

THE PEACOCK

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"WE ITALIANS ARE CULTURALLY A DYING BREED"



BY AILEEN CARNEIRO

Back in college in Bangalore, I was introduced to Italian Neorealism and immediately took a special liking to the works of Vittorio de Sica. The legendary director showcased the sorry state of the Roman proletariat after WWII. Later, when I lived in Rome, I grew to love its people, who are said to talk with their hands, but in my experience speak directly from their hearts. Here at IFFI 2017, I was happy to meet Andrea de Sica, grandson of the man who first taught me to love realistic cinema. He spoke exclusively to **The Peacock** just before a screening of his *Children of the Night* (2016).

De Sica's life has been synonymous with cinema. "I don't remember a moment in my life when I was outside this reality," he says. "This environment brought me up with a great passion. It passed on the values that are rooted in this work, such as dignity and respect."

As a young man, he worked with Bernardo Bertolucci, another iconic Italian director. Later, he made documentaries for RAI Television. "Then one day, I felt the need to don my director's cap and do something more important," says the 35 year old. "I wanted to make a movie that is completely unrecognizable in Italian cinema of today, not caring about market, about finding an audience, but just doing what I deeply wanted to do."

Children of the Night is set in a boarding school. "I thought that boarding schools in Italy were a thing of the 1950s. But they exist. It's a very direct film, about the relationship between teenagers and death. I found that there was great secrecy. From there came the subject."

Italy is not very appealing to De Sica right now. "We are culturally a dying breed. The public administration offers fewer platforms for culture in general," Rome has become unrecognizable. "Back then, it was much

more tolerant. My city offered me lots of free festivals, many things to see and all my education came from there. Now it's much more expensive," he worries for his four year old daughter and baby son. "I think if Italy goes on this way, it will become the greatest archaeological park in the world. Just for tourists!"

Although neorealism was considered the Golden Age of Italian cinema, it was also criticized. "There was a huge political movement against neorealistic cinema. Francesco Rosi, an extraordinary director, was totally convinced that cinema should bring light where there is darkness. From that period on, politics gained much control over cinema." Partly in reaction, the 80s saw the rise of very commercial content. "It was an attempt at shaking off the atmosphere of the 70s in Italy, which were years marked by terrorism. So, realist cinema was looked at as very boring and ideological."

"Italians don't tolerate too much drama," says De Sica. He cites the example of *Gomorrah* (2008), based on Roberto Saviano's best-selling book by the same name. The film's director Matteo Garrone was sentenced to death by the Mafia and still lives under police protection. De Sica says, "It's a pattern that repeats itself every time something dark and dramatic comes from our country."

The Mafia fascinates many; there are the films and TV series to prove it. But is this fascination for the crime genre coming from people outside of Italy? "We think that the Mafia is about violent guys with guns, but the main business of Mafia is carried out in offices. It's mainly trying to build alternative systems of entrepreneurship over the traditional ones. Violence is just a side business. Milan is being made by the money of the Mafia! It's not just the guns, the cocaine and the girls. I'm not interested in that," he says. "Martin Scorsese already went there."

De Sica touched on the topic of slavery in Italy in his short film *I Am Fine* (2011). But, he says that nobody wants to hear these stories, just like very few want to hear the stories of the refugees. "My impression is that there are two faces of Italy in this crisis. An Italy that is tolerant, respects, knows and lives this tragedy every day, welcoming people. The other is right wing politics which is running demagogic to raise people's anger against immigrants. Of course, it's happening throughout Europe," he says.

MARIONETTE MAN

BY DAPHNE DE SOUZA

Hanuk Lee is a Korean writer and director whose credits include *215* (2008) and *Hide and Seek* (2012). His latest is *Marionette*, which tells the story of a high school teacher who encounters a mysterious person through instant messaging. Hanuk spoke exclusively to **The Peacock**.

Why filmmaking?

Lee: Filmmaking is my dream, my goal. While graduating high school I started working in the film industry, and studied various positions, film editing, writing... I felt that as a future director I should know all the positions and roles that are involved in making a film. I studied all that by myself, not in university. I studied in film production systems.

Why 'Marionette'?

Lee: It's based on sexual violence and teenager problems in Korea. This problem is not in Korea but in every country. Marionette has a dual meaning. In the film there is a group of people shooting a video titled Marionette. It also translates to a puppet. So with regards to the film, the protagonist is being controlled by a mystery guy who claims to be her master. She is forced to submit to her puppeteer.

Any challenges you faced during the making of the film?

Lee: Since it was my first film, many people doubted my skills, whether I was capable enough to make a film. I had to prove myself to them, show them my capabilities. They also tried to interfere with my idea. The actors also didn't get along with me. They couldn't trust my judgements. But I overcame these problems and here I am.



Can you tell us about your favourite director, someone who has inspired you?

Lee: James Cameron! His movies are awesome. Some people don't believe that I like him as my directing style is very minor like B class movies. But I like his movies. Movies are entertainment. Cinema is art and culture but before that entertainment. And I think Cameron is one of the best entertainers.

Can you tell us about Korean cinema?

Lee: I think Korean and Indian cinema are very similar to each other, even our cultures are similar. Korean people love movies, and Indians too. Korea is a small country but the success of a film is huge. They make a huge amount of money.

If given a choice would you make a film in India?

Lee: Sure, absolutely. Before coming to India, I met the Indian ambassador in Korea. We spoke about the various films in Korea and India. He asked, "Why don't you make a film in India?" When I get the opportunity, I will. It will be an inconvenience because of the traffic, sleeping and food, but strangely I feel very comfortable here. There are many constructions, people, crows, many languages but I like this difference. One day I will make a film here.

