

THE PEACOCK

SUNDAY, 24 NOVEMBER, 2019



WENDELL RODRICKS: CELLULOID COUTURE

JAPAN

Those who appreciate Japanese films especially love the works of screenwriter-director Yasujiro Ozu, who is widely considered a beacon of cinematic greatness. His film *Tokyo Story* (1953) is revered as an epic, as is *Late Spring* (1949). The beauty of Japan is easy to translate onto screen because the aesthetic of the country is firmly entrenched in our collective subconscious. From pine wood to cherry blossoms, tea ceremonies to Geishas, kimonos to Mount Fuji, the visual panorama of Japan is a delight. In the recent past *The Floating Castle* (2012) merits mention for its warlord theme, replete with armor and intoxicating scenes of battlefields. *The Floating Castle* is so visually compelling that even without English subtitles, the costumes and narrative leaves anyone mesmerized.

MAHARASHTRA

Marathi cinema is fascinating for many reasons. The ethos is emotions and real life accent make Marathi films special and significant. *Katyar Kaljat Ghusali* (English: A dagger through the heart) is a 2015 Marathi film based on a play by the same name. Directed by Subodh Bhawe, the film stars Sachin Pilgaonkar, Shankar Mahadevan, and Subodh Bhawe in lead roles. The film marks the directorial debut for Bhawe, and the theatrical acting debut for Shankar Mahadevan. The original play, written by Purushottam Darvhekar, premiered in 1967 in Mumbai, where Hindustani classical vocalist Vasant Rao Deshpande played one of the protagonists. This movie deserves mention because of its spectacular acting and music. Costumes too. Also worthy is *Natsamrat* (2016), where the various characters are fleshed out to perfection via the clothing of the protagonists.



Wendell Rodricks is an award winning fashion designer, writer and activist who is currently working on opening India's first costume museum in his native village in Goa. www.modagoamuseum.org. He teaches History of World Costume, and is trained in Hollywood and Paris.

Fabian Gonsalves is an illustration and comics artist. You can follow his work on [instagram.com/fabskribbler](https://www.instagram.com/fabskribbler)

SHORT TAKES



I was disappointed with the opening film. I wish they would screen more documentaries at the festival.

Rahul Raja
Student
Chennai



I look forward to another great day at NFDC Film Bazaar.

Senthil Venu
Producer
London



I had a wonderful time here in 2006. This year, I feel the film selection could have been better.

Rashida PT
Film enthusiast
Kerala



I think the projects last year were much better. The buzz this time was also low.

Alankrata Seth
Producer
Mumbai

“IMPROVISING MUSIC IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL”

BY IMPANA KULKARNI

On 22nd November, International Film Festival of India (IFFI) audiences at the Kala Academy experienced something very different from the usual festival fare - they watched an old black-and-white film, while being treated to a live solo classical piano recital that stirred their emotions for 66 minutes. Many scenes came alive with the music so beautifully that the viewers burst into spontaneous applause, then quietened immediately again, so they could continue listening.

The magic fingers belonged to Yorkshireman Jonny Best, who told *The Peacock*, “I have been practicing on the piano for 44 years, and have always enjoyed the way music works with drama. My very first professional work was playing for the musical *Les Miserables* for London’s West End. But playing for the movies happened 5 years ago, quite by accident. One day I encountered Neil Brand, the leading British silent films player. I had engaged him for a film festival I was producing, heard him perform and thought wow, I would like to do the myself!” Best hadn’t seriously played the piano for nearly 20 years, so he decided to relearn it, telling us, “I was looking for something new; I wanted a change. I think it is exciting to keep learning things as you get older.”

Battleship Potemkin (1925), an all-time classic Russian production, was the first in IFFI 2019’s series of silent films to be accompanied by Best’s playing. The pianist explained, “There is no written music for what I do. The *Battleship Potemkin* last night isn’t the same as the one I played few months ago. Nothing is planned. It’s all about



Photo: Assavi Kulkarni

responding to the film in real time, watching it with the audience and expressing it through musical sound spontaneously. The only thing I had planned for last night was what key I was going to begin in, and the sort of sound I want to start with. It is important to be with the present moment, feeling it, just like the audience. Rather than thinking ‘I better plan the scenes’, you reach a stage where you can say – I am going to sit at the piano and play. That’s it.”

For his performance accompanying *Battleship Potemkin*, Best drew on Russian choral music from the Soviet era, as well as the stunning, modernist compositions of Dmitri Shostakovich. But for *Pandora’s Box* (1929) that was screened at IFFI 2019 yesterday, he said “we find ourselves in 1920s urban Germany – it’s a world of Berlin cabaret, theatre and decadence. So I have prepared myself by thinking of that world of music, some Kurt Weill type sound to get my mind into that zone you know?”

Early in Best’s new career, his mentor Brand told him, “in a sequence that builds itself, keep pulling back and going again. Otherwise you will hit the peak too soon, you cannot sustain it, and the audience gets tired of the sound.”

In Goa, the 49-year-old is playing solo, but back in London he’s joined by percussionists and string players. He says ‘improvising for movies is mentally harder with more people, because you are trying to judge how everyone will fit together.’ But, “I have improvised before I even knew the word! I used to do it as a child. Sometimes I was lazy with my practice so I’d play the first bit of the piece then make up the rest of it. We all do it – whistling in the shower or singing to ourselves – it is all spontaneous music. I feel improvising music is good for the soul, if there is one. I feel healthier. Also, to do that with an audience that will sit there and give their attention is pleasurable. And for them to take some moments and tell me ‘We liked that’ – is very nice. I have felt incredibly welcome here.”

SHORT TAKES



What struck me is how excited everybody is at NFDC this year, and how easily film people interact.

Anup Singh
Director
Geneva



We need rush queues at the festival. I missed two films that I really wanted to watch.

Devika P.
Video Editor
Kerala



It’s a well-organized festival, but the water situation is impractical. I brought my own bottle, but I can’t take it in with me.

Claire Laffitte
Delegate
France



I wish they had better arrangements for senior delegates.

Aishwarya Kalgutkar
Student
Goa

“GANGA HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE”

BY KINJAL SETHIA

“Ganga is probably the only prominent river in the world where thousands of people worship every day. Other mighty rivers may have scenic beauty but they are not sites of unrelenting prayers. It is the river of knowledge. That is why I wanted to make the river Ganga the protagonist of my film,” says Kochi-based director Ananda Jyothi, whose *Uma: The Light Of The Himalayas* (2019) will be screened today as part of the World Panorama section at the 50th International Film Festival Of India (IFFI).

The docu-fiction feature follows the journey of three Brazilians who travel along the river Ganga, right from Gaumukh at Gangotri to Kolkata, where the river meets the Bay of Bengal. They cross Kedarnath, Uttarkashi, Haridwar and Varanasi to traverse more than 2000 km along the length of Ganga. “We did not appropriate any location with a name in the film. Those who have gone there will recognise the place. But I did not mention the names because these are human projections on places that existed before us. When the river passes a town, it does not recognise it by that name.”

During his long stay in Brazil, Jyothi saw many youngsters go through identity crises. He also met some who looked to Indian spirituality for answers. But the filmmaker does not essentially see Indian philosophy through the political prism associated with soft power. He says, “Indian philosophy believes in *vasudheva kutumbakam* where the whole world is your family. This does not leave space for political borders. Everybody can find answers in Indian philosophy. Regimes may plan things like ‘Yoga Day’ but Yoga itself is an ancient practise guiding people since long ago,

it is not new. Similarly, people have been looking to Ganga for salvation since before. Now you may see more human footprints because it is easier to travel. But Ganga has always been there.”

The lead in the film, a Brazilian Yoga instructor Isabella Pitaki says she had felt the power of Indian philosophy in her life, “I instinctually connect to the country and feel at home here. What moved me most during the film was the human connection with nature and collectively having a similar spiritual experience with others. It was also good to connect with the real India and observe the daily life, not the touristy itinerary often suggested. Reading about Vedanta, Samkhya and Yoga has made me introspect about the similarity between the Indian and Brazilian philosophy. The joy of modesty and content in Indian culture is really beautiful.”

