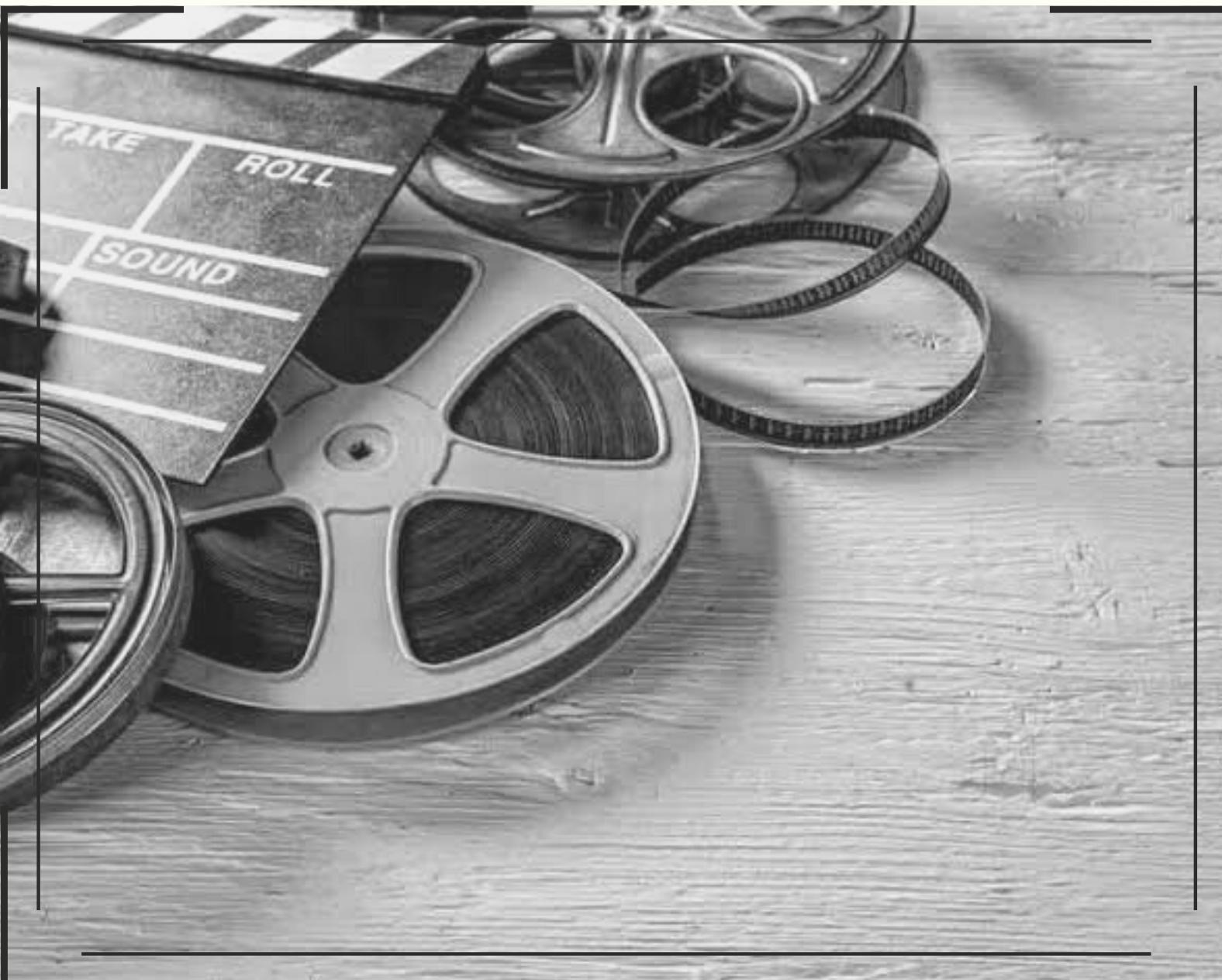


Cine Appétit



Cine Appétit

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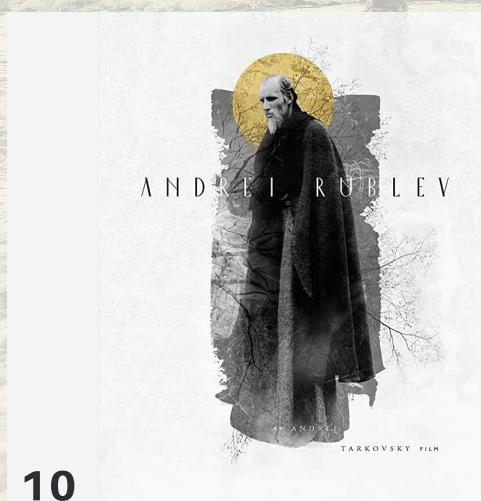
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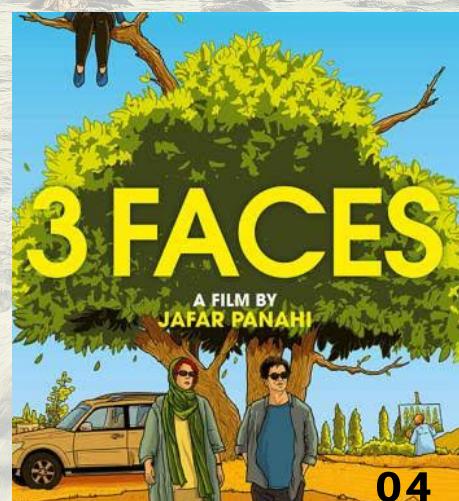
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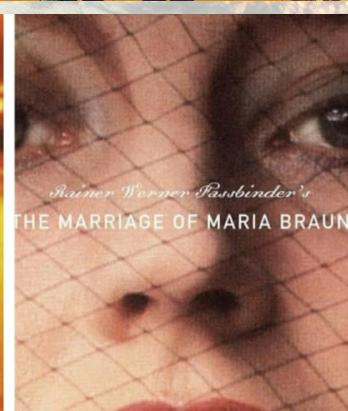
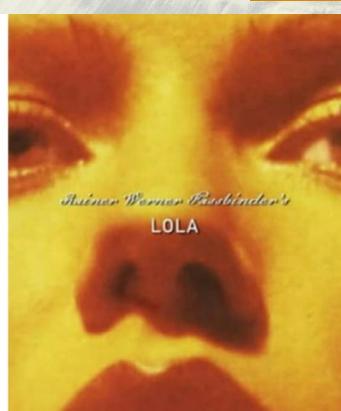
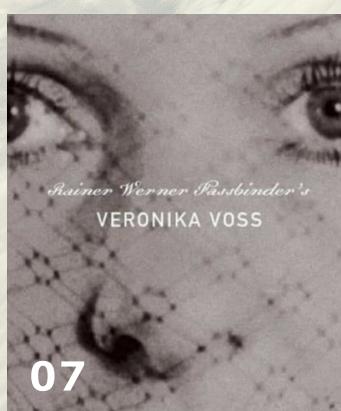
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04



EDITORS' DESK

We, the creators of Cine Appetite always look forward to come up with something new, yet immortal within the pangs of time. This issue comes with three very important articles which not only tells us about film but about life in its entirety. The films of Andrei Tarkovsky and specially Andrei Rublev not only talks about the creation of art and its very problems, but also the drab sterility in which art and the modern man gets constantly tangled up and in the process art liberates itself into a plane of spirituality. Fassbinder's trilogy shapes the whole of Germany in a go where the aftermath of