

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No: 15056

Media Contact: Jared Glover, (803) 348-6010 (c), (803) 898-4948 (o), [jared.glover@scmuseum.org](mailto:jared.glover@scmuseum.org)

Photos and Cutlines: [Click Here](#)

## State Museum to Host Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Exploring the History of Indian Americans

**COLUMBIA, S.C., April 12, 2017** --From the builders of some of America's earliest railroads and farms to Civil Rights pioneers and digital technology entrepreneurs, Indian Americans have long been an inextricable part of American life. The State Museum's new traveling exhibition, *Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation*, details the history of Indian Americans and their contributions to the United States from the 1700s to the present. The first-of-its-kind exhibition from the Smithsonian will be on view at the State Museum opening, Saturday, April 29.

Approximately 17 million people in the United States are of Asian and Pacific Islander descent, and the number is expected to climb to 41 million by 2050. One in every 100 Americans has a family connection to India. Indian immigrants helped build the nation's railroads, worked in lumber mills, toiled on farms and established prosperous trading routes that are still in use today. Through a vibrant collection of photographs, artifacts, art and interactive learning stations, guests will experience the Indian American story and explore the many dynamic roles Indian Americans have played in shaping South Carolina and the rest of the United States.

"A wonderful aspect of this project has been working with the Indian American community. The museum has been working with some great partners to tell the South Carolina story of Indian Americans in our state and also preparing some amazing programs in conjunction with the exhibition," said JoAnn Ziese, curator of history. "It's an honor to share the important story of both immigrants and those who have been in the state for generations. Everyone in the Indian American community has been excited share their experiences and introduce people to their culture and history."

On opening day of *Beyond Bollywood*, April 29, the State Museum will host a number of family friendly activities. Guests will discover and play traditional Indian games from 11 a.m. until 12 p.m. and from 1 until 2 p.m. City Yoga will lead a special kid friendly yoga class. Headlining the day at 3 p.m., will be Dr. Nagarkatti, Vice President of Research at the University of South Carolina. Dr. Nagarkatti will present his work on Complementary Alternative Medicine and how his work connects to India scientifically and culturally.

Created by the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), *Beyond Bollywood* features Indian Americans' migration experiences, working lives, political struggles and cultural and religious contributions. *Beyond Bollywood* will be accompanied by a series of Tuesday night events from 6 until 8 p.m. including:

### **Midlands Gives Bollywood Celebration** (May 2)

Apart of the Midlands Gives celebration, *Beyond Bollywood* will be highlighted with henna tattoos, traditional clothing demonstrations and a number of dance programs.

### **Food and Spices of India** (May 9)

Explore the foodways traditions of India. Presenters will demonstrate the cultural significance of Indian spices, food and how spices are used in traditional Indian dishes.

### **Clothing and Costumes of India** (May 16)

Discover the incredible from the diverse cultures and history of India for men and women. Explore the use of different weaves, patterns, textiles, handwork and ways of wearing beautiful fabrics.

### **Music and Dance of India** (May 23)

Experience the classical music and dance of India

### **Holistic Healing** (June 13)

Hima Dalai from Vital Energy will discuss traditional Indian methods of holistic healing. Hima Dalai is a certified, licensed occupational therapist, energy practitioner with over 30 years of experience.

### **Vedanta Spiritual Philosophy** (June 20)

Explore the endless questions of life and the pursuit of happiness in this special Vedanta spiritual philosophy class from Vedanta World of New York.

### **Yoga** (June 27)

City Yoga owner and instructor, Staci millner-Collins will lead a yoga class for guests to celebrate the museum's *Beyond Bollywood* exhibition.

All Tuesday night events are free with museum general admission and *Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation* is free with museum general admission. The State Museum is open Monday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.; Wednesday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Sunday, 12 – 5 p.m. Visit [scmuseum.org](http://scmuseum.org) to learn more.

***About the South Carolina State Museum:*** *As the state's largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000 square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia's Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its largest artifacts, an 1894 old textile mill full of character and charm. Guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch an interactive 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science/technology. Visit [scmuseum.org](http://scmuseum.org) to learn more.*

***About SITES:*** *SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 65 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. Exhibition descriptions and tour schedules are available at [www.sites.si.edu](http://www.sites.si.edu).*

***About the Smithsonian's Asian Pacific American Center:*** *The Asian Pacific American Center provides vision, leadership, and support for Asian and Pacific Islander American initiatives for the Smithsonian Institution and works to better reflect their contributions to the American experience, world culture, and the understanding of our planet and the natural world throughout Smithsonian Institution collections, research, exhibitions, outreach, and education programs.*

###