The film relies on minimal dialogues and traces the travellers journey by narrating their thought processes. Music plays a big part in weaving it all together. João Paulo, who created the background score for the film, says “While the director trusted me with the musical arrangement, I too trusted his vision for what was to be achieved with the film. It was a beautiful collaboration of Indian compositions with Brazilian percussion instruments, creating a poetic effect.”

When asked about the relevance of Indian philosophy in resolving global problems, Jyothi said, “These problems are not new. There have always been some problems, in some form or another. ‘Vedanta’ means the End of Vedas, which means the movement from rigidity to freedom. It means going beyond rules and religion. It does not seek something external, but guides one to seek oneself within.”



Photo: Assavri Kulkarni

SHORT TAKES



They should allow unlimited bookings every day. I also miss having a rush line at the screenings.

Surya Nu
Delegate
Hyderabad



I'm so glad they've removed the rush lines; this place used to look like a madhouse.

Mohuyu Sen
Creative Director
Goa



Harry Potter was the first film I saw when I was in the 2nd standard. It has made me get into VFX and film-making.

Harshada Paricharak
Student
Pune



This year I saw a lot of first time directors at NFDC, which is very nice.

Akansha Khanna
Producer
Mumbai

CHALO RUSSIA

BY ANDREW PEREIRA

The script written by the Russian delegation at the 50th anniversary edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) certainly has a storyline of opportunities for Indian filmmakers. On the sidelines of the festival programme in Goa, the Russian government has announced a film scheme to boost international collaboration wherein it will offer a rebate of up to 40% to filmmakers desiring to shoot in the giant, picturesque country. There's also other good news in store for Indian regional filmmakers, because *Kinoreporter*, Russia's biggest and most influential film magazine, has decided to look beyond Bollywood and tap into the extraordinary breadth and diversity of Indian cinema.

Alexey Govorukhin, the executive producer of *Kinoreporter*, and one part of the large Russian representation attending IFFI, told *The Peacock*, "we have a very big audience, and are huge fans of Indian movies. We want to take many more stories about the movies of this country to the Russian readership. It's true that Bollywood is the most well-known Indian film industry in Russia, as well as worldwide, but we know that there are a lot of other filmmaking regions in India that produce some great movies."

"In India, you have so many languages," Govorukhin said, "that you have at least ten different film industries. Our country is not like that. Russia has just one film industry, and 99% of our movies are made in the Russian language. But I am here to say we're open to Telegu, Tamil, Bengali cinema, we're open to every single film industry in India."

At its inception, Govorukhin's glossy, impressively produced magazine was called *Hollywood Reporter - Russian Edition*. But two years ago, it became independent from the famous American publication and obtained its own publishing license. Now, "patronized" by veteran filmmaker Nikita Mikhalkov, *Kinoreporter* is actively looking out for direct

contact with Indian filmmakers, producers and other talented artistes, in order to tell their stories to Russian readers.

The glamorous, but regrettably photo-shy, Maria Lemesheva, who heads up the Russian delegation to IFFI, and is editor-in-chief of *Kinoreporter*, told us, "after the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia went through a hard period. Now, our country is reaching out to other nations, and it's the same with our film industry. Russian films are being shown across the world."

Russia's relationship with Indian cinema is rich, extensive and deeply meaningful to earlier generations who grew up in the era of non-alignment and the Cold War, but it has never really faded away and keeps getting re-invented. Lemesheva says that *Awaara* (1951), *Disco Dancer* (1982) and *Seeta Aur Geeta* (1972) are still favourites among both young and old Russians, but an excellent indicator that the younger generation is also keeping tabs on India was the rush in queues to watch *Bahubali* (2015).

Lemesheva also told us that earlier this month the Russian government passed a scheme offering state support for films shot in Russia by international filmmakers. She said, "the Russian ministry of culture has announced a 40% rebate for foreign filmmakers desiring to shoot their films in Russia. We will support you with subsidies. We would love to collaborate with you. The movies can be shot in Russia and India and have both, Indian and Russian actors as well."

Govorukhin added, "we are already receiving interest from Indian filmmakers who are seeking collaboration and ties with Russian filmmakers. Let's work on something together."

40% Support for International Shoots
19 – Minimum number of shooting days in Russia

5 – The company must have over 5 years of experience

Over 50% of the crew should be Russian
The script should be connected with the history and traditions of Russia

Source: Moviestart producing center, Russia

Photo: Assavri Kulkarni

SHORT TAKES



My only complaint is that the ticketing site keeps crashing.

Varad Nayak
Delegate
Goa



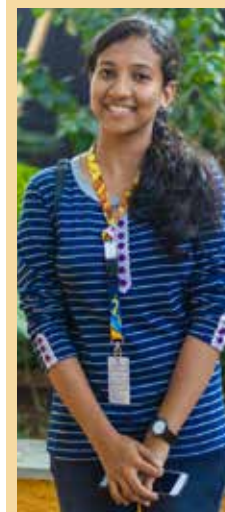
The décor isn't as good as it was last year. I think they need a more efficient transport system for the guests.

Gwen Fernandes
French Interpreter
Goa



People think millennials are too judgmental and critical of movies and other things; I think we're just being honest.

Aditi Bagaddeo
Student
Pune



There are many film students at the festival. It would be nice if they could organize cheaper accommodation for us; it gets very expensive.

Adhira Krishna
Film Student
Kerala

Illustration: Fabian Gonsalves



BY R. BENEDITO FERRÃO

When's the last time you saw someone dark-skinned in a South Asian film? I don't mean "dusky." But really, *really* dark? To say that Indian subcontinental cinemas have a predilection for actors who are light of complexion is, well, hardly enlightening.

Such beauty standards are reinforced by the appearance of female *and* male Bollywood movie stars in commercials where they shill skin-lightening products. There's no subtlety in the message here: one cannot be dark and lovely. To be as beautiful as the movie stars, these advertisements urge, one has to chemically (ouch!) transform something as fundamental as their skin colour.

Beauty standards apart, the very technology of film has itself been historically predisposed to whiteness as the norm. Kodak, which in the mid-twentieth century monopolized the sale of colour film in the United States, used what was known as the Shirley Card to decide on the right skin colour balance when developing

film in labs. Named for an employee who served as its model, the woman on the card is a white brunette whose skin tone became the "normal" against which film was colour corrected. There was no equivalent system to determine if the skin tones of people of colour were properly represented photographically.

Though by the 1990s Kodak created a Shirley Card featuring Asian, Black, and Latina women, the upsurge of digital photography ensured that this more racially diverse yardstick fell by the wayside. "The result was film emulsion technology that still carried over the social bias of earlier photographic conventions," Harvard's Sarah Lewis writes in "The Racial Bias Built into Photography" for *The New York Times* (25 April 2019).

Though more research needs to be done on how skin colour standardization in photography was calibrated in other parts of the world, the global reach of Kodak likely proliferated the colour canon that company originated in the United States; other non-US film-producing companies may similarly have been

partial to lighter skin tones as the default. These biases that normalized lighter skin hues as standard also informed moving film technology.

Lewis finds that though advancements in digital imaging are better suited to shooting diverse skin tones, television shows and films that feature darker skinned people employ a variety of lighting techniques to ensure accurate representation. As an example, she cites the work of Black American director Ava DuVernay, but also *Insecure* where, in addition to special lighting, the HBO show uses reflective moisturizer on its actors because "dark skin can absorb more light than fair skin."

Developments in the more precise depiction of skin colour on film not only speak to the growing diversity of filmic storylines and cultural representation, but also its importance. "Why does inclusive representation matter so much?" Lewis queries; she concludes: "You can't become what you can't accurately see."

