

A romantic scene featuring a man and a woman in profile, looking towards the ocean at sunset. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the horizon, casting a warm, golden light across the sky and water. The couple is silhouetted against the bright background, with their faces softly lit by the ambient light. The woman is on the left, her hair in a ponytail, and the man is on the right, wearing a dark, ribbed sweater. The overall mood is intimate and serene.

Paper Flowers

PRESS KIT

KAPIL TALWALKAR OLIVIA LIANG KARAN SONI FARAN TAHIR MEERA SIMHAN TOM EVERETT SCOTT

Paper Flowers

"Delicate and Enduring"
POP-CULTURALIST

"Transformative"
DAVID LYNCH, FILMMAKER

BASED ON THE VIRAL HUFFPOST ARTICLE
THANK YOU, CANCER



AN ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY PRESENTS "PAPER FLOWERS"

CASTING BY KAPIL TALWALKAR, OLIVIA LIANG, KARAN SONI, FARAN TAHIR, MEERA SIMHAN, WEST LIANG, & TOM EVERETT SCOTT

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: KAPIL TALWALKAR, OLIVIA LIANG, KARAN SONI, FARAN TAHIR, MEERA SIMHAN, WEST LIANG, & TOM EVERETT SCOTT

PRODUCED BY MARY KRELL-OISHI, MAHESH PAILOOR, & ASIT VYAS
WRITTEN BY MARY KRELL-OISHI, MAHESH PAILOOR, & ASIT VYAS
DIRECTED BY MAHESH PAILOOR
CASTING BY KAPIL TALWALKAR, OLIVIA LIANG, KARAN SONI, FARAN TAHIR, MEERA SIMHAN, WEST LIANG, & TOM EVERETT SCOTT
EDITED BY ANAND KUMAR
SCORE BY ANAND KUMAR
COSTUME DESIGNER: ANAND KUMAR
PRODUCTION DESIGNER: ANAND KUMAR
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: KAPIL TALWALKAR, OLIVIA LIANG, KARAN SONI, FARAN TAHIR, MEERA SIMHAN, WEST LIANG, & TOM EVERETT SCOTT
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Runtime: 100 minutes

Genre: Drama | Inspirational

In a Nutshell: "Fault in Our Stars" meets "The Big Sick"

Based on an incredible true story, Shalin Shah, an ambitious USC graduate, leaves behind his loving Indian-American family and devoted Taiwanese-American girlfriend, Fiona, to pursue his dream of making a difference as a Peace Corps volunteer. However, his life takes a devastating turn when a check-up for a lingering cough reveals a shocking diagnosis: a rare and aggressive form of cancer. Forced to return home and undergo treatment, Shalin confronts the fundamental question: what is the true meaning of life when faced with limited time? PAPER FLOWERS is a poignant and inspirational journey of love, loss, and hope. It serves as a road-map to cherish the moments we have and to remember to stop and enjoy every sunset.

Directed By
Mahesh Pailoor

Written By
Mary Krell-Oishi, Mahesh Pailoor & Asit Vyas

Produced By
Asit Vyas

Cast
Kapil Talwalkar, Olivia Liang, Karan Soni, Faran Tahir, Meera Simhan, West Liang
with Genny Gago and Tom Everett Scott

Website: www.paperflowersmovie.com | Social Media: @PaperFlowersMovie

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Based on a viral
true story

HUFFPOST

“Thank you, Cancer”

I strongly believe everything happens for a reason. Had terminal cancer not happened to me, I would not have been able to inspire my closest friends and family to appreciate the beautiful gift of life a little more and live more appreciative and positive lives with my story.

By: **Shalin Shah**
Contributor, May 11, 2015, 09:40

READ THE ARTICLE 



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LOGLINE

Based on the viral true story of Shalin Shah, who transforms a rare cancer diagnosis into an inspiring journey of love, gratitude, and purpose.

SYNOPSIS

A fresh graduate from USC, Shalin Shah (Kapil Talwalkar) is ready to take on the world and make a difference. Being the only son to his Indian immigrant parents, Jay (Faran Tahir) and Reema (Meera Simhan), Shalin carries the burden of South Asian expectations. The only problem is, Shalin is headed off to Peru with the Peace Corps instead of med school, and his long time girlfriend, Fiona (Olivia Liang) is Taiwanese American, instead of a more “suitable” Indian American match. Shalin’s best friend, Milan (Karan Soni), is more than happy to watch his friend’s predicament, teasing him as “every Indian parent’s worst nightmare.”

Undeterred, Shalin sets off for Peru and finds even more than he was expecting — he finds a real purpose and meaning to his life. But before Shalin can embark on his newfound journey, a check up with a local Doctor for a lingering cough, reveals a much more troubling diagnosis. Returning prematurely to the US, Shalin is shocked to learn from Dr. Baxter (Tom Everett Scott) that he has a rare and aggressive form of cancer.

Shalin’s life is completely upended in an instant, and a once bright future becomes dim. Through chemotherapy and self introspection, Shalin tumbles on a downward spiral, in spite of his family’s best efforts. But with the help of Fiona and her undying love for him, they pull out of the darkness together. As Shalin confronts mortality head-on, he realizes that even in the midst of death and a shortened life, he still has an opportunity to change the world — by living his life in the moment and sharing his experience with others through an inspiring manifesto that quickly goes viral.

