

ARCANUM ARCANORUM

ISSUE I



Editorial

Hello!

I suppose starting is always the hardest part – how to start, when to start, how to ensure that everything truly starts, are all questions I underestimated the difficulty of finding the answers to. I suppose experiences eventually have their ways, though, to force one to learn on the go.

Welcome to Arcanum Arcanorum, the secret of all secrets. With this edition of the Oasis English Press, as always, I promise you an exhaustive enough roundup of all that has happened so far in Oasis '23 – Grimoire Galore.

I suppose, after slightly over 24 hours of operation, my true takeaway is that there is only one secret, and that is to remember that it does take a village to raise a child. Thus, there is nothing better that I would like to do as part of my first Editorial to thank my village, and of course, to welcome all readers to Oasis '23!

I hope you have had a memorable first day and go on to have the most festive, jubilant, and engaging Oasis.

Until next time,
Akshatha.

Team

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Aditi C, Aditi M, Aditya, **Akshatha**, Anantshree, Gourav, Harshita, Iyer, Kavya, Krishnam, Navin, Samarth, Sury, Vidit, Yash;

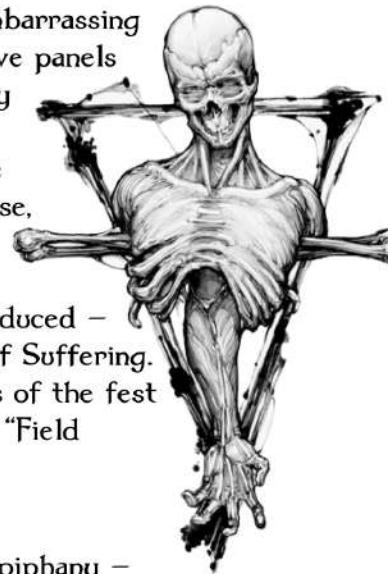
Adhvaith, Aniruddha, Anshuman, Esha, Ishaan, Garvit, Harsh, Nandini, Shreyas, Shivansh, Siddharth, Stuti, Tarun G, Tarun S, Vivegan;

Aditi K, Gawade, Aparna, Chandrasnata, Ishan, Kalyani, Kritika, Kuhoo Laavanya, Pramit, Rishab, Shreya, Surya, Swasti;

Inauguration

The start of Oasis '23 was marked by the Inauguration Ceremony, held in the Main Auditorium on October 27, 2023. The title sponsor for this edition of the fest was unveiled to be eightfold.ai, who also launched their new initiative, "blindfold.ai". Following this, Music Club performed a well-received setlist including tracks like "Atlas Stone" and "Bhare Naina". Various members of the audience remarked that the seamless fusion of rock and Indian Classical Music styles by the club greatly complemented the performers' technical abilities. Music Club faced hindrances as the curtains were drawn on them ten minutes earlier than they were supposed to. However, they recovered from this setback by delivering another performance right after.

This was followed by the long-standing tradition of StuCCAn roasts, featuring embarrassing anecdotes and fitting background music. The compere then introduced the decorative panels made for this edition of Oasis in accordance with its theme – Grimoire Galore – by highlighting a range of sinister tales. These panels were put together by the Department of Art, Design, and Publicity (ADP). They featured Master Wu on the stage backdrop, as well as panels of Zoro from One Piece, Stephen King's Pennywise, Spider-Man Miles Morales, and Sukuna from Jujutsu Kaisen.



Next, the structures prepared by the department outside the auditorium were introduced – the Lords of Evil, the Wraith of Despair, the Demon of Deceit, and the Sorceress of Suffering. The segment came to a close with ADP showcasing a video detailing the intricacies of the fest theme. After this, the anthem of the fest was released, along with a rap feature by "Field Engineers".

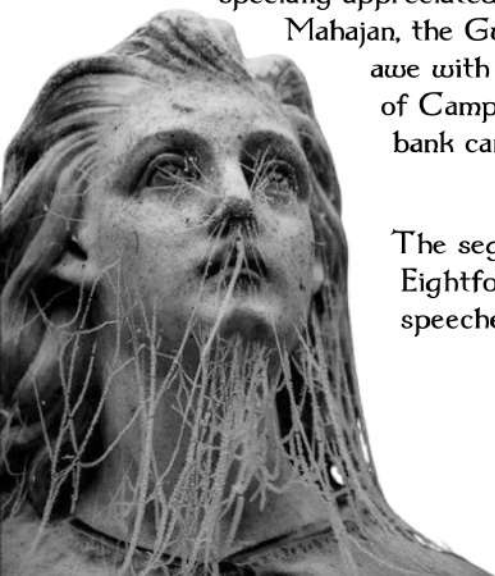
This was followed by the introduction of the theme of APOGEE '24 – Celestial Epiphany – featuring a teaser made by the Department of Visual Media (DVM). Following this, the Filmmaking Club (FMaC) presented their trailer for Oasis '23 and unveiled the official aftermovie for APOGEE '23, evoking a wave of nostalgia within those present.

