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'Make people feel comfortable'

Filmmaker Jasmine Dellal talk about her favourite piece of kit – and funnily enough, it's a camera

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What's your favourite piece of technology and why?

A Sony PD100 – a small video camera.

Is it good for your art?

It is. It gives very professional images, but it's small enough that you look like you're using someone's home video camera – so it's not so intimidating for people you're talking to. The theory is that if the person behind the camera is comfortable then the person in front of the camera will be more relaxed – and you get a much more natural view of them, as if there wasn't a camera there at all.

When was the last time you used it, and what for?

I shot a lot of my film, *Gypsy Caravan: When the Road Bends*, on a Sony PD150, which is slightly bigger but still a small camera. We used it in the US – from the east to the west coast – Rajasthan, Macedonia, Romania

and Spain, and it really gave the film a natural feeling on screen.

Documentary maker Albert Maysles, who shot a lot of the footage for the film, sticks to small video cameras too and still has an old PD100 that he uses today. In video, things usually go out of style in about three minutes; Sony stopped making PD100s about seven or eight years ago, but they are still being used.

What additional features would you add if you could?

A better microphone.

Do you think it will be obsolete in 10 years?

We'll probably all get used to some other new thing where we don't need a tape anymore to record on.

What one tip would you give to non-PD100 users?

Take images that make you smile and make people feel comfortable with the camera.

Do you consider yourself to be a luddite or a nerd?

Probably a little bit of both. I'm secretly a geek about some of the technology that I do understand, but I can't really figure out how basic internet things like MySpace are supposed to improve your life.

What's the most expensive piece of technology you've ever owned?

A car.

Mac or PC?

Macs, through and through. They are intuitive — and better for luddites. I once bought a PC because it was small and I like small things, but I had to resell it and buy a Mac.

What song is at the top of your iPod's Top 25 Most Played?

The songs that are on the soundtrack to Gypsy Caravan, including Maharaja, Antonio el Pipa and Esmá Redzepova — but I'm happy to say that even after five years of making the film, I'm still happy to hear it.

Will robots rule the world?

That thought terrifies me. They already are: have you tried to make a reservation without speaking to a computer? Voicemail is a robot.

What piece of technology would you most like to own?

I don't think it exists yet, but I would like a private plane that ran on some form of green fuel so I could travel the world at ease and cheaply and not destroy the atmosphere while I do it.

Director Jasmine Della's documentary, Gypsy Caravan: When the Road Bends, opens at the ICA today.

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