

**FOREIGN: The South Asia Film Festival in Goa shows off its best***FOREIGN: when tradition meets reality*

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I have to say that reading the synopsis of this film alone, was enough to draw me in at the **South Asia Film Festival** held in **Goa** this year. A collection of films of different potent subjects where showcased, but some how **Foreign** managed to magnetize me the most

The movie has a great mixture of drama, laugh out loud moments (though not intended I'm sure) and tear jerking scenes, which penetrate deep to touch our hearts. And not forgetting the power packed performances that you will remember, days after leaving the cinema

**Foreign** tells the story of Radhika, a girl from India who is excited about her forthcoming married life in the USA. When she gets there all is not well. A series of mistreatments by her husband and her mother in law lead her to the family doctor, who happens to be a friend of her husbands. In a series of events leading up to another meeting, the doctor makes the shocking revelation that Radhika is HIV positive, and he is adamant that Radhika has done something prior to marriage. Radhika comes to know by chance, that the doctor and her husband have been previous sexual partners. She proves their sexual relation in front of her mother in law, but before anyone can react, her husband, mother in law and the doctor start to collapse one by one and it is evident that she has poisoned them. As an icing on the cake, she blows the house up and walks away.

Credit is given to **Rahul Nath**, not only for his acting (read below) but for making a movie so bold and yet still keeping the audience invested in what is happening next. In subjects such as these, there is always the fear that the audience will walk away, and not give a movie like this a chance. But the writing is so rich and the dialogue piercing, combined with many twists and turns, that the audience is locked. The touches of Indian culture and mannerisms keeps the movie visually appealing to the eye at all times, especially in the opening scene. Without giving too much away, the first scene is enough to keep you seated throughout. The other plus point comes from the leading performances, that is made up of a mix of Indians of different nationalities: India (**Khare** and **Tewari**), American (**Mohindra**) and British (**Nath**)

**Puja Mohindra** as Radhika is perfection as her character. There is always a tendency for actors to overdo it with scenes as sensitive as these, but **Mohindra** keeps her ground and carries the movie the whole way. To say that she looks breathtaking, is just the tip of the iceberg. She plays Radhika with innocence and likeability, and we still root for her, even when she turns an evil streak.

**Ananya Khare**, has proved previously that she is an actress worth her weight, and with **Foreign** she cements that. Her scenes with **Mohindra** will surely bring tears to your eyes, but also the realization of what Indian tradition expects of its women

There is just one word to explain **Shruti Tewari's** performance: Hilarious! I am still laughing at some of her dialogue, but more so of her behaviour and the attitude she portrays as Kanta: the mother in law from hell! This woman needs to be on our screens much more, someone please cast her again

For **Rahul Nath**, he has proved that he was born to be in cinema. His writing as mentioned previously brings to the screen, the exact reality that Indians face on a day to day basis. Direction wise he has pulled the best out of his already talented cast and needless to say there has been no compromise on his acting. He is excellent as Ajay, the doctor struggling to abide by Indian tradition, and gives a performance that makes you feel his pain. Visually, his breakdown scenes hit you right where it hurts. If **Mohindra** carries the movie, **Nath** drives it.

A great effort all around and sure to be seen movie (with the high possibility of awards) at all the major upcoming film festivals

After having a successful run in **Goa** at the **South Asia Film Festival** **Foreign** will now play at the **Venice Film Festival in Los Angeles Oct 15th -17th** and then on to national tour of screenings with the **YES India Film Festival in New Zealand in the months of November and December** as well as entries into **Sundance, Tribeca and Toronto film festivals** in 2011

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