

THE

# PEACOCK

THURSDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2022





## Our Films, Their Films

Illustration by Govit Morajkar

We all know Satyajit Ray. But very few know him by his other name, Manikda. As a young man he was fondly called *Manik* (Jewel) by his family. His inner circles continued to call him Manikda. The whole world of cinema is in awe of the legendary director who has 36 films to his credit, ranging from feature films and documentaries to short films. He was also known as an illustrator, calligrapher, graphic designer, and film critic. But he is hardly known for his involvement in the field of literature. Ray's oeuvre of 50 books written in Bangla cannot be considered insignificant. He wrote a number of short stories and novels that were mainly thrillers and paranormal. His characters varied from women in distress and men on the margins to the extra terrestrial and supernatural. In his autobiography *Jakhan Choto Chilam* he writes about his childhood memories. It is true that Satyajit Ray wrote mostly in his mother tongue Bangla, but he also wrote in English. Some of his stories have been translated by the filmmaker himself.

Ray's writings have left a deep impact on his readers. Two of the characters created by Satyajitda that became very popular among the Bengali readership were Feluda the sleuth and Prof. Shanku, the scientist and inventor. The interesting style in which Ray creates mysteries and then goes on to solve them may remind readers of the famous suspense thrillers of Alfred Hitchcock. Satyajitda later went on to create yet another character Tarini Khuro (Uncle

Tarini) and wrote about 15 stories around him. However, his essays on cinema became very popular as collections of these essays were published both nationally and internationally.

I would like to discuss one book by Ray that is very relevant today as we are gathered here for the International Film Festival of India, and that is *Our Films, Their Films*. The title itself speaks of the kind of content within the book. It is a collection of select short articles written by the film critic who knew the world of cinema so very well. Ray airs his views on some of the legendary personalities like Charlie Chaplin, about whom he wrote, "If there is one name which can be said to symbolize the cinema, it is Charlie Chaplin." Chaplin shall live in the hearts

of the film lovers even if the films cease to exist, he further said. Ray also wrote about how he wanted to make a film on Beethoven. He expressed his admiration and reverence for Beethoven's music, right from his days at college. The book also speaks about the experimental art films in India led by great Indian filmmakers like Ritwik Ghatak, M.S.Sathyu, Shyam Benegal, Mani Kaul, and others. Hollywood director John Ford and Japanese filmmaker and painter Akira Kurosawa are fondly discussed from his perspective. He has also expressed his reflections on the Neorealism that evolved in Italian films. Ray has penned

his personal interactions with and his views of the eminent film personalities he met over a period of 28 years. How *their films* made him mull over and assess *our own*. The book carries some notes, observations, and excerpts from his diary. It assumes more importance today for us at IFFI, as we view movies from various countries, including those made in our own country. For nine days here we get fabulous opportunities to compare and evaluate them. Reading *Our Films, Their Films* provides us an insight to appreciate and judge these films, both theirs and ours.

### Pragyaverse

Both Sides of the Blade—A Pandemic Love Story

man meets woman  
barricaded from bacteria  
eyes, eyes, it's all they see  
man leaves wife to be with woman  
woman leaves lover to be with man  
ex-lover and man become business partners  
woman grows lonely, asks too many questions  
woman and man and ex-lover meet  
man says, *you didn't even look at me*  
woman says, *i was never free*  
inside, everything cracks  
outside, the masks stay put

Poem of the Day by Pragya Bhagat

# In Depth with Mayor Monserrate

Panjim is chock-a-block with IFFI delegates. To learn about the festival's impact on the city, Sunit Arora and Roland Mascarenhas met Mayor Rohit Monserrate at his office. Edited excerpts:

**Panjim is in the midst of the festival season. As Mayor, what keeps you up at night?**

**Rohit Monserrate:** The only issue that we have is traffic. There's a lot of infrastructure work that's adding to the burden of the city also. So roads are closed, and there's not enough parking for vehicles. A lot of people have to take alternate routes. Another issue people had is that IFFI is basically concentrated around this one particular stretch; so other parts of the city tend to be neglected. When IFFI began, the organizers went around Goa and encouraged a lot of people from different parts to come and watch the movies. Now I feel like we've not done anything that comes close to that. I understand the restrictions and everything, but we'd like that to generally be the format going forward. It's nice if you actually get a lot of buy-in from the people — they feel like they're involved in the whole process.

**So, what is the city doing to improve parking infrastructure?**

We've decided to bolster public transport — we are getting 25-28 of these electric buses that are going to be plying the city every 10 minutes to address those kinds of issues. One thing that is extremely unpopular is increasing the rates of parking. A lot of people just will not agree to that, but we can't afford to build parking infrastructure like Delhi's because we have a lack of space. This really does have to be addressed comprehensively.

**What are some of the ways festivals benefit the local economy?**

It would help the local economy I guess, if you choose vendors that were from the particular area. That would be one step going forward. Right now, it is just restaurants and hotels that benefit. From what the people see, it is basically just a lot of people coming to the city. Panjim's population is around 40,000 people, but the transient population is



Photo by Michael Praveen

around 100,000, and regular citizens don't see much benefit because of the traffic. But it's not so bad. Everyone just has to get used to it.

I own a couple of hotels also. So, this is generally the time where all of us — hotels, restaurants — have certain blackout dates for resources, so we know for a fact things are going to get sold, and rents go up. It's a positive benefit to the city, but you will also have certain people who are left behind by that development. A tourist will come, take pictures, go to a particular restaurant and leave. It is all the other residents who have to deal with the nuisance caused. They deal with parking issues, they have to deal with a lot of other things. It's that balance that you have to strike.

**Otherwise Panjim is a sleepy city.**

It is. Now we have a lot of casinos here. So, it's a debate between what Panjim was and what Panjim is now. So, there are people who resent the casinos because they've taken over the promenade. But it's also true that Panjim is a dying city, and, basically, if it wasn't for the casinos, everything would shut by like 9pm. Visa has this ranking where they judge the amount of nights a particular traveller spends in an area. So, I remember people used to come to Panjim earlier, they would spend three days here and then they would branch out to different areas of Goa. Right now, people just use it as a transit. They come maybe for a couple of hours and then they leave. So, as of now, the only

thing attracting people to the city is the casinos. You have the heritage area, sure. But even in those areas also, people have gotten quite tired of the influx of tourists.

**What are the solutions here?**

It has to be like a holistic development. If you look at Pondicherry, for example, it is beautifully done. But most of the houses there have been rented to businesses. So you don't really have residences. In Panjim a lot of the residents actually do live in their houses. So, I get constant complaints from people saying that, you know, they don't respect our property, they put their feet up against the wall. It's small things to a traveller. But to a resident living there, it's extremely bad.



