

THE

PEACOCK

SUNDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2021



The King Of All The World

As a writer with several decades of experience that includes scriptwriting, I am very much interested in films that are strikingly different in content and treatment. In the past, some of my favourites have come from Afghanistan, Argentina, and Iran, as well as some rare stories from the African continent. Indian movies made in Kerala, Assam, and the North Eastern states are also very interesting. For me, there's an inherent appeal in the off-beat, unusual and even madcap narratives that reach our screens.

This year's curtain raiser at the International Film Festival of India brought us one of these never-told-before-stories in a mesmerizingly beautiful way. *The King Of All The World* (2021), directed by celebrated grand master Carlos Saura, is a Spain-Mexico co-production that depicts the strong bond between the two nations. The filmmaker seeks out commonalities, and analyses the spirit of Spain in light of the folkloric tradition of the music and dance of Mexico.

As I have a passion for writing stories, whether for films or print media, I viewed all this with great expectation that, in the end, was fulfilled. My interest was to know how writing and cinema collaborate in relation to each other.

Writers love to tell stories, but they also love to read or watch stories, simply because, at times, they are sources of inspiration. As I viewed *The King Of All The World*, I felt puzzled, amused and delighted, all at once. It is the story of a celebrated Mexican choreographer, Sara (Ana de la Reguera) who is invited by a stage director, Manuel (Manuel Garcia-Rulfo), to assist him in staging a new musical show.

Right from the word 'go', the film breaks up into a dizzying mix of imagination and different fictional realities. Sara's father, whose actions are erratic, adds an undercurrent of hostilities that lead to the unpredictable and shocking climax. That is the amazing work of a genius. I am impressed by how, even after making dozens of films, Carlos Saura keeps seeking another level to his work. In my mind, I think this is how Satyajit Ray would comment: 'because there is always some room for improvisation.' Is this not true of all forms of art?

It is said that *The King Of All The World* is a commentary of two master-craftsmen in full



Illustration by Chloe Cordeiro

control of their expertise, Carlos Saura and Vittorio Storaro (the cinematographer), reflecting their views on their disciplines have moved, in personal and historical terms and also in the context of film technology.

The story was conceived by the maestro when he was going through black and white photographs he had clicked 65 years ago. It struck him: what a sea of change that our times have gone through! To recapture some of those feelings and impressions, he has used unconventional settings. Instead of any natural backdrops, Saura utilized structures like projections, photos, and sketches that offer him the options of experimental scenography. He has used more photographic panels and artificial elements than the natural panoramic settings.

As a writer, I have always felt that the hard work going into the making of a novel is always unjustly forgotten. I remember the book *The Writing of One Novel* written by Irving Wallace after he completed the voluminous, *The Prize*. There is something directly resonant in the statement of Carlos Saura after making this film: 'the rehearsals are more interesting than the final performance. Because they testify the pain and hard work that has gone into getting the final product.'

I may want to see *The King Of All The World* once again to affirm my first impressions. The well-knit story, the fabulous photography, the rich characterization, the superb music and dance performances all added up to superlative entertainment. For music lovers like me, it was a windfall experience. It reminded me of our own *Nachom-ia Kumpasar* (2014) by Bardroy Barreto, that similarly awakened the spirit of Goa.



SHORT TAKES

After IFFI not being held last year, I look forward to seeing something interesting. I don't come to the film festival with any pre-judgments, I prefer keeping an open mind.

Anil Kunhappan,
Writer and
director, Kerala



IFFI this year will act as a balm from all the Covid anxiety and all of us can once again see the world through pre-pandemic eyes through the films being screened.

Anupriya
Kunhappan,
Film student,
Pune



Film is able to create narratives about life and culture to viewers. IFFI gives one a chance to interact with people in different parts of the country who share the same thoughts.

TK Shanmuga
Sundaram,
Film writer &
director, Chennai



This is my first time attending IFFI. My favourite film is *The Colour Purple*. I like it, because it shows a different side of black suppression, unlike the films we typically see.

Vineetha
Vallimana,
Writer, Kochi

BACK WITH A BANG!

BY PATRICIA ANN ALVARES

Swathed in glittering silver peacocks and roses, the stage at the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Bambolim set a resplendent atmosphere for the inaugural function of the 52nd edition of the International Film Festival of India.

Emerging from the shadow of the pandemic, IFFI has returned with a bang, as a slew of big names from the film industry came together to declare their collective intention to help make this edition of festival bigger than ever. Headlining the stage, 'Azaadi ka Amrut Mahotsav - India 75' brought into focus the famous moment of our "tryst with destiny" as well as Goa's 60 years of liberation.

Out in force, despite the heavy showers, Salman Khan, Hema Malini, Ritesh Deshmukh, Karan Johar, Ranveer Singh, Madhur Bhandarkar, and Mouini Roy were all part of perhaps the largest gathering of stars in many years at the nation's oldest and most prestigious film festival.

Co-hosting the evening along with Manish Paul, the film producer Karan Johar reiterated that "IFFI is the biggest celebration that marks the film world, and in current times, cinema has indeed been a change-maker."

Just before the show took off with exuberant performances, the Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Anurag Singh Thakur, the Chief Minister of Goa, Dr. Pramod Sawant, and the Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting, Fisheries. Dr. L. Murugan expressed their

enthusiasm about the response to this edition of IFFI.

Welcoming the guests after lighting the inaugural lamp, Mr Apurva Chandra, Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, echoed these sentiments. "May the light of this festival inspire us to continue telling more inspiring stories," he said. The show of numbers, he pointed out, reinforces the fact that they have withstood the challenge of Covid-19. "This year is in fact larger than most, for the fact that several films – Indian, Asian, and international – have debuted at this festival which has received 624 films in 69 languages." The response, he reiterated, only shows the love for films and IFFI.

Veteran actor and Member of Parliament, Hema Malini graciously accepted her award as the Indian Film Personality of the Year 2021.

Renowned directors Martin Scorsese and István Szabó delivered video messages, as the recipients of the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Awards. "Ray has been one of my masters and a filmmaker who I continually return to for inspiration to my films," Scorsese said. Szabó reminisced about the time he spent with Ray in India, and when they dined together, discussing cinema.

