

# THE PEACOCK

TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2018



Pradeep

## PEACOCK PICKS

**CAPERNAUM**  
INOX Screen I, 12 PM  
Dir: Nadine Labaki  
Lebanon  
123 min



**SUMMER**  
INOX Screen IV, 3.15 PM  
Dir: Kirill Serebrennikov  
Russia  
126 min

**IRO/HERE**  
INOX Screen IV, 9.45 AM  
Dir: Hadi Mohaghegh  
Iran  
82 min



**BEAUTY AND THE DOGS**  
INOX Screen III, 3 PM  
Dir: Kaouther Ben Hania  
Tunisia  
107 min



**ESG**  
ENTERTAINMENT SOCIETY OF GOA

BY KINJAL SETHIA

“The ecosystem of producing films is changing in a significant way. There is a paradigm shift away from the studios and towards digital platforms,” Bobby DeLeon told The Peacock, just a few hours after the American producer (he works at Infinitum Nihil, which was founded by Johnny Depp in 2004) arrived in Goa to attend the first-ever IFFI Producers Roundtable, today at 11am at Maquinez Palace.

DeLeon said, “Studios are making less and less movies. At the same time, consumers are getting

# THE HIT-MAKERS

younger. So essentially there are two factors working in favour of digital platforms. One, the studios are only interested in making a particular genre of commercial films, so filmmakers with unique and interesting stories are migrating to Netflix and Amazon Prime. And secondly, inefficiencies in marketing and distribution create overheads of 30-50%, which raise budgets. It is this mix of creative and financial reasons that guarantees that the

future holds promise for digital platforms.”

John Hart, producer of *You Can Count On Me* (2000) and *Revolutionary Road* (2008), traces the story of digital platforms to 2008, “The financial crisis broke the back of studios that were supporting independent cinema. That model was dead, as was the DVD business. 40% of their business was drained by piracy. And yet, while it may be fine to

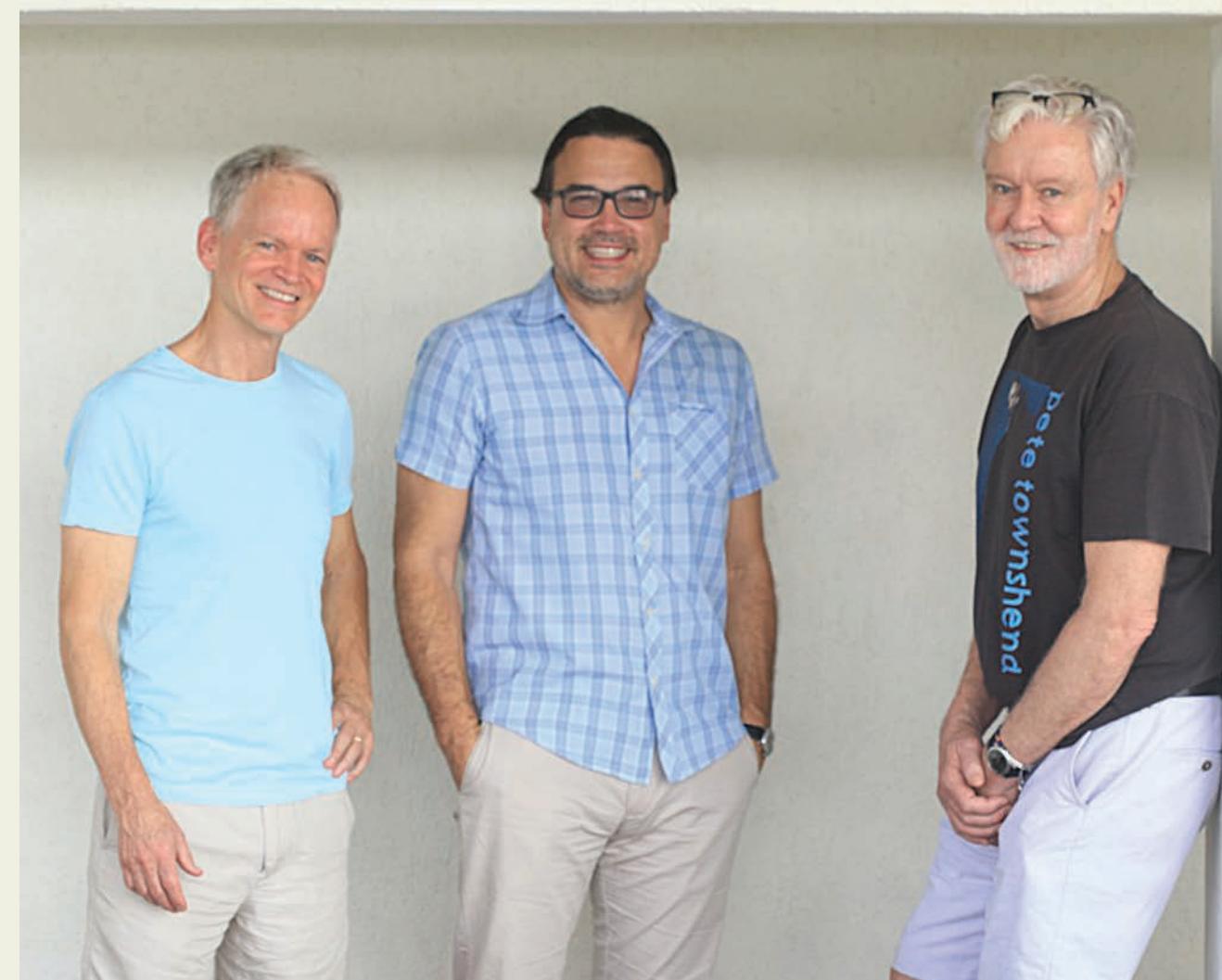
watch drama on small screens, audiences will still come to the theatres for a comedy or an epic.

Digital platforms cannot provide the experience that theatres do. I would rather watch a comedy with someone with whom I can share the laughs. The audiences will come back to the theatres, but one will have to figure out how and why. It might be presumptuous of me, but the audiences in America and India are not very intelligent. So the movies will have to bow to the largest denominator.”

William Fay produced huge global hits like *The Hangover* (2009), *300* (2006) and *Independence Day* (1996). He told us, “Netflix and Amazon Prime are disrupting the industry. The studios are trying to compete, but it has reduced the scope of what films will be picked for a theatrical release. There is so much content online that it is getting difficult to get audiences to go to the theatres. The film has to create a cultural event around itself to draw people to the cinema halls.”

Fay says that digital platforms have another side too, “They offer a lot of latitude. You can make a film for a particular audience, and it will be targeted towards them. It need not have mass appeal. A studio can make a movie for 20 million dollars and will have to spend an equal or larger amount on its marketing. But now, you can make a film for 10 or 15 million dollars, and Netflix will buy it if it suits a segment of its audience.”

The three producers emphasised that digital platforms did not diminish the significance of film festivals like IFFI. Fay says, “Film Festivals will remain important for certain types of films. Netflix buys films for its platform even at Cannes. So, the marketing aspect of film festivals will remain.”



The colourful maze installation in front of Inox is simply amazing and creates a great atmosphere for the festival.