war is so vividly portrayed that the aspects of civilization gets disjointed and we face a world of constant threats. Lastly, Jafar Panahi again raises his master technique of equaling the lenses of camera and his vocals against the restrictions imposed on art. Panahi focuses deeply on the varied aspects of the threats of the working class in this age and we get a war veteran raging against the state. Lastly, Roma by Alfonso Cuaron maybe marked as a path breaker in world cinema as it achieves a great role in marking up the everyday life of a common individual and Cuaron agreeably puts up an existentialist drama magnificently.

This is a monthly bilingual magazine presented by the creators of The Easterly. The articles from the World Cinema section would be included in every issue with a bonus article for the readers. To get your articles featured send in your articles at submissions.theeasterly@gmail.com.

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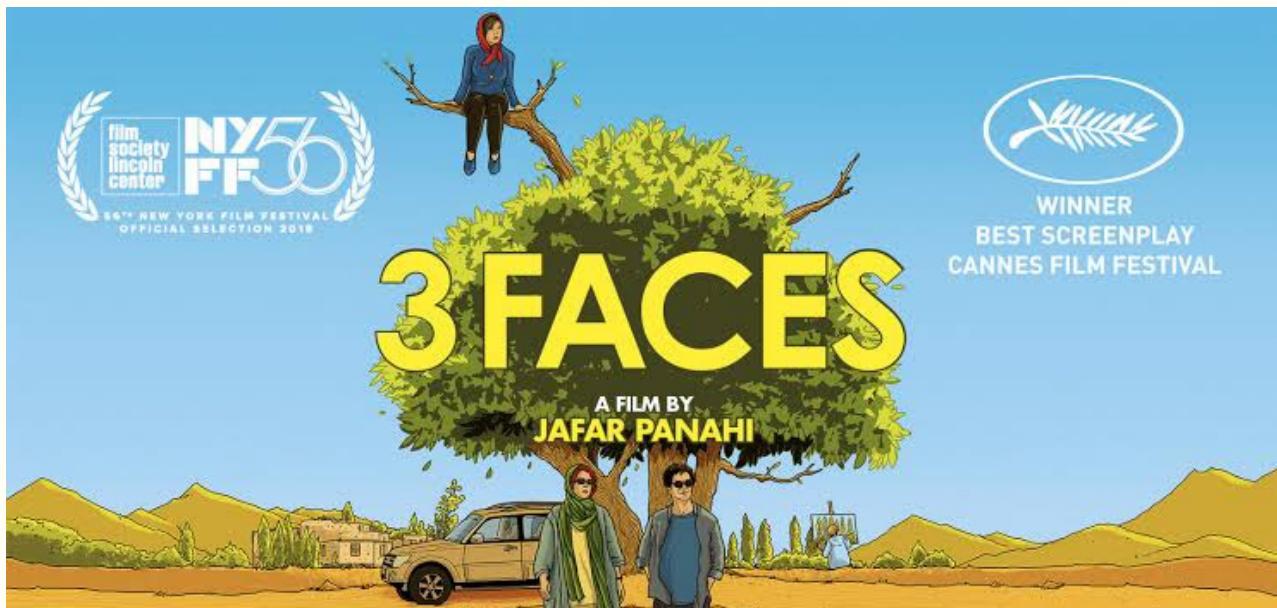
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3 FACES: THE SYMBOLIC MOVES OF JAFAR PANAHİ