Did you know that there are many Indian remakes of Korean films?

Lee: Yes, I've seen Rocky Handsome (*Man From Nowhere*, Korean title: *Ahjussi*). Its a very colourful movie, a lot of action and songs. Very impressive.

Are you enjoying your visit to Goa and the festival?

Lee: Yes. It's a little hot during the day, but the people are very kind. They are always smiling, they speak gently and it's very relaxed here. In Korea everyone is very busy, people walk fast and it is different. I visited Calangute, Baga and Panjim. On the beaches there are many cows and dogs and Panjim is a big city. I asked for a translator from the organisers but unfortunately they didn't provide me with anyone.

THE JOURNEY

BY CLARA ASTARLOA



Quiet footfalls
over the freshly fallen dew
like the breaking dawn
calm and copper-hued,
a head sticks out of the shadow.
From her window, little Kala
in slow motion wants to
hold him in her eyes.

She sees him take refuge
under the branch of a mango tree,
the dark half-moon of his wings
shining in the light of daybreak
Come here, she calls
through the celluloid window
of her darkened room
Come here, don't leave!

The bird hears her and turns
advancing swift and dignified
on a red carpet of flowers
drawn out under his steps

Kala sees the radiant eyespots
that greet her
as cinnamon wings spread out, polychrome
at her window, calling her to fly

In only a few seconds
and in infinite frames
they soar over sea
over houses and buildings
rivers like golden threads that braid the earth
like strange and beautiful songs, other languages heard
from beyond snow-capped mountains
flecked with light from other lands,
other peoples, other plains, other colours greet them,
so different yet so similar in their ways

Embracing his blue and amber neck
they kiss the clouds and in a swooping overhead shot
fall unto the belly of the earth
Little by little, 'tween the flapping of wings,
they sight the Mandovi and Zuari
snaking through the foliage
the Ambo, Cazu and Palm trees
framing the silhouette of her house

I will return, the peacock tells her,
his brilliant wings setting her down
on the grey frame of her window.
The spotlight from above lifts up a November day
as they bid farewell in the fade-out of her room

The door opens and she hears her mother call
Kala smiles and watches the peacock
vanish into the thicket.

(Team Peacock's Clara Astarloa is an accomplished poet in Spanish. This poem was translated by Lucano Alvares)

THINKING OF HER:
VICTORIA OCAMPO

BY CLARA ASTARLOA

Victoria Ocampo's history is part of Argentinian collective memory. I first visited her house many years ago when I was taking a creative writing course. Traversing the rooms, I was delighted to imagine the discussions and talks that Victoria fostered among world artists and intellectuals in that hidden and mystical location in the ravines of La Plata river, San Isidro, where I too grew up and lived for many years before making India my new homeland.

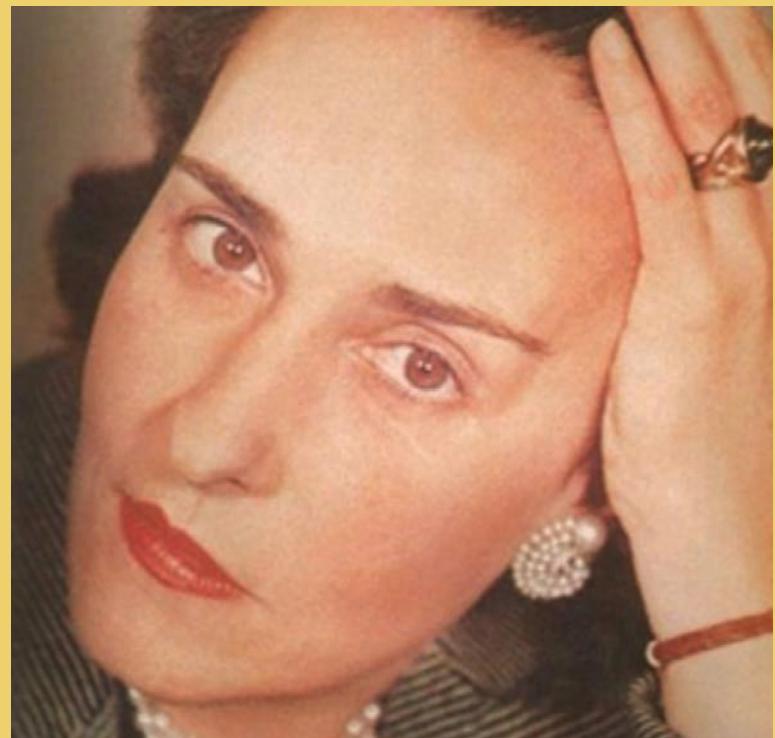
In my course, we analyzed the works of important Argentinian writers such as Silvina Ocampo (Victoria's sister), Adolfo Bioy Casares (Victoria's brother in law) and Jorge Luis Borges (also Victoria's intimate friend). This writer's life has clearly marked Argentinian literature and cultural history.

Apart from founding and directing *Sur*, an intellectual magazine, the aristocrat Ocampo became a great cultural ambassador. Aldous Huxley, Carl Jung, Paul Groussac, Virginia Woolf, Igor Stravinsky, Man Ray, Roger Caillois, Ortega y Gasset were among her personal friends. She was also a successful fighter for women's social rights.

But above all, Ocampo was a visionary. She published and helped great Argentine writers such as Jorge Luis Borges or Julio Cortázar when they were just novices eager to show their work to the world. For every Argentine, to speak about Victoria Ocampo, is to speak about one of the most vital modern women in our history.

This is precisely the case with Eleonora Wexler, a popular Argentine actress who plays Ocampo in *Thinking of Him* (2017), directed by Pablo César. The new movie's world premiere closes IFFI 2017.

