



PRESENTING
CASAGRAN
Cloud9
BANG ON SHOLINGANALLUR

SALIENT FEATURES:

- Luxuriously crafted 331 pinnacle apartments on sprawling 4.87 acres in Sholinganallur
- Contemporary-styled 2, 3 & 4 BHK apts. and 4 BHK floor villas built on B+S+19 floors structure
- Floor villa units have an exclusive jacuzzi in the balcony
- 16,400 sft grand clubhouse loaded with amenities and features
- A sprawling 26,500 sft centralized landscaped podium
- The community offers CCTV surveillance and 24x7 security
- 100% vastu-compliant homes with zero dead space design

70+ WORLD-CLASS AMENITIES & FEATURES



INDOOR AMENITIES

- 1 Double Height Lounge
- 2 Convenience Store
- 3 Café
- 4 Party Hall with Pantry
- 5 Dance Floor
- 6 AV Room
- 7 Indoor Play Area
- 8 Board Games Corner
- 9 Gaming Zone
- 10 Gym
- 11 Crossfit Corner
- 12 Interactive Floor Workout
- 13 Meditation Room
- 14 Yoga Corner
- 15 Day Care Center
- 16 Kids Play Area
- 17 Kids Library
- 18 Learning Centre
- 19 Adventure Rock Climbing
- 20 Kids Playpen
- 21 Kids Soft Play
- 22 Ball Pit
- 23 Interactive Wall Game
- 24 Association Room
- 25 Co-working Space
- 26 Meeting Room
- 27 Jacuzzi
- 28 Steam
- 29 Ironing / Laundry
- 30 Servant Dormitory



TERRACE AMENITIES

- 31 Terrace Party Lawn
- 32 Sensory Play Area
- 33 Golf Putting
- 34 Rooftop Viewing Deck
- 35 Rooftop Lounge Seating



OUTDOOR AMENITIES

- 36 Arrival Plaza
- 37 Party Lawn
- 38 Amphitheatre
- 39 Outdoor Movie Screening
- 40 Outdoor Fan
- 41 Multipurpose Sports Court
- 42 Sports Viewing Gallery
- 43 500 m Race Track
- 44 Mini Soccer
- 45 Meditation Lawn
- 46 Outdoor Gym
- 47 Children's Play Area
- 48 Jungle Gym
- 49 Tot Lot
- 50 Play Mound
- 51 Jogging Track
- 52 Senior Citizens Zone
- 53 Barbeque Corner
- 54 Hammock Zone
- 55 Nanny's Pavilion
- 56 Rock Climbing Wall



SWIMMING POOL AMENITIES

- 67 Swimming Pool
- 68 Kids Pool
- 69 Water Archway
- 70 Floor Water Jets
- 71 Water Curtain
- 72 Poolside Lounges



Scan this QR code to experience a virtual walk-through

EXCITING AMENITIES

Floor Water Jets



Swimming Pool



Podium View



weekend

wknd



metroPLUS THE HINDU

TRAVEL BUG

On his maiden trip to India, *The Office* actor Rainn Wilson tours Dharamshala, Lucknow and Amritsar **P4**



Doctor Consultations on
Sundays too!
(in 10+ specialties)

Every Sunday
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Call 044 4040 1066
At Green Lane, Thousand Lights & Vanganagar units only

Words
by the

river



Writers' retreats offer more than just an idyllic setting to write; they now include spa treatments, meditation, editing workshops, and time for long, inspiring strolls

Akila Kannadasan
akila.kannadasan@thehindu.co.in

One morning, Malayalam writer Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai packed a few shirts and *mundus* and set out on a whim to a lodge to write.

This was in 1956, and Pillai took a bus from his hometown Thakazhi, and then a boat to reach the Boat House Lodge in Kottayam. ‘This father of mine talks of buying a boat and nets...’ read the first line of what would become one of the most successful Malayalam novels of all time: *Chemmeen*. The novel came together on the eighth day of his stay that can be considered a writers’ retreat, albeit one without any material pleasures. He went, he wrote, he returned.

Today, however, writers’ retreats offer several luxuries: walks amid an apple orchard in the Himalayas, yoga sessions, Ayurvedic spa treatments, gourmet food, workshops with industry experts, and the most important thing: solitude.

Indian Summer House, a boutique resort in Muvattupuzha in Kerala, offers a luxurious retreat for writers from abroad as well as India. “The writing is important,” says Don van de Pol, an Australian national who runs it along with his Indian wife Mini, a lawyer. “But they also get to do canoe river crossing, visit local tea shops, go toddy tapping...” Their upcoming retreat in October will feature journalist, editor and author of two non-fiction books, Caroline van de Pol as the tutor. Caroline, Don’s sister-in-law, is a PhD in Creative Writing and has taught at a university. Writers who

come with their story ideas or works-in-progress, get to have one-on-one coaching with her. There are workshops every morning, where she will focus on the craft of writing, from character development to voice and dialogue.

Caroline has attended a number of writing retreats that she says helped her “step outside of my daily routine of parenting, teaching and competing demands for my time”. Her most memorable one was at the Blue Mountains in Australia, called Varuna Writers Centre. “It was such a wonderful experience that I now base the Indian Summer House experience on Varuna with extra treats such as morning yoga and evening walks in the local village,” she adds.

The garden in the two-acre property is the highlight: Don says that it has been developed by a popular landscape designer from Bali. With the river just 100 metres away, one can simply choose to stroll by it and write by the water’s edge.

Mahima Sood, a Pune-based data scientist, happened to spend a sabbatical from work in her family’s property at the Parvati Valley in the Himalayas. The place, which her grandfather bought in the 1950s, is in the midst of an apple orchard that Mahima’s father runs on the tenets of sustainability. “I was reading by myself one morning under the sun, and realised that I wanted to share the place with others,” says Mahima.

Alekhyia’s writers’ retreats thus began on the same philosophy that drives the property: existing as one with Nature.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 3

TRENDS



Have a
GOOD
LOOKING
HOLIDAY

Holiday styles, now in store.



Instapick

Churchill on canvas: A portrait of Winston Churchill by an artist he famously disliked is going on auction in June. It was painted by modernist artist Graham Sutherland as a study for a larger, ultimately destroyed portrait (as portrayed on an episode of Netflix series *The Crown*). It is expected to fetch a hefty sum of up to \$995,000.