BY
ANIKET ROY



Director: Jafar Panahi

Writers: Jafar Panahi, Nader Saeivar

Stars: Behnaz Jafari, Jafar Panahi, Marziyeh Rezaei, Maedeh Erteghaei, Narges Delaram

Running Time: 1h 40m

Genre: Drama

Jafar Panahi, a filmmaker of the Iranian New Wave Movement widely known for his jaw dropping depiction of the political scenario in Iran and a close inhabitant in the very philosophy of Ritwik Ghatak, pushed me further into the scales of his artistic quality through his film '3 Faces'. Panahi, currently banned for making films for approximately 20 years, raises his anti-establishment traits through the many voices of the people of Iran and that's why in the process of making films he raises a war against the State. Gently depicted and thoroughly produced, Jafar

Panahi uses his camera upon the folks of the many cultures still untouched and eventually lost in the foul segments of patriarchy and superstitions. But, this film becomes much more than that.

Marziyeh, a young aspiring actress is lost in the very transition of life by the moral inequalities put forward by the foul patriarchy set up in the village. She remains a sort of nobody or to be precise an '*empty-headed brat*', but she remains true to be the most feminine and the most graceful among the characters living in this face of society. The circumstances lead her in staging a false suicide and filming it only to be sent to Behnaz Jafari, a renowned film actress and Jafar Panahi. Watching her act of suicide, Panahi and BehnazJafari are intrigued in

search of Marziyeh and they take a trip to the village in Northwest Iran. The film takes the form of a road movie, much more like Panahi's '*Taxi*' or Kiarostami's '*Ten*' encountering the many people and these whimsical encounters leave traces upon the viewer through the spirit of resistance.



The symbolism is the driving force which pushes the film into a level of poetic integrity. We'll be looking forward to two scenes which in spite of being thoroughly simple sets up a metaphor of the drabness and sterility in the lives of these people. The first symbolic scene is where an injured bull lies blocking the road. Panahi has a conversation with the owner of the bull regarding its health and the moral questions in its killing. What is interesting to note is that the owner affirms the bull to be a 'stud' and is used widely for breeding and he makes a handsome fee from it. The bull acts as a patriarchal symbol of authority and the driving force of breeding itself points out the drab overtone of sexual restraints to a plane of genital gratification. Panahi surveys very cleverly the grave denunciatory candour of a world of automatic lust indulging the viewers into the director's inner world of chaos.

The second scene much more resonate the viewers in its similarity with Panahi's '*The Mirror*'. Here, Behnaz Jafari and Jafar Panahi, in the final sequence of the film are seen to

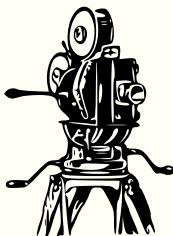
exit from the village leaving behind Marziyeh in the house with her family. But, in the final shot Marziyeh appears again running towards Behnaz Jafari, leaving behind her family losing all the ties with the drab and sterile functionality of the Azeri community to join the two artists. What struck me most in this scene was that while these three people were leaving the village, three trucks are seen to be approaching loaded with three bulls for the upcoming festival and the viewer is immediately called upon to look back into the previous animal imagery symbolising the gross breeding and the lives of people surrounding it and getting less engaged in matters of artistic equivalence. Immediately the viewer's minds are flogged with the question of women liberty and the surrounding gradually sets up the view that



women in these areas are objectified as nothing but sexual devices and this inevitable gender line 'runs through this movie like a volatile fault line'. Marziyeh symbolizes the essence of rebellion and her exit from the village notably points out the unwillingness of the girl being a slave of the regressive mindset. What are left are a road of death never to be smoothed, thoroughly disjointed and an affective reminder of the current state of Iran imposing their restrictions into the many voices of artists and their art.