Nanisha Barreto  
Student, Fatorda



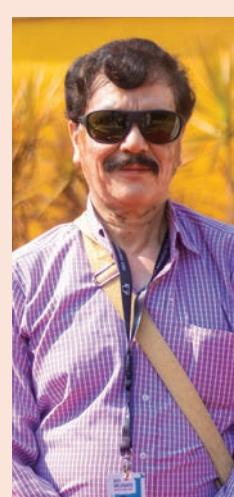
We got a lot of buyers this year because we put the ESG logo on all the art souvenirs.

Nehal Tivrekar  
Volunteer, Panjim



I take a course on film-making, so I am watching out for the director's perspective and the film's context. *Slut in a Good Way* (2018) showed a great character arc, which wasn't derogatory.

Nikita Nogar  
Student, Goa



The festival is calmer this time around. I'd like to have more variety of food stalls in the festival village though.

Nirupam Dam  
Executive,  
Chandigarh

# "MY FILMS ARE VERY INTERNATIONAL"

BY AILEEN CARNEIRO

**I**belong to the younger generation of filmmakers in Brazil. Our films have been recognised in all the major film festivals overseas. I'm also a part of the young women's generation fighting for gender equality," says the Brazilian director Beatriz Seigner. *Her Los Silencios* (2018) premiered at Cannes, and will play at the 49th International Film Festival of India today at 10am at INOX Screen II.

She told The Peacock her story tracks "a Colombian mother with two kids, who travels to Brazil to find out that the father of her children is living on an island filled with ghosts." Seigner wrote the script based on a story told by her childhood friend. To research further, she interviewed over 80 families who live on the border between Brazil and Colombia. *Los Silencios* takes place on an island in the Amazonian rainforest that appeared 20 years ago, remains submerged for four months of the year, and boasts of no infrastructure. It is not affiliated to any particular country's government, and is inhabited by people from all over the region - Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador.

"They say that my films are very international," says Seigner, "My first film *O Sonho Bollywoodiano* (2009) was shot here in India, and was the first Brazilian-Indian co-production." Earlier, when she was just 18 years old, Beatriz lived in

Odisha and studied classical dance from the legendary exponent of Odissi dance, Kelucharan Mohapatra. Is she excited to be back in India, this time in Goa? "It's lovely here," she smiles.

Brazil has been constantly in the news all over the world, as the hard-right Rio de Janeiro congressman Jair Bolsonaro won one of the most controversial, and politically-heated elections in the history of the giant South American country.

Seigner is very apprehensive about the change in leadership which, she fears, is not in favour of the arts, and potentially puts the film industry in danger. She says, "Right now, the film industry in Brazil is watching and waiting, because we really don't know what's going to happen. What we are passing through right now with the government is very scary. They are racist and misogynist, and we might lose our freedom of speech."

The outspoken female director also says, "We are still very much patriarchal in Brazil". But that's where the #MeToo movement has made an impact, especially in famous circles, "People are now more afraid of doing something, because they know their actions will have repercussions. It's very good but it is not enough. We still have to fight for more opportunities for women to be in charge, to be in positions where they can be creative, have access to funds, and be in charge of their own work."



**SHORT TAKES**

I like watching international movies because they are open-ended and leave space for interpretation. Film festivals give us a broad range of non-commercial films.

Archana Dessai  
Finance manager, Goa



I am searching for potential Indian directors for a film. A film festival functions as a cauldron for new ideas and I have watched a lot of Indian films at IFFI.

David Shapiro  
Producer,  
Los Angeles



I keep rushing from one venue to the other to introduce a film or a festival event. I find it funny when people ask me where I am from.

Eufemia Fernandes  
Anchor, Goa



*The Guilty* (2018) played with emotions, the set and our minds. I know how difficult it is to keep a viewer glued to the screen for 90 minutes.

Dhanesh Krishnan  
Cinematographer,  
Kerala

# "AFTER I RETIRE, I WILL DIRECT A MOVIE"

BY IMPANA KULKARNI

**“**When I was a kid, I had a box with a hole in which I put pictures. I would bring the kids to watch it, then make them pay. I would earn one penny per view. That gave me this dream which I still have in my heart, that one day I will direct a movie,” says Nejmeddine Lakhal, the affable Ambassador of Tunisia to India. The diplomat was at the 49th International Film Festival of India to promote his beautiful country – which stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Sahara desert - as an ideal location for Indian film-makers. He told The Peacock, “If I had to shoot a film, it would be in my hometown Kelibia, or my father’s town Touza.

Tunisia has already served as the backdrop to movies like *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace* (1999) and Roman Polanski's *Pirates* (1986). Lakhal recommends Indian directors to work with some of his own country's best, like Nouri Bouzid, Dora Bouchoucha, and Moufida Tlatli, saying “since October we have waived the requirement for a visa for Indians. We love Indian movies and want more Indians to come to our country. So please come!”

Like so many other residents of the countries of the Maghreb, Lakhal has always loved Indian cinema. He says his favourite is *Mother India* (1957), and readily belts out the classic, “Jaane to jaanena” from *Aa Gale Lag Jaa* (1973), saying, “Even if we don't understand the language, these movies are very easy to follow. Within five minutes you know what the story is about. We have about 10 film festivals in Tunisia now, and for years have wanted Indian participation in them. We finally got India as the country in focus for the Carthage

International Film Festival in November this year; and in the upcoming festival at Tozeur, we will be screening two Indian movies.”

Lakhal believes Indian music's greatness lies in the fact that it is shaped by the blend of cultures and civilisations, saying, “It is the same for Tunisia too. The Tunisian population is a blend of Phoenician, Roman, Byzantine, Arabic, Ottoman and European peoples. When your nation has such great civilizations, the music produced is always rich and diverse.” The Ambassador believes Tunisia is similar to India in terms of its cultural diversity, but he connects to Goa best of all, “Goa looks like my home town, a small Roman city, called Kelibia. It is also on the coast and has archeological and historical importance. This time I came for the festival, but next time I am going to come here on a personal visit to discover Goa.”

Lakhal was the only one amongst seven siblings who was drawn to cinema, and he's still firmly hooked. From the sandy beaches of Kelibia to his air-conditioned office at Delhi, where he believes “even 48 hours is not enough”, the Tunisian has come a long way. But there are still cinema dreams on the far horizon. “After I retire, I will direct a movie” he says.



I love the Film Village at Campal. IFFI 2017 was an amazing experience, so I have returned this year. I wish there were more Goan movies being shown.

Evelyn Colaco  
Student, Goa



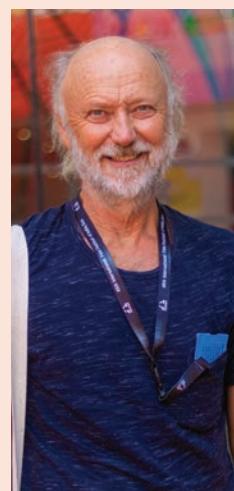
I got 10 regular south Indian customers every night. IFFI has been a great learning experience for me.

Dwayne Araujo  
IFFI intern, Vasco



I loved *Nagarkirtan* (2017) which focused on transsexuals. I prefer Indian movies based on true stories over Hollywood action movies, and have recommended the festival to friends.

