

Film Harmonizes Eastern Mysticism & Quantum Physics

By **REENA RATHORE**
Special to **India-West**

PALO ALTO, Calif. — “The Wisdom Tree,” dubbed “a new kind of mystery film for an enlightened audience,” was screened Feb. 19 at the Aquarius Theatre here to a near capacity audience.

Written and directed by Sunil Shah and produced by Laura Techera and Renu Vora, it is a sci-fi mystery starring award-winning Indian American actress Sheetal Sheth.

At its core, “Wisdom Tree” is a film that combines proven as well as proposed theories from science and math, music, art and mysticism that suggest the universe is multi-dimensional while highlighting the oneness of all things.

The plot follows a quantum physicist Steve Hamilton (Patrick Alparone) who is working on a potentially groundbreaking theory but battles for his life after being injured in a mysterious car accident, neuroscientist Dr.



Writer/director Sunil Shah with producer Renu Vohra at the screening of the film “The Wisdom Tree” Feb. 19 at the Aquarius Theatre in Palo Alto, Calif. (Pradeep Das photo)

grew,” Shah told **India-West**.

“Around 2004 or 2005, I strongly felt that most of the people are not aware of this amazing discovery, these amazing parallels. Even if you don’t consider the parallels, the two are amazing subjects on their own. That’s where the idea came from to make a film.”

The first three years he spent taking notes, reading close to 150 books and 200 research papers from various universities and speaking to people on the subject.

“Simultaneously, I was building a plot and story to fit these things into. These are extremely difficult subjects to explain, even through fiction, I have tried my best to explain,” Shah said.

The title “comes from Bodhi Vraksh, the tree under which Buddha attained wisdom, enlightenment,” Shah explained.

“In the film, as part of its mystery, there is a tree. The movie is about wisdom, so you have information, knowledge and wisdom. These are the levels, and wisdom is supposedly the ultimate level. The film is how through different paths one can attain wisdom.”

“People who are already aware about these subjects are loving the film,” Shah said. “Having said that, many folks who have no idea about this have a lot of questions and they are digging in, reading books to know more, and it’s a beginning of a journey for them. Again, it is a two hour film, and I am not promising any magic here.”

“The Wisdom Tree” will screen March 13 at 6:45 p.m. at the Shattuck Cinemas in Berkeley, Calif.

‘Bhaag Milkha Bhaag’ Wins 9 IIFA Technical Awards



Farhan Akhtar and Rebecca Breeds in “Bhaag Milkha Bhaag.” The film took nine IIFA technical awards in categories such as cinematography and screenplay, it was announced Feb. 28.

By **LISA TSERING**
India-West Staff Reporter

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — The International Indian Film Academy announced the winners in the technical categories of the Tata Motors IIFA Awards Feb. 28, in advance of the mainstream IIFA Awards which will be presented in Tampa Bay, Fla., April 26.

Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra’s acclaimed biopic “Bhaag Milkha Bhaag” took the maximum number of wins — nine technical prizes in the categories of Best Cinematography (Binod Pradhan), Best Screenplay (Prasoon Joshi), Best Dialogue (Prasoon Joshi), Best Editing (P.S. Bharti), Best Sound Design (Nakul Kamte), Best Sound Mixing (Pranav Shukla), Best Background Score (Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy), Best Costume Design (Dolly Ahluwalia) and Best Makeup (Vikram Gaikwad).

The sci-fi spectacle “Krrish 3” came in second place with two

wins, for Best Action (Sham Kaushal & Tony Ching Siu Tung) and Best Special Effects – Visuals (Keitan Yadav and Haresh Hingorani of Red Chillies VFX).

Rohit Shetty’s comedy “Chennai Express” took Best Song Recording (Vinod Verma for “Lungi Dance”) and Best Sound Mixing (Anup Dev).

Bollywood will descend upon the resort destination of Tampa Bay, Fla., on “Videocon D2H IIFA Weekend” April 23-26, the first time the glitzy musical extravaganza will take place in the U.S. The show will be broadcast on Star Plus.

The IIFA voting process is a “stringent and methodical procedure that is closely monitored by KPMG, the official auditors of the event,” said a spokesperson. But the general public is also invited to participate by registering online and voting in some popular categories at iifa.com/globalvoting2014.

Trisha Rao (Sheetal Sheth) who doesn’t want to give up on her comatose patient, and FBI agent Mike Parker (Eric Holter) who is trying to resurrect his career.

The three are drawn together in a chain of events, and in their quest for the truth, they stumble upon clues and coincidences which further trigger a series of puzzling events, deepening the mystery. By the end, not only are their lives transformed and their beliefs challenged but they also unravel a potential danger to the entire human species.

The two-hour, ten minute drama is striking visual and is supported

by a musical score by Hindustani classical singer Shweta Jhaveri.

“The Wisdom Tree” was the only film invited to be screened at the 5th Science and Nonduality Conference last October in San Jose.

Writer/director Shah left a career in technology to venture into films.

“Around 20 years ago I read a book called ‘The Tao of Physics’ by a Berkeley nuclear scientist about the parallels between quantum physics and eastern mysticism, mainly Hinduism, Buddhism and Zen. After that, I kept reading up on the subject and the interest



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