In 2013, actor Nandita Das endorsed the "Dark is Beautiful"

campaign which counters Bollywood's over-representation of light-skinned talent. Taking issue with the equation of beauty and representation, Anjali Rajoria writes for *Round Table India* (21 August 2013), that while "Dark is Beautiful" may challenge industry bias, it perpetuates dominant notions that divide women based on looks, class, and caste. In turn, this leaves no room for something as challenging as the subject of acid-attack victims, which is the basis of *Uyare* (2019), a Malayalam film at this 50th anniversary edition of the International Film Festival of India. By over-valuing the "commodity of 'Beauty,' we create a sense of insecurity in the women belonging to the out-group," Rajoria avers.

Cinematic representation, then, is most effective when it captures the multiple shades of diverse lives. The beauty of such potential is more than skin deep.

Uyare screens at the festival multiplex Screen 2 today at 2.30pm, and at Kala Academy on 26th November at 10pm

SHORT TAKES



I feel 4 tickets a day is still not enough. We spend a lot of money to come here; we want to watch more films.

Sridevi Goel
Delegate
Bombay



I have just two days here. I hope to catch as many movies as possible.

Divya Mansukhani
Delegate
Goa



I enjoyed my first time here 4 years back – I attended it as a journalist and I got to interview Wong Kar-wai.

Bina Datwani
Journalist
Goa



it would be nice if the master classes were open to more people.

Sathyendra S
Film-maker
Tamil Nadu



Photo by Siddhartha Lal

FINDING COMMUNITY AT IFFI

BY SAMIRA SHETH

Just like a film is more than the sum of its parts – direction, acting, lighting, camera work, music - the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), is a great deal more than just a great line-up of world cinema. Much as I love movies, I have to confess it's the festival atmosphere that they are screened in here that is more of a visceral draw for me.

There's so much absorbing pleasure the people you meet and the encounters you have in the most random places; the food stalls, the huddling over cups of tea and sharing tables with complete strangers – some highly accomplished in the world of cinema among them - the standing in line and sometimes complaining about the rush; the scramble to get an auto

from the ESG complex to Kala Academy to catch the next show – these are the moments that have made for my most indelible IFFI memories.

Everyone has some cherished story from this festival. When I look back at the last few years of attending it, I can easily recall some of the great movies I saw, but what draws a smile is the memory of meeting the outstanding director Shekhar Kapur, while getting a chai at the Kala Academy canteen.

Another year, I waited with a policeman manning the crowds awaiting a film celebrity, and gained an insight into his hectic work hours during the festival programme days. Yet another time, at a Bollywood-themed art exhibition, I took a picture alongside Seema Biswas, the star of *Bandit Queen* (1994), as she posed alongside a painting featuring Phoolan

Devi.

Just yesterday, two women hopped in to my auto as I was leaving for Kala Academy. In just those few minutes of riding between venues, we chatted about how it took them 7 years to write their film, which they graciously invited me to view.

Laura Bierbrauer and Verena Kuri, from Argentina, are the directors of *Far From Us* (2019). Where else would you have the opportunity of actually mingling with filmmakers, and hearing their stories first-hand! A little bit later, while standing in the ticket line, I just happened to start a conversation with New York based Malayalam filmmaker Jayan Cherian, whose LGBT film *KaBodyScapes* created a huge controversy when it came out in 2016.

It is this thrill of the unexpected and the sense of adventure in the air

that pervades the IFFI atmosphere, and which keeps one hooked on coming back. Most people here are outsiders like me. Maybe the experience of being somewhere else, outside your comfort zone, pushes one to be more friendly and accepting.

I love this sense of diversity and inclusion, of the love of cinema creating a bond across colour and age and caste and sex. There is an overriding sense of belonging.

Just as movies require a suspension of disbelief, IFFI puts you firmly in the here and now – it feels like there is nothing that exists outside of it while it's on. And it is this immersive mood and vibe, this suspension of real life, that creates these bonds, however temporary, and reminds us that apart from cinema we are all connected in very human ways.

SHORT TAKES



This is the first time I've traveled somewhere alone. I attended a master class with Isabelle Huppert – she's a really good actor, I love her films.

Arif G
Student
Tamil Nadu



I wish the bookings wouldn't open at midnight. I was at a screening at 12, and couldn't book for the next day.

Tanvi Nerlekar
Delegate
Pune



It is my first time here and I like it a lot.

Abhilesh Kuna
Writer
Kerala



I think NFDC is much more organized this year than before.

Sameer Bhamra
Festival Curator
London





“WE WANTED TO GIVE VOICE TO THE LITTLE CREATURES”

BY URVASHI BAHUGUNA

“*The Secret Life of Frogs* (2019) is the most, most difficult film we’ve shot. Nothing was known about these creatures. We were experimenting at every stage,” says Vijay Bedi, who along with his twin brother Ajay Bedi makes extraordinary documentaries on India’s diverse wildlife. Their newest film - the first made on amphibians in India - won silver at the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards, as well as the recipient of a National Film Award. He spoke to *The Peacock* about the necessity of taking conservation seriously, and the challenges of filming tiny nocturnal creatures.

What draws you to Conservation?

When you talk about a wildlife film, it’s still known as a white man’s job unfortunately. Good stuff isn’t expected from Asians. Being third-generation filmmakers, we learned from our father and grandfather how

to work hard and achieve something different. This film is a conservation film totally (full entertainment is there no doubt). There are things in there that even scientists haven’t seen. We’re trying to work with policymakers and researchers, and requested a meeting with the Indian Prime Minister to take things forward. We want to say that if you save amphibians, you can save the entire forest because frogs are known as the barometers of the forest. A third of amphibian populations will be on the verge of extinction by 2050. It’s high time we do something. As young filmmakers, we wanted to give voice to the little creatures.

What brought frogs to your attention?

We thought we need to do something unique that hasn’t been seen by Indians. Amphibians are the least studied group in India. There’s lots and lots of scientists studying tigers but very few doing research on amphibians. In 1917, a Britisher, seeing a purple frog tadpole, figured that it may be a frog which burrows. The purple frog was formally discovered by S. D. Biju only in 2003. It’s only in recent times that we’ve been able to film them. Not much was known about it, the exact population, how many exist in the wild.

What were some new details that you were able to document?

With all amphibians, the female and male frog part after breeding. But with this frog, we noticed that they would come out together and go back into the ground together. We’re coming out with a scientific paper on this. In amphibians, the males usually make calls, but we noticed the female purple frog

making a call which we recorded. These are the small nuggets that were really interesting.

What were some of the challenges?

