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## INTRODUCTION

Lightcube Film Society at Ziro Cafe, Hauz Khas Village present the inaugural screenings of their short film club, **Pinhole Sessions**. The idea of the short film is one borne out of convenience. Films of a shorter duration are as old as cinema itself (in the early days, these films were called two-reelers) – but this fact owes itself to the early, nascent and experimental phase of cinema: when people who had conceived the medium had no real idea of what to do with it. Apprehensive as humans are with each new form, the first films were as much creative endeavours as they were simple tests conducted as if by scientists. As experiments go, therefore, these films were short and meant, essentially, to verify a result or validate a thesis. There was also a technical circumstance: film magazines didn't run long (usually, 760 frames or close to a minute) and therefore, films just had to be short. Other factors like still-developing popular interest and the absence of an organised industry meant that early cinema was used, if ever, to either experiment or as brief, passing entertainment. Cinema pioneers then discovered the possibility of a narrative – the idea that a film can also tell a story. Films got longer, funding came in, directors more ambitious, cast larger and plots more elaborate. But cinema's history, as it often is, tends to traverse a circular path – we always return to an earlier point. With the introduction of the digital cinema, cinema has entered an exciting phase of experimentation, where young filmmakers, equipped with the conveniences of video editing and image manipulation software, are attempting to locate new meanings, a new idiom and a new set of images, all of which weren't visible to the world earlier.

The idea behind Pinhole Sessions precisely to acknowledge and admire this ambition as well as to render in full view the historical lineage and relevance of the short film throughout the history of cinema.