Talkingpoint

Rushdie's reflections: Salman Rushdie confronts the 2022 stabbing in his new memoir *Knife*. Published this week, the book opens with the harrowing details of the attack and reflects on the importance of protecting writers. *Knife* marks Rushdie's first memoir since the 2012 account of his life under a fatwa.

Clad in black, amidst those wearing blue and yellow T-shirts, here's the referee-supporter at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium

Cyrus Broacha

I'm a little ashamed to say, actually I'm always ashamed to say most things, but about this one I am a little more ashamed than normal. Since you insist on being more specific, mathematically speaking, if I am ashamed to say anything at an average of 89% times, this present information raises the shame meter to 97.33%. Anyway, let me just spit it out, or as usual, I will run out of column space before coming to the point, and please make that, any point. Last Sunday, I went to an Indian Premier League

THE COLUMN THAT WASN'T

On the umpire's side

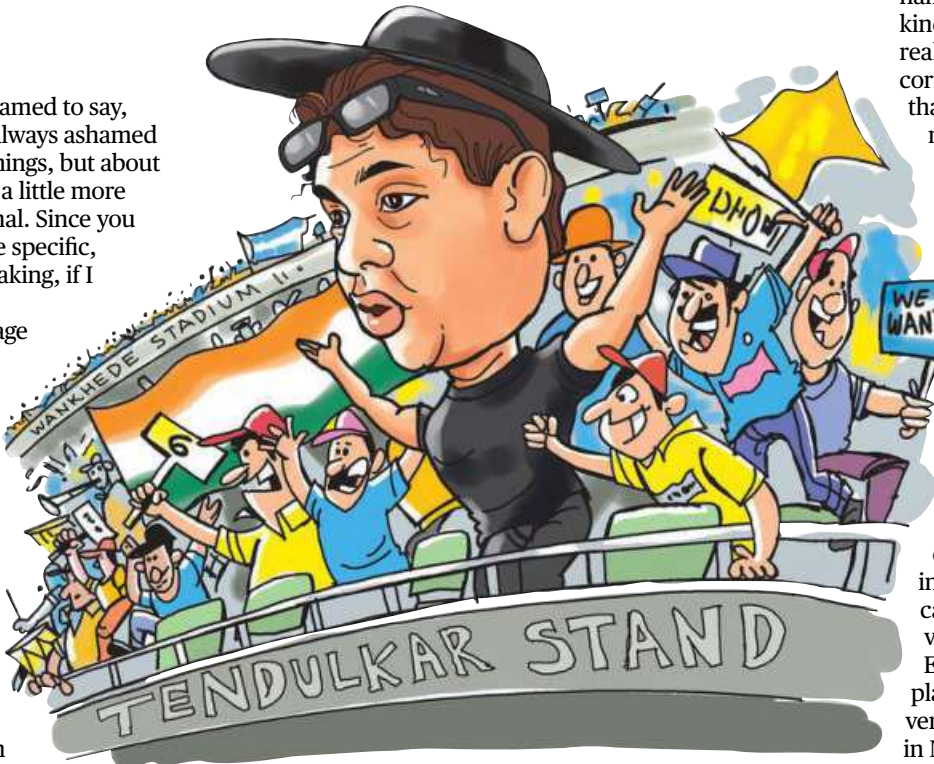


ILLUSTRATION: SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

match. I say, Indian Premier League, because someone told me you can't say IPL without first getting the IPL's permission. However, you can call it by its Latin name which may be The Indian Premier League. If you are not following, let me clarify by way of another example. Just like you are not allowed to call your father Ramesh, but you can call him Mr Kumar, similarly, you can't use IPL, but you can call it The Indian Premier League, or Mr Kumar. So far, the IPL has not objected to Mr Kumar. (Furthermore, I apologise in advance for assuming your dad's name is Ramesh, if you could be so kind as to clarify what his name really is, I will definitely issue a correction in the second, no make that third, edition of this newspaper). I'm also not sure whether I can legally mention the teams that played in the match. So, I'll feed you half information. I feel half information is far more beneficial. The great Estonian writer Mathilde Ram Prakash, once said very loudly, although nobody was really listening, "Half information allows the reader to be less passive, become more active, and work harder on gleaning, the full information". The teams in that case, were the Something Indians versus Chennai Something Kings. Either way, something was playing against something else. The venue was the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, which, surprisingly, was not renamed, for the entire duration

of the match. (Please note as this is election season, renaming reaches pandemic proportions. Just three weeks ago, something something Bangalore was renamed as something something Bengaluru). By the way, I'm reliably told the Bangalore renaming was to foster good luck on the team. My legal team has asked me to put forward no further comment on the matter. Entering the Wankhede takes approximately four minutes and 37 seconds more than the entire match duration. We Indians are master of lines that form and lead nowhere. After inquiring from others in the queue, I was told that many weren't even going into the stadium, they just saw a line, and felt compelled to be a part of it. Aristotle called this 'Fear of Missing Out'. There was more confusion, many yellow shirts were supporting the blue team and many blue shirts, the yellow team. Sadly because of the supply running out, they were forced to wear the rival team's shirt while cheering for the opponent. I, of course, wore a black shirt while solidly supporting the unsung heroes, the umpires. A quick summary. Something something lost to something something something. Yet all of us enjoyed MS Something thumping 20 runs off four balls. (A South Mumbai record). For me, it was a wonderful event. I think, I'll put an Olympic spin to this league. I'll visit once in four years, not more than that.

The writer has dedicated his life to communism. Though only on weekends.

pick of the week

Concerts, workshops, tours, and everything else you need to plan your social calendar. For events, contact us on weekend@thehindu.co.in



Flavour trip

Savour Middle Eastern flavours at **Sunset Grill**, Westin Chennai, Velachery's pop-up until April 29. Indulge in Arabic mezze and slow-cooked lamb at ₹4,000 for two. For reservations: 8939892056. Dive into the bold flavours of Maharashtra's Konkani coast at Match Point, **Taj Wellington News's** Malvani feast. Try seafood and coconut curries at ₹2,300 until April 30. For reservations: 044 66148899



Carry cute

Looking for summer's hottest accessory? Check out **TUMI's** ASRA Bag! This playful and versatile handbag is perfect for all your summer adventures. Shop on tumi.in starting ₹35,000. Want something fun? **Starbucks and Disney** bring a limited-edition collection to India! Drinkware and accessories featuring Mickey and the gang spread summer cheer. Grab yours at select stores starting ₹1,800.



