

THE

PEACOCK

FRIDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2022



On-Screen Goans

BY SAMIKSHA MANDURKAR

Out of the eleven entries, a total of seven Konkani "non-feature" films have been chosen in the Goa section at the 53rd International Film Festival of India. The casts and crews who were part of the selected seven all had the sense of accomplishment on their faces, when *The Peacock* ventured to meet them. *Ardo Dis*, *Before I Sleep*, *Nimnya Disak* and *The White Dream* were screened on 23rd November and *The White Shirt*, *Wind Chimes* and *Goy Swatantryache Homkhan* are scheduled for 27th November.

"It took almost one and a half months to just study the script and the characters. It was a bit difficult because it was about schizophrenia and I had to learn about it in detail," said Alisha Menezes, actress in *The White Dream*. "Prior to this film I knew there were such issues, but after studying it I have begun to look differently at the people who suffer from this." Playing a character in the movie does change the life of an actor in some way, and the empathy Menezes developed opened a soft corner in her heart for people going through mental health issues.

Directed by Himanshu Singh, the film *Ardo Dis* has just two characters – a married couple. "They talk about their misunderstandings and how love and

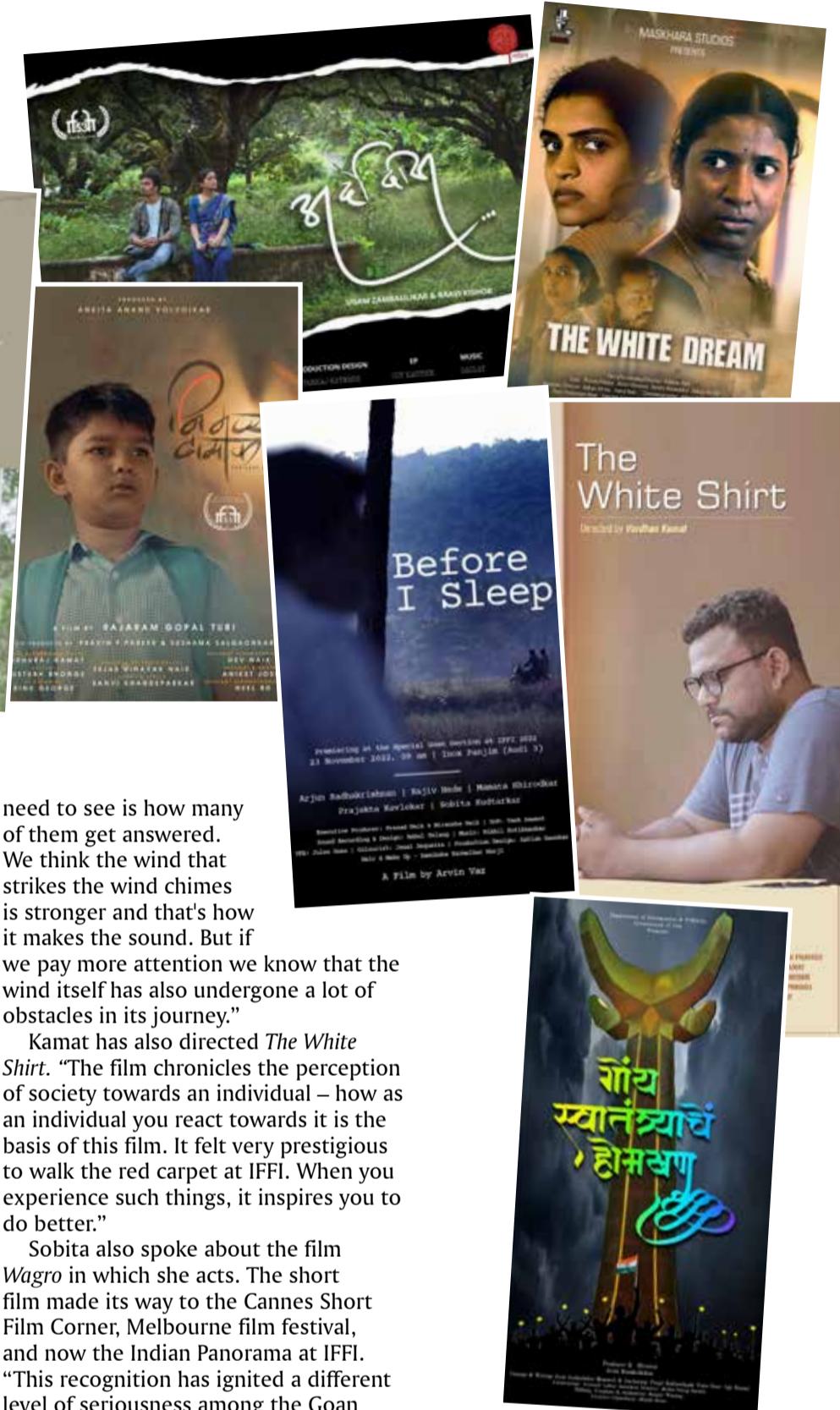
understanding overpowers every ugliness any relationship can face," says Ugam Shashikant Zambaulikar who plays the husband.

Before I Sleep by Arvin Vaz, follows an estranged and dysfunctional family of three. Sobita Kudtarkar, the lead actress, said this film explores "how being in such a dysfunctional family

affects the relationships and whether a good act before one's death can possibly make things better, for the ones left behind."

"This is my debut film as a director," Rajaram Turi proudly told *The Peacock*. His film *Nimnya Disak* dwells on how we humans should pull back our sense of humanity rather than losing it in our day-to-day lives. "Though a debutant, I was quite comfortable directing a crew of around 40 people," he said.

"Just as the wind has to strike against wind chimes to make a sound, we as humans require someone to connect with us to find the positive energy from within," says a quote from *Wind Chimes*. The writer and director Vardhan Kamat, a familiar face in Goa, says, "Niyati is depressed and tangled, like the knots in a rope. A therapist comes along to try and light up her path and brings in a lot of questions too. What we



need to see is how many of them get answered. We think the wind that strikes the wind chimes is stronger and that's how it makes the sound. But if we pay more attention we know that the wind itself has also undergone a lot of obstacles in its journey."

