

COMMUNITY NEWS IN BRIEF



FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU
High: 74 Low: 59	High: 65 Low: 61	High: 66 Low: 46	High: 59 Low: 44	High: 63 Low: 52	High: 70 Low: 54	High: 71 Low: 57

Nitin Mukesh regales New Jersey audience with timeless classics



Jane kahagayewo din.... brought tears in eyes on Nitinji, by rememberig Legendary Singer Late Mukeshji with local sponsors on stage in NJ (Picture by Vijay Shah)

BY A STAFF WRITER
A command performance by playback singer and illustrious son of a legendary father, Nitin Mukesh had a capacity crowd in raptures for over four and half hours on Friday, May 3, at North Brunswick Highschool, New Jersey. Titled 'Remembering Mukesh' by Nitin Mukesh brought audience in memories of sixties & seventies of Black & white era of Hindi Cinema.

The concert was a tribute to the legendary Indian playback singer Mukesh. Nitin Mukesh is his son and an accomplished playback singer himself having sung several very popular numbers in different languages. He was accompanied by singers Manasi Paranjape and Namrata Seth.

Whether serenading the audience with Mera Joota Hai Japani or serenading his wife

with Chand Si Mehbooba ho Meri Jaan, he was in his elements as he belted out hit after hit with breathtaking assurance, poise and melody. His periodic forays into the audience during the performance gave the viewers a close glimpse of this remarkable artiste and his ability to connect with them, young or old. An era of his legendary father was touched upon as he sang Dil Jalta Hai to jalne de, Mukesh's very first song in the film industry and his later day hits from Kabhi Kabhi.

Mukesh's incredible association with India's great showman Raj Kapoor was paid tribute through some magnificent renditions of ageless hits like Jeenayahan, Jaane Kahaan Gaye who Din from Mera Naam Joker and the duet Oh Mere Sanam and Dost Dost Na Raha from Sangam. Manasi Paranjape excelled in both her solo numbers and duets



Manasi, Nitin Mukesh and Namrata at the closing ceremony of remembering Mukesh with Nitin Mukesh. Namrata Seth, Nitin's younger sister and the youngest sibling of the legendary Mukesh wooed the audience with her solos of Geeta Dutt.

At the forefront of Indian theatre today, Feroz Abbas Khan is recognized as much for exploring new forms, as for bringing theatre, mainstream recognition. He has directed some of India's finest acting talent, both from stage and cinema. He is most known for directing plays like Saalgirah, Tumhari Amrita, Salesman Ramlal and Gandhi Viruddh Gandhi.

BY BIDISHA ROY
This year 13th Annual New York Indian Film Festival had opening night red carpet premiere screening of Feroz Abbas Khan's Dekh Tamasha Dekh. Dekh Tamasha Dekh, his second film after Gandhi My Father, is a social and political satire, based on a true story. It revolves around the search for the religious identity of a poor man crushed under the weight of a politician's hoarding. Lyrically interwoven, it is a social and political satire that cuts deep to the heart of many contemporary concerns.

The former police commissioner of Mumbai, Mr. Satish Sawhney, narrated an anecdote to Feroz about an unusual communal situation he had to handle in one of his first jobs as a police officer: A dispute broke out about the religious identity of a horse cart plier who was electrocuted by live wires of an uprooted electricity transmission pole. While both families, poor and socially discriminated, reached an understanding, the religious bigots found an opportunity in the conflict to further their agenda of hatred and mayhem.

The revelation of his identity and unexpected religious rites left him stunned with the audacity and absurdity of identity politics and he decided to make the film. But Feroz strongly believes that communal politics will always test and challenge us but the

collective wisdom and electoral power of the underprivileged and discriminated people of India will defeat it.

Excerpts from a conversation with hi INDIA:

Do you think secularism does exist in a country like India where politicians use religion as a weapon to divide and rule?

Secularism is the foundation on which Indian democracy expresses itself. Without it, the idea of India collapses. Communal politics will always test and challenge us but the collective wisdom and electoral power of the underprivileged and discriminated people of India will defeat it.