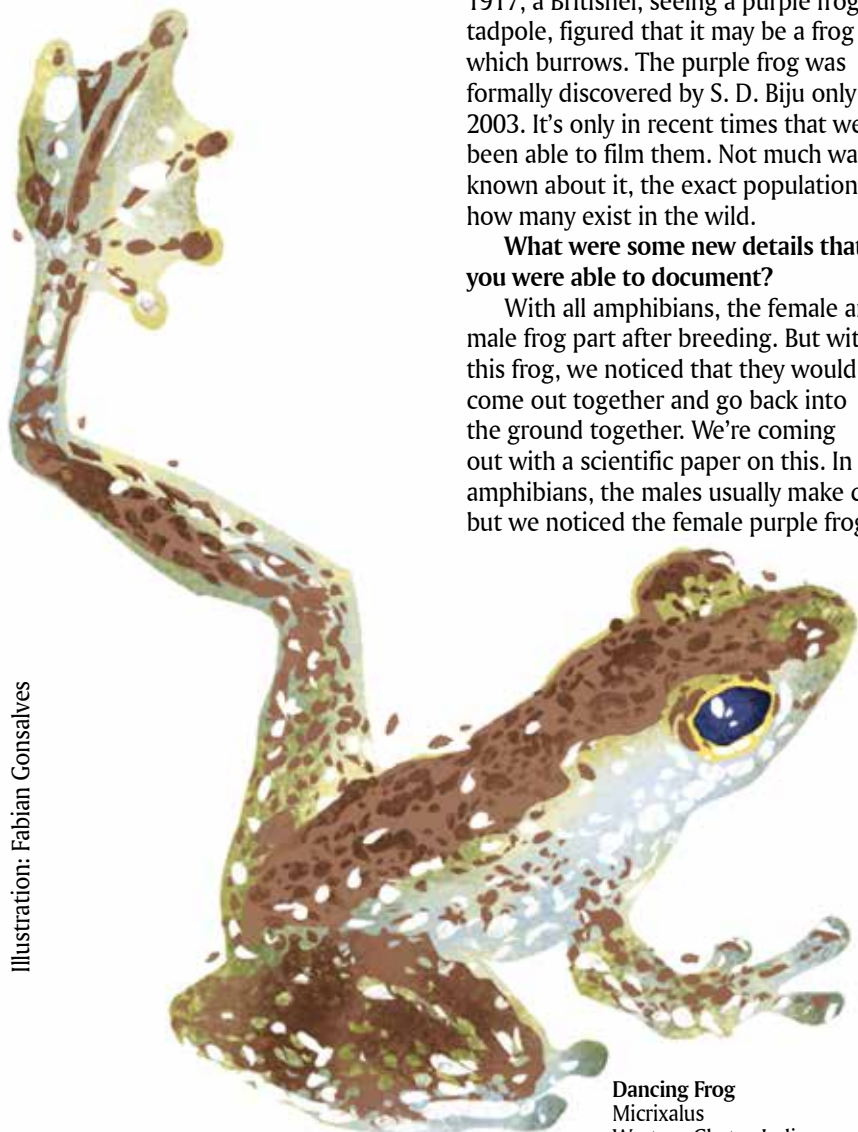
When we talk about amphibians, two things come to mind – night and water. Everything had to be shot at night, we never wanted to use strong lights and scare them away. Their skin is very sensitive. That’s the ethical aspect of filmmaking. If we disturb them, we won’t get the behaviour we’re looking for. That’s the difference between a documentary and a feature film – there are no actors, you’re filming in the wild, nothing is in your hands.

You can ask Shahrukh Khan to shoot again because the camera didn’t roll, but if you make a mistake in the wild, you have to wait for a day, a week, a month, maybe even next season to come back. The margin for error is very, very small.

Kumbara Night frog
Nyctibatrachus kumbara
Western Ghats - India



Purple Frog
Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis
Western Ghats- India



Dancing Frog
Micrixalus
Western Ghats - India

Illustration: Fabian Gonsalves

Also, we were filming in the rain for months and months. Our skin was peeling off because humans are not meant to be in water for so long. Every morning, we used to apply anti-fungal powder on our bodies and try to keep them dry. With the peeling skin, there were all these leech and tick bites, it was crazy. But we were determined to get the stuff.

The biggest challenge was that funding for Indian documentaries is still not there, and no broadcaster came forward to fund the film. We both decided, let’s give it a shot anyway, we’ll pool in whatever little money from our freelance work and do our film.

The Secret Life of Frogs is being screened as part of the Indian Panorama Non-Feature Film section at the festival multiplex Screen II at 11:30 am today.

AGNES VARDA: WE MAKE FILMS TO LOVE

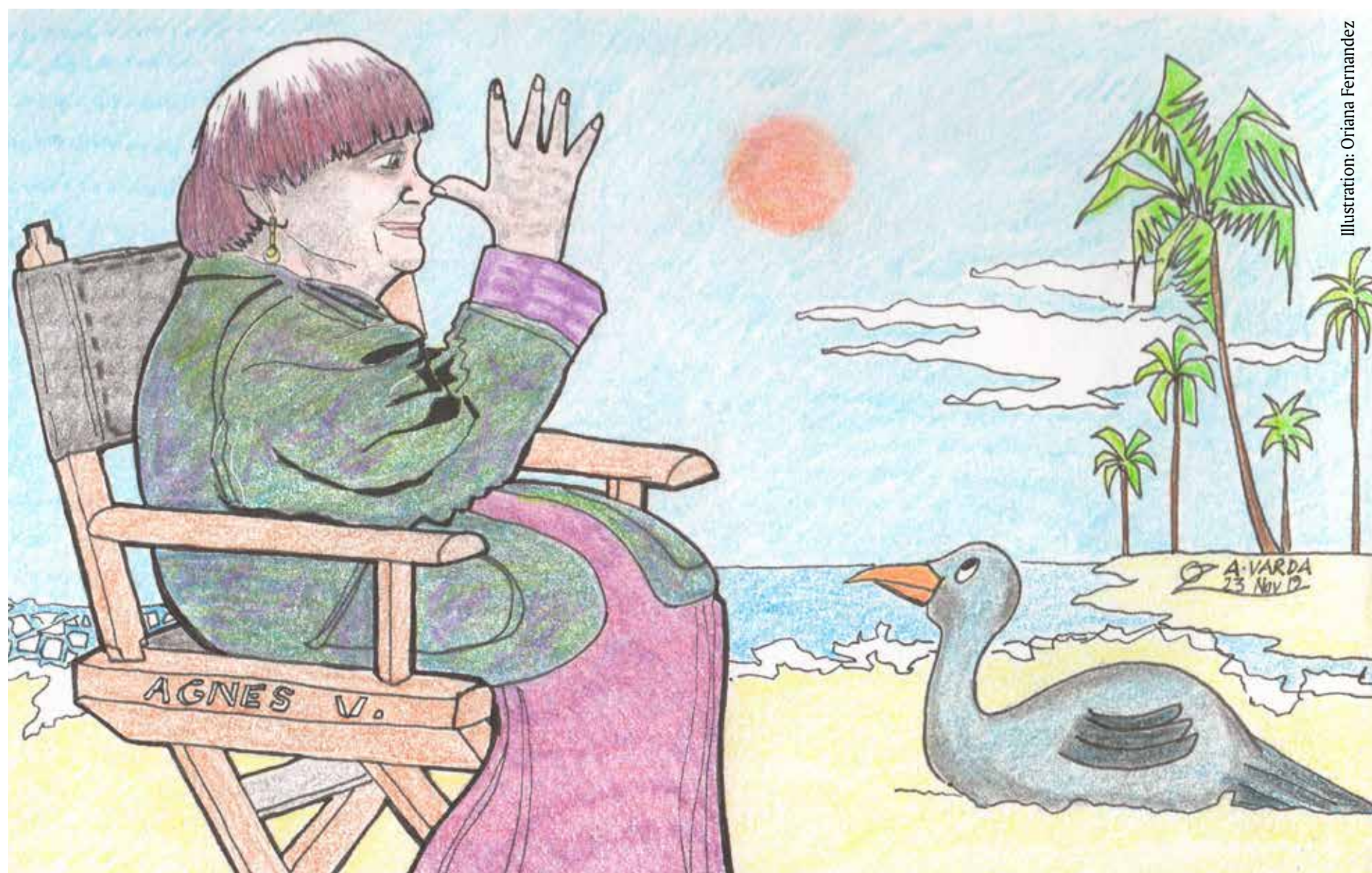


Illustration: Oriana Fernandez

BY AAKASH CHHABRA

This is not a eulogy, for that would never suit someone who lived and died as joyfully as Agnes Varda did. Her two-tone bowl-cut crown, lanky floral pajamas, tinted round sunglasses, eccentric scarves, long statement necklaces and a wry sardonic smile, were all accoutrements to her ingenuity and unlimited imagination.

The Belgian photographer turned filmmaker was at the forefront of *La Nouvelle Vague* along with Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, Alain Resnais, and her late-husband Jacques Demy. *Au féminin singulier* of French cinema, she forged a style of documentary realism with non-actors, experimental juxtaposition, and superimposition of moving images. "I'm not at all a theoretician of feminism, I did all that—my photos, my craft, my film, my life—on my terms, my own terms, and not to do it like a man," she once said.

Varda closed the curtains to her career at the Berlin International Film Festival earlier this year with *Varda by Agnes*. An endearing autobiographical swansong, made using the footage of her lectures, superimposed illustrations, and reconstructions of some of her iconic scenes, where she looks back at her gratifying life in photography, cinema and the world of installation art, she knowingly presented it as her last film. "This is the end, my friend," she wrote in the press notes of her premiere.