Fiona Eldred  
Teacher, London



The system of the rush line is very good. People who haven't booked tickets in advance also get to watch movies.

Hakan Larsson  
Musician, Sweden

# MEMORIES OF BERGMAN

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

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**It was a privilege to have known him, and I say this because he was not a social person**

“Ingmar Bergman was a towering figure in the Swedish film industry, which made him hard to relate to for his contemporaries. He was not a guru, and he couldn't care less about being one. He was not interested in mentoring or supporting his juniors or peers, who were often frustrated about being forced to live in his shadows,” says journalist-critic Jannike Ahlund, who adds as an afterthought, “I believe that by raising the bar higher with his work, he motivated them to push themselves a bit more and that was his way of inspiring others”.

Ahlund represents the Swedish Film Institute and The Bergman Foundation at the 49th International Film Festival of India's centennial celebrations of the iconic film-maker's birth. The toweringly great director's legacy lives on among fans and filmmakers to this day, but Ahlund says the sentiment was different when

he was alive, and overwhelmingly dominated his country's film industry. She says, “Bergman took away the oxygen for everyone else who was trying their hand at the art, as he bagged most of the available government grants for his work, and this made many others in his generation resentful.”

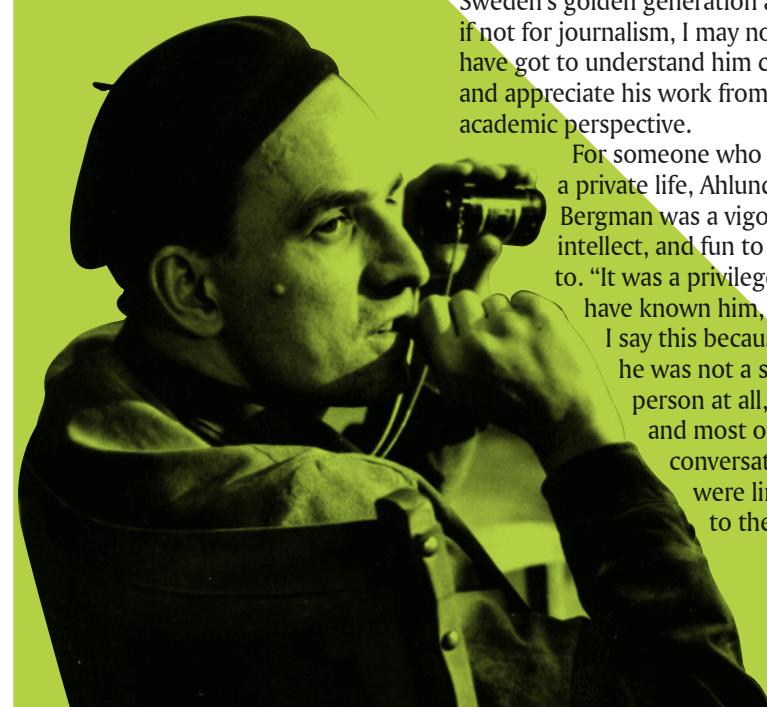
Ahlund admits to be a “late Bergman bloomer”, having turned into his devoted fan only after interviewing him as a journalist. That piece won her the ‘Golden Bugs’ (Guldebagen) award, which was handed over by the legend himself. She says, “He belonged to Sweden's golden generation and if not for journalism, I may not have got to understand him closely and appreciate his work from an academic perspective.

For someone who lived a private life, Ahlund says Bergman was a vigorous intellect, and fun to talk to. “It was a privilege to have known him, and I say this because he was not a social person at all, and most of his conversations were limited to the

telephone. When he died, many people came out claiming that they were his closest friends, and it was hard to believe because he didn't appear to have had friends, but the truth is that he kept everything really private, including his cinema. He had his own private theatre and never watched films in public.”

Ahlund has travelled to Istanbul, Uganda, London, Israel and now India as an ambassador and promoter of Bergman's work, which is being presented in over 200 events across the globe in this centennial year. Besides IFFI, there are another thousand screenings at different festivals and programmes. “I connected with *Autum Sonata* (1978) as it reminded me of my personal relationship with my own mother, but *Wild Strawberries* (1957) changed my perspective towards life, dreams and reality,” she says.

As an editor at the Swedish Film Institute, and former director of Sweden's Goteborg Film Festival which focussed on the Nordic film industry, Ahlund is keen on exploring and learning more about the role of women in film industries worldwide. “In the wake of the current whistle-blowing on sexual harassment at workplace, we have been educating stakeholders in our environs to speak up. Gender bias is huge in the film industry - look at the varying pay scales,” she says.



I liked the movie *A Translator* (2017) very much, because of the care and empathy shown in the protagonist.

Hella Holz  
Legal assistant,  
Germany



I have not missed a single year of IFFI and even take leave during this period. I love Chinese movies because of the landscapes, and Bengali films.

Hemant Sawant  
Street artist, Goa



Stalls selling traditional Goan products give visitors a taste of our culture and people can take back memories of IFFI. I am proud that Goa is home to IFFI.

Mitali Palekar  
Architect, Goa



Cinema is the best way to communicate, and *Iro* (2018) and *Suleiman Mountain* (2017) are great films. There were too many issues with the organisation of the festival.

Konstantin  
Ignatushchenko  
Journalist, Russia

# "THE CROP ISN'T APPRECIATED IN THE LAND IT IS GROWN"



BY KARISHMA D'MELLO

**II**t's not just about artists – it's about Goan artists", insists Dilesh Hazare, one of nine artists who came together to create an exhibit of portraits along the IFFI Mile exhibitions on the riverfront promenade opposite the heritage precinct headquarters of the International Film Festival of India. These are heartfelt tributes to some of Goa's legendary contributors to Indian and world cinema. He told The Peacock, "What we know of Goan artists is just the tip of the iceberg. I've learnt so many things during the course of this project and I hope our visitors learn something too."

Hazare says the nine artists had the idea to put together this special exhibition, but were given the go-ahead just fifteen days before IFFI 2018 began. But there are no traces of time crunch reflected in the many remarkable portraits set up along the river, executed with great skill and flair by Hazare and his colleagues, Harsha Mandurkar, Omkar Banaule, Mahesh Vengurlekar, Seeya Pandit, Deepak Chari, Sanjay Harmalkar, Laxman Chari and Shivaprasad Kinalekar.

"Portraits are a bit harder than most artistic styles. It is not enough

to get the technique right. The color schemes, rendition, anatomy, they all play an enormous role, but getting a personality across through the painting is something that takes years of practice" says Hazare, explaining that there is also a lot of pressure to create an accurate representation of a person.

Hazare is most proud of his depictions of Asha Bhosle and Varsha Usgaonkar, and he expresses admiration for the portrait of Chris Perry by Kinalekar, who told us, "We didn't choose our portraits, we were randomly assigned".

Both artists said they enjoy observing visitors to their exhibition from the sidelines. Hazare says, "We enjoy observing their body language in response to the art. You can tell when something catches their eye; they immediately stop and pay attention to it. It's great to observe their curiosity, when they do not recognize someone and have to stop to read through the bios attached adjacent to the portrait. They're learning about Goan artists and that's what we want - for delegates, invitees and the rest of the public to take back a bit of Goa with them".