Kamat has also directed *The White Shirt*. "The film chronicles the perception of society towards an individual – how as an individual you react towards it is the basis of this film. It felt very prestigious to walk the red carpet at IFFI. When you experience such things, it inspires you to do better."

Sobita also spoke about the film *Wagro* in which she acts. The short film made its way to the Cannes Short Film Corner, Melbourne film festival, and now the Indian Panorama at IFFI. "This recognition has ignited a different level of seriousness among the Goan filmmakers. More teams are coming forward and I personally believe with optimism and hopefulness that this is the 'new wave in Konkani cinema,'" said the young actress.

Talking about *Goy Swatantryache Homkhan*, the director, writer, and producer, Jyoti Kunkolienkar shared her

inspiration behind this documentary, "I always wanted to showcase the legacy of all the freedom fighters, the way they smiled at all the tortures inflicted upon them for Goa, for the generations coming ahead."

MASTERCLASS
'TO CUT OR NOT TO CUT'
11:30 - 13:00
Moderator: Baradwaj Rangan Speaker: A. Sreekar Prasad

IN CONVERSATION
'CASTING IN NEW INDIAN CINEMA'
13:30 - 15:00
Moderator: Avinash Lohana
Speakers: Mukesh Chhabra, Kshitij Mehta

MASTERCLASS
'HOW TO PITCH YOUR ANIMATION IP'
15:30 - 17:00
Speaker: Dr. Christian Jezdic

MASTERCLASS
'BEATS AND RHYTHM'
17:30 - 19:00
Moderator: Baradwaj Rangan
Speakers: G V Prakash Kumar, Sneha Khanwalkar

Pragyaverse

Waste

beer can, soda fizz, mountain spring in plastic
banana peel, fungal bun, biodegradable cutlery, everyday
two hundred pink bags balloon with a thousand guts
disposal, too, is celebration
something old, something new
something borrowed, something blue
orange latex glove on one hand, green glass bangles on the other
i don't watch movies, she says
shah rukh and me, she rustles the limp cardboard
we'll end up like this, only

Poem of the Day by Pragya Bhagat

“I don’t believe in a perfect cut”

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

The jury is still out on which film will take home the Golden Peacock in 2022 – but, one thing is certain, Nadav Lapid has already won *The Peacock*'s award for rockstar attitude. The Israeli-French filmmaker has only one regret about agreeing to join the jury at the 53rd International Film Festival of India: "I have been just watching movies since arriving in Goa, so I have not really had the time to relax, network, and enjoy the festival. I have been tasting Goa in bits and pieces."

The chair of the jury says that "at the same time, this is a huge privilege and I only said yes to India because I felt I was missing out on experiencing an amazing culture." Lapid says he has heard a lot about Goa from his comrades during the compulsory military service that all Israeli men and women go through, and not everything was particularly inspirational.

The 47-year-old offered *The Peacock* an insight into the working relationships and professional dynamic among his fellow jury members who hail from India, France, Spain, and The United States. "There is a healthy dynamic, and as the days pass, we will get to know each other better on a personal level. However, funny, when we sit down for deliberations at the end of this jury exercise to decide the winner, we will realise our differences. Personal rapport can be contrastingly different from professional synergy," says Lapid.

"There are some good films in the screening room and I am personally looking for a film that moves me differently. I am not looking for perfect filmmaking because I don't believe in a perfect cut. In my world, I like to keep it real. I need to feel confused, shocked, amazed by something I haven't seen before," says the Golden Bear and Cannes Jury Prize award-winning filmmaker.

There is nothing pretentious about this Paris-based filmmaker, who will have spent over 50 hours watching movies by the time IFFI 2022 completes, trying to capture the movie that moves him the most. "I feel privileged to have the freedom to be true and genuine to myself as a filmmaker and make strange, yet stirring movies," says Lapid, advising filmmakers, "not to live in anxiety about what their body of work will

look like 10 years from now."

As an industry trailblazer, and acclaimed film director, Lapid clearly prioritizes experience and lived situations over in-depth research. "I know of filmmakers who spend years procrastinating on the right research, instead of putting their faith in experiences and testimonies available to them. In the meanwhile, ideas get stale and the passion is lost. There is no guarantee for your film's success even after spending decades in the profession, therefore, it is best to dive in wholeheartedly, and commit to the story that moves you."

Lapid studied philosophy and literature, before enrolling at the Sam Spiegel Film School in Jerusalem. "Film school was very competitive, and it gave you an opportunity to process situations taking place within yourself and around yourself, and shape your ideas of the world. Jerusalem was obviously a conflict zone, but there is also conflict within us, and as young filmmakers in a conflict zone, we had to embrace it all," says the Tel-Aviv born filmmaker, who has won over 20 international awards.

Not too impressed with artists getting involved in politics, Lapid believes that "a filmmaker's primary medium to communicate a message should be cinema." He expressed his surprise at the Indian national anthem being played at the inaugural ceremony of IFFI 2022, which was followed by "incomprehensible chants". He says, "I completely admire the fierce patriotism, but that was an underwhelming experience for an artiste at an international event."

When prompted to opine on the growing governmental camaraderie between India and Israel, he says, "It is not appropriate for a filmmaker to be showcased as an ambassador of the whole country, as he does not represent the sentiment of millions of people of his country of birth or residence. I have no responsibility to represent Israel. If I wanted to represent Israel, I would have gotten into diplomacy. I am an artiste – and I travel the world, keeping an open mind to experiencing different cultures as an artiste, and that's how I would like it to be."



Photo by Michael Praveen



I love the horror genre, it gives you the unexpected. When I watch films I look at visuals, I like to focus on attention to detail, foreshadowing and symmetry.

Aanaa
Content Creator,
Goa



Ship of Theseus was a movie that left me stunned. It is a powerful, well-crafted movie that you understand only in the last minute.

Jonathan Ratner
NGO Worker,
United States



I want to bring our Irula community forward in any way I can. I could feel the mental agony and sadness of the character in *Dhabari Kuruvi*, which helped me prepare for this movie.

Anuprasobhini
Actor, Kerala



My Love Affair With Marriage is a science-based film that is very boldly made by Signe Baumane. On the other hand, Indian animated films are only made for children.

