

# pickle

From theindianentertainment.com

- Volume No: I-9&10
- Nov 26-Dec 08, 2006
- New Delhi • India



## KRUTI MAJMUDAR

Producer and director of film *The Memsahib* examines Thomson Grassvalley Viper digital camera at the Digiquest Film Bazaar stall at Goa. Viper records in hard disk eliminating the celluloid. Brought first time to India, Hyderabad-based Digiquest studio rents Viper to film makers at \$700 a day. Films like *Collateral*, *Miami Vice*, *Zodiac* has been shot in the Viper FilmStream camera

Photos: MIGUEL

## NEW SALES AGENCY

iDream Independent Pictures (IIP) is a new sales agency set up to sell independent Indian films worldwide. IIP will also bet on regional films

It is good news for the independent film makers' community in India. iDream Productions has ventured to set up iDream Independent Pictures (IIP), India's first independent sales agency. The company will be based in London and Mumbai and headed by Rohit Sharma (rohit@idreamproduction.com). Till recently, Rohit was in iDream's international sales division.

"We have developed contacts and expertise over the last few years in this space. We have four titles now and will have four more for the Cannes Film Market," said Rohit. "We are also looking at regional films which will work in the overseas market."

While Yashraj, Adlabs, Eros, UTV have betted on big blockbuster Hindi films,

the formation of this independent sales agency will open distribution opportunity to a new genre of independent films - who were struggling to find an agent for global distribution.

IIP was launched during the American Film Market 2006 and will target Indian (also English films) and documentaries for worldwide markets.

Backed by one of India's leading financial securities group, the SSKI Group, iDream Production is India's leading production & distribution company. IIP has been promoted by iDream Production and Crossover Capital. Crossover Capital and its sister company Screen Investors have been active in India's media sector for nearly five years, investing nearly \$100m into 35 productions.

## NEW IIP TITLES

- Kaushik Ray Gupta's *On Life and Enlightenment* - a five part documentary series featuring the Dalai Lama
- Antara Bharadwaj's *Telling Lies* -- a thriller starring Melanie Brown, Jason Flemming
- *Karma Confessions and Holi* -- a drama featuring Sushmita Sen, Naomi Campbell and Drena Deniro (daughter of Robert Deniro)
- Pankaj Advani's *Cape Karma* -- a surreal thriller starring Audrey Woodhouse

The Dalai Lama series was sold at the AFM to territories such as Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium ...

IFFI offers a meeting ground to explore new biz

# ADVANTAGE INDIA

Engaging with Indian movie business is a top priority among the global showbiz professionals. Here is a quick look at what is on their mind

## Xavier Merlin **FRANCE**

Director CNC -- Centre National de la Cinématographie

**X**avier Merlin represents the French National Cinema. He was in Goa during IFFI to initiate dialogue with the I&B Ministry to enter into a new audio visual co-production agreement between India and France. "We do have a co-production treaty with India dating back to 1985. But it is old fashioned, outdated and needs to be refreshed. Our wish is to update and sign a new audio visual treaty," says Xavier. He is confident that the treaty will work with India as there are

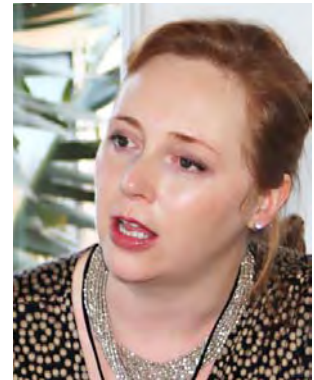


lot of common stories to tell between France and India. France produced 240 films in 2005. One out of two movies produced in France are co-produced. CNC is keen to sign the refreshed treaty during the Cannes Film Festival (CFF) May 2007, which marks the 60th anniversary of CFF and 60 years of Indian Independence

## Clare Wise **UK**

Head, International, UK Film Council

**C**lare Wise has been doing rounds for sometime to stitch the Indo-UK Film Co-Production Treaty. The preamble of the Treaty was signed last year but the annexures are not yet finalised. The biggest bottleneck is the cultural test imposed by UK, which has little takers among the Indian film producers. Like Xavier, Clare Wise has also pitched the Indo-UK Treaty to be signed at Cannes next year. "We are ready to negotiate and crack the annexure in the Treaty," says Clare Wise. While many Indian film makers say that there are creative interventions in the Indo-UK Treaty, UK feels that cultural tests are necessary as they offer subsidy to film makers. Indian films have done well in UK this year grossing over 12 million pounds from 60 releases. Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna raked in 2 million pounds this year.