The cultural extravaganza then got underway with Ranveer Singh's energized performance to a medley of songs ranging from the patriotic 'Is desh ka yaaron kya kehna' from *Naya Daur* (1957) to the popular 'Jumma chumma de de' from the film *Hum* (1991). That was followed by an equally upbeat show by Salman Khan.





KARISHMA D'MELLO

Backstage is a blur of vivid colour as dancers rush this way and that. Tensions run high as crew members, artists, and professionals scurry over last minute arrangements, adding a few final touches. Some groups are huddled together, much like a football team before their big game. And their manager is with them, strategizing, motivating, and giving them their pep talk.

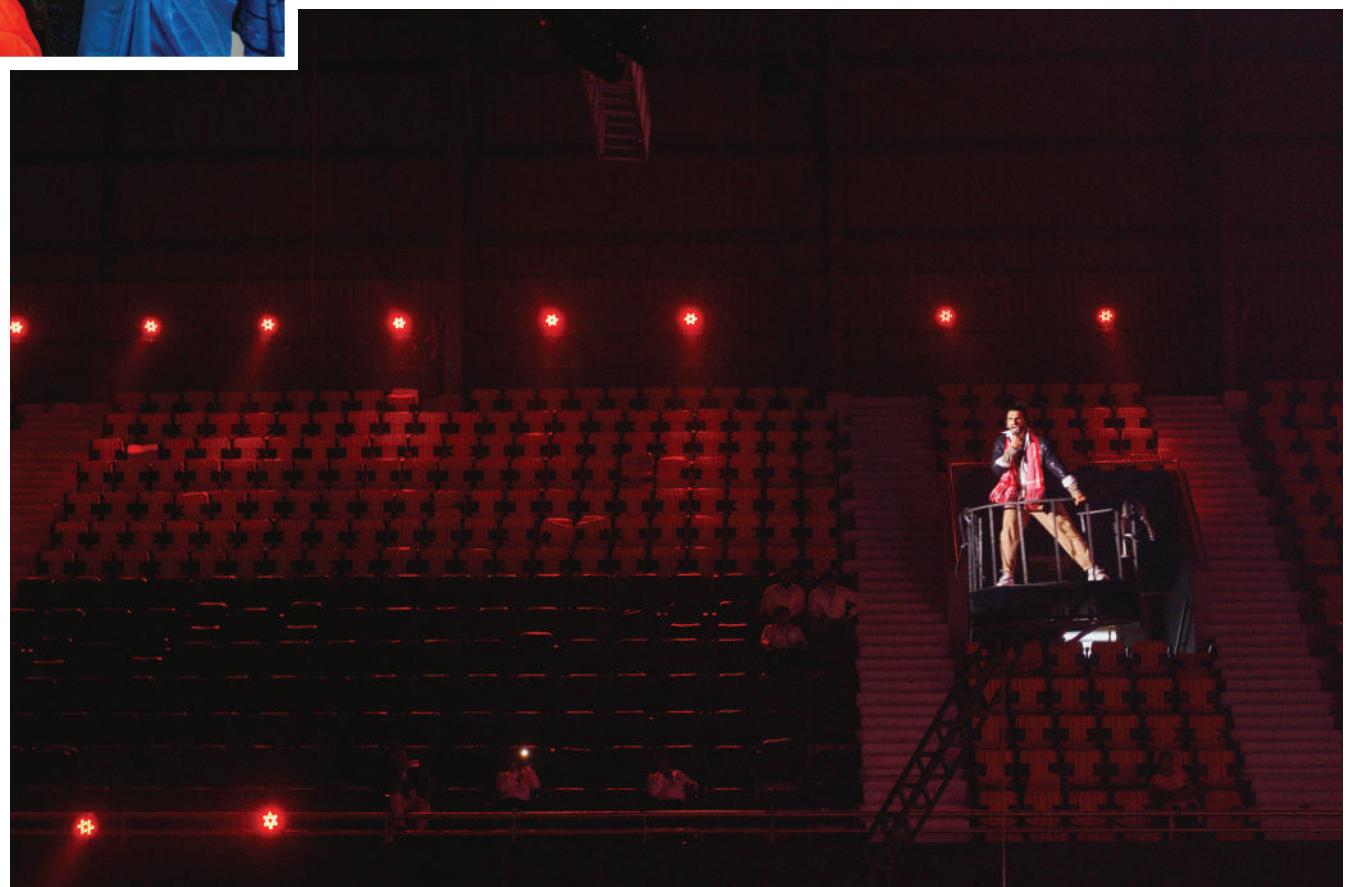
A group of young Goan women spoke to The Peacock about their act, and their intense practice sessions preceding it. "Our is a small act but we're looking forward to performing," says Smrita Pillai. Being surrounded by Bollywood stardom can be overwhelming to some performers making their debut at the International Film Festival of India. Mansi Kenaubki told us, "I was in tears when I saw Shraddha Kapoor for the first time."

Shrushti Mazundar, a dancer from Mumbai, is making her second appearance at IFFI. This year she is a part of almost every performance of the evening. "We've spent almost ten days preparing for today," she says. "It's been hectic, but this is a wonderful festival to be a part of and I love Goa. Everything is happening so fast. We're always on our toes. We've practiced hard and we have a lot to do. I'm sure our team is going to bring a lot of energy to the stage. Hopefully, we'll have some time to party tonight, after we're done."

Although he's a seasoned performer, Ajay Kadamb – another Mumbaikar – is excited to make his debut at IFFI. "I was really happy to be selected after my audition and I'm so grateful to have this opportunity," he says. "I really enjoy dancing and film as well. Everything is well managed and I'm part of a great team. The set is so well-made, and it's a different feeling to have the lights on you, in sync with the music. It's so vibrant and you feel like you're a part of something bigger."

The celebrities we're performing with bring so much energy to the stage; you can feel their presence around you. You can learn so much from them. We're all apprehensive, but also confident that we will do well."





Panjim - City Of The Future

The camera is to the 21st century what the car was to the 20th century – the primary driver of urban change. In the era of social media, the future of our cities would be more Panjim and less Mumbai. Cities that are able to cater to the needs of wandering tech workers - with the promise of blurring the work/vacation binary - are future proofed.