Maheshwar Rao
Consultant,
Hyderabad

Midpoint Musings

BY SACHIN CHATTE

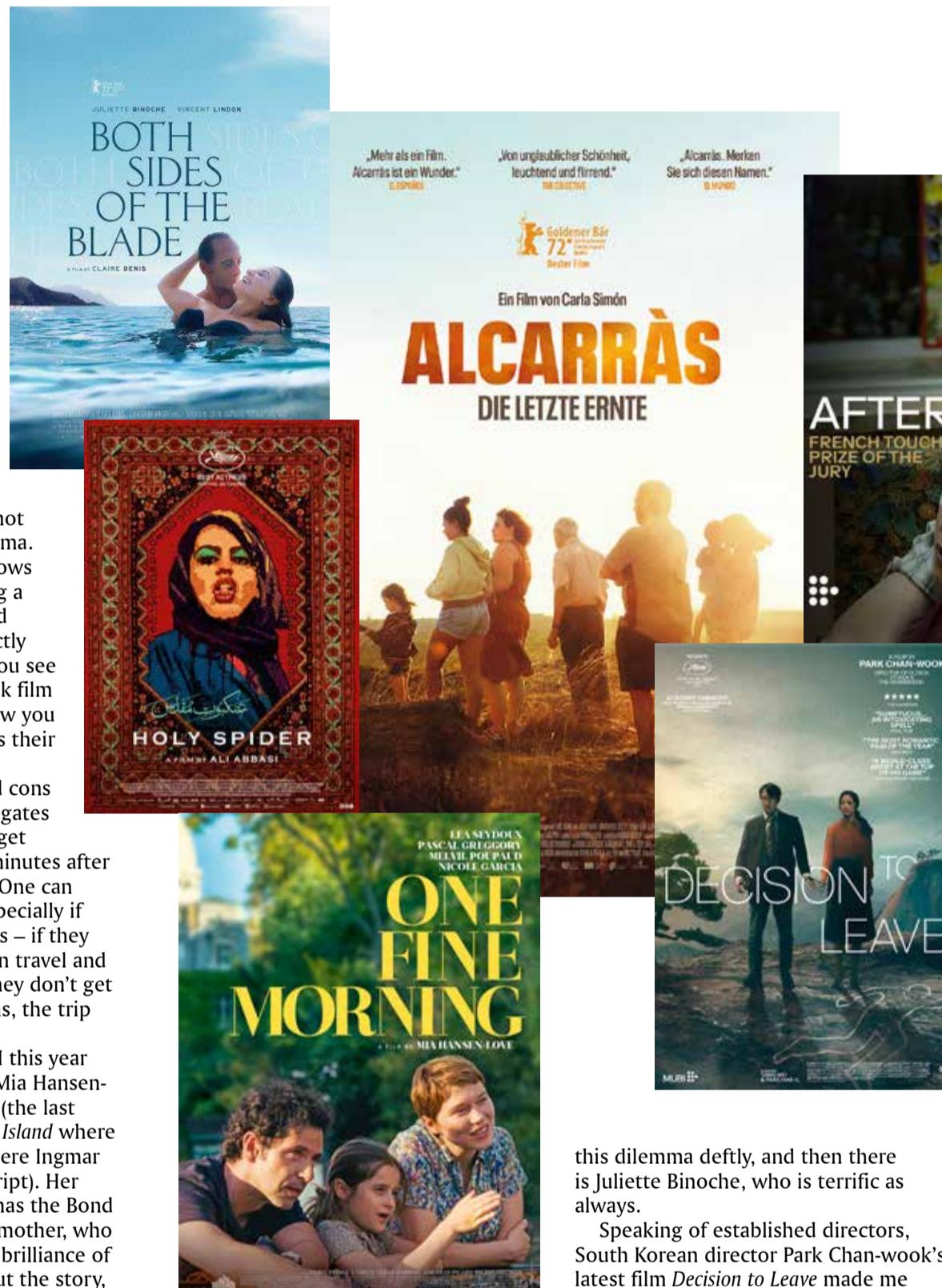
We know this first of all: the 53rd International Film Festival of India has come as a big relief for all cinema lovers who enjoy the process of collective viewing. At this momentous half-way mark, it is amply clear that the crowds are back in full, and watching films as a community experience is has fully returned to vogue.

This year, one can see an unusually high number of youngsters at the festival, which augurs well, not just for IFFI but also for cinema. Almost all the screenings shows have seen full houses barring a few of the retrospectives and older films, and that's perfectly understandable. But when you see a Panahi or a Park Chan-wook film packed to the brim, you know you have an audience that knows their cinema.

There are always pros and cons at every festival – some delegates are unhappy that they can't get to book their choice, even minutes after the bookings open at 8 am. One can understand their anxiety, especially if they are outstation delegates – if they are going to spend money on travel and stay for the festival, and if they don't get to watch their preferred films, the trip can feel futile.

The quality of films at IFFI this year has been solid throughout. Mia Hansen-Løve has been prolific lately (the last festival edition had *Bergman Island* where a couple go to the island where Ingmar Bergman lived, to write a script). Her latest film *One Fine Morning* has the Bond girl Léa Seydoux as a single mother, who reconnects with her ex. The brilliance of this film is not so much about the story, but Hansen-Løve's distinct storytelling, with episodic cuts that drive the narrative.

A lot of films this year have been about the complexity of relationships. A fine example is Claire Denis' *Both Sides of the Blade* where Juliette Binoche plays a



woman who leaves her man for another and a decade later, finds herself attracted to him again. The veteran director, who has also served on the IFFI competition jury in 2013, handles the dynamics of

this dilemma deftly, and then there is Juliette Binoche, who is terrific as always. Speaking of established directors, South Korean director Park Chan-wook's latest film *Decision to Leave* made me wonder, how do you up your game and raise the bar when you have already achieved so much. With films like *Oldboy* (2003) and *Handmaiden* (2016) the director is known for the violence in his films, but though the new film has crime and even a murder, there is no violence.

Chan-wook told the leading man of the film that his character is of a policeman who "doesn't carry a gun, but he carries wet wipes." The film is a masterclass in every segment of film making – writing, editing, acting, camerawork and of course direction, for which Chan-wook won the Best Director award at Cannes.