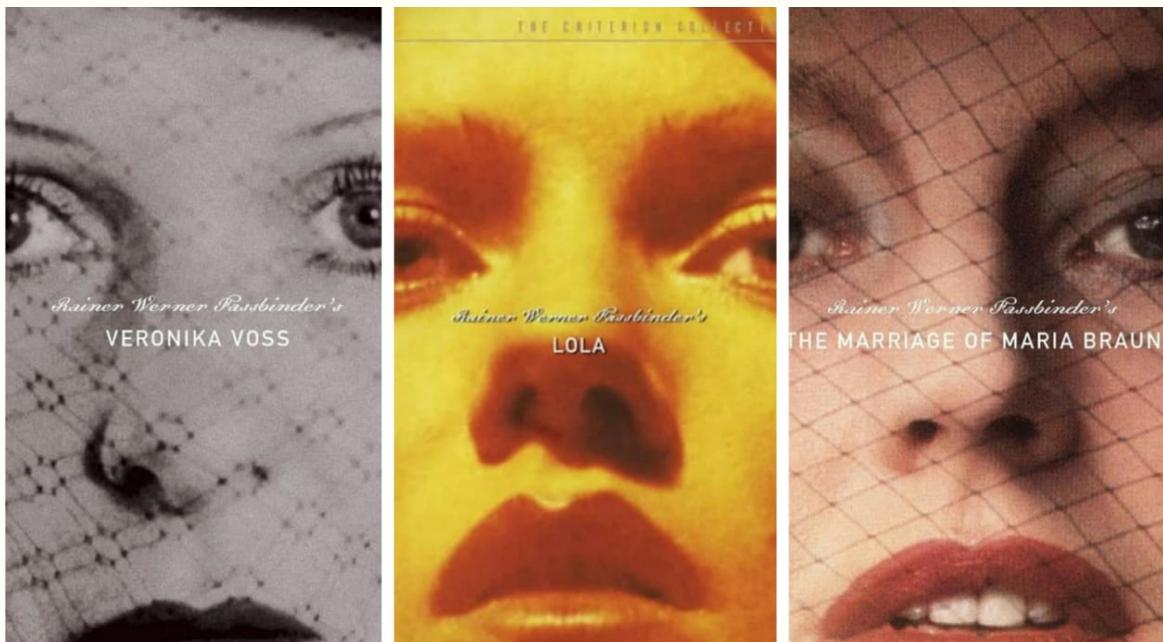
'A humanist in a theocracy, Panahi has long explored social and political issues — poverty, women's rights, authoritarianism — yet without the tiresome art-house wagging fingers and

grandstanding', says Manohla Dargis. Maybe Panahi would agree if we conclude with the final notion from Kurosawa's letter to Bergman, 'Let us hold out together for the sake of movies.'



BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND (BRD)- FASSBINDER'S TRILOGY ON POST-WAR GERMANY

BY
SAYOR BOSE



The rise of Nazism during the first half of the twentieth century cumulated into the Second World War, one of the bloodiest wars ever fought on the planet. Rainer Werner Fassbinder was one of the front line directors of the German New Wave Movement which took shape during the 60's and 70's. In 1980, he made an epic masterpiece on television, a series running for almost 14 hours. Going by the name of " Berlin Alexanderplatz", it brilliantly explored the German psyche post First World War, during the Weimar Republic, on the back of the huge reparations cruelly imposed on them by the Treaty of Versailles coupled with the great depression of 1929. Germany was currently a nation

seething with anger. This would eventually pave the way for the rise of the Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler whom many saw as the Messiah, a man who would go on to make the Germans the supreme race in the world.

Many films all over the world have dealt with this topic in abundance, thousands of movies have come out of Hollywood, Russia showing the brutal aspects of this horrific regime culminating into the terrifying Holocaust. Although most of these events are true, many films have gone to the extent of exaggerating the facts and incriminating the whole German nation. Also, very few movies have tried to explore the condition of Germany post 2nd

World War. This is where Fassbinder steps in. Born in Germany, he was quite fascinated with the psychology of his countrymen, both during pre-war and post war times. He made a trilogy over a period of 5 years starting from "The Marriage of Maria Braun" in 1978, to "Lola" in 1981 and finally "Veronika Voss" in 1982. In all of these 3 films, Fassbinder casts a strong female character in the lead role, who all have become a victim of the circumstances and the moral bankruptcy in post-war Germany. In "The Marriage of Maria Braun", we see that after the supposed death of the Maria's husband, she starts living her own life which is eventually interrupted when her husband returns. It is a chronicle of the rise and fall of a woman during the World War. Fassbinder is conscious enough in maintaining a non-judgmental outlook throughout all his films. In the case of Lola, an every charming lady working as a prostitute finally falls in love with the city's new building commissioner, an upright man whose value system does not fit in with post-war Germany's moral decrepit nature. In the last of his trilogy, which is my favourite among the three, we come across the character of Veronika, a film star who has been induced

by a cruel doctor to drug addiction. Later, when she meets a man and with his help, tries to return to stardom, she finds that the drugs have debilitated her nerves and the fight to overcome the battle with her own self seems all the more tougher.