Kinalekar added, "There is no substitute for a human touch. No machine can create the effect of a paintbrush across a canvas."

The artists say that genuine interest isn't always apparent. More often

than not, the portraits are on the receiving end of cursory glances and casual nonchalance, as onlookers stroll past with an uninterested air. Hazare quotes a common saying in Marathi, that he describes as an accurate representation of the status of Goan art. It means "The crop isn't appreciated in the land it is grown".

Kinalekar explains that with the growth of the film industry in Goa, there are better opportunities for artists. "The Goan film industry is really beginning to stand on its own", he says, "Earlier, if anyone wanted to make a film, they would have to go to Bombay or Delhi to pursue their careers. Now we have our own homegrown environment." Projects like IFFI and Serendipity Arts Festival also create an incredible platform for upcoming talent to step up and create something of their own.

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# FROM THE WATERFRONT

## LEARNING KONKANI FROM FILMS

BY CHRYSELLE D'SILVA DIAS

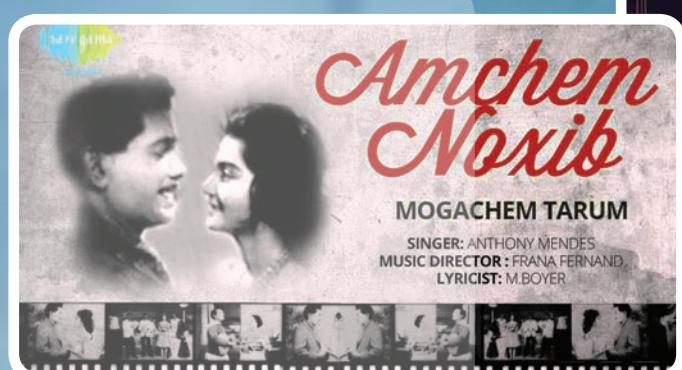
ike all languages, Konkani has nuances that only someone who is familiar with it can spot. I grew up in Mumbai, and learned to speak Konkani only during summers at my grandmother's sprawling rural farm on the outskirts of Mangalore. When I moved to Goa, my Konkani (mixed with Marathi, in which I used to be fluent) was already passable. There are some however, who could immediately spot that I am not a 'native' Goan Konkani speaker. My local vegetable vendor is one such person. No matter how much I speak with her in Konkani, she replies in Hindi, proving that she knows I am "not from here". Her husband, however, has no such hang-ups and happily converses with me in Konkani. Ironically, she is originally from Karnataka so her posturing on being the 'insider' here is interesting, and raises many thoughts about language and the eternal "Who is a Goan?" question.

Goan Konkani is spoken very differently, depending on where you come from. 'Hindi' Konkani is different from 'Catholic' Konkani. The former has many more Marathi and Sanskrit words in it, and is also the version our children study in school, in the Devanagari script.

Let it suffice to say that this is a hurdle for many children who speak different Konkanis at home. My son, now nine, and his classmates have a daily battle trying to figure out words that make no sense to them (or us). What does foster an interest in the language, interestingly, is the singing competitions in Konkani where enthusiastic renditions of film songs make the barriers less daunting. Fun fact: the dreamy 'Molbhailo dhou' from the classic *Amchem Noxicib* (1963) is one of the most popular songs in the school competition, and gets sung by multiple participants each year.

You don't need to know a language to enjoy a film, although it helps. Konkani films are not limited to Goa. They have been produced in Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra as well. And they have a wide viewership, it's not just in Goa, Mangalore or Mumbai that they are eagerly awaited but also in the Gulf, Canada, North America, the UK and Europe.

The first Konkani feature film was *Mogacho Anvddo* (1950). To mark this historical milestone, 24 April 1950 is celebrated as Konkani Cinema Day. Will there be a Konkani presence at next year's International Film Festival of India? I hope so, and in the meantime, I'll be happily sifting through old Konkani songs looking for something soulful and melodious for my son to sing.



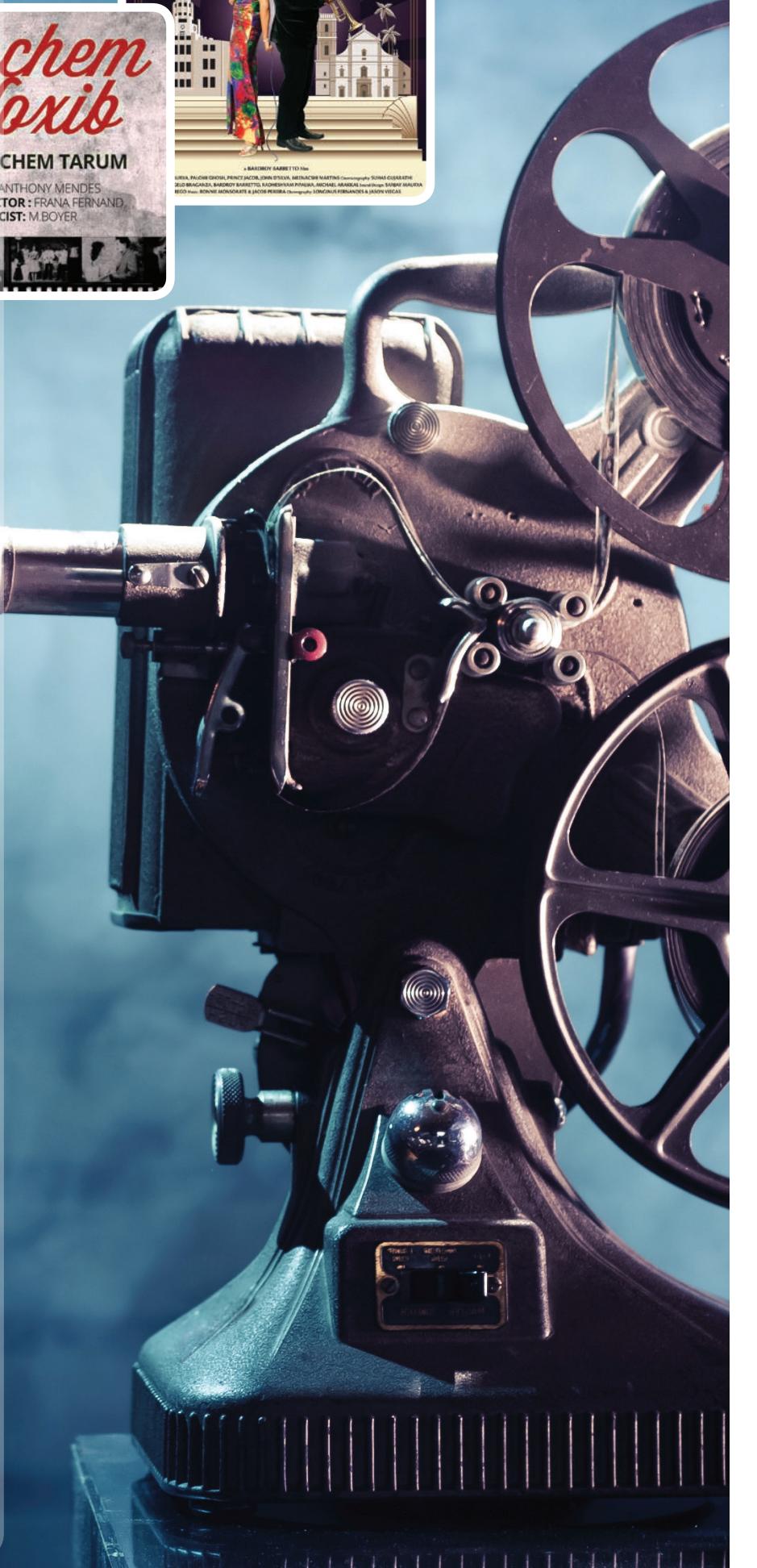
The afore-mentioned *Amchem Noxicib* (featuring the beloved duo Rita Lobo and C. Alvares) and *Nirmonn* (1966) were super-hits. The latter won two national awards and its songs continue to remain popular.

