

A Rare Collection of Bollywood Cinema Showcards at the ROM

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Winding her way through the narrow laneways of dusty Bombay bazaar one hot day, Angela Hartwick happened upon a number of Bollywood cinema relics, and saw something many others had obviously missed.



Payal ki Jhankaar (The Tinkling of Anklets), 1980. Madhu; Mumbai, India. Tinted and untinted silver gelatin print and paint on textured board. Courtesy of the Hartwick Collection.

What she found were cinema showcards -- painted photographs made into posters that were used to advertise the Hindi films of yesteryear, which typically would be thrown out once the films disappeared from theatres. [Deepali Dewan](#), curator of South Asian Arts and Culture at the [Royal Ontario Museum](#) -- where *Bollywood Cinema Showcards: Indian Film Art from the 1950s to the 1980s* will run June 11th to October 2nd -- says of the exhibit "it is remarkable that this collection has survived at all."



Nav Durga (Nine Durgas), 1953. Unknown artist; Mumbai, India. Tinted silver gelatin print and paint on textured board with screen printed lettering. Courtesy of the Hartwick Collection.

This beautiful, rare set of original vintage showcards from the private collection of Angela Hartwick has been paired with more modern posters, lobby cards and film booklets from the [ROM](#)'s permanent collection, and is organized chronologically to offer visitors a real 'visual journey through the history of Bollywood advertising.' It's fantastic to see the creative craftsmanship of the painted photographs up close and somewhat sad to witness the technological transition to modern film posters.



Shaheed (Martyr), 1965. Unknown artist; Mumbai, India. Tinted silver gelatin print and paint on board with screen printed lettering. Courtesy of the Hartwick Collection.

There couldn't be a better time for *Bollywood Cinema Showcards* -- 2011 is the [Year of India in Canada](#) and the much-anticipated [International Indian Film Academy \(IIFA\) Awards](#) will take place in Toronto from June 23rd to June 25th. Whether you're a fan of modern day Bollywood, a Hindi cinema enthusiast or simply interested in international artwork, this exhibit is certainly worth a visit.



Garam-Masala (Hot Mixed Spice), 1972. Color Lab; Mumbai, India. Tinted and untinted gelatin silver prints on colored paper on board with screen printed lettering. Courtesy of the Hartwick Collection.

See exclusive photos from inside the exhibit [here](#).

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