South Asia’s Biggest Queer Film Festival is back for its 6th edition

KASHISH 2015
REACHING OUT, TOUCHING HEARTS

May 27-31, 2015
Liberty Cinema

May 28-30, 2015
Alliance Française de Bombay

May 29-30, 2015
Max Mueller Bhavan

Kashish
6th Mumbai International Queer Film Festival
KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival 2015, South Asia’s and India’s biggest and only mainstream LGBT film festival, was held between May 27-31, 2015 at Liberty Cinema, Alliance Française de Bombay and Max Mueller Bhavan. The theme of the festival was “Reaching Out, Touching Hearts”.

The festival was organized by Solaris Pictures. The Humsafar Trust was the co-organizer.
DEMOGRAPHIC & FEEDBACK SNAPSHOT

For detailed demographics & audience feedback report, refer Page no 26 onwards.

65% between age 18-35 years

76% Male
12% Female
12% Trans / Queer

66% Returning Audience
97% rated KASHISH 2015
Better / Similar than previous years

72% Identified as LGBTQ
28% identified as Heterosexuals / Other

60% Postgraduate
21% Graduate

85% rated KASHISH 2015
Excellent / Good

53% Salaried
30% Self-employed
11% Students

Annual Salary
57% Rs.12 – 5 lacs
23% Rs.5 – 1 lacs
Celebrities

- United Nations Equality champion Celina Jaitly, National award winning filmmakers Sai Paranjpye and Arunaraie Patil, actor Shernaz Patel and theatre personality Dolly Thakore flagged off the Opening Night.
- BJP party spokesperson and fashion designer Ms. Shaina NC and well-known actor Mr. Dalip Tahil were the guests of honour at the Closing Night.
- The KASHISH 2015 jury comprised eminent director & producer Mr. Anubhav Sinha, author & columnist Ms. Malavika Sanghvi, filmmaker & actor Ms. Chitra Palekar, national award winning filmmaker & actor Mr. Aamir Bashir and popular television actor Ms. Meghna Malik.
- Other eminent guests were Ms. Karen Thompson (MAC Cosmetics), Ms. Nadia Rashid (UNDP, Bangkok), Prof. Dennis Altman (La Trobe University) and theatre personality Alaqa Padamsee.

Awards & Special Film Programs

- Total cash awards worth Rs. 1.05 lakhs (US$ 1600) were given out in 6 categories. Other awards included voucher for video stock footage worth $350 and 3 awards of 2-day free HD shooting kit
- An Art Exhibition was held coinciding with the festival: ‘The 377191 Wall’ at Gallery Beyond with 238 artists participating with 280 artworks themed ‘freedom to express, freedom to choose’.
- ‘Country Focus’ was Australia with 22 films (including shorts, documentaries and features) including the classic The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994)
- Indian Showcase: 21 LGBTQ themed films from India, in five diverse languages Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Bengali, Tamil and English
- LGBT themed films from countries where being gay or lesbian is very perilous – Iran, Srilanka, Nepal, Lebanon, Syria, Georgia, and El Salvador

Allied Programs

- Book Reading of Sandip Roy’s iconic book ‘Don’t Let Him Know’ and discussion with Parmesh Shahani, head of Godrej’s India Culture Lab
- Powerful panel discussions:
  - ‘Dare To Dream’ with Ashok Row Kavi, Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, Ernest Noronha, Vijay Hiremath and Pallav Patankar
  - ‘Way Ahead for Coproductions’ with Chaitanya Chinchlikar, Somnath Sen, Vikramjit Roy, Kapil Sharma, Mark Scullion and Ashish Sawhney
  - ‘The Global Gay’ with Devdutt Pattanaik, Sandip Roy, David Altman, Parmesh Shahani and Vikram Doctor
  - ‘Dialogue with Emerging Filmmakers’ with Vaibhav Hatkar, Vivek Vishwanathan, Manoj Thorat, Nadav Mishali, Karan Singh, Sunetra Lahari and Dhamini Ratnam
PARTNERS

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INSTITUTE OF FILM, FASHION & MEDIA

Award Partners

actor prepares  accord equipments  ponds
CELEB & PARTNERS’ REACTIONS

Cinema is a reflection of our society, but also of future generations for in its cultural expression we sow the seeds of future change. It is amazing how KASHISH has grown over the last six years firmly establishing itself as festival that champions the cause of equal rights.