This was followed by the ceremonial lighting of the lamp in presence of the invited dignitaries. The Director of the institute – Dr Sudhirkumar Barai – proceeded to address the audience, also quoting a dialogue from a movie directed by the Chief Guest, R. Balki, in his speech.

The Chief Guest then proceeded to address the crowd. He notably quipped that filmmaking did not require any qualifications, unlike securing a seat in BITS Pilani and specially appreciated the efforts put by FMaC in their work for the fest. Deepika

Mahajan, the Guest of Honour, then delivered her address, stating that she was in awe with the enthusiasm and energy received from the audience. As the Head of Campus Relations of IDFC Bank, she further expanded upon IDFC's first bank campus hiring program as part of her speech.

The segment following this was the sponsorship section, with representatives from Eightfold.ai, Cisco, and BoostGrad delivering notably long and enthusiastic speeches.



The most awaited events were the performances by Mime Club and Dance Club. They appeared to fulfil all expectations that the audience had from them. The clubs took turns alternating between performances, with each club performing three sets each. Mime Club started off with an act about Gandhi Bhawan's infamous "Room 137". This was followed by an energetic performance by Dance Club. The attendees expected the acts to end after the curtains were drawn, however, Mime Club took everyone by surprise with a relatable final act. Dance Club followed suit with another performance that consisted of comedic and nostalgic elements from old Bollywood movies, greatly enthralling the crowd. Finally, the ceremony concluded with films by both Mime Club and Dance Club.

Chief Guest Interview

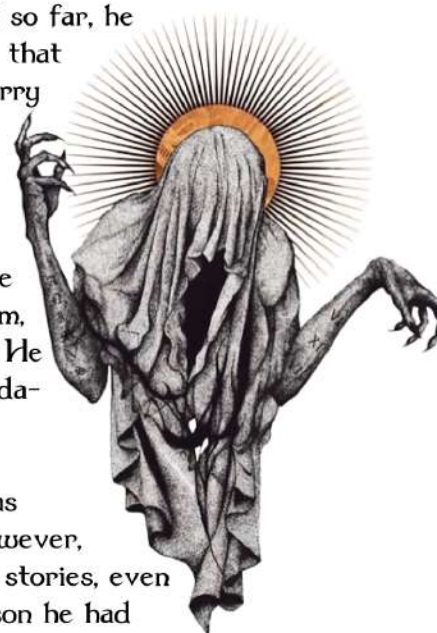
The English Press Club got the opportunity to interview the Chief Guest of Oasis 2023, Mr R. Balki, a renowned filmmaker. Mr R. Balki has directed renowned films such as Paa and Pad Man for which he has won the Best Director award. When asked about his experience at Oasis 2023 so far, he said that he really appreciated the work put in by the organisers. He remarked that the campus was a beautiful place for college students to make 'memories you carry back for a very, very long time'. He also commended the faculty's passion for the fest.

R. Balki admired the Film Making Club's activities and stated that, 'they've got the idea of communication and got pizzazz in their execution'. He believes there will be some talented filmmakers graduating from BITS Pilani. According to him, his biggest inspiration to enter the world of filmmaking was "Ilaiyaraaja music". He shared that he was introduced to it when he was in the seventh or eighth standard. He stated, 'I didn't want to learn music, I wanted to imagine the music'.

When asked about challenges faced throughout his career, he stated that he was advised not to produce Chup as many believed it would upset the audience. However, he said that he would rather be in a 'hesitant space' than be repetitive with his stories, even if they were 'fraught with opposition'. He believed that the most important lesson he had learnt throughout his career was that, 'when you're really down and negative, that is the time to really be thankful'. He believes that instead of 'looking at the wrong, one must stop and thank the universe for the opportunities that you have had'.

