



CELEBRATING CINEMA: 'Mother India' is a mixed media panel capturing the various moods of the film industry; Husain's oil panel titled 'Director'.

Pays tribute to industry through paintings of fave actors & scenes

By Archana in New Delhi

THE country's best-known artist, M.F. Husain, is putting together his most ambitious project yet as a tribute to the Indian film industry, which is a couple of years away from its first century.

Speaking from London, the 94-year-old self-exiled painter, who started life

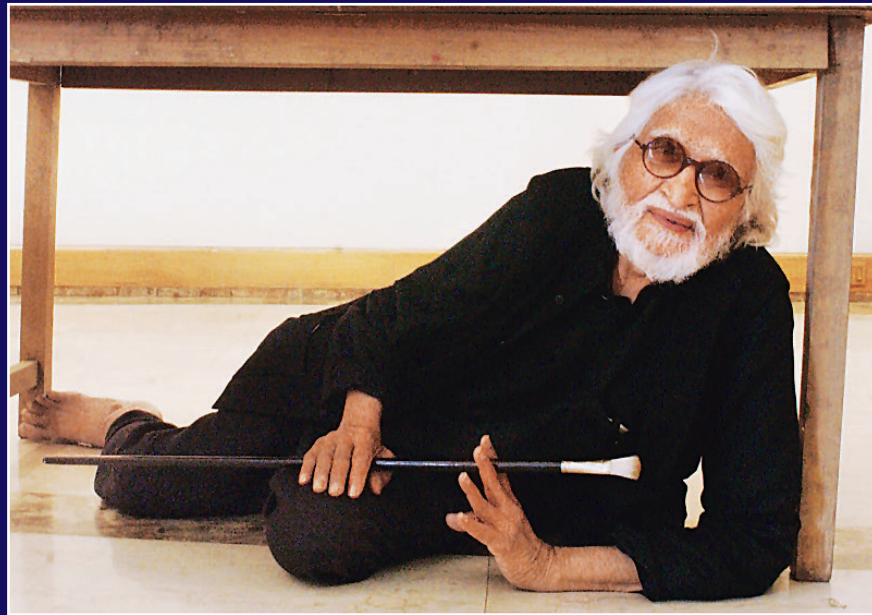
The exhibition is likely to open in London in 2011

as a painter of film posters, said, "Indian cinema is soon going to complete 100 years. I have been a keen student of cinema and always wanted to be a filmmaker. Now that I have got a chance, I thought I must pay a tribute to Indian cinema through my paintings."

For quite some time now, Husain has been working on humongous panels measuring 20x30 ft showing his take on Indian cinema. He said the exhibition was likely to open in London in 2011 and would travel to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, New York and India too.

It will be a celebration of the industry, which unspooled officially when the first full-length motion picture, Dadasaheb Phalke's *Raja Harishchandra*, was produced in 1912 and then first shown publicly in 1913.

"Indian cinema has a unique style of filmmaking, featuring songs and dance," Husain said. "It's a language of expres-



Husain paints 100 years of Indian cinema

sion that has grown out of our concept of the nine *rasas* and been adapted beautifully by our film industry. Guru Dutt was a master of this art — he knew how best to picturise a song-dance sequence. Later, Raj Kapoor did a very good job. I'm going to capture all this and more in my paintings."

One of the most highly acclaimed artists

of the world today, with his paintings fetching millions in auctions, Husain began his career painting cinema posters and hoardings in Mumbai.

He studied art at the prestigious Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai. He also has three films to his credit — *Through the Eyes of a Painter* (1967), which won a Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival;

the Madhuri Dixit-starrer *Gaja Gamini* (2000); and *Meenaxi: A Tale of Three Cities* (2004). The last two were not as well-received as his art.

"I am painting actors and scenes from films of my choice; they are not necessarily in chronological order but it's my story of the film industry in these 100 years," the painter said.

Dixit, to whom he dedicated not just a film but a series of paintings titled *Fida* as well, will make an appearance on these panels by Husain.

"The Hindi film industry has had two major icons in 100 years — Dilip Kumar and Madhuri Dixit," Husain said.

The nonagenarian master, who was chased out of India in February 2007 by Hindu right-wing hotheads because his paintings allegedly showed Hindu goddesses in an objectionable way, retains his love for cinema, like any young man would.