Crafty creations

Master the **art of nail extensions** and design at this one-day workshop tomorrow at 2pm! Learn application, and decoration. Book your spot at ₹3,000 and head to Brain Park, Kodambakkam. Pawga's **Art with Puppies** is the ultimate relaxation and creativity combo! De-stress with puppies as you make art at The Backyard Clan, Adyar today from 11am. Tickets on pawgapetsyoga.com at ₹850.



Glam galore

Shop luxury gems without the markup! **E Jewellery by RBJ** debuts in Chennai on April 21 at Taj Coromandel with its diamond, polki and kundan pieces starting ₹15,000. For another dose of luxury, check out **CaratLane's** new Utsav collection, with 14 kt gold and diamond pieces. These intricate designs are perfect for expressing your unique style. Shop in stores or on caratlane.com starting ₹11,945.



Melody mix

Love Mohammad Rafi's soulful duets? Satrangi presents **Dil Pukare** featuring his classics with Lata Mangeskar, Asha Bhosle and more! Relive the 1950s-70s era on April 21 from 5.45pm at Teach Auditorium, Taramani. Call 9884778073 for tickets starting ₹250. Catch electrifying performances by **Vishnupriya & Band** tonight, and Reconnect Band tomorrow from 6pm onwards at Phoenix MarketCity. Entry is free.



Summer panache

Shop **Alan by Vani's** Sky is High collection. Vibrant hues, and intricate details create chic pieces for any summer soirée. Shop the collection starting at ₹4,100 on alanbyvani.com. **The Shop's** eco-friendly Spring Summer collection, Malmal Mela, is in Chennai! Check out clothing (nightwear, loungewear) and homeware at The Folly, Amethyst from April 26 to 27, 10am to 7pm starting ₹600.



Stage magic

TalkAct Productions' annual play brings Robin Hood to life on stage. Witness thrilling sword fights and heroic deeds on April 22 at 6.30pm in Dakshina Murthy Auditorium. Entry is free. Watch 10 captivating short plays at two showtimes! **Tentastic Tales** promises a whirlwind of emotions on April 21 at Medai, the Stage, Alwarpet at 5pm and 7.15pm. Tickets on in.bookmyshow.com at ₹200.



The skeleton rider

The six-piece limited edition Hermès Arceau Chorus Stellarum watch featuring mobile appliques, engraving and miniature painting, comes to life in a whimsical and mischievous equestrian universe. The watch, designed by artistic director of Hermès Henri d'Origny, has a round case topped by asymmetrical stirrup-shaped lugs. Two exclusive interpretations are inspired by the Chorus Stellarum silk scarf designed by Japanese designer/illustrator Daiske Nomura. The characters are embodied in mobile yellow-gold appliques, engraved and painted by hand. Driven by a spring mechanism linked to the nine o'clock pusher, these characters swing into action at the flick of an on-demand impulse animation that sees them prance around a gilded constellation. This is highlighted by a slender white gold case measuring 41mm in diameter, set with 70 diamonds on the version adorned with a skeleton horsewoman. A matt abyss blue or pearl grey alligator strap highlights the vibrant colours of these two watches, each issued in numbered limited series of six.

Price: €1,15,000

Complexly precise

Watchmakers strive to find a solution to the fundamental conundrum of watchmaking: how to maintain a consistent flow of energy while adding complications that require extra bursts of energy. Invented by Jaeger-LeCoultre, the Duometre mechanism was introduced in 2007 in the form of a chronograph and has subsequently been united with other complications, forming a collection. This year, the brand introduces the most complex of them all — the Duometre Héliotourbillon Perpetual Calendar (Calibre 388), where it incorporates two of watchmaking's most advanced and prestigious complications — the tourbillon and the perpetual calendar in one of the most visually appealing timepieces.

Price: Approximately ₹4,28,00,000



Playful nature

Paying tribute to Nature, the new creation of Maison Van Cleef & Arpels, the Lady Arpels Brise d'Été watch celebrates the freshness of a summer morning. In this new poetic expression, corollas bloom within the Van Cleef & Arpels garden. White and yellow-gold butterflies rendered in plique-à-jour enamel tell the time, but what adds playfulness to this creative timepiece is the fluttering of butterflies courtesy on-demand animation module, which also breathes life into the flowers and their stems.

Price: Approximately ₹1,35,48,970

Changing colour

Grand Seiko Caliber 9R 20th Anniversary Limited Edition is a new creation in the Grand Seiko Sport Collection and it draws inspiration from Shinshu sunrise reflecting off Mount Hotaka, which is situated in Japan's Hida Mountains and is home to all Grand Seiko Spring Drive creations. The scenery radiates ebullient colours transforming from pink to orange early in the morning. Marking the 20th anniversary of the first Grand Seiko watches powered by the 9R Spring Drive movement series, the new Spring Drive Chronograph GMT inspired by the mountainous landscape has a new dial-processing technology — called Optical Multilayer Coating — that expresses the Japanese appreciation for the delicate transition of time as seen through the changing colours of summer mornings.

Price: Approximately ₹12,50,000



What women want

Cartier knows women best. This year, the watchmaker presented yet another hybrid bangle/cuff watch. The new Reflection de Cartier is a modern and chunky gold jewellery with a playful twist in telling time. Available in solid yellow and rose gold variants and in three gem-set on white gold options, the quartz powered watch is concealed and set inside the opening of the cuff. The reflection is made on the polished gold surface that is on the opposite side of the cuff's opening, creating a sort of backwards time-telling optical illusion.

Price: Approximately ₹37,20,000 (for the yellow gold variant)



Set sail for Barcelona

Panerai Submersible Tourbillon GMT Luna Rossa Experience Edition stands for the brand's journey with America's Cup — the world's most popular sailing competition. Limited to just 20 pieces, the Submersible Tourbillon GMT Luna Rossa Experience Edition PAM01405 will debut in July 2024 in the lead-up to The America's Cup finals. The owners of the watch will be invited to partake in the finals of The America's Cup in Barcelona, early September. This exclusive opportunity will include behind-the-scenes view of the competition, unmatched access and engagement with the Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli team, allowing clients to experience the event up close.

