

THE

# PEACOCK

SATURDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2021



# Dev Boro Dis Divum!

**T**hat is how we wish one another in Goa: "Have a Good Day!"

As we greet cinema lovers from around the world, the state of Goa is all geared up for this 9-day joyous event, the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India. We are happy to be here once again, to celebrate the spirit of unity, fraternity, and togetherness. The Covid-19 factor continues to dampen our mood, albeit with much lower intensity than before. The perseverance of filmdom is tough and exemplary, and we, the viewers, are certainly out to derive the maximum from this event. Be prepared for over 200 screenings from different genres, including premieres, from all over the world.

We recently paid our tributes to the revered filmmaker of India, Satyajit Ray, on the occasion of his 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary. The country and the world had to celebrate in a muted mode, in view of the pandemic situation. However, the Government of India has announced its plans to celebrate this Centenary Year by organising programs all year long.

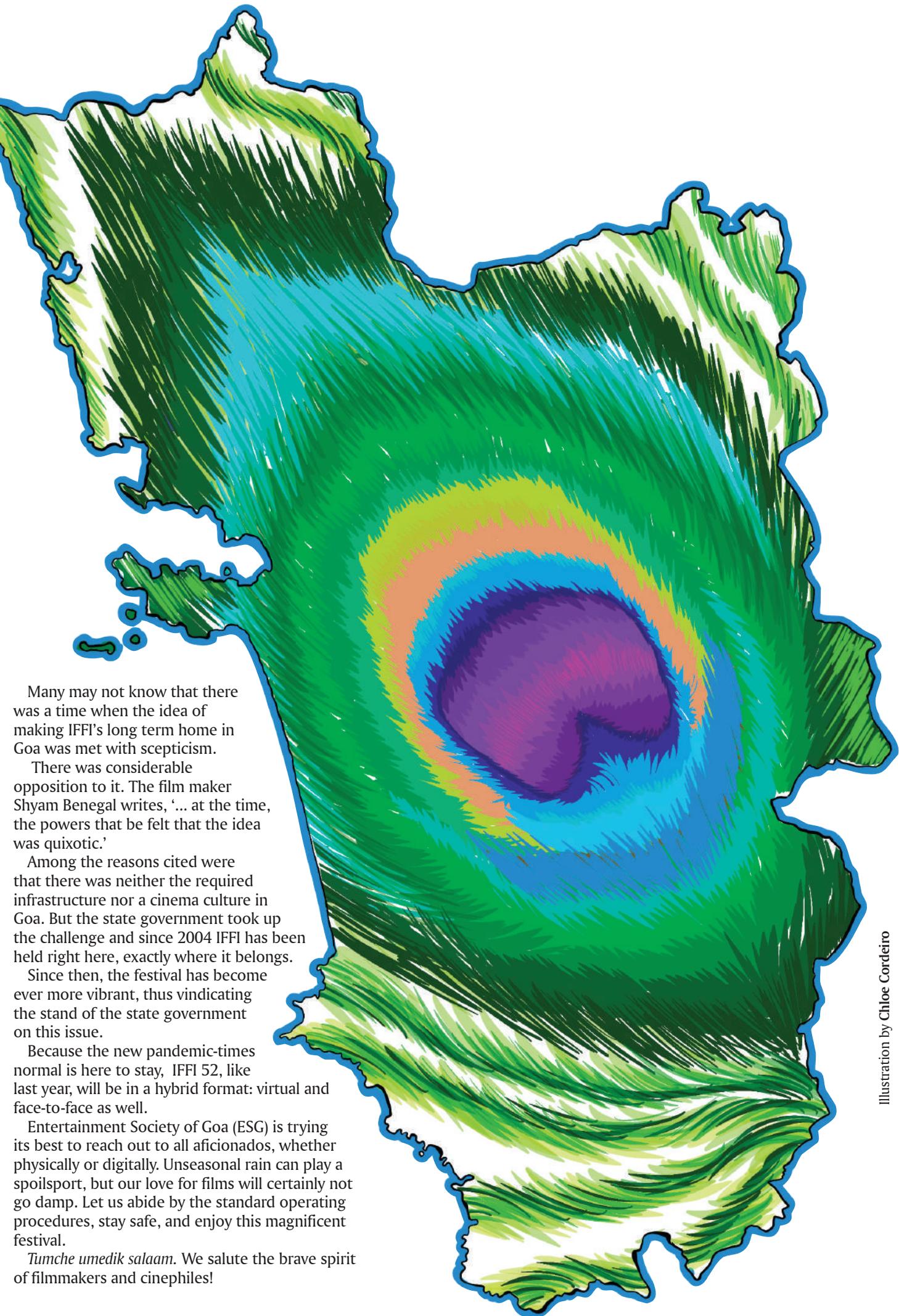
The legendary filmmaker was a multifaceted personality. He was a writer, composer, lyricist, illustrator, and a connoisseur of art. He won the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 1984, and the highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, in 1992. He was awarded the Commander of the National Order of the Legion of Honour, the highest decoration in France in 1987, and an Honorary Award at the 64<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards in 1991. To commemorate his 100 years, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India has now announced that IFFI's Lifetime Achievement Award will henceforth be called the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award. This year it will be bestowed upon István Szabó and Martin Scorsese for their outstanding contribution to world cinema.

During his lifetime, Satyajit Ray spread the message of *Vasudhaiva kutumbakam* through his works, meaning 'The whole world is one family'. This is exactly what cinema speaks about.

IFFI celebrates diversity. The participation of 73 countries with a wide range of themes, number of languages, variety of cultures, and an abundance of traditions and rituals, makes the event extraordinarily attractive. The countdown to the awarding of the Golden Peacock starts... now!

With Goa as the permanent venue, our little state is now much more than a hot tourist destination. This is the best season to come to Goa. Most other film festivals around the world are held during the lean tourism seasons. The world's oldest, the Venice International Film Festival, is staged on the island of Lido in late August or early September, which is the beginning of their tourist season. The legendary Cannes Film Festival is held in May, which is towards the end of their tourist season. And the Berlinale, hailed as one of the Big Three, is hosted annually in February, long before their home season starts in May.

However, the IFFI happens when crowds in Goa are at their peak, along with Goans from around the world who are returning home. This is the time when our beaches are crowded and hotels are full. And people are in a merry mood.



