

PRESS RELEASE
30 April 2015

**FILM LONDON AND CINESTAAN FILM COMPANY
JOIN FORCES TO CELEBRATE 400 YEARS OF SHAKESPEARE**

- **Vishal Bhardwaj, Ritesh Batra and Vikas Bahl attend partnership launch and get set to mentor filmmakers**
- **Ambitious filmmaking talent from India encouraged to apply. Deadline is May 25**

www.cinestaanfilmcompany.com

Film London is proud to announce that India's **Cinestaan Film Company** will invest in the ambitious **Film London Microwave International: Shakespeare India** training through production fund.

Vishal Bhardwaj (*Maqbool*, *Omkara* and *Haider*), **Ritesh Batra** (*The Lunchbox*) and **Vikas Bahl** (*Queen*, *Phantom Films*) attended the launch of the partnership and call for applications in Mumbai and will act as professional industry mentors for a unique and groundbreaking opportunity which aims to bring the two industries closer together.

The international iteration of Film London's award-winning initiative will unite Asian filmmaking talent from the UK and India. Five successful teams will be selected for Microwave's acclaimed Microschool. This will give the writers, producers and directors from both countries the chance to hone their skills through an intensive programme of training, professional mentoring and advice on issues ranging from financing through to distribution.

The ambition is to greenlight one successful project, which will draw from the work of **William Shakespeare** and be theatrically released in 2016 as part of **Shakespeare 400** – a year-long cultural programme marking 400 years since the writer's death.

Cinestaan Film Company will invest up to **£250,000** in the greenlit feature. They will join Film London and the **British Council** in contributing to the crucial training programme and play an important role in selecting the filmmaking teams and ensuring the selected project has the strongest possible chance of success.

Microwave International: Shakespeare India dovetails with Cinestaan's own ambitions to preserve and celebrates India's rich film heritage and will help forge valuable international links for Indian talent.

In order to capitalise on Cinestaan's unique position and valuable connections within the Indian film industry, Indian writers, directors and producers have until **25th May, 2015** to apply. Interested filmmakers should visit www.cinestaanfilmcompany.com to apply or to find out more.

Adrian Wootton, Chief Executive of Film London and the British Film Commission, said: "Being able to partner with Cinestaan Film Company is a spectacular result for the project, particularly since they share our own aims when it comes to training and supporting homegrown filmmakers. Bringing our talent together for the exciting Microwave International production represents an opportunity to build bridges between our two industries and create a unique production based on the works of the world's most famous writer."

Said Rohit Khattar, Founder Chairman, Cinestaan Film Company "To partner with Film London for a film celebrating 400 years of Shakespeare is extremely exciting. Cinestaan is proud of India's cinema heritage and this collaboration shall develop a unique production, uniting talent from India and the U.K."

To apply for Film London Microwave International: Shakespeare India:

- Writers must deliver a first-draft, contemporary script based on or inspired by, the work of William Shakespeare
- Directors must have made at least one feature, and deliver a showreel
- Producers must have delivered at least one feature
- Applications from writers/directors will also be accepted, as per the conditions above
- The deadline for applications is 25th May 2015
- All applications from the UK and India must apply through the Cinestaan Film Company website www.cinestaanfilmcompany.com
- Applicants who have already applied may take this extension to develop their applications and resubmit their projects via the Cinestaan Film Company website www.cinestaanfilmcompany.com
- Indian applicants will be longlisted by Cinestaan Film Company and Film London Consultant Dina Dattani. UK applicants will be longlisted by Film London with the aim to announce successful applicants latest by June 15th, 2015.
- Successful applicants will attend a 5 day Microschool in London in end of July 2015. This filmmaking 'bootcamp' will provide intensive support and training to the selected teams, along with professional advice from UK and Indian industry mentors
- After the Microschool, the filmmaking teams will be given six weeks to repackage their projects before re-pitching them to an expert panel
- The aim is to greenlight one production, with filming taking place in late 2015 or early 2016
- The film must be delivered in 2016, in order to form part of the cultural programme marking 400 years since the writer's death
- Full details and an application form are available at **Cinestaan Film Company website**

ENDS

International :

Alex Deller, T: 020 7613 7682, M: 07787 254 250, E: alex.deller@filmlondon.org.uk

India :

Mukta Kapoor, +91 9811603744, mukta.kapoor@cinestaan.com

Spice PR - 022 26145167

Gurvinder Singh - +91 9930730465, gurvinder.singh@spicebhasha.in

Lavina Sachdev - +91 9819344887, lavina.sachdev@spiceone.net

Notes to Editors

About Microwave International: India

As part of Shakespeare400 on Screen, Film London has launched Film London Microwave International: Shakespeare India. The scheme will offer talented writers, producers and directors the chance to hone their skills while receiving an intensive programme of training, professional mentoring and advice on issues ranging from financing through to distribution. The scheme will partner promising Asian talent from the UK and India, who will attend a British Council funded Microschool in Mumbai. The teams will be mentored by leading industry professionals, and, with Indian and UK production finance, the ambition is to award one filmmaking team up to £500,000 to produce a feature for worldwide release. As well as celebrating Shakespeare, the project seeks to address the lack of diverse talent entering the industry and respond to Creative Skillset's latest census which reported the number of Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic talent working in the production industries was only 5.4% in 2012, which is a fall from 6.7% in 2009 and 7.4% in 2006.

