

CINEQUEST™

create, innovate, empower

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Gabrielle Whelan
E-mail: publicity@cinequest.org

CINEQUEST FILM & CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2019 INDIAN CINEMA CELEBRATION

When it comes to the sheer volume of productions, India boasts the world's largest film industry. Accordingly, most people think of Bollywood films—bursting with lively dance sequences—when they hear the words “Indian cinema.” In recent years, however, a wealth of Indian cinema across all genres and styles—which offer a window into India's culture, history, and modern relationships—have also begun to make a global splash. The 2019 Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival will prominently feature five such works showcasing the talents of India's rising stars behind and in front of the camera. Cinequest's opening night film, *Manto*, directed by Indian filmmaker Nandita Das, explores a significant turning point in the nation's history, and is one of the highlights of the 2019 festival. Following the screening, Ms. Das will be presented with Cinequest's highest honor, the Maverick Spirit Award, for her undeniable personal and artistic achievements. The Indian cinema lineup also includes provocative dramas surrounding unlikely friendships and action-packed thrillers starring Dev Patel. Screening and events will occur throughout the March 5th to 17th festival in San Jose and Redwood City, California.

Feature Films

***Manto* | India | Drama**

Directed and Written by Nandita Das; Starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui

Cinequest opens in high fashion as the glorious Nandita Das presents her sweeping biopic, *Manto*—a moving and gorgeously crafted look at the work and life of India's beloved—and controversial—writer, Saadat Hasan Manto. At the dawn of India's independence, an air of optimism sweeps the country. Yet the euphoria flees when the country faces turmoil, violence, and fear of their quickly-changing world. A horrified Manto bears witness to the upheaval in his homeland and channels his emotions into writing—a transformation of that inner turmoil. Unbelievably, he finds himself on trial for obscenity—a trial wherein the very definition of art and artistic responsibility is challenged. Starring the captivating Nawazuddin Siddiqui (*The Lunchbox*) as Manto, the film immerses us in the life and times of one of the world's most important and uncompromising writers.

***Widow of Silence* | India | Drama | U.S. Premiere**

Directed by Praveen Morchhale

Seven years ago, in the middle of the night, Aasiya's husband was picked up by army officers. Ever since, she has led an incomplete life. Living life as a half-widow, she wants closure more than anything. In her attempts to obtain his death certificate from the government, she faces multiple challenges. Through her quiet strength, she carries her family, but she can't keep juggling between her past and the present.

***Hotel Mumbai* | India | Thriller**

Directed by Anthony Maras; Starring Armie Hammer, Dev Patel, Nazanin Boniadi, Jason Isaacs

USA has 9/11. India has 26/11: The 26th of November 2008. The day that changed everything—when enemies attacked and attempted to break everything held dear. Everything *except* the spirit of the city. Heinous crimes perpetrated by a few monsters could not break the city's undying soul. Instead, it came back with a vengeance. Its resilience was never in question, but the way the city responded to the terrorist attack, and occupation of the landmark Taj Hotel for four days, was a heroic showcase of its courage, strength, and unity.

Indian Luminaries

***Lucky Fifty* | USA | Drama | World Premiere**

Directed by Pari Mathur; Starring Jaya Prasad

Two struggling young actors, Jay and Monica, are brought together by happenstance, and after finding \$50 on the street, they spend a day together loving life and forgetting their troubles. They share simpatico, yet the next day they discover how far apart their current lives actually are.

***The Wedding Guest* | Pakistan | Thriller**

Directed by Michael Winterbottom; Starring Dev Patel

A wedding is supposed to be the happiest day of a girl's life. This one turns out to be a nightmare, however, when a Brit, played by Academy Award-nominee Dev Patel (*Slumdog Millionaire*), travels to Pakistan for a wedding and kidnaps the bride-to-be. This kickstarts a thrilling series of pursuits. With the situation spiraling out of control, the captor and the hostage must seek cover across borders, moving through the underbelly and back alleys of the Indian subcontinent.

Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival 2019 occurs March 5 – March 17, 2019 in San Jose and Redwood City (Silicon Valley).

Complete lineup, passes, and tickets at www.cinequest.org

About Cinequest

The story and legacy of Cinequest is bringing together the Silicon Valley's technologies and

spirit of innovation with the arts to empower great creations—and connecting audiences, youth, artists, and innovators with these creations and with each other, improving our lives and our future. Cinequest’s uniqueness and impact result from being ahead of the curve in the powerful integration of creativity and innovation. Cinequest does this through the Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival ([Voted Best Film Festival by USA Today Readers](#)) and [Picture The Possibilities](#) by Cinequest.

Cinequest 2019 Partners:

Applied Materials (NYSE: AMAT), HP (NYSE: HPQ), Kaiser Permanente, ZOOM, Bank of America (NYSE: BAC), Harmonic (NYSE: HLIT), Canon (NYSE: CAJ), IMDb an Amazon Company (AMZN), Seagate (NYSE: STX), Panasonic (OTCMKTS:PCRFY), Tito’s Handmade Vodka, Google (NYSE: GOOG), Red Digital Cinema, Samsung, Hint Water, Kaleidescape, Comerica Incorporated (NYSE: CMA), Agile Ticketing Solutions, NBC Bay Area, Metro, KQED, SF Media Co., Telemundo, Cinemark (NYSE: CNK), Fairmont San Jose, Marriott San Jose (NYSE: MAR), Hotel De Anza, Barco, VTA, Caltrain, SamTrans, Eddie Lira, SV Creates, San Jose Downtown Association, Team San Jose, and the City of San Jose.

www.cinequest.org

###