The number of Konkani films has steadily grown in the last few decades with some exceptional movies being produced for a larger audience. *Bhuierantlo Munis* (1977) was produced by the legendary Chris Perry and Tony Coutinho. It was the first Konkani colour film, and was based on the novel 'The Count of Monte Cristo' by Alexandre Dumas. *Aleesha* (2004), directed by Rajendra Talak, won a national award for its story on Goa's beleaguered mining belt and the people that inhabit it.

Laxmikant Shetgaonkar's multiple award-winning *Paltadacho Munis* (2009) was produced by NFDC. Rajendra Talak's *O Maria* (2011) was the most commercially successful Konkani film, and Bardroy Baretto's *Nachom-ia Kumpasar* (2015) - a dazzling biopic on the troubled yet creatively fertile partnership between the giant of Konkani popular, jazz and film music Chris Perry and his muse, the feisty Lorna Cordeiro - is still running to packed houses years after its release. Its soundtrack was recently released, and is flying off the shelves. Miransha Naik's debut feature *Juze* (2016) was another Film Bazaar product which received critical acclaim for its portrayal of migrant workers and sexual exploitation.

I'm sharpening my Konkani by watching new and old films on YouTube, and in the cinema, and reading up on them in previous year's editions of The Peacock.

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# "INDIA MAY OVERTAKE FRANCE IN A FEW YEARS"



BY SUNAINA MENEZES

**“**I was one of the pioneers in co-production. It was the early 1990s, and the idea was unexplored at the time, but fortunately I've been successful. I set my sail and there was a good wind,” says Oscar winning producer, Marc Baschet, whose long connections to India include producing *The Lunchbox* (2013), which controversially lost out on becoming India's nomination for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. He told The Peacock, “I produced my first movie in India 44 years ago, on the Baul musicians. I was fascinated by them. They were the ideal subjects to shoot: singing, travelling, leading a good life. I love that.”

“The Oscars foreign language category presents a great opportunity for filmmakers,” says Baschet, whose *No Man's Land* took home that Academy Award in 2001. “When we won, it was against the Indian film *Lagaan* (2001), and the French film *Amelie* (2001), which was very popular world-wide, so it came as a surprise. We had been previously nominated for *Before the Rain* (1994) but didn't win, which is where chance comes into play.”

A gift kick-started Baschet's love for films and filmmaking when he was twelve years-old. He says, “My mother gave me a Super 8mm camera. There were no girls with us, so I dressed up my brother and cousins as females so that we could shoot a spy love story.” Now however, “I've been in the industry for 44 years, and have seen many things. The awards can change your life. You may not become well-known, but you are recognisable. People realise that you are good at your job, and so you get hold of great content and the best people to work with. The downside is that people

are always asking for favours, but luckily I am not a big star. I don't want to be famous because I like being able to walk in the street. There is no privacy for celebrities.”

Baschet says, “Bollywood films are very successful in India. Since the population is so large, a filmmaker can earn enough from the film within the country itself, so it can make sense to cater solely to an Indian audience. But when we made *The Lunchbox*, we hoped to do the exact opposite, to make an Indian film that is exportable to all countries. We have been successful in that sense. There are several different ways to view a country, and our movie showcases one side. On French TV, it is the negative aspects about India that are highlighted: the kids in the street, the poverty. We need to make films depicting the actual reality of India. You cannot explain it, but you can show the viewers that it is possible for people in India to be happy. Personally, I think India is a great country, and may even overtake France in a few years.”

“There are no limitations to freedom of expression,” says Baschet, “because I love to do things that are prohibited. In the 1970s, one of the first films I produced was about same-sex relationships. At the time it was forbidden in France, and could earn a fine. I released the film anyway and all the newspaper said ‘Marc, you are right, let's talk about it. My latest film *Lihaaf* (2018) isn't as provocative, but has still stirred up some controversy in India.”(Note: *Lihaaf* is based on an Urdu short story by the great Ismat Chughtai, about female characters who refuse to conceal their sexual desires.)

Baschet says, “Who cares about authorities, as long as you don't go to jail, and do things that are important for society. The world needs artists and filmmakers to say what needs to be said. Our society has to evolve, little by little, and that is why we are here, to make that evolution possible. Today, same-sex relationships are legal in France, and you can even get married. India will get there soon, because it is obvious that it must happen. Society changes constantly and one has to keep up with it.”

## SHORT TAKES



Apart from movies, IFFI offers visitors a full experience, including opportunities to eat, buy merchandise and get their portraits done.

Sonika Lotlikar  
Programming head, Goa



IFFI showcases everything that is not mainstream, and our brewing company strives to be non-conformist, so this is the first event we decided to cover after the company was launched.

Shashank  
Kulkarni  
Brewer, Delhi



I like IFFI this year because it is not very crowded and there is enough mental and physical space to relax and have a good time.

Uttara Dam  
Film enthusiast,  
Chandigarh



For one woman I met, this festival meant buying a Goan Kunbi sari. She begged the guard to let her in just so she could buy it.

Sumit Gupta  
Journalist,  
Mumbai

BY AAKASH CHHABRA

"It is my first visit to Goa. But not this country. I have some fabulous stories of India from last century," says Georges Dupont, director general of the International Council of Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication (ICFT) in Paris, which collaborates with the International Film Festival of India every year to present the Gandhi Medal to films which promote 'tolerance, intercultural dialogues and culture of peace'. Dupont is on the award jury. He sat down with The Peacock to tell us more about his job.

#### What does the ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal represent?

Around 1994-95, UNESCO founded two medals of honour: The Fellini medal in memory of Italian maestro filmmaker Federico Fellini who passed away in 1993, and to also commemorate the centenary of cinema, and the Gandhi medal to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's 125th birth anniversary. These medals are presented at IFFI to films which confront challenges encountered by post-modern societies. Like yesterday we saw a film *The Rib* (2018) by Zhang Wei, which reflects on the hardships faced by the transsexual community in China. So, the films should not only be of great aesthetic value, but they should be contemplative and socially conscious of present times. They have to be local but at the same time universal, which makes them relevant to societies worldwide. Last year, *Beats Per Minute* (2017), which is about an AIDS activist group in Paris won the Grand Prix at Cannes. And it was equally loved here. It won the Golden Peacock.