It is also heartening to see women step up behind the camera – along with Hansen-Løve and Claire Denis, the mid-fest film *Fixation* was directed by Mercedes Bryce Morgan and *Aftersun* is the debut feature of Scottish director Charlotte Wells. Wells' film about the relationship between a father

and daughter has wooed audiences around the globe, and IFFI was no different. The gender ratio among movie directors is still very skewed but it is certainly improving.

Ali Abbasi's *Holy Spider* is also remarkable. Set in Iran, it is about a journalist investigating a serial killer who is bumping off prostitutes on the street. With brilliant acting by Mehdi Bajestani as the serial killer, and Zar Amir-Ebrahimi (who won the Best Actress at Cannes this year) as the investigating journalist, the film is a Danish production and their entry to the Academy Awards this year. Given the sensitivity of the subject, if the film makes the cut, we can expect some fireworks.

Carla Simón's *Alcarràs* that won the Golden Berlin Bear is about a family being evicted from their farm. Its fictional treatment lays bare the harsh realities of displacement happening around the globe. Among many high-quality surprises was the Icelandic film *Beautiful Beings*, dealing with violence among teenagers; *Happiness*, a film about domestic abuse in Kazakhstan that makes uneasy viewing; and Maryam Touzani's *The Blue Caftan*.



I have been invited here for the screening of my film *Lotus Blooms*. It is about the emotional journey of a mother-son relationship.

Asmita Sharma
Actor &
Producer,
Mumbai



My film *Nine* being screened here is a coming-of-age film about a football player who suffers pressure from the media and his family.

Martin
Barrenechea
Director &
Scriptwriter,
Uruguay



The people I have met here have motivated and guided me to move out of my comfort zone and achieve great things in my career.

Mrudula Devi S
Lyricist, Kerala



Cinema is a celebration of life. One thing I love to read at IFFI is *The Peacock*. I love the layout, quality, feel, and smell of the paper.

Parth Dave
Film Reviewer,
Gujarat

Why Loiter?

BY PRAGYA BHAGAT

The Bombay night breeze is a force of nature. In 2011, I ride the last local from Govandi to CST and stand in the doorway of the train. The wind pushes against me. A city of lights surges ahead, unaware of my presence. I walk to Marine Drive, share a plate of raw mango and starfruit with my girlfriends, and watch the Arabian Sea crash on concrete tetrapods. To be outdoors and invisible, in our bodies, is a luxury.

Shilpa Phadke, an associate professor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, is no stranger to inhabiting public spaces. In 2011, she wrote the seminal book *Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets*. More than a decade after its publication, Phadke tells *The Peacock* that loitering is more relevant than ever.

"The people who are most uncomfortable in public spaces are children. They are beginning to be seen as sexual objects by men on the street. At that age, you're learning to navigate the world and you're constantly being told to ignore the stares."

I assume it gets easier with age. Phadke agrees. "As you get older, you feel a much greater sense of belonging to your body." Phadke finds that women who choose to allow their hair to gray naturally get more respect from younger men, but not necessarily from men their own age. With the passage of time, a woman's confidence increases while a man's confidence decreases. "Our research shows that men are used to navigating public space as if they own it. As they age, they worry that someone will pickpocket them or that they will fall. Whereas women, through a lifetime of looking over shoulders, by the time they are in their sixties, they're like, I've got this."

Phadke's interest in public reclamation evokes Olivia Laing's *The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being Alone*. In this book, Laing embraces walking to combat the alienation of living in a metropolis. She writes, "Sometimes as I walked, roaming under the stanchions of the Williamsburg Bridge or following the East River all the way to the silvery hulk of the U.N., I could forget my sorry self, becoming instead as porous and borderless as the mist, pleasurable adrift on the currents of the city."

Has the pandemic changed our engagement with public spaces? The various protests about that took place during the first wave of COVID-19 infections, Phadke notes, were being led by women. "It came out of the larger struggle of women's access to public space, particularly since 2012, but really, over this entire century. This culminated in a protest by women claiming

citizenship on behalf of everybody." The academic cites the protests of Shaheen Bagh and Pinjara Tod. "We need to hold on to that moment now that we've headed back into public spaces."

Phadke enthuses about *Ann* (2022), an Irish film she saw at this year's International Film Festival of India, about a pregnant teenage girl in a rural setting in the 1980s. "There's a conversation about her happening and there's no acknowledgement that she's pregnant, and it's all being played out in public. It's fascinating, because Ireland didn't allow abortion. It also becomes really edgy, because the US is in the process of taking away abortion rights."

At IFFI yesterday, Phadke was a part of a session titled "Breaking the Screen Ceiling: Gender and Work in Hindi Cinema." She reported the findings of a US-funded research project in partnership with TISS' School of Media and Cultural Studies (SMCS) on gender, both in front of and behind the camera. The study reveals that over the past seven decades, there have been only four Ministers of Information and Broadcasting and four Chairpersons of the Central Board of Film Certification that were women. In this film ecosystem, Dr. Lakshmi Lingam, Dean of SMCS, says there is a dire need for a clear strategy to close the gender gap.

It is possible for a woman to sit in a park or go for a walk on the beach. "But I don't think our infrastructure is geared towards her access to that space," Phadke says, "you have to steal it."

Delhi, I mention to Phadke, has taught me how to confront my sexual harassers, regardless of their age or status. Living in Goa has offered a relative sense of safety.

"The question we should be asking," Phadke responds, "is not one of safety but one of access. Once upon a time, Goa's public transport was better than it is now. More privatization has meant less access. This anxiety about tourists being attacked also frames a discourse of fear. Really, which woman is truly safe in her home? One, what are the fears being discussed and two, what is Goa doing about its infrastructure and its public transport? Addressing these issues could be transformative."



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni

SHORT TAKES

Ajoomma and *Triangle of Sadness* really inspired me. This is my first time at IFFI, I enjoy it so much, I will be back here every year.

Nirali Dave
Journalist,
Gujarat



Open Forum wasn't held this year. I feel more weightage should be given to that as the public can interact with film professionals.

Prakash Reddy
Secretary of Film Club, Hyderabad



I started watching alternative films at the age of 16. It opened me up to different perspectives, which led me to curating. I enjoy being at IFFI, with a well-priced beer and good films.