~ Celina Jaitley
Actor, UN Equality champion and KASHISH Festival Ambassador

The leadership of this country needs to come to events like these to realize what being progressive and being inclusive really mean. To the KASHISH family, I would like to say that on my part I will assure you that I will stand for you, I will stand with you whether we may succeed or not. More than proving a point, it is about expressing to society that unity starts when we accept each other with all our differences.

~ Shaina NC
BJP spokesperson & Guest of Honour at KASHISH 2015 Closing Night

What KASHISH stands for is something close to my heart. And that is – Freedom to Express. At a time when freedom of speech and expression is largely stifled, it is important that a festival like KASHISH stands up and makes a point of being out, open and driving home a message of equality and dignity, for everyone. We may all not be born equal, but everyone has a right to be treated equally.

~ Sai Paranjpye
Filmmaker, Writer & Chief Guest at KASHISH 2015 Opening Night

I am a bit overwhelmed to be here. I must say that being here has been very meaningful and a fantastic experience. The atmosphere is wonderful and I am really honoured and grateful to be here.

~ Dalip Tahil
Actor & Guest of Honour at KASHISH 2015 Closing Night
Over the last six years, KASHISH has become one of the prestigious cultural events in Mumbai. Indie film makers struggle to find resources and finances, but despite these obvious handicaps have been making good films. Actor Prepares by sponsoring cash awards for the filmmakers and the actors hope to encourage the next generation of filmmakers, who are making films on a community that is marginalized.

~ Anupam Kher
Actor, Director & Sponsor of top awards at KASHISH

KASHISH is indeed a milestone in what is possible - the spirit of freedom, love and togetherness is so present - it is an opportunity for people to see that LGBT people are different and yet they are not different. In years to come I am sure KASHISH will go beyond being a LGBT Film Festival and be a place for good cinema that all people flock to.

~ Arunraje Patil
Filmmaker, Editor & Guest of Honour at KASHISH 2015 Opening Night

I am amazed at the way KASHISH has grown from strength to strength every year, and has taken it to a different level by having the iconic Liberty Cinema as its venue.

~ Dolly Thakore
Actor, Theater personality & KASHISH Advisory Board member

KASHISH has over the last six years managed to become the face of the LGBT community of Mumbai, along with the pride march. It is one of the first events organized by the community that has managed to mainstream the issues of LGBT persons.

~ Dennis Altman
Professor, La Trobe University, Australia
We have a country that is so full of old prejudices – it’s time to get a move on. It is a very steep and uphill task, but the sheer size of the cinema contributes to the growth of this movement, which is long overdue.

~ Nazir Hoosein
Owner, Liberty Cinema

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~ Ashok Row Kavi
Chairperson, The Humsafar Trust

I think KASHISH is a beautiful initiative to showcase new talent in terms of film making and at the same time sensitising the masses about the issues and facets about the LGBT community in India as well as internationally. I am glad to have been a part of the closing ceremony and to have performed in front of my brothers and sisters from the community.

~ Sushant Divgikar
VJ, Big Boss contestant & Performer at KASHISH 2015 Closing Night

KASHISH film festival is a platform for independent filmmakers to prove their mettle and Pond5.com is happy to be sponsoring both cash award and voucher for free stock footage. We believe in nurturing talent and offering them facilities that can help them make better films.

~ Ronnie Singh
India Representative, Pond5.com
JURY’S REACTIONS

I grew up in Benaras, in the 70s, where the image and the perception of the gay man was really different back then. These films have given me a universal perspective now and I am happy I got to watch so many of them. Understanding the LGBT community is important. This festival is a great way of doing it.

~ Anubhav Sinha
Director, Producer & KASHISH 2015 Jury member

KASHISH not only brings wonderfully different films to the film lovers of Mumbai, but also creates awareness in the mainstream society about the various concerns of the queer community. Watching, dissecting and arguing about the films with the rest of the jury added to my enjoyment.

~ Chitra Palekar
Filmmaker, Actor & KASHISH 2015 Jury member

After having the privilege of being a part of KASHISH first hand, let me just say that the time for consolidation has come. The time has come to unite for causes different from one’s own. The need of the hour is to go mainstream with the spirit of KASHISH where the talent, skills, dependability, resourcefulness of this community are brought to the fore.

