



Dabangg 2's item song will see no physical intimacy between them

THE CELLULOID CITY

Madhusree Dutta's large-format project is a way to look at what Mumbai does in order to make cinema and, in turn, what cinema does to the city

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If Detroit can be called the Car City, Bangalore the IT city, then can Mumbai be called the Cinema city? Yes, says Madhusree Dutta, the curator of the large-format project, Project Cinema City – Research Art and Documentary Practices. "It is not about Bollywood or about the actors, it is about the city that is giving us cinema, the people who work for the cinemas and the stories that unfold," explains Dutta of her project which has seen a tremendous amount of research. She is also the founder of Majlis, a Centre for rights discourse and multicultural art initiatives.

The project has already travelled to Berlin and four other Indian cities before coming to Bangalore.

So, what's in store for city viewers? Plenty, says the curator. There are multiple aspects to the project including an art show, films, installations, photographs and sub-projects that include calendars created by 60 artists. There is a book as well, written by Dutta, titled dates. sites: Project Cinema City which will be launched in the city. The curatorial note says, "The part of the project that is travelling to the city focuses on the cinema of the city of Bombay/Mumbai: its production processes and ancillary cultures; its stations of reception and recognition that run through a complex set of networks; the bazaars and

□ We get ₹2000 a day to hide our faces and ₹1000 to expose them



(Top) Return of Phantom Lady by Pushpamala. (Above) A work by Atul Dodiya

streets of the city that hawk the footprints of cinema; and the city-zens' memory of the contemporary that revolves around cinema. The project will, in time, include cinema cities across Asia."

But to put it in simple words, the project is a way to look at what the city (Mumbai) does in order to make

cinema and, in turn, what cinema does to the city. "Artisans become mere urban labourers as they go about doing the film sets, similarly people living in shantytowns eke out their living through cinemas. There are thousands of elements that go into the making of cinema," says Dutta. This is better explained

in the words of Reshma, a woman who works as a stunt double, who says, "We get Rs 2000 a day to hide our faces and Rs 1000 to expose them", commenting on how she earns more working as a body double than by appearing in an original role. Cinema impacts the people.

The art show comprises 12 large public art works – so large that they can't be sold, says Dutta. Some artworks are collaborative works. The inside of the sculpture/installation Bioscope rotates three layers of images of the city and the urban icons. The artwork Pipeline Network is an architectural installation with PVC pipes with graphics and objects in multiple formats.

Individual artworks include the photographs of city-based artist Pushpamala who casts herself as the masked heroine who saves an orphan girl from the clutches of the land mafia in places like Dharavi's Khumberwada, Bharatmata Cinema in Lalbaug and so on.

Another exciting sub-project is the Calendar Project that Dutta says is a way to creatively energise history. The 60 artists – the list figures top artists like Gulammuhammed Sheikh to student artists – have been given the task to use the past century's images of cinema according to their sensibilities to create something relevant to the 21st century. "I told them to check the popular entertainment format and convert that into contemporary artwork," explains Dutta.

There are 10 short documentary films that have been produced by Project Cinema City which will be shown over the almost one month long duration of the project in the city.

Project Cinema City at NGMA from Nov 3 to Dec 2