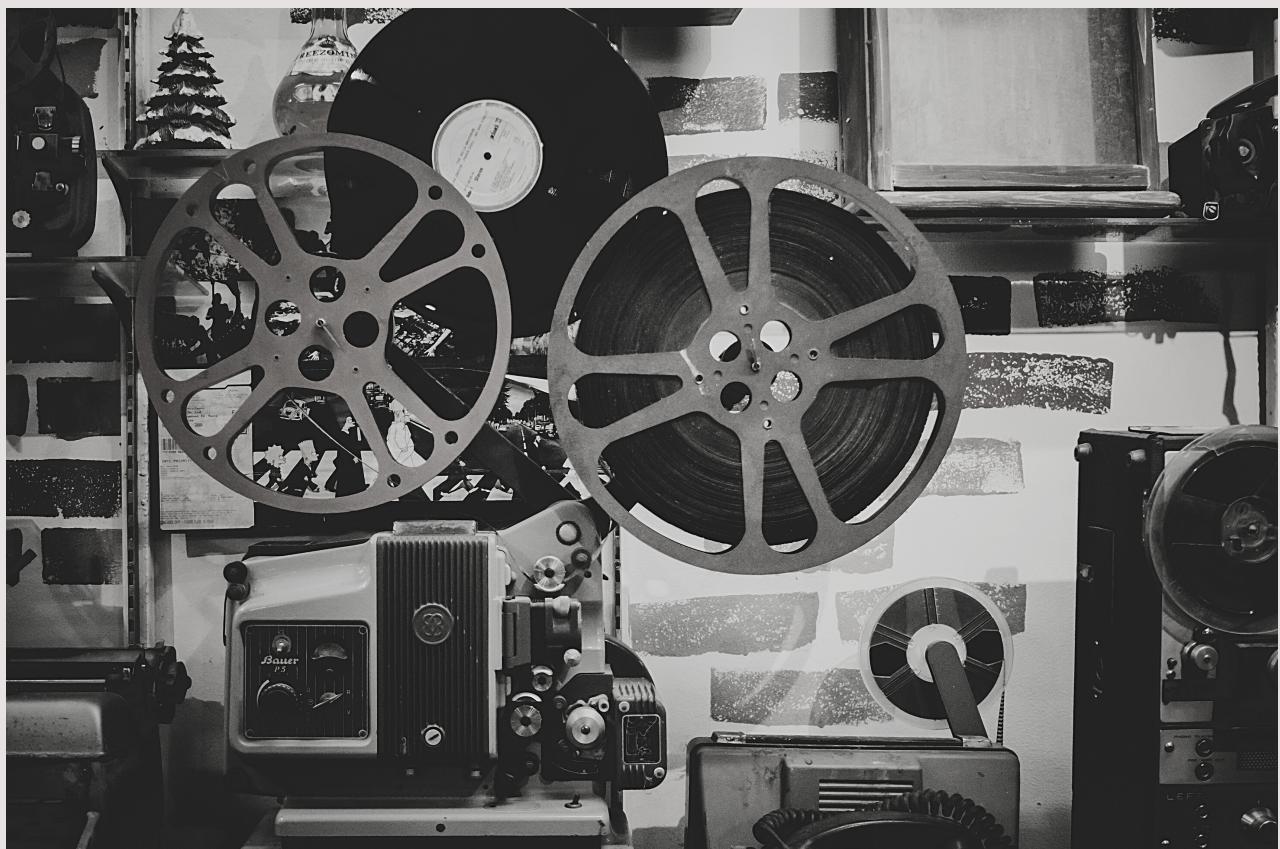
Fassbinder creates an atmosphere of tension, guilt, loneliness and above of all, a deep sadness in his movies. Peer Raben's intoxicating music makes the whole experience all the more haunting yet beautiful. Germany might have shaken the ugly baggage of fascism from her shoulders but the bars and the nightlife tell a different story.

Fassbinder was not only famous as the pioneer of New Wave German Cinema, but also as prominent figure of new Germany. He was the beacon of self-righteous anger, mercilessly critical of the new German life and brutally honest. Fassbinder tells a story of the German people after one of their worst periods in history, a story about how they evolved and how some were drawn into a world of moral bankruptcy. As much as Fassbinder is fascinating, he is equally important.



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A NORMATIVE DISCUSSION ON *ANDREI RUBLEV*

BY
MEGHNADE MUKHOPADHYAY



While watching Rublev, I couldn't help but think about *Béla Tarr* and his *The Turin Horse*. Tarr developed his distinctive style over time, and so one should presume Rublev was a stage in Tarkovsky's development towards perfecting his almost magical cinematic philosophy that we admire today. In this essay we will be discussing only some of the scenes (and a short general discussion) of this three hours long masterpiece otherwise the obvious following rant would not have stopped.

Holiday, 1408, June

The scene opens with the greatest of all Russian Icon painters Andrei Rublev and his crew of apprentices and helpers on their way to a job in the once-powerful feudal fortress city Vladimir in June of 1408. It is probably the evening of June 23, St. John the Baptist Eve, which falls immediately after summer

solstice, the end of spring. The Kliaz'ma River rises north of Moscow, flows between Moscow and the Trinity-St. Sergius Monastery and eastward past Vladimir.

Gathering firewood, Andrei gets caught up in a village pagan ritual. We should notice the sounds of nightingales and of ritual bell percussion. Some would say he seeks a way to join his high spiritual calling and art to the real soil of Russian folk experience, his "civilization" to his "culture". One way to describe the linkage of Christian "civilization" with Russian pagan "culture" is dual faith. Andrei is about to have a "dual faith" experience himself, and so are you if you let the film have its way. The making of a straw effigy and the burning of it are documented features of peasant ritual on St. John's Eve.