Paloma Joseph
Curator, Mumbai



I loved *My Neighbour Adolf*. It is a beautiful dark comedy about a Holocaust survivor.

Raj Gaurav Debnath
Export Manager,
Kolkata

“Legacy of Liberty”



Illustration by Chloe Cordero

BY NICOLE SUARES

How's the Josh?" this line from *Uri-The Surgical Strike* (2019) was on many lips amidst the patriotic wave in the country that year. Indian filmmakers have fired up the nation to action for decades, and particularly so during the freedom struggle. A unique exhibition at the ESG courtyard, 'The Contribution of Film Personalities in the Freedom Movement,' documents India's great film personalities who went beyond storytelling to become active players in the story of India's independence.

"The involvement in the freedom movement had individuals from all walks of life based on their capacity. The film industry was no exception. We have tried to portray such figures who contributed in any way. As freedom fighters they were inspired by Gandhi and other leaders," explained Abhijit Gokhale, National Organising Secretary of Sanskar Bharati. This NGO has been working for the promotion of performing, visual, folk arts, and literature for the past 40 years.

"We wanted to create a platform

which discussed the content of films, what is shown, what can be shown, the relevance and issues to be shown for the welfare of society," he says about the direction behind their film activities. Cine Talkies, one of their programmes, is a yearly seminar that focuses on various aspects of filmmaking.

"Cinema has a responsibility towards the nation. Time and again cinema has fulfilled that, and this should be known, remembered, and celebrated," he says.

This first-of-its kind exhibition consists of informative panels on filmmakers and their involvement in the freedom movement. It begins with the Father of Indian Cinema, Dadasaheb Phalke, whose fascination for film began in 1913 with *Raja Harishchandra*. The filmmaker Dwarkadas Sampat (1884-1958) was influenced by Lokmanya Tilak. Sampat actively participated in the Swadeshi and Indian Home Rule movements. His film *Bhakt Vidur* (1921) is perhaps the first criticism of British colonialism in a feature film. It was banned by the British in Karachi and Madras for its mythological allegory to the controversial Rowlatt Act.

In the South, S Satyamurti from Tamil

Nadu introduced many local film artistes like singers and actors KP Sundarambal, M S Subbu Lakshmi, and others to the freedom movement. Bhalji Pendharkar's *Vande Mataram Ashram* (1926) was banned by the British Censor board. In Bengal, Debaki Kumar Bose, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, left university to join the non-co-operation movement in 1920.

Pioneer of Assamese films, R. Jyoti Prasad Aggarwala, a political activist and freedom fighter, was imprisoned for 15 months in 1932.

Padma Vibhushan and Dadasaheb Phalke award winner V Shantaram's *Dharmatma* (1935) drew a parallel between Sant Eknath and Gandhi. Its original title Mahatma was changed due to opposition from the censor. In 1939, H M Reddy, Telugu stalwart faced opposition from the British for *Mathru Bhoomi*. The film was based on a Bengali play, Chandragupta, on the life of Chandragupta Maurya.

Closer to home, Sudhir Phadke, singer-composer, an icon in the Marathi film industry was actively involved in Goa's freedom movement. He produced a Hindi film on the life of freedom

fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Goa's legendary Lata Mangeshkar not only inspired patriotism through her songs like *Ae Mere Watan ke Logon*, but stood by the ideals in her songs. She held a concert at Pune's Hirabaug on May 2, 1954, at the request of music director Phadke to raise funds for the liberation movement against the Portuguese.

Speaking of storytelling in India, Gokhale explains that Indian filmmakers' emotional approach to storytelling "may be portrayed in different ways, according to different times, but the values which we believe in, the morals we practise, are depicted in our stories."

And it is these strong value-systems that they hope to inspire the youth to get back to in today's era of content overdose. "They should know the legacy of the industry. We hope to provide them a direction that cinema is not meant only for entertainment. We as a social organization working in the field of arts believe that cinema must carry a message and work for the welfare of society. They could make their projects grounded in the value-systems," he signs off.

Films are not just for entertainment. I feel I can relate a lot to movies like *Lost* in my own life. The screenplay was really good and I definitely felt a connection.

Papya Bose
Financial Advisor, Mapusa



I really liked *Dhabari Kuruvi*. It is the first film I have seen with an entirely indigenous cast and a film that features non-professional actors who were incredible.

Sean Stillmaker
Journalist,
Chicago



I look for films that can connect entirely through emotion like the way Alia Bhatt invokes emotions through her expressions in *Raazi*.