Many may not know that there was a time when the idea of making IFFI's long term home in Goa was met with scepticism.

There was considerable opposition to it. The film maker Shyam Benegal writes, "... at the time, the powers that be felt that the idea was quixotic."

Among the reasons cited were that there was neither the required infrastructure nor a cinema culture in Goa. But the state government took up the challenge and since 2004 IFFI has been held right here, exactly where it belongs.

Since then, the festival has become ever more vibrant, thus vindicating the stand of the state government on this issue.

Because the new pandemic-times normal is here to stay, IFFI 52, like last year, will be in a hybrid format: virtual and face-to-face as well.

Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG) is trying its best to reach out to all aficionados, whether physically or digitally. Unseasonal rain can play a spoilsport, but our love for films will certainly not go damp. Let us abide by the standard operating procedures, stay safe, and enjoy this magnificent festival.

*Tumche umedik salaam.* We salute the brave spirit of filmmakers and cinephiles!

# Everything Will Go Smoothly: Subhash Phal Dessai

BY SACHIN CHATTE

**B**eing at the helm of running a film festival is a nightmarish job. It is all the more arduous if it happens to be India's largest event of its type, the grand old International Film Festival of India. To add to it, we are now living in strange and uncertain pandemic times, which increases the levels of complexity by several notches.

Even given this difficult context, Subhash Phal Dessai, the Vice-Chairman of the Entertainment Society of Goa, has been there and done that many times before. While there are always some last-minute issues to be addressed, he goes about all of them in the most unflappable and professional manner.

"The fact that we could hold the 51<sup>st</sup> edition successfully earlier this year has given us the confidence that we will be able to pull off this 52<sup>nd</sup> edition from 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November even more smoothly," he told *The Peacock*.

After the big disruption of the last edition, IFFI has returned to its regular fixed schedule of 20<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November. Phal Dessai says, "with large scale vaccinations done in Goa, and Covid cases under control at the moment, we are expecting to have a wonderful celebration of cinema."

"Much like last time, this edition will be a hybrid festival where screenings will happen online as well as in-person," he adds. "This time, since Kala Academy was not available because of the on-going renovations, we decided to include four screens from the INOX multiplex in Porvorim, taking the number of theatres to 10."

Being the on-ground partner for logistics and infrastructure, the Entertainment Society of Goa aims to ensure that all the standard operating procedures (SOPs) laid down by the authorities are followed. Phal Dessai says, "as of now, 50 percent occupancy is permitted in the auditoriums but as is the case in many states, we hope to get permis-

sion for 100 percent from the government of Goa, which will take our full capacity to 2500 seats."

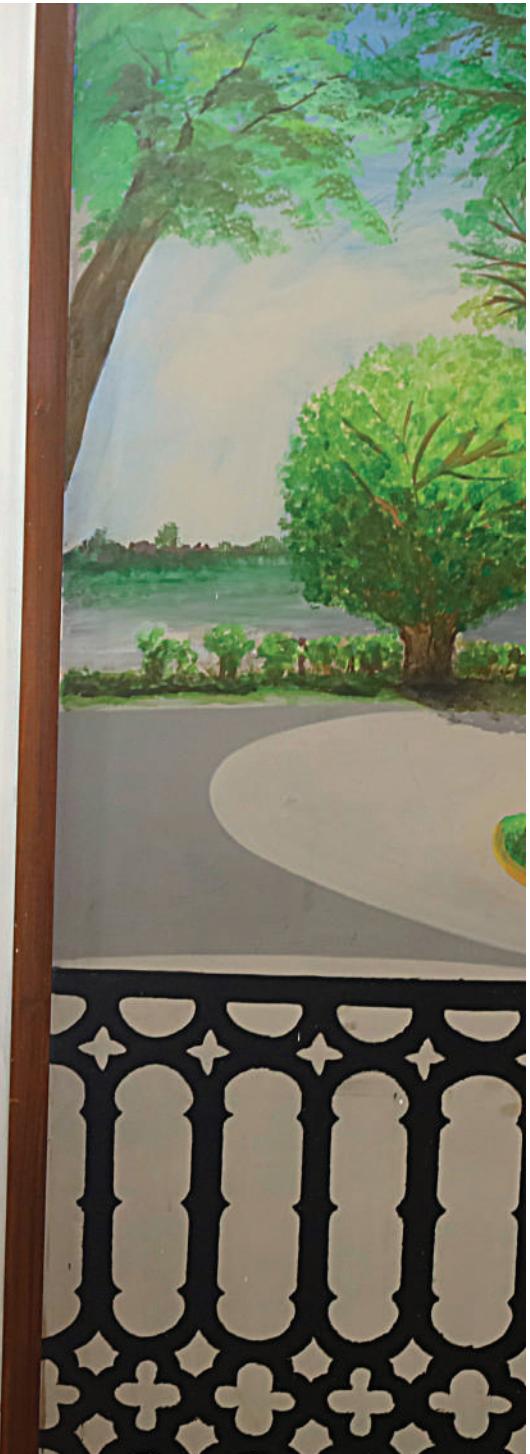
The opening and closing ceremonies were relatively low-key affairs last time, but Phal Dessai is hopeful that we will see a bigger participation this time, both in terms of celebrities as well as the public. But, speaking about delegate participation, there was a tinge of disappointment in his voice when he mentioned that they were expecting close to 6000 registrations but the number is hovering at around only 4000 at the moment.

Being the nodal body for shooting permissions, ESG has also streamlined the process for line producers. "The window for registering as a line producer was closed but we have reopened it with a process in place, where the applicants will have to answer an exam and go through training to ensure professionalism."

This move is likely to pay rich dividends given the number of films, television programmes, and advertisements that are shot in Goa throughout the year. Phal Dessai also said that ESG is in talks with the government to ensure that it has enforcement powers to stop illegal film shoots: "There are a lot of people who come to Goa and shoot films without the requisite permissions, and even if the ESG comes to know about it, we don't have the necessary powers to stop them as of now. We are seeking some kind of legislation to empower us."



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni



I don't watch too many films, but *3 Idiots* was an exception. I watched it when I was schooling and I found Aamir Khan's character in the movie very motivating.

