

A film on Dawson disease goes places



Saad Khan has worked with Ashutosh Gowariker in *Khelein Hum Jee Jaan Se*

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On *My Mind* is a short film — an experimental project — written and directed by filmmaker Saad Khan, who had virtually no budget at all. With just two weeks of pre-production, this film proved to be a success and was featured in three film festivals, including the prestigious Los Angeles Film Festival. A chat with Saad Khan.

What is the film all about?

On My Mind speaks of a debilitating disease that not many people are aware of. The Dawson Disease attacks the senses one by one and cripples major organs as well. When I was in Europe, a close relative was diagnosed with the deadly ailment and it was so painful. In February, he was diagnosed and by the end of October, he was "like a vegetable". I made this film based on his experiences and in his tribute. There are some fictional elements added, but the focus is on the main character and his struggle with the dis-

ease. The movie is 30 minutes long.

Tell us about the filming process?

Since I was in South Louisiana, I decided to use the local cast itself. The main character has been essayed by Hunter Burke, who acted in *Final Destination 3*. I met him one day at a bar and told the story and it took him a minute to agree to the role. Casting was that easy. The filming took about seven months in all. When this movie was shown at the festivals, many people told me that they did not expect such a film from an Indian director.

What else have you been doing?

After I returned from the US, I wanted to have a Bollywood experience. I was clear that it had to be either Ashutosh Gowariker or Yash Chopra. I left my movies at Ashutosh's office and was called by him to work for *Khelein Hum Jee Jaan Se*. It was a wonderful experience working for him.

On My Mind will be screened at Sublime Galleria, UB City, at 6.30 pm today