



Bombay Boys

Kaizad Gustad

INDIA, 1998

105 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **Kismet Talkies**

Executive Producer: **Thomas Cherian,**

Nima Welinkar

Screenplay: **Kaizad Gustad**

Cinematographer: **Kramer Morgenthau**

Editor: **Priya Krishnaswamy**

Production Designer: **Ram Yadekar**

Sound: **Brad Steven Bergbom**

Principal Cast: **Naveen Andrews,**

Rahul Bose, Tara Deshpande,

Alexander Gifford, Roshan Seth,

Naseeruddin Shah

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Bombay, recently renamed Mumbai by nationalist politicians, is one of the strangest cities on earth. Millions are crammed into a peninsula smaller than Manhattan, with the (extremely) rich and the (desperately) poor literally on top of one another. An invention of the British Raj, it has none of the historical baggage of the rest of India and so has become the home of India's most "European" citizens. Sort of. A bizarre mix of ethnicities and religions, lovingly encapsulated in the city's most glamorous industry, Bollywood, vie for space and attention in its traffic-clogged streets.

First-time writer-director Kaizad Gustad perfectly captures this heady mix in *Bombay Boys*, a rollicking, sexy and hugely entertaining odyssey through every corner of this fascinating place.

Three young and very handsome guys of Indian descent land at Mumbai Airport. Krishna Sahni is an American (Naveen Andrews, from *The English Patient* and *Kama Sutra*) who wants to use his New York training to become an Indian film star. Ricardo Fernandes is Australian (Rahul Bose from *English, August*), and seeks his brother who stayed on after the rest of his family emigrated when he was very young. Xeres Mistry is British (newcomer Alexander Gifford), a musician in need of "self-discovery." They are thrown together when an unscrupulous group of taxi drivers rips them off. They (eventually) find an apartment together and begin their respective journeys.

Krishna encounters a mafioso film producer named Don Mastana – in a captivating and hysterically funny turn by Naseeruddin Shah, one of India's finest stage actors and a major Bollywood star – who hires Krishna because he is such a bad actor that his films could only lose the money that the Don needs laundered. But Don Mastana's girlfriend/gangster moll (the wonderful Tara Deshpande) is seduced by Ricardo, threatening everyone's lives. Meanwhile, Xeres comes to the slow realization that he is gay, with the help of their fey Parsi landlord, Pesi (in a very different role for one of India's most recognized actors, Roshan Seth, from *Gandhi* and *Such a Long Journey*, a Special Presentation at this year's Festival. He also joins a local rock band – the biggest thing in Bangladesh – aptly named "The Bombay Boys."

■ **Noah Cowan**

Kaizad Gustad attended the Australian Film, TV and Radio School in 1988, and New York University Film School in 1991, where he directed over 20 short films. *Bombay Boys* (98) is his first feature film.

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