#### How is the selection of films made?

We trust the proficient IFFI jury to invite entries for films along the lines of UNESCO's principles of peace building and social inclusiveness. These films are then shortlisted for competition. An independent jury from ICFT watches all, and selects the winner. These films do not necessarily have to be features. They can be documentaries, animation, or avant-garde films.

#### What would you like to say about this year's selections?

There is a wild diversity in our category. You have films from places like Syria, China, Colombia, Lebanon, and Slovakia. All of them are unique in their language. Except for two, all films are unique

# THE GANDHI MEDAL

in terms of their country of origin. And even these two are very different in their approach: one is a film from Tamil Nadu and the other is from Ladakh. Every year this category offers a well-represented bulk of films from around the world. And it is not very different this year.

A lot of these have already been well-received at other forums. So, there are not many new films in the category?

ICFT intends to promote young and independent filmmakers. Even though some of these films are loved by the critics at various film festivals globally, they are not very commercial in their nature. And most of them are not made with the intentions of garnering huge profits. They are very personal in nature. They are like social statements of disapproval from the prevalent norms. They are demands of equal rights and inclusiveness. So, they are sociologically important in their nature and have to be presented to a wider audience.

We do not have to restrict ourselves to just avant-garde films or new films. If a mainstream film or a film already well-received is along such lines, we are happy to accept them. The seventh art is an expensive art. And we have to understand that. As filmmakers we cannot choose to not be bothered by the returns of the investments made on the films. The uncertainty always looms. And for independent filmmakers, the risk is even higher. For them, avenues such as IFFI are a big relief. We are very happy to accept such films.

#### What is your pick for this year's winner?

Well that's still in the talks. It's still too early to share.



I want to watch *Daughter of Mine* (2018) since it is Italian. It took three hours for us to register.



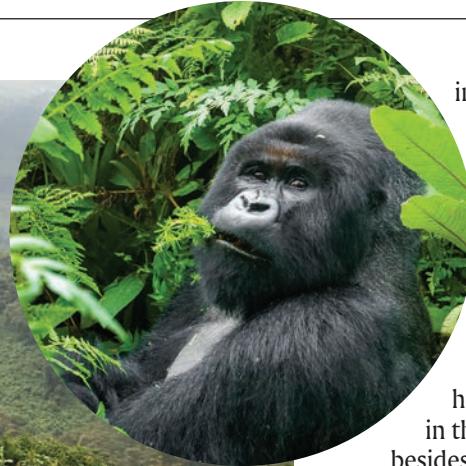
I met a lot more people here at the festival than I do at the hotel, and they were all well-behaved.



I liked the movies in the kaleidoscope section, especially the non-stereotypical treatment in *Yomeddine* (2018).



The bean bags are very helpful. I got a nice afternoon nap yesterday between movies.



PHOTOS BY SANDESH KADUR

# HEALING AFTER WAR

BY NANDINI DIAS VELHO

**J**oël Karekezi's *The Mercy of the Jungle* (2018) – which played at IFFI 2018 on 23rd November - explores how two Congolese soldiers survive, and reflect upon their lives when lost in the dense jungles of Central Africa. Unfortunately, the official invitation to attend the festival came too late for him to attend his own screening, but nonetheless the young Rwandan director was happy to fly down from Kigali to Goa to visit India for the first time.

There is an Indian connection to the beginning of Karekezi's cinema career. In 2009, he graduated from Mira Nair's Uganda-based Maisha Film Lab, which is a non-profit training initiative for emerging East African filmmakers, encompassing courses in film production, screenwriting, directing, producing, cinematography, editing, sound recording, and acting. His first feature film *Imbabazi* (2013) was about whether forgiveness was ever possible in the aftermath of violence in wartime. Karekezi told The Peacock "it is a deeply personal question. I was myself only eight years old when my father was murdered in the genocide." (Note: in the span of four months in 1994, an estimated one million Rwandans were killed by armed mobs of Hutus, including around 70% of the Tutsi population).

Apart from Nair, Karekezi's other main inspirations are the Mauritanian director Abderrahmane Sissako's *Timbuktu* (2014) and Terrence Malick's *The Thin*

*Red Line* (1998), but he says he has his own unique voice.

After graduation, the Rwandan produced his first feature, that was funded by money collected in small amounts from his friends and peers. *Imbabazi* (2013) was well-received by international festivals, and its success ensured *The Mercy of the Jungle* could be made in collaboration with production houses from overseas. This new film has already won the most promising audio-visual project at the Durban Film Mart in South Africa, and when it was screened in Rwanda its director says it was warmly received by his own people, who were proud and happy he had directed it.

Karekezi says the situation in Rwanda has dramatically improved over the last decade, and its people have started to reconcile their differences.

To learn more about the current scenario, The Peacock contacted Sandesh Kadur, the

award-winning wildlife filmmaker, whose most recent work includes BBC's *Planet Earth II*. He most recently visited Rwanda in 2016, to collect footage in the Volcanoes National Park, famously home to most of the country's population of endangered mountain gorillas." He says it's safe to visit these days, and also told us that watching a gorilla in the wild for the first time was an

incredibly surreal experience, "nothing prepares you for the feeling of connection and oneness as you sit watching them." However, like many other large and charismatic species, gorillas have suffered immense collateral damage in the ethnic conflicts that have remained endemic in their habitats for decades, besides being continually hunted for meat and for illegal wildlife trade.

Dr. Joshua Daskin's doctoral thesis from Princeton University investigated how war across 19 African countries affected 30 large mammal species. He found the more frequent the conflict, the more severe the declines of animal populations. But although wildlife populations dwindle in conflict zones, the animals rarely went extinct, suggesting that working towards conservation during conflict, and immediately after a cease-fire are interesting opportunities for restoration.

Daskin told The Peacock, "Akagera National Park in Rwanda suffered very heavy wildlife declines and deforestation during the Rwandan genocide, but the efforts thereafter demonstrate an important example of post-war recovery and restoration."

So we know that wildlife recovers, but the lingering question remains: can people heal and recover after a war? Has Karekezi managed to forgive the killers of his father, even though no one has apologized to him, and he is entirely unaware of their identity?

The young Rwandan thought for a bit, then told us we all need to understand and accept our differences to live together in peace. "Forgiveness is necessary for the better future of our children"

Nandini Dias Velho is an award-winning wildlife biologist.



# HAS DIGITAL KILLED THE MOVIE CRITIC?

BY APURVA ASRANI

**T**oday everyone is a critic. The day a new film releases, patrons inside cinema halls play fastest finger first to 'live tweet' their reviews. So if the movie critic has to stay relevant, then he or she must have her review out early enough to avoid getting buried under the plethora of opinions that proliferate online. The critic must therefore clamour for an invite to a preview screening, often held just a day before the release, and then rush to the laptop to write a speedy review.

Did the critic have enough time to think about the film? Or get a chance to sleep over it, and wake up to a 'settled' opinion? Was the critic able to re-read and edit the piece to find a balanced view? In most cases, I would think not. And if anyone or anything suffers in this scenario—it is the film. A work of art that took years to conceive, write, shoot, edit and score becomes something that is judged within minutes of being watched.

