

# Collaborative cinema is more than sum of parts

A still from Neha Raheja Thakker's *The Bullock Cart*A still from Xavier Agudo's *Hottie Lollie*

A still from Rafael Yoshida's movie

SHWETA SHARMA

**C**ollabFeature is a unique collaborative cinematic experience that is bringing together a community of international filmmakers who push each other to be better, inspire with different perspectives and help each other reach a wider audience.

Started by award-winning independent Detroit-based filmmakers Ian Bonner and Marty Shea, this project involves a group of filmmakers from around the world who have created a feature film by weaving together multiple stories.

"I first had the idea back in college, where I was studying auteur filmmakers who have a strong personal side. But I was also interested in music and I love the idea of each musician responding to the other, each contributing their own personality and vision to the songs, so that the result is bigger than the sum of its parts. That got me thinking about how the concept of a band could apply to filmmaking," says Shea.

They are currently shooting their first multi-director feature (untitled) that ties

25 short films with a central object — an old, canvas backpack that gets passed from character to character and country to country, on its way back to its owner. Each segment presents a new little adventure involving the bag — each one from the mind of a different filmmaker.

"My segment called *Where East Meets West* because it is exactly where the story changes direction from East to West. It is about a woman who lives in India and decides to come to Lebanon to throw her father's ashes in the land he adored so much," says Sabine Sebaali, freelance filmmaker.

Filmmaker Nicolas Fogliarini's segment is a comedy. "My segment is about the editor of a fashion magazine *object* who is asked by his biggest advertiser from Germany to find the backpack for his young girlfriend, he told *Guardian20*."

The filmmakers submitted their films and a range of genres were selected. Shea adds that they worked with filmmakers who were creative and worked on a lower budget. With 23 out of 25 segments wrapped, the project is likely to release in 2011. Shot over 19 cities, the crew inter-

acted online throughout the discussion stage. "I needed to wrap the shoot in a very little time and the budget I had was close to nothing. This made me get creative in terms of getting my cast, locations and equipment," says filmmaker Xavier Agudo.

The filmmakers agree that it was a challenge. It was a learning experience to shoot independently and yet in collaboration with other filmmakers. "I tried to not bring too much of my ego into the whole thing; I just wanted to let go and work freely. If something didn't work out, I would simply shrug and move on," says Vishesh Mankal, a Delhi based filmmaker who explains his segment *Clinging* to be a break in the narrative.

"As a short filmmaker I have been searching for a way to make short films that would give them a larger market than the festival circuit. However, currently there is no successful revenue model for short films. CollabFeature enabled me to make a short film and use the revenue model for the feature film as a distribution strategy," says Neha Raheja Thakker, a filmmaker.

## Inuit art finds a home in wintry Delhi

VANDANA SEBASTIAN

**T**he National Gallery of Canada has tied up with the National Museum Institute in New Delhi to put together an exhibition of Inuit art which will run most of the winter, all the way until January next year. Inuits, native residents of the Arctic region, were previously known as Eskimos, though that term is now considered offensive. The Inuits have established a powerful art movement since the mid-twentieth century with their intricate carvings and miniature work on bone and wood. But their language and culture is now quietly fading away, as like many primeval cultures, Inuits are also finding it hard to stand still against the tide of modernity.

The exhibition at the National Museum brings to-

gether work by contemporary artists from the Inuit region. There is also work by artists who lived and worked over the past century. The modern Inuit artists, through their work, have been trying

to preserve their fading culture. They use the same base material as their ancestors, like whale bone and green stone, though there is some work included also experiments with pencil, crayon

and paper. Artists like Pudlat and Michael Massie illustrate the influence of globalisation on the Inuit culture in a humorous way. For example, Pudlat, in a piece entitled *Aeroplane*, shows

an aircraft flying through a very tall igloo. The work illustrates that the igloo is still tall enough to reach the aircraft, indicating that the Inuits will preserve their identity in spite of the changes they have to deal with. The exhibit is large, and a thorough viewing with the assistance of one of the very enthusiastic tour guides could take almost two hours.

"Considering the very minimalist tools used by the artists, their work is brilliant. They have managed to create detailed sculptures and carvings with blunt, archaic tools. The work might not be largely expressive, but it has rich tradition and history," says Rupa Kumari, an arts history student from the National Museum Institute, who is also one of the tour guides. The travelling exhibit moves back to Canada on January 2, 2010.



Visitors enjoying a tour of the Inuit art exhibit at the National Museum, New Delhi

## What India used to look like



The Golden Temple, Amritsar, Punjab

SABA SIDDIQUI

**I**f you have ever wondered how the venerable cities of India looked before they were devoured by mall sprawl and tourism, visit the ongoing exhibition, One Hundred Vintage Views of India. Tasveer, an organisation heavily involved in photography, has joined hands with the antiquarian book house Bernard Shapero Rare Books to organise it. It is a touring photo exhibition that aims at introducing 19th century photography to potential collectors and institutions in India. "The images date back to the early 19th century and have been clicked by both established as well as unknown photographers," says Kaajal Gupta, the Creative Head of Tasveer.

"We have about 100 images, though all of them might not be circulating due to space constraints. They are vintage prints and have both historical as well as common spaces and people from that era," she adds.

