

THE PEACOCK

WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2018



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BY NIJU JAYA MOHAN

When I moved to Goa eight years ago, I was looking for a change of scene from Kannur in Kerala and, like many fellow Malayalis, was migrating 'for better prospects'. After a year or so, I had to admit that there weren't too many huge changes from the scene back at home, and that actually was a good thing. I felt quite comfortable in Goa. In 2011, when I sought to volunteer at the popular children-oriented Bookworm Library in Panjim, I had no mutual friends or acquaintances who could vouch for me, but that organization warmly accepted this complete stranger, and so my work life in Goa kicked off.

Back in Kannur, fish was always a big part of our daily menu, and I was delighted to find Goans were crazy about seafood as well. Later on, my Goan foodie journey has led me to relish unique ros omelettes (where the egg preparation is doused in delicious curry), classic xacuti curries, the iconic bebinca dessert, and much more.

But it is much more than the food. Just like Kerala, what makes me feel so at home here is actually the pluralism in Goa, that happy celebration of diversity that I feel is under threat in other parts of our country. Here, you can follow your own religious beliefs and food preferences freely, without any external forces coercing you to do something else.

A major draw for me to stay on in Goa is the nature of its people. They are very open, accepting, and generally mind their own business. So you have lots of time and space, and the freedom to explore your own life as an outsider without feeling threatened. I have come in contact with writers, artists, photographers, and educators



who have intellectually stimulated and challenged me. This has also given me different perspectives in terms of culture, language, food and literature. I am conscious and grateful for everything this land has to offer.

This year working at the Peacock, it was intriguing to learn that 13% of all delegates are Malayalis like me. Exercising some journalistic curiosity, I walked around the festival yesterday morning in search of my countrymen, to understand how they feel in Goa.

Hrishikesh Balachandran, a first timer at IFFI, says, "As I work in the graphics field, Mario Miranda has been a great inspiration for me. So when I come to Goa, I feel I am coming to Mario Miranda's land and I can see his influence

everywhere. Also, Kerala and Goa are like the tourism hubs in India, this is because of the sense of freedom we feel in both places."

Neeta Pillai, an actress who starred in *Poomaram* (2018), which was featured in Indian Panorama this year, says, "I don't feel much difference from Kerala. Our drive from the airport to here itself felt like we were driving through Kerala." Roshan Joseph, an associate director, agrees. "The culture and appreciation for films seems very similar in Goa and Kerala. It is a great feeling of belonging."

Shahida K. and her husband Abdul Hamid too sense kinship, saying "Goa is like our Kerala. It feels like home. The people here are very cosmopolitan and accept everybody. Every interior part of

Goa feels just like Kerala." Meanwhile, Shareef Kurrikal, another IFFI veteran, told me, "this year it felt like a Malayali festival. We met a lot of Malayalis and in the rush lines we were meeting new people and talking in Malayalam to each other."

One of the most familiar faces at IFFI every year for me is Arun Punaloor, a photographer-turned-actor, who says, "People are very open here. Goa has great ambience, food, people, culture and freedom. I want to live in Goa." Here is another Malayali who agrees with him!

(Note: we found an interesting IFFI-themed Malayalam newspaper called "Goa Malayali" - the headline here inverts the term to Malayali Goa.)



D M Naik is like my backbone. Besides, I am proud of my entire team.

Mrunal Niket
Walke
General Manager



I liked the food stalls this year. Being in Goa I got to eat interesting dishes from another state too.

Vaibhav Vaze
OSD Marketing



No matter how bad the day is, I always have my team mates to laugh off my exhaustion.

Arantxa Afonso
Asst. Manager,
Events



I am glad all the seats in the theatres were booked and occupied most of the time this year.

Arjun Narvekar
Head IT

"WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON THE POSITIVES"

BY KINJAL SETHIA

IIIFFI 2018 has been a learning curve like all the previous years. What we have done is value addition," said the Festival Director of the 49th International Film Festival of India, Chaitanya Prasad, in a chat with *The Peacock*.

What do you feel have been the special achievements for IFFI this year?

We have tried to ensure that IFFI as a brand, as a confluence of cinema, lives up to the tagline of 'Joy of Cinema'. Through the selection of films, the programming and stakeholder participation, we have tried to ensure this. The biggest success has been three world premieres for the opening, closing and mid-fest films. We have had four world premieres, two international premieres, 15 Asian premieres, 60 national premieres. With a selection like this, what more could one want?

All screening halls have been running to full



capacity. This is the biggest tribute to the festival.

What is your take on the reactions from the media towards the Festival?

The media has been supportive generally. And when it comes to the media reactions to the presentation of the Opening Ceremony, you should know that these things are done a certain way. We go with a particular theme and narrative. We have to juxtapose all this in the process. Everyone has the right to say what they want. We have even received praise for the opening ceremony, despite all the criticism it has drawn. There might be a particular section of people who might not agree with it. We respect what they have to say, but a ceremony means that things are done in a particular way. What I would really like to emphasise is that instead of criticism and gaps, we should concentrate on the

positives of the Festival.

If someone starts a chain of narrative, we should not follow that needlessly. If some publications are complaining that the beer was cheaper than water, we should not focus on that because it does not have anything to do with the films.

What are the challenges you face in taking IFFI to a higher level?

Every day is a challenge. Our whole effort has been towards addressing the concerns of the audience. We have focussed on improving the quality of the films, and the Masterclasses have been commended by film students and cinephiles. One of the soft drinks in India has a tag line 'Yeh Dil Maange More'. It is so at IFFI too. The audience wants more from us as the organising secretariat, and it is our duty to address their demands. We will try to ensure that everyone is satisfied. Organising such a huge festival on such a vast scale is not easy, and we are learning every day. As far as some gaps in the coordination of the festival are concerned, we hope to come back with greater ammunition next year.

There seems to be the feeling that Masterclasses and In Conversations had an unusually high representation from commercial Hindi cinema?

What we are trying to do is connect generations. When Varun Dhawan and David Dhawan speak, they share a very different understanding of cinema. Varun goes in one direction, the father goes in another direction, and we try to converge them at the festival. Something similar happens when Boney Kapoor speaks to Jhanvi Kapoor. Even if they come from Bollywood, they are still actors. We had a great panel on women directors with Gauri Shinde and Meghna Gulzar. We also had a Producer's Roundtable with American and Indian producers.

How do you balance highlighting the Indian Panorama while also retaining international attention?

We have had a great selection for the Indian Panorama section, with films in Ladakhi and Jasari languages. IFFI is a great platform for Indian cinema to be showcased to the world. We are not categorising it as Bollywood or Hollywood. It is really Indianization of the festival, India first, where we get the best of films. We have had films from Kashmir to Kerala. It is helping spread awareness internationally about the craft of Indian cinema. We were moved by the kind words that many international guests had to say about the hospitality they received at the festival.

How do you feel the present lacunae can be overcome for the 50th Edition of IFFI next year?

Whenever you undertake a task, there will be some gaps. These are learning opportunities. These we hope to streamline next year. But even other film festivals, all over the world, have certain gaps. It is bound to happen. We just hope to bridge this gap to ensure a better experience for the audience. And the few logistic concerns that we have, those too we will address in the next year.



