



# Editor Shayar Bhansali Works his Magic on Sahir Sethhi's Film 'Zoya'

*Multi-award winning film editor Shayar Bhansali lends his skills to the film "Zoya" premiering at the Palm Springs International ShortFest Sunday, June 26.*

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, June 24, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Film editor Shayar Bhansali, who earned multiple awards last year for his work as the editor of "Against Night," recently wrapped production as the editor of Sahir Sethhi's multi-layered drama "Zoya."

Chosen as an Official Selection of the Palm Springs International ShortFest, "Zoya," will have its world premiere Sunday June 26 at 11 a.m. at the Camelot Theatre. "Zoya" has also been chosen as an Official Selection of the Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival.

The highly anticipated film "Zoya" starring acclaimed Bollywood actors Rajesh Tailang from the films "Siddarth," "Amal" and "The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel," and Manjot Singh from the films "Fukrey," "Pure Punjabi" and "Udaan," revolves around a dedicated zoologist who embarks on a tumultuous journey across the jungles of central India in search of a missing tiger.

Shot entirely on location at the Kanha Tiger Reserve in India, one of the major challenges for the filmmaking team was capturing the footage of the wildlife seen in the film in their natural habitat, which specifically affected Bhansali during post-production.

Bhansali explains, "Fortunately, Sahir and the cinematographer Eeshit Narain were able to capture many hours of footage with the animals, and the challenge for me was to find a way to weave this material in with the story in a natural way."

Aside from using his tried and true skills as an editor to decipher the best way to work the wildlife footage into the film's story, Bhansali had to weave together the scenes in a way that made it possible for the audience to grasp the larger, and somewhat philosophical, theme that "Zoya" brings to life.

He says, "A central idea that we wanted the audience to understand with this film was the metaphor for how the tiger represents the relationship with the protagonist and his estranged daughter – it was integral to the larger idea behind the film but something we wanted to highlight in a subtle way."

As a film editor, Shayar Bhansali has been sought out by film productions across the globe to use his unparalleled talents to turn their footage into powerful stories on screen.

Another one of his most recent projects, the documentary "Maruva" from director Monica Lek, which is currently in post-production and is expected to begin screening at film festivals internationally by the end of the year, sheds some much needed light on the true story of Maruva, a transgendered sex-worker in Istanbul, Turkey. Bhansali spent a great portion of last year editing the footage for the upcoming film, which was captured by Lek who closely followed Maruva's interesting, but often tragic life in Istanbul, over the course of four years.

Considering that Turkey's transgendered population often face brutal treatment, with many being beaten up and even murdered for their differing gender identities, "Maruva" was not only

a challenging film to make, but one that is incredibly important for audiences around the world to see.

Bhansali says, "Monica and I connected very early on, sharing a strong sense of belief that we wanted the film to be about Maruva as an individual, and hope that the audience learned about sexuality and gender within the larger context of Turkey through this character... We believed it was important to separate the politics from the humanity of the situation."

Bhansali, who is extremely passionate about the film's story, describes Maruva, the titular character in the documentary, as "a girl with an infectious sense of humor and an incredible appetite for survival."

As most of the film was shot in Turkish, Bhansali and director Monica Lek worked closely with translator Melodi Tuna to adapt more than 120 hours of footage into a coherent and engaging film that English speaking audiences could understand.

Bhansali has carved out a dazzling reputation for himself as a dynamic and diversely talented editor through his work on past films such as "Against Night," which earned a number of prestigious awards in 2015 and 2016, including the National Jury Award from the USA Film Festival, two awards from the Woodstock Film Festival and two more from the Long Island International Film Expo, Cusi Cram's "Wild and Precious," which earned the Honorable Mention Award from the Women's Independent Film Festival and the Best Narrative Short Award from the NYLA International Film Festival in 2014, and Mattson Tomlin's drama "Persuasion."

Despite his work on films like Stefan Kubicki's "Against Night" ushering him into the spotlight and garnering pivotal awards including the Festival Prize for Best Editing at the Kolkata International Film Festival and the LAIFF June Award for Best Editing at the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival Awards in 2015, Shayar Bhansali, who's originally from India, remains unequivocally humble.

"I'm always pleasantly surprised when audiences react positively towards my work. Editing is one of the harder elements of filmmaking to single out and this is part of why I like it - you're an integral part of the storytelling but hope that nothing you do draws too much attention to itself," admits Bhansali. "With the awards we received for 'Against Night,' I think I was lucky to work with such a talented team."

Aside from the upcoming releases of "Zoya" and "Maruva," Bhansali has been tapped as the editor of Mattson Tomlin's film "Rene," as well as Sethhi's upcoming feature film.

Director Sahirr Sethhi explains, "Shayar's filmic sensibility was in perfect sync with the emotional core of 'Zoya.' His cuts didn't just propel the story forward but also retained its subtextual intent. It's special when you find a collaborator you can vibe with and develop a trust in their creative instincts. We'll be working together on my next project, 'Pluto'."

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