Radha Jadi
Student,
Mumbai

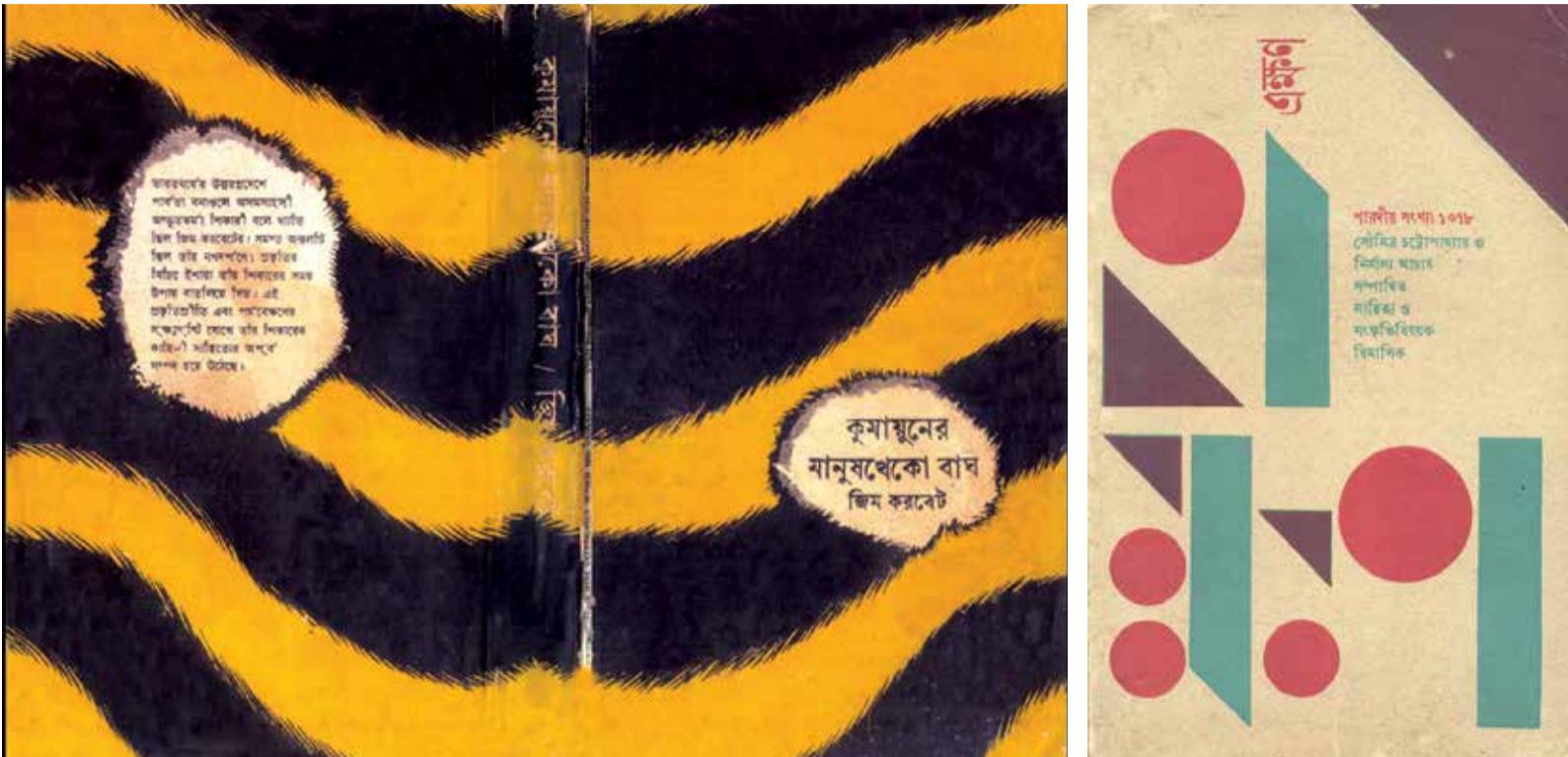


Anupam Kher's Masterclass was one of my best sessions. He interacted with so many actors and inspired them to follow and not give up on what they love doing.

Kabir Deshpande
Media Student,
Mumbai



Refractions of Ray



BY RUKMINEE GUHA THAKURTA

At the cusp of the end of Empire and the birth of a new nation, Bengal of the 1930s and 40s was already at the centre of book design and advertising. India's iconic filmmaker Satyajit Ray's grandfather, Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury was a polymath – a painter, music composer, author of children's literature, and an internationally known innovator in print technology. His firm, U. Ray & Sons, was well-established in the field of graphic arts and photo processes and Upendrakishore was a regular contributor to technical journals like *Penrose's Pictorial Annual*. After his death in 1915, his son, Sukumar Ray, who had also studied photography and print technology, took over the firm. A literary genius, Sukumar Ray wrote nonsense verse in Bengali, illustrated his own texts, designed his own books, and edited the well-known children's magazine *Sandesh* among a host of other things. He died prematurely at the age of thirty-six and his son, Satyajit Ray, was brought up mainly by his mother, Suprabha Debi, who was an abiding influence in her son's life.

After graduating from Presidency

College Ray was keen to study Commercial Art while his mother was keen for him to study at Kala Bhavan, which had been founded in Santiniketan by Rabindranath Tagore. Kala Bhavan offered only Fine Arts. It was there that the urbane Ray who was already exposed to western art, learned the Indian idiom. He studied under eminent artists such as Nandalal Bose and Benode Behari Mukherjee and he visited Ajanta, Ellora, Sanchi, and Khajuraho. All of this influenced him but Ray did not complete his course at Kala Bhavan.

He returned to Calcutta and joined the advertising firm, D.J. Keymer & Co, as junior visualizer in 1943. In the same year Dilip Kumar Gupta, the Assistant Manager at D.J. Keymer, started Signet Press which Ray joined as a book designer juggling two jobs. He designed book covers, title pages and advertisements at Signet Press which went on to become a kind of salon where artists, intellectuals, and writers converged. The first book cover that Ray designed there was *Pagla Dasu* a book by his father Sukumar Ray.

In 1922, Stella Kramrisch, a Viennese art historian who was also a teacher at Visva-Bharati, had curated an exhibition in Calcutta that showed the works of

Bauhaus artists like Paul Klee, Johannes Itten, Wassily Kandinsky and others alongside India's own Modernists, Nandalal Bose, Sunayani Devi, Abanindranath and Gaganendranath Tagore. Ray was no exception to the influence of the Bauhaus—he also had access to international publications like *Graphis*—and this was evident in the design elements he used in his work on book covers and posters.

Minimalism, repetition of elements, geometric angularity, bold patterns, and contrasting colours are some of the methods that he employed in his work. It was clear that he had an extraordinary ability to capture the heart of a story within a single visual with innovative typography. Ray believed that it was important to understand the content of a book in order to choose its artistic treatment and that a designer could not afford to get stuck in a signature style.

Ray designed his own Roman typefaces such as Ray Roman, Ray Bizarre, Daphnis and Holiday Script, but it was with Bengali type and calligraphy that he experimented radically on his book cover designs for Signet Press as well as later for his own film posters. Cut-outs, emotive typography, vertical type, influence of scripts like Tibetan, he

tried it all. Yet there was a remarkable simplicity and clarity in his concepts. For instance, his cover design for the Bengali translation of Jim Corbett's *Man-Eaters of Kumaon* uses only large, furry stripes in contrasting colours, with type placed on the entry wound of a bullet on the front cover and a slightly displaced and larger exit wound on the back cover. His use of graphic elements ranged from Bengali and Vaishnav alpona patterns to M.C. Escher's tessellations, from abstract, isometric grids to figurative drawings that reveal the influence of Ajanta and Rabindranath Tagore on his oeuvre. Ray created a new identity for each book he designed.

The Discovery of India is the book that made Signet Press famous as Jawaharlal Nehru himself visited to see the book cover that Ray had designed. Ray's cover ideas often spilled inside into the title pages in what can only be described as a childlike excitement for reinterpreting stories in more ways than one. He would also create the advertisements for the books he designed.

