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AUSTIN NONPROFIT INDIE MEME ANNOUNCES DATES AND LINEUP OF OVER 30 INTERNATIONAL FILMS FOR THEIR ANNUAL SOUTH ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL, APRIL 17-21

Showcasing the best of South Asian cinema, the ninth annual Indie Meme Film Festival features a vibrant lineup of compelling films from over 13 South Asian countries amplifying female filmmakers, and storytellers highlighting an array of global human interest stories; headlining the event is Adil Hussain of Ang Lee's Oscar-winning "Life of Pi"

(AUSTIN, TEXAS – March 20, 2024; source: Juice Consulting) – Austin-based nonprofit **Indie Meme**, founded by two passionate women, is proud to announce the official dates and lineup for their ninth annual **Indie Meme Film Festival (IMFF)**, taking place **April 17 - 21** at the **Austin Film Society Cinema** (located at **6259 Middle Fiskville Rd, Austin, TX 78752**). Following closely on the heels of SXSW, Indie Meme is bringing an international film festival to Austin with **more than 30 international films** from **over 13 countries** spanning more than **17 languages**, solidifying Austin's reputation as a hub for cultural exchange and a true film capital. With a deep commitment to promoting Texas filmmakers sharing South Asian stories, IMFF will include a **Local Shorts Showcase** featuring conversations with several regional storytellers in their programming. Additionally, the festival's roster includes several international premieres, an array of international shorts and a lineup of award-winning feature films, the majority of which are created by female and global filmmakers, that bring socially relevant cinema from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar and more to the United States. IMFF 2024 lineup will explore currently relevant themes such as women's rights, immigration, childhood trauma, and family dynamics, as well as other human interest stories centered around consumerism, environmentalism and global issues.

In addition to Indie Meme's incredible roster of films, guests can also expect a variety of elegant parties and social gatherings between screenings and captivating conversations with visiting acclaimed South Asian directors, producers and talent in attendance, including **Adil Hussain**, an award-winning and critically acclaimed film, TV and theater actor who has appeared in over 80 films, most notably **Ang**

Lee's "Life of Pi." Other notable films and theater productions he has been featured in include Subhashish Bhutiani's "**Hotel Salvation/Mukti Bhavan**," Iram Haq's "**What Will People Say**," Prakash Jha's "**Pareeksha**," Gautam Ghosh's "**The Wayfarer**," Danis Tanovic's "**Tigers**," Mira Nair's "**The Reluctant Fundamentalist**," Pan Nalin's "**Angry Indian Goddesses**," Partho Sen-Gupta's "**Sunrise**," Italo Spinelli's "**Gangor**," Prashant Nair's "**Umrika**," Leena Yadav's "**Parched**," Bauddhayan Mukherji's "**The Violin Player**" and "**Othello- A Play in Black and White**," directed by Roysten Abel. Hussain has also been featured in television shows such as the well-known BBC World Service Trust television series "**Jasoos Vijay**," "**Star Trek**" and the Netflix series "**Delhi Crime**." For more on Adil Hussain's impressive and versatile career, please see [here](#).

Tickets for this year's Indie Meme Film Festival are now available and can be purchased [here](#). There will be a special **red carpet event** on **Friday, April 19**, at **5 p.m.** Media who are interested in covering the festival or Red Carpet event can RSVP [here](#). For more information on IMFF and the festival lineup, please see below and their website [here](#).

"Indie Meme is a labor of love for everyone involved!" said **Alka Bhanot**, IMFF Director and Co-founder. "I am truly proud of how the festival has maintained a soul and grown into a five-day celebration of art & culture through film. Our programming is bold, pushing boundaries and showcasing some of the most amazing films and stories from South Asia."

Kicking off the festival on **Wednesday, April 17** is "**Sultana's Dream**," a surreal, animated feature about a woman's search for Ladyland, the Utopian land of women. **Thursday's** spotlight shines on the **International premiere** of "**Mithya**," a sincere tale focused on a young boy's grief after losing both of his parents. **Friday's opening night film**, "**Footprints on Water**," a dramatic thriller delving into immigration and family narratives, will also include a **Q&A** after the screening with director **Nathalia Syam** and lead actor **Adil Hussain**. Other films of note in this year's lineup include "**Sthal (A Match)**" directed by **Jayant Digambar Somalkar**, which examines the practice of arranged marriage and women's rights, and "**Vasudhavia Kutumbakam (The World is Family)**," by trailblazing filmmaker **Anand Patwardhan** who will be in attendance at the screening. "**Against the Tide**" is another not-to-be-missed film, documenting two indigenous fishermen striving against a cruel sea and climate change, that has won multiple awards at various film festivals such as **Sundance, Asian Pacific Awards, Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival, Seattle International Film Festival** and **Sydney Film Festival**. The final **closing night film** of this year's incredible lineup is "**Girls Will Be Girls**," another **Sundance** award-winning film, centered around a young woman's experience through a coming-of-age story shared with her mother. There will be a **Q&A** with director and writer **Shuchi Talati** following the screening.

