

Ethnographic Film Screening

So Heddan So Hoddan

Like Here, Like There

52 mins, Sindhi, Kachchhi and Hindustani with English subtitles, 2011

Directed by Anjali Monteiro & K.P. Jayasankar

<http://likeherelikethere.wordpress.com/>

Monday, 14 May, 14:00-15:30

Hermann-Föge-Weg 11, Library Hall

Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, a medieval Sufi poet, is an iconic figure in the cultural history of Sindh. Bhitai's Shah Ji Risalo is a remarkable collection of poems which are sung by many communities in



Kachchh and across the border in Sindh (now in Pakistan). Many of the poems draw on the eternal love stories of Umar-Marui and Sasui-Punhu, among others. These songs speak of the pain of parting, of the inevitability of loss and of deep grief that takes one to unknown and mysterious terrains.

Umar Haji Suleiman of Abdasa, in Kachchh, Gujarat, is a self taught Sufi scholar; once a cattle herder, now a farmer, he lives his life through the poetry of Bhitai. Umar's cousin, Mustafa Jatt sings the Bheths of Bhitai. He is accompanied on the Surando, by his cousin Usman Jatt. Usman is a truck driver, who owns and plays one of the last surviving Surandos in the region. The Surando is a peacock shaped, five-stringed instrument from Sindh. The film explores the life worlds of the three cousins, their families and the Fakirani Jat community to which they belong.

Before the Partition the Maldhari (pastoralist) Jatts moved freely across the Rann, between Sindh (now in Pakistan) and Kutch. As pastoral ways of living have given way to settlement, borders and industrialisation, the older generation struggles to keep alive the rich syncretic legacy of Shah Bhitai, that celebrates diversity and non-difference, suffering and transcendence, transience and survival. These marginal visions of negotiating difference in creative ways resist cultural politics based on tight notions of nation-state and national culture; they open up the windows of our national imaginary.

Festival Screenings

- » Film South Asia 2011, Kathmandu, Nepal
- » Open Frame 2011, New Delhi
- » Indian Panorama 2011
- » International Film Festival of India 2011, Goa
- » Vibgyor International Film Festival 2012, Kerala, India
- » 11th Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival, 2012
- » Mumbai International Film Festival 2012
- » Signs 2012, Kerala

Awards

Indian Documentary Producers' Association (IDPA) 2011 Awards:

- Silver for Cinematography
- Silver for Sound Design and
- Silver for Script

Directors Anjali Monteiro and K.P. Jayasankar are Professors at the Centre for Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Both of them are involved in media production, teaching and research. A presiding thematic of much of their work has been a problematising of notions of self and the other, of normality and deviance, of the local and the global, through the exploration of diverse narratives and rituals. These range from the stories and paintings of indigenous peoples to the poetry of prison inmates. Jointly they have won twenty-eight national and international awards for their films.

