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Young guns explore complexities of life

By *editor*

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A trick cyclist in Jagadhari, Haryana, a ragpicker in the Deonar Dumping Yard, a jutti maker in Malwa, Punjab and a group of break dancers have nothing much in common. Except their struggle for existence. They all are subjects of documentary films by student filmmakers screened at the recently concluded "Jeevika: Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival" by the Centre for Civil Society at the India Habitat Centre.



"The festival offers a platform for student filmmakers and recognises them in different segments.

We always receive several entries from institutions like Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, Jamia Millia University, Delhi, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) among others," said Manoj Mathew, director, Jeevika Festival.

City's Edge is one such film made by a group of five students from TISS, Mumbai. The film explores the life of thousands of men, women and children, who live around the Deonar Dumping Ground and make a living off the waste of the city.

"As perceived by many, dumping yard is not exactly a sad place. While shooting for the film, we realised that it is actually a place to hang out for the young ragpickers, make conversations and view life," smiles Sandeep Kr. Singh, one of the team members.

Vishal Singh hails from a small city, Jagadhari in Haryana. At present he is studying television production at YMCA, Delhi. As a child, he used to look forward to performances by Imtiaz Khan (Pappu Bharti), a trick cyclist in his hometown.

From a superstar of stunt cycle, Pappu Bharti is now slipping into anonymity and finding it hard to carry on with his profession. His film *Cycle of Life* is about this man and his life. "This

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A still from the film *Breakin' Mumbai*

man could do anything and everything to entertain people and earn his living. He was not concerned about his life at all. He even ate glass pieces once and had to be hospitalised,” says Vishal.

Break dance, started back in the 70s in New York, has is popular across countries. Aakriti Kohli along with Shweta Ghosh, Gin Khan Siam and Sumit Singh decided to make a film on what it means to be a breaker in Mumbai.

“Breaking is not recognised as a classical dance form. The dance form is an expression of subaltern youth cultures. The film, Breakin’ Mumbai also explores the questions of space and avenues for leisure in Mumbai,” explains Aakriti.

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