In the movie, she recalls, "I take photographs or I make films. Or I put films in the photos, or photos in the films. When I made my first film, *La Pointe Courte* — without experience, without having been an assistant before, without having gone to film school — I took photographs of everything I wanted to film, photographs that are almost models for the shots. And I started making films with the sole experience of photography, that's to say, where to place the camera, at what dis-

tance, with which lens and what lights?"

In her last film, which will be shown tomorrow at the International Film Festival of India, Varda speaks of her core principles: "inspiration", "creation" and "sharing". A few minutes into it, she shares with an audience her fears of growing old, "80 was bearing down . . . like a train. Now I'm 90 and I don't care." Then she remembers *Cléo from 5 to 7* (1961), in which she mixed documentary with fiction to confront the traditionally objectified woman, and *Vagabond* (1985) about the death of a young drifter "de-fetishized the female body from the male perspective." Actress Sandrine Bonnaire, who played the drifter, shared the stage with Varda to remind her how dismissive and blunt she had been to her 17-year-old self when, she complained about blisters on her arms. "I should have licked them," Varda blurted out, to great laughter.

Sometime later, Varda speaks of her husband Jacques Demy's life and his

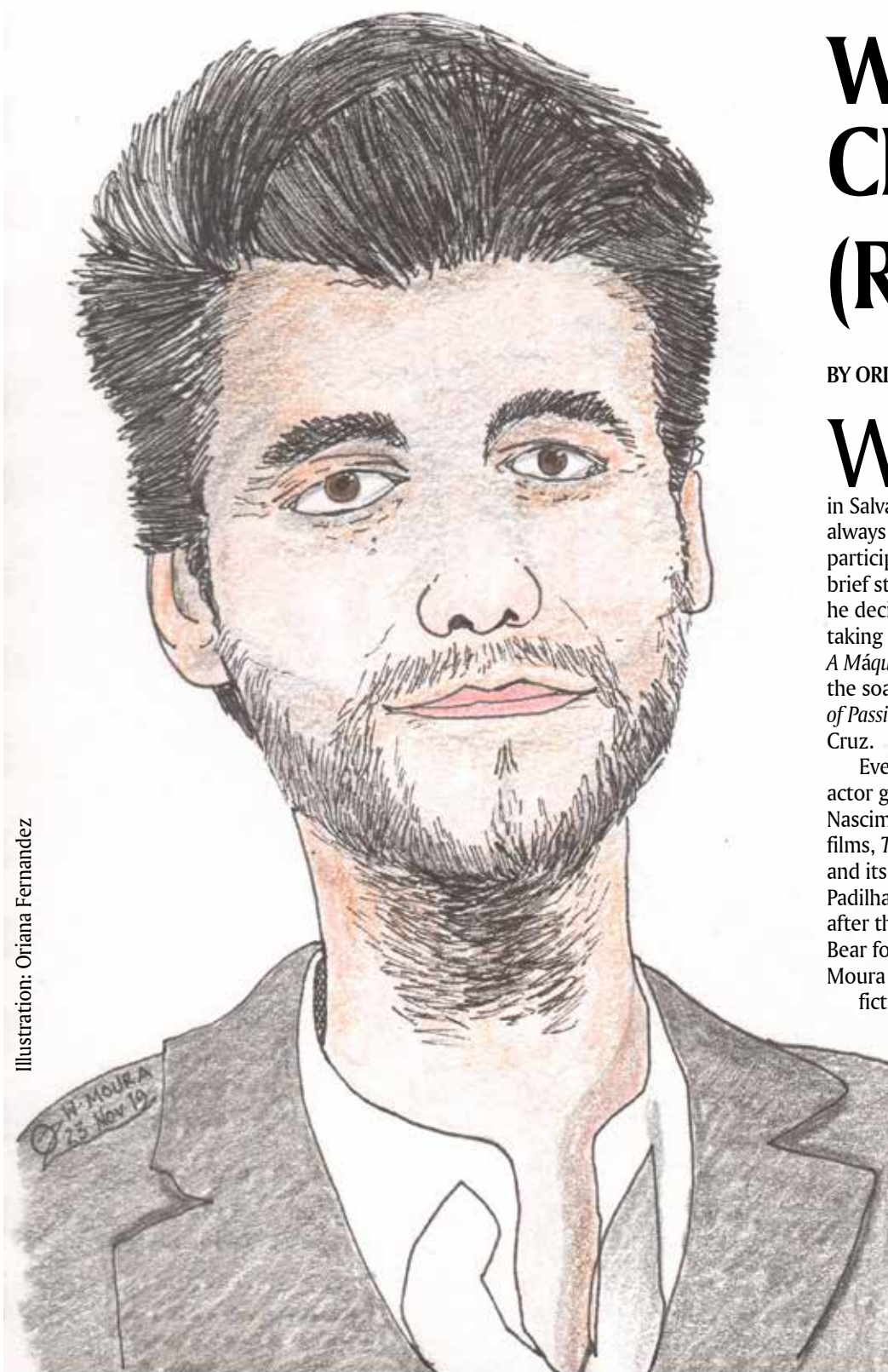
demise, the making of *Jacquot de Nantes* (1991), a film which begins as his biography but transforms into Varda's acceptance of his death, and describes her classic *Le Bonheur* (1965) as "a beautiful summer peach with a worm inside."

She reminisces about her art installation *potatutopia*, jokes about her blurring vision and love of beaches, her re-ignited love for photography and collaboration with artist JR in *Faces Places* (2017). This culmination of an extraordinary career is much more than an illustrated lecture, or retrospective. It's a testament of her unparalleled vision.

When *Faces Places* (2017) gave Varda her first Academy nomination she said, "There is nothing to be proud of, but happy. Happy because we make films to love. We make films so that you love the film."

Varda by Agnes screens at the INOX in Porvorim at 6.30 PM.

Illustration: Oriana Fernandez



WAGNER MOURA'S CINEMATIC (R)EVOLUTION

BY ORIANA FERNANDEZ

Wagner Moura has been meticulously climbing the movie industry ladder. Born in Salvador do Bahia in 1976, he was always interested in performance, and participated in plays at school. After a brief stint as a journalist with Bahia TV, he decided to turn to acting full-time, taking on small roles in plays such as *A Máquina*/ "The Machine" (2000), and the soap opera, *Sabor da Paixão*/ "Taste of Passion" (2002-03) starring Penélope Cruz.

Eventually, the ambitious young actor got his first break playing Captain Nascimento on the acclaimed crime films, *Tropa de Elite*/ "Elite Squad" (2007) and its sequel (2010), directed by José Padilha. He reached international acclaim after the movie received the Golden Bear for Best Film at the Berlin Festival. Moura then played Spider in the science fiction film, *Elysium* (2013) where he

got the chance to work with Matt Damon, Jodie Foster and the renowned Brazilian actress Alice Braga. But for international audiences, his most recognisable role by far has been that of Pablo Escobar, in the worldwide hit Netflix series, *Narcos*. His portrayal of the infamous Colombian drug-lord led to a Golden Globe award nomination in 2016.

Wagner Moura has donned many more caps in

recent years. As a human rights activist, he is a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nation's International Labour Organisation, supporting the global campaign to end modern slavery. He has served as producer on the film, *Sergio* (2018), in which he also starred in as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who was killed by terrorists in Baghdad.

This year, he made his directoral debut with *Marighella* (2019), a biography of Carlos Marighella, the controversial Marxist guerrilla writer, politician and soldier who was murdered by the Brazilian dictatorship in 1969. It debuted at the 69th Berlin International Film Festival earlier this year, but did not enter as a contender for the illustrious Golden Bear Award. The film has attracted much debates, and was famously denounced by Jair Bolsonaro, the current, far-right president of Brazil, even before its release.

"I was always very interested in politics, and I think the nature of art, even if you're not obviously doing a political thing, it's always very political. It's something that is made to interfere, not only with individuals and their daily lives, but with society in general." Moura noted in an interview with The Hollywood Reporter, earlier this year,

Marighella – which is in the competition for The Golden Peacock at IFFI 2019 - screens today at the festival multiplex Screen 1 at 7 PM.

