

The 2012 Indian Film Festival of Melbourne program launched

Friday 11 May The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) was launched this morning by Indian Film star and Festival Ambassador **Vidya Balan**, Premier of Victoria **Ted Baillieu** and Festival Director **Mitu Bhowmick Lange**.

Taking place from June 11 to June 22 at Hoyts Melbourne Central and Chadstone, with 10 of India's most exciting film figures as special guests, the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne presents a dynamic program of screenings and master classes, appealing to cinephiles, lovers of Indian culture and filmmakers across its twelve day program.

Festival director **Mitu Bhowmick Lange** said, "This is a double celebration; of the world's biggest film industry, in all its crazy diversity, and multicultural Melbourne with its shared taste for spicy food, cricket and movies."

The festival in its first year is screening an extraordinary 40 films celebrating the dizzying breadth of Indian film culture, including 20 Australian premieres. The films range from Bengali art house to Hindi mass entertainment and South Indian action; from "masala" movies (lots of ingredients all cooked in the same pot) to regional art house plus a program of rarely seen films from the wider subcontinent including Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal, specially curated for the festival by acclaimed Indian New Wave director, Onir.

Highlights include opening night film, **Kahaani**, starring Vidya Balan; **Saving Face**, the winner of this year's Academy Award for Best Documentary; **Chatrak**, from Sri Lanka, shot in Calcutta; the Hindi film, **Michael**, starring one of India's finest actors, Naseeruddin Shah; **Delhi Belly**, a box office phenomenon shot in English and described by the Hollywood Reporter as "a sexy, filthy, and thoroughly entertaining comedy that marks a welcome shift in contemporary Indian Cinema" and **Urumi**, the second most expensive Malayalam (Mollywood) film ever made, a rip-roaring period fantasy set in 16th century Kerala. Closing the festival is **Memories in March**, starring **Rituparno Ghosh**, one of India's most respected, not to mention fascinating, filmmakers. Rituparno will be here to introduce the film and take part in a Q & A session.

Three of the world's most popular film figures - Tamil superstar, **Vijay** and former Ms World and leading actress and screen goddess, **Priyanka Chopra** are IFFM opening night special guests along with Bollywood superstar, **Shahid Kapoor**, and producer **Vicky Bahri** and producer director, **Kunal Khali**, bringing his new film **Teri Meri Kahaani**, starring Priyanka Chopra and Shahid Kapoor to the festival for its world premiere.

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne invites local filmmakers to strengthen ties and mine the wealth of knowledge and experience of India's leading film practitioners by attending four masterclasses.

Rajkumar Hirani and **Abhijat Joshi** comprise one of India's most successful writing partnerships and present *Thinking through Laughter*; the king of Indian arthouse cinema, **Rituparno Ghosh** presents *Realism in Indian cinema*; acclaimed costume designer **Sabyasachi Mukherjee** presents *Talking through Fabric* and **Jugal Hansraj** presents *Animation: The hotspot for co-production*.

As well as fostering broader cultural ties, The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne provides a platform for new voices and visions. Acclaimed young Melbourne illustrator Jessica Singh has designed the festival poster and in collaboration with Western Union, the festival invites budding filmmakers to enter the Western Union Short Film Competition. Open to filmmakers from India, Australia and New Zealand the winning entries screens at Hoyts during the festival, and on SBS TV.

We invite everyone to come along and experience the particular magic of Indian cinema. Get into the mood with three special free screenings at Federation Square in the lead up to the festival.

For bookings and information go to www.iffm.com.au
www.facebook.com/pages/Indian-Film-Festival Follow us at twitter.com/#!/IndianFFMelb

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