MILLENNIAL ARTISTS

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

1 50 students from Goa College of Art (GCA) have mixed together creative juices and their love for cinema to curate the IFFI Mile, which stretches on the Mandovi waterfront in front of the International Film Festival of India's heritage precinct headquarters. From paintings to photography, impromptu caricature to rangoli, and pop culture installations to live graffiti, Goa's youngest generation of passionate artists has enriched the festive spirit along the riverfront promenade.

The Photo Booth erected opposite the art park is hard to miss. It is a giant popcorn box that allows passersby to click selfies. Another arty hit is the pixellated installation of late Indian film diva Sridevi, who passed away earlier this year, created by assembling hundreds of pictures of the actor. She is also featured in rangoli portraits, along with other popular Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar and Ranveer Singh.

GCA's student leader Savni Panandiker says these installations are more than just a tribute to cinema all around the world, "This is our tribute to the relevance of art in movies. Movies without art would be shallow. Yet, as artists, we feel neglected. Locally, Goans themselves are not aware that an art college exists here, and that there are Goans who can do talented art work. Rangoli, for example, is a dying art, and is limited to only inauguration ceremonies at formal functions."

We walk on to spot some live graffiti dedicated to Goan films and the local film industry. Further on, there life-sized cutouts of

Hollywood icons. There is also a photo gallery curated by the students, where a dozen young lensmen have captured the traditional side of Goa, unknown to many tourists. Another section features pictures clicked by the students of events happening inside the festival venues. "We have titled it 'Inside Out' as it is a glance of IFFI for those Goans who are not delegates, and also a sneak-peek into Goa for the delegates who might want to travel around after the festival," says Yati Dhume.

A live caricature stall is manned by three young artists, who each employ different techniques. Sanman Pilgaokar creates portraits, while Keine Carvalho can portray you into your favourite superhero or celebrity.

Gajanan Chari, who does caricatures on a digital graphic pad, says "Life is boring without humour. We look at ourselves in the mirror and maybe we like what we see or maybe we don't. Caricatures give us an opportunity to laugh at ourselves and smile at the fact that we may be seen differently by others."

In our 21st century world of technology fusing into art, where touch-pads have replaced brushes and computer screens have substituted canvases, it was intriguing to stop by a stall dedicated to calligraphy and typology. "We have forgotten the importance of handwriting," says Clacia Pereira. "The art of putting down our thoughts through handwritten words once helped us connect with our truest emotions. Our writing told true stories of our mental and emotional state of mind and we have begun to take all this for granted."



The art college put up some fantastic art works. We hope to continue this collaboration next year too.

Nagnath Chari
Head Technician



This year we tried to attend to the previous year's suggestions by people. So we added a separate air-conditioned ticket counter for delegates in the art gallery.

Sanesh Varghese
IT In-charge



I liked how the décor was based on pixels this year. It has come out really well.

Santosh
Bhimegovda
OSD Technical



Seeing movie lovers having a good time gives us an added zeal to work more.

Siddesh Sane
Head of Admin

"THE WAR MAY HAVE ENDED, BUT ITS REPERCUSSIONS LIVE ON"

BY KARISHMA D'MELLO

“It took us ten years to write the screenplay. It was hard to bring the atmosphere of the fifties to the screen, and we hope we've done justice to these stories”, says Bernd Bohlich, director of the film *Sealed Lips* (2018) that will have its world premiere today, to close the 49th International Film Festival of India.

Shot in a post-World War II setting in Berlin, the film depicts the pain of a woman (played by Swetlana Schönfeld) who is separated from her child. Bohlich told The Peacock, “We're telling stories about the lives and struggles of real people during that time; the lasting impression of the war even during its aftermath. The war may have ended, but its repercussions live on.” says Bernd.

The story was inspired by stories told to Schönfeld by her mother, about her own experiences as well as those of her friends during the gripping conflict that shattered 1940s Europe. The actress told us, “We hope that the victims feel that we've depicted their personal struggles accurately.” She and her colleagues expressed hope they would be able to bring out lesser known stories of World War II, in a new perspective to non-European viewers who may be unfamiliar with its lasting impact.

Schönfeld has the opinion that Indian viewers tastes tend towards glamour, and larger than life excitement, as reflected by typical Bollywood films. In contrast, she says, *Sealed Lips* is an emotional drama in a historical setting, “It is a controversial and complex political story. We hope it resonates well with the Indian audience.”

The actress depicts a mother plagued with constant worry, who is



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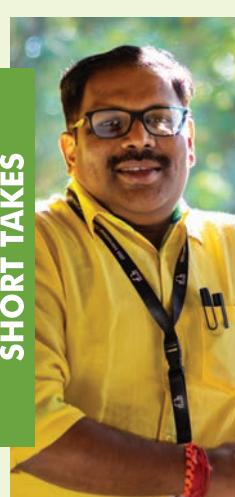
If it wasn't you, it was your family; if it wasn't your family it was a friend; everyone was affected, everyone has a story to tell.”

longing to meet her lost daughter. The loss of contact with her child leaves her in an intense state of anxiety. However this isn't a story of a single character, as Berndt reminds The Peacock. Other lead characters are the daughter (played by Alexandra Lara Maria) and a communist (Barbara Schnitzler) who also longs to get back to her family, and find her way back home.

Bohlich says, “If it wasn't you, it was your family; if it wasn't your family it was a friend; everyone was affected, everyone

has a story to tell.”

He told us that everything you see in the film is based on first-hand elements from victims of the war, in some way or the other, “Everything is a depiction of what we saw happening around us from the fifties to the eighties. These are the untold stories of war. And now we start to see that the political scenario of that era is largely similar to our current situation. We've tried to bring out the parallels. The ideas we've depicted are still relevant now.”



We are stressing on officials registering online too, as we want to build a firm database of delegates.

Anand Jadhav
Head of Registration Cell



My daughter was writing her assignment on Arijit Singh. We were so happy that in this festival we met him.

Sujata Naik
Head Accounts and Finance



I come every year because this is our festival, so it is our responsibility to make it grand.

D M Naik
Deputy Director Accounts



I am glad all celebrities are tagging or mentioning the festival in their posts. It shows that they are happy with the experience.