SHORT TAKES



Everyone's been asking a lot of questions at the masterclass sessions, and it's helped me feel a little less lost.

Niharika Singh
Delegate
Delhi



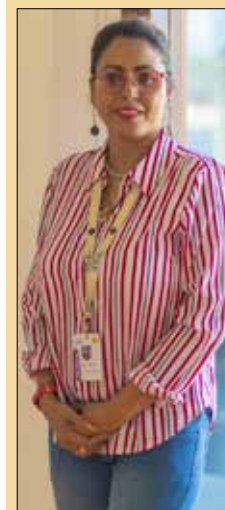
I think they should've announced the schedule well in advance.

Vivek Tandon
Writer
Bombay



I feel the Film Bazaar is a great place for networking

Eklavya Sood
Actor
Bombay



I've come here for the first time with two of my films. I feel the organization of activities can be a little better.

Sonu Mitra
Filmmaker
Bombay

“GENDER EQUALITY REMAINS A MYTH”

BY KINJAL SETHIA

“I don’t think women are being treated equally even now. Those who say gender equality has been achieved completely do not know the whole picture,” says Pune-based director Sameer Vidwans, whose Marathi film *Anandi Gopal* (2019) will be screened today at the 50th International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

He told *The Peacock*, “When a man says he permitted his wife to work or study further, it makes me wonder why does she need his permission. So, even if it is true that the situation has improved for women as compared to earlier times, there is still discrimination in some form or another.”

Anandi Gopal is based on the real story of the titular character who became India’s first female physician in 1886. The film chronicles her journey to United States to study medicine and the important role played by her husband, Gopalrao Joshi. Vidwans says, “I feel that more than a historical film, this is a love story between Anandi and her husband. They had a great relationship with utmost understanding between each other. And I have tried to portray this love against the backdrop of her story of success.”

The 39-year-old filmmaker says his 135-year-old story is still relevant, “patriarchy is so deeply conditioned into us, that we do not even realise that we are being unfair. Some have accepted equality only at a farcical level. But at that time, Gopalrao encouraged Anandinbai to study, and it was she who decided to become a doctor. He responded with utmost support, ready to do anything to realise her dream. Even if we tell the story today, it remains ahead of its time.”

Vidwans says, “when I see cases like women being debarred from entering temples at Sabarimala, or the main sanctum at Shani Shingnapur, I feel that gender equality remains a myth. Even the Supreme Court has refrained from doing the right thing by avoiding a decision in favour of women. Its response of constituting a larger bench of judges is disappointing. When I see around myself and look at my mother and aunts, I realise that their wish to study was suppressed. And even if you blame the economic situation you realise that a boy in a similarly desolate condition would have still managed to study. So, it is not really about the money.”

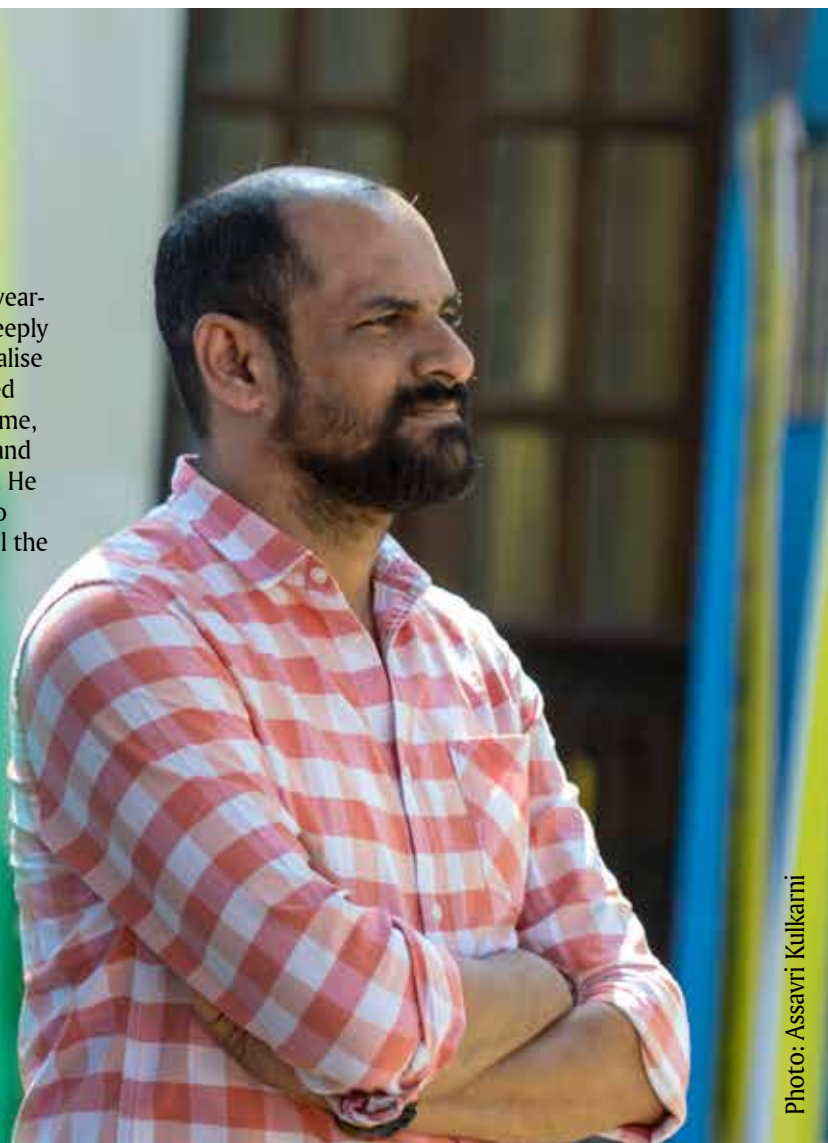


Photo: Assavri Kulkarni

GOA FOUND AND LOST

BY ANDREW PEREIRA

“I’m not just here to enjoy the movies, but I want to bring attention to the fact that we’re losing Goa,” Ajoy Tyagi told *The Peacock* on Friday. A legal professional and a lover of realistic cinema, he is determined to use his passion for writing and music to awaken people that Goa’s transition to something unrecognizable is happening at a frightening pace.

“I returned to Goa after travelling

the world as a consultant for 13 years, but this is not the Goa that I knew,” he says, “it’s not just the physical characteristics of Goa, but even its people have changed. When you talk about Goa, you talk about kindness, simplicity and purity. This was its essence. That character is now fading”

Tyagi has composed a song to express his anguish, which is being released to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the International Film Festival of India, and “comes straight



Photo by Siddhartha Lalit

from the heart. ‘Let’s Goa’ describes the ethos of the people of this glorious land, and vividly, yet, honestly describes how Goans are,” he says. The track has Goan musicians Mario Ludovico Mascarenhas on guitar and additional vocals, with Thais and Tanya Mascarenhas providing vocal harmony, and has been arranged and recorded by the veteran Roque Lazarus.

Says Tyagi, “I’m six decades old. This song is a cry about the Goa I’ve seen and lost.”

SHORT TAKES



The Porvorim venues are quite far, and the transport that has been arranged does not come by very often.

Anuja Philomina
Professor
Kerala



If we don’t come to festivals like these, we’re restricting our own perspectives. These films allow us to find newer meanings to life.

Rayhaan T
Film-maker
Tamil Nadu



I think the registration process needs to be improved. I also feel there need to be rush lines.

Sarika Dusane
Film Producer,
Pune



I think they could add our phone numbers behind the cards. It would be easier to track down the person who’s lost it.

Sandeep Kumar
Screenwriter
Mumbai

SCOUTING FOR TALENT

BY SAGAR MAHINDRA

It's the waning hours at NFDC Film Bazaar, and every hall and corridor is still abuzz with festival programmers, co-producers, and distributors from across the world. Over the years, South Asia's largest film marketplace has helped independent films such as *Qissa* (2013), *Lunchbox* (2013), *Thithi* (2015) and *Angrezi Mein Kehthe Hain* (2017) make it to international film festivals and theatres, and reach global audiences. Which project will be the next one in this highlight reel?

