

INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF MELBOURNE ANNOUNCES SPECIAL GUESTS & MASTERCLASSES IFFM AWARDS NOMINEES REVEALED

IFFM SPECIAL GUESTS

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne is delighted to announce a number of India's leading actors, directors, producers, designers and critics from the world's biggest film industry as special guests in 2015. The stellar list features:

SPECIAL GUESTS



ANIL KAPOOR

With a career spanning over 30 years, Anil Kapoor has established himself as one of India's pre-eminent actors, appearing in iconic Bollywood films including *Tezaab*, *Woh Saat Din*, *Mr. India*, *Virasat* and *Loafer* before making his Hollywood debut as the quiz show host in the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*, as well as producing films such as *Aisha* and the critically acclaimed *Gandhi My Father*.

Anil Kapoor introduces his latest film, *Dil Dhadakne Do (Let The Heart Beat)* on Sunday August 16 at 8pm.



SHONALI BOSE

Winner of the FIPRESCI Critics Award and a National Film Award, Shonali Bose's latest film *Margarita, With a Straw* won the Best Script award at Sundance's Writer's lab and premiered at Toronto. Since graduating from UCLA, filmmaker Shonali Bose has seen her work screened at festivals around the world, from her first short narrative films *The Gendarme Is Here* and *Undocumented* to the feature-length doco *Lifting the Veil* and her debut dramatic feature, *Amu*.

Shonali Bose appears at a Q&A on August 20 following the screening of her latest film *Margarita, with a Straw* on August 20 at 8pm.



NAGESH KUKUNOOR

A director, producer, screenwriter and actor, Nagesh Kukunoor has earned worldwide acclaim and is one of India's first independent directors, who quit his lucrative career as a chemical engineer in the US to return home and make films. His debut feature *Hyderabad Blues* (1998) won worldwide acclaim and since then his films, including *3 Deewarein* (2003), *Iqbal* (2005) *Lakshmi* (2013) and this year's *Dhanak* have won international festival and Filmfare awards and critical acclaim for tackling India's social issues.

Nagesh Kukunoor appears at a Masterclass, 'Confessions of an Indie Auteur,' on August 23 and will do a Q&A following the screening of *Dhanak* on Saturday August 22nd at 730pm.



SONAM KAPOOR

Indian superstar Sonam Kapoor is renowned for her celebrated sense of style and outspoken humour. Her strong choice of roles is helping her redefine how Indian women are portrayed on screen. She won critical acclaim for her debut performance in 2007's *Saawariya* and has since starred in *Raanjhaana*, *Bhaag Milka Bhaag* and recent blockbuster *Khoobsurat*. She was GQ Woman of the Year and Vogue's Beauty of the Year in 2013.

Sonam Kapoor appears at a Q&A on August 16 following the screening of her latest film *Khoobsurat*.



KIKU SHARDA

One of India's most successful and popular TV comedians and drag performers, Kiku Sharda is the star of multiple hit shows thanks to his iconic characters and catch-phrases. But how do you sustain a career in comedy in a country where you face competition from over 1.25 billion people, whole swathes of whom you could offend by saying the wrong thing about their culture and religion? Here's your chance to find out from the man who's doing it, Kiku Sharda.

Kiku Sharda appears at a Masterclass on Comedy on August 17, 8pm at Hoyts Melbourne Central.



Rajkumar Hirani

Arguably India's most successful contemporary director, Hirani started his journey as a writer and working in advertising, before going on to create a string of influential hits. His skill at tackling weighty subjects with a populist touch has been demonstrated with *Lage Raho Munnabhai* which revived the values of 'Gandhism' *P.K.*, a political satire about 'God and business of God' which has broken box office records across the world.

Rajkumar Hirani appears at a Q&A following the screening of PK on August 18 at 630pm.

Other guests include Indian National Award 2015 winning director of *Chotoskhone*, **Srijit Mukherji (Q&A Sat Aug 2)**; acclaimed Kannada filmmaker **B. S. Lingadevaru (Q&A Sunday Aug 2)**; Bollywood heartthrob **Imran Khan**; multi-award winning actress **Kangana Ranaut**; screenwriter, playwright and Professor of Creative Writing **Abhijat Joshi** one of the most successful and acclaimed screenwriters in Bollywood (*3 Idiots*, *Nanban* and recent blockbuster *PK*); Indian screen legend **Simi Garewal**, known as the Oprah Winfrey of India; popular film critic and CNN-IBN reporter **Rajeev Masand**; Indian producer, screenwriter and director, **Nikhil Advani**, serving on the IFFM Awards Jury; and commercial hit director **Vinnil Markan**. On the occasion of the IFFM Awards fashion show, the festival is honoured to also welcome two of India's leading fashion designers, **Anamika Khanna** and **Gaurav Gupta**.

IFFM AWARDS SHORTLIST

IFFM is delighted to announce the nominees for the **Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) Awards**, the first Indian cinema awards in Australia. The winners will be announced at a red carpet gala event on 15 August in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria.

Dominating the nominations, with three selections each, are *Piku* (2015), a quirky comedy about a father-daughter relationship starring Deepika Padukone and Amitabh Bachchan; *Haider* (2014), a modern-day adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; and *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (2015), a comedy about an unlikely romance. The full list of nominees is available online via <http://www.iffm.com.au/nominees.html>

The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM), the southern hemisphere's greatest annual celebration of Indian cinema, takes places from 14-27 August. The Festival opens with a gala Australian premiere of *Umrika*, winner Sundance Film Festival Audience Award, World Cinema Dramatic Audience Award, on Friday 14 August.

IFFM dates • Friday 14 August – Thursday 27 August
IFFM Opening Night • Friday 14 August @ Hoyts Melbourne Central
IFFM Awards Night • Saturday 15 August @ National Gallery of Victoria

Tickets for all films are now onsale at http://www.hoyts.com.au/movies/events/indian_film_festival.aspx

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