The sexual license portrayed here is characteristic of peasant spring and summer rituals. Andrei stands over a smoldering camp fire and his monkish robes catch fire. Fire and water are central to the pagan rituals of St. John's Eve (they are also central to Tarkovsky's own personal film imagery). The men and women are performing a characteristic ritual of St. John's Eve. Also don't miss the scene downstream from the two lines of naked folk--a white horse comes into view and begins to thrash the river's surface as the ritual boat approaches.

Andrei is captured and bound in a stable by villagers who do not want him to interfere with their dear ritual. Marfa approaches him and plants an earthly kiss: physical contact of native paganism with highly refined and civilized Christianity. Notice the necklace she wears. Also notice how Andrei sheds his monkish cowl (identifying "uniform" of the black or monkish clergy) as he decides to melt into the woods and rejoin the village fest. As the next morning follows someone has squealed on the village revelers. The local landlord and his ruffian men-at-arms on horseback appear, accompanied by clerical enforcers, all bent on doing their official Christian duty. They hope to run down participants in last night's ritual. Sure enough, here comes Marfa and her significant other, chased by authorities. He doesn't get away, but she swims toward the middle of the river, immediately past the boat carrying Andrei, but he will not look at her. She splashes bravely out to deep waters.

Raid, autumn, 1408

Now we jump ahead a few weeks to the fall of 1408 and the outskirts of the city Vladimir. This army is led by a Russian prince who is a

rival of his own brother for power in Vladimir. A tatar Khan's army and his one will join up at a difficult river ford in preparation for an attack on Vladimir. As the two armies link up, the Khan and the Russian prince vie with one another to see who is faster. The Russian prince recalls an event in the previous winter in which the church tried to reconcile him with his rival brother. The wintry church is the great in Vladimir, built in 1194-1197. You can just barely make out the remarkable animal, vegetable and human figures carved in relief in the white stone outer walls of this ancient cathedral. These figures are taken to be themselves representatives of the combination of old pre-Christian "Scythian" motifs with Biblical themes.



Two times later in this section of the film, the Russian prince flashes back to this treacherous "kissing of the cross" which he and his Tatar ally are now about to betray. The second flashback occurs as the Russian prince witnesses the Tatar humiliation of the captured prince's brother and family and receives from the Tatars the vestments of the now deposed brother's power. The sounds of the Orthodox mass can be heard again, now in the courtyard as the Tatar khan nervously walks his war horse back and forth in anticipation of breaking into the church. A dying horse comes down a stairway and falls to the ground, bleeding to death. This is a

disturbing and powerful scene. We may be more touched by this cruel death than by all the other film portrayals of human death. As the horse stumbles to its death, from the church we hear the most characteristic phrases from the Russian mass: *Hospodi, pomilui, Hospodi, pomilui...* [Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy...].

Soon, we see inside the cathedral being rammed by the Tatar army. We spy Andrei again. He is with a young blond woman. The actress is Tarkovsky's wife, and she is playing a paradigmatic Russian cultural role: the holy fool. She is a "durochka", not able to take care of herself, but in her naive simplicity representing something very dear to Russian tradition. Andrei has made himself her protector in earlier scenes, and now they are trapped together as the cathedral door breaks open. What a scene, as the Tatar khan paces his horse around inside the cathedral, asking the Russian prince taunting questions about the holy images on the walls, most now burning. The brave and defiant Foma is tortured, molten lead is poured into his mouth, and he is dragged to his death by a stallion stampeded through the devastated streets of Vladimir. The traitorous prince is beset with deep misgivings about this destructive adventure. Large white geese float from cathedral rooftops to the disordered streets below, all in slow motion. Andrei and Durochka are still in the church and try to come to terms with what has just transpired.

Tatar's Wife

The final scene I have selected is four years later, the winter of 1412. It is a hard winter, and famine stalks the land. Andrei is heating large stones and trying to transfer them to wooden casks to heat water. Durochka is eating an old

apple. The Tatar khan rides into the monastery with several of his warriors. They are in a playful mood. The khan feeds frozen meat to quarrelsome dogs. Durochka wants some too. What follows is one of the most intriguing "falling-in-love" scenes in all of filmdom. Andrei tries to intervene, but this situation is beyond his or just about any imaginable power to change. As the khan sweeps Durochka up behind his saddle and he and his warriors gallop out of the monastery courtyard through a roofed gateway, our time is up.



Some commentary or rather a casual discussion--

Tarkovsky created a film about faith in a time when there were no films about religion, apart from satire or anti-religion propaganda. At the same time, people who were religious have tended to view film as a profane medium, inappropriate for religious topics. Andrei Rublev was a 15th-century monk regarded as Russia's greatest icon writer. While his work is well known and celebrated throughout Russia, little is known of his life except for the handful of icons he left behind. Tarkovsky invented life for Rublev. It is then not an investigation into the painter's life, but Tarkovsky's response to what the filmmaker saw and felt by looking at Rublev's icons.

Moving through 'a sequence of detailed fragments' in which Rublev is sometimes

present, sometimes only an observer, the film works toward difficult questions: how is experience related, and how can it be communicated? How can art be true to its subject and its audience? How do you paint the trinity without just reducing it to the sum of its parts?

