



Irrfan Khan, right, with Anil Kapoor

Irrfan's disappointment

The excitement is over. The release of *The Amazing Spider-Man* July 3 has disappointed all **Irrfan Khan** fans. After all, his role as Dr Ratha is even smaller than **Anil Kapoor's** appearance in *Mission Impossible - Ghost Protocol*. And that one, as we all know, was really a bit part. Khan has been slammed by the Indian media and audience for doing this film, but, in all fairness, he had always maintained that his role was not lengthy and he did it for the experience. He told *India Abroad*: "I am fortunate that I could play a part in this myth of America; the biggest fantasy of the film world. I had a great experience working with (director) **Mark Webb** and (actor) **Andrew Garfield**... The production design, the huge canvas, the shoot and the scale was an experience in itself. As an actor, you want to go through these experiences at least once in your lifetime." We hope that if the rumors that he plays the villain in the sequel are true, he will return with a substantial part.

— **Patcy N**

Night's plot

For all those who have been wondering about **M Night Shyamalan's** upcoming film *After Earth*, the official plot description is finally out thanks to the upcoming Comic Con in San Diego. It reads, 'In *After Earth*, one thousand years after cataclysmic events forced humanity's escape from Earth, Nova Prime has become mankind's new home. Legendary General Cypher Raige (played by **Will Smith**) returns from an extended tour of duty to his estranged family, ready to be a father to his 13-year-old son, Kitai (played by **Jaden Smith**). When an asteroid storm damages Cypher and Kitai's craft, they crash-land on a now unfamiliar and dangerous Earth. As his father lies dying in the cockpit, Kitai must trek across the hostile terrain to recover their rescue beacon. His whole life, Kitai has wanted nothing more than to be a soldier like his father. Today, he gets his chance.' We hope this one turns out better than his previous box office debacle *The Last Airbender*.



M Night Shyamalan

KEITH BEDFORD/REUTERS

Coming to a screen near you...

Nivi Singh moved to the United States as a student. But there was something about Los Angeles that made her want more. "I came to the US as a student at the University of Southern California. I had done some theater in India. When I saw so many creative people in Los Angeles, I felt inspired. I decided to further perfect my acting skills and took classes," she tells *India Abroad*. "My family is in India. Initially, they were shocked when they came to know about my acting aspiration, but now they are supportive and proud." The Bhopal-born actress, who has acted in short films, plays and on television and has featured in a **Moby** music video, will soon be seen in the film *Cardboard Dreams*. The movie — which was shot in Los Angeles, Texas and India and made in English, Hindi and Spanish — details the



Nivi Singh

struggle to realize the American dream. Directed by **Pablo Veliz**, it has won the Special Jury award at Cinefestival 2011. But Singh knows that the road ahead will not necessarily be easy. "I am aware that I will have to fight the stereotyping of Indians in this industry. It is a constant struggle to get roles and establish yourself in this field. The number of roles offered to Indian actors has definitely increased in television, but we are yet to see the trend in main-

stream cinema," she says. Yet she is optimistic. She adds, "There is a lot of diversity in American society, with Indians being an integral part of it now. The contemporary stories told by writers/directors will have a lot more Indian characters, so I think I will have a better chance to get roles." Good luck, Nivi.

— **George Joseph**

Art beat

It is always interesting to walk into a museum in the United States and stumble upon Indian art. Seven contemporary Indian artists — **Sonal Jain, Mriganka Madhukaillya, Shumona Goel, Shai Heredia, Vikram Joglekar, Amar Kanwar** and **Kabir Mohanty** — were part of an exhibition titled *Being Singular Plural* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York from March to June. Organized by **Sandhini Poddar**, associate curator, Asian art, it was the museum's first exhibition to focus exclusively on artistic production in India. While Kanwar's 19-channel video installation *Torn First Pages* had political oppression in Myanmar as its subject, Mohanty's *Song for an Ancient Land* explored the issue of identity from a vegetable vendor in Mumbai to a friend in New York. With Joglekar, who is a sound engineer and designer, Mohanty also presented an interactive sound installation titled *In Memory*. Goel and Heredia's film *I am micro* celebrated small-scale independent filmmaking and collaboration. And Jain and Madhukaillya were inspired by the philosophy propagated by French thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Their *Trespassers Will (Not) Be Prosecuted* was a round-the-clock public artwork installed on the exterior of the museum.