There is a beautiful picture



Summer palace of Tipu Sultan, Seringapatam, Karnataka

of the Marble Palace, Red Fort in Delhi by well-known British photographer Samuel Bourne. A picture of the Lidder river in Kashmir by John Burke and William Baker, and another of the summer palace of Tipu Sultan in Seringapatam, Karnataka, clicked by John P. Nicholas, have all been shown here.

"These pictures are authentic and we have collected them from dealers, photograph collectors and from the archives of Bernard Shapero Rare Books over a period of two years," says Gupta.

The average price of each picture is Rs 20,000, depending on who the photographer is, the amount paid to the original owner and the cost incurred. Though some pictures are very beautiful, others aren't that great. There is one photo which focuses on a part of the Qutub Minar. The only reason someone would buy it is that it has been clicked by Samuel Bourne. Another picture shows lattice screens of Taj Mahal taken from the side. Clicked by an unknown photographer, it might not hold your interest.

This exhibition starts in Delhi on November 12. Next, it will tour Mumbai, Kolkata and Ahmedabad and while doing so the organisers hope that all the pictures are sold out. "We have sold some of these pictures, but we will deliver them to the buyers only after the tour ends, so that others can have a look at them too," she adds.

The exhibition will be displayed at Art Motif Gallery, F213 C, Lado Sarai, New Delhi from November 12-24, between 11am to 7pm (Sundays closed).



Caves of Elephanta, Mumbai

### THE BUZZ

#### Biographer sues *Fela!* production team

**The biographer of Fela** Anikulpa Kuti, the Afrobeat musician, has filed a suit against the team of the Broadway musical *Fela!* on the grounds that the stage production breaches on the copyright to his book. He is demanding an injunction against the show. Author Carlos Moore in his complaint, filed in federal district court in Manhattan accuses the musical of copying portions from his book verbatim and inserting them into the script of his musical. Moore says that he had been approached by producers of the musical before, but an adequate compensation was never proposed. Moore's biography of Fela was titled *Fela: This bitch of a life*.

#### Warhol's Coke bottle caps \$222m in auction



works completed by Warhol between 1961 and 1962, helped Tuesday night's sale of contemporary art at Sotheby's to reach a recession-defying total of \$222.45m.

**The New York art** market continued a run of soaring prices after a distinctive Andy Warhol Pop Art painting broke its estimated sale price and sold for \$33.4m (£20.7m). Coca-Cola (4) (Large Coca-Cola), part of a series of

#### Hefner mansion and artwork to be sold

**Hugh Hefner might** have to pawn his lavish Playboy Mansion and his collection of artwork treasures to sort out his debt issues. The 84-year old founder and chief creative officer of Playboy Enterprises must raise \$115 million in 16 months to pay investors who plan to demand payment of their convertible bonds on March 15, 2012. Hefner controls the company with 70 percent of its voting stock. The panic alarms have been set off over the past few months as there has been pressure from the company for him to cover debt that he took on six years ago. According to a Wall Street analyst, Hef's finances are really tangled.

#### Art condemned by Nazis found in Berlin



The terracotta and bronze statues were found during a dig to lay down a new subway line. They belonged to a collection of 15,000 works condemned by Hitler's regime.

**Nearly a dozen sculptures** considered by the Nazis to be "degenerate" artwork and believed to have been lost or destroyed after the Second World War have been unearthed during building work near Berlin's city hall.

#### Houellebecq wins Goncourt prize



published his first novel in 1994 and sealed his reputation a few years later with *Platform*, had been previously repeatedly overlooked for the Goncourt, France's equivalent of a Pulitzer.

**Michel Houellebecq**, France's leading fiction provocateur, took home the prestigious Goncourt prize after years of dominating the French literary scene without a nod from the award committee. Houellebecq, who

#### Ugandan President creates a dance hit

**He is 65, has been** President for more than two decades and is Uganda's newest rap star. Facing an election in February, Yoweri Museveni has released a rap song and video that has become a sensation in the East African nation, played at dance clubs and on the radio. Supporters at a rally in northern Uganda last week called for Mr Museveni to perform "U Want Another Rap" and he sang as his supporters danced. The lyrics are not exactly gangsta — they are about making something out of nothing and getting ahead in life. Museveni had explained while addressing a rally of his party in October that he recently learned about the black African roots of hip hop music.

#### Perry to perform at Grammy nominations



among the top U.S. pop hits of the year, will be joined on stage by country singer Miranda Lambert, rapper B.o.B and singer-songwriter Bruno Mars.

**Pop stars Katy Perry** and Justin Bieber will perform at a show to announce the Grammy nominations, organisers for the top music awards said. The 16-year-old Bieber and Perry, whose song "California Gurls" has been

#### Pulp to re-form for Wireless festival

**Britpop band Pulp** are reuniting to perform on stage together for the first time in almost 15 years, the former chart stars announced. Frontman Jarvis Cocker and members of the band from the days of the peak of their success will re-form to headline the Wireless festival in London's Hyde Park next summer. A spokesman for the Sheffield group, whose hits included *Common People* and *Disco 2000*, said: "Pulp have decided to get together and play some concerts next summer. They will be playing songs from all periods of their career. This will be the first time that all the original Pulp members have been on stage together since 24th August 1996."