

Tahaan

**India – EAST COAST PREMIERE**

Live Action, Santosh Sivan, 2008, 105 min

Hindi with English subtitles

Recommended ages 8 to adult

IFC – Sun, Mar 8, 11:00am

*Tahaan*, from award winning director Santosh Sivan, is a stunningly shot, fable-like story set in scenic but strife-ridden Kashmir. The conflict is used as backdrop for the story of an eight-year-old boy, Tahaan, who tries to gain back his beloved pet donkey that has been sold along with his family's possessions to pay the family debt. With his father missing in action for three years, Tahaan lives with his older sister, his loving, parable-telling grandfather, and mute mother, but is left more or less on his own to wander village and countryside, navigate border checkpoints, and negotiate with merchants and money lenders in an effort to regain his lost pet. More than a war movie, this is a film about striving, finding life-purpose and, finally, of right and wrong—as Tahaan is recruited by a young terrorist/rebel to throw a grenade into an army compound, building up to a heart-thumping (but thankfully non-tragic) final scene. Like Sivan's earlier films, *Tahaan* is told with warmth, humor and simple honesty, while gorgeous cinematography offers breathtaking views of Kashmir's snow-covered mountain passes and shimmering lakes, and a recurring encounter with a group of mystic Sufi singers contributes to the atmosphere and provides a compellingly exotic musical bed.