



## A HELPING HAND

Thurston Moore (pictured), the frontman of American rock band Sonic Youth, will release a song in support of Wikileaks whistleblower Chelsea Manning. The proceeds from the song *Chelsea's Kiss* will go towards the defense of Manning who is serving a 35-year sentence.

## SNAP SHOTS



## Southern Sojourn

TAMIL FILM *Visaranai*, directed by Vetrimaaran and produced by Dhanush, is India's official entry for Academy Awards 2017 in the Foreign Language Film category. The film had earlier won three National Awards including best Tamil film. The critically-acclaimed film is based on police brutality and is adapted from M Chandrakumar's novel *Lock Up*. The film premiered in the Orizzonti (Horizons) section of the 72nd Venice Film Festival, where it won the Amnesty International Italia Award. In 2016, India had sent Marathi film *Court* as the official entry for Oscars. The 89th Academy Awards ceremony is scheduled to take place in February 2017 in Los Angeles.

## Star Power

NEW YORK-BASED designer of Nepalese origin, Prabal Gurung will soon make his India retail debut. The designer, who studied at NIFT Delhi, before attending Parsons School of Design in New York, will host a trunk show at Le Mill in Colaba, Mumbai, next month. Having dressed an array of style icons — from Michelle Obama and Kate Middleton to Lady Gaga and Sarah Jessica Parker — Gurung will hope to cash in on the red carpet rounds in India as well. The designer has also dressed Sonam Kapoor, Deepika Padukone, Kangna Ranaut and Katrina Kaif in the past. No surprise then that the launch event promises to be a star-studded affair.



Prabal Gurung with Deepika Padukone at a fitting session

## Super Fun

INDIAN FANS of the long-running TV show, *Supernatural*, have a treat in store. Jim Beaver (pictured), who played Bobby Singer till the seventh season, will be in India for the Mumbai Comic Con that starts on October 22.

While appearances by the lead actors of the show — Jensen Ackles and Jared Padalecki — was perhaps too much to hope for, the presence of Beaver would be welcome to fans.

## Shades of Life



A photograph shows Wandoh at his home in Bangalore with his children

## Bangalore-based Mahesh Shantaram pans on the issue of racism that Africans face in India

PALLAVICHATTOPADHYAY

WITH HIS portrait of Wandoh, an IT professional living in India for over a decade, who comes from Chad in Africa, photographer Mahesh Shantaram captures a private moment from his everyday life. Seated next to his two children on a bed, as he puts them off to sleep, Wandoh clasps onto one of their tiny hands. The image is a far cry from when Wandoh made head-



Jake Curtis

(Above) Jasleen Kaur; Robert Napier's grandson in a turban as part of Kaur's 2015 work *Marbled Busts* (right); her work at LDF, using tin cans



## SHINY VARGHESE

MEET 193-YEAR-OLD MaltaSingh. He started the first ever Curry House in London's Brick Lane. It was built by him along with his friends from the surrounding furniture factories, using rejects and found objects. He gave Malta's national food, pastizzi, a curry flavour. Legend has it that he even fed it to Mahatma Gandhi. He is the protagonist of "Clarke, Clerkin and Kaur: The Thing With MaltaSingh", an exhibition at London's Gallery SO. Starting this evening, MaltaSingh's Indian kitchen will dish out chickpea curry, pastizzi and dal for visitors interested in knowing just who is MaltaSingh.

That he is a fictional character, in a pseudo-real setting of a contemporary space, is the design intrigue of artist Jasleen Kaur, and her friends, Danny Clarke and Carl Clerkin. As the London Design Festival (LDF) draws to a close this weekend, this show at Gallery SO is what Kaur calls "fringe design". The Scottish Indian artist is the exhibition designer for "Transformation", a contemporary Indian design show that is part of LDF. Curated by Arpna Gupta, founder of India Design Platform, the show is inspired by salvaged material, melding the culture of recycling with traditional craft.

Seven designers — Material Immaterial, Anu Tandon Vieira, Poonam Bir Kasturi, Prakriti Shukla, Vishal K Dar, Neisha Gharat and Alkesh Parmar — challenge the notion of consumerism in their exhibits.



Coming from a traditional Sikh household, and growing up in Glasgow, Kaur is always exploring dual realities, like in the work, *Father's Shoes*

On either side of the escalators, within the undulating glass building of The Guardian at Kings Cross, sit industrial-sized food cans that shelf designer products. Kaur chose containers of tomatoes, spinach and oil sourced from local stores to form her

plinth. These cans will later be distributed to local food banks, soup kitchens and gurdwaras. The idea was to minimise waste for the exhibition.

Food, cooking and Kaur are never too far apart. At LDF 2014, she presented the film

*Balti: Unmeasured Measurements*, screened from the back of a van. It documented the process of cooking a langar in the kitchen of Pollokshields Sikh Temple, Glasgow. She made a series of measuring tools using plastic mugs and buckets, recording the intuitive methods of preparing food for multitudes.

"I would take the van to different venues, stream the film at the back of the van, and cook for the audience," says 30-year-old Kaur. "Six years ago, when I graduated from The Royal College of Art, I wanted to make something that would change the atmosphere of a gallery space, something for my parents and friends, because I think art often excludes people," she says.