Additionally, several films in this year's festival lineup are premiering for the first time in the United States and internationally. On **Wednesday, April 17**, Indie Meme will present their **Local Shorts Showcase** starting at **6:15 p.m.** where both "**So, That Happened**" will premiere internationally alongside the North American premiere of "**The Road Not Taken**." On **Saturday, April 20**, "**Ullarivu**," "**Vakuppu (The Clause)**," "**Helena**," "**Something Like an Autobiography**," and "**Next, Please**" will all be premiering for the first time in North America. Then on **Sunday, April 21**, "**Bahadur - The Brave**" will be having its **North American premiere**. See below for further details and times for each of these films.

Wednesday, April 17:

LOCAL SHORTS SHOWCASE:

6:15 - 7:15 p.m.

“So, That Happened” by Neha Aziz

Themes: Personal Choice, Modern Day Relationships

Country of Origin: USA

Language: English & Urdu

Live Q&A to follow with Neha Aziz

“The Road Not Taken” by Sarthwik Bollu

Themes: Work-Life Balance, Career vs Aspiration, Following Your Dreams

Country of Origin: India

Language: Telugu

Live Q&A to follow with Sarthwik Bollu

“Sultana’s Dream” by Isabel Herguera

7:15 - 8:56 p.m.

Themes: Women’s Rights, Surrealism

Countries of Origin: Spain, India & Germany

Language: Basque, Spanish, English, Italian, Hindi, Bengali

Recorded Q&A to follow with Isabel Herguera

Thursday, April 18:

DEBUT FILMMAKER SHOWCASE:

“Shivamma” by Jaishankar Aryar

11:30 a.m. - 1:43 p.m.

Themes: Capitalism, Consumerism

Country of Origin: India

Language: Kannada

Recorded Q&A to follow with Jaishankar Aryar

“Amar Colony” by Siddharth Chauhan

2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Themes: Woman’s Experience, Motherhood, Humanity

Country of Origin: India

Language: Hindi

Recorded Q&A to follow with Siddharth Chauhan

“In Flames” by Zarrar Kahn

3:45 - 5:38 p.m.

Themes: Psychological Horror, Patriarchy and Women's Property Rights

Country of Origin: Pakistan & Canada

Language: Urdu

Recorded Q&A to follow with Zarrar Kahn

“Ullarivu” by Sumi Mathai

6:15 - 6:45 p.m.

Themes: Coming of Age, Loss of Innocence and Gender Inequality, Gender Roles and Conformity

Country of Origin: India

Language: Malayalam

Short film paired with “Mithya”

“Mithya” by Sumanth Bhat

6:45 - 8:53 p.m.

Themes: Child Psychology, Grief, Coming of Age, Family & Friendship

Country of Origin: India

Language: Kannada, Marathi

Virtual Live Q&A to follow with Sumanth Bhat

Friday, April 19:

“Footprints on Water” by Nathalia Syam

6:15 - 8:46 p.m.

Themes: Illegal Immigration, Human trafficking, Organ Trafficking, Exploitation

Country of Origin: United Kingdom

Language: English

Opening Night Film; Live Q&A to follow with Nathalia Syam and lead actor Adil Hussain

Saturday, April 20:

SHORT FILM BLOCK:

10:30 - 12:29 a.m.

“This is TMI” by Subarna Das & Vidushi Gupta

Themes: Animation, Breaking Taboos, Normalizing the Female Body

Country of Origin: India

Language: English, Hindi

Live Q&A to follow with Vidushi Gupta

“Phar Yar Sin (The Altar)” by Moe Myat May Zarchi

Themes: Buddhism, Poetic, Anti-Establishment
Country of Origin: Myanmar
Language: Burmese

“Vakuppu (The Clause)” by **R Jayaraj.**
Themes: Abuse of Power, Police Brutality
Country of Origin: India
Language: Malayalam

“Kamathipura” by **Aayushman Pandey**
Themes: Myth, Sex Workers
Country of Origin: India
Language: Hindi

