

# THE PEACOCK

SUNDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2018



PEACOCK PICKS

## COLD WAR

Kala Academy, 9 AM  
Dir: Pawel Pawlikowski  
Poland-France-UK  
85 min



## VISION

INOX Screen IV, 5.45 PM  
Dir: Naomi Kawase  
Japan  
109 min

## TOUCH ME NOT

INOX Screen III, 10.45 PM  
Dir: Adina Pintilie  
Romania-Germany-Czech  
Republic-Bulgaria  
125 min



## ASH IS THE PUREST WHITE

Kala Academy, 10.30 PM  
Dir: Jia Zhang Ke  
China  
150 min





# GOAN ART, GOING PLACES

BY VIVEK MENEZES

In his milestone 2007 essay on the art and artists of Goa, the critic and curator (and award-winning poet) Ranjit Hoskote wrote, “Goan art has long been an invisible river, one that has fed into the wider flow of Indian art but has not always been recognized as so doing...the Goan art scene finds its definition around a number of inspired individuals who defy the apathy of India and the defeatism of their peers; around groups of artists acting collegially towards a higher common purpose; and around the cluster of compelling psychic and historical contents that spur them on to artistic exploration.”

That compelling curatorial text was written for the hugely significant large-scale group exhibition, *Aparanta- The Confluence of Contemporary Art in Goa*, which reintroduced the Indian art world to the intensely fertile cultural landscape that had previously produced a long string of heralded exemplars: Trindade, da Cruz, Angelo da Fonseca, Vasudeo Gaitonde and Francis Newton Souza.

There are two direct connections between that breakthrough and the International Film Festival of India in Goa. One of *Aparanta's* crucial participants was the brilliant young artist Pradeep Naik, who contributes stunning original cover paintings to The Peacock's 2018 edition. The other is IFFI's heritage precinct headquarters in the the wonderfully restored old Goa Medical College. At that time in 2007, the building had been cavalierly handed over by the state government to some Delhi-based developer to convert into a shopping mall. But after the citizens of Panjim saw their beloved landmark brim full of life, spilling over with art and activity, they ensured it would remain in the public domain forever.

There's a curious paradox about the art and artists of Goa. Few places anywhere in the world continually churn out such amazing talent non-stop, but each generation faces similar problems of isolation, neglect, and an appreciable amount of less-than-subtle bigotry. Hoskote

nailed it in 2007, “Geographical contiguity does not mean that Goa and mainland India share the same universe of meaning: Goa's special historic evolution, with its Lusitanian route to the Enlightenment and print modernity, its Iberian emphasis on a vibrant public sphere, its pride in its ancient internationalism *avant la lettre*, sets it at a tangent to the self-image of an India that has been formed with the experience of British colonialism as its basis.

The relationship between Goa's artists and mainland India has, not surprisingly, been ambiguous and erratic, even unstable.”

Part of the difference is globalized sophistication. In Goa, the arts flow into each other seamlessly, with literature and poetry influencing painting and music, and vice versa. One contemporary example is the annual cross-disciplinary Goa Arts + Literature Festival (the 2018 edition begins on December 6). But also just look at the festival daily newspaper in your hand, enlivened throughout by the extraordinary portrait photographs of Assavri Kulkarni, inscrutable and intriguing illustrations and comics by Nishant Saldanha, and one-of-a-kind cover paintings by Pradeep Naik, who follows in the outstanding footsteps of Siddharth Gosavi, Amruta Patil and Kedar DK.

