

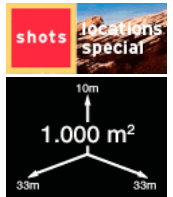


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# hotshot bear necessities

19 August 2009

**This week's Hotshot from Equinox director Ram Madhvani is sure to send a shiver of pure joy down your spine, as a giant polar bear invades a train station to bust out some mentholated dance moves for Halls via Contract India.**

What more could you ask for when you're stuck in the middle of commuter central with a blocked nose, than for your own personal polar bear to come to the rescue?

Proving conclusively that the powers that be at Cadbury clearly have a thing for oversized anthropomorphised animals, the latest Halls spot sees a bunged-up traveller taking the lead from an imaginary bear to bust some serious moves on the platform. We spoke to Madhvani to find out more.

### A gigantic polar bear in a train station - WTF?

You can thank the ECD Raj Nair for that one! When he spoke to me about the idea of having a polar bear personifying the cold, cool mentholoptus I was hooked. And when the client backed it we knew it was going to be fun.

### We love the lead actor - can you tell us a bit about the casting process? What were the auditions like?

We started by inventing a dance called The Shiver (which we're hoping will become as popular as the moon walk or the macarena). The brief to the casting director Monalisa Mukherji of Happydent fame was very simple - let people dance as if they are shivering when they feel cold, or imagine how you'd dance if someone put an ice cube down the back of your shirt. Our choreographer Avit Dias suggested we use Jingo Jingo Ba as the reference track, so the video test was done to that. Shyam Pathak was the best choice from the casting sessions. His dancing made us smile.

### Where did you get the bear costume from?

The polar bear was from America. I was in New York on a holiday recently so Matt Brady from the Animatronic Bear Company flew down from Ohio to show me the costume. The neighbours at my brother's home in Scarsdale were not amused to see a polar bear in the garden doing Matrix like moves with an Indian. Matt was amazing. Somehow he remained good-spirited even when the temperature was 70 degrees inside his suit at the shoot in a hot and sweaty Indian summer.

### Where did you film the spot?

We shot at Mumbai's biggest and oldest and largest station. It was originally called Victoria Terminus but now it's been renamed the Chatrapati Shivaji Station. We couldn't shut it down for the shoot so we filmed on a Sunday, with a thousand extras of our own alongside real commuters. It was a crazy shoot since every ten minutes a train would pull up at the platform and real commuters would be gaping at a polar bear in Mumbai in 40 degree heat.

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