## Rex Weiner **USA**

President, Media Telka

**R**ex Weiner is currently in India working on few scripting projects. A member of the Writers Guild of America since 1982, Weiner's produced screenwriting credits include The Amnesty Files, Miami Vice, Glades among others. His screenwriting workshop at Film Bazaar, IFFI was attended by 50 students. Rex had his audience rapt for 150 minutes and dealt in detail all the aspects required to be successful in screen writing. "It should a simple story with one character and initially you have to work with a line followed



by three lines and then six to nine pages," says Rex. Syd Field from US will be in India next month for a script workshop organised by UTV. UK Film Council is also working on a script project in India. Rex will be remembered in India for bringing the thought for financiers to invest in a script than on a movie.

## Hisham Alghanim **MIDDLE EAST**

Head, Kuwait National Cinema Company

**H**isham Alghanim owns all the 28 movie screens in Kuwait. He was in Goa to employ 50 people during the IFFI. Hisham plans to expand the movie screens in Kuwait to 36 in April 2007 and 84 screens in 2009. He will be in Kerala next month to employ another round of people for his theatre chain. Most of his 550 employees working at Kuwaiti theatres are from India.



"Indian film content is consumed more than Hollywood in Kuwait," says Hisham. Telugu and Hindi movies are more popular in Kuwait theatres. India has a lot to learn from the transparent box office system devised by KNCC.

Hisham has engaged Chennai-based Real Image to deploy digital cinema in the new movie screen additions. He is the real ambassador to the Indian showbiz sector in the Middle East.

**India has a huge cost advantage in post production work**

# TRANSPARENCY IS KEY

The biggest challenge for Indian filmed entertainment is to enter markets beyond the diaspora



**Stephen Cohen** USA  
Vice President Ascent Media

US-based Ascent Media is the largest post production studio in the world owned by John Mallone. Stephen Cohen was at his best in sharing the emerging technologies shaping the filmed entertainment space at the Goa Film Bazaar workshop. Cohen is impressed with India and his company is currently exploring to off-shore post production work to India.

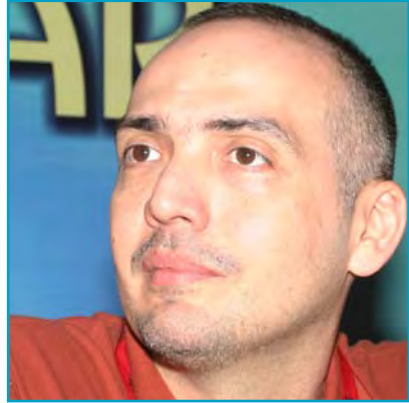
"India is a rapidly developing country in terms of technology. Anybody who does not recognise India for the powerhouse that they are and are going to become will lose their position in the global business. I hope to see how I can persuade my managers to see the same thing," said Cohen. He is likely to visit India next month for the Bangalore film festival. Cohen will also visit post production facilities to see potential business opportunities.



**Francois Da Silva** FRANCE  
Europa Corp

Europa Corp is the only company in the world owned by a director, Luc Besson. It is Europe's largest film distribution and production company and last year the company invested Euros 200 million on eight movies. Francois's job is to travel around the world, pick projects and bring this talent to Europa Corp.

Francois maintained that if Indian films have to see move abroad, there is a need to tell a story in honest manner-- language and culture difference does not matter. "It is important to be honest and very rooted to your own culture and roots. The more local orientation you have, more global could be your appeal," he says. Francois says there is curiosity about India in France, but the Indian film industry is very complicated. "My advice to Indian showbiz industry is to be less complicated and more importantly answer emails."



**Helder Da Costa** BRAZIL  
Tropical Storm

Helder is a well-known sales agent in Brazil and has set up a company to source Indian films in the Latin American market. After watching Indian films for four consecutive years, Helder has not still found a suitable Indian film for the Brazilian market. "We have recently bought *Krish* to the Brazilian market. It could be extended to Argentina also. We think it will work well in the home entertainment market," says Helder. He says the format of the Indian films has to change if it is targeted at the overseas audience. Helder watched glimpses of the panorama movie *Sringaram* directed by Sharada Ramanathan. "The movie is great. But it will not work for an overseas audience because it is made strongly for the local audience here," says Helder. He says the biggest challenge for the Indian cinema is to go beyond the diaspora market to reach out to a global audience.

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De Heer may do an Indian musical film after Dr Plonk

# SOPS FROM ICELAND

Jamaican Film Commission assist in getting visas, work permits and clear red tape related to licenses



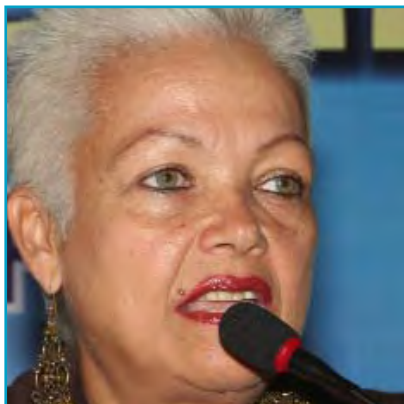
**Auðunn Atlason** ICELAND

Deputy Chief of Mission  
Embassy of Iceland to India

Soon Iceland will be on the tourist map of India. Iceland has begun to lure Indian film makers to shoot movies in their country. Acting ambassador of Iceland to India, Auðunn Atlason has been at his best pitching Indian producers to shoot in Iceland. Icelandic Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde will visit India next month with a delegation of film makers and meet industry representatives at Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai.