“Places I’ve Called My Own” by **Sushma Khadepaun**
Themes: LGBTQIA+ Experience, Family Dynamics
Country of Origin: France, India
Language: Hindi

Live Q&A to follow with Sushma Khadepaun

“Helena” by **Ayarush Paudel**
12:45 - 1:10 p.m.
Themes: Migrant Workers, Urban Poverty
Country of Origin: Nepal, United Arab Emirates
Language: English, Hindi, Nepali
Short film paired with “Something Like an Autobiography”

“Something Like an Autobiography” by **Mostofa Sarwar Farooki**
1:15 - 2:53 p.m.
Themes: Corruption, Wealth, Abuse of power, Reproduction
Country of Origin: Bangladesh
Language: Bengali

Recorded Q&A to follow with Mostofa Sarwar Farooki

“Vasudhavia Kutumbakam (The World is Family)” by **Anand Patwardhan**
3:30 - 5:51 p.m.
Themes: Freedom of Speech, Politics, Old Age and Elder Care
Country of Origin: India
Language: Marathi, English, Hindi

Live Q&A to follow with Anand Patwardhan

“Next, Please” by **Rishav Kapoor**
6:15 - 6:40 p.m.

Themes: Futuristic Dating, Virtual Reality, Sci-Fi
Country of Origin: India
Language: Hindi, English

Short film paired with “Sthal (A Match)”

“Sthal (A Match)” by Jayant Digambar Somalkar

6:45 - 8:44 p.m.

Themes: Arranged Marriage, Women’s Rights, Education, Farming, Colorism
Country of Origin: India
Language: Marathi

Virtual Q&A to follow with Jayant Digambar Somalkar

“Ayeh Haye Zamini (Terrestrial Verses)” by Ali Asgari and Alireza Khatami

9:00 - 10:47 PM

Themes: Government Control, Slice of life
Country of Origin: Iran
Language: Farsi

Recorded Q&A to follow with Ali Asgari

Sunday, April 21:

“Bahadur - The Brave” by Diwa Shah

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Themes: Migrant Workers, COVID, Immigration, Community
Country of Origin: India
Language: Nepali, Kumaoni, Hindi

Virtual Q&A to follow with Diwa Shah

“Against The Tide” by Sarvnik Kaur

12:45 - 3:06 p.m.

Themes: Tradition vs. Modernization, Environmentalism, Overfishing
Country of Origin: India
Language: Koli, Marathi, Hindi

Virtual Q&A to follow with Sarvnik Kaur

“Shera” by Arun Fulara

3:30 - 4:04 p.m.

Themes: Children, Wildlife
Country of Origin: India
Language: Kumaoni

Short film paired with “Pushtaini/Ancestral”

“Pushtaini (Ancestral)” by Vinod Rawat

4:00 - 5:38 p.m.

Themes: Childhood Trauma, Child Abuse, Film Industry, Family

Country of Origin: India

Language: Hindi, Kumaoni, English

Live Q&A to follow with Vinod Rawat

“Girls Will Be Girls” by Shuchi Talati

6:15 - 8:37 p.m.

Themes: Mother-Daughter relationships, Coming of Age

Country of Origin: India

Language: Hindi, English

Closing night film; Live Q&A to follow with Shuchi Talati

ABOUT INDIE MEME:

Indie Meme was established in 2013 when co-founders **Alka Bhanot** and **Tripti Bhatnagar** couldn't find a supporting festival for South Asian filmmakers in Austin. Alka comes from a background of extensive work producing shows and films like India's first late-night show, “**Movers & Shakers**,” winner of Best Narrative Feature at **The Atlanta Film Festival**, “**Dear Pillow**” (2003), and “**Sunshine**” (2009) which went on to air on **PBS's Independent Lens series**. Tripti also comes from an exceptional background in research, business and marketing for films like **Lone Star Emmy** award-winner “**A Fair to Remember**” (2008), and **Cine Golden Globe** winner “**Louie, Louie: A Portrait in Parkinson's**” (2005). The organization began hosting screenings of South Asian films throughout the year and eventually grew to present their first **Indie Meme Film Festival (IMFF)** in 2016. IMFF has since grown to include the most incredible talent working in South Asian cinema, with virtual and live Q&A with filmmakers and actors from all over India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Iran, and more. This project is supported in part by the **City of Austin Economic Development Department**, **Texas Commission on the Arts**, and **Humanities Texas**, the state affiliate of the **National Endowment for the Humanities**. For more information about Indie Meme and their mission to share the best of South Asian Film with the United States, see their website [here](#).

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