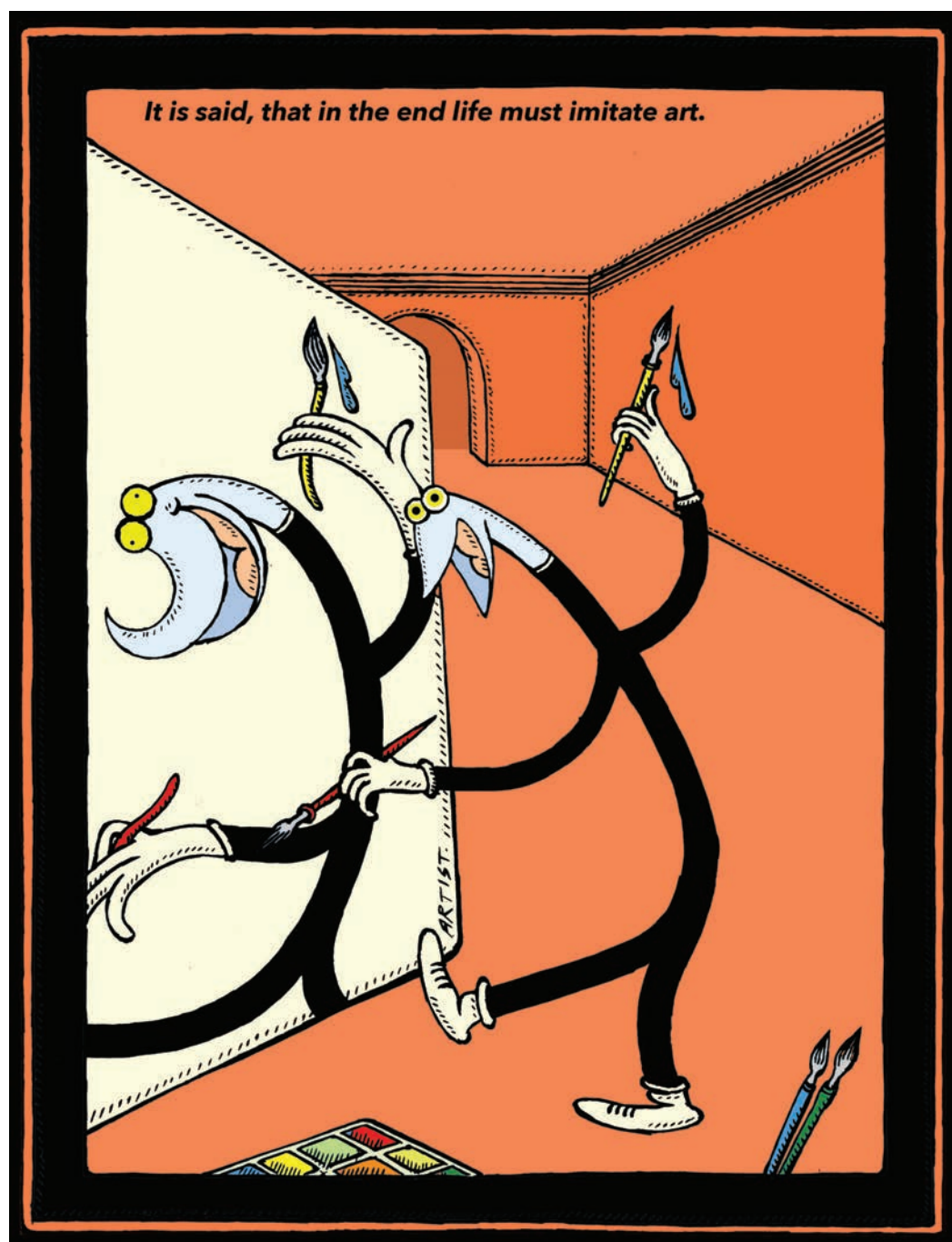
Here are some important facts to remember. The genius modernist Francis Newton Souza died in 2002, without ever selling a painting in his 50-year career for as much as 10,000 dollars. Twelve months had not passed before that top price surmounted \$100,000, and very soon crested

beyond one million dollars. His countryman, and lifelong friend, and fellow member of the Progressive Artists Group of Bombay, Vasudeo Gaitonde himself passed away in 2001 in something like penury, looked after by a generous friend.

His paintings too posthumously soared to stratospheric market values – the two natives of North Goa villages have traded off the world record price for an Indian artwork

constantly over the years, as auctions in New York and London have pushed the numbers ever higher.

