Press Release
16 May 2019: India Pavilion, Cannes Film Festival (Day 2)

Cary Sawhney, Festival Executive and Programming Director, London International Film Festival moderated a session on co-production opportunities with India. Marc Baschet, Producer ASAP Films, Arfi Lamba, Actor, producer, Bombay Berlin Film Productions, Rahat Kazmi, Writer, Director, Raymond Massey, Film Producer, Golda Sallem, Film Producer and Pranit Sahni, Producer, Jugaad Motion Pictures were the panelists.

Speaking about how a co production can be more appealing internationally, Pranit pointed out that the themes of the films have to be universal for audiences from across the world to connect. You need to remember that a story should be able to have a set up anywhere. If the same theme can be set up in India or in Greece or in any other country, it's a film that will work for an international audience.

Rahat Kazmi shared his experience on his feature film…..”While we had a film, Golda (his French co-producer) helped us make the narrative more international. She made us edit the film to suit it to international audiences

MarcBaschet, who co-produced Lunchbox spoke about his experience working on an Indian co-production. “India has the nicest people in the world. They are talented and they know how to make a film. They are good with technologies”.

Raymond Massey advised that the finance part of the film should starts from the script stage itself so that the story can be made relatable for that country that is co-producing the film. He also said that co production treaties between countries are very helpful.

“The government really supports with permissions and help in terms of locations etc but we really need to keep our budgets in check. We also need to make investors more aware that there is a market even if the film doesn't release theatrically in India.” Added Sahni.

“The language also becomes important sometimes, especially if it is in English language because then that English has to be relatable in all territories internationally and mixing talent in terms of crew from all across the world helps a great deal.” Said Arfi Lamba.

On asking what is the most important thing one should concentrate on, while working on a co-production, Golda on a concluding note said, “Script script and only script is what one should focus on.”

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A session on importance of film festivals in the age of digital platforms was moderated by Festival Director Collin Burrows with panelists Mr. David Shepheard, Film Commisioner, Vancuver, Mr. Samir Bhamra, Writer, Director from UK and Cary Sawhney, Festival Executive and programming Director, London International Film Festival.

"Festivals play an important role in shaping and nurturing a film talent. It also helps commercially. I met producers of Ajji and ended up taking 11 more films from them." said Samir Bhamra

David Shepheard said, "The festivals are always about celebrating cinema. People visiting a film festival learn. Also, when you are at the film festival you are focused on buying, selling or watching a film. It's a networking place. You make relationships for life sometimes."

While talking about her experience of organizing a film festival, Archana Misra Jain said, " We decided to have our film festival at various locations to ensure the commerce is sorted. The biggest thing is that we have to try and get non Asians to watch Asian content."

"We also started experimenting with formats, like we started playing short format films. People had to invest much lesser time and they came out much elated." Archana added.

Bobby Bedi pointed out that a films gets more recognistion if it goes through a journey of film festivals, "If I sell my film to a festival, I would be able to reach more people in my own country. That's the power of festivals." He said.

 "Selecting very good films, curating is very important role of a film festival. Whether you love or hate it you at least talk about it. There is discussion about what films are there at a particular film festival." Said Cary.

" Any producer director has to make a decision on their audiences. There is conflict yes when it comes to digital platforms but there is so much content that there is room for everyone to consume content. Also, It's not about making the film, it is also important where you place it in the festival." Sais Collin.

 "Make happy film, you are more likely to get selected." He added laughingly on a concluding note.

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The session was followed by the poster launch of Vikas Khanna's Last Color where he along with his producer Jitendra Mishra were in conversation with Stephan Ottenbruch. Vikas spoke about how he never thought of making a film but it just happened.

"I am wearing many hats now. Besides hats a chef and an author, I am wearing my third hat as a filmmaker now." Vikas said.

"My journey of this film started here at Cannes and hence I am happy to unveil my poster here". He added.

On a lighter note, he also spoke about the similarities between cooking and making a film.

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Post the session with Vikas Khanna, Kangana Ranaut visited the India Pavilion with Mr. Amit Khare, Secretary, Ministry of I & B, Govt. of India, Mr. Ashok Parmar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of I & B, Govt. of India and Mr. Prasoon Joshi, Writer, Poet, Chairman, CBFC. Their session was moderated by internet sensation Kusha Kapila.

Kangana spoke about donning the hat of a director for film Manikarnika, gender parity, plight of crew members and junior artists in the film industry. She also praised the efforts of the government for the India Pavilion at Cannes.

"I really appreciate the Ministry for their efforts to have this place in middle of this (Cannes) Festival. It is such a remarkable achievement." She said.

Mr. Khare appreciated Kangana for speaking in Hindi at the India Pavilion.

"I would like to thank and express my gratitude towards Ms. Ranaut that she started this conversation in Hindi." Mr. Khare said.

"It is important to have dialogue with collective art forms and I would agree with Kangana that it is important to reach out to smaller cities." Mr. Khare added.