Kalpesh  
Karapurkar  
Student, Goa



*Slumdog Millionaire* had a huge impact on me. I was very young when I watched it, and it opened my eyes to a side of India and a harsh reality I didn't know existed.

Sarah Aga  
St. Xaviers College  
Goa



*Bahubali* would be my most favourite film. The visuals and performance were outstanding.

Mayur Balve,  
Cinephile, Goa



*The Breakfast Club* is definitely my all-time favourite movie. I love how the setting is limited to one place and how people from completely different walks of life come together in this space.

Rucha  
Prabhudesai,  
Screenwriter, Goa

# Who's Afraid Of Shah Rukh Khan?

BY URVASHI BAHUGUNA

I root for SRK the way I root for India at the Olympics, the way I rooted for my house team at school sports days. He's ours. He's possibility. He's worth getting rowdy for. The depth of loyalty he inspires is worth probing. After all, that is what makes him dangerous to some.

SRK has been seen in every arc, from *Dar* (1993) to *Devdas* (2002) to *Jab Harry Met Sejal* (2017) – films that range from iconic to outright unwatchable. He's played the stalker, the unsuitable lover, the sympathetic hero – important archetypes for the Indian social consciousness.

He was the kind of hero (and anti-hero) that tried to humanize the character he played, largely staying away from playing aggressive men whose behaviours were not interrogated by the film or thwarted by the plot. He often chose to play gentler men such as the therapist in *Dear Zindagi* (2016), a flawed, but doting husband in *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (2008) and a dutiful son and brother in *Main Hoon Na* (2004). He didn't make women of a certain disposition roll their eyes the way more obviously macho stars of the 90s and early 2000s did. Even if the bar was low, he was a man to lose an afternoon of your life to.

But SRK's allure also ran deeper for me (and I suspect, many other women). Shrayana Bhattacharya, author of the newly released book *Desperately Seeking Shah Rukh: India's Lonely Young Women and the Search for Intimacy and Independence*, said in an interview, "As real men disappoint women, Bollywood icons become more salient. Shah Rukh starts to embody all the elements real men are missing."

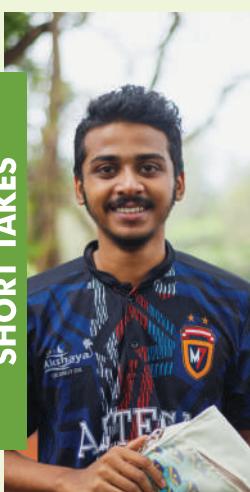
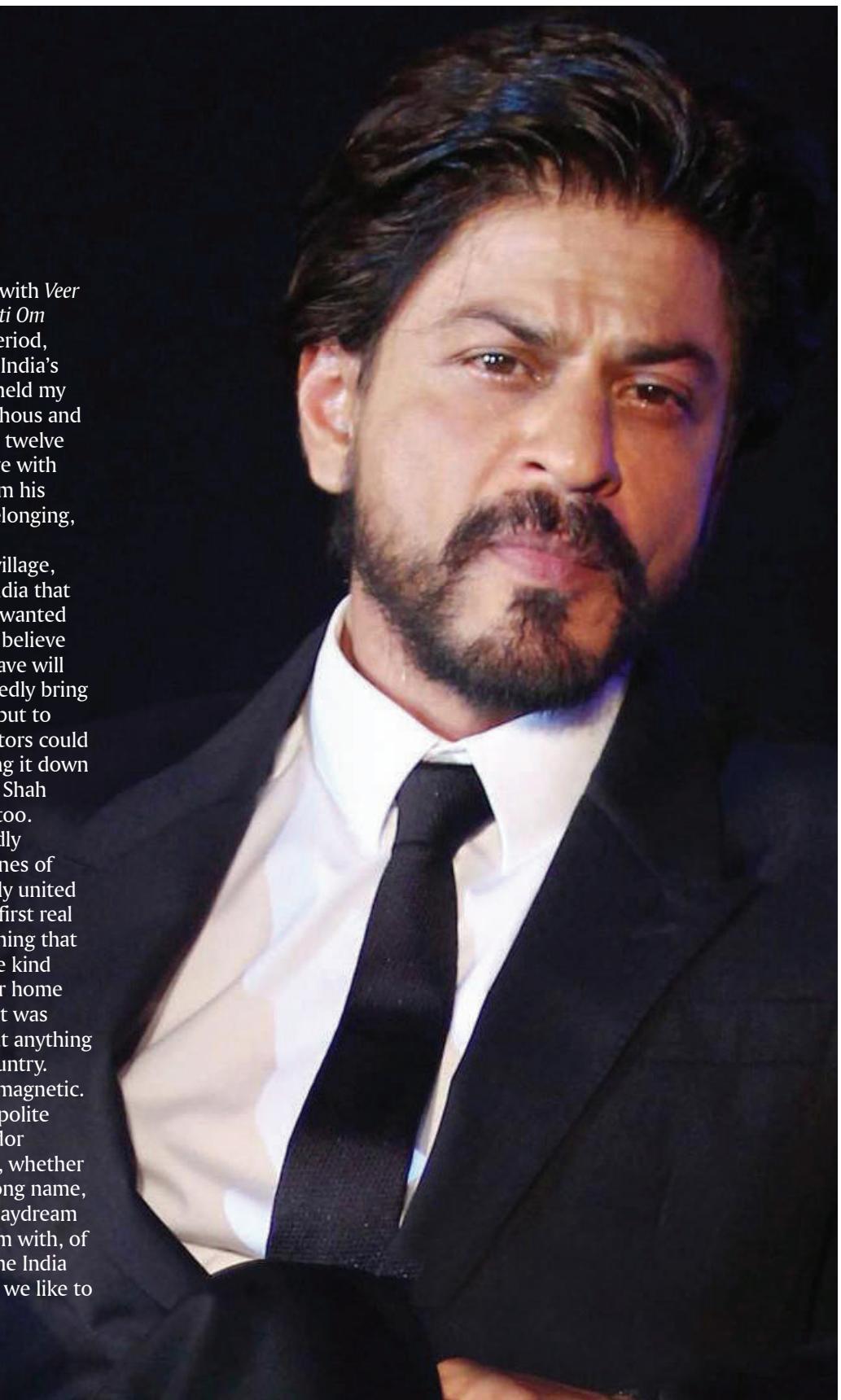
For me, he represented an idealised India. That outsized influence comes down to *Swades* (2004) and *Chak De India* (2007), which were

released in a golden era of SRK films, with *Veer Zaara* (2004), *Don* (2006) and *Om Shanti Om* (2007) also coming out in the same period, further cementing his place as one of India's undeniable sweethearts. These films held my identity as Indian in place – an amorphous and increasingly tense label to carry. I was twelve when *Swades* released, and I fell in love with the story of a man long estranged from his homeland who returns to it to find belonging, purpose, and love.

