

# The New York Times

## FILM REVIEW

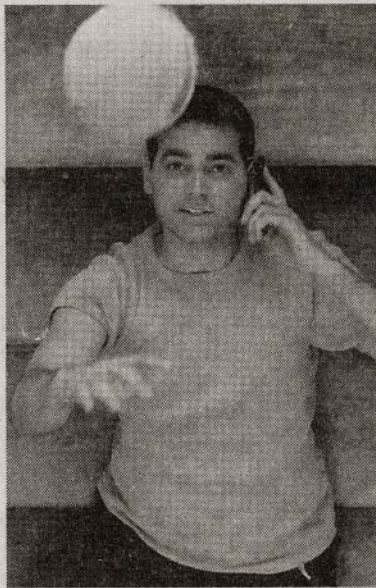
### Bollywood Discovers New Jersey's Subplots

By DAVE KEHR

Following in the sasquatchian footsteps of Hollywood, Bollywood is also going global. The Hindi-language film industry, based in what was once called Bombay and is now Mumbai (somehow, Mumbywood seems unlikely to catch on as a blanket term for the business), has followed the Indian diaspora and now produces films in the United States as well, and in this case largely in English.

"Flavors," written and directed by Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK, was shot and is set mostly in New Jersey, where the thoroughly Americanized Rad (Anupam Mittal) is about to be married to his tall, blond American fiancée (Jicky Schnee). Rad's tradition-minded parents, arriving from the old country for the big event, are at first appalled by American customs like women smoking on the street, but before too long they are happily adopting American folkways, including wearing promotional T-shirts and going for aimless walks along empty suburban streets.

The wedding is a device to bring together several subplots. Kartik (Reef Karim) invites his long-distance phone pal, Rachna (Pooja Kumar, now on Broadway in "Bombay Dreams"), to fly in as his guest for the wedding, hoping their relation-



Net Effect Media

Reef Karim plays Kartik in one subplot of "Flavors."

ship will develop into something more. Sangita (Sireesha Katragadda) is a lonely newlywed whose husband, Nikhil (Gaurang Vyas), is distracted by problems at work. And Candy (Rishma Malik) is a den mother to three unemployed computer programmers who pass their time drinking beer and pining for romance.

## FLAVORS

Written and directed by Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK; director of photography, Dave Isern; edited by Frank Reynolds; music by Mahesh Shankar and Leslie Lewis; production designer, Tushar Unadkat; produced by Anupam Mittal, Mr. Nidimoru and Krishna DK; released by Net Effect Media. Running time: 118 minutes. This film is not rated.

WITH: Pooja Kumar (Rachna), Reef Karim (Kartik), Bharati Achrekar (Mom), Anjan Srivastava (Dad), Anupam Mittal (Rad), Jicky Schnee (Jenni), Sireesha Katragadda (Sangita), Gaurang Vyas (Nikhil) and Rishma Malik (Candy).

The picture is bright, good-spirited and blissfully short for Bollywood, at a mere 118 minutes. The conflicts all center on that classic theme of immigrant cinema — homegrown, traditional values versus the liberal mores of the new country — and are resolved with grace, humor and very few surprises. But Bollywood fans will be disappointed by the lack of the wonderfully demented musical numbers that are the Hindi cinema's defining characteristic. Such things, it seems, are not globalizable.

"Flavors" opens today in New York, New Jersey, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Detroit, Washington, Toronto and Vancouver, British Columbia.