At once humble and cosmic, Rublev was described by Tarkovsky as a “film of the earth.” Shot in widescreen and sharply defined black and white, the movie is supremely tactile—the four classical elements appearing here as mist, mud, guttering candles, and snow. A 360-degree pan around a primitive stable conveys the wonder of existence. Such long, sinuous takes are like expressionist brushstrokes; the result is a kind of narrative impasto. The film’s brilliant, never-explained prologue shows some medieval Icarus braving an angry crowd to storm the heavens. Having climbed a church tower, he takes flight in a primitive hot-air balloon—an exhilarating panorama—before crashing to earth. Fifteenth century Russia was a tumultuous country, never really at peace, and Tarkovsky shows this in particular in the latter half of the film. The theme of conscience is present throughout

the film. Tarkovsky plays here with sound and silence, almost deafening silence. Shooting the entire movie in black and white, Tarkovsky finally dazzles the audience with close-ups of Rublev’s works, revealed for the first time during the movie in all their brilliance and colour. After more than two hours of sombre and austere imagery, the beauty of the frescoes amazes the viewers.

The art, born from the endeavours and aspirations of the artist, is presented to the audience in all its grandeur, rising over the everyday like the man on the balloon at the beginning of the movie. This universal quality of the artist and his work makes the historical period irrelevant, performing a spiritual sweep, casting an ethereal spell on the audience.

Andrei Rublev is itself more an icon than a movie about an icon painter. (Perhaps it should be seen as a “moving icon”) This is a portrait of an artist in which no one lifts a brush. The patterns are God’s, whether seen in a close-up of spilled paint swirling into pond water or the clods of dirt Rublev flings against a whitewashed wall. But no movie has ever attached greater significance to the artist’s role. It is as though Rublev’s presence justifies creation.



ROMA AND THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE

BY

SHANTANEEL NANDI



Roma a 2018 film by Alfonso Cuaron, feels more like a study of human understanding than a film. It is a kind of fictional documentary which allows us to take a look at a middle upper class family in the Roma neighbourhood of Mexico City at the beginning of the 70's. Nostalgic, profound and without a doubt, sometimes difficult to watch, Cuaron's new film is one of the most personal films in recent times. Roma revolves around Cleo, a servant of a middle-class family living in the Roma neighbourhood in 1971. While she is an employee, the film makes us understand that her relationship with this family goes much further than a salary, a situation which is still common in Mexico. Sometimes her boss scolds Cleo, either for not picking up the dog's waste from the garage or for leaving the lights on at night. However there is a deep connection between the members of the family and Cleo, especially

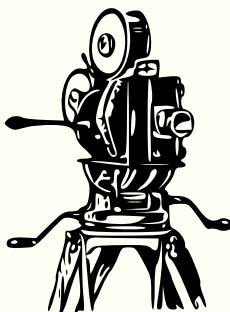
between the children of her. She accompanies them on family trips and they share strong emotions together, taking care of the well-being of the children and of any other task that her boss entrusts her with. Cleo tries to live a quiet life, without causing too many problems for the family, assisting with whatever they ask. The parents of the children are going through a separation and the children are through time without their dear father. Cuaron does an excellent job of showing us the innocent view of the children. The reality of the situation with the father is not so optimistic and he is actually in a relationship with another woman and has not sent a dime to support the family. These are agitated times for Mexico revolving around protests against the Government. In one of the first scenes of the film, Paco mentions how he saw a soldier killing a protester, shooting him in the head, an observation which seems to be a normal occurrence in his life. Cuaron makes

sure to emphasize the fragility of life from the simple fact of breaking a window, to a children's game to the events of the student movement of the time in Mexico. But at the centre of all this is Cleo. Yalitza Aparicio debuts excellently as Cleo. Her life takes a turn when she becomes pregnant with the cousin of her friend's boyfriend, who isolates himself from any responsibility of Cleo and her baby. Fortunately her employer offers to provide any help she needs. We witness the development of Cleo a person throughout the film. The camera, however acts as an omnipresent power, observing Cleo and how she reacts to everything that surrounds her. Mexico at the beginning of the 70's is going through a series of events that unfold in the background, which affect the tense environment and the main events that alter the life of the family. The film shows a representation of the 'Corpus Christi Massacre', also known as El Halconazo. But the film is actually about these people whom we get to know for a short time but feel as if they were our loved ones. We know the details of the house and its members, the difficulty of parking the car in the tight garage, how it is always filled with dog waste, the children's messiness and their sweet innocence, the pain and uncertainty of the mother, who is struggling with an absent spouse and the need to provide for her family. Roma is a film that lacks a conventional narrative drive, focusing more on creating and environment, recreating the era and makes us feel empathy for these characters. It is an experience designed to be slowly absorbed. At the beginning of the film the viewer must make the decision to be a part of it, to simply observe and absorb this environment and the problems of these characters. By doing this, it becomes inevitable to create an emotional connection

