

San Jose Mercury News



sal pizarro

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Pizarro: Deepak Chopra raises consciousness at Cinequest

By Sal Pizarro
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Updated: 03/03/2010 09:29:05 PM PST

Deepak Chopra is a doctor, an author and a New Age self-help celebrity. He's recently delved into graphic novels and movies, too. But Tuesday night at the Cinequest Film Festival, he was branded a maverick.

"I like to speak with a rebel's voice, so it feels good," said Chopra, who received the Life of a Maverick award at the California Theatre in downtown San Jose.

Relaxed in a blazer and jeans with his standard sparkling eyeglasses, Chopra addressed consciousness, spirituality, art and addiction during an hourlong conversation on stage with Cinequest co-founder Kathleen Powell.

He also announced plans for a new film project titled "Beyond." Chopra described the project, based on the Liquid Comics graphic novel he wrote, as "an adventure into other dimensions."

"Just like 'Avatar' explores outer space, this explores inner space," he said.

If there was any disappointment for the crowd, it was due to a dodgy sound system that made it tough to hear the early part of the program. Chopra made up for it, though, by going out into the audience to field questions at the end of the event.

ANOTHER MAVERICK: Former "Law & Order" star Benjamin Bratt is slated to receive a Maverick Spirit award at Cinequest tonight. The 7 p.m. event at the California Theatre will begin with a screening of "La Mission," which stars Bratt and was directed by his brother, Peter Bratt (who'll introduce the film).

MOVING

IN: Sarah Ligda, a 26-year-old San Jose State University grad who moved into The 88 condo building last month, has been recognized as San Jose's 1,500th downtown high-rise resident.

She'll be feted at a Downtown Association news conference today that will also highlight retailers that have opened or are planning to open downtown.

IRISH WEEK: The 11 members of the Dublin sister city delegation, led by Lord Mayor Emer Costello, arrived in San Jose Wednesday.

This morning, they're attending a breakfast at the Silicon Valley Capital Club, followed by a 10 a.m. ceremony to raise the Irish flag at San Jose City Hall.

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