Mr R. Balki mentioned that the film he is closest to is Chup because it came from the core of his heart, "the angst of an artist". When asked about what prospective changes he would make in his films, he said he would change all of them, because he could always think of better ways to film them. He quoted, 'you just do it to the best of you, till you ask yourself no more questions'.

When asked what the best and the worst thing about being a filmmaker is, he stated that the best thing is the 'high you get' after getting an idea, finishing a script, or seeing a particular scene being performed. He expressed his discontent with the inefficient and ignorant film critics, and the lack of outreach of the films. In conclusion, he said that films are just a medium for expressing original thoughts. He advised aspiring filmmakers that their prime reason for filmmaking should be originality. He believes that 'the more we tell stories from our heart, from our imagination, it creates hope for people because so many watch it. It's all about a possible dream.'



Antaak

Antaak, a quizzing event on Bollywood music, was organised by the Hindi Activities Society (HAS) on Day 1 of Oasis. Meant to commence at 12 AM, the event was delayed by an hour due to the Inauguration Ceremony continuing past its scheduled time. A technical malfunction further increased the wait.

The event was hosted by Ruhika Das and Vidhi Jain, and was conducted in two segments – 'Elims' and 'Mains'. The 'Elims' started with great excitement, after the hosts explained the general rules. The segment comprised four rounds – 'Dhun', 'Pictionary', 'Antara', and 'Theme'.

'Dhun' began with an array of questions on Bollywood music from across the generations. The second round, 'Pictionary', involved guessing a song after seeing pictures that hinted towards it. 'Antara' saw people enthusiastically singing along with the shown recordings; with them almost revealing the answers. A few participants could be heard chattering that the questions were quite intriguing.

The top 30 participants from the first half qualified for 'Mains'. A jovial and energetic crowd was explained the rules of the segment, that proved to be an apt test of knowledge of the Bollywood music industry. It consisted of several rounds such as 'Dhun', 'Burglars', and 'Sound-After-Scene'. After the event ended, the coordinator of HAS, Rijul Bassamboo, shared that he was proud of the thrilling public response and grateful that the event went smoothly.



Travelling and Living Quiz

The first ELAS event of the fest, the "Travel and Living Quiz", featured questions about the diverse and rich cultures of the world.

The competition began with a preliminary round, contested by around 40 teams, with each team having up to two members. This round had 26 questions, with the first letter of each answer being part of an 'alphabet soup'. After all 26 questions were asked, the response sheets were graded and the eight top-ranked teams made it to the final round.

The final round was divided into 3 stages: "South Hemisphere", "North Hemisphere", and "Connect". The former two were held in the IBP format with the questions revolving around various events in the respective regions. The Connect round featured a long connect question.



The questions asked in the final round were very challenging and the teams had to step up their game to solve them. The negative marking aspect forced teams to adopt a more conservative approach in answering questions. The quiz master was constantly gauging how difficult the teams were finding the questions and accordingly provided hints, clarifications and additional information to maximise the engagement from the teams. As the quiz was wrapping up, the competing teams were separated by very small point margins, so each team tried their best to gain more points. However, it was the team of Akshay Aserkar and Vedant Kabra who took home the prize at the quiz's conclusion. All participants extended their congratulations to the winning duo and expressed their excitement to participate in the "India Quiz", the ELAS event scheduled for the next day.

Fiesta de Neon

Fiesta De Neón, the flagship event of Fashion Club, was conducted on October 28, 2023 at SAC. The event was scheduled to begin at 1:00 AM, just after the Inauguration Ceremony, but got delayed to 1:45 AM.

The event aimed to provide a unique experience for attendees, with neon lights, glow-in-the-dark decorations, and music that kept the energy levels high throughout the night.

The decorations included halloween-inspired fluorescent artwork that adorned the walls. Upon entry, the attendees were given food coupons which entitled them to avail snacks and beverages. A DJ kept the crowd dancing with a mix of electronic, bollywood, EDM and neon-inspired tracks. Attendees donned party clothing and accessories, which added to the fancy vibe of the event.

The event also faced several challenges. The inefficient measures for crowd control created havoc outside SAC before the event commenced. At one point, the area outside SAC got overly crowded, causing discomfort to attendees and hindering mobility.

