

Anurag Basu

Anurag Basu (born 8 May 1974) is an Indian director, screenwriter, actor and producer. He is best known for helming films which tackle bold themes of passion, envy and adultery.

After initial setbacks, he achieved his breakthrough with the erotic thriller *Murder* (2004), and gained prominence with the musical romantic thriller *Gangster: A Love Story* (2006) and the ensemble urban drama *Life in a... Metro* (2007), the latter of which earned him the Filmfare Award for Best Screenplay, in addition to his first nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director.^[1]

His highest grosser came with the widely acclaimed romantic comedy-drama *Barfi!* (2012), which earned him his second nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director. He next directed the much-delayed musical adventure comedy-drama *Jagga Jasoos* (2017), which earned mixed reviews and was commercially unsuccessful, and the Netflix black comedy crime film *Ludo* (2020), in which he also made his debut as a cinematographer. The latter film also earned him his third nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director.

Early life

Basu was born into an upper-middle-class Bengali family in Bhilai, Madhya Pradesh (now in Chhattisgarh). His parents, Subrato Bose and Deepshikha Bose [ex-executives in SAIL Bhilai Steel Plant in Cokeovens and Education department (Organic Chemistry) respectively], were award-winning theatrical artists and Basu grew up watching them performing in his father's theatre company (Abhiyaan). He attended BSP Senior Secondary School, Sector-IV (SSS-IV) in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh (then Madhya Pradesh).^{[2][3]} He received a B.Sc. degree in Physics honours from the University of Mumbai, intending to study cinematography at FTII, Pune; however, during his college years in Mumbai he had an opportunity to assist on a number of levels in TV and film projects. After trying to remain involved with filmmaking, Basu became an assistant director to Raman Kumar on *Tara*.^[4]

Career

Television

Basu began his television career as an assistant director on *Tara* in mid 1994. After six months, he was given full responsibility for directing about 712 episodes.^[5] He directed television serials, trying genres ranging from daily soaps to thrillers such as *Saturday Suspense* and *Ajeeb Dastaan*, and horror (*X-Zone*). Basu's most successful work during this period was the Balaji Telefilms soap *Koshish ...Ek Aashaa* in 2000 and he made pilot episodes of Indian television shows including *Kyun ki saans bhi kabhi bahu thi*, *Kahani*

Anurag Basu



Born	8 May 1970 <div>Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, India</div>
Occupations	Director • producer • screenwriter • actor • television presenter
Years active	1995–present
Spouse	Tani Basu
Children	2

ghar ghar ki and *Kasouti zindagi ki*^[6] in 2001 and 2002. He began his own company and initially he produced TV serials for Zee TV and Sony channel. The popular shows of his company were *Manzilien Apni Apni*, *Miit*, *Thriller at Ten*, and *Horror Shows* on Zee. He himself directed the TV series *Miit* (based on the novel *Noukadubi* by Rabindranath Tagore), *Manzilien Apni Apni* and all his other series.^[7] Basu has directed many television shows. In 2000 he received a RAPA Award for Best Director Award from the Radio and TV Advertisers Practitioners Association, followed by an Aashirwad Award for Best Director two years later. Basu returned to television in 2007 to produce and direct the college drama *Love Story* and hosted the Bengali reality show *Ke Hobe Biggest Fan (Who Will Be the Biggest Fan)* for Zee Bangla in 2010. Basu started his own film production house, Ishana Movies, in 2007 and the first film of his production company was the 2007 musical drama film *Life in a... Metro* with co-producer UTV. Currently his series *Stories by Rabindranath Tagore* is airing on Netflix^[8] and EPIC Channel. Basu will be judging the upcoming TV show 'Super Dancer Chapter 4', along with Shilpa Shetty and Geeta Kapoor.^[9]

Films

Initial work, directorial debut and breakthrough (2003–04)

Basu made his film debut as an extra in the action drama *Dalaal* (1993).^[10] He made his directorial debut with the Balaji Motion Pictures-produced horror slasher film *Kucch To Hai* (2003), followed by the Vishesh Films-produced supernatural fantasy romantic thriller *Saaya* (2003). Both films received highly negative reviews from critics upon release, and emerged as commercial disasters at the box-office.^{[11][12]}

Basu achieved his breakthrough with the erotic thriller *Murder* (2004) starring Emraan Hashmi and Mallika Sherawat in lead roles. Based on the American film *Unfaithful* (2002), It is the first instalment of the *Murder* film series. The film told the story of an unhappily married woman's extramarital affair with her former flame. Due to its erotic subject and sex scenes, which was unusual for Indian cinema at the time, it received an A certificate from the Central Board of Film Certification. It received mixed reviews from critics upon release, but emerged as a commercial success at the box-office, ranking as the eighth highest-grossing Hindi film of the year.^[13]



