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## Guests Galore at SSAFF 2014 Celebration, Education, and Conversation with Honored Guests from South Asia to Seattle

SEATTLE, WA (*October 20, 2014*) – With excitement and great anticipation, Tasveer welcomes more than 15 visiting directors, producers, and actors during the 9th annual Seattle South Asian Film Festival – including **Prasanna Withanage**, Sri Lanka’s veteran statesman of cinema, who will be honored with the Tasveer Emerald Award at the Festival’s Closing Night Reception on Sunday, November 9th.

“Attending filmmakers **enrich the festival experience**, bringing fresh perspective and valuable knowledge into our conversations,” says SSAFF co-founder and executive director Rita Meher. “We are proud to provide this opportunity for our guests to meet each other, and to share their expertise with our community.”

Filmmakers scheduled for the opening weekend will be in attendance at the Opening Night Gala on Friday, October 31st at the Renton Pavilion Event Center – including **Puja Maewal**, director of the multi-award-winning *JAYA*, and **Bob Woosley** and **Summer Pervez** of the Pakistani-Canadian co-production *SHAME*. Another NW favorite, Portland’s **DJ Anjali and the Incredible Kid**, hosts of the longest-running Bhangra and Bollywood party on the West Coast, will bring the beats for Opening Night.

“Renton is honored to host the Seattle South Asian Film Festival (SSAFF) for the first time,” says Renton Mayor Denis Law, “one of the most highly-respected South Asian film festivals in the United States. The Renton Community Marketing Campaign is partnering with SSAFF to bring the world of film to Renton and help showcase the diversity of our community, bring visitors to Renton and Renton’s hotels, and **promote arts, culture and cultural understanding**”

Many guest filmmakers will serve on SSAFF educational panels designed to foster cross-border communication through filmmaking. These events are free of charge and open to the public.

On November 1st, in collaboration with Washington Filmworks, SSAFF presents *Filmmaking for Global Audiences: Stories that Travel*. Director **Kanu Behl** of Cannes 2014 official selection *TITLI*, director **Subarna Thapa** of Nepal's first LGBTQ-themed feature film *SOONGAVA*, director **John Jeffcoat** of the critically acclaimed *OUTSOURCED*, and **Mayank Tewari**, renowned Indian comic and co-star of the hilarious SSAFF 2014 bromance comedy *SULEMANI KEEDA*, or *WRITERS*, will discuss the cultural crossroads of film with Warren Etheredge, host of *The High Bar*.

On November 4th, The Film School's monthly First Tuesday event will be co-presented with SSAFF on *A Global Perspective on Screenwriting: Writing that Resonates*. Tewari will be joined by director **Bauddhayan Mukherji** of *TEENKAHON* and director **Agneya Singh** of *M CREAM* to discuss what makes a script ring true across borders and cultures.

Says Diana Dotter, Executive Director of The Film School, "The Film School's focus is on educating screenwriters and filmmakers on authentic storytelling. We need to have an international perspective on our stories. The **diverse and uniquely qualified group** that SSAFF is convening in Seattle will be able to give us unparalleled insight into this topic."

Also prominent among attending filmmakers are three locals, whom SSAFF proudly presents not only as excellent artisans but strong figures in the NW filmmaking community. Director **Nadeem Uddin** will present a work-in-progress clip of his next film, *BHOPAL84*, on November 2nd along with the Indian feature *AN AMERICAN IN MADRAS* (director **Karan Bali** also in attendance).

Local producer **Jane Charles**, whose film *SOLD* thrilled audiences at the 2014 Seattle International Film Festival and went on to win the Pure Heaven Audience Award at the London Indian Film Festival and Best Narrative Feature at the Albuquerque Film and Music Experience, will join a Q&A that promises to be very engaging following the November 8th screening of her film.

**Monish Gangwani**, whose short film *THE ROAR* will screen with *ANIMA STATE* (director **Hammad Khan** also in attendance) on Saturday, November 8th, will be on hand to discuss his transition from a corporate marketing career to filmmaking, the artist's impulse that led him to create, and his forthcoming film, *ALWAYS...*

The full lineup and tickets for all events of the 9th annual Seattle South Asian Film Festival is now available at <http://ssaff.tasveer.org/2014/>.

A full listing of guests expected at the Festival can be found at <http://ssaff.tasveer.org/2014/index.php/program/filmmakers-in-attendance/>.

### **About SSAFF and Tasveer**

Running Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup> through Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, SSAFF 2014 includes 24 feature films and 17 shorts representing nine countries to inspire, inform, and provoke audiences throughout the Festival.

For more information, please visit <http://ssaff.tasveer.org/2014/>.

Founded in 2002 by Rita Meher and Farah Nousheen, Tasveer strives to curate thought-provoking artistic work of South Asians through films, forums, visual art, and performances that engage and empower the community.

Tasveer presents three keystone events each year: AAINA, a women-focused arts gathering (spring); South Asian International Documentary Festival (spring), and Seattle South Asian Film Festival (fall).

The purpose of Tasveer is to increase awareness of South Asian countries and cultures from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; to provide a platform for South Asian filmmakers and artists; to initiate dialog that bridges communities; to provide an alternative to corporate media; and to employ independent South Asian film as a vehicle to give voice to marginalized communities.

For more information, please visit [www.tasveer.org](http://www.tasveer.org).

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