Now zoom back in to India's smallest state. What is history going to tell us about the outside world's capability to understand, appreciate and celebrate Generation Now's contributions to the spectacular trajectory of Goan art, even as it unfurls in front of their eyes?



Nishant Saldanha is an animator and comics artist. You can see his work at [instagram.com/nishantsaldanha](https://www.instagram.com/nishantsaldanha)



# "THE JOURNEY FOR FILMS LIKE OURS IS FULL OF HURDLES"

BY AAKASH CHHABRA

// The attrition of the Jasari language that I could observe with every new visit to Kavaratti, the prevalence of colloquial slangs, and the steady melding of indigenous traditions with Malayali dominance, roused me to place my story in Lakshadweep," says director Sandeep Pampally, about *Sinjar* (2018), his debut film, which premieres in the coveted Indian Panorama section at the International Film Festival of India 2018. *Sinjar* is the first feature length film made in the Jasari language of Lakshadweep. It was the surprise winner of the the Best Feature Film at the 65th National Film Awards, and Pampally won the Best Debut Film of a Director Award. He sat down to explain his journey to The Peacock, just a few hours before his red carpet ceremony yesterday.

**How and where did the idea of *Sinjar* come from?**

Four years back I approached Shibu G Suseelan, my producer, and spoke to him about a story set in Lakshadweep, about two women who are abducted by the ISIS and held as slaves in the town of *Sinjar* in Iraq. They are rescued and they return to their hometown in Kavaratti, but their community is reluctant to accept them. The story is inspired by a series of incidents I read about in newspaper columns.

**When and why did you decide to shoot the film in Jasari, a language foreign to you?**

I envisioned my film in Malayalam and was at first hesitant to make it in Jasari.



But Suseelan insisted, and we decided to go ahead with it. The principal photography finished in just 16 days but it took us three years of pre-production, mainly due to the difficulties in getting permissions to film in the islands. Translation was another arduous task. Most of our actors are from the mainland. We would have various dialect coaches on the set [giggles]. No, they

were the local crew, who served the role of translators. Jasari is not an easy language to learn. There are no books or resource materials. Everything is passed down through oral traditions. Most words involve guttural sounds and are really difficult to enunciate. So, we would have various translations of the original dialogues written in Malayalam and choose the ones that were easiest for the actors. But, we also had to be careful to not dilute their meaning.

**I am curious to know where you sent the film for certification, considering it's the first in this language.**

Do I really have to share this [laughs]? Once the film was ready we started to look for various government grants and festivals to send it. We had done something historic and monumental. The locals of Kavaratti had embraced us, and we wanted to take *Sinjar* to the entire world. But before we

could do it, we had to get a certificate. Since Kavaratti happens to fall under the jurisdiction of Kerala, we applied to the state certification board that outright denied it by saying the film was not in Malayalam. We then went to Mumbai and struggled for months. But you know what was funny? An hour after we submitted our film, the CBFC website added Jasari to their list of languages. They jumped at the opportunity to bask in glory. The same happened when we applied for the National Awards. Kerala State Awards had simply denied us entry into the competition citing the language. But the day we won the National Award, the Lakshadweep Arts and Culture Department contacted us for the exhibition of the film, with whom we had struggled prior to being in the news.

**The struggle for films in minor languages can be difficult. I'm sure you must have some suggestions for other such filmmakers.**

The journey for films like ours is full of hurdles. There is very little encouragement from the state or the centre. I remember, until a few years, every National Award winning film was granted satellite rights to Doordarshan. There was a readymade platform for non-commercial and small-budget films to be exhibited. But this policy was unwisely scrapped, and now it's just the festivals that such films are dependent on for visibility. There is a rise in the content on VOD platforms but they're not very optimistic about rare language films either. I hope things change soon for us.