His dexterity in weaving together form and content can also be seen in his film titling, posters, brochure designs, set design and costume design, all of which he would draw in great detail in his sketchbooks but that's another story.



IFFI has been organised very well, the decorations are beautiful, and I must say that Goa is a little paradise.

Ludmilla
Nguyen Duy
Festival
Organiser,
France



I am happy to see so many people here at IFFI. It builds the vibe and makes IFFI very colourful. I want to watch a lot of Indian cinema before leaving.

Marek Novak
Producer, Czech
Republic



I love the film *Triangle of Sadness* by Ruben Östlund. My perspective changed after watching it. It's a genre bender, the style changes during the film.

Sruthi Bhaskar
Lecturer,
Bangalore



I am at IFFI with our movie *Anne*, about a sensational incident in 1984. I have been to hundreds of film festivals, but IFFI has been one of my favourites.

Niall Flynn
Film Producer,
Ireland

Artificial Realities

BY LINA VINCENT

A pink boat floating upside down in a green desert, under a canopy of multi-coloured raindrops, with frogs in them..."

How's that for a prompt to generate an image through Artificial Intelligence? AI refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines. In this expanding technology, machines are programmed to think like humans do, and also imitate their actions. It has been part of our science fiction diet in movies like the 'Matrix' franchise (1999, 2003, 2021), in which a computer programmer has to fight an underground war against powerful computers who have reconstructed his entire reality with a system called the Matrix. Mind-bending and confusing, films like these often leave me in the need for explanations. HER (2021) was disorienting, as a futuristic scenario showcased the protagonist, Theodore Twombly, developing an emotional and romantic relationship with the AI virtual assistant 'Samantha', personified through a female voice.

We have slowly become used to the idea of being immersed in spaces of virtual and augmented reality that use a combination of computer software and hardware to create digital environments.

In recent months, there have been controversies about the validity of AI-generated art in competition with art made by the human hand. There are specially developed tools in AI generators such as DALL-E 2, MidJourney, Dream Studio and Stable Diffusion that allow for Text-to-Image translation through a series of steps and prompts. These are able to create a wide range of images based purely on the instructions you give them – whether a surreal landscape or a hybrid creature. They can also be layered with specific styles, say, a Picasso style, or a Disney style, or Aboriginal art style. When Jason Allen's AI-generated art-piece won a prize at the Colorado State Fair, other contenders for the prize,



Illustration by Chloe Cordeiro

and the entire artist fraternity went up in arms questioning the correctness of such an award. Beautiful though the artwork was, Allen only gave text prompts to a software to generate it, he didn't use a physical creative process, whether

gestural or digital. The prize is just one aspect of a large debate that has forced artists, designers, photographers, and other visual creators to question their existence and relevance. What makes an artist? Isn't there an emotional connect

to the work that resonates over and above the formal aspects? However, there are also artists who are taking strongly to the use of these AI tools to enhance their artmaking and explore newer realms of visual expression. Harshit Agrawal is an Indian artist working with artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. The algorithms that he creates are an essential part of his process. With the rise of NFTs or 'non-fungible-tokens' in the crypto world, art that resides in a completely digital space has become an asset, as another Indian artist Raghava KK has been proving.

Video games are also a vast space of exploration when it comes to simulated realities. Steven Spielberg's *Ready Player One* (2018) based on Ernest Cline's book of the same name, is set in 2045. Most humans during this time use OASIS, a virtual reality simulation, to escape the real world. Here the bodies run in place on treadmills to enhance their virtual experiences; they wear haptic suits and experience the simulations as physical reactions.

A step further, *Free Guy* (2021) created a stir about self-aware artificial intelligence. Produced and directed by Shawn Levy, the film follows the narrative of a bank teller who finds out that he is a character in a video game. He twists the story with this awareness, and decides to behave differently than his programming, shocking his makers. In a sequence of intriguing and mind-boggling situations, he sets out to save his world.

The imagination can go wild in such scenarios – nothing is impossible. In a veritable 'through-the-looking-glass' world, there is no restriction as to what can be created, destroyed, or played out. For viewers of such films, and players of simulated video-games, it is a direct experience of another reality. And for artists, having access to tools that can create anything that they may want, without the limitations of medium, scale, size, and other formats, it is pure freedom. The fact is that AI is definitely going to be an integral part of our collective futures.

SHORT TAKES



Happiness was a revelation to me. Contrary to its title, it is a bleak movie on domestic violence. I love that the director has not shied away from portraying the graphic scenes.

Suma Nagaraj
Journalist,
Bangalore



IFFI has evolved a long way in the past few years. I am truly blessed that IFFI let me watch a masterpiece by Stanley Kubrick, *A Space Odyssey*, on the big screen.

Sagar Honnali
Filmmaker, Goa



I love non-fiction movies like *The Help*, it expands my world. You can live through cinema and see lives I would normally never experience.

Suprita Chatterjee
Campaign Manager, Kolkata



I have come to IFFI after 12 years, the event has greatly improved. I want to watch *The Willow Woman*. Goa is a very blessed land with good people, food, and culture.

Silvia Calabrese
Filmmaker, Italy



The Bleu L'Goon - The French mafia

Veritable mountains of verbiage pile up about every edition of the International Film Festival of India, but it's imperative to look beyond the hype, because numbers don't lie. In this regard, of course, Team Peacock fully acknowledges there are many ways to understand the success, thrust and impact of the country's oldest and largest cinema extravaganza, and we also agree that everyone has the right to their own angle. Yet, what we hear most often is terribly misinformed, and often based on pure conjecture. Such empty rhetoric is deeply unhelpful, because the relevant data exists and is easily accessible. Here, then, is IFFI by the numbers.

There are several complexities when considering the total number of passholders, but let us focus on delegates in the "legitimate" categories: cine enthusiasts, students, film professionals, the "Goa Film Fraternity" cadre, and media persons. These are 7260 (as of the festival mid-point) but there's another 20% of that total who are special invitees of some kind. Is this kind of worrisome bloat avoidable in future editions? You can rest assured the Entertainment Society of Goa will try to address it, along with the clear red flag presented by the highly imbalanced IFFI 2022 gender skew. It's simply not good enough that only 27% of delegates are women, and this problem is high on the list of priorities to be addressed right away.