The introduction of electricity in a village, corny as that subplot is, showed an India that a kid, removed from those problems, wanted to believe in. Part of me still wants to believe that those of us with privilege who leave will come back, maybe not to single-handedly bring villages into the twenty-first century, but to contribute, restore, and build. Few actors could have played that role without weighing it down with jingoism. We already believed in Shah Rukh, and he made us believe in this too.

*Chak De India* showed a team of wildly different young women from across lines of geography, language, and class, loosely united by their flag and a coach who is their first real chance at international success. Watching that movie as a teenager, I experienced the kind of euphoria that only comes with your home country winning on the world stage. It was intoxicating and led me to believe that anything was possible for the people of our country.

SRK's off-screen persona is equally magnetic. He's always dressed neutrally, always polite and articulate, a compelling ambassador representing a country where anyone, whether of humble beginnings or with the wrong name, can become a star. He's someone to daydream about, but he's also someone to dream with, of better men and better nations. He's the India we want to show the world, the India we like to pretend to be.



*In the Mood For Love* completely changed the meaning of love for me. I like that it isn't stereotypical like most romance films. It's a beautiful movie and very well choreographed.

Abhay S  
Aspiring  
filmmaker



*Yuvarathnaa* is a very inspiring Kannada film that stresses the importance of taking along your loved ones with you as you move forward in life and not leaving anyone behind in your journey.

Ashwini G,  
Finch International



*Paltadacho Munis* is a film that really stood out for me. It was something different from most Konkani films and portrays a version of Goa that is not usually seen in mainstream media.

Fr Feroze  
Fernandes,  
Catholic Priest  
Manila



*Shershaah* was such a beautiful war and love story. I enjoyed it very much.

Gayatri Pednekar  
Commerce  
student  
Dempo College

# Amchi Xit Codi

BY PATRICIA ANN ALVARES

**X**it Codi (the iconic Goan fish-curry and rice) is inseparable from the identity of India's smallest state, and the single-most essential experience for every visitor. Fully aware of that iconic status, *The Peacock* is very proud to offer IFFI delegates this exclusive guide to the best samplings of Xit Codi served in restaurants around the festival venue.

## BOMBIL

Wood-fired prawn curry, homemade pickles and masalas, and the freshest seafood make for the finger-licking good fish thali and an array of other specialties in this charming little eatery just down the road in Campal. This tiny restaurant opposite the Military Hospital in Panjim lays its emphasis on typical village food from Xaxtii (South Goa), along with genuine local brews. The ambience – with its wooden tables, splashes of pottery, and monochrome pictures of a bygone era framed in tiny windows – lends to an authentic rustic Goan vibe.

## RITZ CLASSIC

Bordered by the manicured cricket playing field on one side and the picturesque Mandovi River on the other, Ritz Classic at Panjim Gymkhana on the Campal-Miramar road provides a perfect setting for its famously large seafood fish thalis. From Crab *xacuti* to *tisreo* (clam), there's an astonishing variety of seafood here to satiate any palate.

## GODINHO BAR & RESTAURANT

Serving authentic local fare since 1932, in its traditional setting with red-chequered tablecloths, altar, and traditional furniture, Godinho has been serving up sumptuous fish curry rice as well as an assortment of beef and pork



Photo by Michael Praveen

specialties like *vindaloo* and *xacuti*, all rendered in authentic homemade masalas. The fish thali is actually a recent addition. Located on the busy street near the old Cine National in the heart of Panjim, it is a favourite among locals and visitors alike.

## KOKNI KANTEEN

Often awarded prizes for being amongst the very best traditional restaurants, this little establishment lives up to its reputation as one of the best fish curry thali destinations in the state. Located in an ancestral house at Dada Vaidya Road, opposite the historic Mahalaxmi Temple, its original vintage interiors with rafters and arched doorways and touches of an older era have been retained. There's lots on the menu, but there's no doubt the Goan fish thali is its biggest draw, with special varieties of fish reserved for Sundays.

## RUCHIK CLASSIC

*Tisreo*, *galmo*, *chonak*, *modso*, *pomfret* – some of the choicest authentic seafood can be found at this small restaurant in the heart of the city near the Caculo Circle. Outwardly modest, the hospitality is everything you could want. While regular fish curry, with all the trappings of the thali, are served up at a modest rate, the special thali with additional varieties of fish or chicken, is also within one's pocket. And yes, the lady of the house prefers to make all the masalas at home to give it that authentic taste.

## AMBOLI SPICE

Tucked in a corner on a narrow lane on the 18<sup>th</sup> June Road, Amboli Spice offers up a fish thali with generous helpings of prawns, kingfish, *kismur*, *tisreo*, and *kokum*. A two-tiered restaurant, the family rooms on top make it comfortable for larger groups.



SHORT TAKES

The Malayam film *Uyare* is a favourite of mine. It is based on a true story of an aspiring pilot. The director did an exceptional job of portraying her life.

Col. KVG Nambiar  
Indian Army  
(retired)



12 Angry Men is on my list of favourites. I love how the movie starts with the rain and ends with sunshine – it was so fitting with the plot.

Navin Soni,  
Restaurant  
Manager,  
Goa



Boyhood by Richard Linklater had a huge impact on me. I felt I could relate to the different emotions, experiences and phases of growing up depicted in the film.

