

March 28 – April 2

Cinema India

The Union Theatre explores the cinema of India, the world's largest producer of films. Included will be a rare screening of short films and documentaries by the legendary Satyajit Ray, recent documentaries focusing on urgent environmental concerns, and a weekend of new Bollywood fare, featuring the extravagant musical numbers so distinctive in the Indian film industry. Take a deeper look into this multi-faceted and changing culture.

Tuesday & Wednesday, March 28 & 29 – 7 PM – Free Screenings

The Short Films and Documentaries of Satyajit Ray

Satyajit Ray (1921-1992) is the internationally acclaimed filmmaker most known for his Apu trilogy (1959) – considered by many critics to be the greatest cinematic suite ever made. Working with simple tools, Ray fashioned tales, both visual and literary, that were straightforward in their presentation, yet richly complex in their capacity to suggest multiple meanings and interpretations. Two very special screenings will present the director's rare short films and documentaries, provided by the Satyajit Ray Film and Study Collection at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Program One (94 min.) – Tuesday – 7pm

Through simple stories tonight's films artfully take on issues of class divisions in ways that translate universally. **Two** (1964) is a concise parable revolving around a series of children's games, showing an encounter between a street child from the slums and the child of a rich family. **Pikoo** (1980) presents a day in the life of a six year-old child from a wealthy Calcutta family, who lives in a home that is isolated from the city by a park. **Sadgati (Deliverance)** (1981) is Ray's searing indictment of the caste system in which a peasant of the "Untouchable caste" is driven to death by the village priest.

Program Two (107 min.) – Wednesday – 7pm

Tonight's program focuses on Ray's documentaries, revolving around individuals of great political and cultural significance to India that also interested Ray on a personal level. Films include: **Tagore** (1961), a documentary that deals with the life and work of the celebrated Bengali poet and author Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; **Bala** (1976), a portrait of the celebrated dancer Balasaraswati, who was considered a virtuoso in the classical style of "Bharata Natyam"; and **The Inner Eye** which observes Binode Bihari Mukherjee, an accomplished painter who lost his sight following an unsuccessful cataract operation, as he continues to create art using his "inner eye" to guide his fingers.

Thursday, March 30 – 7pm – Free Screening

The Politics of Water: Environmental films from India

Dam/Age and Fishing in the Sea of Greed

(Aradhana Seth, India, 50 min., DV, 2002)

(Anand Patwardhan, India, 45 min., VHS, 1998)

These films weave together a number of issues that lie at the heart of politics today: from the consequences of development and globalization to the urgent need for state accountability and the freedom of speech. DAM/AGE traces writer Arundhati Roy's bold and controversial campaign against the Narmada dam project in India, which will displace up to a million people. The film shows how Booker Prize winning author Roy chose to use her fame to stand up to powerful interests supported by multinational corporations and the Indian government. FISHING IN THE SEA OF GREED

documents the response of one fishing community in India to the "rape and run" industries that have begun to dominate their livelihood and decimate their environment. Under the leadership of the National Fishworkers Forum and the World Forum of Fishworkers and Fish Harvesters, workers are fighting not only for their jobs, but for the survival of the world's coastal communities and ecosystems.

Friday, March 31 – 7 pm

Saturday, April 1 – 9pm

Sunday, April 2 – 4pm

Parineeta (*The Married Woman*) **Milwaukee Premiere*

(Pradeep Sarkar, India, 130 min., Hindi w/Eng. St., 35mm, 2005)

Set in vibrant 1960's Calcutta, PARINEETA follows the lives of long time friends and neighbors who develop a deep love for each other. Orphaned at an early age, Lolita is sent to live with her uncle's family, where destiny introduces her to Shekhar, a budding musician and the son of an affluent businessman. Though they develop an intense love for each other; class, circumstance, and misunderstandings alter their lives and divide them. Adapted from the novel by legendary Indian writer Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay. *"This is at its heart a beautiful story, stunningly lit with breathtaking frames, and sumptuous performances."* – Raam Tarat FUTURE MOVIES

Saturday, April 1 – 4:30pm

Sunday, April 2 – 7pm

Rang De Basanti (*Paint it Yellow*) **Milwaukee Premiere*

(Rakesh Omprakash Mehra, India, English/Hindi w/ Eng. St., 157 min., 35mm, 2006)

A young London based filmmaker chances upon the diaries of her grandfather, who served in the British police force in India during the freedom struggle. Planning to shoot a film on the Indian revolutionaries mentioned in the diaries, she travels to Delhi. The friends cast to play the revolutionaries initially refuse to take part since they don't identify with the characters. Scenes from 1930's British India and the India today run parallel and intersect with each other at crucial points. As the film reaches its resolution the line between past and present blurs as they become one in spirit. *"Successfully weaving historical facts with contemporary themes and characters, it's thanks to Mehra's smart writing and direction that you are instantly drawn into Rang De Basanti's absorbing plot, which flits smoothly from past to present."* – Jaspreet Pandohar BBC

Replacing *HariOm*

Saturday, April 1 – 7pm – Free Screening

American Desi

(Piyush Dinker Pandya, U.S./India, 100 min., Eng., DV, 2001)

AMERICAN DESI is a fun-loving romantic comedy focusing on the lives of second generation Indians in America. Born and raised in New Jersey, Krishnagopal Reddy (Deep Katdare) the son of immigrant Indians has long resisted his parents' traditions and values. Kris eagerly departs for college in the hopes of finally living a "normal American" life only to find himself surrounded by several other Indian students all struggling with their identities. What follows is the story of a young man who learns about the intricacies of friendship and love as he comes to terms with his cultural identity.