

# Making Of Mumbai Connection Showcasing Atlanta's Talent

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

Atlanta: Rafiki Media Production has a special offering this summer for movie lovers of Atlanta – Mumbai Connection, a comedy thriller shot entirely in Atlanta. Directed by Atlanta Nagendra, a local of Atlanta, the film boasts of plenty of local acting and technical expertise.



Director Atlanta Nagendra.

The story revolves around Faisal, an Indian IT salesman based in Atlanta. Trouble starts when Faisal is laid off from his job while he has huge debts and no employer is ready to sponsor his work visa. Fate changes for Faisal at a 70's themed party when he lands a job at a startup company BA-IT. Things start to regress as Faisal finds out that BA-IT provides IT services to US mafia and is run by an Indian, Kal who is linked to Mumbai underworld. Faisal is also hounded by an Indian cop to turn informer against Kal. To make matters worse, the US mafia does not want to buy BA-IT and his only friend appears to be his colleague, Tara. In order to get out of the sticky situation, Faisal as the tagline reads, has to go where no salesman has gone before – where? You will have to find out for yourself at the theatres this summer.

Nagendra says that close to two years of efforts have gone into the making of Mumbai Connection with nearly a year spent on the script.

"The making of the movie was much harder and expensive in Atlanta and not as luxurious as in Bangalore" he candidly admits.

An engineer turned filmmaker, Nagendra has previously produced and co-written a successful Kannada movie Joke Falls that enjoyed a 25 week Silver Jubilee run in PVR, Bangalore. Nagendra had to balance his full time job as an IT professional, while running around to gather everything from lens to actors on time.

"They don't rent lens for a day, so I would skip lunch on Fridays to rent the lens and then had to return them Monday morning" he says. And since most of the actors also had other jobs, the only time they could shoot was during the weekends. But then there was another hurdle; the restaurants wanted the shoots on week days since weekends attract more customers. But since the actors were only available on weekends, they shot overnight, a 17 hour stretch sometimes.

"A 70's themed party was shot in Eastman color at Café Bombay" he says. He even included dialogues to folks at the party who were really

interested in being part of the movie.

Nagendra adds that along with restaurant owners a lot of friends and friends of friends also chipped in. "The movie has been shot in some friend's homes, and a lot of people have even lent their cars" he recalls.

Nagendra is grateful to everyone who extended their support in letting him use their gas station, computer training institute or fitness center as locations.

"My Engineering Manager at work plays an Italian mafia don in the movie" Nagendra adds. Since the story gyrates around Indian and foreign actors, about 20% of the movie has English dialogues while 80% is Hindi. Spanish and Italian lines have been added to support the plot.

"While shooting at Global Mall, some people even offered me their business cards for future projects" he adds. At an outdoor shoot, Nagendra tells us that the police asked him about the film and was required to show permissions after which they wished him well and even asked to show Atlanta at its best in the movie. He is very pleased with his entire team including choreography of Prem Rehman

who teaches at Global Mall and Sreenivas who transformed script into dialogues in no time. He is thankful for his producer's timely support. Nagendra says that two Bollywood actors have also been roped in to record voiceovers. "Having formal training helps" he admits. He was able to plan his scenes, camera angles well in advance using a story board. With all its challenges, Nagendra is truly happy to be making films and appreciative of everyone that extended a helping hand towards the movie.

While Mumbai Connection has a global storyline, most of the cast and crew are from around Atlanta and the movie features familiar Atlanta locations such as the Fox theatre, CNN, Coke, Aquarium, Buford Dam, Georgia Tech, Marta station, Global Mall and several Indian restaurants. Rafiq Batcha, an electrical engineer with an MBA, the main lead and executive producer is also based in Atlanta. Other executive producers include Abbas Moloo, Guha Lakshmanan and Hazifa Olia. Praveen Duth Stephen, the Music Director based in Bangalore, India has a lot of awards to his credit. The movie also has a Sunidhi Chauhan Item song shot at an Atlanta nightclub. The story is credited to Atlanta Nagendra and Rafiq Batcha. For more information check [www.mumbhaiconnection.com](http://www.mumbhaiconnection.com)

"Lot of movies have been done with Information Technology (IT) as back drop. Lot more movies have been made with Underworld or Mafia as Integral part. Nobody tried to connect between these two. This Conflict was not explored by anyone, based on this thought, story was woven around it. I have made an entertaining, sensible and worthwhile movie to watch" Nagendra tells us passionately. Brimming with local talent and locales, Mumbai Connection has an intriguing story to tell. In support of local talent and our city, here's wishing the movie a successful run at the box office.

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