**SHORT TAKES**

We saw four Goan films today, including *Before I Sleep* and *Ardo Dis*. There is a lot of wonderful local talent. The music for these films was so beautiful.

**Chinmayee Sumeet**  
Actor, Mumbai



I want to watch films from young lady directors from smaller countries and countries going through crises, who use cinema to highlight topics we may not be aware of.

**Yashodhra Katkar**  
Author/Film Critic, Goa



I loved the film *Little Wings*, a short film by Tamil filmmaker Naveen Mu, about this woman trapped in a marriage and her husband wanting to eat their pet rooster.

**Deeya Sumeet**  
Cinematographer, Mumbai



I really enjoyed a Telugu film *Khudiram Bose* about a freedom fighter, it invoked feelings of patriotism in me.

**Thripura Kotamraju**  
Actor, Hyderabad

# Navigating IFFI

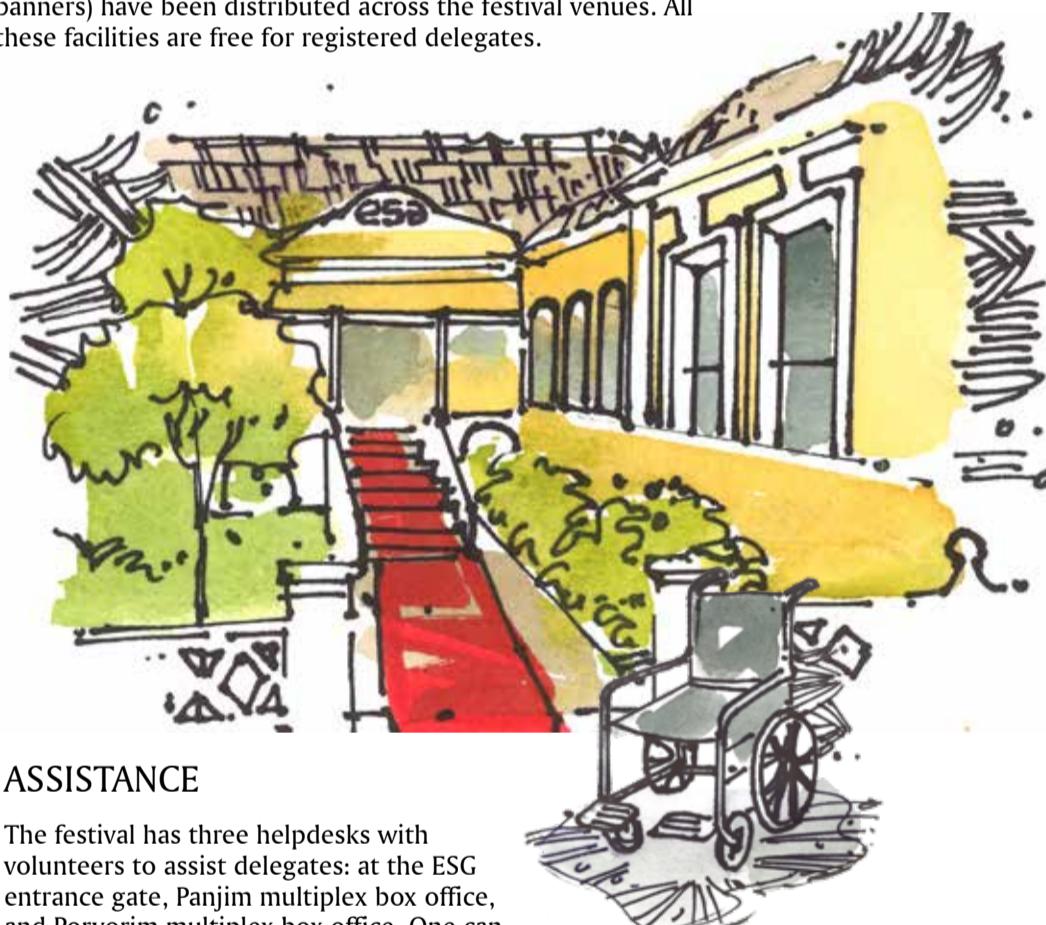
BY IMPANA KULKARNI

## PARKING AND TRAVEL

Parking space is available for all delegates and media personnel at DB GROUND, adjacent to Kala Academy, along the main road.

Only people with special vehicle passes are allowed to park at the multiplex parking, although two-wheeler can be parked along the compound wall. There are 10 IFFI Buses (identifiable by the banner on their windshield) shuttling between Panjim and Porvorim from 8.30am to

10pm, every 30 minutes. One can catch them at the nearest city bus-stand. A total of 16 autorickshaws (with the IFFI banners) have been distributed across the festival venues. All these facilities are free for registered delegates.



## ASSISTANCE

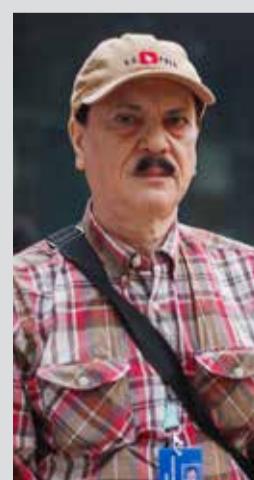
The festival has three helpdesks with volunteers to assist delegates: at the ESG entrance gate, Panjim multiplex box office, and Porvorim multiplex box office. One can request for wheelchair assistance at these desks, or approach security personnel. Wheelchairs are available at ESG gate, Maquinez Palace entrance, at both multiplexes, and at the Panjim multiplex parking lot. Delegates can refill their water-bottles at the water dispenser located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Maquinez palace, at the entrance of Auditorium II. Additionally, they can buy water bottles at the stalls set up in the festival courtyard.



**SHORT TAKES**

I was crying for all the right reasons while watching *Ajoomma*. It is a light film compared to the usual heavy films screened at IFFI.

**Aarti Bhatnagar**  
Researcher, Goa



Some films I enjoyed were *Alma and Oskar*, *Undressed*, and *Alcarràs*. They were beautifully made and well shot.

**N Dam**  
Retired employee,  
Kolkata



I am here with my film *The Young Arsonists*. The Indian film scene here is really huge and so exciting. I am looking forward to seeing films like *Triangle of Sadness* and *Fixation*.

**Agata Smoluch**  
Del Sorbo  
Producer,



We are very excited to bring our film *Fixation* to IFFI this year. I really love all the art work here, it's incredible. It gives a make-believe kind of feel.