## SHORT TAKES



I want more people to know about Jharkhand, so I am very happy to have this stall at IFFI. It may not be as famous as other states, but it has some amazing locations and wildlife.  
**Vijay Kumar**  
Procurement expert, Jharkhand



I love Indian films and I am hoping to run into celebrities and click some pictures with them. I heard that Akshay Kumar and the Kapoors were here.  
**Bhavna Meha**  
Mehndi designer, Pune



I am visiting Goa with my wife after 33 years of working for Doordarshan. It is nice to start this journey in Goa by watching movies at IFFI.  
**D K Chaliya**  
Doordarshan, Delhi



I like the question-answer round at the end of each workshop. It gives us a chance to closely interact with the professionals in the industry.  
**Chevonne Faleiro**  
Student, Vasco



# "GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHIES ARE TIMELESS"

BY KARISHMA D'MELLO

// Non-violence may be one of Gandhi's best known philosophies, but we struggle to incorporate it in our lives. There is a desperate need for us all to get back to our roots and ideals," says Pavni Gupta, assistant director of the Bureau of Outreach and Communication. The bureau along with National Film Archives of India, is presenting the multimedia exhibition 'Mahatma on Celluloid', hosted at Kala Academy, which will be open to the public until November 28.

The exhibit features seven films inspired by the life and experiences of Gandhi, screened at 1.30pm and 5pm everyday. "He may have not been fond of cinema, but the feeling was not mutual. He remains one of the most photographed and documented world leaders of all time," says Arti Karkhanis, head of the research and documentation centre at NFAI.

The exhibit has circulated all across India since October 2, when it was set up for the first time in Delhi. It is now open to public for free, to come and celebrate the life and philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi.

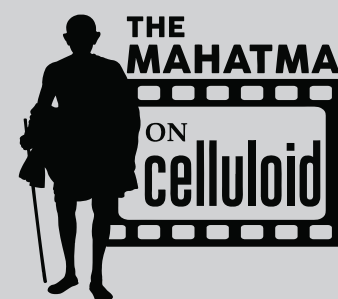
"We want to use technology to communicate older ideas to bridge the gap between the earlier times and the modern world," adds Gupta. She continues, saying the audio exhibit is her personal favourite and makes for a visually stimulating experience. "If you shut your eyes for a moment, you can envision yourself in his presence; that is an incredible feeling. It allows you to connect with him on a more personal

level".

Gupta comments that as a nation, India has successfully managed to incorporate a few elements of his philosophies, but we still have a long way to go. "I've noticed that the streets in Panjim are incredibly clean, but cities in other parts of India struggle with the concept of Swachata".

Karkhanis explains that she has noticed an incredible response on the part of the public. "In the evening parents walk in with their young children, lifting them up to get a better view of the exhibits; it's wonderful to watch."

She mentions that there are several misconceptions about Gandhi, as with any world leader, but the exhibit pays no heed to rumours and is an accurate portrayal of his teachings and works. The exhibits include restored photographs, recovered audio and live footage of Gandhi. "We are still in the process of discovery. There's room for much more new information," says



Gupta.

"The content and the technology they've used is impeccable", says Arun Naik, a visitor at the exhibition. However, as his one complaint in an otherwise beautiful exhibit he mentions that he dislikes the association of Prime Minister Modi with Gandhi. Preksha Sawantwadikar, a volunteer at the event comments that while there are a few visitors who are interactive and genuinely looking to learn more, "a lot of them seem uninterested;

like they're here because they have nowhere better to be". She mentions that the older generation seems more responsive than their younger counterparts.

Pankaj Tripathi, a prominent face

in modern Indian cinema, attended the exhibition too. An onlooker at the exhibit intends to gift his daughter the books up for sale at the stall. "Every film has Gandhian philosophies shining through in some way or the other. At the end of every film you see the triumph of good over evil. No film has ever encouraged injustice. We may create crime dramas, but at the end of the movie, the audience takes back with them the injustice of the crime. At the end you know that justice wins; truth wins. The truth may be hidden, but it is never lost", says Tripathi.

Voicing a similar opinion, Karkhanis adds that truth and justice are concepts that do not have expiration dates. "His philosophies are timeless. They will never cease to be relevant".

## SHORT TAKES



International visitors will find it difficult if the schedule of the day is available only the night before. Redemption of tickets negates the online booking system.