Anurag Basu, Ranbir Kapoor, Priyanka Chopra, Ileana Dcruz and Siddharth Roy Kapur at *Barfi!* promotion

The same year, he helmed the musical romance *Tumsa Nahin Dekha: A Love Story*, again starring Hashmi alongside Dia Mirza. Halfway through the film, Basu was diagnosed with acute leukemia. He was immediately hospitalised, directing parts of the film from his hospital bed. He gave instructions by dictaphone for camera angles and script changes, with Mahesh Bhatt and Mohit Suri completing the film while the director underwent chemotherapy.^[14] The film received mixed-to-negative reviews from critics upon release, and emerged as a commercial disaster at the box-office.^[15]

Success (2006–12)

Basu's next directorial venture was the musical romantic thriller *Gangster: A Love Story* (2006), which starred debutante Kangana Ranaut alongside Hashmi and Shiney Ahuja in lead roles. The film revolves around the complex love triangle between a bar singer, her mysterious lover, and a gangster, exploring

themes of love, betrayal, and the criminal underworld. It received positive reviews from critics upon release, with praise for its screenplay, soundtrack, cinematography and performances of the cast. The film emerged as a commercial success at the box-office.^{[16][17]}

He next screenwrote and directed the ensemble urban drama *Life in a... Metro* (2007). The film narrates the stories of nine people living in Mumbai and tackles themes such as extramarital affairs, sanctity of marriage, commitment phobia and love. It received widespread critical acclaim upon release, with high praise for its novel concept, story, screenplay, dialogues, soundtrack and performances of the ensemble cast. The film emerged as a surprise commercial success at the box-office.^[18] *Life in a... Metro* won Basu the Filmfare Award for Best Screenplay, in addition to his first nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director.

His next film was the romantic action thriller *Kites* (2010) starring Hrithik Roshan, debutante Bárbara Mori and Kangana Ranaut in lead roles. Filmed in Hindi, English and Spanish, the film follows the tumultuous love story between a dance teacher stuck in a green card marriage, and a woman on the run. It received mixed-to-negative reviews from critics upon release, with sharp criticism for its multilingual narrative that featured the majority of dialogue in English and Spanish. Despite pre-release hype due to its starcast, the film emerged as a below-average grosser at the box-office.^[19]

Basu's next directorial and screenwriting venture was the romantic comedy-drama *Barfi!* (2012) starring Ranbir Kapoor, Priyanka Chopra and Ileana D'Cruz in lead roles. Set in 1970s, the film revolves around the love triangle between a deaf-mute young man, an autistic girl, and a wistful young woman. It opened to widespread critical acclaim, with high praise for its direction, screenplay, cinematography, soundtrack, performances of the cast, and the portrayal of physically disabled people. The film emerged as a major commercial success at the box-office, grossing ₹175 crore worldwide, ranking as the sixth highest-grossing Hindi film of the year.^[20] *Barfi!* earned Basu his second nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director.

Barfi! was screened at several film festivals such as Busan, Marrakech and Taipei, and won the prestigious Grand Jury Award at the Okinawa International Movie Festival in Japan.^{[21][22]} The film made the shortlist for India's official entry for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film at the 85th Academy Awards, but failed to receive a nomination.^[23] However, its choice as the country's entry was criticized after Basu was accused of plagiarizing several Hollywood films.^[24] Since its release, *Barfi!* has achieved a cult status for its refreshing story, soundtrack, performances of the cast, and feel-good factor.^[25]

Later career (2017–present)

After a 5-year directorial hiatus, he made his comeback with the musical adventure comedy-drama *Jagga Jasoos* (2017) starring Kapoor alongside Katrina Kaif. Originally planned for a release in 2014, schedule conflicts set back release.^[26] The film was produced by Basu and Kapoor's new production company, Picture Shuru Entertainment, in association with Disney Studios. It tells the story of a teenage detective and an accident-prone journalist who join forces to search for his missing father. The film received mixed reviews upon release, with praise for its innovative storytelling style, cinematography, soundtrack and cast performances, but criticism for its plot, runtime and pacing. Despite hype prior to release, it emerged as a commercial disaster at the box-office.^[27]

He next venture was the Netflix black comedy crime film *Ludo* (2020), in which he also made his debut as a cinematographer. Starring an ensemble cast, the plot of the film interweaves the lives of four characters—a determined young woman, a cunning conman, a troubled teenager, and a righteous police officer—through

a series of interconnected stories. It received mixed-to-positive reviews from critics upon release, with praise for its direction, screenplay, cinematography, soundtrack and performances of the cast. The film earned Basu his first nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Film, and his third nomination for the Filmfare Award for Best Director.