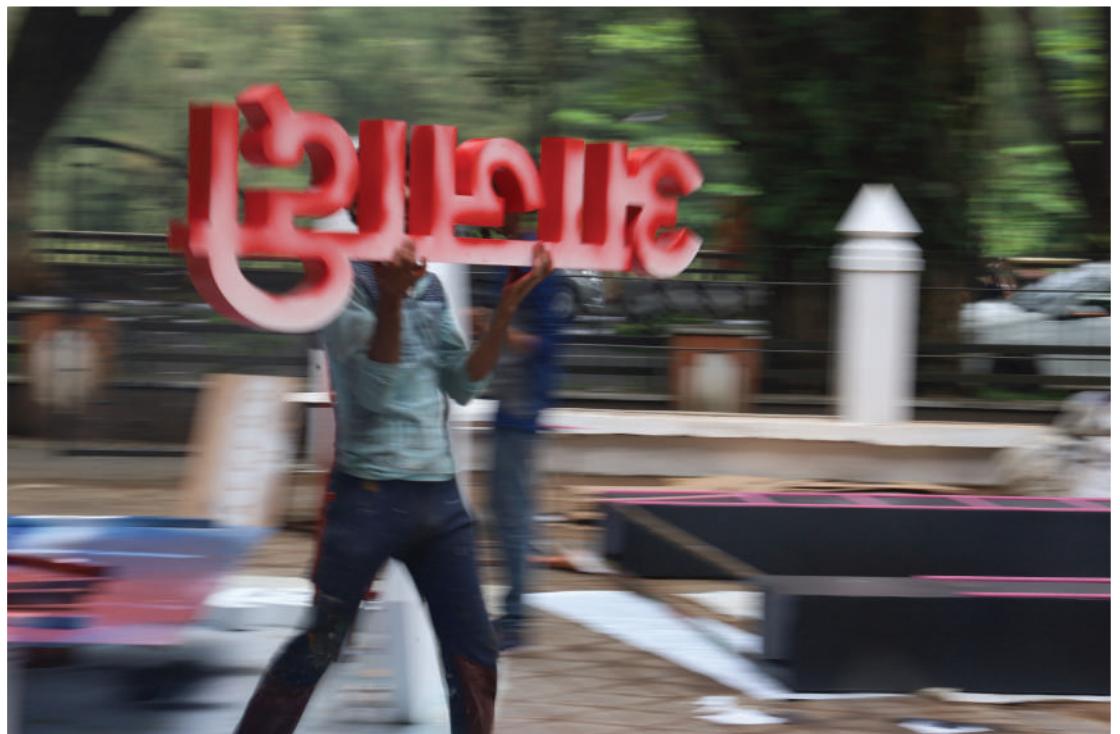
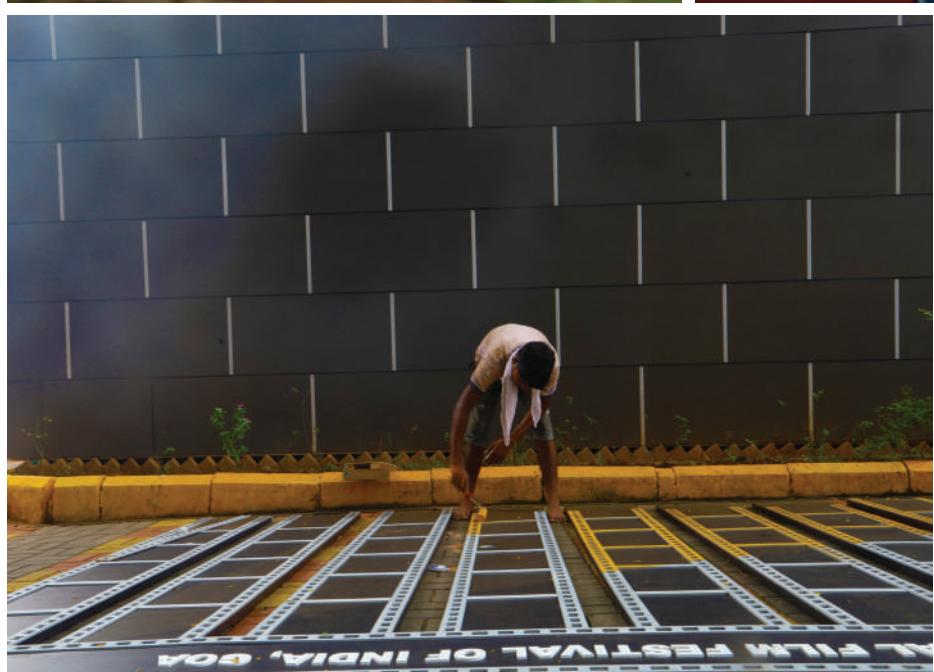
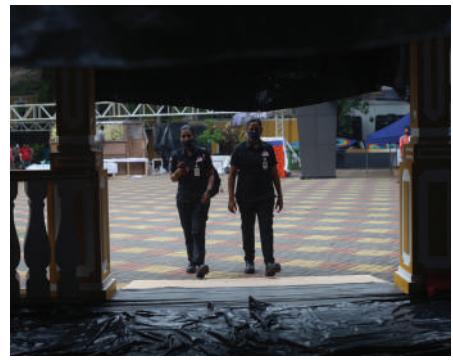
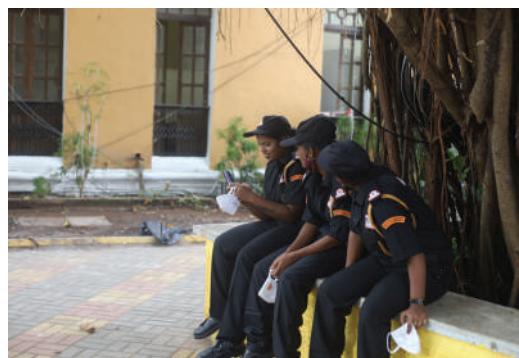
Mohil Bhavsar  
Architect



The Sky Is Pink is one of my favourites, it's a feeling I can absolutely relate to, having lost a family member. It conveys so many emotions and optimistic thoughts.

Sandhya Yadav  
Student volunteer,  
Nepal

# ASSAVRI KULKARNI: BEHIND THE SCENES





Photos by Siddharth Lall

## "Goa Means Happiness"

BY KARISHMA D'MELLO

**I**t is the day before the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India kicks off, and the venue is abuzz with men and women cleaning, repairing, sweeping, and decorating.

These unsung heroes of the festival are hard at work to bring this spectacular event to life year after year, and they still graciously spare a moment to talk to *The Peacock*.

