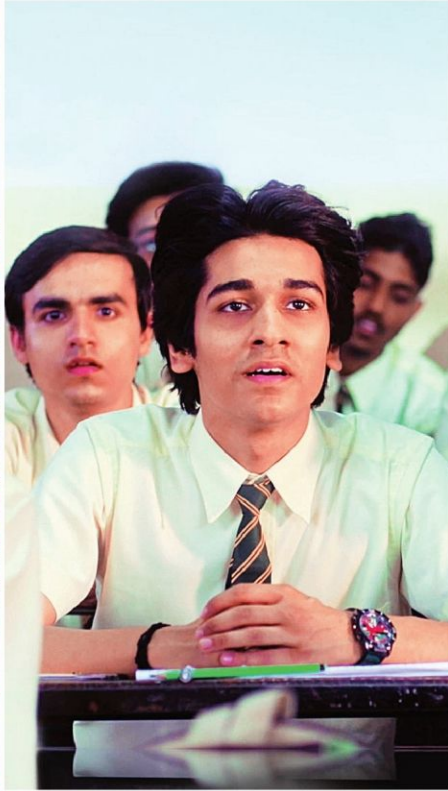


Global recognition for Applause's *Rasbhari*

Swara Bhasker-starrer becomes the first Indian series to be officially selected for the Series Mania International Festival



Swara Bhasker, Ayushmaan Saxena in the series

Nurturing talent across the world, the 'Series Mania International Festival' brings together the who's who of the content industry from across the world to celebrate their talent. Applause Entertainment's coming-of-age series, *Rasbhari* will be making a mark at this prestigious festival, as it becomes the first ever Indian series to be selected for the Short Forms Competition at the festival in France.

Series Mania International Festival, held at Lille in France, draws the most renowned names of the global series universe together on one common platform. Right from its inception in 2010, they have been instrumental in recognising and curating the best series in the world. Through this nine-day dynamic event, Series Mania brings the most renowned creators, screenwriters, directors and talents of yesterday, today and tomorrow's serial universe under one roof. *Rasbhari* has broken ground with its new-fangled narrative, impactful dialogues and eloquent cinematography. It has been selected alongside premium iconic shows for the Short Forms Competition like *Break Up* (France), *Drive* (Singapore), *Fourchette* (Canada), *Germain s'éteint* (Canada), *Hell Is Other People* (Denmark), *M* (Argentina), *People Talking* (Spain), *State of the Union* (United Kingdom) and *ZéroStérone* (France). Audiences present at this festival will also get to witness the world premiere of two episodes of *Rasbhari*.

Produced and co-created for Applause Entertainment by Tanveer Bookwala and directed by Nikhil Nagesh Bhatt (*Salun* and *Brij Mohan Amar Rahe*), *Rasbhari* is a coming-of-age love story, set in the Hindi heartland of small-town Meerut. The writer of the runaway hit film *Badhaai Ho*, Shantanu Shrivastava's stirring words, delectable turn of phrase, delightful local dialect and wicked sense of humour, coupled with Nikhil's deft direction makes



The show's director Nikhil Bhat, writer Shantanu Shrivastava and producer Tanveer Bookwala



Applause's Creative Director, Dheeman Agarwal, seen here with Head of Content, Deepak Segal

every character in this show come alive. Headlining a terrific cast of actors, the critically-acclaimed actor, Swara Bhasker, noted for her roles in *Tanu weds Manu* and *Raanjhanaa*, and her blazing success in *Veere Di Wedding* will play the enigmatic character of Shanu Madam, who is the object of attraction not only for the young hero, Nand (Ayushmaan Saxena), but also the entire male population of Meerut.

Swara's co-star Ayushmaan Saxena, who rose to fame through *Bombay Talkies* and won hearts with his stint on *Dance India Dance* Season 4, brings to life Nand's character, a 16-year-old boy who gets infat-

uated with his new English teacher. This story explores Nand's rite of passage to adulthood with a strong dose of social satire, ridiculing these men and their inveterate sexism. The show also features Rashmi Agdekar, Pradyuman Singh, Neelu Kohli and Chitrnanjan Tripathi in pivotal roles. The title music has been composed by Chirantan Bhatt.

"We are delighted to represent India at the esteemed Series Mania International Festival, France. Good content has global resonance, and our selection in the much sought-after Series Mania Competition is a strong validation of this. Working in close collaboration with Team Applause, Tanveer, Shantanu and Nikhil have created a sparkling gem of storytelling, which is now finding an audience across borders and continents. We are excited to showcase this labour of love at the festival and are looking forward to stream it soon for viewers all over the world," says Sameer Nair, CEO Applause Entertainment.

Tanveer Bookwala, Founder and Creative Director of Ding Entertainment, added, "*Rasbhari* (translated as 'juicy') is many parts sexy and all parts social satire. We have created a delightfully quirky and heart-warming tale, set in the landscape of exotic small town India that we hope it will appeal to prudes and poets alike."

Swara Bhasker adds, "The artiste in me was thrilled to be a part of a unique narrative like *Rasbhari* and I am now beyond thrilled to know that our series has been selected for the prestigious Series Mania International Festival! Thank you, Tanveer and Ding for pulling this together, Shantanu for the writing, Nikhil for bringing it to life, my wonderful co-stars, especially Ayushmaan Saxena, and Applause Entertainment for their bold belief in us."

Rasbhari will be streaming soon on a digital platform for the audience to watch and relish.