

THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF REEL ASIAN BOOKENDED BY HONG KONG'S SOUL MATE AND INDIA'S SAIRAT

Festival runs November 8 to November 19, 2016

Public tickets on sale on October 11 at www.reelasian.com

(TORONTO – September 29, 2016) **The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian)**, Canada's Premier Pan-Asian Festival, announced today the Opening and Closing Night Galas for its platinum anniversary year. The festival will open with Derek Tsang's poignant and poetic romantic drama **SOUL MATE** and will close with the Canadian Premiere of India's smash hit **SAIRAT** from Nagraj Manjule. The Reel Asian Film Festival takes place **November 8 to November 19, 2016**.

"It is serendipitous that we are celebrating our 20th anniversary with opening and closing night films from two returning filmmakers who have contributed to the strength and quality of the festival over the years," said Louanne Chan, Executive Director of Reel Asian. "Our audiences can expect more films as exciting as **SOUL MATE** and **SAIRAT** when we unveil our full line up in the next coming weeks."

Toronto Opening Night Gala (Nov 8)

SOUL MATE – Toronto Premiere

Director: Derek Tsang Kwok Cheung (Hong Kong)

Director Derek Tsang returns to the Opening Night Gala spot at Reel Asian since debuting his first feature film **LOVER'S DISCOURSE** in 2011. With his new film **SOUL MATE**, Tsang chronicles the story of model student Qiyue and free-spirited Ansheng who are the best of friends, forming their inseparable bond from the moment they met as children. Their loyalties are put to the test when a boy and the cruelties of youth lead them to embark on separate paths until one day, a web novella based on their lives surfaces uncovering a deep secret. Produced by notable Hong Kong filmmaker Peter Chan, **SOUL MATE** is a poignant, poetic look at the intimacy of female friendship.

Derek Tsang is expected to be in attendance for a special Q&A.



Click on the image to watch the trailer.

Toronto Closing Night Gala (Nov 18)

SAIRAT – Canadian Premiere

Director: Nagraj Manjule (India)

The last time Nagraj Manjule was at Reel Asian, he took home the National Bank Best First Feature Award in 2014 for his debut film FANDRY. Much like FANDRY, Manjule masterfully molds non-actors into stars who carry his new film, SAIRAT. The film follows fun loving Parshya who is beloved by his neighbourhood cricket team and has a crush on Archi, the daughter of a wealthy, upper caste politician. Their star-crossed love is put to the test when Archi's father discovers their relationship and drives the young couple to flee to the city. The highest-grossing Marathi film in India, the film features singing, dancing and a soundtrack composed by Indian musical duo Ajay-Atul.

Nagraj Manjule is expected to be in attendance for a special Q&A.



Click on the image to watch the trailer.

Reel Asian celebrates 20 years of showcasing the best in contemporary Asian cinema, providing a public forum for Asian media artists and inciting the growing appreciation for Asian cinema in Canada. **Tickets go on sale starting October 11 on reelasian.com.**

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of Presenting Sponsor National Bank, and government funders the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, a program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ontario Media Development Corporation, Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council.

About Reel Asian

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, is a unique showcase of contemporary Asian cinema and work from the Asian diaspora. As Canada's largest Asian film festival, Reel Asian® provides a public forum for Asian media artists and their work, and fuels the growing appreciation for Asian cinema in Canada. The 20th annual film festival runs in November 2016 in Toronto and Richmond Hill. Reel Asian will be showcasing special projects featuring prominent artists, musicians, up-and-coming filmmakers and also includes an Industry Series for creative minds to connect. Works presented at Reel Asian include films and videos by East, South and Southeast Asian artists in Canada, the U.S., Asia and all over the world.

This year's festival programming to be announced at Reel Asian's launch event in October 2016.

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