"Before interpreting Victoria," says Eleonora, "I had done other historical Argentinian characters like Eva Peron and Salvador Medina Onrubia. But with Victoria the challenge was huge. She was an advanced woman in a world, which was until that moment dominated by men. I centered the work on trying to comprehend the deep fusion that she might have gone through with her very first encounter with the Eastern world: the moment she read Tagore's *Gitanjali* for the first time, and how that impacted her life. Victoria



is mostly regarded as a strong and dominant woman, but I wanted to show how sensitive, fragile and vulnerable she was. It is a young and insecure Victoria that is taking the first steps towards the empowered and determined woman she soon becomes. The admiration she feels for Tagore inhibits her, and shows the timid woman she also was."

"She had felt a strong spiritual connection with Rabindranath Tagore from the moment she read his book, and even more, from the moment she met him for the first time in Buenos Aires," adds César. "The film is not fictional in relation to Tagore and Ocampo's story. It is completely based on the letters they sent to each other from 1924 till Tagore's death."

Ocampo writes to Tagore on 8th June 194, "Now, tell me, what is the title of the poetry book you dedicated to me?" *Purabi* was dedicated to Vijaya (the Bengali name given to Victoria) in 1925. Some years later, on 14th March 1939, he wrote to Vijaya about "some experiences which are like treasure islands detached from the continent of the immediate life, their charts ever remaining vaguely deciphered. My Argentine episode is one of them".

César says, "The devotion that Argentina has always felt for Tagore is irrefutable. Victoria expressed an admiration that the whole Argentine culture shares. In this film I wanted to show Tagore from an Argentinian perspective. He has touched Argentina deeply and that is what the film shows."

"I WANT TO MAKE THE VIEWER MORE SELF-CONSCIOUS."



BY RESHAM GEORGE

Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award this year at IFFI 2017, Atom Egoyan retains the enthusiasm and zeal of a true cinephile. Talking to a packed audience at his Masterclass, he said, "I had the best festival day yesterday, watching 5 films back to back. There's nothing I enjoy more than plunging myself into great cinema. Cinema when it's done well is really exciting because it engages so many of our intellectual and emotional faculties."

Egoyan's talk was peppered with jokes and self-deprecating remarks. He On *Chloe* (2009), "This is an erotic thriller, and it ends up being a little silly in the end." But he points even 'mainstream' cinema should have nuanced characters: "It's important to have moments that are very human. I often use clichéd stories, but I try to do something different with them. I want to make the viewer more self-conscious."

Egoyan is known for sensitive character portrayal in films like *The Sweet Hereafter* (1997). "Allow actors time to develop moments. The actors are aware that as a director I am very interested in everything going on in their head, I am not in a rush. Part of my job as a director is to be absolutely obsessed with the particular quality that the actors have, and make sure that I'm really absorbing their performance. I'm old style. I'm right beside the camera. I'm part of that conversation physically. I'm absorbing it like the actors are. For me that's thrilling. One of the things about the camera – and cinema – is that it not only shows the energy of the actor in front of the lens, but it also is magically able to capture the energy of the person behind the camera. I want intimacy with my actors."

About corporate-style filmmaking: "This is the paradox of making film in that system – it has to have audience approval. And my films don't test well because audiences want clarity."

The hardest thing is to know what the right choice is and hope that there aren't a lot of corporate style people around you. That type of corporate or committee filmmaking is not what we're interested in. We are interested in cinema."

After showing a clip from *Chloe*, Egoyan sighs. "That's the strange thing about filmmaking – you can finish making it, and years later, you see it again and you immediately think of other things you could have done instead. When you're editing, you just have to hope that your decisions work out. But the most important one are the actors' performances and the director's work with them."

During the Q&A session, an audience member asked Egoyan about the compulsory practice of standing during the national anthem, drawing applause from the rest of the audience. Egoyan smiled awkwardly. "It's very unusual. But I'm Armenian. At the Armenian film festival, the religious head blesses the festival on the opening day. There should be separation of church and state, but in Armenia there is no separation. All the participants are supposed to be part of the blessing. So I think that this anthem is like your blessing."

He jokes, "I have to say it's the most unhummingable anthem though. I listened to it many times but I still wouldn't be able to hum it. But every culture has its tradition – you have to get used to it. I stood up all the time. And everyone stood up, which is great, I guess." In response to the audience member's follow-up question (Are people punished in Armenia if they refuse to participate in the blessing?), Egoyan grimaces. "Well, that's a long story. I'll tell you about it another time. Ok, let's talk about films."

Reflecting on his views on drama, he says, "I started this workshop with the pretentious idea of making drama, but I think you understand now that it's about making my own particular type of drama. It's an alternate view of cinema."

SHORT TAKES



It has been a wonderful experience with a lot of surprises. I got to work with an amazing team and interview some really cool people. I liked *The Breadwinner*.

DAPHNE DE SOUZA
Team Peacock



I loved the portrayal of Karl Marx in *The Young Karl Marx*. It was a sensitively done film. I loved the bromance in the movie especially. It brought out the side of his life which I didn't know before.

NIJU MOHAN
Team Peacock



Having my film at the festival and to have my parents watch my work in a theatre for the first time was my biggest highlight.

SUYASH KAMAT
Team Peacock



Really enjoyed *Euthanizer* because it made me question the code of ethics and morals.

