

# U.S. Producer Sues Chinese Financier for Firing Him From Film

**Gene Maddaus**  
Senior Media Writer  
@GeneMaddaus



OCTOBER 3, 2016 | 06:11PM PT

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A U.S.-based producer filed suit against a Chinese company on Monday, alleging that he was fired from the Orlando Bloom film "Smart Chase" in violation of his contract.

[Sriram Das](#), of [Das Films](#), accuses [Bliss Media](#) of breaching the terms of the agreement after Das had already spent months working on the project. The film is now in production in China with a different producer.

"It's a great example of people from other countries investing in the movie business," said attorney Bryan Freedman, who represents Das. "They enter into these contracts that are standard contracts in the entertainment industry. People know them... Financiers from other countries come in and they turn around and want to disregard the contracts."

"Smart Chase" is about a private security agent who is ambushed as he attempts to escort an antique out of China. According to the suit, Shanghai-based Bliss Media hired Das to produce the film in December 2015. The agreement provided that Das would hire a writer and director, scout locations, draw up a budget for the \$17 million film, and sign agreements with the lead actors.

Das hired the director and the writer, who re-wrote the script. But Das alleges that Bliss Media dragged its feet in approving the script, and cast Asian actors in supporting roles without consulting with him or with the director. Das claims that Bliss appeared to be inventing excuses to get out of the production agreement. On April 14, Das got an email from Bliss stating that Das was "off the project and we will change the title and proceed on our own."

The film, then known as "Smart Chase: The Dragon and Phoenix," was [later announced](#) as "Smart Chase: Fire & Earth."

Das was deprived of hundreds of thousands of dollars in producer's fees, as well as box office bonuses and profit sharing, according to the suit.

Bliss Media did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Freedman (who also represents PMC, the parent company of Variety) said the suit should send a message to overseas financiers.

"No matter where they live, or what country they come from, or whatever they think they can do, they ought to read a contract and make sure they abide by the terms of it," says Freedman. "Ignorance is no excuse."

Update, 3:45 p.m. Oct. 5: Bliss Media has issued a statement in response to Das Films' claims:

"The allegations against Bliss Media by Das Films are wholly without merit as they were terminated with cause. As this matter is currently the subject of aggressive litigation/arbitration, it is inappropriate to comment further other than to vehemently deny the claims put forward by Das Films. Smart Chase is an extraordinary collaboration with talent and filmmakers from the U.S., China and Europe that is being shot entirely in Shanghai and will receive a wide release in China."

FILED UNDER: Bliss Media, Das Films, Sriram Das

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3