Price: Approximately ₹1,71,88,100



CLOCKING FASHION

Check out the newly launched luxe timepieces at Watches and Wonders 2024

Mitrajit Bhattacharya

Horology enthusiasts were looking forward to this year's edition of Watches and Wonders in Geneva. The fair was bigger in scale, with 54 participating maisons, their retailers, partners and media. The week-long event, open to invitees only for four days, flung its doors open to the general public during the last three days. Compared to last year, it recorded a 14% rise in footfall, with nearly 49,000 visitors, including 5,700 retailers and 1,500 journalists.

On the Internet, #watchesandwonders2024 shot to popularity on many social-networking sites clocking an estimated reach of over 600 million, states the event's official closing report. Supermodel Gisele Bündchen attended the event for Swiss luxury watchmaker IWC Schaffhausen and French footballer Kylian Mbappé made an appearance there for luxury watchmaker from Nyon, Hublot. We get the lowdown on the watches that are ticking all the boxes of style and functionality and are a hit among watch collectors and followers of the industry.

Gautam Sunder
gautam.sundar@thehindu.co.in

“Dwight Schrute is in India!” These words resonated across the fan forums and social media groups of mockumentary sitcom *The Office* last week when its star, actor Rainn Wilson, posted pictures and videos from Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh on Instagram.

Rainn has enjoyed experimenting with his career, starring in comedies such as *Super* and *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story*, and being the voice of Lex Luthor in the DC Animated Movie Universe. He also turned author and entrepreneur, while engaging with causes like empowering girls through education in developing countries and spreading awareness about climate change.

In recent years, the 58-year-old has found meaning in spirituality which led to his bestseller *Soul Boom: Why We Need a Spiritual Revolution* (he himself sees the comical side to the guy who played Dwight writing a book on the topic), and a spanking new podcast birthed from the same idea... which is why he's in India, perhaps?

I put all my journalistic prowess to the test, and just a couple of days later, I am wearing my trusty old Dunder Mifflin T-shirt, all set to get on a video call with our favourite Assistant (To The) Regional Manager.

Excerpts from a conversation:

Question: When did Rainn Wilson come to India and why?
Answer: I've been in India for about 12 days and am about to leave now! I was flying a little under the radar, so unfortunately didn't get the chance to meet too many fans. I was in Dharamshala for about three days, and got to have a session with the Dalai Lama, and met some Tibetan Buddhist monks. We were part of a delegation under the auspices of



Dwight is out of office

Actor, author and podcaster Rainn Wilson tells us about his visit to India, what *The Office* means to him, and his new podcast *Soul Boom*

Harvard University's division that studies happiness with writer and professor Arthur Brooks. He has been meeting with the Dalai Lama for many years, and invited me and Rich Roll (wellness advocate and speaker), as podcasters, to experience the trip.

I also got to interview a Tibetan monk for my new podcast *Soul Boom*; it was a delightful, profound trip.

Q: What else have you experienced in India during the last two weeks?
A: This is my first time in India! I'm here with my wife (writer Holiday Reinhorn) who had visited Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh earlier

to visit some schools we support in India through the Mona Foundation (a non-profit organisation that supports grassroots initiatives in education and raising the status of women and girls). After Dharamshala, we drove to Amritsar to see the Golden Temple; I have some dear friends in the United States who are Sikh. It was so beautiful and welcoming; we visited it twice, once in the morning and then in the evening. We also visited the India-Pakistan border to watch the flag ceremony.

Q: Your podcast series on YouTube is just under a month old and is already

a success. Is the idea to tap into the minds of people from different walks of life?

A: Yes, I want to have a combination of thinkers and authors, and people of different faith... and entertainers. The next episode is with Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist and author of the best-selling book in the United States, called *The Anxious Generation*. It's about how smartphones and social media are hurting our youth. That's a very interesting conversation because mental health is something that I'm interested in. It's a big issue in the United States right now.

Q: You said that you spent several years on *The Office* mostly unhappy, and that, despite a successful TV career, you were discontent about not becoming a major movie star. Have you now figured out how to deal with these emotions?

A: Absolutely, I'm much better at it now than I was 15 years ago. I had a conversation with BJ Novak, who played Ryan in *The Office*. We both admitted that our biggest regret about being on the show was

that we didn't enjoy it more while it was happening. It's just the human condition. I was given this job that was beyond my wildest dreams, it was an incredible group of people making a really good living, making a great comedy, getting to be a very successful actor, and lots of doors opened for me. But it was never enough for me and I was often discontent with myself. And I think that happens to people.

I mean, you read about it with people that win the lottery, and they're miserable because fame and fortune does not guarantee happiness. So I've worked very hard on it. I've been in therapy, and I've meditated and studied; I feel now that I am much better at cherishing every single day that I have breath in my lungs.

(Clockwise from left) Rainn Wilson and Steve Carell in the episode, *The Injury*, of *The Office*; Rainn with his wife Holiday Reinhorn in India; and John Krasinski and Rainn Wilson in a still from *The Office*. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Q: The *Office* fans love the fact that you still carry some part of Dwight with you. What have you learnt from playing the legendary role?

A: I'm so grateful for the role. Because it was such a beautifully written role, very funny, very human, very complex, and so much fun to play. And look at all the doors that it opened for me!

Q: Which is your favourite episode of *The Office*?

