

Luke Mendes - XIC Alumnus
Film & Television Course 2004

Mumbai boy heads to Cannes

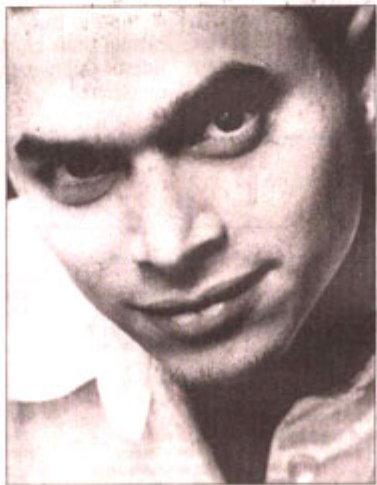
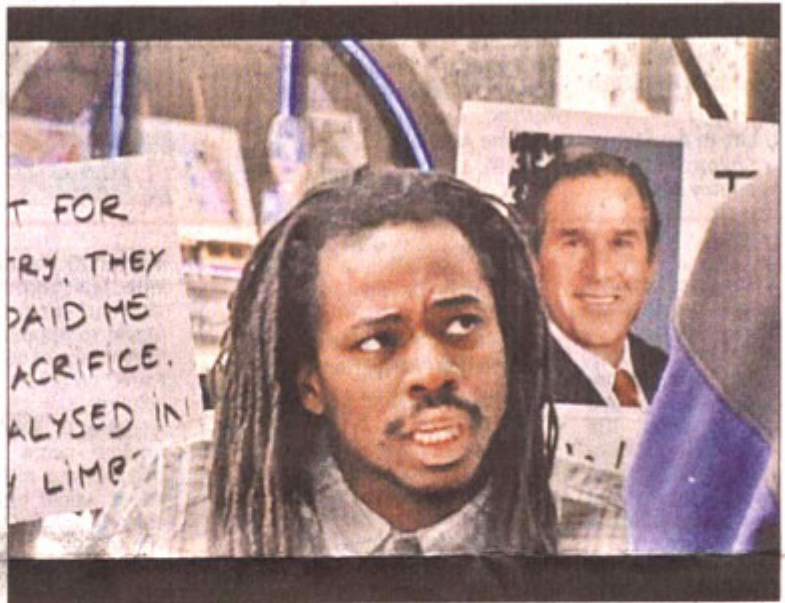
Luke Mendes' short film 'Dog Eat Dog' has been selected for the film festival

Asish Samanta

THERE is always a lot of hype around any mainstream Bollywood movie making an entry in the Cannes Film Festival. But also in the running are young filmmakers whose talent has got them their rightful place in one of the most prestigious platforms in cinema. One such name is Luke Mendes. This Mumbai-based filmmaker's 'Dog Eat Dog' has been selected for the Short Film category at Cannes this year. "I wanted the entry to be from India, but because my actors are from the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the movie was shot and produced in the United States, it got an entry from the US," says Luke.

Basically an ad filmmaker, Luke went to the United States to study filmmaking at NYU, after which he made 'Dog Eat Dog.' The movie was made during protests against the Iraq war and for that reason has political undertones. Luke had initially submitted the movie at the Tribeca Film Festival in the United States who rejected the film, albeit very diplomatically. "I had foreseen this when I was making my film and knew Europe would be more receptive to my film because they had taken a neutral stand on Iraq," reveals the young director.

Luke believes in giving a voice to sensitive issues with his movies. "We all are sold images of the Great



Poster boy of protest: (Above) A scene from 'Dog Eat Dog' and Luke (L)

American Dream, but capitalist America that believes in holding the highest moral ground does not want anyone to see issues like war, racism and poverty within the country." 'Dog Eat Dog' focuses on such issues through four main characters – a war veteran looking for retribution, an unemployed white man who finds a novel way of earning money, an ageing hooker looking for a companion and a child who questions these motives. In the film's synopsis Luke explains, "In the scheme of life here, who uses and who gets used is not the question. It's not millions or even an image that's at stake. It's survival."

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