About Film London Microwave

Launched in 2006, Film London Microwave is the acclaimed micro-budget feature film scheme which has produced eight features including *Litling*, *Shifty* and *iLL Manors*. Funded by the BFI and BBC Films, with support from Creative Skillset, Microwave is committed to discovering and investing in emerging London-based filmmakers, backing talented teams with fresh voices and strong stories. It provides an intensive approach to filmmaking with the emphasis on original ideas, tightly focussed scripts and short production schedules. Between 2014-2017 Microwave will develop and train up to 36 filmmaking teams and produce up to six features, at production budgets of £150,000, with additional funding ring fenced to support development and distribution.

About Cinestaan Film Company

Cinestaan Film Company (CFC) is a film Production House committed to telling stories that are at the cutting edge of creativity and that resonate universally.

CFC has recently announced a three film agreement with visionary filmmaker Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's ROMP Pictures. The first film will be the **Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra** directed *Mirzya*, followed by **Fanney Khan**, an official remake of an Oscar Nominated film, to be directed by **Nitin Kakkar**, the National Award Winner for Best Film in 2013. The third film (yet untitled) will again be directed by Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra.

CFC's 4th film is a co-production with Film London for an adaptation of a Shakespeare story in the year of his 400th death anniversary.

Cinestaan is committed to preserving the rich legacy of India's cinematic heritage and several initiatives are being worked upon in that direction. This includes an **Oral Histories** project that shall celebrate the contributions of our screen legends.

www.cinestaanfilmcompany.com

About Shakespeare400 on Screen

Shakespeare400 on Screen, co-ordinated by Film London, is an international celebration of the life, work and ever-present legacy of William Shakespeare. Marking 400 years since his death, Shakespeare-related film and television activity will take place all over the world to celebrate the global cultural phenomenon of a writer whose work has been translated into every major language and is continually re-interpreted and performed worldwide.

Presented under the banner of Shakespeare400 on Screen will be: major international film and television screenings, including London-wide, UK and international touring programmes; brand new productions including shorts, feature films and artists' film commissions produced through Film London; and a host of exhibitions.

Shakespeare400 on Screen delivery partners include: Arts Council England; BBC; BFI Film Audience Network (representing hundreds of cinemas UK-wide); British Council; GREAT campaign; Into Film; London & Partners; Melbourne International Film Festival; Museum of London; National Portrait Gallery; New York Public Theater; Rotterdam Film Museum; Toronto Film Group; and Visit Britain.

Shakespeare400 on Screen is part of Shakespeare400, a consortium of leading cultural, creative and educational organisations, co-ordinated by the London Shakespeare Centre and the Cultural Institute at King's College London.

www.filmlondon.org.uk/shakespeare / www.shakespeare400.org.uk

About Film London

Film London is the capital's screen industries agency. We connect ideas, talent and finance to develop a pioneering creative culture in the city that delivers success in film, television, animation, games and beyond.

We work to sustain, promote and develop London as a global content production hub, support the development of the city's new and emerging filmmaking talent and invest in a diverse and rich film culture. Funded by the Mayor of London and the National Lottery through the BFI, we also receive support from Arts Council England and Creative Skillset.

Film London's activities include:

- Maintaining, strengthening and promoting London's position as world-class city to attract investment through film, television, animation and games
- Investing in local talent through a range of specialised production and training schemes
- Boosting employment and competitiveness in the capital's screen industries by delivering internationally facing business development events
- Maximising access to the capital's film culture by helping audiences discover film in all its diversity
- Promoting London through screen tourism

Film London also manages the **British Film Commission** through a public/private partnership which is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and UK Trade and Industry through the BFI.

www.britishfilmcommission.org.uk

www.filmlondon.org.uk

[@Film_London](https://twitter.com/Film_London)

About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.

We work in more than 100 countries and our 7,000 staff - including 2,000 teachers - work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year by teaching English, sharing the arts and delivering education and society programmes.

We are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter. A core publically-funded grant provides less than 25 per cent of our turnover which last year was £781 million. The rest of our revenues are earned from services which customers around the world pay for, through education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. All our work is in pursuit of our charitable purpose and supports prosperity and security for the UK and globally.

Our work in Film

British Council Film works with our extensive global network to connect UK films, filmmakers and film culture with international audiences. We showcase innovation, diversity and excellence and seek opportunities for creative exchange and collaboration

For more information, please visit: www.britishcouncil.org/film. You can also keep in touch through twitter.com/British_Film.