The main event will be in Mumbai on January 10, 2007. Iceland offers 12 per cent refund on all film and TV production costs in the country.

Some of the films that have been shot in Iceland include *Flags of Our Fathers*, *Beowulf & Grendel*, *Batman Begins*, *Die Another Day*, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, *A Little Trip to Heaven* among others.

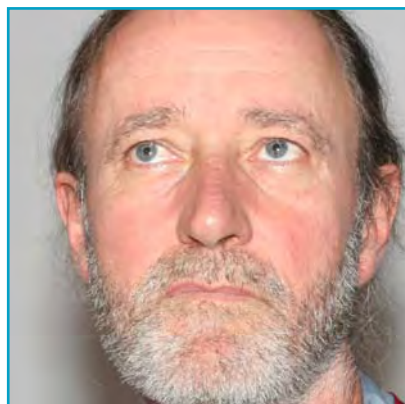


**Dell Crooks** JAMAICA

Jamaican Film Commissioner

The Jamaica Film Commissioner Dell Crooks is keen on engaging with India and sign a co-production Treaty between India and Jamaica. "We have common stories to tell and there is a natural synergy between India and Jamaica," says Dell. Like France, Jamaica has an institutionalised set up to shoot films. Scripts must be submitted to the film commission for approval before the shooting commences. Interestingly, if the local hotels are promoted, the crew will get free accommodation during the shooting. This is in big contrast to hotels in Goa where the cost of staying at Marriott or Taj is equal to what it costs in New York or Paris star hotels.

The Commission also assists in getting visas, work permit and clear any red-tape related to licenses, duty exemptions and access to public buildings.



**Rolf De Heer** AUSTRALIA

Film Maker

Rolf De Heer is the Jury head of the 37th International Film Festival of India at Goa. After 28 long years, De Heer was in India for the IFFI. De Heer's film *Ten Canoes* (Australia's official entry for for best foreign language film at next year's Oscars) was shot entirely in the indigenous language of Ganabingu, spoken only by 200 people. "The language doesn't matter at all," says De Heer on a film to reach to a global audience. He remembers watching Satyajit Ray and Shyam Benegal movies in art house cinemas at Australia. In recent times SBS the Australian public broadcaster -- which has a special mandate to reflect the multicultural nature of Australian society has begun to screen Indian cinema. De Heer's next film is *Dr Plonk*, a black and white, silent comedy in the style of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin films shot on a hand-cranked camera.

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## Movie Piracy in the Oscar Season

# SHAME SHAME

Films are not safe at the accounting firm that received Academy Award screeners. The Academy member has no knowledge that the screeners sent to him have been intercepted

**A** 22-year old male suspect was arrested this week by the Southern California High Tech Task Force for illegally selling and distributing Academy Awards screeners. The suspect uploaded the films to the Internet making them available to millions of people and then attempted to sell the screeners to an undercover informant.

He obtained the movies from his 22-year old female cousin who was also arrested for felony second degree burglary and embezzlement for stealing the screeners from her employer. The female suspect worked as a receptionist at an accounting firm that received Academy Award screeners on behalf of an Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) member. She is accused of intercepting packages containing the screeners intended for the member, and then providing them to her cousin.

"It is vital that we protect the integrity of the Academy Awards and the films being considered during this Oscar season," said Dan Glickman, Chairman and CEO of the Motion Pictures Association of America. "This should serve as a reminder to all those participat-

ing in the voting process to keep these films safe from people who may seek to sell them for a profit. A screener is an advance copy of a DVD sent to AMPAS voting members prior to the Academy Awards ceremonies. The suspects are accused of stealing and illegally distributing Warner Bros.'

Infamous, New Line Cinema's *Little Children*, Paramount's *Babel*, Sony's *Running With Scissors* and *Marie Antoinette*, and First Look's *The Dead Girl*. A subsequent search of the female suspect's home revealed that she had also stolen three additional screeners including

Disney's *Pirates of The Carribean 2*, Warner Bros.' *Superman Returns* and Miramax Film's *The Queen*. The arrests were the result of a joint investigation by the Southern California High Tech Task Force and the MPAA. Each screener is water-marked enabling forensics investigators to trace the source of a pirated copy which allowed investigators to identify the Academy member who was the intended recipient of

the screener. The Academy member had no knowledge that the screeners had been intercepted and no connection to the suspects.