It is rarely the case that filmmakers from across the country do not portray Goa as some version of rural vacation retreat to the highly urbanised metros. This despite the fact that Goa is the richest and most urbanized state in the country today.

All too often the outmoded urban forms of yesterday, the skyscraper and the highway, are portrayed in films as being the signs of modernity and progress, while low density housing with greenery are seen as agrarian and rural. These modernist ideals have a long shelf life in the national film industry.

Modernist-inspired city planning of the 20th century catered to the needs of industrial capital. We lived in the leafy low rise suburbs, worked in the soulless glass blocks of central business districts and went on vacation to recuperate. In the name of planning efficiency, a set of binary principals were followed that separated your home from your workplace, your private life from your public life and more importantly your work from your vacations.

The development of the camera in the 19th century began obscuring these binaries, and had a profound impact on the way that built space began being conceived. Cities and spaces started evolving from being richly ornamented, and compartmentalised to being more open, transparent, and legible to the camera. The ubiquitous lens also began encroaching into people's private domains and transmitting those images to the public at large. Private spaces got increasingly more accessible to the public, and the binary began to blur.

Through the use of photographs, individuals began to leverage their lifestyles and homes to create an illusion of affluent leisure for the public at large to consume. It was not long before cities too began doing

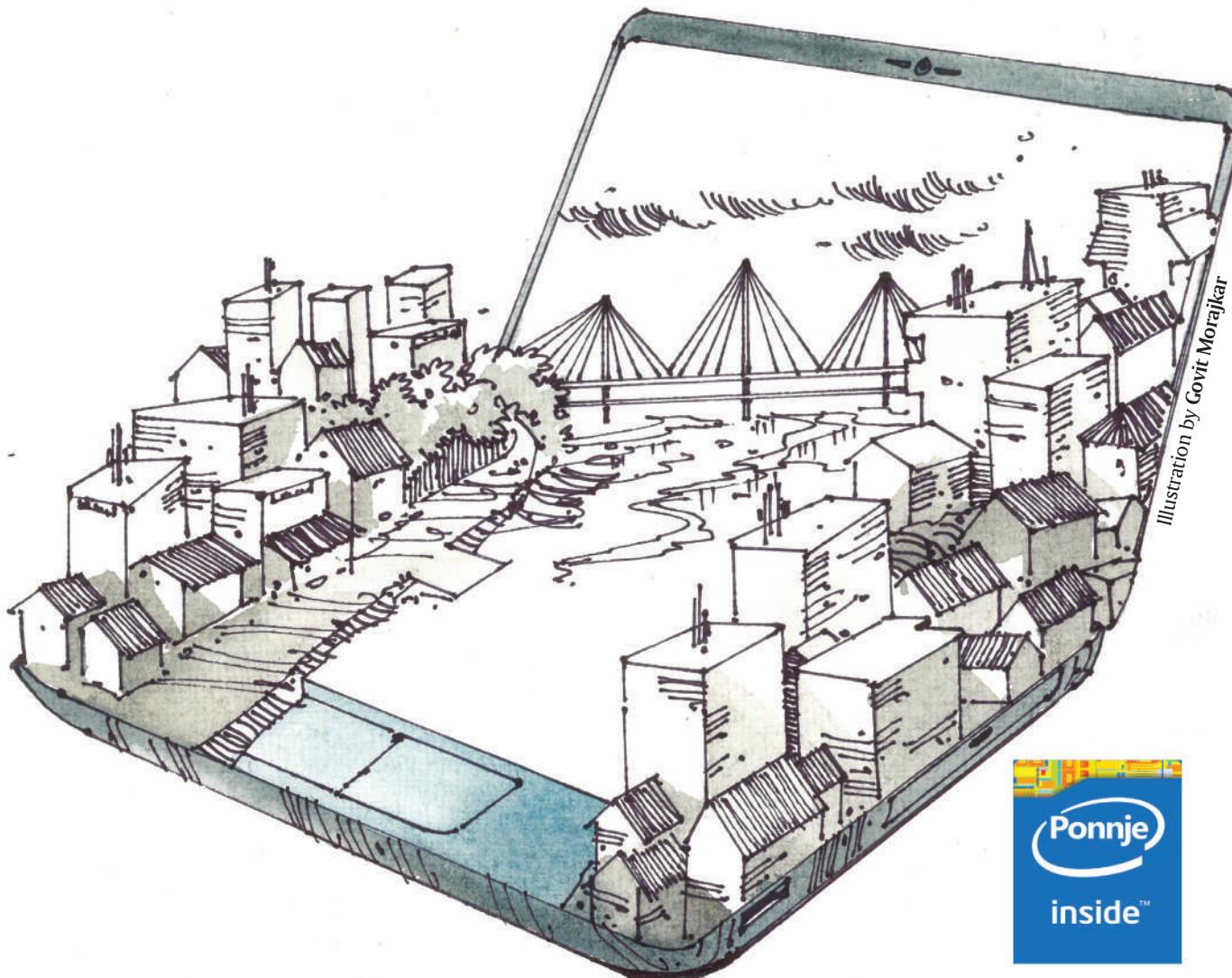


Illustration by Govir Morajkar



the same. They no longer had to rely on the development of infrastructure to attract investments, but could also use a controlled set of images to promote a desired lifestyle and draw the attention of the best talent.

The evolution of the motion camera and the rapid proliferation of films accelerated this trend. Through the use of sets, entire cities and virtual communities could be created virtually without ever having to be physically materialized. It made us spectators to a world of fantasy and illusion, but also increased our ability to conduct surveillance on a mass scale.

The development of the internet and webcam has made the physical and material world increasingly redundant at the level of the individual. It has collapsed the binaries of work-vacation, public-private, local-global and day-night into your home and into your bed. We can work, sleep, socialize, and create virtual social relationships and neighbourhoods online without having ever to dress up for the day. It has wiped out the need for actors and spectators, broadcasters and consumers, as we now embody all of these categories individually while laying waste to entire industries. As long as we

can plug into the creative industry, and economically leverage ourselves on social media, we have a bright future ahead of us. The same applies for cities.

