

Third Tibetan Film Festival begins in Delhi Saturday

The vast desolate landscape of Tibet with its rugged snow-lined peaks, majestic valleys, howling winds, Buddhist monasteries and a colourful indigenous culture woven around the gospel of Siddhartha will reveal itself at a festival of Tibetan movies July 5-9 in the capital's India International Centre (IIC).

The festival of feature and documentary films is being organised by the Foundation for Universal Responsibility for His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

It will begin with the screening of 'The Lion's Roar', a 50-minute film directed by Mark Elliot on the life of 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, one of the most revered figures in Tibet.

The screening will be followed by award-winning and popular masterpieces like the 'Travellers and Magicians', 'Tintin in Tibet', 'Spirit of Tibet: Journey to Enlightenment', 'Mystic Tibet: An Outer, Inner and Secret Pilgrimage' and the widely-acclaimed 'The Saltmen of Tibet' on the first day.

Day two will feature 'A Song for Tibet' directed by Anne Handerson, a story of the efforts by Tibetans in exile, including the Dalai Lama, to save their homeland and preserve their heritage against odds.

It will be followed by the screenings of 'Windhorse', 'The Sacred Site: A Pilgrimage to Oracle Lake', 'Kundun' by Martin Scorsese, a classic biography of the young Dalai Lama and the 'The Dalai Lama Renaissance'.

The highlight of the third day will be Bernardo Bertolucci's 'Little Buddha'. It is the story of a group of monks, led by Lama Norbu (Ruo Cheng Ying), to seek out the reincarnation of his great Buddhist teacher, Lama Dorje.

'Himalaya' by Eric Valli will be screened on the last day.

'This is our third film festival since December 2007. The last two were in India Habitat Centre. This is an open festival - we are expecting all kinds of people. Any one who is interested in Tibetan cinema can watch the movies,' Thupten Tsewang, programme manager of the festival, told IANS.

Tsewang, attached to the Foundation for Universal Responsibility for His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, said most of the films in the festival, barring a couple of international hits, were relatively unknown. 'The Tibetan community of filmmakers is very small. They are young and mostly shoot documentaries and occasional feature films. The industry, unlike Hollywood and Europe, is just taking off.'

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