PAPER FLOWERS is a journey through love and loss, heartbreak and hope. Above all, it serves as a gentle reminder for those of us still living and breathing: not to take our moments for granted, but to slow down, cherish the people we love, and embrace the beauty, meaning, and possibility woven into everyday life.

CAST

SHALIN SHAH



Kapil Talwalker

"The Burbs"

"Night Court"

"Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist"

FIONA CHANG



Olivia Liang

"Kung Fu"

"Legacies"

MILAN



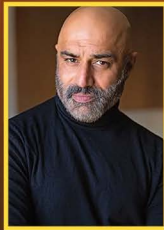
Karan Soni

"A Nice Indian Boy"

*"Spiderman: Across
the Spideverse"*

"Deadpool"

JAY SHAH



Faran Tahir

"Iron Man"

"Star Trek"

REEMA SHAH



Meera Simhan

"Four Samosas"

"Iron Man"

DR. BAXTER



Tom Everett Scott

"The Summer I Turned Pretty"

"That Thing You Do"

FILMMAKERS

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Mahesh Pailoor | Director

Mahesh Pailoor is an award-winning filmmaker based in Los Angeles. Raised in Maine by Indian immigrant parents, his work explores complex South Asian identity. His films have screened at SXSW, Cannes Lions, and the Smithsonian. He directed and co-wrote the acclaimed feature *Brahmin Bulls*, praised by *The New York Times* as a “warm debut,” and has directed episodes of NBC’s *The Blacklist* and CBS’s *S.W.A.T.* An alum of the NBC Emerging Director Program, Disney’s TV Directing Program, Berlinale Talent Campus, and AFI, his latest feature, *Paper Flowers*, is based on the viral article “Thank You, Cancer.”



Asit Vyas | Producer

Asit Vyas is an entrepreneur whose career spans acting, restaurant franchising, and filmmaking. A former Burger King franchisee in San Jose and Pizza Hut operator in Connecticut and Rhode Island, he pursued his passion for cinema while building his business career. His early producing effort led to the Bollywood feature *Zara Si Bhool (A Small Mistake)*, released on Amazon Prime. After selling his franchise business, he completed UCLA’s Producer’s Program and transitioned fully into film. He is now producing his second feature, *Paper Flowers*. Based in Los Angeles, Asit balances filmmaking with family life, celebrating purpose, perseverance, and cultural storytelling.



Brandon Miree | Co-Producer

Former NFL player Brandon Miree is a filmmaker, educator, and founder of Moviefield Entertainment, Corp., a Los Angeles-based production company dedicated to stories that inspire and strengthen community. Working across narrative and documentary film, his projects highlight resilience, transformation, and underrepresented voices. His work includes independent features, educational programming, and impact-driven initiatives that connect cinema with social engagement. As Co-Producer of *Paper Flowers*, Miree provides creative leadership and strategic outreach, expanding the film’s reach beyond traditional exhibition into meaningful audience dialogue. He believes storytelling can spark reflection, gratitude, and collective growth.

TEAM

Executive Producers

Asit & Mita Vyas
Santosh Govindaraju

Screenplay by

Mary Krell-Oishi
Mahesh Pailoor
Asit Vyas

Production Design by
Carlee Wyman

Edited by
Cary Lin

Cinematography by
Aakash Raj

Co-Producer
Brandon Miree
Naman Gupta

Music by
Kristin Øhrn Dyrud

Casting by
Emily Schweber CSA

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Gratitude. That's the one word that this film has taught me. I didn't know Shalin Shah or his story when he passed away in 2015. It wasn't until a few years later when Asit Vyas (producer) approached me to direct the film, that I first read Shalin's op ed in the Huffington Post, "Thank You, Cancer." What struck me, was Shalin's humility and perspective in the face of mortality. We're all going to die. That's a given. But how we spend those days, who we spend those days with, and how we appreciate it all — that's the real gift of life. That was the gift Shalin gave to me, from a 22 year old, wise beyond his years.

The challenge in making this film was how to convey those lofty ideas without becoming sanctimonious and overly sentimental. To that end, we worked hard on grounding the film and telling both Shalin's spiritual journey as well as the journey his closest loved ones went on, inspired by him. As much as this is Shalin's story, it is also an ensemble piece with an incredible cast lead by Kapil Talwalkar and Olivia Liang. Along with the cast, we had an equally incredible and passionate crew who dedicated their time and talent to the making of this film.

I am so grateful for everyone who has come on this journey with us and I'm excited to share the film with audiences, helping to spread Shalin's message of gratitude even further.

Mahesh Pailoor | Director



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PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

In 2015, a young man filled with hope and love changed the world with phrases like “Thank you, Cancer” and “Sunset for Shalin.” Shalin Shah, 22, a promising relative of mine, was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He soon not only accepted his diagnosis with grace but also helped his friends and family view life through a lens of positivity.

Living with love, purpose, and gratitude became his personal epiphany. Shalin shared this message with those close to him, and it quickly spread across the internet, becoming a viral sensation.

Shalin's story, a testament to living each day fully, created a lasting ripple effect. His legacy, touching diverse walks of life, continues to inspire. Shalin's last wish was to share his story worldwide, hoping to help people appreciate the beautiful gift of life a little more. I decided to do my part by making “Paper Flowers,” an inspiring film based on his true story.

Asit Vyas | Producer



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MEDIA CONTACT

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