

MARCH 14 – 24, 2013
CAAMFEST
FILM. MUSIC. FOOD.

**CAAMFest Highlights Daring Works by South Asian Female Filmmakers
and Adds Spice with CAAM Salons**

SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 13, 2013 - South Asian female directors take center stage at CAAMFest with provocative, bold new works. Auteur Deepa Mehta (*The Elements Trilogy: Fire, Water, Earth*) returns to the coveted Centerpiece spot with *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*, an adaptation of Salman Rushdie's Booker Prize-winning novel on India's transition from British Colonialism to independence. Equally acclaimed Mira Nair (*Mississippi Masala, Monsoon Wedding, The Namesake*) directs *THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST*, a CAAMFest Special Presentation centered on a Pakistani man who becomes disillusioned with post-9/11 America. Other high-profile films by South Asian women include *INVOKING JUSTICE*, Deepa Dhanraj's rousing portrait of Muslim women challenging tradition and insisting on gender equality, and *WHEN HARI GOT MARRIED*, an Indian documentary co-directed by Ritu Sarin.

Bringing mouthwatering South Asian food to the table is Amrit Singh's *DOSA HUNT*, a short documentary in which notable Indian American musicians, including members of Das Racist, Vampire Weekend, Yeasayer and Neon Indian, go in search of New York City's best dosa. A part of the New Directions launch, the screening will be followed by a short set by Indian Bastards from Hell (Heems and Dapwell of Das Racist) and a food and arts-infused reception at the Asian Art Museum. Similarly, the interactive presentation *MIXING MASALA* will offer insights on incorporating spice into one's culinary life.

BIG NIGHTS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Based on the celebrated 1981 novel written by Salman Rushdie, *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN* tells the tale of two boys born into opposite classes of wealth and poverty, switched at birth on the day India became an independent nation. Following a world premiere at Toronto International Film Festival and a Gala Presentation spotlight at Vancouver International Film Festival, CAAM is thrilled to bring *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN* to the Bay Area for its San Francisco Premiere. Critically acclaimed Deepa Mehta is regarded as one of the most provocative and influential filmmakers to make an impact in world cinema. Her films are known for their bold, outspoken approach on issues of intolerance and prejudice, often evoking thoughts of cultural practices that both divide and unite us. No stranger to the CAAM family, Mehta has screened many of her previous films at the festival: *Fire* (1997), *Water* (2006) and *Cooking with Stella* (2010). (Sponsored by the Consulate General of Canada, San Francisco)

THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST is acclaimed director Mira Nair's boldly dramatic adaptation of a remarkable, timely novel starring Kiefer Sutherland, Riz Ahmed, Kate Hudson and Liev Schreiber. The film chronicles the life of a Pakistani man altered by the prejudicial climate of post-9/11 America. Aided by Nair's assured direction, Ahmed gives a magnificently textured performance as a Pakistani American whose attitude evolves from an eager willingness to assimilate to a deep dejection with his adopted country.

STORIES TO LIGHT

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SPICING IT UP

What happens when you put pianist Vijay Iyer, music critic Amrit Singh and members of Das Racist, Vampire Weekend, Yeasayer and Neon Indian into an Indian disco van to track down NYC's best dosa? Find out in Amrit Singh's and Sam Carroll's *DOSA HUNT*, an insider's jaunt through South Asian Americana, New York-style. Kicking off CAAMFest's interactive and multi-media New Directions segment, the screening will be followed by a short set by Indian Bastards From Hell (Heems and Dapwell of Das Racist) and freshly served dosas in a perfect convergence of film, music, art and food.

One of two CAAM Cook Salons, *MIXING MASALA* is an intimate symposium-style gathering that allows audiences to hear San Francisco's very own chai wallah (Paawan Kothari, Founder and CEO of the Chai Cart) and local chef Thy Tran share their insights on creating unique spice mixes. The culinary fun will include a spice identification quiz and advice on adapting traditional masala techniques to one's own kitchen.

(MORE) SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN DIRECT THE SHOTS

Defiantly eschewing Western portraits of Muslim women, Deepa Dhanraj's *INVOKING JUSTICE* explores the first Women's Jamaat (Assembly) in Tamil Nadu, South India, where women are raising their voices and enacting new interpretations of Sharia law to demand gender equality. This remarkably intimate portrayal offers the women an opportunity to "talk back" to the male Jamaats, their aggressors and to anyone who has ever doubted the power and autonomy of a Muslim woman. (Sponsored by KALW)

WHEN HARI GOT MARRIED is the latest film co-directed by Ritu Sarin and her partner Tenzing Sonam (*Dreaming Lhasa*, SFIAAFF '06). Hari is a chatty, gregarious taxi driver getting married to a girl he's seen only once. Shy bride-to-be Suman is a welcome addition to Hari's extended pastoral family. With ample humor and affection *HARI* examines the changes taking place as modernity and globalization meet age-old traditions and customs. (Sponsored by IW Group)

EXPERIENCED DOCUMENTARIAN TURNS CAMERA ON HIMSELF

WHEN I WALK, an official selection of Sundance 2013, is a feature-length, point-of-view documentary about young filmmaker Jason DaSilva's battle with multiple sclerosis. Through his cinematic talents and magnetic personality, DaSilva attempts to shed light not only on his struggles with the disease, but its impact on his creative process in this rousing example of storytelling at its most direct, personal and effective. (Sponsored by KQED)

CAAMFEST GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES ITS SPONSORS

CAAMFest is supported in part by the following: Comcast, Asian Art Museum, B'stro, Pacific Islanders in Communications, Eagle Press, FilmFest, Gala Festival Engine, Southwest Airlines, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, San Francisco Grants for the Arts/Hotel Tax Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, San Francisco Foundation and Cal Humanities. CAAM is supported with major funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

GENERAL FESTIVAL INFORMATION

CAAMFest is a presentation of the Center for Asian American Media. CAAMFest, formerly the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), is a celebration of film, music, food and digital media from the world's most innovative Asian and Asian American artists. CAAMFest takes place March 14-24, 2013 in the Bay Area. San Francisco venues include: Castro Theatre, 429 Castro Street; Sundance Kabuki Cinemas, 1881 Post Street; New People Cinema, 1746 Post Street; Great Star Theater,

636 Jackson Street; Asian Art Museum, 200 Larkin Street; Hotel Kabuki, 1625 Post Street; Rickshaw Stop, 155 Fell Street; Slate Bar, 2925 16th Street; and Superfrog Gallery at New People, 1746 Post Street. Berkeley venues include: Pacific Film Archive Theater, 2575 Bancroft Way. Oakland venues include: Oakland Museum of California, 1000 Oak Street.

FESTIVAL TICKET INFORMATION

Excluding special events, panels, galas and special screenings, advanced general admission tickets are \$12. Students, seniors (65+) and disabled adults are \$11 (Limit 1 per program with ID only). Tickets for Center for Asian American Media members are \$10 (Limit 2 per program per ID). There is a \$1.50 service charge for all tickets purchased online. Tickets go on sale to CAAM members only on Wednesday, February 13, 2013 (online only) and open to the general public beginning Sunday, February 17, 2013 (online only). Tickets can be purchased in person at our CAAMFest box office at Sundance Kabuki Cinemas starting Thursday, February 28, 2013.

About CAAM:

CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) is a non-profit organization dedicated to presenting stories that convey the richness and diversity of Asian American experiences to the broadest audience possible. CAAM does this by funding, producing, distributing and exhibiting works in film, television and digital media. For more information on CAAM, please visit www.caamedia.org.

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