

Evoke and celebrate the magic of cinema with 'MAYA MAHAL' An Enchanted Look at Hindi Cinema through the Priya Paul Collection

Kolkata, January 9, 2013: Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival 2013 ushered in a season of cultural verve in the City of Joy with its presentation, 'Maya Mahal - An Enchanted Look at Hindi Cinema through the Priya Paul Collection'. Inaugurated with a ceremonial ribbon cutting by Apeejay Surrendra Group Chairman Karan Paul, 'Maya Mahal' featuring Hindi film memorabilia, on view for the first time, commemorates the Golden Age of Indian cinema, revisits and relives the heroic eras of Hindi films. The presentation is a part of one of the key themes' of the fourth edition of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival - 'A Century of Indian Cinema'.

Shyam Benegal celebrated film director, Onir, film maker and gay rights activist; Sirish Rao, author, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, British journalist and author; Jai Arjun Singh, author and journalist; and Mira Hashmi, film critic and Professor of Film Studies from Pakistan were amongst the personalities who attended the event at The Park Kolkata. For them and the intellectually-driven audience of Kolkata, 'Maya Mahal' is special as it features some remarkable, exclusive and unconventional objet d'art of Film.

Ms. Paul, Director Apeejay Surrendra Group and Chairperson of Group Company Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels, is a renowned film aficionado and her collection has drawn wide appreciation. The curator of the exhibition Debashri Mukherjee also present on the occasion highlighted the intrinsic aspects of the collection and Ms Paul's bond with the subject. As the name suggests, commemorating the Golden Age of Indian cinema, 'Maya Mahal' revisits and relives the heroic eras of Hindi films. Covering multiple document types from posters and lobby cards to song booklets and magazine covers, the exhibition also tracks a history of changing film publicity art.

The three main sections of the exhibition - Fantasy, Action and Dance - distill the three main attractions of Indian cinema. Fantasy takes the audience back to earliest impulse of filmmakers, to experiment with the relationship between magic and the moving image. Special effects that could be achieved in-camera proved very popular from the very first decades of silent cinema and so there are tales of fairies, sorcerers, gods, monsters, and djinns recurring till at least the 1950s.

Action is an essential element of every good blockbuster. Starting with the stunt films of Fearless Nadia, the exhibition tracks different incarnations of the masked hunterwali figure till she morphs into the avenging daaku of the 1980s. The last section, on Dance, foregrounds the idea of the spectacular in Hindi cinema. Dance sequences have historically enabled elaborate displays of choreographed bodies, escapes into foreign lands, and desires for refashioning the self. The figure of the dancing seductress, be she tawa'if or apsara, mimics the enchantment of cinema itself.

This exhibition helps the viewer to rediscover some lost genres, themes, and actors of mainstream Hindi cinema as well as its B-movie circuits, and also preserve the cultural history of India and dying arts of film poster painting and designing.

About Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) 2013:

A Community initiative by the Apeejay Surrendra Group, the annual literary festival hosted since 2010 in Kolkata is the first international literary festival in Kolkata, a city celebrated for its intellectual depth and cultural heritage. An array of special curated discussions, performances and some of the finest literary events are scheduled for the fourth edition from 9th- 13th January, 2013. A noteworthy literary and cultural representation from across India and overseas will be seen at the Festival, amongst the finest minds from India and overseas. Prominent personalities attending will be Ramachandra Guha, William Dalrymple, Shyam Benegal, Pavan Varma, Yasmin Ali Bhai Brown, Amit Chaudhuri, Leila Seth, Manil Suri, Ruchir Joshi, Onir, Urvashi Butalia, Shobhaa De and Tishani Doshi and several others. Events are scheduled at significant cultural and heritage venues across Kolkata like National Library, St John's Church, banks of Hooghly, Lascar Monument, and at India's finest and most loved 92 year old iconic bookstore- Oxford Bookstore, Kolkata. Amongst the many highlights is Festival's collaboration with the Tibor-Jones South Asia Prize to recognize and encourage new and emerging writers in the South Asian region.

For event videos & pictures Log On to <http://www.aklf.in/>

For media related information, please contact: Perfect Relations
Priyanka 9830615322 | Ranita 9007392076 | Aditi 9831548970