The American author Truman Capote once said: "I am a completely horizontal author. I can't think unless I'm lying down, either in bed or stretched on a couch and with a cigarette and coffee handy."

As the pandemic has shown, the 21st century tech worker will be some version of him, probably living and working on a bed, being watched over, and having access to a beach. Then and now, Panjim will be the city to be in.

SHORT TAKES

Being a film lover, interacting with people who share the same interests, is what brings me to IFFI. I look forward to watching three films tomorrow. *Outsider* is at the top of my list.

Ezhil, film director, Chennai



I am looking forward to discovering new exciting Indian films this year, especially the Bengali and Konkani ones because we usually only get to watch the big Bollywood films in France.

Marianne Borgo, Actress, France



IFFI is the main meeting point for the purpose of cinema only. I love the ambience Goa has to offer and I'm looking forward to meeting filmmakers from all over the world.

Jayaram Swami, Screen writer, Kerala



I'm looking forward to the foreign films that will be screened at IFFI this year. My favourite film is *Lawrence of Arabia*, it shows time, places, and people in a very unique way.

Sammitra Kale, Software engineer, Pune

The Running Man

BY SACHIN CHATTE

When a civil servant rattles off names like Kim Ki-duk (the art-house Korean director), you know he knows his cinema. Also, when you think of a bureaucrat, you might conjure up someone bookish, who has excelled in academics and civil service exams – you wouldn't really think of someone who has run several half marathons and is aspiring to run a full marathon someday soon. But that is Dr Tariq Thomas, the CEO of Entertainment Society of Goa, who took charge earlier this year.

As happens with a festival of this magnitude, there are always a million things to handle right until the last minute, which can stress out anyone involved, but Dr Thomas – his degree is in medicine – looks preternaturally calm, fresh and relaxed, like a batsman who has the asking run rate well under control. "If I look like that, I am happy to hear that, it is a good sign," he said breaking the ice in speaking to *The Peacock*.

"When I joined ESG, I was quite comfortable because our organization has handled the festival before, but then I learnt that every edition throws up its own set of challenges; for example, we don't have Kala Academy this year because of the renovation so we had to make up by using the multiplex in Porvorim to compensate," he said.

With a change in the host television broadcaster, a few of the arrangements for the opening ceremony have differed from past years, while unseasonal rains have also played spoilsport in the preparation.

An IAS officer of the 2011 batch, apart from being the CEO of ESG, Dr Thomas has many other responsibilities in the governance of India's smallest state, and looks after multiple portfolios including Urban Development, Transport, Science and Technology. He is also the nodal officer for the Swachh Bharat Mission and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

Dr Thomas has been in Goa for over three years, and feels that each portfolio presents its own set of challenges. Even then, being the CEO of ESG is a rather unique assignment. "There are a lot of moving parts and issues to deal with

when it comes to something like IFFI; it requires a better understanding of people and dynamism in solving matters. One can prepare and put all plans in place, but no battle plan ever survives contact with the enemy," he said, quoting the Prussian Field Marshal, Helmuth von Moltke.

Since the festival involves several entities, he feels that adaptability and manoeuvrability, along with quick and sound decision-making in moments of crisis, are all key elements.

Cinema is one of Dr Thomas's passions. Back in 2012, while on probation in Goa, he attended IFFI. That was the year when Kim Ki-duk was a guest. "I remember watching four to five movies a day during that edition. We used to start watching from early morning and stayed back till the last show – our eyeballs would turn square by the time we finished, but I enjoyed every bit of it," he reminisced.

Becoming the CEO of ESG has brought that connect back. "Even though I regularly watch movies on OTT, I am still a theatre person, and that experience cannot be replaced," he said, adding that he loves all genres except horror – "there is so much horror and trauma in real life, why would I want to see more?"

Dr Thomas hails from Kerala, one of the bastions of quality cinema in the country, and is delighted to see the resurgence in Malayalam cinema, with likes of Fahadh Faasil and others taking centre stage.

But he does admit his main passion is running: "When you work long hours, it is important to keep yourself healthy and fit. Right after the festival ends, I am hoping to get back out there on the roads."



I don't come to the festive with any preconditioning or expectations. I look for good cinema in different categories. A film must be cinematic to the core and must enhance your understanding.

Dr Anmol,
Kholapur,
Maharashtra



I look forward to actor-oriented performances. I really enjoyed watching *Joker*, the intensity of the performance had the whole audience hooked.

Jigoy PR, Associate
film professor FTII,
Kerala



The rate of actors and directors coming to IFFI is a lot, really looking forward to meeting them.

Vishal
Signapurker,
Works in
administration,
Panjim



This is my first internship here so I'm super excited to mingle around and experience what IFFI has to offer.

