

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INSIDE OUT

Mark S. Bonham Scholarship for Queer Studies in Film and Video

Annual Deadline: May 30

Complete Scholarship information: [www.insideout.ca](http://www.insideout.ca)

### **2011 MARK S. BONHAM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**

In September 2011, Inside Out awarded Eshan Rafi as the tenth recipient of the annual Mark S. Bonham Scholarship for Queer Studies in Film and Video. Eshan is currently completing a BFA in Visual Arts and a BEd in Concurrent Education.

“It’s exciting to have a festival that has so much prominence be representative of the LGBTQ communities.” Eshan was proud to have a personal work, *becoming irfan*, screened at this year’s Festival as part of the Transplanetarium program, “which was really exciting and it felt good to be recognized as an artist/video maker.”

With the help of the scholarship, Eshan explains there will be “more time to spend on my artistic projects as well as investing time in applying for future screenings and exhibitions... build a more solid artistic community for myself within the queer/trans/people of colour communities...” Previous artistic practices have mostly encompassed video performance and installation work, drawing from an identity as a first generation Pakistani immigrant and queer transmasculine, racialized person. Eshan explores gender play by using multi-layered narratives, constructing critical spaces that provoke, seduce and subvert the viewer’s expectations.

“More than any other medium, video art grabbed my attention... I understood video as a medium that was taken up by queer people and racialized people not just to be seen and heard, but to be represented on our own terms... I understood video to be something that was explicitly queer... and explicitly political.”

Eshan describes a current project that will involve drawings, super 8 film and audio recordings of people singing a well-known Pakistani children’s song. Art pieces often start with family and cultural narratives and become very queer in the process, adding more layers of narrative. Eshan intends to use this project “...to disrupt the nationalism that underlies the song, as well as explore it as a performance of cultural and national identity and explore the resonance it holds for many people (including myself) who grew up singing the song in school.” Inside Out is excited to see what will come from this budding video artist in the near future.

Established in 2001, the Mark S. Bonham Scholarship for Queer Studies in Film or Video is a \$5000 cash scholarship that assists a Canadian student who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transgender in pursuing post-secondary studies in the field of film and/or video. The Scholarship is awarded annually by Inside Out, organizers of the Toronto LGBT Film and Video Festival. A jury of industry professionals, educators and Inside Out representatives chooses the scholarship winner. Previous recipients of the scholarship are Adam Garnet Jones, Mary Fogarty, Christopher Sanchez, Jung Kim, Cam Matamoros, Jo SiMalaya Alcampo, Rachel Smyth, Jordan Tannahill and Amy Dyck.

The annual deadline for applications is May 30 and complete information is available at [www.insideout.ca](http://www.insideout.ca).

-30-

For media inquiries please contact Scott Ferguson, [scott@insideout.ca](mailto:scott@insideout.ca)

**About Inside Out:**

Inside Out, producer of the Ottawa-Gatineau and Toronto LGBT film festivals, is the largest queer film organization in the country. The organization is a non-profit charity that is committed to the exhibition, promotion and production of Canadian and International queer cinema to a diverse and inclusive community. Through the generous support of it's members and several annual initiatives including a scholarship fund, peer-mentoring, touring program and one of the world's premier LGBT film festivals, Inside Out has been challenging attitudes and changing lives for more than 20 years.