Coming from a traditional Sikh household, and growing up in Glasgow, Kaur is always exploring dual realities. For her 2015 work *Marbled Busts*, she drew parallels between Indian idols and Western traditional portraits to show three busts of her great-grandfather, the first in her family to migrate from India; Edward Said, post-colonial scholar who "lived between two worlds"; and Army man Robert Napier, a central figure in British India. She requested Napier's grandson to wear a turban as a celebration of dialogue between two cultures.

Kaur takes things from everyday and gives it a different footnote. "I call it the unpacking of daily life and history, or the aesthetics of everyday," she says. She hopes to travel to Maharashtra in January next year, where she will be part of an artists' programme, working with Warli painters.

## Unpacking the Everyday

Scottish-Indian artist Jasleen Kaur on being a fringe designer, and not playing to the gallery



Rachel Louise Brown

## NOW SHOWING, AT LDF



## A PLAY OF LIGHT

If Alkesh Parmar isn't collecting corks for his *Celebration Chandelier*, one might find him sourcing orange peels for his *APeel juicer*. The British-Indian designer is showcasing his *Light-Wallah* installation (pictured above) at LDF — a pun on the chai-wallah — with *kulhads* fashioned as lights. "I am constantly challenged to redesign discarded objects and materials that have already served their primary function. *Light-wallah* expresses the beauty and craft of these humble objects by giving them an alternative use. Terracotta lends itself perfectly for lighting; it is warm, thermally responsive, and perfectly shaped," he says.



## MATERIAL WORLD

Nitin Barchha and Disney Davis, founders of Material Immaterial studio, Mumbai, are known to strip every material to its bare simplicity. "Our approach has always been to leave out, rather than put in," says Barchha. Their "Organic" collection at LDF is inspired by nature — be it mushrooms or mosses, ferns or flowers. Minimalists in their designs, Barchha says, "The reduction process takes one through a mirror, emerging out on the other side to discover richness, like in the subtle differences between five shades of grey, or in different textures of concrete. We let design be at the helm."

## Tell-tale Signs

An award-winning short film encourages parents to be sensitive to the signs of child sexual abuse

RADHIKA SINGH

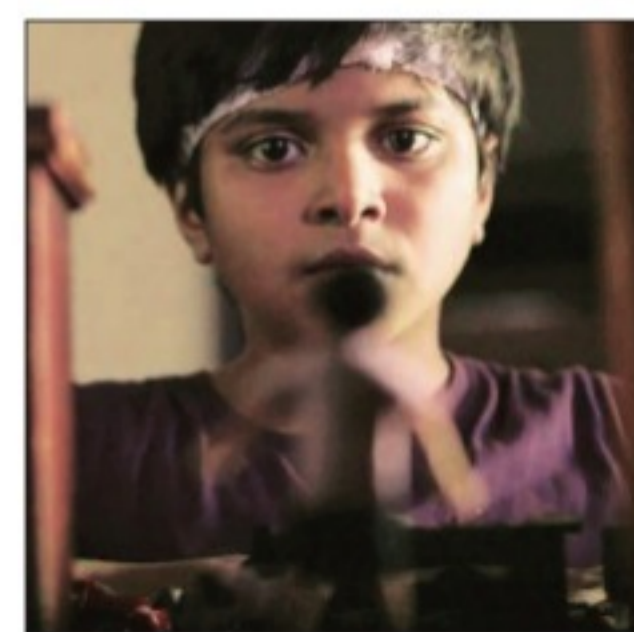
TEN-YEAR-OLD Apu does anything he can to get out of tuition at 5pm, even going so far as stepping in front of a car barreling down the street. His parents are worried, and can't seem to figure out why his grades are slipping. What could have been wrong? Apu's constant fear reverberates throughout the film — and that's what, says Ruchir Arun, the director of *5 O'Clock Accidents*, and its producer Ashwini Mishra, most victims of child sexual abuse live with.

*5 O'Clock Accidents*, unlike most films that aim to educate its audience on sexual abuse, is targeted towards parents rather than children. "Parents need to be aware of certain signs their child may exhibit," says Arun, adding, "They need to open a channel of communication between them and their child and talk about these issues." In the film, although Apu hates what's happening to him, he is not even aware that his abuse is wrong or that he's a victim. His tuition teacher, well-educated, articulate and even charming man, is welcome in their home; he chats with his father over a cup of tea.

He's not the image of a predator one usu-



Stills from the film *5 O'Clock Accidents*



ally has. He's not, as Mishra puts it, "some creepy rickshaw-wallah". But that's exactly the point. "Abuse happens everywhere," Mishra says. "India's middle-class, the emerging face of New India, think it can't happen in their neighbourhood. We wanted to attack this misconception with our film."

The setting of a well-off family was also chosen because both Arun and Mishra didn't want parents to think that, because it wasn't a familiar environment, this couldn't happen to their child. "I've noticed that upper-class people are not able to relate to more lower-class settings, while the opposite is not true," says Mishra.

Mishra, who works with Nirman Foundation, a Chennai-based NGO that works on spreading awareness and ameliorating social issues, had been sitting on the idea for this film for years. A few months ago, he reached out to Arun, whom he met in college, and they decided they had enough time to go ahead with it.

After talking to many survivors of child sexual abuse, and trying to understand their experiences, they crafted a story that they felt would resonate with a lot of people. *5 O'Clock Accidents*, which has been awarded and featured in several film festivals across India, was released on the internet recently, aiming to reach out to more people.