Saisha, Mass
communication
student, Goa

THE HYBRID RITUAL

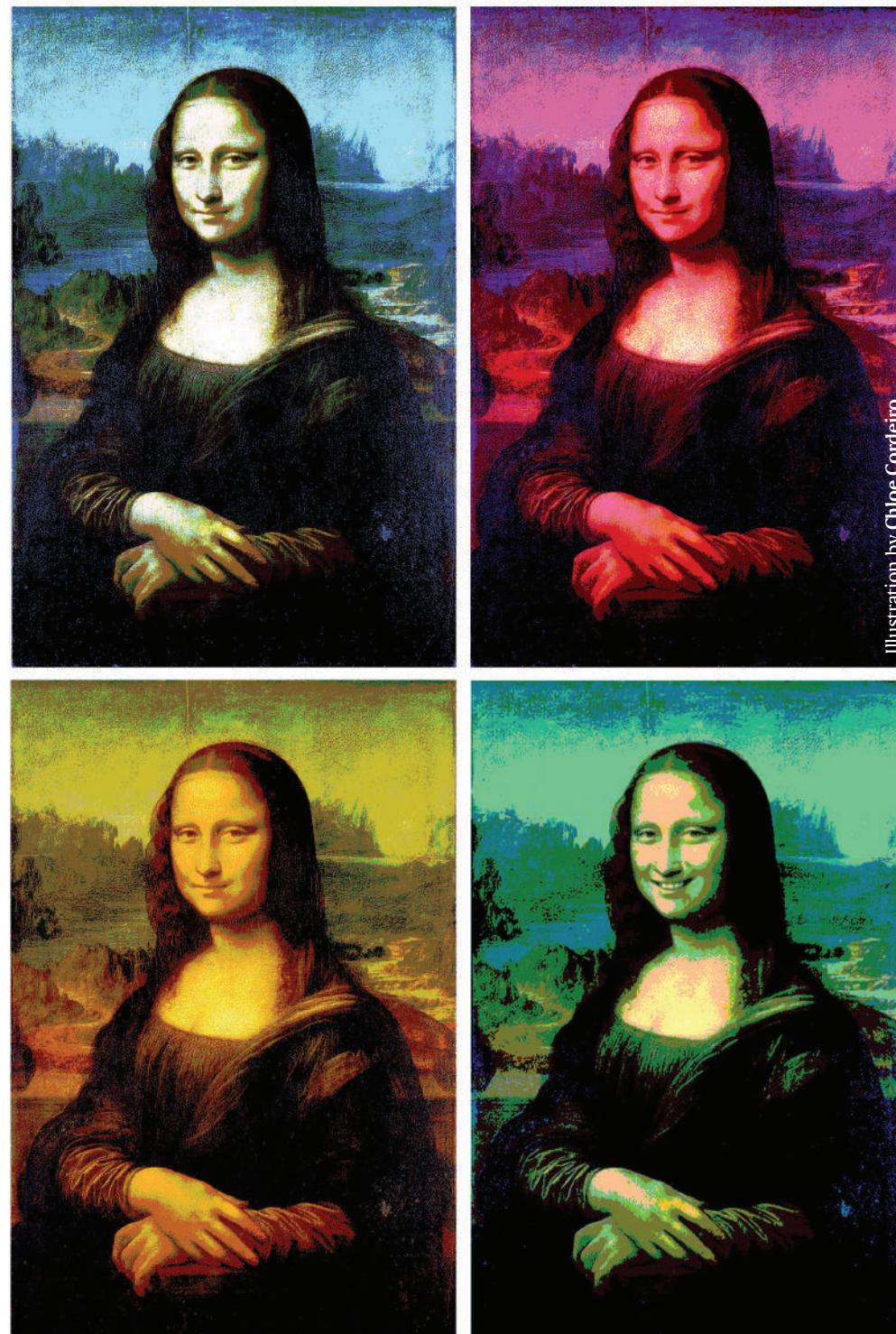
My work as a curator and art historian is about getting up-close and personal with objects, materials, and artists' thoughts and spaces. These encounters with contemporary or historical materials are always accompanied by the energy that the items carry, and the silent stories that fill the atmosphere surrounding them. It is a physical experience as much as it can be an emotional or psychological one.

When the pandemic began, I questioned my ability to learn a new language of seeing, listening, and communicating through flattened screens. Being suddenly distanced from multisensory experiences, I realised how much I relied on them for inspiration. As commonly felt across the spectrum of urban dwellers, I also understood how privileged I was in having access to those digital modes of communication that were unavailable to such a large portion of the population.

The sweeping transition between the physical and virtual world impacted the cultural industry enormously. Art, in general, is perceived as "non-essential"; it suffers the first budget cuts, and is at the very bottom of any agenda of policy development. Artists and artisans of all sorts were left adrift, with the very basis of their sustenance — an audience — abruptly cut off. Museums and art galleries were locked up, theatres went empty, screens and stages went silent. As the forced shift to virtual spaces began, people were left disoriented; some struggled, a majority adapted in different ways and with varied degrees of comfort and success.

The human rituals of focused interaction with art — whether viewing a priceless object in a museum or experiencing a director's magnum opus in a cinema theatre — were abruptly transformed, and newer rituals began to take their place. Here, the all-powerful internet is key.

Many of us have survived the utter isolation and distancing during the pandemic because of the internet, and numerous streaming platforms that were like life-savers. We were provided with constant entertainment, filling in for the lack of



human contact and the distancing from professional spaces of work. Regardless of how good a television set is, there is no comparison to the experience of sitting in a darkened theatre, awaiting the lighting up of the screen in larger-than-life narratives.

Yet, screens, during the pandemic, have become smaller and smaller. There are many grand theatrical compositions in which teams of writers, filmmakers, and technicians have worked towards providing a spectacular experience for viewers, now viewed on 8 x 12 or 6 x 4 inch blocks. The awe-inspiring sensation of rich colours and textures, sounds and experiential aspects are reduced to a bare minimum. The options of pause, rewind, fast-forward and delay, seem to produce a fragmented engagement with the art form — yet these are ingrained in our new rituals.

Over the past year, working on virtual exhibitions and viewing rooms for various artists, I have felt a similar dilution of the sensory experience of visual art. In this split-screen universe, massive sculptures in the round or paintings with complex textures are transformed into flat icons with no scale. The magic of walking into a physical gallery, with the lighting and ambience just-so, is something I have missed deeply.

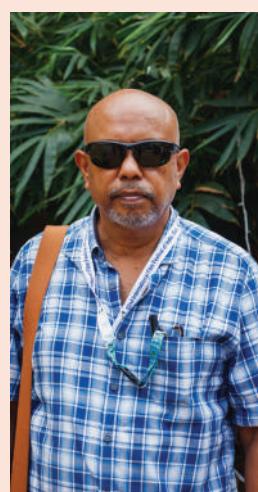
This is the time for hybrid rituals. A virtual space cannot be a substitute for the physical one, but in a view to moving forward positively, our responsibility as creative people is to modify and customise our methods of making, sharing, and consuming art of every sort — because the presence of art in life is non-negotiable. The art world is now supporting NFTs (non-fungible tokens) and the making and buying of new forms of art; so also, filmmakers are unlearning and innovating with methods of sharing their work with audiences despite the limitations of the new interfaces.

A platform like the IFFI, coming back as a hybrid physical + virtual festival this year, is a thoroughly encouraging sign. As artists, actors, directors, curators, and audiences await ideal non-distanced conditions for art, this episode will go a long way in feeding our spirits.