**Max Topplin**  
Producer,  
Canada

## ESG STALL

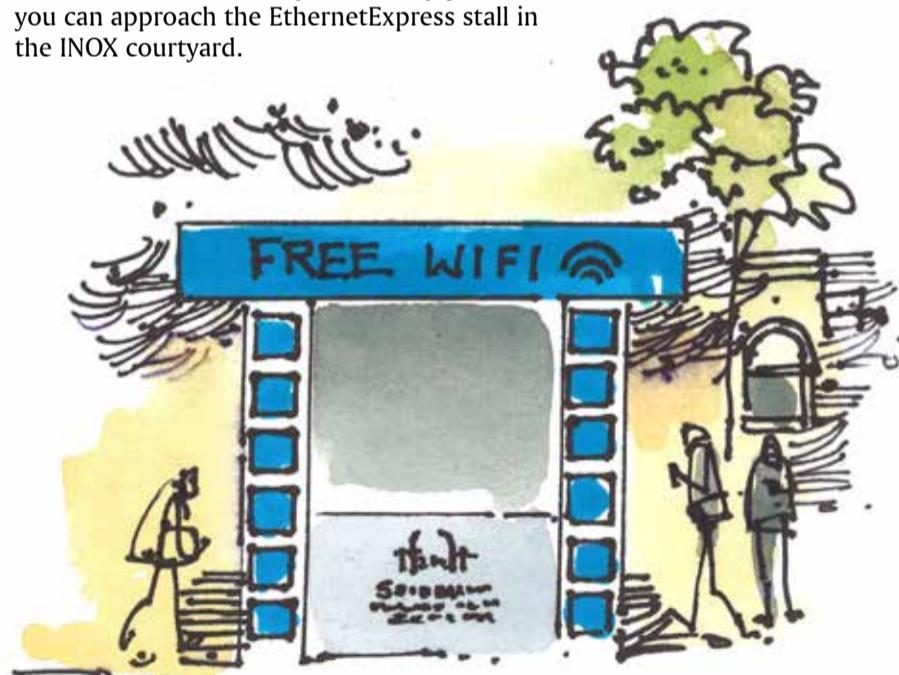
Cinephiles can purchase festival merchandise at the Entertainment Society of Goa counter in the quadrangle next to Maquinez Palace and INOX. Pick up the fabulous one-of-a-kind *The Peacock Quarterly!*



## REGISTRATION AND TICKETING

Owing to the overwhelming number of delegates this year, and limited seating in theatres, further registration is closed. Ticket booking is possible online, on the MYIFFI web portal and the IFFI GOA mobile app (scan the QR code given here). Any elderly person facing difficulty with online booking can approach the INOX ticket counters for assistance. All movie tickets are released two days prior to the screening day at 8am.

Public access WiFi is free for all delegates. Login at 'IFFI by EthernetXpress', enter the OTP, and browse through the film schedule online. Should you face any problem, you can approach the EthernetExpress stall in the INOX courtyard.



What else can *The Peacock* help you with? Share your suggestions and feedback via email at [thepeacock@iffigoa.org](mailto:thepeacock@iffigoa.org), or message us on Instagram @thepeacockgoa.

Illustration by Govit Morajkar



# "I'm getting paid to do what I love."



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni

BY PRAGYA BHAGAT

**M**eenakshi Shedde wears many hats: journalist, film critic, curator, and author, for starters. Today, her headgear consists of a pair of red-framed spectacles, perched on a salt-and-pepper fringe across her forehead.

"My life has been a series of happy accidents," she tells *The Peacock*. The critic acknowledges her privilege and the guidance she received along the way. "In college, there was a mentor I had, Amrit Gangar, who used to run a film society called Screen Unit." Through these free screenings emerged an appreciation of cinema. "That was my early influence."

Shedde started writing reviews for the *Times of India*. Soon after, in 1998, she won the National Award for Best Film Critic, followed in quick succession by invitations to the juries of the Cannes, Berlin, and Venice film festivals.

"I had a feeling I didn't quite deserve it." She credits film critic Maithili Rao and Iqbal Masud for everything she knows. "They were my mentors, Eklavya style. By the kind of people they were, by their integrity, by the way they were interested in so many subjects around them." The greatness of a critic, Shedde believes, is reflected in the richness of their lived experience. She is fond of poetry, drama, temple architecture, and painting, which informs her writing.

This year, the Golden Globe Awards invited her as an International Voter. Next year will mark her 25<sup>th</sup> year with the Berlin Film Festival, where she is the South Asian Delegate.

"Do you know how many films we make in India in a year?"

I'm stumped.

"Two thousand five hundred features in a year. Only features. Only the censored ones. Which is at least three times the size of Hollywood. This is not counting documentaries, shorts, experimental, and animation films being made in film schools by students." A film, she states matter-of-factly, is a film.

A curator must operate from a space of responsibility. She narrates an incident when a fellow jury member voted for a film because it was made in her native country, even though the member didn't like the film. "Nationalism can, for some, be higher than art."

Not for Shedde. She is attracted to films that surprise her, that offer revelations. "I'm very drawn to humour." With a conspiratorial air she confesses that everything she's wearing right now is a gift from someone else. She peppers her conversation with "aiyos" and leavens every sentence with gratitude.

"I'm getting paid to do what I love." Cinema, Shedde says, has given her everything she has today. "It's paid my bills and given me awards. It's given me tremendous joy, and it's given me some of the richest and deepest friendships that I have. There's a circularity of generosity; I've received so much, now I'm able to give."

The volume of the work the critic engages with is "an incredible luxury. Six hundred films over three months." Recently, she watched a lot of Satyajit Ray films, for a retrospective of his work that she curated for the Toronto International Film Festival.

Along with curating and critiquing, she has now also ventured into teaching. Given the amount of respect she holds for her own guides, Shedde as an educator makes perfect sense. Mentoring young people energizes her. Two years ago, she was supposed to do a course for Pune; then the pandemic happened. Last year, the course took place online. "I love that there were people from relatively smaller places – Kochi, Indore, Imphal." City folk, according to Shedde, are "bored and blasé." The real hunger comes from the smaller towns.

Like her students, Shedde continues to be a learner. "The *adda baazi*, the chatting after watching a film, is the real education. You're talking with people who may have very different views from you. We'd go to some cheap Iranian café, have bun maska and chai. That's where you learn about life."

## SHORT TAKES



A film I acted in, *Nimnya Disak*, is being screened at IFFI this year. It translates to "last day of a person" and is a movie based on humanity.

Krupa Vaze  
Actor, Goa



IFFI is an integrated platform for new talents. Filmmaking is a process where one needs a team, a group of people to come together to make it happen."

Rashmi Somvanshi  
Producer & Writer, Mumbai



I enjoyed watching *Distance*, I felt the trauma of a man with a lung ailment is depicted very nicely.