'I try to catch a Hindi film almost every week'

"I have always been young at heart. I try to catch a Hindi film almost every week and know the younger crop of actors as well — such as Amrita Rao. Films, you see, are a way of relaxing — you get to release your emotions when you whistle and hoot in a theatre. I continue to do it," Husain said with a chuckle.

Recalling the 'film club' he had formed with three of his friends in the 1960s and 1970s, Husain said, "My painter friends V.S. Gaitonde and Tyeb Mehta (both of whom have passed away) and I had formed this club where we would watch a film every week — we especially enjoyed whistling whenever the voluptuous actress Mumtaz appeared on the screen."

Even as he paints these big panels for the Indian film industry and busies himself with a lot of other activities like putting together his museum of works of art (cars, paintings and installations), his mind is already racing towards the third feature film he would like to make.

"My first film was a classic, the second was a contemporary story, and now I want to make a comedy," he said.

There's a lot of art that's waiting to carry the million-dollar Husain signature.

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CISF personnel to protect Indian diplomats in Pak

By Aman Sharma in New Delhi

THE Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is selecting 13 of its best jawans to be sent to Pakistan for "security escort" duties and to protect Indian diplomats stationed at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.

After the 26/11 Mumbai attack, the CISF had already deployed six of its men (in April) to be drivers of diplomats stationed at the Indian High Commission.

Now, India is supplementing the strength of its CISF men there in view of inputs from the Research and Analysis Wing of repeated terror threats to the commission.

The CISF is picking its best personnel, who are well-trained in VIP security duties, for the sensitive job. The 13 men are expected to leave for Islamabad next month.

"Thirteen constables will be selected for security escort duties at the high commission in Islamabad. They should be less than 35 years of age, trained in VIP security, have a clean record without any punishment or adverse remarks, be free from departmental or vigilance inquiries and must have rendered a minimum of five years of service in the CISF," says the order of the Directorate General sent to all CISF units.

This is the first occasion that Indian

paramilitary personnel are being sent to Pakistan for security duties.

The CISF has a 45-member contingent posted at the Indian embassy in Kathmandu and the consulate general of India in Birgunj, Nepal, while the Indo-Tibetan Border Police is performing security duties at the Indian mission in Kabul.

The high commission in Islamabad had placed a request for a similar cover after the terror attack on the Indian mission in Kabul last year and after the 26/11 strike.

Pakistan, however, has been quite sen-

Inputs of terror threats to the Indian mission in Pak

sitive to such an arrangement of Indian security personnel at the high commission there and had created a diplomatic furore over the issue earlier this year.

However, CISF sources now say they have applied for visas from Pakistan for the 13 CISF men to be sent next month and all necessary permissions from Pakistan would be taken.

It has not been specified yet by the Union home ministry what roles the 13 jawans would play as "security escorts" or whether they would carry arms and ammunition from India for the duties.

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Cornered Hillary asserts she is secretary of state not Bill

HILLARY Clinton has a message for the world: It's not all about Bill.

The US secretary of state bristled on Monday when — as she heard it — a Congolese university student asked what her husband thought about an international financial matter.

She hadn't travelled to Africa to talk about her husband the former president. But even there, she couldn't escape his oversized shadow.

She abruptly reclaimed the stage for herself. "My husband is not secretary of state, I am," she snapped. "I am not going to be channeling my husband."

Clinton's presence, so bold in her historic presidential candidacy against Barack Obama, has sometimes been hard to see in the months she has served as the supposed face and voice of US foreign policy.

The president's ambitious travels have overshadowed her; heavyweight special envoys have been assigned to the world's critical hotspots, Vice-President Joe Biden has taken on assignments abroad — and then last week her husband succeeded in a North Korean mission to free two journalists even as she landed in Africa on a seven-nation trip.

"You want me to tell you what my husband thinks?" she asked incredulously when the student raised a question



Hillary and Bill Clinton.

about a multibillion-dollar Chinese loan offer to Congo.

"If you want my opinion, I will tell you my opinion," she said. "I am not going to be channeling my husband." The moderator quickly moved on.

State department officials said the student approached Clinton later and told her he had meant to ask what Obama, not Bill Clinton, thought about the Chinese loan. A senior Clinton aide said that Hillary assured the student not to worry about it.

The Clintons have always been a complicated couple. An accomplished lawyer and politician in her own right, Hillary has struggled for decades to balance her interests and ambitions against his. AP