"We look forward to working for IFFI every year. We work for Thunder Force, a security company, and they bring us here for eight days as a part of the security team," says Hema Naik, who lives in Porvorim, and has been working as a bouncer for over ten years. "Five of us are lady bouncers, and four others are a part of the guard team," she says.

"There's always something different to look forward to at the film," Sneha Naik tells us. "Everyone has been home for two years because of the virus. It's really nice to have a big event in Goa. We get a lot of freedom here. It's a very laidback place unlike Mumbai, which is too fast paced for my liking."

Hema adds, "Goa is so diverse, with so much to offer. That's what brings different

people, from various parts of India here. There's something for everyone. You can't find this kind of happiness in another state. Goa means happiness. They take good care of us here. They give us food, water, and any medical facilities that we need."

Over at the Maquinez Palace, Haseena Khan and Tahara Shaikh talk to us about their own experiences at the festival. "We have been working here for ten years, since the years of Parrikar. We were born and raised in

Goa and we love everything about it, from the markets to the beaches," says Tahara.

"There are so many changes every year, there is so much history in this city," she adds. "This used to be a hospital, and now we have a film festival here. It is incredible."

"We like being a part of various events. We go for matches, wine festivals, carnivals, wherever we are called," says Haseena. "We look forward to seeing the lights and the decorations in the evening."

Haseena and Tahara, both in their forties, enjoy Bollywood classics. "We don't like new films. We prefer to watch the works of Rajesh Khanna, Jitendra, Dharmendra, and the older stars. We even watch films from the South."

"My favourite film is *Sanam Bewafa*," says Haseena. "We have a nice TV at home, so we don't watch movies in theatres anymore. We just watch whatever is on cable."

Among their various cleaning duties, these two colleagues also feed some of the festival's most popular attendees – the cats and dogs. "We love the animals here. We feed them every day. They know our timings better than anyone else. They join us for our morning breakfast, lunch, and teatime, and we enjoy their company."

Rehana Shaikh and her team work for the company Eco Clean, and will be working in Panjim for the duration of the festival. They work daily from 8 am to 8 pm.

"We have to sweep and mop, clean the toilets, and dust the premises every day. We have to wear a mask because of the pandemic and it gets difficult to breathe especially during the afternoons when the sun is out. It's a lot of hard work, but we like it," says Rehana, who has worked in Goa for over 15 years. "We love films and we love working for IFFI."



# “Who am I? Where am I at?”

**T**hose elemental, existential questions were at the core of an exercise I conducted recently, with a set of wonderful creative practitioners under my mentorship. Each had to evaluate themselves, their work, and the place they felt they were at, and present their findings in a nutshell. They seem simple enough questions to answer, but dig into the themes and it becomes apparent that there are many things about the self and identity that we take for granted, and others that stay hidden below the surface.

One interesting realisation was that it's not just the profession we follow, or the work we author that frames our status. The entirety of our identity is constantly evolving and expanding, shaped by all our past experiences and memories; the people we have encountered, the challenges we've overcome; the books and art we've engaged with, and yes, even the movies we've watched. The pandemic has been a period of introspection in which to evaluate the things we spend time on,

and the people we want to be with – it has been a year and more of deep questioning.

I call myself 'curator and art historian' – that's my profession. I love working in a multidisciplinary way, particularly with young artists. I am interested in tangible and intangible histories, and their mediation through the curatorial process. My practice is rooted in the local, wherever I might be, and having spent eight years in Goa now, this feels like home.

I grew up in a household that was liberal, culturally tolerant and aware, with three elder siblings whose taste I followed in everything. A colour television came home when I was about 13. Until then it had been black and white 'Doordarshan' with dull droning music whenever someone prominent died. The white noise that appeared every time the antenna failed was a meditative space to stare at.

My childhood was full of regional cinema – Telugu, Tamil, Hindi – movies my parents watched that were usually classic family dramas. I lived several years in a district of Hyderabad that was known for

its film studios. Riding around on a cycle, I watched a variety of 'shootings' – with heroes and heroines prancing around the once beautiful rocky landscape, and villains fake-blasting cars on deserted roads. It was my very direct interaction with a world behind the screen. On occasion, my dad took us to the theatre as a treat, and one film that stays with me is *'Back to the Future'* (1985). Movies like that can take you beyond yourself, to being an alternate identity; a presence in a magical realm where anything is possible. It helped me envision myself as an artist.

Over years of fine-arts education in Bangalore (I trained in printmaking with a Masters in art history) I spent an enormous amount of time in single-screen theatres – tokens of the past – bunking classes to watch the latest Bollywood and Hollywood block-busters. Visual art was of primary importance to me; I did not see moving-image as anything other than entertainment.

It was only later, with art cinema like that of Mira Nair and Kalpana Lajmi, that

awareness of feminist modes of thinking were also sparked. I began to consider the possibilities of cinema as a medium of power and possibility. It led me to an enduring interest in video art, that had risen as a popular medium among artists from the late 90s onward.

Since 2008, as an independent culture worker, I have had the opportunity to work on multi-layered projects: from contemporary art exhibitions and educational curriculum development, to museum outreach programs and collaborative public art festivals.

Looking back across those recent years, an inspiring cinematic experience that impacted my understanding of filmmaking and storytelling was *'Loving Vincent'* (2017), a spectacular homage to the artist, and a brilliant articulation of the animated space.

Having learnt aplenty from the headlong plunge into the many aspects of digital space, my current practice now focuses on projects that bring together diverse voices, modes of expression, and interfaces for dialogue, both physical and virtual.