Lalita Kamat  
Income tax practitioner, Goa



It's not easy to talk to filmmakers with so much ease, but IFFI helps us connect to them. It helps students to put things in perspective. I loved *Blaze*, it's a piece of art."

Manali Surwade  
Student, Mumbai

# Real Life Hero

BY SACHIN CHATTE

**W**hen Jafar Panahi, the Iranian filmmaker made entry in his new film *No Bears*, I wanted to clap and whistle in the way a single screen crowd cheers the grand entry of Salman Khan – or the duo from *RRR*.

Panahi is a real-life hero – for filmmakers, film lovers and anyone with a conscience - who is currently in prison serving a six-year sentence. The filmmaker was also banned from making movies for 20 years by the courts in 2010, yet he has managed to make five films after that, including *No Bears* which is being screened at IFFI. It won the Grand Jury Prize at the Venice Film Festival when it premiered, and an empty seat was left for Panahi at the press conference in protest. At the Berlin Film Festival when *Taxi* (2015) won the Golden Bear, his niece accepted the award on his behalf because Panahi is banned from leaving the country – and there was another empty chair left for him at the ceremony.

There is a certain diversity in the subjects of the films Panahi has made so far. The common thread is the human element, the socio-political commentary, and the insight that he offers. His debut film *The White Balloon* (1995) was about a girl who loses the money she was given to buy a goldfish. Panahi then pushed the boundaries with his take on the treatment of women in Iran with *The Circle* (2000), which won him the Golden Lion at Venice. The brilliance of the film, which became the hallmark of Panahi, is that he makes a point seamlessly without being in your face. By weaving the film with interconnecting stories, he conveys the message without having a central protagonist. Given the theme, the film was promptly banned in Iran.

His next film *Crimson Gold* (2003) also suffered the same fate – Panahi used a real life pizza delivery man to play the lead role of a pizza delivery man who takes up to crime as a last resort. In 2006, Panahi made *Offside* about young Iranian women who sneak in dressed as men, to watch a football match – he partly shot it during the Iran-Bahrain match played that year.

The ban on making films came in 2010, but that only prompted Panahi to become more innovative and reinforced

his spirit to make cinema, against all odds – and at great risk. *This Is Not A Film* (2011) is a docu-drama shot in his apartment over a few days. It was smuggled out of Iran on a pen drive, hidden inside a cake.

After *Closed Curtain* (2013) which won the Silver Bear for Best Script, Panahi made *Taxi* (2015), inspired by his mentor Abbas Kiarostami's *Ten* (2002). In fact, *No Bears* has a scene which appears to be a tribute to Kiarostami's *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999). If the engineer in that cult film was hunting for a phone signal in that memorable scene, Panahi uses a ladder to climb on the roof in search of the signal for his Wi-Fi.

*Taxi* left such a powerful impression on me that I saw the film twice, within a span of ten hours, at IFFI in 2016. The scene at the end where Nasrin Sotoudeh, a real life activist and lawyer leaves a bouquet of roses on the dashboard by saying “this is for the people of cinema because they can be relied on”, has to be one of the most memorable and profound moments in movie history.

*3 Faces* (2018) was a slight departure in terms of the content although his style was still the same. The film also has one of my favourite tea anecdotes – When

Panahi, who plays himself travels to a village in search of a certain place and person, he stops by to ask for directions at a small house where a celebration is going on. An old man invites Panahi to the house for a cup of tea – Panahi refuses by saying, “Sorry, I have to go”. “We all have to go someday my friend,

but you should always make time for tea,” says the old man.

*No Bears* also won the Precious Gem Award at the Miami Film Festival for which Panahi shared an audio message, from jail. “I also wish that I could make films instead of receiving awards because a filmmaker lives to make films.”