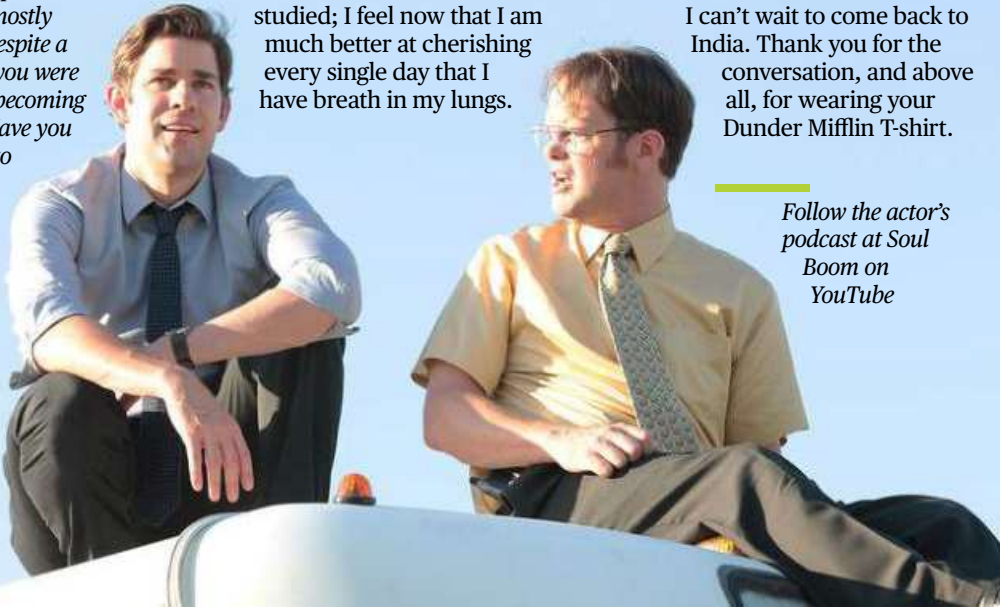
A: I really enjoyed filming the Diwali episode. But my favourite episode is *The Injury* in the second season. That's when Dwight gets a concussion and Michael burns his foot on the George Foreman grill! It just had a beautiful mix of like, heart and silliness. It was fun to get to see Dwight's personality change where he actually becomes likable and friends with Pam. (laughs)

Q: Finally, in your recent documentary Rainn Wilson and the Geography of Bliss, you travel the world to explore what makes some places happier than others. Fancy coming to India for an episode next?

A: We are actually working on getting the second season together just now. Oh, I would absolutely love to come to India to film for the series. That would be first on my list. I love it here; the food, the people, and all the different faiths. I'm so excited that people are able to watch that show here.

I can't wait to come back to India. Thank you for the conversation, and above all, for wearing your Dunder Mifflin T-shirt.

Follow the actor's podcast at *Soul Boom* on YouTube



Novel to Netflix

One Hundred Years of Solitude, a series based on the eponymous novel by Gabriel García Márquez, has been packed into a 16-episode saga that will soon be streamed on Netflix. The teaser, released this week, features Aureliano Babilonia (played by Claudio Cataño) reading from the mythical diary of Melquiades. Directed by Laura Mora and Alex García López, the series is filmed in Spanish, and shot in Colombia with the support of Gabriel García Márquez's family.



Time to shine

Actors Alia Bhatt and Dev Patel have been ranked on *TIME* magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2024. The stars feature among singer-songwriter Dua Lipa, actor Jeffrey Wright, and filmmaker Sofia Coppola. Six people of Indian descent have been included on the American news magazine's list of people who made remarkable contributions and impact on a global scale, including Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Olympic gold-winning wrestler Sakshi Malik, president of the World Bank, Ajay Banga, Yale University professor, Priyamvada Natarajan, Darjeeling Express restaurateur Asma Khan and US Department of Energy's Loan Programs Office director, Jigar Shah.



10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

11 LAKHS OFFER

A TO Z WEDDING SERVICE WITH AC WEDDING HALL FOR 1000 LEAVES @ JUST ₹11 LAKHS ONLY

OUR SERVICES

- HALL BOOKING
- CATERING SERVICE
- MANGALA VADYAM
- GARLAND & FLOWERS
- ANGUMANI THINGS
- VAIDEEGA THINGS
- KASI YATHRA THINGS
- KOLAM
- KATTUSADAM
- SEER BAKSHANAMS

6/9, Varadappan Street, West Mambalam, Chennai - 33

9600026070 | 6379625656

NITRAA
FURNITURE REDEFINED
ESTD. 1988

Discover a fresh perspective & indulge in exclusive designs as we delve into the deeper meaning behind furniture design

EXCLUSIVE INAUGURAL OFFERS

Offer Valid till 30th April 2024*

HOME FURNITURE :

- KITCHEN
- LIVING ROOM
- DINING
- BEDROOM
- STUDY ROOM

OFFICE FURNITURE :

- MODULAR WORKSTATION
- INTERIOR TURNKEY PROJECTS
- SPECIALISED SEATING SYSTEM
- INSTITUTIONAL FURNITURE
- MODERN OFFICE FURNITURE
- AUXILIARY FURNITURE
- STANDARD RETAIL FIT-OUTS

Furniture Starting at ₹2,999/-

Join us to unveil our latest, meticulously crafted collection in Chennai, adding a touch of elegance to your experience

SUNDAY | 21 APRIL 2024 | 11:30AM TO 12:30PM

SPECIAL GUEST – ACTRESS PRIYANKA MOHAN

VENUE : 10, Vinayaga Avenue, Okkiyam Thorai, Pakkam, Old Mahabalipuram Road, Chennai – 600 097

FOR ENQUIRIES CALL : **+91 81222 14472**

Scan for Venue:

www.nitraafurniture.in

Follow us on: @nitraa_furniture

*T&C Apply

Malayam

Fahadh Faasil carries this thinly-plotted film



SR Praveen
praveen.s@thehindu.co.in

The most tense moment in *Aavesham* is placed not during one of the numerous fights, but in the middle of a game of dumb charades. The game takes place in the lair of Rangan (Fahadh Faasil), a colourful gangster, stories about whom range from the chillingly realistic to the far-fetched. It is a cleverly-crafted scene which makes us question our understanding of that character until then, and ends up reassuring us that we made the right assessment after all, only to upset it again spectacularly a while later. This ambiguity about Rangan is one of the things that filmmaker Jithu Madhavan pulls off successfully in the gangster comedy *Aavesham*.

Aavesham is a different beast altogether with Fahadh running riot as the gangster adorned in bling, and with a habit of sharing his dance reels. We see Rangan through the eyes of three Malayali students – Aju (Hipster), Bibi (JS Mithun) and Shanthan (Roshan Shanavas) – in Bengaluru, who are frequenting seedy bars with the intention of gaining some “local support” to take revenge on their seniors who bashed them up.

The scenes leading up to Rangan’s introduction and the slow reveal of his true stature are a scream. And, to build up on this character, there is Rangan’s sidekick Ambaan (Sajin Gopu) with a wealth of humorous and scary stories on him that he narrates as if he has witnessed them. Rangan is the kind of character that mainstream stars have essayed in the past, but Fahadh gives it a spin of his own and runs uninhibitedly wild with it.

