

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Global Film Initiative has announced the first recipient of support from its new Industry Development Fund, Nick Cunningham reports

The US Global Film Initiative (GFI), a fund created in 2002 to create and develop cinematic links between the US and developing industries worldwide, announced this week the first recipient of support from its new annual Industry Development Fund. The Valdivia International Film Festival (Chile) will benefit from a €50,000 grant payable over a 2-5 year period, depending on need. "We are greatly honoured to develop a new relationship with the US through this Fund," comments Valdivia chief Bruno Bettati. "Our festival tradition is as a window for European and Latin American cinema. Now we have the chance to integrate professionals from North America."

"We're searching for festivals and industry markets that are looking at progressive and innovative expansion of what they are doing," explains Sanjosh Daniel, GFI Director of Programs. "We are really looking for people who are examining their industry creatively, who are looking at ways to make it more sustainable, with greater longevity; not just as an exhibition space, but also a space that will eventually create and cultivate an industry that they can rely on in perpetuity." The GFI is set to provide funding to the value of €250,000 in 2010. In addition to the Industry Fund, Initiative staff will launch the domestic distribution/exhibition Global Lens Program, in-



Bruno Bettati and Sanjosh Daniel

photo: Guilherme Korver

tended to "support community and and cultural vitalization projects across the US." These programmes complement the GFI support that will continue to be granted to individual filmmakers across the world. Since 2002, the GFI has awarded 81 grants to global filmmakers. These include a €10,000 award to Raja Martin's *Independencia* (Philippines), which screens this year in Signals: After Victory, and *10 to 11* (Pelin Esmer), screen-

ing in Bright Future. "We try to support the entire chain of filmmaking, from the moment of creation to the point of exhibition in the US," adds Daniel. "We know that when filmmakers make their films they want people to see them and they know that the US is a very thriving and strong market that is hard to gain access to. So we provide support at the beginning, support in the middle and support at the end of the whole process."

BINGER BEARS FRUIT

Outgoing Binger chief Ido Abram

As a testimony to perseverance, Anup

Brokempfer says, "We have a German broadcaster

SEVEN-YEAR PITCH

JUNGLE FEVER
Directors Chu-Li Shewring and Adam Gutch on filming their short *Spirit*, screening in Spectrum Shorts, in the jungles of Borneo

Looking at the incredible array of diverse films on display in Rotterdam, it's hard to imagine a better festival in which to be screening a world premiere of your first film. We've arrived from the UK, not long out of the National Film & TV School where we graduated in Documentary and Sound Design, and have been fortunate enough to benefit from a scheme set-up by the school, Pawel Pawlikowski and The Channel 4 BRITDOC foundation. This enabled us to spend the last two years (off and on) making a film in Sarawak, Borneo with a longhouse community from the Iban tribe. Why Sarawak? Well, Chu-Li was born there, and although she moved to the UK at the age of 7, her heart has never been far from her country of birth. In 2004, her short film *Manis Takis* was screened in Rotterdam, and after enjoying that first taste of the festival it was great to be selected again to screen *Spirit*, which in many ways follows on from what was first explored in *Manis Takis*: the idea of the jungle as a place of beauty and wonder, but equally of fear. This is apparent in the natural world of strange insects and plants, but also through the Iban people, whose animist beliefs in spirits and dreams exist alongside modern and Western approaches to life.

One thing that strikes you is that everyone has a personal ghost story to tell. The jungle is an unsettling place, alive with bizarre electronic sounds that uncannily recall familiar city sounds. When filming in quiet areas of jungle we'd often get distracted by strange occurrences — a lone leaf blowing in a non-existent breeze.