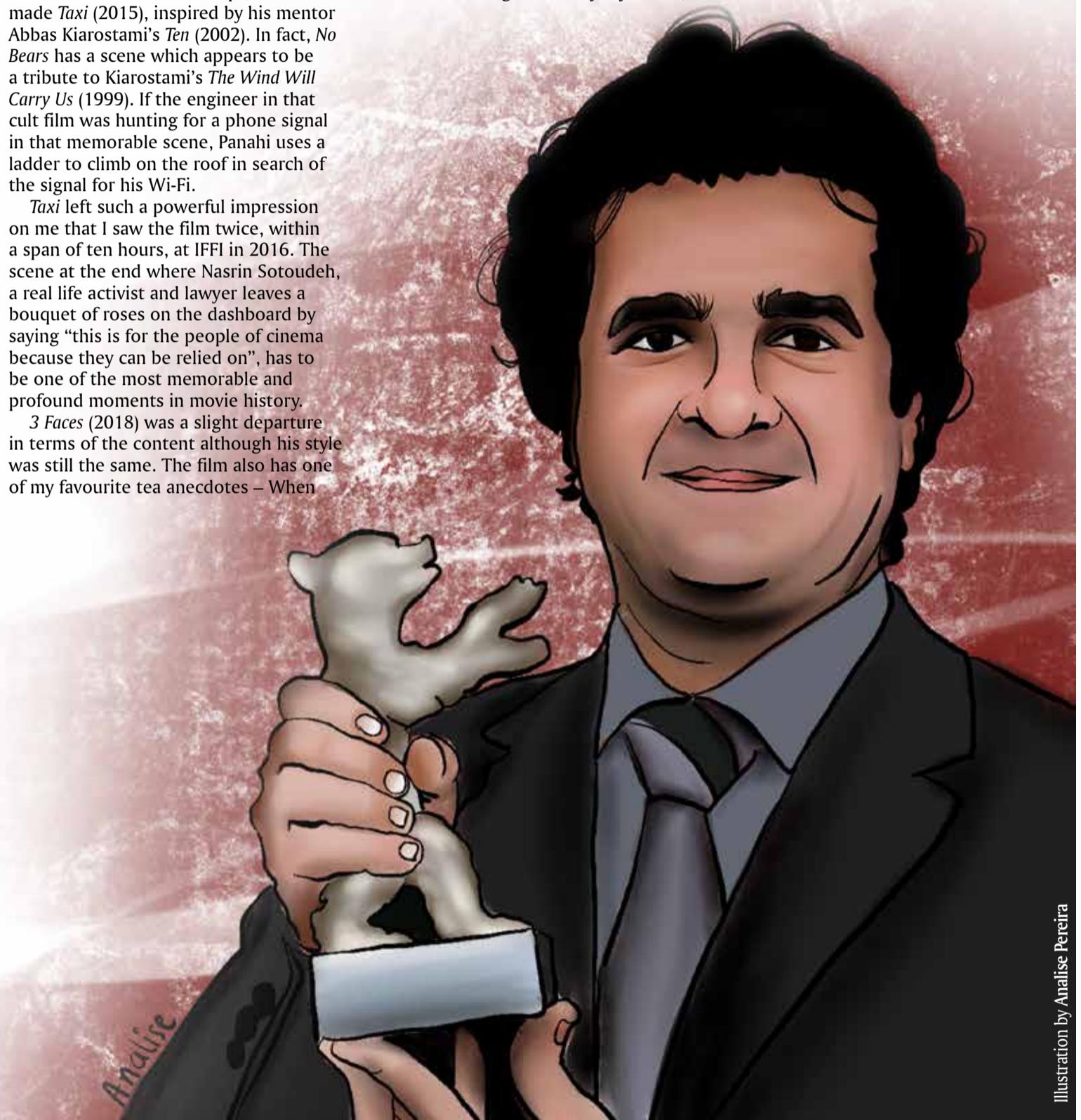


Illustration by Analise Pereira



SHORT TAKES

Even though I am not from the older generation, I could relate to the movie *Abhimaan* and loved the funny parts.

Jessica Pereira  
Student, Pune



The response for the screening of my Kannada film *Naanu Kusuma* was overwhelming and we are in the running for the UNESCO-Fellini Medal.

Greeshma H. S.  
Actor, Karnataka



I am a little disappointed at this year's selection of films and the facilities here. One I did love was the French film *Belle & Sebastian*, about the bond between a boy and his dog.

Keerthana  
Manoj  
Student, Kerala



IFFI is a big platform, and people worldwide are coming over here, which gives us great exposure. It also helps me to meet new artists and to work with them.

Shebin Becker  
Producer, Kerala

# “I am who I am because of the people”

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

**W**ow! *The Peacock* is a Goan publication? This is so artistic and beautiful,” Anupam Kher exclaims, browsing through our official festival daily newspaper.

Fans and reporters thronged Kher’s press conference, at the 53<sup>rd</sup> International Film Festival of India, with questions and pleas for autographs, leaving him literally no room to breathe. However, the lion-hearted actor said that he “felt the love” and is “genuinely grateful”, as he obliged everyone with humour and humility.

By his own account, as he reminisces of his time as a struggling “bald” actor, Kher has come a long way from no one recognizing him at IFFI in 1985 to developing a rich resume of “bold” work, spanning 532 films. “From being a gold medalist at the National School of Drama to being denied acting roles because of my receding hairline, this journey has been full of ups and downs, but I never gave up.”

Responding to a writer’s candid complaint that he had to battle through a flood of fellow journalists, fans and security personnel to get to him, Kher laughs, “I love the attention – all my life I wanted to be an actor. They are not a crowd. They are people – husbands, wives, sons, daughters – who will take back this memory to their family, and I want to be a part of that happy moment that will make their day. To get this kind of adulation for the work that I do, I consider myself very fortunate. I am who I am because of the people.”

The 67-year-old veteran actor, whose recent films have successfully navigated a capricious period in Indian box-office business, believes that “hard work eventually pays off”, but “fortune” is as important as “effort”. He says, “My films are not stereotypical narrations of Indian culture. Whenever I have done good work, there has been genuine appreciation, and I think the audience is intelligent to recognize good cinema.”

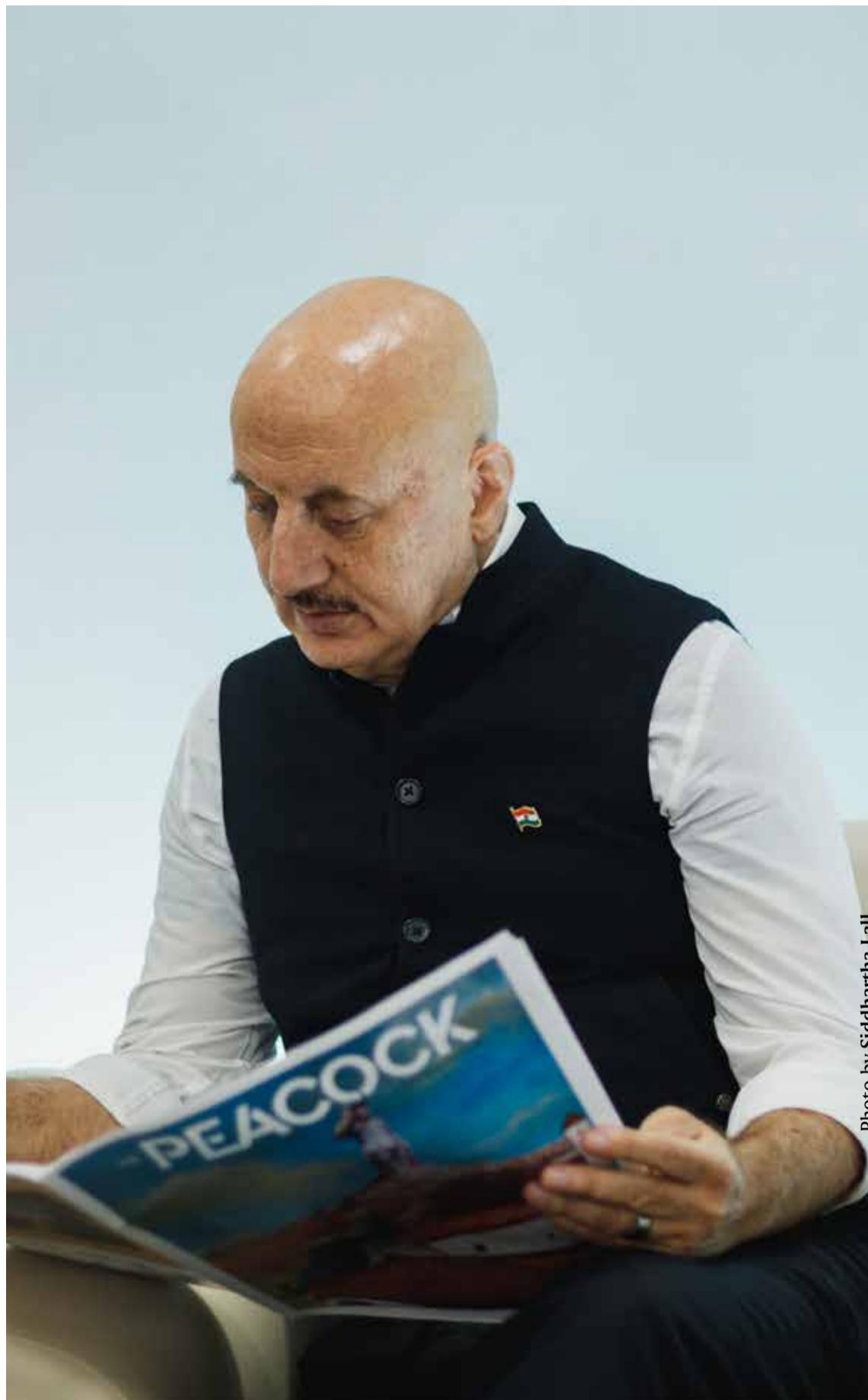


Photo by Siddhartha Lall

Kher categorically denies subscribing to the phrase that the “Indian audience has matured” to appreciate non-commercial cinema. “As an actor and filmmaker, I would never blame the audience. With the emergence of OTT, the audience is certainly better exposed to a wide range of films – regional and global. More importantly, the pandemic has allowed people to introspect and reflect on their choices. I believe people do not appreciate anything that is fake – whether, it is on-screen or off-screen.”