Viresh Vazirani
Head of Social Media Team

OMAGGIO A BERNARDO

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

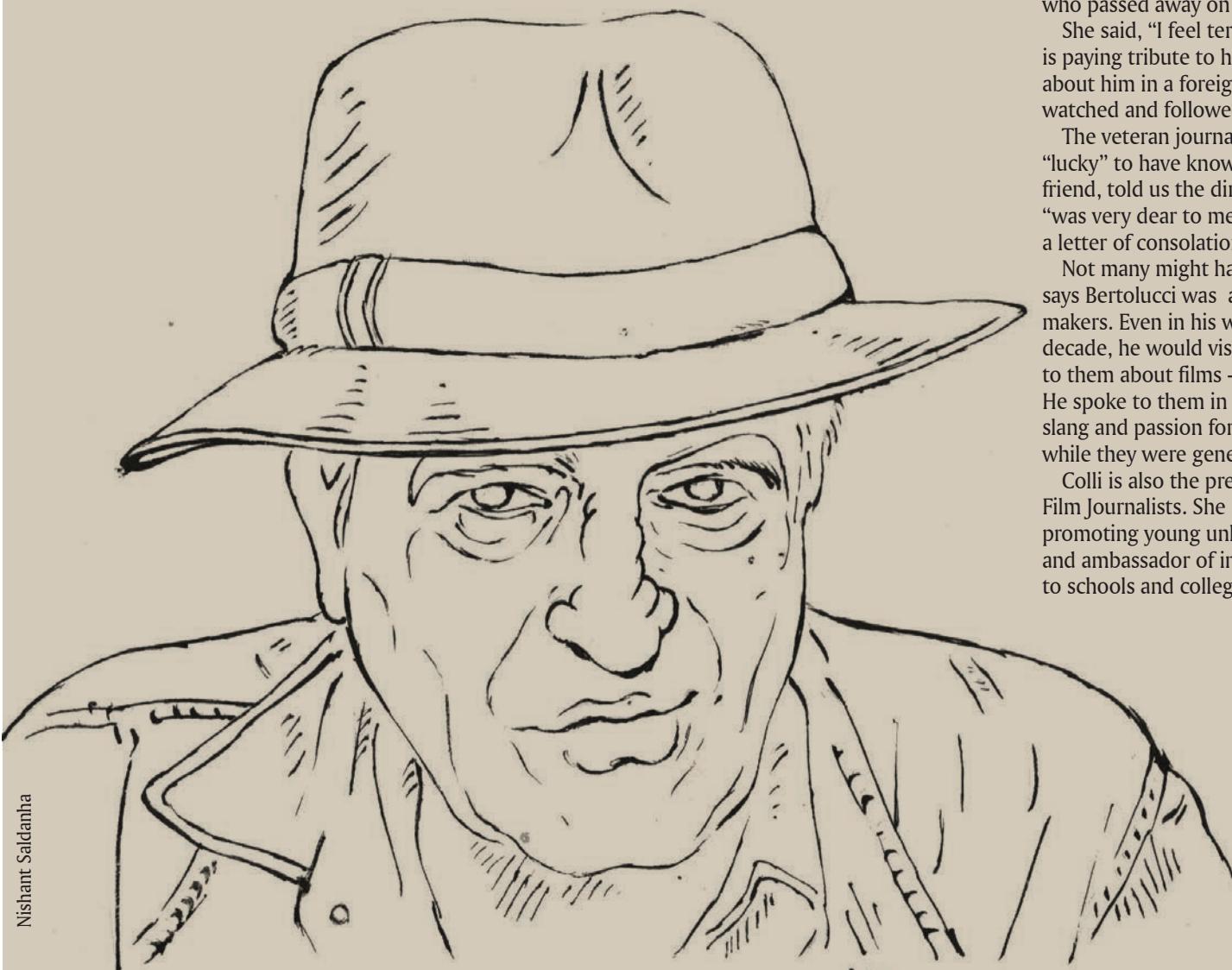
“In Bernardo Bertolucci's death, Italian and world cinema has lost a master and a friend," said an emotional Laura Delli Colli – the vice-president of the Rome Film Festival – to The Peacock, about the world-renowned director who passed away on 26th November at the age of 77.

She said, "I feel terrible and sad. I appreciate The Peacock is paying tribute to him because it is important to speak about him in a foreign country, where his work has been watched and followed, and yet, maybe misunderstood".

The veteran journalist and author, who considers herself "lucky" to have known Bertolucci personally as a family friend, told us the director was a very sensitive person, who "was very dear to me and when my father died, he wrote me a letter of consolation which I hold very close to my heart."

Not many might have known that nurturing side, but Colli says Bertolucci was a "leader to many authors and filmmakers. Even in his wheelchair-bound condition in his last decade, he would visit the youth in their environs, speaking to them about films - not just his own, but those of others. He spoke to them in their language. He understood their slang and passion for life and they connected with him, even while they were generations apart".

Colli is also the president of the National Union of Italian Film Journalists. She says that Bertolucci dedicated himself to promoting young unknown talent, and was a huge promoter and ambassador of independent cinema, "He would travel to schools and colleges to cast his actors and actresses.



Nishant Saldanha



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"It's certainly a huge loss to the cinematic world. My wife and I went down to the beach to offer some prayers this morning. He was a master film-maker and inspired me to do what I do. He is always saying something through his films."

—Rakesh Omprakash Mehra

Film-maker, India



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"In Italy and in Rome particularly, there's a strong and resilient youth movement, and Bertolucci spent himself for these young people so that they would not give up on their education. This he did till his dying breath, and his efforts will live on."

—Francesca Via

General Manager of Rome Film Festival



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"We will always be grateful to Bernardo Bertolucci, for being one of the bravest innovators in the world of art, creating, through his experimental, poetic and unique vision, an universal heritage that will last forever in our hearts."

—Anna Ravel

Actress, Italy

BERTOLUCCI

Everyone who has worked with him has learnt lessons they will cherish for life. You just didn't work with him on sets, you lived with him."

Bertolucci was from a "special family", says Colli, intellectuals who were born and raised in the Italian countryside. "He had a deep connection to his motherland. This is evident in his work in *Novecento* (1900) (1976). This saga tells the story of his life and his experiences, and his origins as a very simple peasant. But then Bertolucci became a great intellectual, and he could script a narrative about the bourgeoisie as easily as could write about his farm."

According to Colli, "with all the fame that surrounded him, in his lifestyle, he never lost his sincerity, a natural simplicity that characterised his relationships with people on the set and off. The courage he showed towards the final leg of his life, battling sickness for many years, and still managing to face some mentally challenging moments, speaks volumes about his tough approach to life."

Born on March 16, 1941 in Parma, the precocious Bertolucci made his directorial debut at the age of 21, with *La Commare Secca* (1962). Eight years later, he climbed the ladder to global success with the multiple award-winner *The Conformist* (1970). Later on, says Colli, "India was a great discovery. The country changed him, and he began making movies that reflected his intimate psychological make-up, which people had not seen before. I think his career took a different direction after *Little Buddha* (1993). He began narrating relationships and intimacy from a different perspective," she says.

Colli says that Bertolucci was saddened by negative vibes that dominated media coverage of the last few years of his illustrious life, but the director remained focussed on being his true self, instead of engaging in debates to prove himself to the world.

She says, "he will never die. His movies will live on for eternity. But, we have really lost someone special, in the sense that through his personal lesson he taught us to never give in, never give up, and now he is no more. His determination, and will to be himself, to be in all the great battles of cinema fighting for freedom, for quality cinema, just makes me emotional. He is an inspiration to all of us, especially the youth, to never give up on themselves and who they truly are."