## Technology

# Bollywood Goes High Def With HD VMD

**N**ew Medium Enterprises (NME), developers of high definition platforms, processes and technologies, has concluded content distribution deals with six of India's largest film content distributors.

For the first time ever, major Bollywood titles will be available in high-definition (HD) through NME's HD VMD format. The titles will go on sale in January 2007 together with the HD VMD player; a bundled solution of 10 Bollywood titles and a player will be available for US\$299 through Indian retailers and on various Indian e-commerce sites for Asian audiences living overseas.

"Bollywood productions have an epic global audience but viewers have been frustrated by the lack of high definition content. Now, for the first time ever, VMD offers ultra-high quality high-definition experience which the content deserves," said Mahesh Jayanarayan CEO of NME. "VMD's adoption by Bollywood alone will provide a life-long annuity for NME; we are committed to providing high-quality HD content, but most importantly we are making it affordable to both consumers and vendors."

Launched at Mipcom in October 2006, NME's first generation HD VMD player offers true high definition to the international mass consumer market; in addition it is backwards-compatible, capable of playing existing DVD formats.

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Pickle is for the filmed entertainment biz.

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## MARKET INDICATORS

# Overview

A recent survey of Chief Financial Officers of global Entertainment and Media E&M companies by Ernst & Young revealed that new media technologies will continue to drive growth in this sector. E&M industry is poised for high growth and it will be powered by internet media providers. Filmed content like movie clips, music and mobisodes will drive growth in the new world of online digital broadband.

**Media & Entertainment Companies traded in the Bombay Stock Exchange (value in Rs)**

Company	Sept 27	Dec 05	P/E Ratio
Adlabs Films	345.35	409.30	64.97
Balaji Telefilm	137.00	146.35	17.59
Cinevista Ltd	23.00	22.25	-15.82
Crest Animation	115.70	107.50	34.68
Cyber Media	80.00	132.40	27.76
Deccan Chronicle	481.30	712.65	43.19
ETC Networks	43.15	47.05	9.60
ENT Network India	244.70	243.10	62.02
Galaxy Entertainment	202.40	208.75	54.99
HT Media	581.90	770.95	64.81
Inox Leisure	53.65	174.00	59.39
JagranPrakashan	292.05	312.05	45.16
K Sera Sera	29.50	31.75	—
Mukta Arts	55.95	57.00	-23.58
NDTV	214.25	233.50	-218.22
Prime Focus	—	323.45	25.71
PVR	255.10	244.40	107.48
Pritish Nandy	47.50	41.55	10.88
Sahara One	317.00	428.30	99.60
Saregama India	185.85	209.75	36.47
Shringar Cinema	46.40	55.05	-60.49
Sun TV	1244.10	1507.95	71.95
TV 18	602.00	895.10	95.43
TV Today Network	75.85	74.50	15.08
TIPS Industries	28.20	26.15	44.07
UTV Software	179.25	276.50	—
Zee Telefilms	302.25	358.30	85.72

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## PICKLE DIGEST



Eminent architect Charles Correa was felicitated by the CII for his contribution towards Goa at India - the Big Picture Conference. Also seen in the picture is Goa Chief Minister Pratapsingh Rane

## India at Golden Globes

India has bright chances at this years Golden Globes as the nominations for best foreign film will be announced on December 14th 2006. *Rang De Basanti*, *Omkara*, and *Lage Raho Munnabha* are holding the flag for India as the race begins for the 64th Annual Golden Globe Awards. It will take place on Jan 15 in Beverly Hills, and will be broadcast on the NBC television network worldwide.

## Eros deal with Anytime

Eros International plc, the leading Bollywood studio announced an investment deal (up to £2.1 million) with Singapore-based, ANYTIME Pty Ltd. Asia's leading supplier of Video-on-Demand (VOD) Hollywood entertainment and a company whose shareholders include 4 major Hollywood studios and Intel. As part of the deal, it is intended that an Eros-branded Bollywood VOD service showcasing Eros' library of over 1300 titles will be launched in the 14 Asia Pacific countries where ANYTIME has a licence to operate.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Send your letters, views, suggestions to

**The Editor**

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### DEAR READERS

Due to technical reasons the Pickle issue dated Nov 25 to Dec 1, 2006 Volume 1-9 could not be distributed. Two issues are combined as Nov 25 -Dec 8, 2006 as Volume 1-9&10.

Pickle will continue to be distributed weekly

Editor

## BY THE NUMBERS

The worldwide Motion picture industry lost **\$18.2 billion** in 2005 as a result of piracy. Over **\$7 billion** of which is attributed to Internet piracy and more than **\$11 billion** attributed to hard goods piracy including bootlegging and illegal copying