Elaborating on his opinion that the curtains are closing in on the era of larger-than-life Bollywood movies, Kher says, “We have to make movies that relate, that connect with the audience. They have gone through a lot of turmoil, hurt, and loss during the last couple of years and it has given them the freedom to be more authentic. They want to relate to reel stories that feel real.”

Kher’s *The Kashmir Files* (2022) is being screened in the competition section at IFFI 2022. A willing spokesperson of the story, which is close to his heart, Kher believes that the film offers a “fresh perspective”, which may be difficult to digest for some, but nevertheless had to be told. He says, “Cinema is basically about the truth. Truth connects with people. Whether it is in the form of laughter, tears, or horror.”

Kher is also delivering a masterclass on ‘Performing for Screen and Theatre’ at IFFI 2022. Having learnt the ropes of acting on stage, he says, “Theatre is the greatest platform for learning an actor can ask for, and it is nice to see film festivals highlighting this facet of an actor’s career path.”

When quizzed on his reported interest in investing in a Konkani film, he says, “Firstly, I love the people of Goa, so I would love to do a Konkani film one day. I will have to learn my Konkani to be able to act, but I am happy to take up that challenge. I would love to produce it as well. Bring me a good story, I am eager to be involved.”



**SHORT TAKES**

Kudos to the team who created the IFFI Goa app. It has a lovely curation, doesn’t crash and has all films organised by their genre.

Gitanjali Ghate  
Researcher,  
Mumbai



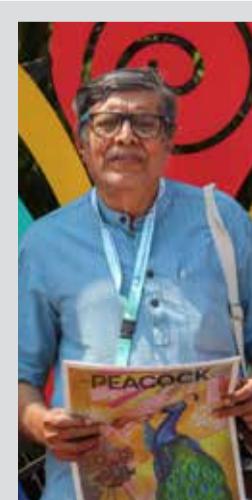
IFFI is India’s premiere festival, reflecting our country’s cultural activism. When you come to Goa for films, it is all about Goa, films and you.

Geetha  
Insurance  
company, Kerala



I watched *The Kashmir Files*. There were some parts in the movie that I think were over-hyped and it felt a little Islamophobic, which I think could be misleading.

Roja V Roy  
Student, Kerala



*The Peacock* magazine portrays art and culture very well. It’s amazing how cinema has evolved with technology over time.

N Shashidhara  
Vice-President  
of Film Society,  
Bengaluru

# No Country For Animators?

BY RUKMINEE GUHA THAKURTA

**M**y first memory of watching animated films is as a child at my cousin's birthdays. My uncle owned a 16 mm projector, and several spools of Walt Disney films which he'd make us watch—dozens of us—sitting cross-legged on the floor in order to get us to wind down after all the tearing about. *Lady and the Tramp*, *Mickey Mouse*, *Dumbo*, and *Tom & Jerry* were as much a part of the diet of our mixed cultural upbringing as Satyajit Ray's *Teen Kanya* and *Pather Panchali*. We took the moving pictures for granted and it was only as a student of design that I witnessed what went into the making of animated films. Twenty-four frames per second—that is what it took our classmates, who took up the study of animation filmmaking, to make two-dimensional cel animation films. After the endless drawing, there was the shooting and editing, and all this, after the initial storyboarding and, even before that, character design, writing, and ideating.

There is a special quality about animation—it can bring alive emotions that live-action films cannot convey

and it can take us to spaces in the imagination that a live-action camera cannot enter. This complex medium is quite certainly not a medium for entertaining only children. While studying design I had been exposed to a lot of animation films and I can recall the awe I developed for the medium while watching Norman McLaren's abstract animation drawn directly on film and other such gems produced by the National Film Board of Canada.

Buried memories of these films came alive while I listened to Mark Osborne's talk in the IFFI Masterclass section. Osborne, the director of the computer-animated martial arts comedy *Kung Fu Panda* (2008) and *The Little Prince* (2015) demonstrated animation's magical qualities by showing us a short clip of how the little prince—the central character of his film based on Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's book—simultaneously shares a sunrise and a sunset with his friend, the Rose. He took us behind the scenes of the filming of this moment, showing us how the camera moved with the lighting over a miniature set for this bit of ravishing stop-motion animation.

Right from shadow play, magic lantern phantasmagoria, puppetry, automatons

to stereoscopes, photography and cinematography, animation is part of a long and fascinating history of the illusion of motion and traditions of storytelling. Japan's complex and atmospheric anime rose to prominence in the 1960s with Hayao Miyazaki, the co-founder of Studio Ghibli, who is widely recognized as one of the most accomplished filmmakers in the history of animation. Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* is regarded by critics as one of the greatest films of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

India too has produced remarkable feature-length animation films such as *Arjun, The Warrior Prince* (2012) by the pioneering animator, Arnab Chauduri, who lamentably passed away way before his time in 2019 and *Bombay Rose* (2019), Gitanjali Rao's poetic portrayal of the struggles of life on the streets of Bombay. Both films have been critically acclaimed, have travelled around the world and yet they remain unknown in India. At Osborne's talk I met with Prosenjit Ganguly, the co-writer of Vaibhav Kumaresh's upcoming animated feature film, *Return to the Jungle*, who bemoaned the lack of support by producers of animation films as also the lack of an appropriate approach by filmmakers to make their films appealing to viewers in India. His views echo Gitanjali Rao's words in her tribute to Arnab Chaudhuri that India is no country for animators.

This year's IFFI showcases five animation films of which several sound promising. The selection includes the renowned filmmaker Guillermo del Toro's retelling of *Pinocchio*, a well-known Italian fairy tale by Carlo Collodi.

A story of "love and disobedience", *Pinocchio*, like most fairy tales, is not just a simple tale for children. Through allegorical references, the story examines morality and the complexities of being human as the wooden marionette, Pinocchio, dreams of being a real boy. Another promising film, *My Love Affair with Marriage* by Signe Baumane is a story that explores female rebellion and societal notions of love.

