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4th Annual Chicago South Asian Film Festival Brings Together the Best of Talent and Filmgoers

Dynamic South Asian Talent and Chicago Audiences Take Part in a Weekend of Daring Film Selections, Intimate Film Discussions and a Celebration of 100 Years of Indian Cinema

Chicago, IL – September 24, 2013 – The Chicago South Asian Film Festival inspired and entertained hundreds of filmgoers last weekend in its fourth successful event. Artists including Parvesh Cheena, Abhinav Shiv Tiwari, Sanjay Tripathy, Trupti Bhoir, Geeta Malik and Meera Menon were in attendance to support the festival where films including *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and *Shahid* played to packed theaters.

An Opening Night Red Carpet and Reception for the U.S. premiere of *Oass* kicked off the three-day event on September 20th after which film enthusiasts continued to indulge in a weekend of films, acclaimed artists, and upbeat festivities.

The festival once again hit its stride as an intimate experience for artists and filmgoers alike, providing a platform for large-scale productions as well as high-quality indie-films. The value of such a respectable mission was not lost on attending artists who praised the warm reception and daring film selection.

The twittersphere was buzzing with #CSAFF2013 and @TheCSAFF tweets.

Fawzia Mirza, a Chicago-based filmmaker and Actor and CoDirector of *Queen of My Dreams*, tweeted: "Just watched @farahgoesbang at @TheCSAFF and loved it #femalefilmmakers #southasia #film"

Outsourced Actor, Parvesh Cheena, tweeted: "Amazing AMAZING short films at @TheCSAFF Wow wow wow. Great programming! "

"Cheers for resisting the temptation to water down the festival with too many films; quality definitely trumps quantity," said Brayden Yoder, who directed *Breakdown*, in an email to the CSAFF team. Ryan Logan, director of *Queen of My Dreams*, shared this sentiment, saying that he felt more respected as a filmmaker at CSAFF compared with larger festivals.

A diverse selection of short films and features whose themes explored topics from women's issues to politics and terrorism brought multitudes to Film Row Cinema at Columbia College Chicago and Showplace Icon Theater. Audiences and press engaged in enlightening discussions with artists during Q&A sessions, panels, and a press conference. In one session, Abhinav Shiv Tiwari of *Oass* described the physical and emotional journey he took while visiting brothels throughout India that allowed him to relay a more realistic picture on screen.

The festival honored Indian cinema's centenary by continuing to provide a stage for the best of Bollywood as well. Sanjay Tripathy's *Club 60*, starring Farooq Sheikh and Sarika, was described by viewers as truly inspiring. The director also offered his thoughts on modern Indian film. "This is the most exciting time for Indian cinema where mainstream spicy affairs to experimental contents are coexisting without losing the money or the audience. In coming times this is only going to be better and better," he said.

Shahid, a biographical piece on a slain human rights activist and lawyer directed by Hansal Mehta, was extolled by audiences and received praises from Aamir Khan on his Facebook page over the weekend.

The Reluctant Fundamentalist closed out the festival on a superbly strong note. The film, starring Kate Hudson, Liev Schreiber, Riz Ahmed, and Shabana Azmi, played to a sold out theater. Director Mira Nair tweeted her support for the festival and encouraged the community to see her film, which tells the story of a Pakistani man in America post 9/11.

"We're proud of the caliber of films and filmmakers this year and are excited to introduce some innovative programming to the festival in 2014," said Festival Director Amit Rana.

Major sponsors include Xfinity Comcast, Columbia College Chicago, and Saavn.

About CSAFF

[Chicago South Asian Film Festival](http://www.csaff.org/) is dedicated to fostering a diverse cinematic experience through South Asian films. The Festival was founded in 2010 and is organized by the Chicago South Asian Arts Council Inc. The Festival is held in late September in conjunction with Columbia College Chicago and includes a stellar selection of films and guests, panel discussions, opportunities for filmmakers and film lovers to connect, musical performances, tributes to major artists, and galas. The Festival is committed to providing a groundbreaking cinematic experience for filmmakers and moviegoers alike with the warmth and personal touch that is unique to Chicago. For more information, visit <http://www.csaff.org/>.