The overcrowding also led to long lines at the acrylic face paint stations and radium bracelet stations inside SAC, reducing overall satisfaction. The organisers faced some management issues, when the crowd started pulling up in large numbers at once and people without tickets started sneaking their way into the event. But as the event progressed, the crowd started settling in and the entry process became smoother.

A Neon Party veteran testified that the preparations this year were lacklustre compared to last Oasis. Nevertheless, the creative integration of neon aesthetics and music at Fiesta De Neon made it an unforgettable experience for all attendees. The enthusiastic atmosphere created a sense of joy among attendees.

Movie Screening- Hindi

One of the first events that took place in Oasis this year was the movie screening held by Matrix, the cinema and literature club of BITS Pilani. The program was scheduled to start at 1:30 AM on October 28, 2023, at the Lecture Theatre Complex, but was delayed by thirty minutes.

The movie screened was "Ghoomer", a 2023 Indian Hindi-language sports drama film. The screening took place with the writer and director of the movie, who was also the chief guest of this edition of Oasis, R. Balki, in attendance. The movie is about Anina, played by Saiyami Kher, a young batting prodigy, who loses her right hand in an accident. An unsympathetic, failed cricketer, played by Abhishek Bachchan, gives her new hope, and trains her with unconventional techniques, to turn her fate around. Working together, they invent a new style of bowling: "Ghoomer," hence deriving the name of the movie.

Regarding the screening, the coordinator of Matrix, Adhvaith KS said that although the event was conducted successfully, the only issue that they encountered was that the movie was scheduled to be screened at the J.C. Chaudhry NAB Auditorium, but the venue was changed at the last minute.

Overall, it was an entertaining watch and was received well by the crowd.



FashP

FashP, organised by the Department of Theatre (DoT), witnessed an enthralling fashion competition between three colleges in the midst of a cheerful audience. Though it was scheduled at 4:00 PM, technical disruptions led to a major delay and the event finally commenced around two hours later.

The first team was the "Indigent Fashion Society", from the Indian Institute of Art and Design – who portrayed an intricate story of a queen being murdered by her most loyal follower – followed by the desperate desire of others to succeed the crown. The models presented an outstanding act to convey the message behind their gorgeous outfits and make-ups, in the absence of narration.

The second participant was the "Nakshatra Fashion Society", from the Hindu College, with the story of the "Eternal Sunshine". They portrayed sacrificial love and agony through the shades of red and golden sewed in their elaborate attire.

The final contestants, from the Shri Ram College of Commerce, illustrated a royal story of two queens. Unlike the previous performances, they had a subtle hint of western wear. They also provided the audience with a beautiful narration as well as background music.

Some participants felt that performing at the Rotunda demoted the quality of their performance as a proper backstage was lacking. The event concluded with a small product demonstration after the performances. Ms. Prachi Goel, a reputed fashion diva, judged the competition and the results are expected any time soon.



Indie Nite

ARBITS – Association of Rock, BITS Pilani – organised a kernel event, Indie Nite, on Day One of the fest. The event was held at South Park. The artists featured this year were Darzi, Parvaaz, and the F16s.

While the show was supposed to start at 8pm, the opening act Darzi started almost half-an-hour late. He began with slow beats that set a mellow mood, before transitioning to EDM and techno music. The crowd didn't seem amused in the beginning but eventually started enjoying the show.

After a short break, the next act to take the stage was Parvaaz, a four-member rock band formed in Bangalore. The audience was immediately captivated by the live instrumental music, especially the bass by Fidel O'Souza and vocals by Khalid Ahamed. The band played for the majority of the concert. They were joined by a third guitarist for the latter part of their performance. The encore consisted of songs like Marika, Ghaib and Roz Roz. The response to Parvaaz's performance was evidently positive.




The concluding performance was by The F16s from Chennai, who took the stage after a rather long break during which some students had left the venue. The five member band was an instant hit with the audience, opening with upbeat music and an equally enthralling stage presence. Bassist Shashank Manohar put on an especially electrifying show appreciated by all concert-goers. By this point into the night, some people in attendance had started to jump over the barricades into the VIP section which led to a bit of crowding in the area. Initially, volunteers from Audiforce were able to restrict this activity, but eventually admitted defeat and stopped interfering. Another disappointing aspect of the event was the hike in water bottle prices to twice the usual cost. The F16s ended with their song "Moonchild", which resulted in cheer and applause from the audience. The vocalist and guitarist Josh Fernandez ended with him introducing an unreleased song to the crowd.