Film is like family to me. *Mother India* is my all-time favourite followed by *Moglaya*.

Dashrath Kachrawat,
Filmmaker, Actor



I appreciate the E-ticketing system at IFFI, it makes everything a lot more convenient. I was super thrilled to hear that they will be screening four Assamese films.

Nayan Prasad,
Actor, Producer,
Goa



Once Upon a Time is one of my favourite films because it talks about nature. I was looking forward to a film called *The Restless*, but unfortunately the seats were fully booked.

Mayank
Kumarzha,
Aspiring
Filmmaker, Patna



I hope to see the Brazilian films the most, especially with all the upheavals the country has gone through. and also more Konkani films which usually don't get featured as often as the others.

Yashodhara
Katkar,
Film Critic,
Mumbai

A TOOFAN NAMED AKRITI

BY URVASHI BHUGUNA

In 1974, a woman turned up at the Lucknow railway station with her two children, claiming to be a direct descendant of the royal family of Oudh. She then moved to a train station in Delhi, and lived there for ten years protesting against the alleged loss of their royal lands.

The family was eventually granted housing in a 14th century hunting lodge tucked away in a wild, forested corner of Delhi, where they lived without the most basic amenities for decades. It wasn't till 2019 that Ellen Barry of the New York Times unearthed the depths of the deception that had occurred. Her story inspired Mumbai-based actor Akriti Singh to make *Toofan Mail 8 Down* (2021), a fictionalized take on the mother's journey. Singh spoke to *The Peacock* about what makes a good story and the simple audacity required to make a film today.

What made you see the potential in this story?

I have realized over the years that "drama" is something that is not normal. There is everyday life, and then there is a break in everyday life, and that break causes the drama. That is the point where creativity comes in. Already, in the real incident, this woman who landed up at the station broke the codes of normal things. So, it is already very dramatic. I mean, it was right there – someone just needed to understand its layers. I could have written a poem about it, but I made a film that I think is poetic.

Is the story chiefly about the mother, or do the children also feature in your story?

Only the seed of the story comes from the incident. The film does not have Begum Wilayat Mahal, it has Queen Alamaara the Second. The children aren't in the film. Everything is different. My film is a poetic take on the person who broke the normal and created drama.

Why did you name the film *Toofan Mail 8 Down*?

Toofan Mail is the train that comes from Calcutta to New Delhi. The number is Eight Down. Right now, we have these big digits for train numbers, like 12367. But back in 1974, there were so few trains, that they had single digit numbers. And 'down' meant Calcutta to New Delhi and 'up' meant New Delhi to Calcutta. I was amazed when I spoke to a railway person and learned about this. So, I named it after the train the woman took. But as I said earlier, a toofan breaks normal things, a toofan entered the station.



What were some of the challenges of making this film?

I did not have a producer, so we already knew we had zero money. My entire team is from a theatre background. I run a theatre company called Storia Senza Storia, which is Italian for 'story without a story'. We are not very rich people! [Laughs.] But we knew we have brains and talent. The journey was really fulfilling and we are here right now. It's a dream come true to be recognized by IFFI. Such a small budget, independent film made by a woman! It's amazing. We are all thrilled and happy. And right now, we can't think of anything that was challenging.

What would you say to aspiring filmmakers who want to tell unusual stories?

I would say, go ahead and tell your story. I live in Bombay and am surrounded by aspiring filmmakers, aspiring actors waiting for the money to happen, waiting for someone to come and give them a push. Just go ahead and make it. The times have changed. You can shoot a film on a mobile camera. If the film and story is good, and if you have something to say, nothing can stop you.

Toofan Mail 8 Down is playing at INOX Audi 2, Panjim at 5 PM today.

Photo by Assavri Kulkarni



IFFI is one of India's biggest cultural events and being here is like being on a mini world tour of films. And Goa is the perfect platform for an event like this.

Geetha,
Employee at LIC,
Kerala



It will be great to see more content based Indian cinema and to meet independent film makers with new creative ideas.

Deepak Lobo,
Film maker, Goa



This is my first time at IFFI. Bengali films are my favourite and I'm excited to check out the line-up for the festival.

Vibha Shah, Film
student, Pune



I'm looking forward to watching a wide range of films that aren't part of the mainstream. I really appreciate good cinema.

Shubham
Bhattacharya,
Co-founder of Live
News Goa, Goa



Cock, stork, and two smoking squirrels

Liberty and Light

BY VIVEK MENEZES

The freshly spruced halls of the old Goa Medical College building are hallowed ground far beyond any contemporary glamour from the red carpets in their newest avatar as the headquarters for the International Film Festival of India. This lovely old building is in fact the cradle of scientific medicine in Asia, and was the crucial training ground for the very first allopathic doctors to fan across the oceans from Japan to Mozambique to Brazil.

That literally incredible lore bristles with the biographies of very many exemplary women and men, but standing head and shoulders above everyone else is Francisco Luis Gomes (1829-1869). He was one of the greatest polymaths of the 19th century world, and an Indian intellectual giant of inestimable calibre.

When you have a few minutes to spare, dear IFFI delegates, please take a very short stroll down the tree-lined main road to Campal – it will take precisely four minutes from the festival multiplex – to view his statue, pay due respects, and spend a moment or two of contemplation about the scale of this spectacularly accomplished man's achievements, even if they remain unaccountably unknown anywhere outside his homeland in Goa.

What did Gomes not do? He was such a star in this medical school that he was immediately appointed to its faculty. Very quickly, he also catapulted to chief surgeon in the Portuguese military. A natural polyglot, with rare mastery of Konkani, Portuguese, and French, he was also highly proficient in Latin, English, Spanish, Italian, and Marathi. In 1866, he wrote one of the very first Indian novels, *Os Brahamanes*, which vividly depicted the 1857 Indian Rebellion, and argued – much before any other thinker deployed similar rhetoric – that “impartial men who are moved by justice and not by racism want India to be ruled by Indians.”

At the age of just 31, he was elected to represent Margão and Goa in the parliament at Lisbon. Almost

immediately afterwards, Gomes became acclaimed for his acuity, balance, oratorical skills, and fierce independence of mind. He kept fighting relentlessly against the practice of slavery (which was still legal in Portugal) as well as all the other iniquities of colonial rule by the European powers.