The all-pervading presence of this character and Sushin Shyam’s pulsating score somewhat papers over the film’s many weaknesses, especially in plotting and character development. The interval high was followed by a considerable lull, during which time the film shifts its gaze from unabashed hero worship and turns it into a cautionary tale.

The youngsters, some of whom are social media stars, as well as Sajin, stand their own amid Fahadh’s one-man show. But no female character, not even a girl from the campus gets substantial presence. It also presents to us a rare insight into Rangan’s personality, which is mostly hidden from us owing to the sketchy writing. Well, it is that kind of film, which revels in its loudness and quirkiness and leaves little space for quiet introspection and meaningful connections... things that Rangan also appears to crave for.

Aavesham is currently running in theatres

Aavesham

Director: Jithu Madhavan

Cast: Fahadh Faasil, Sajin Gopu, JS Mithun, Hipster, Roshan Shanavas

Storyline: Three Malayali students in Bengaluru befriend Rangan, a gangster, to take revenge on a gang of seniors who bashed them up, but things do not turn out as planned

Runtime: 158 minutes



Writer-director Ali Abbas Zafar’s attempt to give the soul of Bollywood tropes an AI finish appeals in parts

Hindi

Anuj Kumar
anuj.kumar@thehindu.co.in

In a rare Eid week without a Salman Khan-starrer, director Ali Abbas Zafar keeps alive the inclusive spirit of Bollywood with a high-speed action vehicle that runs on easy chemistry between its two drivers – style and substance.



Scan the QR Code for more entertainment news.

Made for the masses, the film carries a jolly heart and some purpose in the swagger beneath the armour of special effects. It follows the time-tested friend-turned-foe formula of Bollywood that was forcefully reinvented by Siddharth Anand in *Pathaan* and takes it forward in the realm of Artificial Intelligence. In times of deep fakes, Zafar digs into the receding human factor in technology.

An old hat Firoz aka Freddy (Akshay Kumar) and a rakish Rakesh alias Rocky (Tiger Shroff) are the trusted soldiers of

Commander Azad (Ronit Roy). Their insubordination has forced them out of the uniform but when a dushman-dost Kabir (Prithviraj Sukumaran) returns from the dead to take revenge, they join hands to take on the challenge of clones.

Of course, *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* is larger than life. Of course, it gives a feeling that someone used an AI app to develop an interesting idea. It is a road we have taken many times before – but the way it pans out, it is fun in the first half and engaging in the second. Equating the perfection of robots with the *fidayins* populating all faiths, it sends out a stinging message to those who want to rule with brainwashed foot soldiers. Underlining the Indian tradition of putting conscience ahead of talent, the film brings some respite from the propaganda fare. Expanding the India-Pakistan jousting on screen, Zafar, for a change, brings China into the picture and relates how self-interests, personal ego, and grudge turn men into monsters. He makes easy mythological allusions to Eklavya and Karna to give the audience something to chew on between the relentless punches.

Set to a throbbing background score by Julius Packiam, *BMCM* begins like a collection of action set pieces to flaunt what vfx company DNEG could achieve in the desi space. The digital bonding of the foreground and background is not always smooth but the narrative soon finds the irreverent tone of the original starring

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan

Director: Ali Abbas Zafar

Cast: Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Manushi Chhillar, Alaya F, Sonakshi Sinha, Ronit Roy

Storyline: Two soldiers, played by Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff, rejoin the fray against a masked antagonist

Amitabh Bachchan and Govinda. Early in the film, a hilarious throwback scene pays tribute to the comic timing of the two with the great Satish Kaushik and joins the chord between 1998 and the present. While Akshay plays the OG with his time-tested straight-faced humour, Tiger Shroff gets to flex his acting muscle and

laugh at himself. Laced with some meme-worthy inside jokes, the references to nepotism in terrorism and the comment on actors’ lowbrow image work well. In the battle between biceps and brains, Manushi Chhillar and Alaya F lend some sensual energy and goofy banter as the writers don’t treat them as just good-looking props. However, Sonakshi Sinha, in an extended cameo, doesn’t have much to add.

The problem is that every emotion, like the action choreography, is spelled out in capital letters and Zafar takes a bit too long to arrive at the point. But before you feel that it is just yet another heavy dose of adrenaline, Zafar brings a twist to the tale forcing you to log in again.

After living the emaciated Goat Life, Prithviraj Sukumaran turns up as a puffed-up, masked antagonist devouring the digital scenery with style. The dialogue delivery demands a little more work on intonation but his expression of the anguish of a scientist whose hard work is rejected because of its possible misuse hits the right notes.

Targeted at the galleries, the film follows what Azad says in the film: intent is more important than talent. One advice for Akshay, though. It is high time he starts growing a real moustache for fictitious roles. It distracts!

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan is currently running in theatres

Diljit Dosanjh gamely anchors Imtiaz Ali’s vibrant musical

Hindi

Shilajit Mitra
shilajit.mitra@thehindu.co.in

In the 1980s, singer Amar Singh Chamkila – born Dhani Ram in a Dalit Sikh family in Punjab – gained notoriety and fame for his rough musicality and teasing lyrics. His record-setting songs obsessed over incest and illicit love. On March 8, 1988, while alighting from his car for a performance, he was gunned down by unidentified assailants in Mehrauli along with his wife and singing partner, Amarjot. Multiple theories were floated, but with the State in the grip of a violent insurgency, the case went unsolved.

This haunting episode from Punjab’s checkered past has been mined for cinematic fodder before, most inventively in Kabir Singh Chowdhry’s absurdist docu-fiction *Mehrauli* (2018). Now Imtiaz Ali, co-writing with his brother, Sajid, takes a crack at Chamkila. This film does not clear mysteries or exorcise



any ghosts. It is a fairly straightforward reading of the Chamkila myth, more a vibrant celebration than a deep dive. Yet, it manages to offer a peek into the artist’s interiority.