This article includes essential translation inputs by Aileen Carneiro

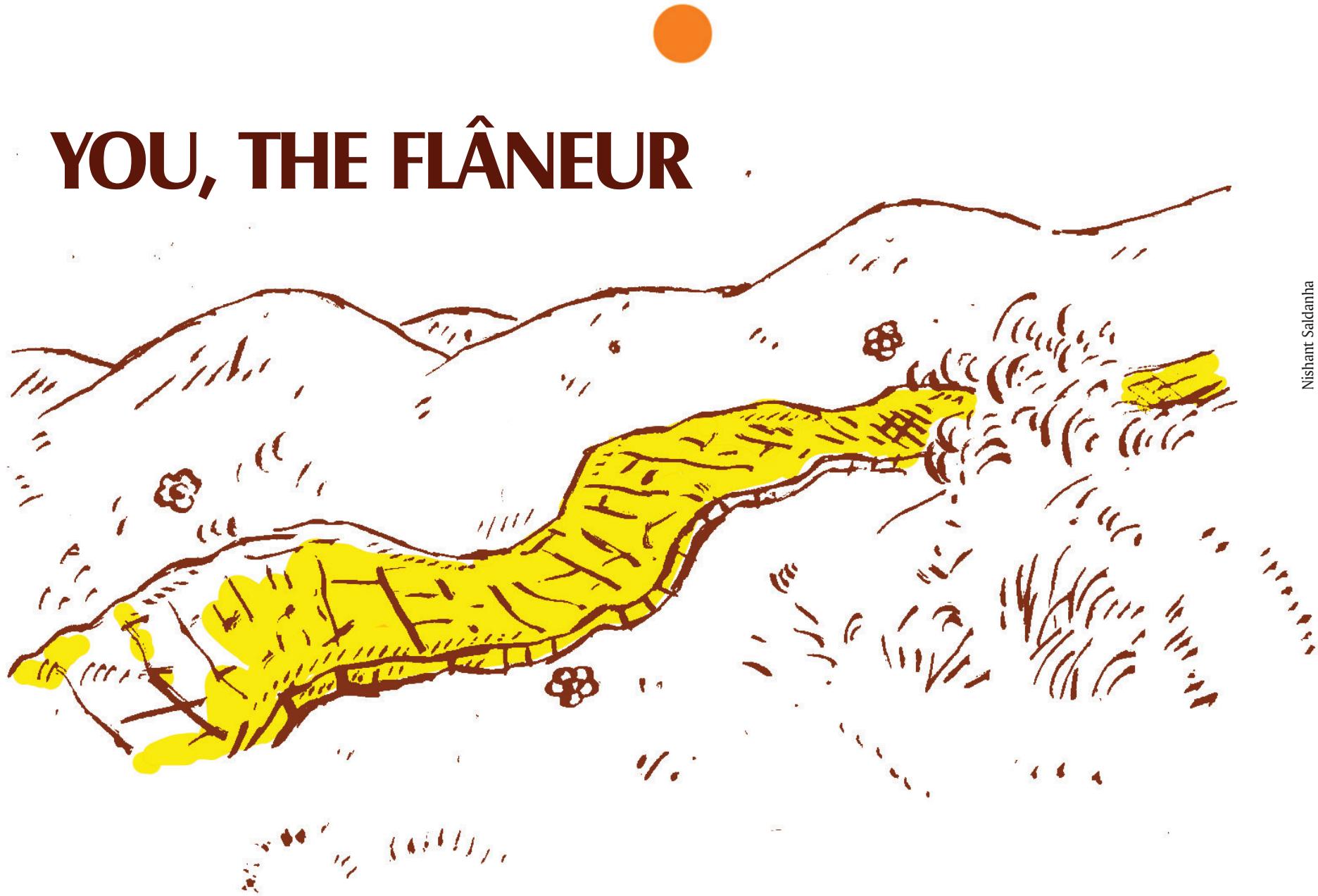
THE BEST OF BERTOLUCCI

- *The Grim Reaper* (1962)
- *Before the Revolution* (1964)
- *The Conformist* (1970)
- *The Spider's Stratagem* (1970)
- *1900* (1976)
- *La Luna* (1979)
- *The Sheltering Sky* (1980)
- *Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man* (1981)
- *The Last Emperor* (1987)
- *The Dreamers* (2003)





YOU, THE FLÂNEUR



Nishant Saldanha

BY SUNAINA MENEZES

I view myself as a lover of literature, and a cinephile second, and am prone to concluding about most movies, "but the book was better."

But still, just days ago, I arrived from Mumbai to attend the International Film Festival of India for the first time, not knowing what to expect. A *filmi* version of Carnival? Obscure, opaque, unending movies? Instead, in a place far from home, I encountered the famed flâneur, or more accurately, his movie-going cousin.

Goans know all about *susegad*, their famous collective lifestyle choice that involves relaxation, contentment, and much sucking in the bone marrow of life. Both *susegad* and the French word *flânerie* became popular in the 19th century, and often attract negative connotations of sloth and idleness. But it is also widely acknowledged that the flâneur - although a stroller or wanderer - is a highly perceptive individual, possessing an artistic disposition, and

not merely a loafer.

Cinema-goers are often attacked in a similar vein, and cynics are quick to dub them seekers of mindless entertainment.

Before my IFFI experience, I too tended to regard a visit to the cinema as leisure activity, perhaps even a guilty pleasure. But now those prejudices have fled forever. The past few days, I have navigated my way around the festival among throngs of people chattering in excitement, who seemed agenda-less, without the expectation of a particular outcome, but clearly possessing a refreshing spirit of inquisitiveness and wonder.

The French poet Charles Baudelaire precisely described this mindset, "For the perfect flâneur, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from

the world. The spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito."

Two key characteristics of the flâneur that I also recognised in cinema enthusiasts this week are the desire for anonymity, and paradoxical ability to remain simultaneously engaged and detached. The flâneur wishes to see and not to be seen, and what grants greater anonymity than the faceless crowd, shrouded in darkness, gathered before a cinema screen?

In the flâneur collective at IFFI, we daily immersed ourselves in foreign cultures and their unfamiliar stories. Through observation, we gained a deeper insight into lives that are not our own, and yet as we left the screening hall we retained our distinct identities and ethnicities.

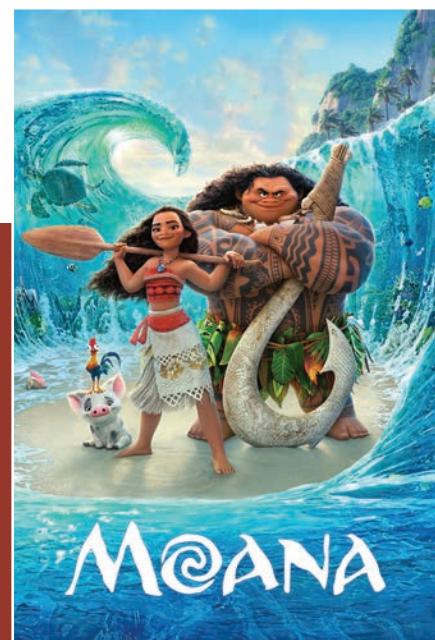
F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote in 'The Great Gatsby' (1925), "I was within and without," which aptly summarises the experience of every IFFI attendee. I'd like to imagine each of us picked up a skin at the entrance of the theatre, lived, breathed and lounged in it for two hours

or so, before slipping it off in exchange for another one.

Watching Carmen and Lola (2018) I caught glimpses, in true flâneur style, of the lifestyle of the gypsy community in Spain. *My Masterpiece* (2018) was more unnerving. During a scene involving a drugged cup of coffee, all of us in the audience giggled nervously as the victim delayed taking a sip. For that epiphanic moment, we were all part of the narrative, and all complicit in the crime.

Prior to IFFI 2018, I viewed film-watching as a lonely art, something like a forlorn cocktail of escapism and voyeurism. By that interpretation, a cinema-goer would resemble the figure of the solitary flâneur, observing and understanding, but never being understood himself.

But what revealed to me at this transformative festival is that flâneurs don't have to feel like isolated individuals, when we are surrounded by dozens, hundreds, even thousands just like us. We need no longer look on from afar, because here we belong.