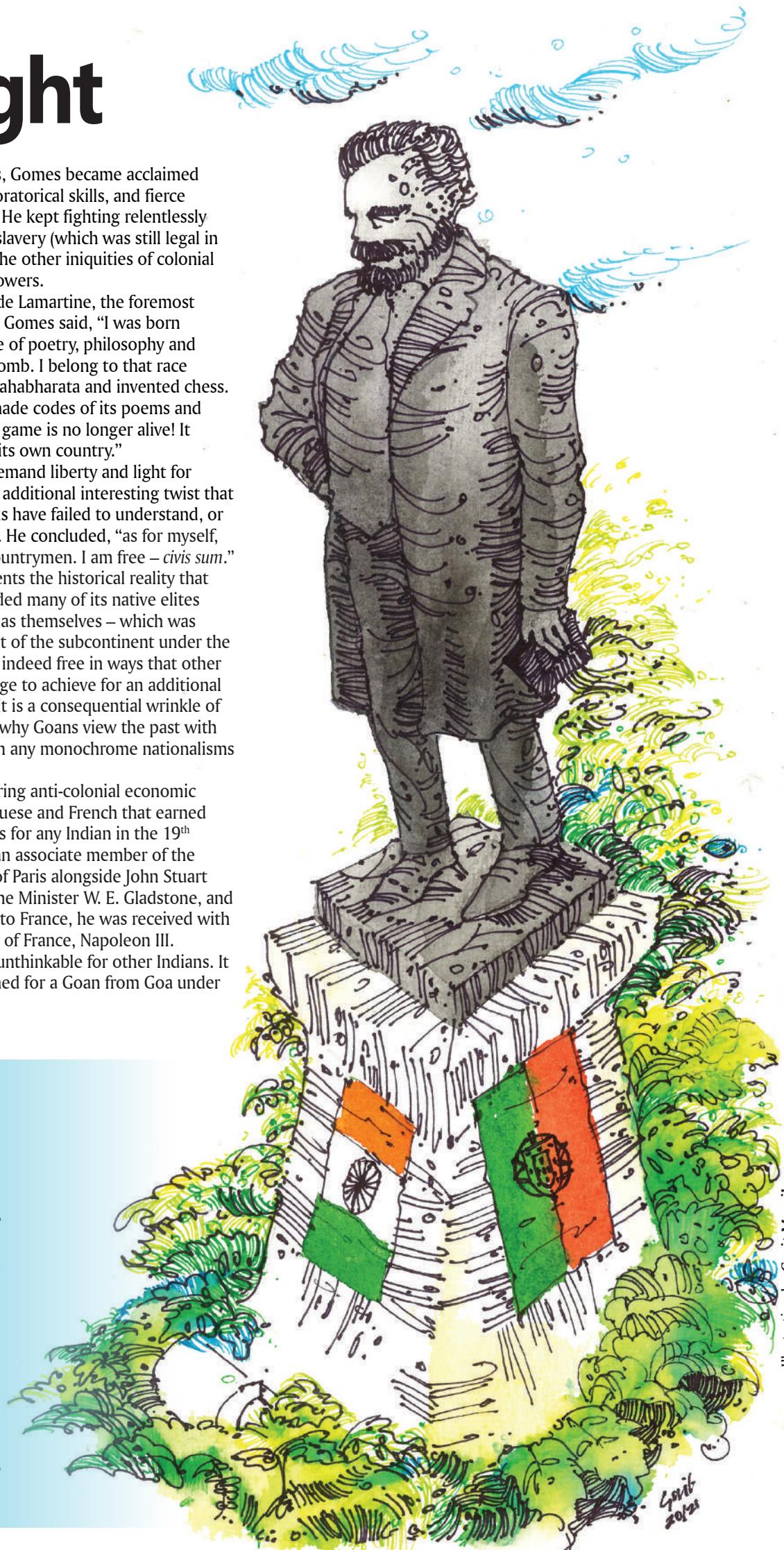
Writing to Alphonse de Lamartine, the foremost statesman of the times, Gomes said, “I was born in India, once the cradle of poetry, philosophy and history and now their tomb. I belong to that race which composed the Mahabharata and invented chess. But this nation which made codes of its poems and formulated politics in a game is no longer alive! It survives imprisoned in its own country.”

Gomes declared, “I demand liberty and light for India” but there was an additional interesting twist that contemporary historians have failed to understand, or even record adequately. He concluded, “as for myself, more happy than my countrymen. I am free – *civis sum*.”

That final line represents the historical reality that Portuguese India accorded many of its native elites exactly the same rights as themselves – which was inconceivable in the rest of the subcontinent under the British – so Gomes was indeed free in ways that other Indians could not manage to achieve for an additional couple of generations. It is a consequential wrinkle of history, which explains why Goans view the past with much more nuance than any monochrome nationalisms could possibly admit.

Gomes wrote pioneering anti-colonial economic analyses in both Portuguese and French that earned him unheard-of honours for any Indian in the 19th century. He was made an associate member of the Society of Economists of Paris alongside John Stuart Mill and the British Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone, and on his subsequent visit to France, he was received with honour by the Emperor of France, Napoleon III.

Every bit of this was unthinkable for other Indians. It could only have happened for a Goan from Goa under Portugal.



Poem of the Day by Urvashi Bahuguna Accounting for Taste

Why am I drawn to what I'm drawn to? A superhero, a miscreant, an artist, and a murder victim walk into a bar, and I follow. I can explain myself easily enough – there is no spot on the horizon far enough. I wonder about the people who'll sit out a six-and-a-half-hour movie, who'll put down good money to watch a person be mauled six ways to Sunday or a pack of teenagers picked off one by one. The ones who'll choose two people railing philosophically at each other for the better part of two beatific hours, never leaving the stuffy frame of their suburbia. I suppose one woman's insipid is another man's alive. Either way, the stories have our numbers, they have us all figured out.