Chamkila (Diljit Dosanjh) has sold out his Toronto show, during his overseas tour of ‘87. His oily impresario is grinning from ear to ear, telling him how, when Amitabh Bachchan performed at the same venue a few nights ago, they had to add 137 extra seats. In Chamkila’s

case, he proudly adds, that number has exceeded a thousand. We expect Chamkila to cheer up at this achievement. Instead, his smile fades.

No real explanation is provided for his blues: a narrator dryly notes that artists are strange creatures, and that Chamkila’s dejection resembled a loss. This moment, buried deep in the noise and tumult of Chamkila’s extraordinary life, is the best in Ali’s film, even if it is wholly fictitious. It asks a gentle question: how

comfortable was Chamkila, improbably baptised the ‘Elvis of Punjab’, with his meteoric rise?

Ali opens his tale with the fateful assassination, then proceeds to jumble up childhood and death, deed and aftermath, fact and hearsay. The wailing ‘Baaja’ reaches an angry crescendo, complete with spoken lines.

This bracing prologue is followed by a mostly tame assembly of Chamkila’s life and times. An ordinary mill worker, he sweet-talks himself into the orbit of folk sensation Jinda (based on Punjabi singer Surinder Shinda), writing lyrics for him and bringing tea. A chance to open at a seething akhada announces his singing skills. He builds his reputation crooning lively duets, but is soon out of backers and a partner. His high-pitched delivery and endless bookings wear out most, but somehow Amarjot (Parineeti Chopra), tickled pink by his bawdy verses, stays on. They get married.

The extremists roaming the countryside as well as religious chieftains had imposed strict curbs on culture and speech. Chamkila

was branded a *baagi* (renegade), a corrupting influence on family and youth. This made him vulnerable to all kinds of exactions and threats.

Ali barrels through the dark sociopolitical atmosphere of 80s Punjab. There is a constant softening of mood and tone. AR Rahman’s pulsing original soundtrack ‘Ishq Mitaye’ is pained but glorious, with its echoing refrain of “Main hoon

Panjab”. ‘Naram Kaalja’ is a perfectly drawn women’s folk number, with lyricist Irshad Kamil having fun with the skittish imagery. Despite Chamkila’s inflammatory reputation, this is not a particularly provocative film, mindful of cultural norms in its chosen time.

Ali’s film employs live recordings of Chamkila’s original songs. Diljit Dosanjh portrays Chamkila as a gentle dreamer, diffident and optimistic; the charismatic loucheness, and the searing blaze we occasionally glimpse in Chamkila’s eyes in old photographs, are weirdly amiss. Parineeti perseveres in a limited part.

Ultimately, this is less a film about Chamkila than the lives that gathered around him or were altered by him. As with all great artists, he inspired both envy and awe. From rivals to raconteurs to income tax agents, everyone had a Chamkila story to tell. Like moths, they flickered briefly in his light.

Amar Singh Chamkila is currently streaming on Netflix

Perfect Days

Director: Wim Wenders

Cast: Kōji Yakusho, Tokio Emoto, Arisa Nakano, Aoi Yamada

Runtime: 125 minutes

Storyline: Hirayama feels content with his life as a toilet cleaner in Tokyo. Through unexpected encounters, he reflects on finding beauty in the world



Charming portrait of the everyday

Japanese

Ayaan Paul Chowdhury
ayaan.paul@thehindu.co.in

In Wim Wenders’ Oscar-nominated opus, the bustling streets of Tokyo serve as the canvas upon which the German director paints a poignant portrait of life’s quiet nuances through the presence of Kōji Yakusho. Set against the backdrop of the pulsing Japanese capital, the film follows Hirayama, a Tokyo toilet cleaner who savours the little moments in his daily affairs. At the heart of the film lies Yakusho’s Hirayama, a man of few words but

infinite depth. Through Yakusho’s masterful portrayal, Hirayama emerges as a figure of quiet resilience, his weathered face betraying the weight of a lifetime’s worth of experience. Yet beneath his stoic exterior lies a soul brimming with warmth and compassion. Hirayama is an acolyte to routine. Wenders imbues his daily rituals with the gentleness of cinema verite, by the end of which, his everyday schedule is burned into our consciousness. As a proud employee of the real-life Tokyo Toilet Project, Hirayama spends his working hours meticulously cleaning the stunning public restrooms across Tokyo. Whether he is scrubbing toilets with military precision, feeling the sunlight filter through the leaves on his face or relishing his day off with an afternoon siesta, these moments of stillness serve as the film’s emotional core, offering glimpses into the soul of a man who finds solace in the simplicity of everyday life. Yakusho instantly turns Hirayama into a character that you not only root for, but more importantly relate with on a number of levels. From the outset, *Perfect Days* is a visual feast. Each shot feels like a love letter to the city - from the neon-lit alleyways, to the serenity of its parks and gardens, to Hirayama’s tiny sunkissed flat.

Throughout the film, Wenders also explores themes of memory, solitude, and the passage of time. We receive a glimpse at Hirayama’s wistful recollections at the end of each day in the form of monotone dream sequences. It is not until we witness Yakusho break down when bidding farewell to his sister and niece that we get a taste of Hirayama’s crippling solitude, one which he had been doing such a stellar job masking for the better half of the film. It felt almost cruel having to watch Yakusho’s haunting final shot, perfectly paired with Nina Simone’s “Feeling Good,” as Hirayama struggles to keep up the charade of composure, tears cascading down his grinning face while he drives off into the sunset. With a delicate touch, *Perfect days* uncovers the enchantment within the ordinary, the cosy embrace of routine, and the art of leaving our mark. It is a delightful dance between optimism and nostalgia. *Perfect Days* reminds us that true perfection lies not in grand gestures or dramatic revelations, but in the quiet grace of everyday existence. It reminds us to pause, to reflect, and to embrace each perfect day as if it were our last.

Perfect Days is currently streaming on MUBI

Snippets



Renée Zellweger to return for new Bridget Jones movie

Universal Pictures and Working Title have put together *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy*, the fourth part of the romantic comedy film series. Renée Zellweger will return to play the popular character Bridget Jones. Also returning are Hugh Grant as Daniel Cleaver and Emma Thompson, who was part of the 2016 movie *Bridget Jones’ Baby*. Chiwetel Ejiofor and Leo Woodall are the newcomers in the movie. Michael Morris, who directed the Andrea Riseborough starrer *To Leslie*, will helm the film. The feature film is adapted from the 2013 novel by Helen Fielding, who created the *Bridget Jones* book series. The film will hit the screens on Valentine’s Day 2025.