# Of Media, Morgues, and Movies

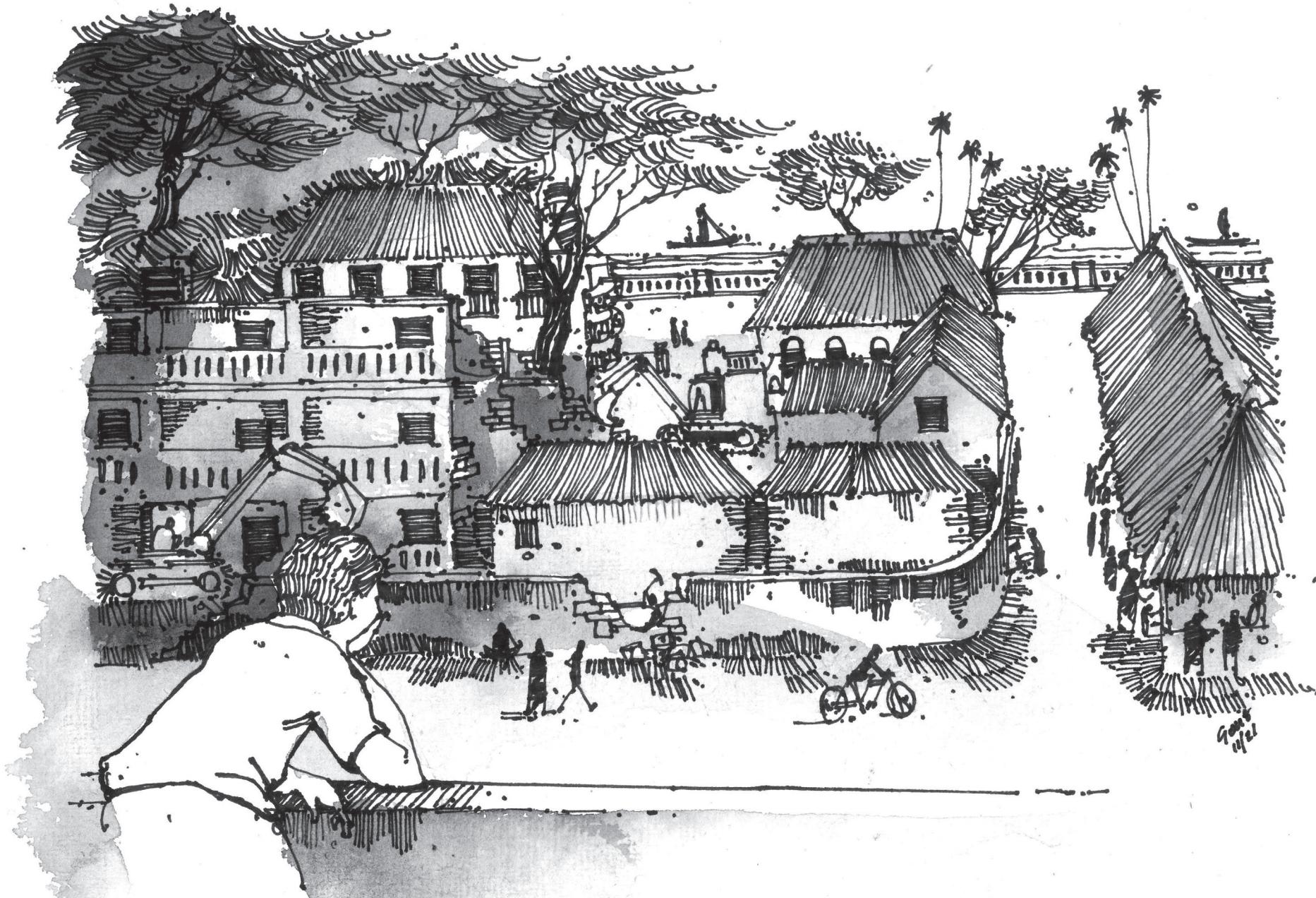


Illustration by Govit Morajkar

**O**n a rainy monsoon day in 2004, the bulldozers arrived and tore down the morgue outside my family home in Panjim, forever changing its gory informal address from “the white house opposite the Morgue” to a more insipid one – “the white house opposite the multiplex”. Looking out my window as a young architecture student, I got a ringside view of Goa’s transformation from an edgy tourism backwater to a mainstream pleasure periphery for the rest of the country.

Not content with their home state’s marginal position in the national consciousness, there was a restless yearning among an influential segment of Goan society to be part of the national cultural mainstream. If Goa was going to emerge from the margins, movies and tourism were the means by which it was going to be achieved.

In a span of just about 100 days, the site that housed the unsightly mess of modernist extensions to the former Goa Medical College was replaced by red carpets and glamorous film stars. One could enjoy this nicely transformed urban space, if you only

managed to get a ticket in hand.

The works carried out for the International Film Festival of India within the heritage precincts of the former Goa Medical College have set the tone for the massive infrastructure upgrade that followed. The major avenues, public spaces, as well as the market complex near the main screening venues were also spruced up or entirely rebuilt. Goa did not have a thriving local film industry in those days, but what it now had was an entire capital renovated to cater to the needs of the national film industry, which is something other states could not match.

I entered Goa College of Architecture in 1999 and at that time Panjim still felt like a crumbling small town. It was the year the state got its first casino ship in the river Mandovi.

Those days there were reputed Goan architects whose works were known outside the state, but the Goan built form had been barely taken notice of. That year a book titled “Houses of Goa” changed all that. It was richly illustrated, with images of grand houses which not only focussed on the architectural features of these houses but

also on the lifestyles of their inhabitants. The book was well received, and created a desire among the metropolitan elites to buy into an upper class Goan lifestyle. The seductive images of Goan houses surrounded by lush greenery – rapidly proliferating through books and cinema – also fundamentally changed the nature of these houses and their equation with Goan society. They were now viewed as investments for surplus metropolitan capital, their new owners increasingly looking at living lives of leisure away from the dust and grind of urban India. For Goan families it became an opportunity to offload their crumbling ancestral houses to the highest bidder.

Movies like *Dil Chahta Hai* (2001) also began portraying Goa as a destination of escape. If an illusion of freedom and self-determination needed to be created among the nation’s youth the exoticisation of Goa’s built heritage needed to be creatively repackaged, and this was what was a new generation of filmmakers from across the country commenced. While Goa began to be featured ever more prominently in the media, it also began being subtly marginalized through the very medium

through which it sought to engage with the world. A distinct sense of foreignness is being created to mark out the territory as being different from the rest of the country through the representation of its built form. Complex Goan house forms, with centuries of local and international influences, are now reduced to “Portuguese houses”.

The tourism industry plays no small part in creating and sustaining these stereotypes. The old quarters of Panjim are full of social media influencers literally barging into people’s homes to create that elusive award-winning Goa image.

As I begin my nascent architectural practise in Goa after many years abroad, I am frequently asked by clients to reproduce what they see as “Portuguese Architecture”. Maybe my name plays a part here.

