

Sikh Heritage Week in NY presents Film Festival

Posted: Saturday, October 11, 2008, 08:40 am EST

New York: David Paterson, NY Governor, declared October 3-10 as "Sikh Heritage Week" to coincide with the Sikh Art & Film Foundation's 'Sikh Heritage Gala and Annual Film Festival'.

The highlight of the event was the Film Festival on October 4, attended by over 350, that screened 'Ocean of Pearls'.

Audience members came all the way from California, Canada, Indiana, and Georgia to view this story of a young Sikh doctor struggling with the inequities of the American Health System and ultimately his own identity. It speaks to the universal challenge of how so many people (not just Sikhs) have to balance romance, family, ethics and spirituality in today's complex world.

This year, the Foundation presented a total of \$15,000 in prize money to films that won in their respective genres. The audience voted Ekta Walia's 'Sikh, Rattle and Roll' (UK) the Best Children's Film with a prize of \$2,500.

Well-known media personalities like Aseem Chhabra, Carol Anne Riddell, Sabrina Dhawan and Navi Rawat judged 'Kabaddi Cops' (Canada) the best Short Film with a prize of \$3,500.

Greg Cote, Director of 'Kabaddi Cops' said "The Annual Sikh Film Festival in New York City is among the finest events I have ever attended - period. Although many of the participants, me included are relatively unknown, independent directors and producers, the organizers and audiences made us feel like Martin Scorsese himself. A well attended and organized event the likes of which one rarely sees at film festivals."

A distinguished panel of judges Daljit Dhaliwal, Vicki Mabrey, Sarab Singh Neelam and Katheryn Winnick selected 'Tami Yeage'r and Preetmohan Singh's 'A Dream in Doubt' (USA) the Best Documentary with a grand prize of \$6,000.

Peetmohan said "Our film, A Dream in Doubt, has been in many festivals, and this weekend was absolutely splendid – from the gala to the film festival and the after-party entertainment. The audience for our film was engaging, and the venues at the Asia Society and Cipriani were second to none. We cannot thank the Sikh Art and Film Foundation enough for organizing such a phenomenal weekend."

The Annual Sikh Film Festival 2008 – NYC, presented a thought-provoking lineup of films covering topics such as the, Post 9/11 Racial Profiling & Hate Crimes, 1984 Sikh Genocide, a contemporary look at the 1947 partition of India, and the proud traditions of the Sikhs in America for over 100 years. The Festival was a grand testimonial of the prominence of the Sikh-American community and their integration within mainstream US culture.

On Oct 3, the Sikh Heritage Awards Gala was held at the luxurious Cipriani Wall Street, attended by over 500 guests which included Chief Guest H.E. General (Ret.) JJ Singh – Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, India, special guest Honorable Thomas P. DiNapoli – Comptroller of New York State, various Assembly Members, Donald and Shelly Rubin, and ex-baseball star Darrell Strawberry.

(Compiled from a press release)

Copyright © 2007-2008 TheIndianStar.com. Republication or redissemination of contents of this screen are expressly prohibited without the written consent of TheIndianStar.com