ONE HUG IS NEVER ENOUGH

BY IMPANA KULKARNI

I saw *The Lion King* (1994) for the first time when I was five years old. When Simba lost his father in a wildebeest stampede, it taught me what loss could feel like, just like when Po finally succeeded in becoming the Dragon Warrior in *Kung Fu Panda* (2008), the teenaged me learned it is best not to care about what others think. More recently, as an adult, when Moana listened to her grandmother's words in the 2016 Disney hit, I learned some lessons about truth hidden in ancient wisdom.

The raw emotions on these characters' faces make the movies endearing to watch. And the older I grew, the better I found myself relating to characters in films. In *Becoming Jane* (2007), I saw Jane Austen (Anne Hathaway) push away Tom (James McAvoy) despite the affection they shared, because of family differences. In *The Lake House* (2006), I saw a woman and a man wait two years to finally meet when their time zones overlapped. Each movie tackles human emotions differently. A film buff at the International Film Festival of India defined this well to me, "Sometimes we do not understand our own emotions. But after watching a film deal with it, we are able to address them better."

The 49th edition of IFFI has been a big bang of emotions and creativity, satisfying viewers' appetites with unconventional and radical films. It has however worked its magic on a different plane for me.

Besides understanding cinema better, this festival for me has been the forging of new ties, and lots of poignant moments with The Peacock. As work extended late into the night, one of my colleagues silently placed a cup of coffee on my desk. Another booked a guest room, then gave it away to three of us instead, saying he preferred to 'crash' in his car and shower at the Kala Academy. Some friendships clicked in an instant.

In the course of one assignment I knew I would always want to partner with my new colleague for stories. Others matured over late nights after work. As I lay on the sands of Miramar with two new friends, gazing at the stars, we knew our pack of three was glued for many wild adventures ahead. Our conversation topics in the office stretched from watching bull fights in front of the house and being the best cook of sausages in the world, to beating competitive publications and raising the bar for content each day.

We are a bunch of people who planned the after-party well before the festival started, spent a good amount of precious reporting time blowing balloons for our youngest team-member's 21st birthday, and developed unobtrusive signals to converse uninhibitedly through a public event.

We are the kind who - after hearing Gaspar Noe's movie *Climax* (2018) is a drug-induced nightmare - bravely pick back-row middle seats, and then leave in between because it's too much to handle. We are those who first politely decline home-made food, and then grab a bowl from the pantry and dig in voraciously.

In the course of The Peacock's 2018 flight, I have been part of a team of professionals across a wide age group from various fields, all doubly armed to write as well. A healthy work atmosphere encourages learning, and caring colleagues can make you think of the work place as home too. As author Jane Austen said, "There is no charm equal to the tenderness of heart." We caught various movie screenings at the festivals, but the actual emotions have been churned in the office. Even though I dread the 28th night when IFFI ends and everyone flies back to their own nests, I remember what Dan Wolman told me a few days back; that to enjoy the warmth of an embrace once more, one has to pull back for a short while. One hug is never enough; so hopefully everyone will return for a lovely warm hug again next year.



WOMEN IN THE WILD

BY NANDINI DIAS VELHO

Shaleena Phinya and Malaika Vaz are both 21-year old women who are arriving on the wildlife film-making scene.

The former lives very close to Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in the Himalayan foothills of West Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh, and is training to be the first woman filmmaker from her Bugun community, while Goa's own Malaika Vaz has just finished presenting the first episodes of 'On the Brink' on Animal Planet (the second part is scheduled for release this week).

Phinya says that after she graduates, she will definitely continue being a film-maker, even though she doesn't yet know what opportunities exist for her. But Vaz is already a familiar face on television, who told *The Peacock* that "the most humbling part is the many young girls who reach out, saying that they've watched the show, and are now inspired to go to the closest jungle, forest or ocean around their house to learn more about nature."

Initially, Phinya felt affected by comments of "*tum nahi kar payegee*" (you won't be able to do it) from people in her village, but everything changed after joining The Green Hub, which describes itself as "the first youth and community fellowship and video

documentation centre for recording the environment, wildlife and people's biodiversity in North East India." Rita Banerji, her course director, is the first woman to win the National Geographic - CMS Prithvi Ratna award, which is "conferred upon a filmmaker for exemplary work and being able to effect changes in perceptions and policies via their work, in the field of environment."

Banerji has become Phinya's role model, and now the young Bugun filmmaker is in the process of making her first feature documentary on one of the most biodiverse community reserves of the world, which is owned and managed by her tribe. This reserve and the adjacent forests are second



only to the Andes mountains in terms of bird species numbers. The Bugun Liocichla, the first bird to be described after India's independence, was named after Phinya's tribe in honour of their conservation efforts. But it was only after joining Green Hub that Phinya spent her first night in the forest, and there has been no looking back. "I love it and prefer spending time in the forest over the village," she says.

Vaz entered film-making in another way altogether. She is a trained pilot, expert horse-rider, free-diver, champion windsurfer, and visited both North and South poles by the age of 16. The youngest Indian to ever get into the National Geographic Explorer club is presently in the

midst of her biggest film production project, a three-part series on tigers, lions and leopards. She is a confident presenter and filmmaker, who already has her own production house, Untamed Planet. Since 14, she has been mentored by award winning film-makers Mike Pandey and Sandesh Kadur, and most recently by Akanksha Sood (who heads an all-woman film team).

Filmmakers who are women "bring different perspectives in both how they shoot and tell stories, which men tend to ignore", says Kalyan Varma, who has worked for National Geographic and the BBC, and started Asia's biggest consortium of wildlife

photographers. One example is the first assignment chosen by Phinya, about a single mother supporting her family and raising her child. From her experience, Vaz says that women have some advantages in making people feel more comfortable in interviews, so they open up and tell their stories authentically. She feels that being female has eased access for her, including in a recent investigative film on the illegal trade in oceanic wildlife products. She says, "I think it's definitely an exciting time to be a woman and in the wild."

Nandini Dias Velho is an award-winning wildlife biologist.



BY CHRYSELLE D'SILVA DIAS

t has been a while since the last time I registered as a delegate at the International Film Festival of India. It was 2015, when my son went to the first standard, and I had whole mornings left to my own devices. That seemingly endless stretch of time felt like an unimaginable luxury, and I was going to make the most of it with a long list of films marked in the festival catalogue.

This time, I'm back as a reporter and columnist for The Peacock. It's been an extraordinarily interesting assignment for me. In thirteen years of writing for leading national and international publications, this is the first time I have exclusively covered the film industry.

Interviewing a movie star or celebrity is one thing, but keeping track of industry developments, and identifying independent film makers and the stories they are trying to tell, is a different ball game altogether.

I was happy to cover the NFDC Film Bazaar. There were seasoned filmmakers, producers and actors pitching their stories to sales agents, and also those who are new to the scene like I am. I will freely admit that, despite my journalistic experience, I was nervous that first day at the Film Bazaar. Most of the names were not familiar to me, neither did I have any immediate contacts or interviews lined up. Like any journalism assignment, I had to go find the stories. Imposter syndrome reared its annoying head. Would my lack of knowledge (or interest) about the movies come through?