When filmmaker Stanley Kubrick was asked if he ever learned anything about his work from film critics, he said "No. To see a film once and write a review is an absurdity. Yet very few critics ever see a film twice or write about films from a leisurely, thoughtful perspective. The reviews that distinguish most critics, unfortunately, are those slam-bang pans which are easy to write, and fun to write, and absolutely useless. There's not much in a critic showing off how clever he is at writing silly, supercilious gags about something he hates."

I'm sure many critics must begin thinking up their review while still watching the film. If one were to peek inside their minds, one might hear rapidly changing thoughts, "Great opening: four stars. No, the actor is weak, so three. But the direction is quite slick, so I'll go with three and a half. Too stretched; maybe only two and a half stars!"

Come Friday, when a new film releases, its PR machinery goes into overdrive to ensure a 'positive buzz'. There is so much content out there, and if a film has to stand out in the noise, well, it is expected to generate even more noise. Positive tweets from viewers are rewarded by a retweet from the stars headlining the film, and this can result in hundreds of retweets from their fans. But if you dissed the film, you'll probably feel

pretty lonely, with zero action on your tweet.

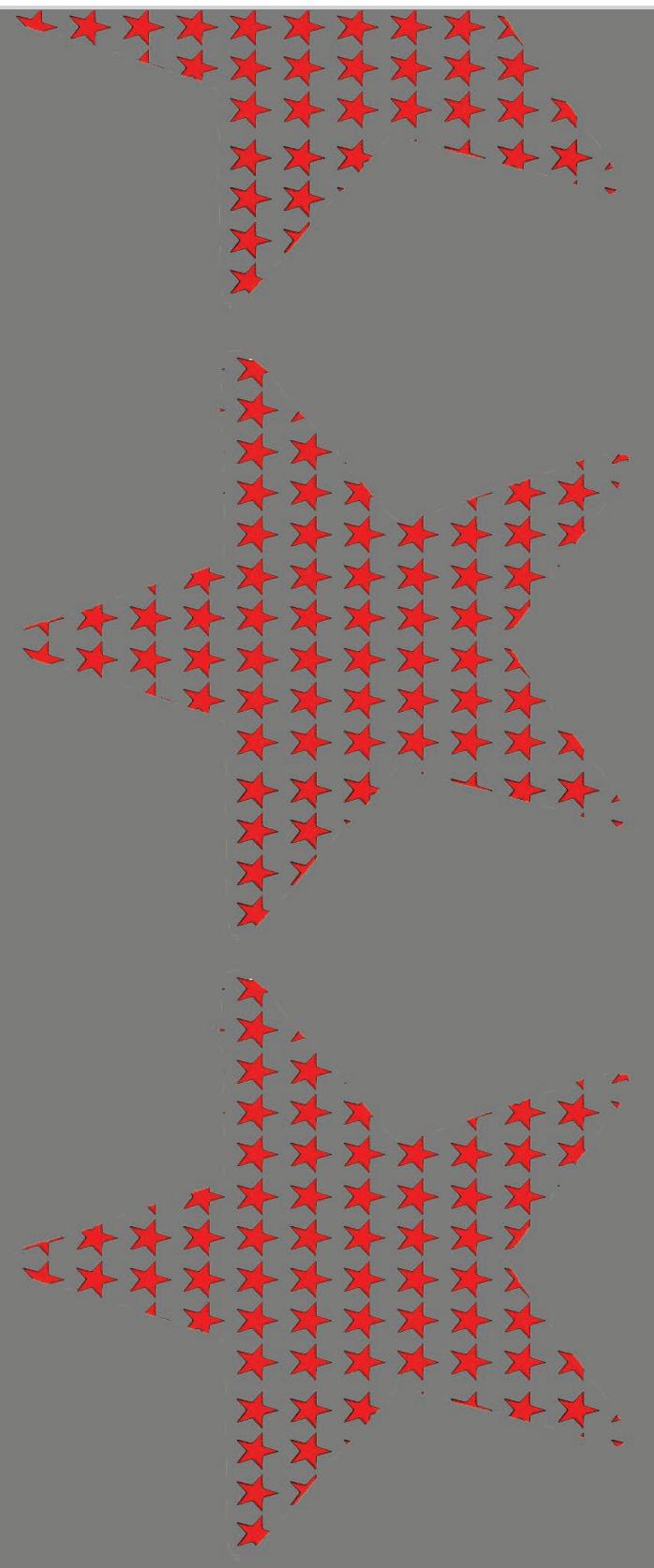
Have you noticed how, within a day of its release, the film's publicity material will carry positive ratings from select critics who of course said good things? This advertising masquerading as genuine reviews is published in leading newspapers, and the name of the critic travels to every household in the country. Fame isn't such a bad reward is it? I even know of instances where the PR team will text a critic while still in the theatre, to request a one-liner review with a rating. Why wait till you've even written the review? The ad has to go to print—do you want to be famous or not?

Some critics wake up to find their newspaper changed their rating to a more favourable one. The paper relies on ad-spend, and many studios pay big money to promote their films. Terrible reviews could mean that the rival paper gets the full page ad. And if the critic continues to review unfavourably, they will soon be given the boot. Maybe that's why you will often find critics reviewing the big studio's brain-dead, big release in the most forgiving tones, like "It's quite silly, the actors ham and the script is shallow, but it's so much fun. Just leave your brains at home and watch it." How one can surgically remove a live brain just before a screening is still a mystery to me.

Another phenomenon that plagues many of our critics is that they have to play reporters too. Which means that to keep their job they are expected to get the inside stories from the sets of a film, and even interview its actors. Imagine the plight of the reviewer; On one hand you pull up an actor for not doing a good job, and on the other you call him to request an interview. There is little chance that the reviewer will be obliged; unless of course she/he promises to present good to moderate views about the actor.

Todays critics are forced to make alliances with film producers and directors, hoping to take their writing to the screen and out of this saturated rut. Needless to say, this is an absolute conflict of interest. Once I was nominated for a screenwriting award and there was a renowned film critic sitting near me, nominated for the same award. I won, and the critic was obviously crushed. I soon noticed that that critic just stopped reviewing my films after that.

I often wonder if the digital age is slowly killing the movie critic.



Apurva Asrani is a National Award winning filmmaker, film editor and screenwriter based in Mumbai, India. He has a multimedia body of work in film, television and theatre. He is best known for editing films like *Satya* (1998) and *Shahid* (2013), and for writing the acclaimed human rights drama *Aligarh* (2016).