OMKAR REGE
Team Peacock

"THIS IS A FIGHT THAT WE ARE ALL FIGHTING TOGETHER"

BY DAPHNE DE SOUZA

She's not just any normal kid from Saligao. Winner of the National Geographic Roar Talent bursary award, 20-year-old **Malaika Vaz** is a champion windsurfer, airplane pilot, explorer, equestrian and entrepreneur. She aspires to use filmmaking to share compelling stories of her adventures. At such a young age, she has already been a brand ambassador for Woodland, a brand friend to Victorinox, a brand advocate for Columbia and the list continues. It's very sad that so few people know about such a young achiever, and the immense work she's done.

Vaz's childhood inspiration vocation is winner of the Green Oscar- (also known as Whitley Awards) - wildlife filmmaker Mike Pandey, though she is currently mentored by renowned wildlife presenter Liz Bonin. As a 12 year old, she hosted a TV series on HCN channel in Goa, 'Spotlight with Malaika'. In high school, she created **Kriyā**, an NGO that focuses on victims of sexual violence and disadvantaged teenage girls. Her stint with Felis Creations as an intern catapulted her into producing and directing **Waghoba** (2016) spotlight on human-animal conflicts involving tigers, along with cinematographer Nitye Sood.

Vaz wants to get people to fall in love with wildlife, through compelling imagery and storytelling. In a powerfully inspiring TEDx talk, she gives us a way for each one of us to contribute to save nature.

She says, "In the years to come I will tell stories of critically endangered species. I will tell stories of young men and women working at the front lines of conflict. And I will tell stories of hope, stories that inspire us to rewire our understanding of the natural world. But I've realised this isn't just the job of a wildlife filmmaker or a conservationist or a wildlife biologist. This is the role of every single young person today, WE need to protect the environment together. We need to tell stories about the environment. And this can be done in a multitude of ways. As a lawyer, you can fight powerful multinationals infringing on inviolate forests. As an engineer, you can create sustainable solutions that reduce our burden on our little blue planet. As a journalist, you can choose to report with



both an investigative eye and a critical eye, with compassion and conviction on stories of environmental justice and injustice. This is a fight that we are all fighting together."

As Project lead for the Manta Trust in India, Vaz is currently filming a documentary on the illegal trade of manta rays titled 'Ocean to Potion'. Follow this exciting pioneer's footsteps: malaikavaz.com and on Instagram 'malaikavaz'.



I found the experience extremely rewarding. I really enjoyed 'Zer', as it perfectly portrayed the identity crisis one faces in such a fractured world.

SASHA PEREIRA
Team Peacock



I loved The Young Karl Marx. It's always good to know the other sides of a story, especially for an ideology that shaped history.

AILEEN CARNEIRO
Team Peacock



My favourite film was Pomegranate Orchard. It had outstanding actors, I loved the moral ambiguity of the characters, and the cinematography was breathtaking!

RESHAM GEORGE
Team Peacock



A Sort of Family was technically great and Still Night, Still Light was terribly poetic. They both kept me thinking for a while after watching them.

CLARA ASTARLOA
Team Peacock

STARTUP GOA

BY NIJU MOHAN

The CEO of Entertainment Society of Goa is also state Information Technology Secretary. About the Tech Expo component of IFFI 2017, Ameya Abhyankar told ***The Peacock*** "Start-ups represent innovative and disruptive technology dimensions. The idea behind running the expo is to connect the technical requirements of the cinema world with disruptive start-ups who are in a position to fulfil the requirements at a fraction of the cost when comparing to larger companies. In order to test the market, we are running it only for one day this year, but hope to expand the scope and schedule of in future editions."

The Tech Media Start-up Expo is a collaborative effort between Niti Ayog, Dept. of Information Technology – Govt. of India and IFFI. "The whole idea is to connect and give opportunities to start-ups which are related to media and films. We got more than 40 applications for the expo, and we selected the best 14 of them from all over India which includes 4 start-ups from Goa." said D S Prasanth from the Dept. of Information Technology, Govt. of Goa.

Anil Joshi, who runs Unicorn India Ventures, was listening to pitches from the start-ups. He said, "I am here because the festival is hosting start-ups around tech media. I want to invest in very early stages when the start-ups have done some proof of concept. We are looking to invest in companies in which we can add value, not just the finance but also give mentoring."

Jason Fernandes runs Funl, a notification filtration service using social blocking. This is an innovative idea which give rewards to block notifications. Funl's device is in the final prototype stage and it's the first time they are showcasing this to the



public.

The Center for Incubation and Business Acceleration (CIBA) incubates the other three Goan start-ups in Assagao and Verna. Counterfeit IQ, founded by Ganesh Faterpekar, is a blockchain solution for identifying fake products and goods. Manufacturers include blockchain tags in their products, and at the end of the supply chain the customer scans the product to verify if it is original. They also have another product which is a cryptocoin which movie fans can use to see the

The IFFI 2017 Tech Expo participants were:

1. Brushflicks – www.brushflicks.com
2. Cubane – www.cubane.in
3. Counterfeit IQ – www.counterfeitiq.com
4. Eunoians – www.eunoians.com
5. Funl – www.funl.in
5. Graphic India – www.graphicindia.com
6. Happy Adda Studios Pvt. Ltd – www.happyadda.com
7. Kontiki Innovation Labs Pvt. Ltd – www.kon-tikilabs.com
8. KDK Factory – www.kdkfactory.com
8. Musein – www.musein.co.in
9. Nettywood - www.nettywood.com
10. NearBuzz – www.nearbuzz.com
11. Planet Earthlings – www.planetearthlings.org
12. Variety Innovation Venture Private Limited – www.varietyinnovation.com

"THERE IS A ONE BILLION POPULATION OUT THERE WAITING FOR STORIES"

BY NIJU MOHAN

Whirlwind changes in the media industry were explored in an exciting panel discussion 'Digital Space: The Future Ahead' at IFFI 2017, moderated by filmmaker Bharat Bala.

Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur said there are new gatekeepers of content, "Amazon, Netflix and Facebook have rebelled against iconism and became icons themselves." Citing a

recent study he said "If you join an engineering college today, by the time you finish you are out of date, as technology is moving so fast." The future lies in individuality and democracy. That is where technology is going. Storytelling is a rebellious medium, and with technology anyone can tell their story.

Filmmaker Sudhir Mishra expressed concern, "I see lack of craft in digital space." He also disagreed that attention spans have become dismally short, pointing out that people binge on multiple seasons of TV series over weekends, "If your efforts are worth the binge, you will get the binge."

Nachiket Pantvaidya, CEO of Alt Digital-Balaji Telefilms contrasted the million crore rupees invested in infrastructure with just a thousand crore rupees invested in content. So there is huge difference in the focus here, he said. "There is a huge gap between ***Naagin*** and ***Narcos***." He also stressed that digital is the way we can home-deliver cinema, which is why Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms like

Netflix and Amazon are picking up.

When asked about building content to engage with the domestic audience, Vijay Subramaniam, Director of Content at Amazon Prime Video-India said their focus is to be super local, to be relevant and to reflect the taste of the audience. "Indian story tellers are not going to run out of stories anytime soon. In a manner of speaking it's Day 1 for us."

Filmmaker Karan Anshuman's ***Inside Edge*** (2017 TV series) has been widely acclaimed. He said "For me it was about rebelling. It's just so liberating, you are not adhering to a two hour and three act structure, the characters don't have to have any kind of resolution at the end of it. They can just go through emotions in a realistic sense. Breaking those rules are so much fun. Because the audience is willing to be engaged over 8 to 10 episodes of the season, when your storytelling is compelling. I don't know if I want to make a film any time soon, because this (TV series) is really working."





"DOING A FILM HAS TO BE DRIVEN BY A BIGGER IDEA"

BY DAPHNE DE SOUZA

Muzaffar Ali is famously known for *Umrao Jaan* (1981) starring the ever so poised Rekha. At IFFI 2017, he heads the International Competition jury.

What made you go into filmmaking?

Ali: It was the fascination of the medium, and my natural pull towards creativity. For me, expressing myself, what I felt about, where I came from, the predicament of the people, the culture, all that became important issues for me. As a painter I could feel a kind of a strength in me to portray it visually. You use visual language to persuade people to buy. I was working with masters like Mr. Ray. He was the chairman of my company. So I used to observe. And Calcutta was a place of renaissance for Indian Cinema in the late 60s. As a young person I was very fascinated by these people, how they captured things that we saw with our naked eye, but we couldn't put a finger on how it could impact minds. I was pulled into that. When I was heading advertising back then I was exposed to how we can use the film language, moving image language, to present India, its culture and all that kind of stuff. It drew me into my own self as to how I could do that with the culture of Awadh, from where I came from..

After *Umrao Jaan*'s success you were not so prolific as a director.

Ali: After *Umrao Jaan* I made a film which was not the right next step. I made a film on sugarcane growers called *Agaman* (1982) in which I introduced Anupam Kher. Maybe that was not the right step for

me to take. But I liked the film, the idea. It didn't put me into the race but it took me out of it. After that I made *Anjuman* (1986). I didn't like being in Bombay. It was like, too heavy on the sword.

You made many short films in the 80's.

I didn't confine myself to feature films. I confined myself to an ethos, to a culture, to ideas. I was moving between painting and films so I was not heavy duty into films. I was heavy duty into living an ethos in which I grew up in, serving that so close to me. So I did films that came my way which were on spiritualism, sufism and all that stuff.

In the 90's you almost disappeared.

Ali: Films are means to an end, a mean of humanising society, of sensitising society. There is no sense in making a film for the sake of it. There has to be a huge purpose. For me being a filmmaker is good enough. Doing a film has to be driven by a bigger idea.

How has IFFI developed after it's been moved to Goa?

Ali: I think it is developing slowly, slowly. First of all, any place the event takes place in has to have its own intrinsic culture, and has to be supported by the people of that place. Here people are more laid-back. As a destination the place is very beautiful so people like to come here. Exotic destinations always have a number of events taking place. But anyways it's a good thing and the market is growing as there are young people and a lot of ideas coming to create cinema. A lot of content and knowledge is being exchanged.

SHORT TAKES



By far for me the most interesting experience is the chance to watch VR (Virtual Reality) films at 48th IFFI. It's a preview of what our cinema experience would be in future.

ARTI DAS
Team Peacock



My best experience was taking portraits for filmmakers from around the world. And when they ask to email the photos to them, that is the best compliment one can get.

ASSAVRI KULKARNI
Team Peacock



Meeting these people, watching the films they made was an honour. I quite enjoyed watching *In Blue* and *Marionette*. They defined cinema in a different perspective.

SIDDHARTHA LALL
Team Peacock



I enjoyed *The Party*. It was a highly entertaining and sharp piece of theatrical cinema that kept me engaged from the start to the finish.

GREIG FERNANDES
Team Peacock

SONAR BANGLA

BY PRABASH MUKHOPADHYAY

Bengal Tigers roar royally in the Sundarbans even today. Once Bengali movies were regal too, now they just bark. This seems to be the refrain the last few years. A golden era of Bengali cinema once dominated Indian cinema, but that lost crown has not been recovered so far. Three mainstream movies featured in the package of Indian Panorama of IFFI 2017. Kaushik Ganguly's *Bisorjon*, Anik Datta's *Meghnadbodh Rohoshyo* and Pratim D. Gupta's *Macher Jhol* were all commercially released in Kolkata this year.