Everyone has a story. At this moment of personal crisis, it was a good point to remind myself of that. My colleagues at The Peacock were chasing filmmakers for interviews, or getting quotes from delegates. It wasn't long before I worked out how the Bazaar was structured and what the main focus was. A bundle of The Peacock tucked under my arm made for a great conversation starter, and things fell into place.

The Film Bazaar was fascinating for its sheer scope of creative stories. I spoke to filmmakers about everything from Virtual Reality, child kidnapping, lynchings, censorship, freedom of expression, and how there are no markets for documentaries in this country. Irrespective of their commercial successes, most film-makers have similar struggles, similar dreams for their stories. Some of those interviews made it to The Peacock, others didn't for lack of space.

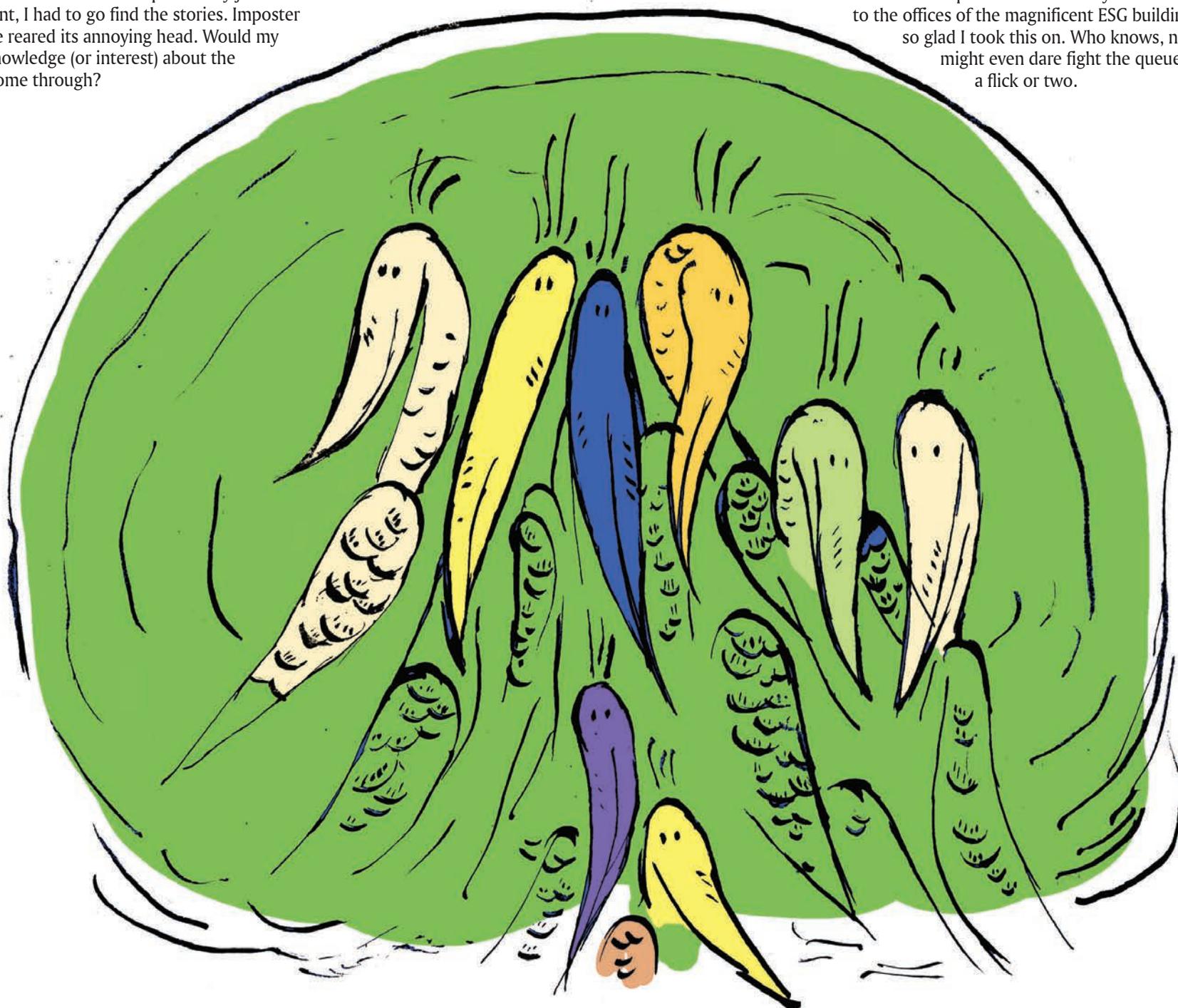
SPREADING FILMI WINGS

Through the conversations over this last week, I'm seeing my home town of Panjim and Goa in a new light. Most delegates are delighted with our tiny state and its pretty little capital, and love to visit every year. 'Tell me what to see around here' was a common request. There were the occasional ones though, who couldn't understand what the fuss was about. One film director from Mumbai was still trying to figure out where the charm lies. "This is my second trip to Goa," he said. "The first time, my friends bullied me into coming here saying, 'Goa mein maja karenge (We'll have fun in Goa)'. I didn't really enjoy myself, and don't know why people keep coming back here."

This young man was the exception to the adulation Goa generally receives. As someone who has grown up outside the state, and is a fairly recent transplant here, I like to think that I can see things from both perspectives. The idea of 'fun' in Goa means different things to different people. For this young director, a self-professed 'mountain person', Goa was not quiet enough, not cold enough. For others, the idea of Goa comes from the movies, or popular culture.

For me, working with a brilliantly competent team was not only fun, it was a genuine pleasure. I still haven't seen a single film at IFFI this year but I've written one or more stories in each daily edition of The Peacock. The festival experience for me may have been limited to the offices of the magnificent ESG building, but I'm so glad I took this on. Who knows, next year, I might even dare fight the queues and catch a flick or two.

Nishant Saldanha



THE FLIGHT OF GOLDEN PEACOCKS

BY AAKASH CHHABRA

On the banks of a river Mandovi, there is a golden peacock, and every November it takes flight. In 1965, the 3rd edition of the International Film Festival of India (which was chaired by Satyajit Ray) was graded with category 'A' by the Paris-based Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films. With this recognition, the Indian startup came on par with the most prestigious film festivals in the world – Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Moscow, and Karlovy Vary in the Czech Republic. That same year, IFFI instituted the Golden Peacock Award, in tribute to India's national bird. Its first recipient was Gamperaliya (1963), a Sri Lankan film directed by Lester James Peries. Over the intervening decades, the Golden Peacock has been awarded to 28 films from sixteen different nations. This year fifteen filmmakers vie to hold the coveted bird in their hands. Here's what The Peacock has to say about some of the top contenders:



1. DONBASS

The film is Ukraine's official submission for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. It was also the opening film in the Un Certain Regard section at 71st annual Cannes Film Festival, and honoured with the Best Director award. Directed by Sergei Loznitsa whose previous films *My Joy* (2010) and *In the Joy* (2012) have competed for the prestigious Palme d'Or, Donbass is an anthology of thirteen unrelated segments, which explore the mid-2010s conflict between Ukraine and Russia-backed Donetsk People's Republic.