He is currently directing *Metro... In Dino*, the sequel to *Life in a... Metro*, which stars a new ensemble cast.^{[28][29]}

He is next set to direct the musical sequel to Mohit Suri's *Aashiqui 2* titled, *Aashiqui 3* starring Kartik Aaryan opposite Tara Sutaria.^[30]

Personal life

Basu is married to Tani Basu and has two daughters, Ishana (b. 2004) and Ahana (b. 2007).

Filmography

Films

Year	Title	Director	Writer	Screenplay	Producer
2003	<u>Saaya</u>	Yes	No	No	No
2004	<u>Murder</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2006	<u>Gangster</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2007	<u>Life in a... Metro</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2010	<u>Kites</u>	Yes	No	Yes	No
2012	<u>Barfi!</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2017	<u>Jagga Jasoos</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2020	<u>Ludo</u>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Frequent collaborations

Actors	<u>Saaya</u> (2003)	<u>Murder</u> (2004)	<u>Tumsa Nahi Dekha</u> (2004)	<u>Gangster: A Love Story</u> (2006)	<u>Life in a... Metro</u> (2007)	<u>Kites</u> (2011)	<u>Barfi!</u> (2012)	<u>Jagga Jasoos</u> (2017)	<u>Ludo</u> (2020)
<u>Emraan Hashmi</u>		✓	✓	✓					
<u>Kangana Ranaut</u>				✓	✓	✓			
<u>Ranbir Kapoor</u>							✓	✓	
<u>Shiney Ahuja</u>				✓	✓				
<u>Pritam</u>				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
<u>KK</u>	✓			✓	✓	✓			
<u>Sayeed Quadri</u>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓

Television

- Tara (1996)
- Saturday Suspense (1998)
- Star Best Sellers (1999)
- X-Zone (1999)
- Ajeeb Dastaan (1998)
- Koshish ...Ek Aashaa (2000)
- Kyun Ki Saans Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
- Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki (2000)
- Manzilien Apni Apni (TV series) (2001) - Home production
- Miit (2002) - Home production
- Thriller at 10 (2005–2006) - Home Production
- Ke Hobe Biggest Fan (2010)
- Rooh - Home Production
- Love Story (2007) - Home Production

- Stories by Rabindranath Tagore (2015) - Home Production
- Super Dancer As a Judge (Season 1-4) - (2016-2021)

Awards and nominations

Year	Award	Film	Category	Result	
<u>2008</u>	<u>Filmfare Awards</u>	<u>Life in a... Metro</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
			<u>Best Screenplay</u>	Won	
<u>2013</u>		<u>Barfi!</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
<u>2021</u>		<u>Ludo</u>	<u>Best Film</u>	Nominated	
			<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
			<u>Best Screenplay</u>	Nominated	
			<u>Best Production Design</u>	Nominated	
<u>2005</u>		<u>IIFA Awards</u>	<u>Murder</u>	<u>Best Story</u>	Nominated
<u>2007</u>			<u>Gangster</u>	<u>Best Screenplay</u>	Nominated
<u>2008</u>			<u>Life in a... Metro</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated
	<u>Best Story</u>			Nominated	
	<u>Best Screenplay</u>			Won	
<u>2013</u>	<u>Barfi!</u>		<u>Best Director</u>	Won	
			<u>Best Story</u>	Won	
<u>2018</u>	<u>Jagga Jasoos</u>		<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
<u>2008</u>	<u>Producers Guild Film Awards</u>	<u>Life in a... Metro</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
<u>2013</u>		<u>Barfi!</u>	<u>Best Story</u>	Nominated	
			<u>Best Screenplay</u>	Nominated	
<u>2008</u>	<u>Screen Awards</u>	<u>Life in a... Metro</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Nominated	
<u>2013</u>				Won	
<u>2013</u>	<u>Zee Cine Awards</u>	<u>Barfi!</u>	<u>Best Director</u>	Won	
			<u>Best Screenplay</u>	Won	
			<u>Power Club - Box Office Award</u>	Won	
			<u>Best Director</u>	Won	
<u>2013</u>	<u>Bollywood Hungama Surfers' Choice Movie Awards</u>		<u>Best Director</u>	Won	
			<u>Grand Jury Award</u>	Won	

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External links

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