The promise held by these films reminds me of an unforgettable animated short called *The Big Snit*. Barely ten minutes long, this social satire made by Richard Condie for the NFDC in 1985, is a surreal film about love, war, and futility. It mirrors Mark Osborne's words—"filmmaking is therapy. It is about diving into something meaningful and discovering something along the way."



Illustration by Chloe Cordeiro



## SHORT TAKES

I am here for the screening of my film *Wagro*. It is the first ever Konkani film to be screened at IFFI's Indian Panorama.

Sobita Kudtarkar  
Actor, Goa



*Aftersun* was a well-executed film compared to most films in Indian cinema. It taught me a lot as a learner.

Rajesh Pathak  
Creative director,  
Mumbai



I really enjoyed *Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey*, it showcases women's empowerment and has inspired me. I really love the evenings here with all the lights, colour, and vibrancy.

Murshida T  
Student, Kerala



My favourite film is *Rorschach*, a Malayalam psycho-thriller. I liked watching the suspense of it because there is curiosity in every moment.

Sudev Nair  
Student, Kerala

24th NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENTATION  
'BREAKING THE SCREEN CEILING : GENDER AND WORK IN HINDI CINEMA'  
14:00 - 15:30

Tata Institute of Social Sciences

IN CONVERSATION  
'REPRESENTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND IDENTIFYING NEW MARKETS'  
17:00 - 18:30

Speakers: Rishabh Shetty T.G. Thyagarajan

# Mediating The Medium

BY LINA VINCENT

In present times, anyone with a phone or good device can make a film if they wish to. But filmmaking is a serious craft that involves a vast amount of expertise in several layers – a collaborative medium in which the fine tuning and timely input of various members of a team creates a composite whole that can tell a story successfully. This process of *making* evolves and improves as the persons involved gain more experience.

Sitting in the hubbub of the Film Bazaar, I can feel the buzz, as people connect, discuss, and pitch ideas and films. It is an intensely creative space, where script-writers, directors, cinematographers, actors, connoisseurs and consumers rub shoulders in a space meant for film and film alone. This year, the Viewing Room is showcasing 245 films, of which 168 are features, 18 are mid-length and 59 are shorts. Curated by Deepti DCunha, the FBR 'Film Bazaar Recommends' is highlighting 22 films, with 5 having been accepted in the Work-in-Progress Lab, which gives selected filmmakers a chance to screen the rough cut of their film to an eminent panel of international advisors, with the aim of helping to achieve an accomplished final cut. DCunha is a Mumbai based film programmer specialising in contemporary Indian cinema. As a consultant with the National Film Development Corporation Limited (NFDC) over the past eleven years, she brings to it her expertise in programming with international and Indian film festivals, with a particular focus on South Asian cinema.

Having curated within the visual arts over the past two decades, I understand that where there is any sort of art, there are also viewers and consumers – art is generally created for sharing. When there are producers and consumers, there is a market – and this is a space that requires strategic mediation and programming. DCunha steps into exactly in this zone, that combines a practical and business-oriented perspective, with an ability to gauge creative voices and direct them toward the right avenues.

Dynamic and unassuming at the same time, DCunha exudes a quiet confidence as she shares her personal



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni

evolve with the technology. I want to be able to discover talent. Film is a medium like any other; you recognize someone is a good painter, or a good musician because they start hitting the right notes. When they are doing something that seems like they know the rules well, that's where you know instinctively. I think the delight of a programmer is that you see a good film and you want to shout out from rooftops that everyone should watch it. I've always been excited about cinema."

With a country as diverse as India, and opportunities and privileges generally differing between those in urban centres and two-tier towns and villages, it is doubly necessary that arts platforms should be democratic spaces, in which persons regardless of their background, region or situation are able to participate and attain the same credit for work done in a particular standard. The Viewing Room allows this unbiased space, as well as advanced software to showcase the films safely. DCunha explains the smooth process that the NFDC has in place for the programming, and the enormous outreach the government has in some of the most remote regions in India. This gives her the field to work on making the program diverse in terms of language as well as representation; it opens up possibilities of looking at, and including, both the glossiness of well-produced, high budget films, as well as raw but truthful films with lower financial backing. Happily, she mentions that a large number of film programmers are women.

Since 1975 the NFDC has functioned under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, with the primary objective of promoting the Good Cinema Movement. It has been instrumental in creating an ecosystem to support the development, financing and distribution of independent films across the country. Film Bazaar has been an integral to this since 2007, now being the largest South Asian film market. Over the years, films such as *Lunch Box*, *Margarita With A Straw*, *Chauthi Koot*, *Qissa*, *Ship of Theseus*, *Titli*, *Court*, *Miss Lovely*, *Dum Lagake Haisha*, *Liar's Dice* and *Thithi* have been through one or more program of the Bazaar, which also facilitates the sales of world cinema in the South Asian region.

methodologies, that balance her passion with a discerning eye on the core objectives of a market. "A curator has to rely on an instinct which develops because of the exposure that we have in the field. It brings an alertness, an understanding of taste. It is because you have worked on refining your responses

that you can have a more sophisticated understanding of something as complex as films. It is an intense process, and a challenge, because you can only curate from the submissions that come in, and through a process of meticulous comparison...Another criterion is the films should reflect their times, and



I liked *Ajoomma*, about a middle-aged widow who has to move away from her role as a mother as she watches her son become independent.

Nalini  
Rajarathnam  
Retired,  
Hyderabad



I liked the film *Parsley* about ethnic cleansing by the Dominican Republic against the Haitian people.

Vivek Madan  
Theatre  
producer,  
Mumbai



The calibre of films selected at this festival is better than the ones I've seen at other festivals. They have done a really good job in representing Tamil films here.

Paro Salil  
Student,  
Chennai



I am grateful to be here, I have been invited for the screening of my film *Havana*.

Yongho Hong  
Director, Korea





Illustration by Analise Pereira

**W**hen the International Film Festival of India relocated to Goa in 2004, with the idea that the country's smallest state could become the permanent home of Asia's oldest cinema extravaganza, there were many naysayers but only one undaunted champion.

That was the late Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar, who used every bit of his legendary charm and cunning to get the event rooted to his home constituency, despite national political alignments shifting against his party. To underline his case, he personally oversaw the remaking of the Mandovi riverfront promenade and the extensive renovation of the Old Goa Medical College heritage precinct to become festival-friendly.