3. WHEN THE TREES FALL

The second entry from Ukraine, it marks Marysia Nikitiuk's feature debut and places her in the ranks of Europe's most promising young women film-makers. An enigmatic fantasy which straddles multiple genres, the film brings a familiar whiff of post-Soviet dystopia. *When the Trees Fall* is set in one of the rural projects in Lozova in East Ukraine. Larysa is 15. Her life takes an unexpected turn after her father's untimely demise. The village community starts to ostracize her for her relationship with Scar, a petty criminal. She develops a deep bond with her grandmother, and together they plan to escape from the village. Quietly overlooked at Berlin International Film Festival, the film is a social commentary on life in rural Ukraine amid the prolonged crisis which started in 2013.



4. AGA

A gloomy drama about an isolated Inuit couple holding on to their traditions even as global warming and the modern world encroach onto their remote outpost, Aga is the award-winning Bulgarian director Milko Lazarov's second feature after the 2013 Venice Days' highlight *Alienation*. Shot in the Russian republic of Sakha, infamous for having the northern hemisphere's coldest climate, the film employs a fixed camera which firmly places the two characters within their harsh white environment. Through this Lazarov manages to capture the timelessness of a lifestyle that ironically has reached the end of its time. The film had its world premiere in the Berlinale Panorama.



2. A FAMILY TOUR

Yin Liang's fourth feature film, it is the story of a Chinese film director who is left with no choice but to leave everything behind and seek refuge in Hong Kong. When her mother falls ill and needs to undergo an operation, the two decide to meet in Taiwan. A self reflective and semi-autobiographical memoir which is born out of Liang's own sense of disconnection after a five-year exile, it casts a sharp and unflattering light on Chinese society's deformation after decades of People's Party's rule.

DEU BOREM KORUM

BY VIVEK MENEZES

Four years ago, the last issue of the first-ever edition of The Peacock recalled that all-time-great director Frank Capra attended the inaugural International Film Festival of India in 1952.

We asked then, "What did the creative genius behind *It Happened One Night* (1934) think of India" and answered ourselves, "We don't know...we are left with only skeletal details, and a meagre archive of press clippings and photographs (plus living memories) to glean what happened at every subsequent edition. We know the movies screened, but what did delegates think about them? What events surrounded the cinema schedule? How did all those filmmakers present and contextualize their work at that time?"

Precisely this gaping lacuna prompted the founding of The Peacock in 2015 by Ameya Abhyankar – still the CEO of Entertainment Society of Goa – to "create an archival trove of rich content about each edition of India's oldest film festival, which includes as many voices as possible", to help shape different narratives of this consistently vibrant and interesting, but always misunderstood, and often wilfully misrepresented event.

From eight pages printed on newsprint, each following year catapulted this unique publication further up the learning curve to the sixteen-page collector's item you hold in your hands. Thanks, Ameya. This achievement belongs to you.

We call ourselves Team Peacock, but arise and take shape anew each year much more like the mythical phoenix. There are mainstays however, who emerge stronger and more capable every edition. This grueling print run would not have been possible were it not for the meticulousness, diligence, and tireless commitment to excellence of Jonathan Rodrigues and Niju Mohan. My personal thanks also to this paper's founding editor, Jose Lourenço, for coming in to save the day precisely when he was most needed. You're the best, guys.

This year's edition debuted a troika of new columnists, each one absolutely wonderful. In many ways, all of us took our lead from The Outsider, written with great passion and flair by award-winning filmmaker, Apurva Asrani, who wowed this team (we thought we'd

already seen it all) daily. Another absolute sparkler was The Wild Side, by Panjim-girl-made-good, the wildly multitalented award-winning wildlife biologist Nandini Velho. Anchoring our pages, From The Waterfront was always sheer reading pleasure, from the immensely capable and very widely published Chryselle D'Silva Dias. Take a bow, all three of you. You rocked!

This year, our emotional centre came from several limitlessly talented young stars. Impana Kulkarni, classically trained dancer, also copy edits and writes,

and imbued our newsroom with much grace and good cheer. Aakash Chhabra, film student based in Kolkata, is clearly one to watch. Keep your eye on him, folks! Karishma D'Mello is a lawyer, and also first-class journalist in the making.

Aileen Carneiro has travelled the world, and speaks multiple languages, and even though she injured herself mid-way, contributed mightily, including translating full-speed from Italian for today's paper. Sunaina Menezes turned 21 during IFFI, and writes with great composure. She has an immensely bright literary future ahead of her. Thank you so much, most lovely millennials! We could never have done it without you.

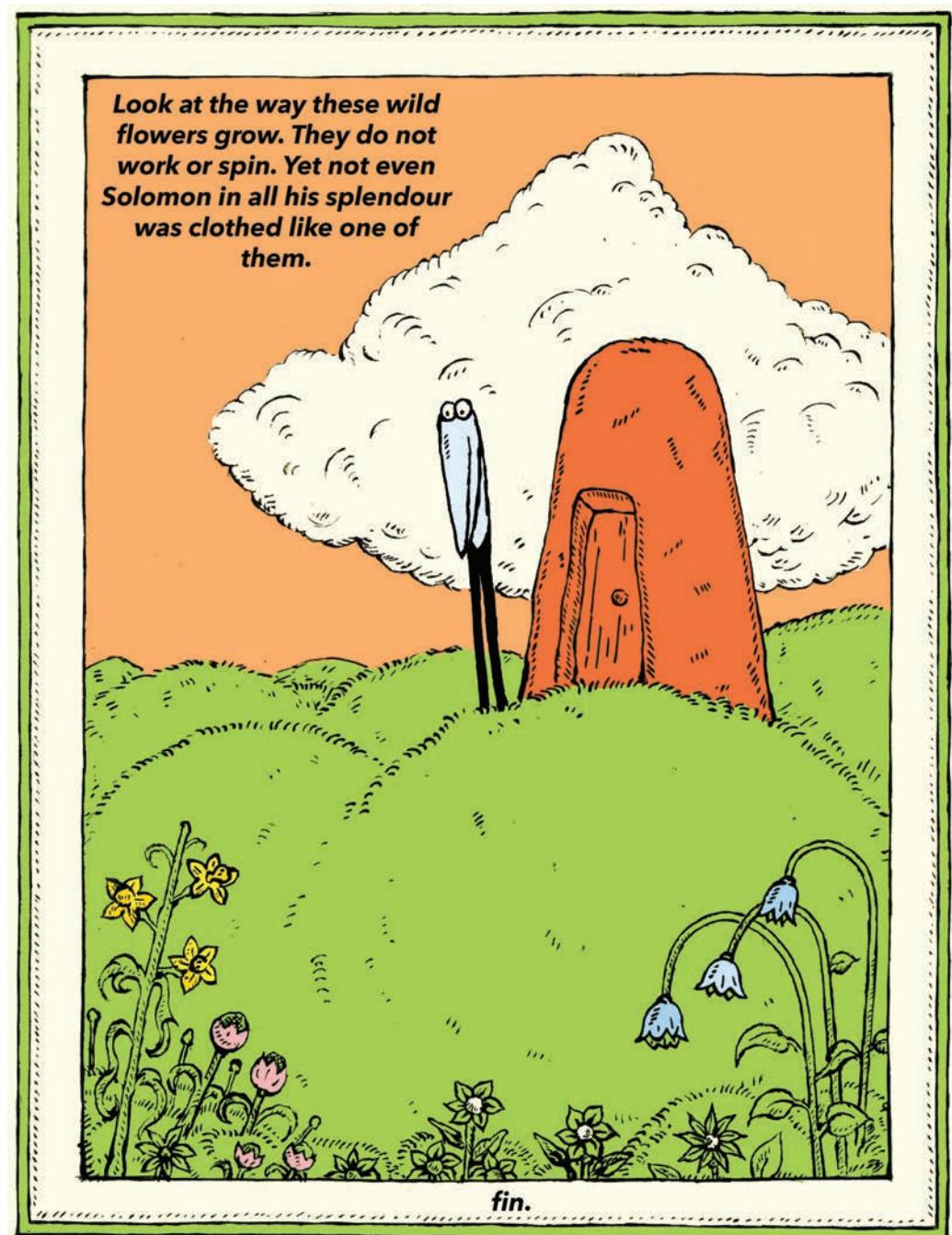
Many international delegates told us they've never seen any festival newspaper look as attractive as The Peacock. One big reason is the amazing portrait photography of Assavri Kulkarni, who is among the very best anywhere in the world. What an amazing set of