Illustration by Govit Morajkar

PEACOCK PICKS



Parallel Mothers

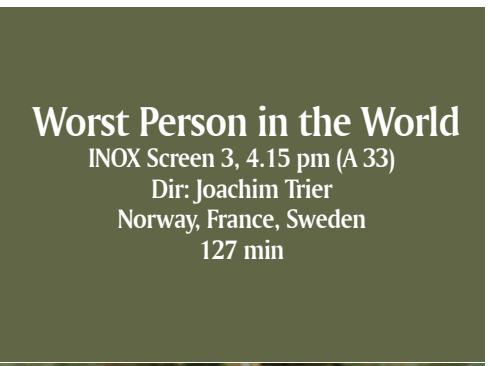
INOX Screen 3, 7.30 pm (A 34)
Dir: Pedro Almodovar
Spain
123 min

Luzzu
INOX Porvorim, Screen 1, 11.30 a.m. (A 61)
Dir: Alex Camilleri
Malta, USA
94 min



The Restless

INOX Screen 3, 10.15 a.m. (A 31)
Dir: Joachim Lafosse
France, Belgium, Luxembourg
117 min



Worst Person in the World

INOX Screen 3, 4.15 pm (A 33)
Dir: Joachim Trier
Norway, France, Sweden
127 min

52nd INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA GOA2021 21st November 2021							
INOX AUDI 1 (483)	A11 11:00 Inagural Ceremony of India @ 75 felicitation of 75 creative mind		A12 14:00 Inaugural Ceremony of BRICS Section Dia De los Muertos (CF) Dir: Victor Ryzhakov Russia 86 min 2021		A13 17:00 Charlotte (IC) Dir: Simon Franco Paraguay Spanish & Guarani 79 min 2021 (AP)		A14 19:30 Rafaela (WP) Dir: Tito Rodriguez Dominican Republic Spanish 93 min 2021 (WP)
INOX AUDI 2 (287) INDIAN PANORAMA	A21 10:00 INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF INDIAN PANORAMA SECTION IP Opening ceremony at 10 A.M VED... THE VISIONARY (IP- NF) Dir: Rajiv Parkash English 63 min SEMKHOR (IP-F) (IC) Dir: Aimee Baruah Dimasa 93 min	BREAK FOR SANITIZING	A22 15:00 VEERANGANA (IP- NF) Dir: Kishore Kalita Assamese 21 min EIGHT DOWN TOOFAAN MAIL (IP-F) Dir: Akriti Singh Hindi 97.18 min	BREAK FOR SANITIZING	A23 17:40 THE SPELL OF PURPLE (IP- NF) Dir: Prachee Bajania Gujarati 24 min BOOMBA RIDE (IP-F) Dir: Biswajeet Bora, Mishing 76 min		
INOX AUDI 3 (231)	A31 10:15 The Restless (WP) Dir: Joachim Lafosse France, Belgium, Luxembourg French 117min 2021 (IP)		A32 13:30 PM Atlantide (WP) Dir: Yuri Ancarani Italy, France, US, Qatar Italian 100 min 2021 (IP)		A33 16:15 Worst Person In The World (FK) Dir: Joachim Trier Norway, France, Sweden Norwegian 127 mins 2021 (IP)		A34 19:30 Parallel Mothers (MoC) Dir: Pedro Almodovar Spain Spanish 123 min 2021 (IP)
INOX AUDI 4 (211)	A41 10:30 The Outsider (Szabadgyalog) (RET) Dir: Béla Tarr Hungary 1981 Hungarian 146 min		A42 14:00 Dhamaka Dir: Ram Madhvani India Hindi 103 min 2021		A43 16:45 Fighter (Spri) Dir: Jérô Yun Korea Korean 103 min 2020 (IP)		A44 19:30 Zahori (DD) Dir: Mari Alessand Rini Switzerland, Argentina, Chile, France 105 min 2021
MAQUINEZ PALACE 1 (232)	A51 11:00 Absence (WP) Dir: Ali Mosaffa Czech Republic Slovakia English, Czech, Farsi 106 min 2021 (AP)		A52 14:00 Mr. Madhur Bhandarkar Moderated by Mr. Taran Adarsh Masterclass on filmmaking 60 mins		A53 16:30 Mr. Prasoon Joshi Moderated Mr. Anant Vijay Masterclass on 90 mins		A54 17:30 Creating Cult Icons: India's own James Bond (007) with The Family Man In-conversation session with Raj, DK, Aparna Purohit, Manoj Bajpayee, Samantha Ruth Prabhu & Moderator: Ankur Pathak 60 mins
INOX Porvorim (AUDI 1)	A61 11:30 Luzzu (FK) Dir: Alex Camilleri Malta, USA Maltese 94 mins 2021 (IP)	BREAK FOR SANITIZING	A62 14:30 Damnation (Kárhozat) (RET) Dir: Béla Tarr Hungary Hungarian 116 min 1988		A63 18:00 Clara Sola (WP) Dir: Nathalie Álvarez Mesén Sweden, Costa Rica, Belgium Spanish 106 min 2021 (IP)		
INOX 2 Porvorim (AUDI 2)	A71 11:45 A Writer's Odyssey (CF) Dir: Lu Yang China Mandarin 130 min 2021		A72 15:00 On Wheels (CF) Dir: Mauro D'Addio Brazil Portuguese 72 min 2017		A73 17:30 Doctor Liza (CF) Dir: Oksana Karas Russia Russian 120 min 2020		
INOX 3 Porvorim (AUDI 3)	A81 12:00 Aparajito (The Unvanquished) Dir: Satyajit Ray Bengali 127 min 1956	SANITIZING	A82 15:15 Andhadhun (Ind75) Dir: Sriram Raghavan Hindi 139 min 2019		A83 18:30 Thaneer Thaneer (Ind75) Dir: K. Balachander Tamil 143 min 1981		



Today's stunning, surreal cover art work by BhisajiGadekar juxtaposes our favourite bird with the sunny, glorious sounds of Goa's village

brass bands. These riotous combos play for all kinds of festive and solemn occasions, from baptisms to funerals. And it is from those deep roots that emerged our profound tryst with Jazz, along with the master musicians who traversed from Big Band to Bollywood, creating some of the greatest soundtracks in the history of cinema.



Find us online
<https://iffigoa.org/peacock/>