Director Kaushik Ganguly's Partition-themed movie *Bisorjon* won the National Award for best Bengali film this year. It is the love story of a Muslim man and a Hindu woman living in India and Bangladesh respectively.

Ganguly said, "I don't understand politics. I believe in airing my views through art. I hope the film will be viewed in both countries, as we are connected by a common language. There are many people in Kolkata who have their ancestral homes in the-then East Bengal, now Bangladesh. They still converse in the dialect of that place. The same holds for people living on the other side of the border."

Meghnadbodh Rohoshyo, which appears to be just a potboiler mystery in its trailer, explodes into an intriguing family drama garnished with a gentle amount of political seasoning as it unfolds on screen. With Director Anik Dutta's witticism, daring mockery of the current regime and many literary references, it is smart and wholesome entertainment.

The film opens with a search-



and-chase sequence where British police find a freedom fighter, Arindam (Sridip) in a dilapidated mansion and shoot him dead. In a heart-wrenchingly beautiful shot, he falls in the river creating a silver spidery web on the water surface.

Maacher Jhol is refreshingly different, a slice of life with dollops of Bengaliness and a liberal diffusion of the right spices. But that's not the film's core narrative. Director Pratim D Gupta has cooked an inter-continental story that would perhaps taste just as good even if made with other recipes. What is refreshing about the film is its sensitive air. The characters go about life like most of us do — blissfully detached from the Bengal that lives out of a pottage. And like most of us, they seem to learn from life's ups and downs — something embodied by Paoli Dam's character, Sreela. The dialogues, too, are crunchy-crisp, unpretentious and at times, rib-tickling.

DREAM COME TRUE: KADAAMH

BY ASTRI GHOSH

The Marathi film *Kshitij - A Horizon* is nominated for the UNESCO Gandhi award at IFFI 2017.

"Being featured at IFFI is like a dream come true," says director Manoj Kadaamh. "The film is in Marathi, but you don't really need to know the language to see it, because it is so visual."

Kshitij is produced by Navroz Prasla. "My wife, Manjiri Pendharkar, was the executive producer of this film as well as the casting director. We used to discuss the role of each character - what he or she would look like. She would tell me what would be suitable and why, that these are the qualities so and so character should have. After that I chose the actors, even for small characters in the film. We did 17 auditions all over Maharashtra in rural settings."

Working on a child-centred film can be a challenge. Getting young children to perform in front of a camera must have been quite a difficult task. "There were many child artistes apart from the protagonist. I had to put myself in their age. With a four-year-old I would do things he would like. Then I would get him to do that in front of the camera."

Award winning sound designer Resul Pookutty encouraged Manouj Kadaamh to direct the film right from the start. "After reading the story he said- You've been waiting for eight years. You are going to direct this movie. He would call and ask about how the film was going. I am grateful for his encouragement."

In the beginning, Manouj Kadaamh had decided he only wanted to use natural sound.



But Resul Pookutty told him, "if you are too realistic, you are making a documentary, not a feature film. There has to be sound as well as music. Don't insist that you don't require music. It took me three months to digest this."

Shailendra Barve, the music director of the movie and Pookutty spent a lot of effort to make sure the timing and sound matched with the music. When they were recording an abhang, a religious song, Kadaamh did not want to record it in a studio. Resul had a broad smile on his face when he told Kadaamh he would come and record the song.

"I was stunned by his dedication. He has reached the highest pinnacle, got an Oscar. After one rehearsal, he took half an hour to figure out where the mics would be placed, where we would put the instruments, the mridanga. He never said, look here, I have won an Oscar. He would ask me, Manouj, is this okay? He showed me respect as a director. His behaviour taught me how to be connected to your roots."

SHORT TAKES



I loved the Aki Kaurismaki film, *The Other Side of Hope*. It treated a serious topic with great style, and typically Scandinavian black humour.

VIVEK
MENEZES
Team Peacock



The Young Karl Marx was very inspirational, and lent a real-life immediacy to the classic scenarios of emerging communism that we know so well.

JOSÉ
LOURENÇO
Team Peacock



I really liked *The Final Portrait*, which is about my favourite artist Alberto Giacometti.

SIDDHARTH
GOSAVI
Team Peacock



The new look and feel of IFFI 2017 could not have been possible without the support of ESG & IMB team. This has made my job easier.

SUNIL SETHI
Chief Design Advisor, IFFI

"IN TURKEY YOU CANNOT WATCH THE VERSION OF THE FILM YOU HAVE SEEN AT IFFI!"

BY SASHA PEREIRA

Zer (2017) tells the story of Jan, a Turkish man living in New York, who is searching for his lost identity. **The Peacock** spoke to director Karim Oz, and Levent Ozdilek, the actor who plays Jan's father, Serta.

What was the inspiration behind the film?

Oz-In 2005, I was making a documentary about Dersim, my village, in Turkey. In the past the village had many people but after the war in Kurdistan and the Dersim Rebellion many people left. I wanted to make a film about this empty village and its story. I heard this folk song which told the love story of a shepherd. I tried searching for it. As I journeyed across villages and towns I heard it in bits and pieces in different villages.

So the character of 'Jan' is based on the journey you undertook to find the song?

Oz- Yes a little. Jan lives in the west, in New York, but he is not happy. When he goes back to the east and his old heritage, something which doesn't appeal to the modern youth in Turkey, he finds himself. He smiles for the first time. In cinema today we mostly see journeys from east to west. Through this film I wanted to change this concept. I wanted to ask people in Turkey, are you sure this way is good?

Ozdilek- In Turkey you can knock on a door and people would be more than willing to welcome you.

