

ਮਿਲਾਂਗੇ ਬਾਬੇ ਰਤਨ ਦੇ ਮੇਲੇ ਤੇ

ਮਲਾਂਗੇ بابے رتن تے میلے دے

Let's meet at Baba Ratan's Fair

Sufism and the Dalits of East Punjab



Ajay
Bhardwaj



Film Showing
followed by Q&A
with the director



Borders spring up from nowhere; new nations are born of a violent rupture and unprecedented blood-letting, uprooting millions of people; and, a centuries-old composite culture is silenced forever. Or so it would seem...

On the eve of the British leaving the subcontinent in 1947, Punjab was partitioned along religious lines. Thus was created a Muslim majority state of Punjab (west) in Pakistan and a Hindu /Sikh majority state of Punjab (east) in India. For the people of Punjab, it created a paradoxical situation they had never experienced before: the self became the Other. The universe of a shared way of life, called Punjabiya, was marginalised. It was replaced by perceptions of contending identities through the two nation states. However, this shared outlook has not been totally erased. In ways seen and unseen, it continues to inhabit the universe of the average Punjabi's everyday life, language, culture, memories and consciousness. This is the universe that this film stumbles upon in the countryside of East Punjab, in India. Following the patterns of lived life, it moves fluidly and eclectically across time, mapping organic cultural continuities at the local levels. This is a universe marked by a rich tradition of cultural co-existence and exchange, where the boundaries between the apparently monolithic religious identities of 'Hindu', 'Muslim' and 'Sikh' are blurred and subverted in the most imaginative ways.



13th November, 7pm Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS

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