As we see in your film, a minor issue can create a mayhem out of nothing. Don't you think other than politics the religious intolerance is also responsible for that?

Religious extremism breeds hatred and eventually it polarizes societies. There should be zero tolerance policy towards people and institutions preaching enmity. They must bear the entire weight of law and the state.

What do you think about the reactions of our religious 'gurus' - both Hindu and Muslim - when Dekh Tamasha would be shown in India as you did not spare either of them?

My film is a satire, it's funny. If they have a sense of humor they should laugh and reflect.

INDIAN CINEMA BINDS THE NATION IN ITS JOY, PAIN AND FANTASY:

FEROZ ABBAS KHAN



If they have any sense they should embrace it. However, the absurdity of religious extremism is such that fanatics on both ends find themselves on the same side against voices of reason and sanity.

What is the biggest achievement of Indian cinema as we are celebrating 100 years of it?

It has been the most powerful force that binds the nation in its joy, pain and fantasy. Of late we can see Indian film makers are making movies with bold subjects which one could not think of few years back. Would you credit the changed audience for that?

There is a transformational shift in our society. Films had to reflect our new realities

and it is doing that job wonderfully.

What is more challenging - directing a movie or a play?

Both are very different and equally challenging.

Theater gave us some of India's finest actors of all time. But their talents are often overshadowed by stardom. Your comment.

Theatre nurtures the talent that becomes great actors. Star is a gift of nature offered to celluloid that will always overshadow talent.

Festival surprises from midnight screening to jet lagged actor

The 13th edition of New York Indian Film Festival, which came to an end on May 4, was an astounding success like previous years. Other than film screenings, Q&A sessions and panel discussions, there were some special moments during the five day long extravaganza. A sneak peek. - By Bidisha Roy

Third Timer

After 2009 and 2011, Delhi boy Spandan Banerjee came to the festival with his movie To-Let. Undoubtedly Spandan was excited. But for him 2009 was very special since it had the premiere of 'Slumdog Millionaire'.



Mira's Regret

Mira Nair attended the opening night gala with her husband. She had a regret. She is so busy with the promotion of her film 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist' that she would not be able to watch her favorite Goutamda's (Goutam Ghose) movie 'Act Zero.' But she sorted it out. "I'll see it when I go to Kolkata." There would be a special screening for her, for sure!



Double Screening

Director Goutam Ghose, who attended the festival for the first time, was not too happy with the screening time of his film Shunyo Awanko (Act Zero) which was scheduled for Thursday, May 2 at 4 pm at the Tribeca cinema. He felt the timing would not draw enough crowd on a week day. So the organizers immediately arranged for a second screening of the Movie at 10 am on Saturday, May 4 for the director - the only Indian to win the coveted Vittorio Di Sica Award. But with Ghose's surprise, even the Thursday screening was housefull!



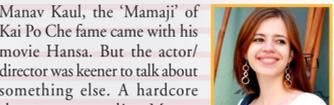
Midnight Horror

There was a midnight screening of a movie on Friday night. Odd timing? Not at all since it's the best time to watch a horror movie. Yes Suparn Verma's 'Aatma' got that special treatment. Suparn was more than happy to see so many spectators to attend the show for this super natural thriller that stars Nawazuddin Siddiqi and Bipasha Basu.



Romancing with Tagore

Manav Kaul, the 'Mamaji' of Kai Po Che fame came with his movie Hansa. But the actor/director was keener to talk about something else. A hardcore theater personality Manav revealed to hi INDIA that his next play is on Rabindranath Tagore and Victoria Ocampo which would be first staged in Shantiniketan. Titled 'Tomae Gaan Shonabo' (I'll sing for you - a line from a Tagore song) the play will have Kalki Koelchin as Ocampo. Who will play Tagore? Yet to find!



Surprise Guest

The festival had a surprise guest in Mohan Agashe at the inaugural red carpet on April 30. He came to the city that morning to catch a flight to Boston the next morning. Jet lag could not deter the veteran actor to attend the most prestigious Indian film festival in the US.

