

Raj Singh: An Outstanding Documentary Film Producer

* Courtesy: Sikh Research Institute (USA) Email: info@sikhri.org

San Antonio, Texas - One of the youngest Sikh filmmakers in the world has created a documentary that has taken the community by pleasant surprise. 19 year old Raj Singh has captivated his audience across borders with his filming skills. To mark the 300th Anniversary of Guruship of Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Research Institute (SikhRI) humbly shares the release of **35**, a documentary focused on Gurmukhi script. "Out of sheer honesty, this documentary originated on the basis of my own personal interest," said Raj Singh. Raj says he wanted to find out for himself the origins of the Gurmukhi script and, even further, develop a stronger personal relationship with the Guru. The documentary centers around the scriptural canon of the Sikh nation - Guru Granth Sahib. It incorporates the history, purpose, and methods available to learn the Gurmukhi script.

Raj shared his view that he does not entirely understand the hybridized language of Gurbani and he wanted to create a documentary that one, catered to his own interest, and two, could be utilized as a motivational tool for the Sikh Community. "By working on this film, I have gained a solid understanding of our scriptural history and methods of learning Gurbani; however, most of all I have began to not only read Gurbani, but I have been able to develop my own personal interpretations which has uplifted my spirit as a son, a brother, a friend, and especially as a Sikh," commented Raj. He started making films at the age of thirteen. He has put together various films that have been submitted to different festivals across the world. They include "The Unrepresented Sikh Nation," "Jaswant Singh Khalra," and "Darsh Flies High." "A lot of credit has to go to my family and especially my parents," he said. "They have blessed me with not only the opportunity, but with the support that I have needed to continue growing as a filmmaker."

Harinder Singh, Executive Director of SikhRI and co-producer of **35** remarked, "This is an attempt to share the Guru-granted scriptural heritage of the Sikhs and its impact on the Sikh culture. It also contextualizes the pronunciation, grammar, and lexicon for building a relationship with the Sabad – the infinite wisdom with the Guru Granth Sahib." **35** was made possible with support from SikhRI and Panjab Digital Library (PDL). SikhRI facilitates educational endeavors that explore various dimension of Sikh culture. Panjab Digital Library is a digitization and preservation repository dedicated to "revealing the invisible heritage."