Parrikar had an evolved vision, which bears revisiting. He expected the state government to get advice and expertise from the Centre for no more than two or three years, before it started to take control of the festival programming and peripheral activities. That this signature event would lead to others, and the eventual regeneration of the entire heritage waterfront of Panjim for cultural activities. Right alongside, he predicted the constant expansion of what he called "a ripple effect" bringing untold benefits to Goa and Goans, especially the youngest generation of talented artists and artistes from the state.

One cannot imagine the cascade of high-profile events that define "high season" at year-end in Panjim – and other parts of Goa – without Parrikar's interventions almost 20 years ago. Far beyond even his expectations, this tiny slice of the Konkan coastline has become the winter-months cultural capital of India, the premier staging ground for every kind of literary and artistic event imaginable, and the centre of the country's restaurant universe to boot. This remarkable boom is undeniable, but so is the fact some Goans feel left out, and keep questioning IFFI's value, as though by rote. For example, here's what someone said on social media this week: "The film festival

has nosedived into a boring, bureaucratic, gaudy affair...The promise of the initial years has quite simply evaporated. Little has been achieved in relocating the Delhi affair to Goa."

Needless to say, Team Peacock firmly rejects this argument as baseless. Over many years, we have seen IFFI's wonderfully inspirational effect on an entire generation of young writers, illustrators, artists, and filmmakers in and from Goa, of which you can see just a tiny sample on this vibrant newspaper's pages every day.

The fact is this festival presents delegates with an extraordinary and unrivalled banquet of cinema each year – no other similar event in the country has nearly as much range, reach and ambition – and it is the people of Goa who

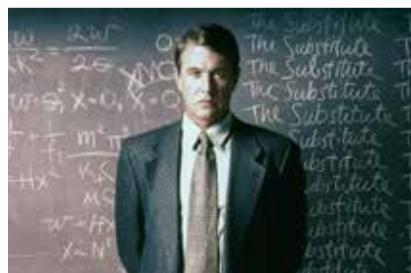
have responded with maximum alacrity. For example, at the time of writing this column (just past 6 pm yesterday), a full 3681 out of 8931 registered participants in this festival are locals. That's 41.21%, and all anecdotal evidence is the percentage is much higher amongst the actual occupants of seats in theatres.

Of course, moviegoing isn't by itself enough to justify the magnitude of effort and expenditure the state puts in for IFFI, which is why we must also factor in the massively beneficial spill-on effects including many which are essentially intangible. We now have the nicest and friendliest film club in the country in the Entertainment Society of Goa's own Goa Cinephiles screenings each Thursday, and an unstoppably burgeoning boom in Konkani cinema that is steadily making its way up into the national vanguard. Earlier this year, our own Sainath Uskaikar's debut short film *Wagro* was selected for the short film corner at Cannes – but that's only the beginning. More and even better is on the way.

- VIVEK MENEZES

# SCREENING SCHEDULE - 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2022

INOX SCREEN-I PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-II PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-III PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-IV PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-I PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-II PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-III PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-IV PORVORIM	MAQUINEZ PALACE-I
D11  ANN 09:00 - 10:38	D21  DHABARI QU-RUVI 09:30 - 11:14	D31  MEMORIES OF GLOOMY MONSOONS 09:15 - 10:51	D41  OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN 08:45 - 10:29	D51  MISS VIBORG 09:00 - 10:40	D61  RAINBOW 09:15 - 11:01	D71  CORSAGE 09:30 - 11:23	D81  CONTEMPT 08:45 - 10:26	D92  PRESENTATION ON GENDER PARTICIPATION IN HINDI CINEMA 14:00 - 15:30"
D12  THE LINE 11:30 - 13:12	D22  OTHER RAY: ART OF SATYAJIT RAY / THREE OF US 12:15 - 14:27	D32  ORDINARY FAILURES 11:45 - 13:09	D42  PALOMA 11:15 - 12:59	D52  BLANQUITA 11:30 - 13:08	D62  MEDITERRANEAN FEVER 11:45 - 13:33	D72  BLIND WILLOW, SLEEPING WOMAN 12:00 - 13:52	D82  NANAK NAM JAHAZ HAI 11:15 - 13:28	D94  REPRESENTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND IDENTIFYING NEW MARKETS 17:00 - 18:30
D13  A MINOR 14:30 - 16:09	D23  HATIBONDHU / FATIMA 15:00 - 16:53	D33  A HOUSE WITH NO NAME 14:45 - 16:25	D43  BIRTHDAY BOY 14:15 - 15:51	D53  ARNOLD IS A MODEL STUDENT 14:30 - 15:55	D63  ARIEL 14:45 - 16:23	D73  YAMABUKI 15:00 - 16:37	D83  RAISE RAVENS 14:15 - 16:04	D95  LOOK AT THE SKY / MATAMGI MANIPUR 19:30 - 21:46
D14  FIXATION 18:00 - 19:39	D24  REKHA / MAHANANDA 17:30 - 20:20	D34  SELF DEFENSE 17:15 - 18:52	D44  RAYMO 18:30 - 21:06	D54  BOMBER NUMBER TWO 17:00 - 18:31	D64  MEMENTO MORI : EARTH 17:15 - 18:40	D74  HANGING GARDENS 17:30 - 19:17	D84  ALPHAVILLE 16:45 - 18:24	D95  LOOK AT THE SKY / MATAMGI MANIPUR 19:30 - 21:46
D15  QALA 20:10 - 22:10	D25  AYUSHMAN / AKHANDA 20:45 - 00:12	D35  GOLDFISH 19:30 - 21:53	D45  SATURN BOWLING 21:45 - 23:39	D55  WHITE DOG 19:30 - 21:05	D65  TROPIC OF VIOLENCE 19:45 - 21:18	D75  ALCARRÀS 20:00 - 22:00	D85  OEDIPUS REX 19:15 - 20:59	
D16  THE NIGHTSIREN 22:50 - 00:39								



The Substitute  
INOX 1  
Porvorim 9.00 am

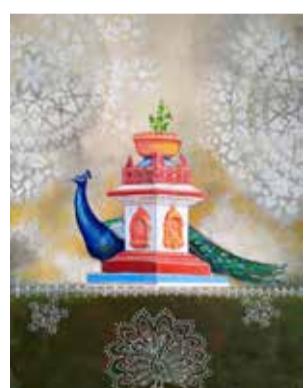
FIXATION  
INOX 1  
Panjim 5.00 pm



Alcarràs  
INOX 3  
Porvorim 7.30 pm



Nightsiren  
INOX 1  
Panjim, 10.30 pm



Our exclusive cover artist Praveen Naik plumbs deep nostalgia today, by featuring our favourite bird wandering around a traditional Goan courtyard with its typical tulsi vrindavan, and mud floor caked with cowdung (that is itself adorned with another peacock emblem etched in rangoli).