Team Peacock loves demographic data, because it helps us understand the broad strokes narratives emerging from each IFFI. Thus, considering you can only register for the film festival if you're 18 or above, it's quite remarkable almost a quarter of all delegates are under 25. This does reflect national statistics: right now, India is famously young, with over 500 million citizens under that same age benchmark. It's also interesting to note only 26.7% of our festival cinemagoers are over 50. We don't have the data to make any direct comparison yet, but our assumption is these are fairly dramatically different percentages from what you would find at Cannes or Berlin or London.

There's an interesting twist in how IFFI receives and compiles data for countries and places of origin of all its passholders. We don't care about citizenship, and only consider zipcodes of the registered addresses. This means that large numbers of delegates from other parts of the world who happen to live in India – or at least have access to some Indian mailing address – are impossible to detect. Nonetheless, it's an encouraging and healthy sign there are 22 countries in our 2022 database, from Albania to Uzbekistan. If you're from either of those countries, please come and visit Team Peacock in the Maquinez Palace. We would like to gift you a copy of our exciting new cultural quarterly (which is also on sale in the festival quadrangle).

Let's round up (down?) our tryst with IFFI's numbers with one (wonderful!) new stat, and another that is now familiar. We're super-excited at least 6000 of you are using our mobile App, which was always intended to remove human error – and reduce our innate Indian hierarchical tendencies – by automating the booking of all seats. This is democracy via technology in action, and it's deeply gratifying to see it work. Much less of any kind of surprise, but no less pleasing, is the fact that 1147 of our brothers and sisters from Kerala are paid-up delegates who have joined us here in Goa. They, and you, are most welcome, and we hope to see you again next year!

- VIVEK MENEZES

7260 Moviegoers

Males: 72.5%

Females: 27.5%

Below Age 25

23.6 %

Above Age 50

26.7 %

Delegates from
22 Countries

Delegates from Kerala:

1147

Active mobile app users:

6000 +

Illustration by Analise Pereira



SCREENING SCHEDULE - 25TH 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
E11 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS 09:00 - 10:39	E22 SHER SHIVRAJ 12:30 - 15:03	E31 VICE AND VIRTUE 09:15 - 11:08	E42 SOL'S JOURNEY 11:15 - 12:33	E51 LEONOR WILL NEVER DIE 09:00 - 10:39	E61 LA PIETÀ 09:15 - 10:39	E71 SONNE 09:30 - 10:57	E81 CARMEN 08:45 - 10:27	E91 ANHONEY 09:00 - 11:07
E12 WHEN THE WAVES ARE GONE 11:10 - 14:17	E23 FRAME 15:30 - 17:28	E32 ROBE OF GEMS 11:45 - 13:43	E43 9 14:15 - 16:00	E52 THE LINE 11:30 - 13:12	E62 NEON SPRING 11:45 - 13:27	E72 LIKE A MAN 12:00 - 13:45	E82 DISCO DANCER 11:15 - 13:30	E92 TO CUT OR NOT TO CUT MASTERCLASS 11:30 - 13:00
E13 RED SHOES 15:10 - 16:33	E24 PATAAL-TEE / EKDA KAAY ZALA 18:00 - 20:42	E33 COLD AS MARBLE 14:45 - 16:13	E44 MAYA NILO (LAURA) 16:45 - 18:27	E54 HOLY SPIDER 17:00 - 18:57	E63 GREAT YARMOUTH : PROVISIONAL FIGURES 14:45 - 16:38	E73 CHERRY 15:00 - 16:16	E83 ASHKAL 14:15 - 15:47	E93 CASTING IN NEW INDIAN CINEMA 13:00 - 13:30
E14 BHEDIYA 17:30 - 20:06	E25 VEETILEKKU / TAANGH 21:05 - 22:58	E34 TERA KYA HOGA LOVELY 18:30 - 20:54	E45 NO END 19:15 - 21:07	E54 HOLY SPIDER 17:00 - 18:57	E64 CAPERNAUM 17:15 - 19:21	E74 A MINOR 17:30 - 19:09	E84 THE SILENT POET / BROJENDROGEE LUHONGBA 16:45 - 19:04	E94 HOW TO PITCH YOUR ANIMATION IP WITH CRISTIAN ZEJDIC 15:30 - 17:00
E15 PINOCCHIO 20:40 - 22:37	E36 PACIFICATION 22:15 - 00:57	E46 MANTICORE 21:45 - 23:40		E65 THE GREAT MOVEMENT 19:45 - 21:10	E75 MAUSAM 20:00 - 22:36	E85 BHOOL BHULAIYAA 19:45 - 22:19	E95 MASTERCLASS ON BEATS & RHYTHM WITH GV PRAKASH KUMAR AND SNEHA KHANWALKAR 17:30 - 19:00	E96 PINJARA 19:30 - 22:25



Sonne
INOX 3 Porvorim
9.30 am

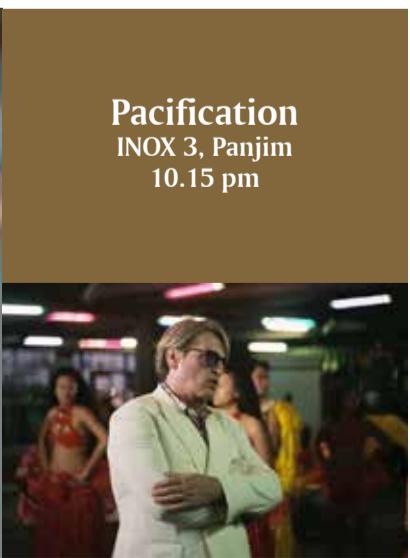
Robe of Gems
INOX 3 Panaji
11.45 am



Pacification
INOX 3, Panjim
10.15 pm



Holy Spider
INOX 1 Porvorim
5.00 pm



Today's stunning hand-made multimedia collage cover artwork by Praveen Naik pays tribute to "the forms, textures and colours of Goan kunbi sarees" and traditional weaves of the indigenous communities of India's smallest state. As the lower border, this brilliant artist has positioned a saree that is his own family heirloom.