Eti (Ester) Cohen, the director of Israel's Film Department and Council, who is on her maiden visit to Film Bazaar, was highly impressed with this year's projects. She said, "Indian films have a huge appeal in Israel. The Ministry is very keen on promoting them further. I am really glad to have interacted with some passionate filmmakers here, whose works range from all sections of the society. I am finding a continuous flow of energy. Every corner where you sit, people are talking about films. The atmosphere is so enriching and magical."

Selvaggia Velo is director of the unique River to River festival in Florence, Italy, and has been a Film Bazaar regular over the years. She told **The Peacock**, "I come here every year with the hope of meeting some dynamic filmmakers, and seeing new and interesting work. This year is no different, as I got my hands on some wonderful films and attended excellent pitches."



Velo's River to River was founded in 2001 under the patronage of the Embassy of India, and is the only film festival in Italy that exclusively screens works of Indian filmmakers. She told us, "we have had the privilege to host personalities like Amitabh Bachchan, Ketan Mehta, Aparna Sen, and Anurag Kashyap. We have successfully completed 18 years and looking forward to the 19th

edition. This year we have Shonali Bose's *Sky is Pink* (2019) which premiered at Busan as our opening film, and Abhishek Shah's *Hellaro* (2019) is also a part of the festival."

The vivacious Italian Indophile has been visiting India since 1991, and feels that she can never get enough of the country and its people, saying, "there is something to the Indian culture that

always brings me back here. Indian Cinema is so rich and vibrant. We have had retrospective of masters like Satyajit Ray, Guru Dutt, Raj Kapoor and Mani Kaul at our festival and the Italian people find it very inspiring. River to River, for us, is a flow of cultures, ideas and cinema from Arno river to Ganges."

"Indian films have always made a mark in international circuits, and festival programmers are always keen on presenting Indian films on their platform," said Nadia Dresti, the Head of Locarno Pro's film festival in Switzerland, "this year the Viewing Room has a variety of interesting projects. Some are complete, while others still in progress. You can just grab a seat, and embark on this journey that takes you to different parts of a country where narrative takes the lead over everything else."

BBC UK Director, Tamara Gordon, who has 8 international awards to her credit, considers Film Bazaar the perfect space for aspiring filmmakers who wants to reach global audiences. She told us, "it's an opportunity to get exposed to amazing Indian talent. When you see these passionate filmmakers with amazing tales, you would immediately want to connect them. They have beautiful stories and we have the plan to make them global. Collaborating with these minds helps both them as well as mediators like us who knows how to carve the way through these circuits."

The 13th edition of Film Bazaar concludes today.

Photos by Siddhartha Lal



DR. RACHANA PATNI: THIRD EYE

‘Diversity’ is such a buzz word today in my world of work. ‘Inclusion’ and ‘unconscious bias’ even more so. While radical in their import and impact, I have personally experienced how these can be used in a way that changes the text without changing any subtexts. If I were to squeeze out the essence of all of the approaches seeking redressal for exclusion and discrimination in our society and workplaces, ‘recognition’ jumps out as a singularly powerful concept. To work towards a world where we all recognize each other as fully human is not just a spiritual achievement, but a matter of practical and social accomplishment.

Many Indian communities feel marginalised and struggle for recognition within India. The North East is clubbed as a single entity, but holds various diverse and different groups. Just in Manipur alone, there are over 35 communities, each with distinct cultural identities. The reaction to a lack of recognition of entire communities takes the shape of political and cultural subversive acts. In Manipur there was

a total ban on Hindi films from cinema halls for nearly a decade. This leads to a further cultural alienation from mainstream India but it is a response against the reductionism with which the tiny state has been treated. This kind of dynamic can keep us locked into a lack of recognition of each other. There are therefore real advantages to be had if we are able to enjoy the culturally imbued cinema of different parts of India.

Internationally, Russia has often held the space of being ‘different’ and due to certain political aspects, it has successfully been able to take pride in that. Hollywood can often create a matrix of the kind of characters we like or dislike. Through that specific gaze, there is a certain emotional geography at play with barriers *against* feeling for some communities and allowances *for* feeling for certain others.

Watching films made in Russia can act as an excellent antidote to the inoculation of feelings towards Russians that could be a by-product of an overdose of dominant stories that

characterize them as *lesser* humans. This can also apply to other communities that are painted in a negative light or shown regularly to be suffering from some moral deficits.

I have personally worked on confronting ways in which the choice of music and costume also create the sense of what is homogenized as the dominant culture of the world. It is so strong that we often can only sense the non-western as ‘ethnic’. That the western world also has its ethnicities is obfuscated by the way in which modernity itself gets fused with and subsumed by the dominant narrative.

Thus, wearing a bindi or saree, and choosing to expand our enjoyment of musical forms, can be forms of subversive actions, ones that I have employed quite consistently. There are so many hybrid ways of enjoying difference and ensuring that we do not treat difference to mean ‘less than’.

Films create dominant and marginal identities through both strategic and unthinking decisions that are part of telling of any story. Consumers of the

films are an active set however. Reviews and criticism are as much part of the story of film as the film itself. The more we engage from our particular standpoints, the more we can challenge what is passed off as universal. In this way, engaging with a narrative that is imperfect makes for great learning and change.

As an invested social psychologist, I have been trying an exercise every now and again that I also suggest to others as a reflective practice that builds empathy.

In a film, if I have any strong identifications or repulsion against certain characters, I try to stay with the notion of continuing to feel connected to the ones that repel me, attempting to get to grips with their perspective. In this way the shadow sides of our personas can easily be explored through our emotional responses to characters in films. The diversity of good and evil, likeable and repellent, which exists within each one of us, can also be examined through our relationship with films.

I Know She Hated This, But

In a trailer that runs a mere minute and a half, a man can't help but call Akhmatova beautiful twice. Her Selected Poems carry two introductions – one by a woman who refers to Akhmatova as one of the greatest poets, another by a man who starts off, as one does, saying, “I know she hated this word, but I would like to call her a poetess.” Akhmatova's quoted, her name invoked, doubtless, somewhere every day. She was mistaken when she predicted people would remember her as simply a storm that shook the night. Her writing survived a war, a revolution, the loss of a husband and a child. The man in the trailer of a film about her life described her as very beautiful and very petrifying.

Note: The Russian poet mentioned is Anna Akhmatova (1889-1966), among the most famous and well-regarded poets of the twentieth century. The trailer referred to was made to promote a documentary called A Film About Akhmatova (2008).



Illustration: Oriana Fernandez

INOX
Screen I

D01 08:30 AM
CHRONOLOGY (IC)
Dir: Ali Aydin
Turkey/2019/117 min

+

D02 12:00 PM
PARASITE (FK)
Dir: Bong Joon-ho
South Korea/2019/
132 min

+

D03 03:30 PM
FATHER AND SONS (WP)
Dir: Félix Moati
France/Belgium/
2018/90 min

D04 07:00 PM
MARIGHELLA (IC)
Dir: Wagner Moura
Brazil/2019/155 min

+

D05 10:30 PM
WHY DON'T YOU JUST DIE! (CF)
Dir: Kirill Sokolov
Russia/2018/95 min

INOX
Screen II

D11 09:00 AM
ABOUT ENDLESSNESS (MF)
Dir: Roy Andersson
Sweden/Germany/
Norway/
2019/78 min

+

D12 11:30 AM
THE SECRET LIFE OF FROGS (IP-NF)
Dir: Ajay Bedi,
Vijay Bedi English/
2018/54 min