with these people. Rarely in the film are there any close-ups. Instead, Cuaron allows us to savour a variety of wide-shots with beautiful black and white photography, placing Cleo in the middle of some hectic environment, either running down the street through pedestrians and markets, or in a house full of screaming children. It is important to recognize this way of capturing moments since it allows us to understand in a subconscious way how agitated and noisy the world around Cleo is. The closer the day of her baby's birth, the more the world around her seems to become problematic, representing the anxiety inside her of becoming a mother. Cuaron has mentioned that the film is based on his childhood and the women of his life; the result is a story that feels strangely personal, even for the viewer whose childhood may have been very different. But in the same way the fact of creating a world and characters that feel so real, one leaves the film feeling that we actually know these people. This is perhaps one of the greatest achievements that a director can offer to the world giving us characters that we will remember as if they have been part of our own lives alike old friends. And we often find our self asking: what happened to the family? Will Cleo continue to serve strawberries to the children? Did they manage to move on with an absent father? Cuaron makes sure to prevent an ending that, as in life, rarely feels completely satisfying. The father does not appear again, Cleo lost her baby, but in a certain way, the family feels more united than ever, something that makes us happy. In this essence, Roma is a film about time and the fragility of life, how time can change a family, and how the circumstances of a society can also change around them. The film begins with a long shot of the floor of the house being cleaned with soap and water, while a plane passes overhead, and time as well as soap water washes everything

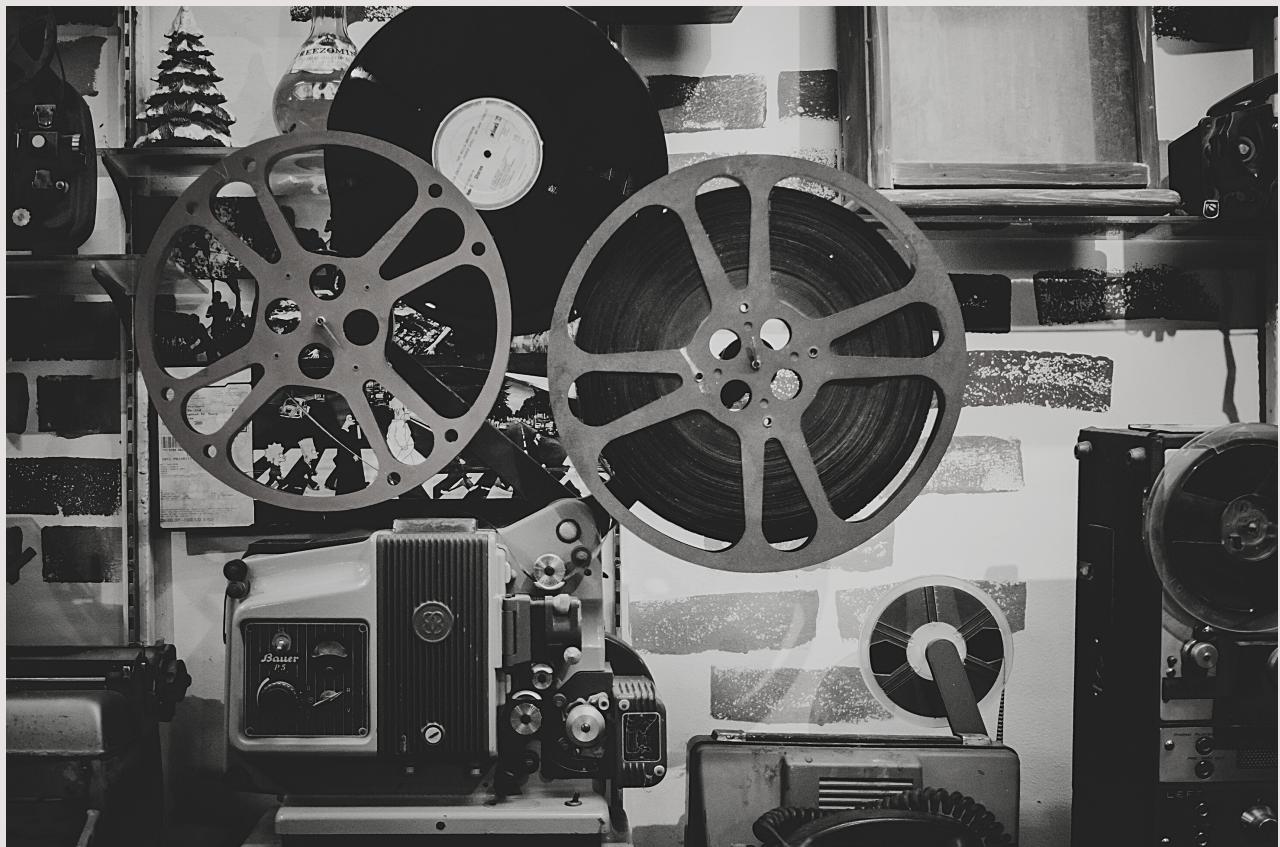
away. In spite of how bad things can be, even when the father decides to leave the family, even though her beloved Cleo has lost the baby and the children almost drowned and will grow up without a father, even if the same

freedom of expression in Mexico is violated ruthlessly and those who raise their voices are killed; time just as water washes it all away. And just like the planes that fly over the turbulent capital, life goes on.



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