

MEDIA RELEASE

4 February 2021

Award-winning student film explores domestic violence

Creative media student Bushra Khanum has been honoured at the [IndieFEST Film Awards](#) for her student film inspired by life experiences as a survivor of domestic violence.

[Chained to Traditions](#) tells the story of a young Sydney-born Pakistani woman, Zara, who is trapped in a physically and emotionally abusive marriage.

Bushra, who has just graduated with a Bachelor of Film degree at [SAE Creative Media Institute](#) in Sydney, said the film reflected many of her own struggles.

“I was in an abusive marriage for three years. I was not allowed to see my parents or anyone else, let alone talk to them,” she said.

“I would even get beaten if I cooked noodles that were too spicy, so I can relate to the character of Zara and what she goes through.”

Chained to Traditions takes place over the course of one evening and depicts the physical and emotional suffering of Zara, the fractious relationship with her family and the abuse she suffers at the hands of her husband.

“She lives in a westernised culture, but is surrounded by family who think and act as though they’re still living in Pakistan,” Bushra said.

“During the film we see Zara’s mother helpless to the situation. She wants to help her daughter, but is unable to challenge her husband. Whereas her sister is a fighter, who stands up for Zara and questions her father’s passive attitude to what’s happening.”



“I feel if we educate girls to be financially independent before they get married, they will have the confidence to leave that relationship if it goes sour,” Bushra said.

The IndieFEST Film Awards are open to all filmmakers globally, attracting powerhouse veteran filmmakers as well as newcomers to the industry. Bushra received an award of merit for her film. Previous award winners include *Love Thy Nature* with Liam Neeson; *A Path Appears* featuring George Clooney; and *Touched with Fire* starring Katie Holmes.

Prior to filming, Bushra identified as a writer, but it was SAE film faculty and mentor [Renee Brack](#) who first noticed Bushra’s raw directorial potential.

“I told Bushra that this is a great opportunity for her to step up, direct and create something significant and meaningful,” Renee said.

“I encourage students to make impactful content that could change the world and add to our understanding of it; this is something Bushra’s accomplished.”

Looking to the future and building on her award-winning debut in the director’s chair, Bushra is developing her own production company. “All I want to do is to keep making films about serious issues - bringing light to the issues people are too afraid to talk about.”

SAE is the place for creators and innovators. Make the leap from a film fan to studying for a [Bachelor of Film](#) that covers everything from concept to cut.

For more information:

Barry de Silva, National Communications Manager

Phone: 0498 004 023

Email: b.desilva@sae.edu

Imagery



About SAE

SAE Creative Media Institute is the place for creatives and innovators.

Since 1976 we've been the leaders in creative media education across animation, audio, creative industries, design, film, games, web and mobile. Every year, we support more than 10,000 students globally to develop the skills and experience needed to carve successful careers. Students enjoy access to the latest technology and are taught by industry-experienced faculty, while putting their skills to the test in small class environments. Our graduates become part of a highly-respected global community of creatives that's been around for over 40 years.

We pride ourselves on being technically explorative, transformative and brave through our range of creative media programs, from short courses and professional training through to bachelor and postgraduate degrees. In Australia, our programs are delivered at campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Byron Bay, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. SAE is a part of Navitas Pty Ltd. More information about SAE is available at sae.edu.au.

About Navitas

Navitas is a proud Australian company that pioneered an innovative university partnership model of education in Perth in 1994. Its entities have delivered education programs across the country since 1976. Further information about Navitas Pty Ltd is available at www.navitas.com.

