

Toronto film fest has Deepa Mehta touch



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The 36th annual Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) will have a special celebration of **100 years of Indian Cinema** at a gala this September.

Fittingly, the event is being **curated by Indo-Canadian director Deepa Mehta**, a Toronto native, who has been associated with TIFF for several years .

In an interview, Mehta described the challenge in putting such an event together given the breadth and depth of Indian filmmaking spanning a century: “It was a tough thing to do, but finally I chose films that I feel were landmarks in the history of Indian cinema.” What will be on display will be a multimedia experience, as she said, “I used these films as a template for the evening. It will be a film/theatre/dinner/dance experience – move over, Vegas !”

The gala, in fact, is a fund-raiser for the festival, only the second such event at TIFF. The first, held last year, was based on James Bond, given that it was the 50th anniversary of that franchise.

Explaining the genesis of the project, Mehta said, “It was something that came to me while I was at a TIFF board meeting.” Given that Indian cinema was significant in the global film industry, that idea was well received, as Mehta pointed out, “It just seemed like the right decision. Evidently the board agreed with me, because not only did that become our theme but I was somehow roped into designing the thing.”

Though in recent years the international vision of Indian Cinema has often been related to Bollywood, Mehta wanted to move beyond that stereotype. Finally, she selected 19 films. These range from the first full-length Indian feature, Raja Harishchandra, made exactly a century ago, Andaz with Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar and Nargis to Guru Dutt’s Pyaasa.

Anirudh Bhattacharyya Hindustan Times
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The Toronto FilmFest is often seen as a significant marker for The Oscars, and Fest 2013 will be embellished by 146 world premieres including the latest films by renowned Directors Paul Haggis and Denis Villeneuve, within a total cinema-repertoire of 366 Feature /Short films from 70 nations.