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Utpal Kalal's Documentary 'The 14th February & Beyond' Explores Commercialization of Valentine's Day

By R.M. VIJAYAKAR/Special to India-West

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MUMBAI — Filmmaker Utpal Kalal's documentary "The 14th February & Beyond" will have its Australia and Belgium premieres Nov. 23 at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne and Millenium International Documentary Film Festival, Belgium respectively. It first released Jan. 31, 2020.

This is a documentary film that exposes the strange face of Feb. 14 or Valentine's Day. It explores this global love-fest and its impact on the mental health of our society. The filmmaker explores the origins of this famous holiday on Feb. 14, and how the day has been twisted as a result of consumerism and commerciality into a competition and self-esteem checklist. The festival has its roots in Europe in the mid-19th century, picking up steam in America. But over almost 30 years now, in post-liberalization India, it is now a rage among the youth.

While disguised as a celebration of love, spanning days of gifts and adoration in some cultures, Valentine's Day can actually often lead to some very dark memories, humiliation and rejection, and also self-esteem crises for others. We reveal the shocking facts about the commercialization of Valentine's Day – the spending and traditions that have been overlooked until now, as well as bringing forth a comprehensive view of the subject through experts from various fields into this eye-opening narrative. And we all have an opinion on it—whatever it may be!

The film has got two Best Film awards and nine nominations so far.

Writer-director-editor Utpal Kalal is a filmmaker based in India. He grew up in a small town in Rajasthan. After finishing his medical studies, he followed his passion for cinema and went into full-time filmmaking. Kalal has directed several music videos, short documentaries and

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Shilpa Agrawal, Venkat Aravala, Sudhir Bhawe, Rajiv Malhotra , Yashma Mathur, Nityananda Misra, Vijay Phanshikar, Gajendra Singh Shekhavat, Namita Singh, Neerja Singh and Manjita Vanzara are among those who speak in the 59-minute documentary.

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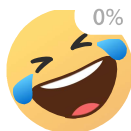
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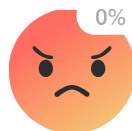
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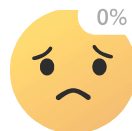
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