~ Malavika Sanghvi
Author, Columnist & KASHISH 2015 Jury member

Thank you KASHISH for widening my horizons. Being here has opened my eyes, I feel like I understand the heartaches and joys of this community a little better thanks to the films. Now I am not just another guy who has a gay friend or a silent ally.

~ Aamir Bashir
Actor, Filmmaker & KASHISH 2015 Jury member

It felt just like being with family. What we saw were the stories of people from different social set-ups. It made me feel the pain and the strength, the courage and the fear of the community. Being here was a real eye-opener for me.

~ Meghna Malik
Actor & KASHISH 2015 Jury member
AUDIENCE REACTIONS

I could find people like myself, it has sharpened my gender perspective.

After attending KASHISH my approach, viewpoint became more wider about ‘Feelings’ of LGBTQ persons.

Films at KASHISH have made me realize that life is so beautiful and one should live it to the fullest. They have taught me how to value and respect my LGBTQ friends.

KASHISH always comes up with varied level of stories.... Different issues, people throughout the world... Gives an experience of knowing lifestyle of people there & how people think about LGBT people... Being a queer person, it’s more about being confident and confident about what and how life is.

I am able to identify myself as a gay man now and that sexuality is fluid.

It was my first LGBT event. It made me realize am not alone in this. There are people like me. It’s a community; we are here to look out for each other. It was a wonderful experience.

KASHISH makes family closer, It’s like a family get together for a film (film festival)... You know big family need so many films!

KASHISH has been a platform which has made me proud of who I am. Every year for those five days I have a high spirit for myself. Overall it has

Kashish 2015 was an amazing experience for me. Being a gay and crazy cinema enthusiast it was a double treat for me to watch lgbt cinema made in different parts of the world. Kashish 2015 was meticulously planned and wonderful executed. I enjoyed every bit of it. Kudos to Kashish team.

I was very surprised to visit such a big event with many powerful and happy people in a country where the issue of the festival is (again) illegal !! This combination confused me- but of course in a good way!
KASHISH 2015
FESTIVAL REPORT

KASHISH this year was better publicized and better organized this year than most of the previous years.

KASHISH has come forth as a celebration of basic human rights focusing LGBTQIA rights in particular.

KASHISH 2015 was far better in every aspect. The only similarity was the venue and some of the speakers. The film collection was outstanding. The opening and closing nights were exemplary and the event was organized very well in comparison to 2014.

It is good to see the Indian shorts move past ‘coming out’.

I feel empowered and liberated during 5 days at KASHISH.

The diversity and volume of audience has improved. We were able to make a good impact on the mainstream society. Regional media has started taking positive note of our efforts.

Keep up the great work. My friends and I are proud to be a part of Kashish and look forward to more such events between the film festivals.

Thanks to the Sponsors/partners and the organizers and volunteers to have made this happen- a social place for interaction and collaboration for our community.

This year I visited with few friends and they all loved it along with me. We all will come next year with more friends and relatives. I will come with my mother in law them!
Celina Jaitly, actor & United Nations Equality champion at the Opening Night ceremony

National award winning filmmaker Sai Paranjpye & Aruna Raje and theatre personalities Shernaz Patel & Dolly Thakore inaugurate KASHISH 2015
Ruling political party BJP spokesperson Shaina NC, actor Dalip Tahil with festival director Sridhar Rangayan at the Closing Night ceremony

Houseful show at Liberty Cinema, with around 900 seats!
Karen Thompson  
Brand Manager  
for MAC Cosmetics

Nadia Rashid  
Health and Development Practice Manager  
for UNDP, Bangkok regional Hub

Two gorgeous ladies who stood tall and made heartfelt speeches that touched everyone’s heart at the KASHISH 2015 Opening Night
Panel Discussion on Trans* Rights

Milling crowd on weekend at Liberty Cinema
And the awesome show-stopper performances...!
Those breathtaking moments of sheer happiness!
KASHISH Mumbai International Queer Film Festival

Website: mumbaiqueerfest.com
Blog: kashishmiqff.blogspot.com
Facebook: facebook.com/Kashish.MIQFF
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