Salman Khan’s next film is titled Sikander, to release on Eid, 2025

Salman Khan announced that his next film has been titled *Sikander* and will be released in theatres across the country on Eid 2025. Salman will play the titular role in the movie, which will be directed by A R Murugadoss. The project will be produced by Sajid Nadiadwala’s banner Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment. In a message posted on his official social media handles, the superstar sent his best wishes to his fans for the festival of Eid and asked them to watch Akshay Kumar-Tiger Shroff starrer *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* as well as Ajay Devgn’s *Maidaan* in theatres.



Vijay and Venkat Prabhu’s The Greatest Of All Time to release on September 5

Actor Vijay’s next release, *GOAT (The Greatest Of All Time)* has locked a release date of September 5, 2024 on the occasion of Vinayaka Chaturthi. His last release was the hit action drama *Leo* directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj. The film is directed by Venkat Prabhu and produced by Kalpathi S Aghoram’s AGS Entertainment. The music score is by Yuvan Shankar Raja. The film is a sci-fi spectacle and might feature Vijay in dual roles. Sneha is teaming up with Vijay after 22 years and music composer Yuvan Shankar Raja is working with Vijay after *Pudhiya Geethai* (2003).



Post-apocalyptic carnage

Blood, guts and gore pepper this tale of a girl in search of her father, and a squire seeking knighthood, in Jonathan Nolan’s adaptation of the popular video game

English

Mini Anthikad Chhibber
mini.chhibber@thehindu.co.in

Here is another wonderful videogame adaptation that rocks from the word go. Like 2023’s *The Last of Us*, *Fallout* (based on Bethesda Softworks’ role-playing video game franchise) too is set in a post-apocalyptic world. Here too a young woman has to make her way through dangerous places helped by friends and hindered by foes. Like the feature-film length first episode of *The Last of Us*, the Jonathan Nolan-directed first episode of *Fallout*, titled *The End*, clocks at 74 minutes and introduces the main players in this world of stark, dust-streaked vistas reminiscent of Nolan’s science fiction western series, *Westworld*. We open in Los Angeles in 2077, where famous Hollywood cowboy star Cooper Howard (Walton Goggins) is performing, with his daughter at a child’s birthday party (a man must do what he can to pay the alimony). The world seems stuck in a time warp, with boxy televisions, women in flared skirts straight out of *Mad Men*, and the paranoia of a nuclear attack and Reds under the bed – thanks to the Modern Prometheus. As the violently coloured cake is being cut and passed around, there is a nuclear attack and the world goes to hell. The scene moves 219 years ahead where people live in underground bunkers called Vaults. Lucy (Ella Purnell) from Vault 33 is cleared to marry a man from Vault 32. The wedding day goes horribly

Fallout Season 1

Creators: Graham Wagner, Geneva Robertson-Dworet

Cast: Ella Purnell, Aaron Moten, Kyle MacLachlan, Moises Arias, Xelia Mendes-Jones

Episodes: 8

Storyline: In an alternate history, post-apocalyptic world, a girl sets off on a quest to free her father

wrong with many dead, dismembered people, a result of raiders from the surface led by Lee Moldaver (Sarita Choudhury). Lucy’s father, Hank (Kyle MacLachlan) is captured and Lucy decides to go up top to get her father back. On the surface, the Brotherhood of Steel uses “pre-war technology to find prewar tech, to convince people not to use prewar tech.” Maximus (Aaron Moten), a squire, gets a chance to serve the irascible Knight Titus (Michael Rapaport) on an important mission – to find Dr. Siggi Wilzig (Michael Emerson) who is travelling with a dog. Cooper, after the nuclear holocaust, has become a gunslinger and a ghoul. It turns out that everyone is interested in Wilzig – Maximus, the Ghoul and Lucy who hopes to trade the doctor for her father. Alliances are formed and broken, and truths and lies uncovered, as Lucy, Maximus and the Ghoul journey into the heart of darkness. Lucy’s brother, Norm (Moisés Arias), and her cousin, Chet (Dave Register) find that all is not roses, champagne, sweetness and light in the vaults, as there are some pretty dark secrets in there too. As our three travellers make their way through the Wasteland as uneasy allies, tentative friends or outright enemies, we are shown the past, and the insidious rise of Vault-Tec and Bud Askins (Michael Esper) with his concept of Time being “the apex predator” and Management, the all-powerful overseer. Cooper’s wife, Barb (Frances Turner), seems to have drunk the Kool-Aid, much to Cooper’s dismay. While the opinions of fans of the game are sharply divided (Nolan himself is an avid player), *Fallout* offers enough adrenalin-charged thrills for newbies as

well as Easter eggs and callbacks for the gaming faithful. The eight episodes zip by on neat parallel tracks of humour and horror. There is the gun spewing massive killing rounds with a digital display that urges the people to “please remain calm,” while the dining table of suicides looks like a sepia-tinted vision of a demented master and the petrified bodies remind one of Pompeii. The two stoners at the Super Duper Mart are reminiscent of Wayne and Garth from *Wayne’s World*, while the irony of the election in the Vaults makes you laugh so hard till you weep. *Game of Thrones* and more recently *3 Body Problem* composer, Ramin Djawadi, does a great job with the score, while sweet, sunny pop standards by music legends including Perry Como, The Ink Spots, Bing Crosby and Johnny Cash soar in time to bones, digits and skulls being remorselessly crushed. The vast cast from the principles to the minor characters – including Leslie Uggams as former overseer of Vault 33, Betty Pearson; Annabel O’Hagan as the heavily pregnant and vaguely deranged Stephanie Harper, Lucy’s best friend; Matt Berry as the voice of cheerily violent robot, Snip Snip; Jon Daly as the shady Snake Oil Salesman; Chris Parnell as Ben, the cyclopean Overseer of Vault 4; and Dale Dickey as the rough and ready shopkeeper in Filly, Ma June – give heft to their roles. *Fallout* with its excellent production values, writing, acting and soundscape is a thrill-charged ride one would love to be on. As the stage is set for season 2, one of the questions buzzing in my over-stimulated brain was whatever happened to the dog, Roosevelt.

Fallout is currently streaming on Prime Video