I politely turn down these commissions and try and unpack for them the problems of this architectural style, and its relationship with mass consumptions. If they don’t get it, I direct them to the works of the local film industry that are also pushing back against this trend. IFFI helped speed Goa into the media age and there is no escape from it now.



*Inglorious Bustards*

# Maie-mogacho Yevkar

BY VIVEK MENEZES

The phoenix is said to rise and renew from the ashes of nothingness, but much the same is true about Team Peacock. Just in time for each edition of the International Film Festival of India in Goa, our peerlessly enthusiastic body of artists, photographers, writers and designers reassembles in ever-new cohorts, and works from early morning right into the wee hours to assemble the vibrant daily newspaper that you hold in your hands. We are proud to acknowledge the plaudits: there is nothing quite like this labour of love anywhere else, at any event of this type in the world.

This year, of course, is not like the others. We do look forward to the usual, spectacular banquet of cinema that will take us around the world like no other medium can manage, but there's also no avoiding our collective backdrop of sorrow and loss due to Covid-19.

Here in India's smallest state, it has been a giant bereavement: thousands have died. We cannot forget their loss, and salute their eternal memory. It is indeed surpassingly difficult to feel particularly festive in an *annus horribilis* of this magnitude, and we are well aware the entire world shares those sentiments. At this moment, our hearts are one like never before.

The great Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar says that "cinema can fill the empty spaces in your life and your loneliness." We will be looking for precisely that from his latest offering, *Parallel Mothers* (2021) when it plays at the festival multiplex (screen 3) at 7.30pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> – as part of a special IFFI 2021 section celebrating "masters of contemporary cinema" – as well as all the other movies we will have access to over the next eight days. In this way, we know that solace will come from unexpected sources, and unlikely origins. That is the power of great art.

In what seems like an aeon nearly lost in memory, the International Film Festival rooted itself permanently in Goa in 2004. At that juncture, the combination was contested and often described as confusing. There were those who were irate, and thundered about the prerequisite "cinema culture" being lacking here. Many believed it was an arrangement that could never last. Fast-forward to 2021, and all the naysaying appears ludicrous in hindsight. We

now know nothing in this country could ever work better than this festival in this heritage precinct, along this very historic waterfront. Everything fits, with an uncommon harmony that is all Panjim.

Dear delegates, we know you are here for onscreen delights, but please do take the time to consider your location. The river besides you is one of the great information superhighways in the history of globalization. For at least 2000 years, it carried people, goods, technology, and ideas to and from the subcontinent across the Arabian Sea, and after 1510 – with the abrupt arrival of the Portuguese, and their Estado da India – the scale of exchange exploded dramatically to Europe, the Americas, and East Asia. Just upriver from here, the remnants of the city now called Old Goa bear testament to extraordinary scale. By the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was twice the size of contemporary London or Paris.

Today we are used to perceiving Panjim as a tiny city of an inconsequentially small state at the very margins of the gargantuan polity of modern India, but in 1843 it was raised to the capital of the entire eastern maritime empire of Portugal with its writ extending from Mozambique to Macau to Timor. Many things happened here first: the first public library in Asia, the first school for girls in South Asia, the first medical school in India. There is much more. For just one example, every evening just downriver at Miramar, you can look across the bay to see the first lighthouse in Asia.

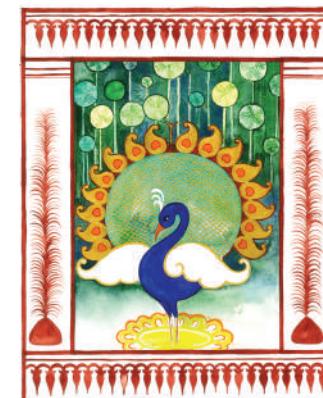
Wherever you are from in the world, we know you will feel at home in Panjim. There is so much that has changed in our world, but some of the most precious things have not. Welcome!

## Poem of the Day by Urvashi Bahuguna Women in Film

*You could be cut up or knees down in a basement, a lone figure on a long, lonely road, a woman last seen in broad daylight. Maybe, you're missing and you're found. But the people who lost you aren't the same anymore. The story needs something to not be the same anymore. Maybe you're never found. The people who lost you are haunted and we like to watch them through a window on our street, never breaking the surface for contact – that isn't the point of any of this. You're certainly not the point. You could be carrying a rucksack, underscoring your youthfulness, your joie de vivre still intact. You could look back. They like to make you look back, so you're looking us dead in the eye. We are so far gone; we just want to know who the killer is.*



Illustration by Nadia De Souza



This year's exclusive cover artworks for *The Peacock* are by Bhisaji Gadekar, an acclaimed multi-disciplinary artist with mastery over several forms. In today's beautiful image, he has drawn deep from the wellsprings of Goan creativity, from the

natural environment that nourishes us all, to the iconic *kaavi* mural tradition that is widely implemented across all cultural strands in the Konkan, and uses the very red lateritic soil of Goa as its only pigment.



20<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

उद्घाटन फ़िल्म की स्क्रीनिंग के लिए  
आप सादर आमंत्रित हैं

"द किंग ऑफ ऑल द वर्ल्ड"  
स्पेनिश / 95 मिनट  
कार्लोस सॉरा द्वारा निर्देशित

भारत का 52वां अंतर्राष्ट्रीय फ़िल्म समारोह, गोवा

20 नवंबर, 2021 सांय 7:00 बजे  
स्थान : ऑडिटोरियम 1, आइनॉक्स मल्टीप्लेक्स,  
पणजी, गोवा

You are cordially invited  
for the screening of the Opening Film

**"The King of all the World"**  
Spanish | 95 min.  
Directed by Carlos Saura

52<sup>nd</sup> INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA, GOA

On 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2021 at 7.00 p.m.  
Venue: Auditorium I, INOX Multiplex,  
Panaji, Goa

"52ND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA 2020  
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Govt. of India  
(November 20th - November 28th 2021)"

20th  
November  
2021

Opening ceremony followed by Opening Film 'The King Of All The World' at INOX (All screens)

**The King Of All The World  
(OP)**  
Dir: Carlos Saura  
Mexico, Spain | Spanish | 2021 | 95 min



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