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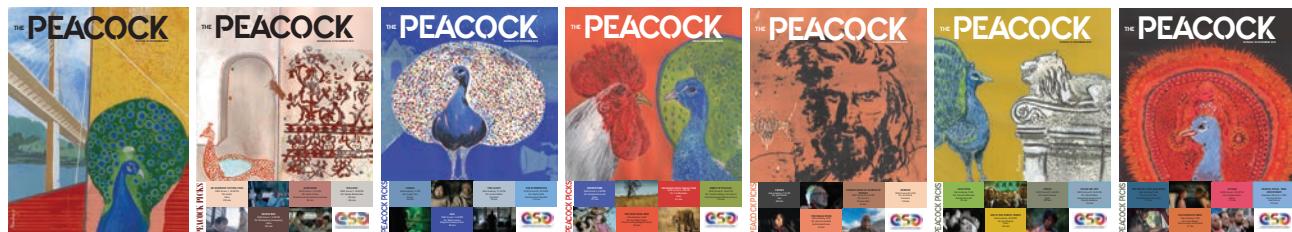
## TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

## PRESS CONFERENCES (Venue: Press Briefing Room)

- SEALED LIPS cast and crew at 10am
- Delegates of Rome Film Festival at 12 noon
- World Panorama at 3pm

## "MAHATMA ON CELLULOID" (Venue: Kala Academy)

- Bhavanjali - A Shraddhanjali to Bapu through Bhajans - 5:15 PM
- Movie Screening - Gandhi, My Father Dir: Feroz Abbas Khan, Hindi at 1:30 PM



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

INOX Screen I	INOX Screen II	INOX Screen III	INOX Screen IV	KALA ACADEMY	MAQUINEZ PALACE I	MAQUINEZ PALACE II
G11 09:30 AM <b>AYKA (FK)</b> Dir: Sergey Dvortsevoy Russia/Germany/Poland Kazakhstan/2018/100 min	G21 10:00 AM <b>LOS SILENCIOS (ICFT)</b> Dir: Beatriz Seigner Brazil/France/Columbia 2018/88 mins	G31 09:15 AM <b>MUG (WP)</b> Dir: Małgorzata szumowska Poland/2018/91 min	G41 09:45 AM <b>IRO/HERE (IC)</b> Dir:Hadi Mohaghegh Iran/2018/ 82 min	G51 09:00 AM <b>THE MANSlayer/THE VIRGIN/THE SHADOW (IC)</b> Dir: Sulev Keedus Estonia, Lithuania / 2017/140 min	G61 09:00 AM. <b>GRASS (FK)</b> Dir: Sang-soo Hong South Korea/ 2018/66 min	G71 09:30 AM <b>RANCHI DIARIES (SF)</b> Dir: Sattwik Mohanty India/2018/93 min
G12 12:00 PM <b>CAPERNAUM (ICFT)</b> Dir: Nadine Labaki Lebanon/2018/123 min	G22 01:00 PM * NAACH BHIKHARI NAACH (IP) Dir: Jainendra Dost & Shilpi Gulati Bhojpuri/ 72 mins	G32 12:00 PM <b>THE GENTLE INDIFFERENCE OF THE WORLD (WP)</b> Dir: Adilkhan Yerzhanov Kazakhstan/France/2018/ 100min	G42 12:45 PM <b>VISION (FK)</b> Dir: Naomi Kawase Japan/France/2018/110 min	G52 12:30 PM <b>THE LOAD (DC)</b> Dir: Ognjen Glavonić Serbia, France, Croatia Iran, Qatar / 2018/98 min	G62 11:00 AM - 01:00 PM Panel Discussion "MAKING CO PRODUCTIONS WORK" with John Hart William Fay Bobby De Leon Rockline Venkatesh Alta Arvind Bianca Goodloe Christopher Tillman	G72 12:00 PM <b>SARABAND (RETRO)</b> Dir: Ingmar Bergman Sweden/2003/107 min
G13 02:45 PM <b>THE IMAGE BOOK (FK)</b> Dir: Jean luc Godard Switzerland/France/ 2018/84 min	G23 03:30 PM * SILENT SCREAM (IP) Dir: Prasanna Ponde Marathi/ 29 mins *YES, I AM MAULI (IP) Dir: Suhas Jahagirdar Marathi/ 38 mins	G33 03:00 PM. <b>BEAUTY AND THE DOGS (SP TUNISIA)</b> Dir: Kaouther Ben Hania India/2018/107 min	G43 03:15 PM <b>SUMMER (FK)</b> Dir: Kirill Serebrennikov Russia/2018/126 min	G53 03:00 PM. <b>A FAMILY TOUR (IC)</b> Dir: Liang Ying Taiwan   Hong Kong   Singapore   Malaysia/2018/107 minnd /2018/97 min	G63 03:00 PM - 05:00 PM <b>MASTERCLASS "NUANCES OF INSPIRATIONAL CINEMA"</b> RAKEYSH OMPRAKASH MEHRA	G73 03:30 PM <b>BIRDS OF PASSAGE (WP)</b> Dir:Marcos Loayza Bolivia/Uruguay/2018/87 min
G14 05:30 PM <b>COLD WAR (FK)</b> Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski Poland/France/UK /2018/ 85 min	G24 06:00 PM <b>MAHANATI (IP)</b> Dir: Nagashwin Telugu/ 176 mins	G34 05:30 PM <b>VOLCANO (DC)</b> Dir: Roman Bondarchuk Ukraine/Germany/2018/ 106 min	G44 05:45 PM <b>TOUCH ME NOT (FK)</b> Dir: Adina Pintile Romania   Germany   Czech Republic   Bulgaria   France/ 2018/125 min	G54 05:30 PM - 07:30 PM Masterclass "MASTER CLASS WITH MR. INDIA" Anil Kapoor Moderator Rhea Kapoor	G64 06:15 PM <b>THE BUBBLE (CF)</b> Dir: Eytan Fox Israel/2006/117 mins	G74 06:00 PM <b>KAZANTZAKIS (WP)</b> Dir: Yannis Smaragdis Greece/2017/120 min
G15 07:45 PM <b>THE WILD PEAR TREE (FK)</b> Dir: Nuri Bilge ceylon Turkey/2018/188 min	G25 09:30 PM <b>TO LET (DC)</b> Dir: Chezhiyan Ra Tamil/ 99 mins	G35 08:15 PM <b>VAN GOGHS (IC)</b> Dir: Sergey Livnev Russia/2018/103 min	G45 08:15 PM <b>BHAYANAKAM (IC)</b> Dir: Jayaraj Malayalam/ 123 mins	G55 08:00 PM <b>3 FACES (FK)</b> Dir: Jafar Panahi Iran/2018/100 min	G65 09:00 PM <b>THE INTERPRETER (ICFT)</b> Dir: Martin Šulík Slovakia, Czech Repub- lic, Austria/German, Slovak/ 103 mins	G75 08:30 PM <b>THE MERCY OF THE JUNGLE (ICFT)</b> Dir: Joel Karekezi Belgium, France, Rwandan- da, Germany/French, Swahili/ 91 mins
G16 11:15 PM <b>ASH IS PUREST WHITE (FK)</b> Dir: Zia Zhang Ke China/2018/150 min	G26 11:30 PM <b>PERANBU (IP)</b> Dir: Ram India/Tamil/148 mins	G36 10:45 PM <b>LITTLE TICKLES (WP)</b> Dir: Mathew Cullen UK/USA/2018/118 min		G56 10:30 PM <b>53 WARS (IC)</b> Dir: Ewa Bukowska Poland/2018/79 min		

27th November 2018



The 49th International Film Festival of India celebrates cinema in all its mindboggling variety: 222 movies from 67 countries. Out of these 16 are their country's official entry for the upcoming Academy Award for Foreign Language Film.

But the diversity isn't merely geographical, there is an historical element to it as well. The Ingmar Bergman retrospective screened 8 films, most of which played in pristine black and white. In today's striking monochromatic cover painting, Pradeep Naik pays nostalgic tribute to classic cinema around the world before the advent of Technicolor.