The story also revolves around the clash of the Kurdish people against the Turkish government.

Today there is talk of the creation of a new Kurdish state. What is your opinion on this?

Oz-In Turkey, the Kurdish people don't have simple rights. If you are Kurdish you have to study Turkish. I think Kurds need freedom, not a different state. Freedom to be educated in their own language and culture. A democratic system. The solution is not to create a new state, but to change the mentality and the system.

So the political system is not democratic in Turkey?

Oz-We are soon going to be a dictatorship. Last week, in Van, a town in Turkey I was told I wouldn't be able to screen this film just three hours before I reached there. The government thought it was a critical film against them. When the film was premiering at the Istanbul film festival the government told the festival organizers I had to censor some parts. For the first screening I cut out the parts they wanted censored and had a black screen, with the text 'You can't watch this scene because the Turkish government didn't want you to'.

Ozdilek- The whole audience erupted with thunderous applause.

Oz-After the screening our license was revoked. Then they said that they even wanted portions in the film with the black screen to be censored. In Turkey you cannot watch the version of the film you have seen in the theatre here at IFFI. We are in a sort of artistic war where we are not allowed to put out content freely.

Ozdilek In Turkey we live in George Orwell's, 1984.



ELVIS & SHARON DIAS,
AMO
Communications,
Mumbai



I enjoyed 'On Body and Soul'. It was a good film, the concept was new and the direction was good.
SHRISTHI DESHMUKH
Theatre Artist,
Pune



I loved 'Ana, Mon Amour' as it was a great illustration of human emotion and it was a character-driven film.
TUSHAR LADKAT
Student, Film Direction, Pune



I liked 'Mother' because it showed the pain of a mother. It also reflects feminism. I also liked 'The Last Painting' because it shows how men objectify women.
RAJTIK DEKA
Film Editor,
Assam

TO DO SOMETHING FOR OTHERS, THAT'S WHEN THERE'S NO LONELINESS

BY SUYASH KAMAT

For almost two decades, the film-maker duo Sumitra Bhave and Sunil Suktankar has been making films that are socially relevant, deeply rooted and universally accessible. Their oeuvre includes 14 feature films, more than 50 short films and four TV serials. A good number of other Marathi filmmakers call Bhave and Suktankar an alternate 'film school'.

Their *Kaasav* (The Turtle) won the Swarna Kamal for Best Film at this year's National Awards. It is an empathetic take on depression and loneliness. They spoke exclusively to *The Peacock*.

What was your inspiration behind making 'Kaasav'?

We felt that these days youngsters seem very depressed. Every day, there are multiple cases of suicides by young ones. Looking at this, we felt that the seed of

depression possibly lies in their outlook towards the world around them. I was reading the Gita, and a particular paragraph caught my attention. It said that perception towards circumstances can often cause for violence to be born within mankind. And this violence, when withheld, finds a way to come out either by hurting somebody else, or by hurting ourselves. Hence we wanted to make something about this and address the concerns surrounding this issue.

Any reason behind choosing a turtle?

Turtles are entirely non-violent. And yet, they also survive the longest. We couldn't help but see the parallels between this and the kind of self-violence we indulge in as mankind. We can eventually withdraw ourselves from all the anger, hate and violence.

Your previous film had an elephant as a character. This one has a turtle.



for decades now. What has changed?

When we started out, our translation was into concrete visual frames. But as we grew into the medium, we felt ourselves drawn towards abstraction. Especially in a film, the images aren't still, they are moving. How does one get hold of abstraction? There is a certain rhythm to these moving images and you want to understand that rhythm.

How does it feel to win the National award?

It was a surprise for us, absolutely unexpected. Awards are great because that is when we understand that in some sense, we are told to keep working and that they need us. That is very important for us. When people personally tell us how much they like our work, we feel validated. Over time we have developed our own sense of ethics and aesthetics. And it feels good to know that people accept it.

We've always felt that we are related to everything: the trees, animals, rivers, nature, the entire universe. And it's very crucial to understand these relationships we share with them. The turtle is an animal that endures through pain, through patience and perseverance. It withdraws during times of turmoil and stays silent. We must learn to live calmly, and let others live calmly as well.

The idea of loneliness is often confused with 'being alone'.

Absolutely. Loneliness is born out of living for oneself. This idea of a man feeling for others as though they are one's own is an antidote to the idea of loneliness. To do something for others, that's when there's no loneliness. You may be alone, but not lonely.

You've been making films

KACCHA LIMBU

BY ARTI DAS

"For my first film to get selected at IFFI this year is a big success, and a sense of pride for Marathi cinema. Also I just came to know that it has won the award in Best Film Category at Edinburgh Film Festival," says Prasad Oak, the director of the Marathi film, *Kachha Limbu* (2017).

He adds, "I always wanted to make a movie with a strong social message. So, when I had read the Marathi novel, 'Runanubandha', and a Marathi play 'Natigoti' which is based on this book, I wanted to make a film on the same topic. I spent three years working on this movie." It is a family drama around the sexual desires of a mentally challenged teenage boy., and deals with the everyday struggle of the parents in raising their child.

Oak has exercised some creative freedom, as he has changed the climax of the story. "Yes, I have



changed the ending as we need to understand that the novel was written in 1974 and the play was made in 1980. So now I think we can accept change, as the times have changed. I also wanted to show a positive end. I have focused on the parents, their relationship with their son, their interests and their problems, and not so much on the mental condition of the child or the science behind it."

The film is shot mainly in black and

white. Oak explains, "It was a challenge to shoot it in B&W, but I wanted to portray that the parents have lost colours in their own lives. There are a few scenes in colour, to portray their desires in life. But I was clear right from the beginning that I wanted to shoot it this way."