Choreo

The Department of Theatre (DoT) organises seven kernel events under the domains of music, dance, fashion, and theatre. This year, they started with their stage dance competition – Choreo – a contemporary dance event featuring entries revolving around a particular theme as chosen by the team. It had participants from various colleges from around the country, including our very own Dance Club, contesting for the prize.



The judge for the event was Mr Manish Kangia, a critically acclaimed contemporary, jazz and ballet instructor. Mr Kangia established a dance academy in 2017 named the "Manish Kangia Academy of Dance", which trains students in the basic foundations of ballet, jazz, and lyrical contemporary. The academy also hosts an annual dance showcase named Dawn. The event was scheduled to begin at 1 pm, but was delayed due to prod setup on stage. However, this did not hinder the success of the programme, evident by the cheers of the packed auditorium.



The six colleges shortlisted to perform in the finals in the Main Audi were Christ University, Hansraj College, Hindu College, Gargi College, Kirori Mal College, and BITS Pilani. Teams used various props and light cues to highlight and enhance their performance. Each college was assigned ten minutes of performance time, exceeding which, would result in penalisation. BITS Pilani's DC drew great applause from the crowds, so much so that the auditorium felt empty once the performance was over.

The performers were spotted receiving feedback from Mr Kangia at the end of the event, who generously spent his time for the same. Finally, the prize was awarded to Kirori Mal College, with Hindu College coming second and Christ University receiving a Special Mention.

Cinema and Literature Quiz


MATRIX organised the Cinema and Literature Quiz on Day 1 of Oasis 2023, a quiz based on questions from movies, T.V. shows, books as well as comics.

While the quiz was scheduled for 3 PM noon, the event commenced after a delay of 30 minutes. Teams were made up of two players each, with some anomalies due to the extensive number of participants.

The first set of questions was from "Guess the Line", where famous movie quotes were given and contestants had to guess the movie. The second round was the "Stills Round", where several pictures from different movies were displayed, and the audience had to guess the film based on the picture. The final round for the prelims was the "Literature Round", where contestants had to guess the book from the descriptions provided to them. Some contestants ended up cheating using phones, resulting in intense communication amongst the participants.

After the prelims, there was a break, and the finals commenced at 6 PM, with six teams left to battle it out. The succeeding rounds were divided into two phases – a normal phase and a buzzer phase. The first

round of the finals was "Exaggerated Synopses", where an exaggerated description of the plot of the movie was provided and the name of the movie was to be guessed. The second round consisted of audio clips, and the participants were required to guess either the movie or the show based on the clips. The final round was a comic book round, which included simple trivia on certain comics.



The winners were Manomay and Aditya. Second place went to Shashank and Kumar, and third place to Ayush and Muskaan. The quiz ended with a round of congratulations before the participants took their leave.

Ghettoverse Performance

Organised by Kalamvansh, Ghettoverse was an event that showcased underground talent in the areas of rap and hip-hop. The program was scheduled to start at 12:30 A.M on Day One but started almost an hour and a half late. The anchors, A. Roy and Sahaj, first introduced the event's sponsors and then began by singing popular songs such as 'FE!N' by Travis Scott and 'Family Ties' by Kendrick Lamar.

Roy and Sahaj then announced the opening artists, who came on stage and introduced themselves along with their Instagram handles. They started by beatboxing individually, and soon formed pairs to perform, with one singing and the other beatboxing. The performers mainly rapped freestyle. They also asked the audience members for word suggestions, around which they composed verses.

The second set of artists was 8GB RAM and Raaghav, who began their performance by giving a series of shoutouts to the event organisers and the deejay. Performing a total of four original songs, they rapped about love, struggling and their evolution as artists as well as frustration with the state of the world. 'Ruins', described by 8GB RAM as one of their first songs, was received well by the crowd. Throughout their set they received a great deal of applause.

The next artists were a duo called 'Satyug', a combination of the names Sattvik and Navyug. They had arranged their song list according to mood, alternating between 'sad breakup songs' and more upbeat numbers. A. Roy and Sahaj followed them by covering songs from their own albums and rapped alongside them to entertain the audience.

A technical problem with the audio caused the event to stall for around fifteen minutes, during which the organisers tried to resolve the issue. While not clarified officially, several members of the audience believed that it was due to someone tripping over a wire connected to the speakers. However, the problem was soon sorted out, with the performers coming back to entertain the crowd for longer.



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