



PRESS RELEASE

Asia Society India Centre awards fellowships to six writers for New Voices Fellowship for Screenwriters 2011-2012

November 22, 2011, Mumbai — Asia Society India Centre announced the final six awardees selected from 150 applications from promising writers from across India for the FIRST New Voices Fellowship for Screenwriters (NVFS) 2011-2012. Twelve finalists were shortlisted to attend the 1st workshop from 8th-12th November in Khandala led by renowned screenwriter Anjum Rajabali who was supported by NVFS Mentors Sriram Raghavan, Ashwini Malik and Members of the Advisory Council, Jaideep Sahni and Saket Chaudhary.

The finalists were selected from across India including Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Karnataka, U.P., Haryana, Punjab and Bihar. The applications had a wide range of stories from across cultures and socio economic issues of India.

“We were delighted by the large and diverse response to this new fellowship since this is the first year and our application requirements were very demanding. We are very excited with the writers we have selected and hope they will benefit from their engagement with each other, the strong faculty leading the fellowship, and with Asia Society. Asia Society is enriched and invigorated when new voices participate in our programs” says Bunty Chand, Executive Director of Asia Society India Centre.

The fellowship has been awarded to six screenwriters for their original, persuasive stories and personal commitment to the art and craft of storytelling. The fellowship recipients are:

- Mr. Gaurav Asri (Kaithal,Haryana)
- Mr. Vijay Borade (Aurangabad, Maharashtra)
- Ms. Chitra Iyer (New Delhi)
- Ms. Payal Sethi (Bangalore)
- Ms. Pooja Varma (Kolkata)
- Dr. Pravin Yadav (Mumbai)

Time Warner is the Founding Sponsor of NVFS selected writers will have a rare opportunity to work with eminent screenwriters to develop their scripts and to attend a second 5 day long workshop and produce one finished script.

“The 12 young screenwriting enthusiasts who attended the workshop exemplified the very profile that initiatives like this fellowship seek. They are brimming with new ideas for stories, stories that they feel close to and are eager to script with their innate talent and willingness to work hard. The energetic response that this fellowship has received from screenwriting aspirants says that Indian Cinema could be in for an exciting future.” says Anjum Rajabali.

ABOUT THE NEW VOICES FELLOWSHIP FOR SCREENWRITERS (NVFS)

Asia Society recognizes India’s exceptional legacy in the field of cinema. At the same time, many screenwriters are seeking to develop their skills and explore new directions. After a year-long exploration with film makers, writers, educators, film festival directors including Anjum Rajabali, eminent screenwriter, Rachel Cooper, Director of

Cultural Programs and Performing Arts, Asia Society, and George Jose of Asia Society India Centre developed a unique fellowship program which includes workshops, mentoring, peer feedback and a modest stipend. The fellowship fosters a creative community for a diverse and talented group of screenwriters who will explore new approaches to storytelling and narrative, provide peer feedback, and work intensively with respected professionals in the field.

The fellowship is guided by an Advisory Council. The members of the Advisory Council, led by Anjum Rajabali, are Dev Benegal, Saket Chaudhary, Nandita Das, Maithili Rao, and Jaideep Sahni. Bunt Chand and Rachel Cooper of Asia Society are also members of the Advisory Council. The project mentors are Ashwini Malik, Sriram Raghavan and Vinay Shukla.

The *New Voices Fellowship for Screenwriters* was designed to select through an open application process, six screenwriters from across India for a nine month fellowship.

About Asia Society:

Asia Society is the leading global organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people and institutions of Asia and the United States. The Society was founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller the 3rd.

Asia Society India Centre is a part of Asia Society's global network of 11 offices. The India Centre is a not-for-profit, non partisan institution inaugurated by PM Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2006, aiming to become a key forum for intra-Asian connections and exchange. Our programmes span a wide field, and include business panels, policy discussions, conferences, cultural festivals and art exhibitions. The India Centre has conceptualized and curated over 230 events in the past 5 years. We have a strong and growing list of members, patrons and corporate supporters.

The India Centre is fortunate to have Mukesh Ambani, Sajjan Jindal, Rajiv Singh, Jai Shroff, Sunil Mehta, Falguni Nayar, Pheroza Godrej and Rashmi Poddar, among others, on its Board of Directors. Purnendu Chatterjee serves as the Chairman of the Board.

The India Centre has been privileged to host Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Planning Commission Chairman Dr. M. S. Ahluwalia, former White House National Economic Council Director Dr. Lawrence Summers, President of Brandeis University Dr. Joshua Reinharz, and Co-Founder of Ebay Pierre Omidyar, among others.

For more information on New Voices Fellowship for Screenwriters visit <http://asiasociety.org/centers/india>

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