Oak used a strong cast of acclaimed Marathi actors including Sachin Khedekar, Sonali Kulkarni and filmmaker Ravi Jadhav, who plays the role of the father. "In the Marathi film industry the actors get typecast very fast. If an actor is acting as a chocolate boy, then he will get similar roles. It is true for all those who do roles of villain, comedian, etc. So, I wanted to cast someone fresh in the role of the father, and at the same time who has weightage. That's why I thought Ravi Jadhav was

apt for that role."

This year at IFFI, nine Marathi films were selected for the Indian Panorama section, which is great news for the industry. "Yes, having nine Marathi films among the total of 20-21 films and one of them also selected in the International Competition is something to celebrate. I am extremely happy, it is like the Hindi saying, *Mehnat ka phal meetha hota hai*.

Kaccha Limbu deals with sexual issues, how did the censors tag it? "Our movie received A (Adult) certificate. We were expecting U/A certificate as I wanted every family to watch this film. As it received A certificate many families backed out. But then I was told that if it had to get U/A there would have been around 30-32 cuts. The procedure is not in my hands, my work is to just make a film."

(*Kachha Limbu* will be screened on November 28 at 10 a.m. at Inox screen II)

ADEUS!

BY VIVEK MENEZES

The Peacock squawks, but then falls silent until another edition of the International Film Festival of India, the greatest cinema banquet in this most movie-crazed land. We have worked hard to do justice to this event, and hope you enjoyed our efforts. Thank you so much for all the positive feedback, and please keep in touch: teampeacock2017@gmail.com.

Every single day of IFFI 2017, people have come up to let us know they have never seen a festival publication quite like *The Peacock* anywhere in the world. We haven't either. This periodical has been custom-built to match the film festival, which itself spills over with colour and style, rich content and quite a lot of attitude. And just like the best movies are always made, our small team of highly dedicated writers, photographers and artists has been given full freedom to express itself to the utmost. For that trust and confidence, we are deeply grateful to Ameya Abhyankar, the CEO of Entertainment Society of Goa, as well as Rajendra Talak, the Vice Chairman.

It is amazing to see almost a score disparate individuals come into an

empty, semi-abandoned room and turn it into a humming, deadly-serious newsroom in just a couple of days. Here, we would like to thank Arjun Narvekar for his steady tech support, and, most of all, the smilingly unflappable Arantxa Afonso, for remarkably gracefully handling many irritants so that Team Peacock could work uninterrupted and in peace.

This is the third year of The Peacock's existence, but the first year in full colour and on excellent paper. This was again thanks to the CEO's decision, but the opportunity was most spectacularly taken by our brilliant cover artist, Siddharth Gosavi. He is a rockstar, one of the very best in his generation of Indian artists. Keep the name in mind, folks. You will be seeing his work in a museum near you.

Every year that we reconstitute Team Peacock, someone surprises us by stepping up to become a mainstay. This year we had both Aileen Carneiro and Daphne De Souza, who emerged almost overnight as first rate film journalists. Alongside them is Sasha Pereira, who did some great stories, and Resham George, who handled a variety of assignments with terrific aplomb. We are very proud of all of them.

The right newsroom blend between neophytes and experienced journalists is extremely important. Here, we were lucky to have Arti Das and Astri Ghosh, both of whom are IFFI veterans. Our big stroke of luck was Clara

Astarloa, who is Goa-resident but Argentine-born, and gave us some marvellous and unique perspectives with great poetic sensibility. Including her, Team Peacock spoke Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Norwegian, French, Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi, and naturally Konkani and English too.

Cinema, of course, is a language to itself. In this regard, we count ourselves lucky to have Omkar Rege and Suyash Kamat on the team. If there are more passionate people about film, we have yet to meet them. It was particularly heartwarming to see them debut their own 'Marisol 1988' at IFFI 2017. Salute!

All-colour needed visuals to match. In the category of photography, Team Peacock was blessed with the best in Assavri Kulkarni, simply extraordinary with portraits and everything else visual. Check out her superb book, *Markets of Goa*. Some of our best images were contributed by Siddhartha Lall, a consistently hardworking presence in the newsroom. You did good, Sid.

Two more reasons *The Peacock* looks as good as it does are Niju Mohan (who took photos) and Greig Fernandes (who did illustrations). But they also contributed much more, both Swiss Army Knife-type individuals with seemingly unlimited capacity to do everything well. Thank you, gentlemen, for everything and most of all your unfailing good humour and readiness to help. We couldn't have done it without you.

Sachin Chatte has boundless facets to him, all of them polished and impressive. Thank you Sachin, for the ever-wise leadership and guidance.

Your navigation makes everything possible. Amol Kamat, your speed and design sense are both tops. Deu borem korum! And a special thank you to Comrade José Lourenço, the bedrock and backbone of Team Peacock, without whom this publication would not exist. I am very proud of what we've achieved together, and now let's do it even better in 2018. Adeus!





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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

Indian Panorama-Meet the Directors
Feature films- 'Maza Bhirbhira' (Marathi) Director : Vivek Wagh, 'Railway Children' (Kannada) Director : Prithvi Konanur
Non-Feature films- 'A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings' Director : Pratik Vats, 'Fireflies in the Abyss', Director : Chandrasekhar Reddy, 'Aaba',

Director : Amar Kaushik
IFFI Media Centre @ 11.00 a.m.

**Press Conference: Closing Film :Thinking of Him
Pablo Cesar @ 12.00 noon**

Closing Ceremony @ 04.00 p.m.

28TH NOVEMBER 2017