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‘Wisdom Tree’ Challenges Indian American Actress Sheetal Sheth

By [Lisa Tsering, Staff Reporter](#)
 Dec 12, 2013

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Indian American actress Sheetal Sheth stars in the metaphysical mystery film “The Wisdom Tree,” which will screen Dec. 18 at the Orinda Theatre in Orinda, Calif.

SAN LEANDRO, United States

“The Wisdom Tree,” a philosophically inclined, independent mystery film set at the intersection of New Age thought and quantum physics, served as a wakeup call for Indian American actress Sheetal Sheth.

“It challenged me,” Sheth told India-West in a phone interview after a San Francisco screening of the film.

Directed by Sunil Shah, “The Wisdom Tree” tells a story about Steve Hamilton (Patrick Alparone), a conflicted quantum physicist struggling to deal with the aftermath of a mysterious car accident. When his research on a potentially ground-breaking theory is put at risk, he teams with neuroscientist Trisha Rao (Sheth) and FBI agent Mike Parker (Eric Holter) to investigate.

According to a statement on the film’s Web site, “The film heavily

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relies on — and attempts to bind — theories and doctrines, as well as hypotheses, from science and math, music, art, philosophy, mysticism, spirituality and intra-disciplinary possibilities, to create an engaging whole.”

Thinkers such as Deepak Chopra, Fritjof Capra, Swami Vivekananda, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Michael Talbot and many others have written about the ways that consciousness and a mystical worldview can relate to the ideas of quantum mechanics. Rarely does the concept reach the medium of film, although the 2004 documentary “What the [Bleep] Do We Know?” inspired a lively debate; despite its growing popularity, “quantum mysticism” is still considered pseudoscience by many in the mainstream.

India-West asked Sheth how familiar she was with the concepts presented in the film.

“Not very familiar, to be honest,” she explained.

“I’d seen a documentary dealing with the topics, but when Sunil called me and asked me to do the film, I said, ‘You’ll have to explain all of this’ because it’s not something in my regular daily life. But it’s fascinating, and I love that.

“He gave me books to read, too, and I had to get it in me, because the ideas are central to so much and if I can’t understand it, there’s no way I can portray it.”

The past few weeks have been crazy busy for Sheth, who got married over the weekend of Nov. 23 to her longtime boyfriend, Neil Mody, on a secluded island in Mexico.

The couple first met as college students at NYU; Mody went on to found a content recommendation platform called nRelate, which was acquired by Ask.com last year.

Sheth wore a custom gown by Jorge Vega Umana, while guests at their three-day wedding festivities included Aasif Mandvi (“The Daily Show”), Amir Arison (“Blacklist”), Sujata Thomas (CNN producer of “Fareed Zakaria GPS”) and Nazanin Boniadi (“Homeland”), serenaded by Indian American pop singer Falu Shah.

“It was lovely, and exactly what we wanted,” said Sheth. “We took over a resort and it was a three-night extravaganza. It was really, really moving to see all of our favorite people in one place.”

Sheth feels that “The Wisdom Tree” can have a wide appeal among intellectually curious filmgoers. “It’s a movie that anyone can get into, really. At the end of the day, a good movie is a good movie. You hope that people will embrace that,” she said.

“If I’d heard of this, would I be the first person to go and buy a ticket? I don’t know! But the minute I read it I knew it was fascinating. I did a movie that I didn’t understand and I’m all the better for it.”

“The Wisdom Tree” will screen at the Orinda Theatre in Orinda, Calif., Dec. 18 at 7:15 p.m. Visit TheWisdomTreeFilm.com for information.



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