PHOTO-PREM (IP-F)
Dir: Aditya Rathi,
Gayatri Patil
Marathi/2019/89 min

D13 02:30 PM
UYARE (IP-F, DC)
Dir: Manu Ashokan
Malayalam/2019/
125 min

+

D14 05:30 PM
SHABDHUKUNNA KALAPA (IP-NF)
Dir: Jayaraj Malayalam/
2018/14 min

RANGANAYAKI (IP-F)
Dir: Dayal Padmanabhan
Kannada/2019/114 min

D15 08:30 PM
ANANDI GOPAL (IP-F)
Dir: Sameer Sanjay
Vidwans
Marathi/2019/134 min

INOX
Screen III

D21 08:15 AM
EDMOND (WP)
Dir: Alexis Michalik
France/Belgium/
2019/110 min

D22 11:45 AM
PAIN AND GLORY (MF)
Dir: Pedro Almodovar
Spain/2019/113 min

+

D23 03:15 PM
ECHO (FK)
Dir: Rúnar Rúnarsson
Iceland/
2019/79 min

+

D24 06:45 PM
COMRADE DRAKULICH (WP)
Dir: Márk Bodzsár
Hungary/2019/95 min

D25 10:15 PM
THE WEASEL'S TALE (MF)
Dir: Juan José Campanella
Argentina/Spain/
2019/129 min

+

INOX
Screen IV

D31 08:45 AM
VEYILMARANGAL (HM)
Dir: Dr.Biju
India/2019/
108 min/(Malayalam)

D32 12:15 PM
HEARTS AND BONES (WP)
Dir: Ben Lawrence
Australia/2019/111 min

D33 03:45 PM
ANDREY TARKOVSKY: A CINEMA PRAYER (CF)
Dir: Andrey A. Tarkovsky
Russia/2019/97 min

D34 07:15 PM
UMA 'LIGHT OF HIMALAYA' (WP)
Dir: Ananda Jyothi
Brazil/2019/72 min

D35 10:45 PM
MATTHIAS & MAXIME (MF)
Dir: Xavier Dolan
Canada/2019/119 min

+

KALA
ACADEMY

D41 09:00 AM
THE SCIENCE OF FICTIONS (IC)
Dir: Yosep Anggi Noen
Indonesia | Malaysia |
France/
2019/106 min

+

D42 12:30 PM
THE STEED (IC)
Dir: Erdenebileg Ganbold
Mongolia/2019/98 min

+

D43 04:00 PM
MID FEST GALA SCREENING
TRAUMFABRIK (WP)
Dir: Martin Schreier
Germany/2019/125 min

D44 07:30 PM
BLACKMAIL (SF)
Dir: Alfred Hitchcock
UK/1929/85 min

D45 10:00 PM
INSTINCT (WP)
Dir: Halina Reijn
Netherlands/2019/
108 min

ABOUT ENDLESSNESS
Inox Screen II, 9 AM
Dir: Roy Andersson
Sweden/Norway/Germany
78 min



PAIN AND GLORY
Inox Screen III, 11.45 AM
Dir: Pedro Almodovar
Spain
113 min

VARDA BY AGNES

Inox Porvorim I, 6.30 PM
Dir: Agnes Varda
France
115 mn



MATTHIAS & MAXIME
Inox Screen IV, 10.45 PM
Dir: Xavier Dolan
Canada
119 min

Today's Highlights

MASTERCLASS - The Art of Visual Effects with V. Srinivas Mohan at 1.15 pm (Maquinez Palace I)

PRESS BRIEFING- With actor of Hearts and Bones Andrew Luri at 2.30 pm (Old GMC Building)

MID-FEST GALA SCREENING - Traumfabrik at 4 pm (Kala Academy)

OPEN AIR SCREENING - Uri-The Surgical Strike at 7 pm (Miramar Beach)

MUSIC- Lorna and 7 piece band at 8.30 pm (Campal Ground)

FILM SCREENING- Takashi Miike's Ichi The Killer at 9.15 pm (Maquinez Palace Theatre)

MAQUINEZ
I

D51 08:30 AM
PORFIRIO (GPR)
35mm
Dir: Alejandro Landes
Colombia/Argentina/
2011/101 min

D52 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
In-Conversation Session
'Nuances and process of filmmaking'
Panelists: Megha Gular, Pooja Ladha Surti, Juhl Chaturvedi, Modhura Palit & Sumedha Verma Ojha
Moderator: Madhureeta Mukherjee

D53 01:15 PM - 02:45 PM
Masterclass
'The Art of Visual Effects'
Masterclass by: V. Srinivas Mohan

D54 03:30 PM
DULU (GP)
Dir: Avinash Chari India/
2019/125 min (Konkani)

D55 06:30 PM - 08:00 PM
In-Conversation Session
'The Emerging filmmakers of India'
Panelists: Vignesh Shivan, Manu Ashokan, Aditya Dhar & Shashank Khaitan
Moderator: Baradwaj Rangan

D56 09:15 PM
ICHI THE KILLER (FF)
Dir: Takashi Miike
Japan/2001/129 min

MAQUINEZ
II

D61 09:00 AM
NANAK NAM JAHAZ HAI (GLF)
Dir: Ram Maheshwary
India/1969/133 min
(Punjabi)

D62 12:30 PM
M S DHONI (AI-AF)
Dir: Neeraj Pandey
India/2016/
177 min (Hindi)

+

D63 04:00 PM
NERO'S GUESTS (BM)
Dir: Deepa Bhatia
India/2009/57 min
17 -AUG (BM)
Dir: Alexander Gutman
Russia/2009/53 min

UKADI PUKADI (BM)
Dir: Anuj Kumar,
Avinash Medhe,
Jaikar Marur, Swarup Deb,
Dhruv Rao India/2009/
6 min

D64 07:30 PM
BLACK (DSP)
Dir: Sanjay Leela Bhansali India/
2005/124 min
(Hindi)

INOX
PORVORIM
I

D71 10:15 AM
HEAD BURST (WP)
Dir: Savas Ceviz
Germany/2019/99 min

D72 01:00 PM
ENTWINED (WP)
Dir: Minos Nikolakakis
Greece/2019/89 min

D73 03:45 PM
MY EXTRAORDINARY SUMMER WITH TESS (WP)
Dir: Steven Wouterlood
Netherlands/Germany/
2019/82 min

D74 06:30 PM
VARDA BY AGNÈS (HM)
Dir: Agnès Varda
France/2019/115 min

D75 09:15 PM
SO LONG, MY SON (FK)
Dir: Xiaoshuai Wang
China/2019/185 min

+

INOX
PORVORIM
II

D81 10:45 AM
PIRANHAS (FK)
Dir: Claudio Giovannesi
Italy/2019/105 min

+

D82 01:30 PM
THE KING OF MASKS (GPR)
Dir: Tian Ming Wu
China/1996/91 min

D83 04:15 PM
HOMEWARD (WP)
Dir: Nariman Aliev
Ukraine/2019/96 min

D84 07:00 PM
ALL ABOUT EVE (OR)
Dir: Joseph L. Mankiewicz
USA/1950/138 min

INOX
PORVORIM
III

D91 10:30 AM
SYSTEM CRASHER (FK)
Dir: Nora Fingscheidt
Germany/2019/118 min

+

D92 01:15 PM
K SERA SERA (KF)
Dir: Rajeev Shinde
India/2016/125 min
(Konkani)

+

D93 04:00 PM
COMMITMENT (MF)
Dir: Semih Kaplanoglu
Turkey/2019/135 min

D94 07:00 PM
THAMPU (INC)
Dir: G. Aravindan
India/1978/
130 min (Malayalam)



Today, Sonia Rodrigues Sabharwal's seriously beautiful exclusive cover artwork pays tribute to this year's country of focus at the 50th anniversary edition of the International Film Festival of India, with a lovely artistic dialogue between classic Russian imagery (the beloved nesting matryoskha dolls,

and the iconic, spectacular, Byzantine onion towers of St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow's Red Square) and equally talismanic azulejos, the Islamic-Iberian ceramic tradition that has been part of Goan art for centuries, and is currently thriving anew in the 21st century.



IFFI HELPLINE : 0832 492999 (7.30AM TO 10.00 PM)