

Abu Dhabi, UAE – October 7, 2010

International Premiere of Autograph As Surprise Addition to the Abu Dhabi Film Festival Line-Up

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival (October 14-23) proudly announces a surprise addition to its line-up: the international premiere of Autograph, Srijit Mukherji's directorial debut. The highly anticipated Bengali film is shown as part of the Showcase section, the Festival's selection of outstanding feature films from around the world, and its two Abu Dhabi screenings are sure to draw large crowds of Indian film fans and world cinema enthusiasts.

Starring the acclaimed actress Nandana Sen, Bengali idol Prosenjit Chatterjee and the emerging new face of Parallel Cinema, Indraneil Sengupta, Autograph revolves around the lives of a superstar, a young director and a theatre actress, who come together during the process of making a film, an experience that changes them forever. Sen, Chatterjee and Mukherji will travel to Abu Dhabi to attend the premiere and present the film to the Festival's audience and guests.

"We are delighted to welcome this brand new film to our line-up and look forward to offering the local audience an accomplished work by a talented first-time director, whose choice of cast and material is remarkable. It is gratifying to see Abu Dhabi becoming a trusted first port of call for international releases of Indian films," said Peter Scarlet, Executive Director of the Abu Dhabi Film Festival.

Taking a captivating, thoughtful approach to celebrity culture and the pitfalls of the film world, Autograph tells the story of a hapless young director, who, by a stroke of luck, manages to win over the reigning matinee star of Tollywood, as the Bengali film industry is commonly referred to, with his unlikely idea of making a film about a film star inspired by two classics of art house cinema: Satyajit Ray's Nayak: The Hero (1966) and Ingmar Bergman's Wild Strawberries (1957). After casting a leading actress, the trio embarks on a journey of emotional and professional upheavals as the film's production gets underway. Essentially a film within a film, the story splits into two parallel strands, playing with the blurred boundaries between reality and the make-believe world of Tollywood stardom. The two

narratives interweave as the story jumps between reel and real events: while one of the strands follows the unconventional relationship brewing between the star and a journalist, the other details the emotional triangle between the director, the actress and the matinee idol.

Mukherji is a former economist, whose first foray into directing was inspired by a stint as a songwriter and actor on Anjan Dutt's recent musical feature *Madly Bangalee* (2009), followed by his role as assistant director, lyricist and actor in Aparna Sen's *Iti Mrinalini* (2010).

Autograph is produced by Shree Venkatesh Films Films in collaboration with the producer Madhu Mantena.

Screening details:

Autograph will be screened on Friday, October 15, at 10:15 p.m., CineStar 5, Marina Mall (International Premiere) and again on Thursday, October 21, at 7:45 p.m., CineStar 5, Marina Mall.

Tickets can be purchased:

Online at www.abudhabifilmfestival.ae or in person at the Festival box offices:

Emirates Palace Hotel – auditorium level

CineStar Cinemas, Marina Mall – in the lobby, opposite main box office

Abu Dhabi Theater, Heritage Village (from October 14)

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The Abu Dhabi Film Festival (formerly the Middle East International Film Festival) was established in 2007, with the aim of helping to create a vibrant film culture throughout the region. The event, presented each October by the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) - recently described by Newsweek as the leading cultural organization in the Arab world - under the patronage of H.E. Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, is committed to curating exceptional programs to engage and educate the local community, inspire filmmakers and nurture the growth of the regional film industry.

As the only Festival in the region where works by Arab filmmakers are represented equally in competition with those by major talents of world cinema, the Festival offers Abu Dhabi's

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diverse and enthusiastic audiences a means of engaging with their own and others' cultures through the art of cinema. At the same time, a strong focus on the bold new voices of Arab cinema connects with Abu Dhabi's role as a burgeoning cultural capital in the region and marks the Festival as a place for the world to discover and gauge the pulse of recent Arab film.

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The Abu Dhabi Film Festival Press Office is at your disposal for any questions and further information. Email press@adff.ae or call +971 2 556 4000 to find out more.

Press Materials including pictures, biographies and press kits are available on:

<http://www.abudhabifilmfestival.ae/en/press/press-center/>

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