images this year! She was ably backed by Sid Lall, part of the heart of this operation. Original cover paintings made have distinguished The Peacock from inception, and Pradeep Naik dazzled throughout for this edition, an extremely hard act to follow. Nishant Saldanha was another star debutant who drew serious attention for his wacky, inscrutable illustrations. Peacock visuals crew, salute!

Every team has its most valuable players, and they tend to change each season. But it's a bit different for us, because Amol Kamat is perennially

invaluable. We work to funnel lots of amazing content, but he is the one who puts it together with tremendous artistry and equally impressive equanimity. Thank you, Amol.

That leaves out only one staff member, whose byline has been with us from the very beginning. Kinjal Sethia started as an incredibly quick-learning intern, then became one of our best reporters, and this year earned battlefield promotion to News Editor. On her behalf, and the rest of The Peacock, we extend our gratitude to you, dear reader. See you next year!



Nishant Saldanha is an animator and comics artist. You can see his work at instagram.com/nishantsaldanha



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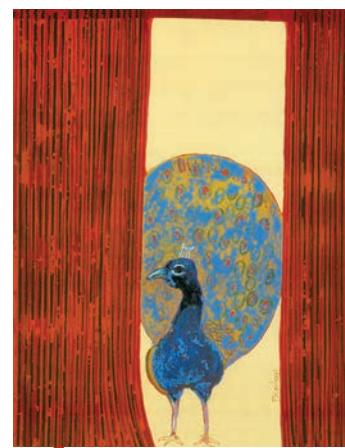
GOA
BREWING
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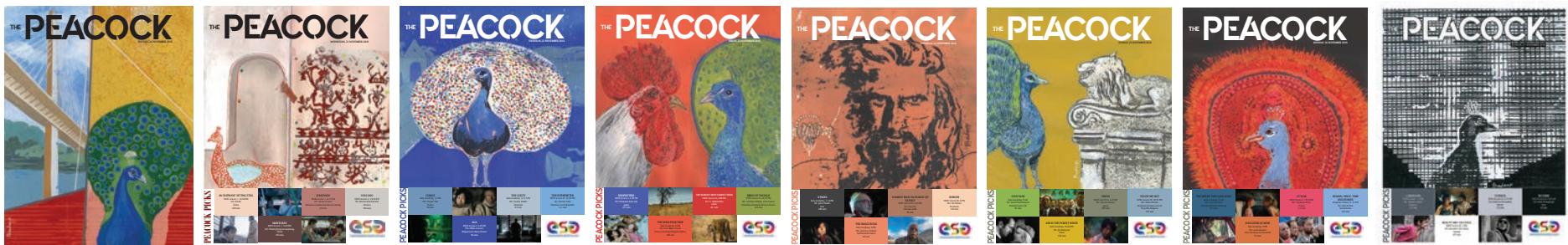
DNA-GOA



WHITE OWL

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Movified

On this closing day of the 49th International Film Festival of India, our annual banquet of spectacular cinema reaches its final course. For his final painting in the extraordinary series of covers he created for this year's edition of The Peacock, outstanding Goan artist Pradeep Naik depicts our favourite bird's last glimpse of his audience before the final curtain closes. You don't have to wait till next year to see more of Naik, however. His deeply thoughtful artworks are part of Serendipity Arts Festival 2019 next month, and you can email him at pradeepnaik2047@gmail.com



MISSED AN ISSUE OF THE PEACOCK? Visit our offices on the first floor of Maquinez Palace and collect!

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

MOVIE SCREENING

"Mahatma on Celluloid"
Gandhi
Dir: Richard Attenborough,
English

Kala Academy, 1:30 pm and
5pm

Press conference with
Producers of USA , John Hart,
William Fay and Bobby Deleon
at 10.30 a.m.

Venue: Press Briefing Room,
IFFI Media Centre, Old GMC
Building

Find us online
[https://iffigoa.org/
thepeacock/](https://iffigoa.org/thepeacock/)



Send us feedback and comments at
thepeacock@iffigoa.org



28th November 2018

INOX
Screen I

H11 09:30 AM

WOMAN AT WAR (FK)
Dir: Benedikt Erlingsson
Iceland | France | Ukraine/ 2018/101 min

H12 12:00 PM

HUMAN, SPACE,
TIME AND
HUMAN (FK)
Dir: Kim Ki Duk
South Korea/2018/
122 min

07:30 PM

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

INOX
Screen II

H21 10:00 AM

EE MAA YOVE
(IC)
Dir: Lijo Jose Pellissery
Malayalam/ 120 mins

H22 01:00 PM

ABYAKTO (DC)
Dir: Arjun Dutta
Bengali/ 86 mins

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

INOX
Screen III

H31 09:15 AM

TO THE END OF THE
WORLD (WP)
Dir: Guillaume Nicloux
France/2017/103 min
(ASPERA)

H32 12:00 PM

WINTERFLIES
(WP)
Dir: Olmo Olmerzu
Czech Republic/Slovenia/
Poland/Slovakia/2018/85
min

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

INOX
Screen IV

H41 09:45 AM

492
(WP)
Dir: Henrique Goldman
Brazil/2018/98 min

H42 12:45 PM

RAMEN SHOP
(WP)
Dir: Eric Khoo
Singapore | Japan | France/
2018/90 min

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

**KALA
ACADEMY**

H51 09:00 AM

DOGMAN (FK)
Dir: Matteo Garrone
Italy/France/2018/102
min

H52 12:30 PM

THE HOUSE THAT JACK
BUILT
(FK)
Dir: Lars Von Trier
Denmark | France | Germany
Sweden/2018/155 min

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

**MAQUINEZ
PALACE I**

H61 09:00 AM

YOMEDDINE
(FK)
Dir: A.B. Shawky
Egypt/USA/Austria/
2018/97 min

H62 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

In- Conversation Session
"RAMP TO SCREEN"
Diana penty
Rakul Preet Singh

Closing Film
Sealed Lips
Dir: Bernd Baulich
Germany/2018/100 min

**MAQUINEZ
PALACE II**

H71 09:30 AM

RESPETO
(DC)
Dir: Treb Monteras II
Philippines/2017/96
min

H72 12:00 PM

BERGMAN ISLAND
(IB RETRO)
Dir: Marie Nyreröd
Sweden/Denmark/Norway/
2006/85 min