**Cora Bhatia**  
Editor, Mumbai



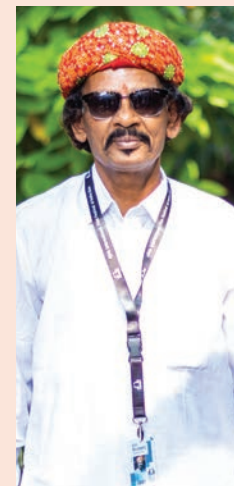
I like how The Peacock newspaper gives its best selection of movies each day on the cover page. I look forward to it every day.

**Debu Banerjee**  
Photographer, Mumbai



As a film-maker, I respond to sound a lot. So that is one thing I particularly notice while watching films.

**Dennese**  
Cinematographer, Philippines



I find this film festival much better organised than the one at Pune. It is a great learning platform for the younger generation.

**Deepakji Surana**  
Ayurvedic Doctor, Pune



# "MY FILMS ARE NOT MAINSTREAM"

BY KINJAL SETHIA

“I only hope that there would be someone crazy like me in the audience, who has ideas, but no means. And then I can give them strength to implement their ideas.”

// I don't like the name Master Craftsman. I am not a teacher. Anyone who listens to me today will not suddenly start making better films, which get great reviews or make money. I just hope that my experience allows me to give you some tips for your own ideas. I just want to give some information and experience, and speak about ideas,” said Dan Wolman, addressing the packed audience at his Masterclass on November 24.

The recipient of the International Film Festival of India's Lifetime Achievement Award for 2018 continued, “I hope I am not given this honour only for the film, but also the way these films were made. It is just that a person who is not rich, who is not upper middle class, just a regular guy can make films that are watched for 50 years. Some of the films that I have made really go against common sense. My films are not mainstream. My first film was shot inside an old age home. My second film was also about old people, shot in black and white, and then people told me this would be my last film. Even the

subjects that I have dealt with are daring and marginal.”

Wolman says, “When I address such audiences as today, I only hope that there would be someone crazy like me in the audience, who has ideas, but no means. And then I can give them strength to implement their ideas.”

Speaking about his approach to writing, “I would put immense work into a script, and it was painful when the big producers rejected it, or did not get back to me. Now, I write two kinds of scripts. In one script, I put in all that I want. It may have ships, aeroplanes, the army of Napoleon. And the other one, I write for when I cannot wait to get the first script approved. This one could be made with my friends on my own. And I give myself a time frame. By the target date, if I don't get funds for the first script, I go ahead with the second.”

Wolman cited the biblical story of two hunters. Nimrod is a unique hunter who has a lot of patience. He would prepare well for the whole day, and shoot

the antelope with one arrow. Esau is cunning. He would shoot quiversful of arrows in all directions, and one was likely to hit the antelope. Wolman says, “I am like the second hunter. You cannot wait to make a masterpiece every time. Even Van Gogh did not paint the sunflowers with the intention to make them a masterpiece. As artists, you have to decide what kind of film-makers you want to be. I believe it is important to work continuously. I don't mind making bad film, even though the critic's review hurt sometimes. But it is important to keep doing what you want to do.”



## SHORT TAKES



I love independent, artistic films, not the ones you watch with popcorn. I hope I can watch some German films because they rely more on emotion than action.

**Diane Indart**  
Teacher, France



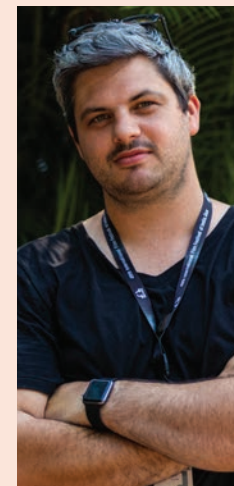
The festival helps me understand the technicalities of cinema, and I enjoyed Dhappa (2018). I wish the rules about tickets did not keep changing.

**Dhruv Sincro**  
Actor, Goa



Putting up our stall at IFFI has proven very useful for us. We meet people from different professions and hope to get some good business.

**Upasana Mittal**  
Film City Official, Bangalore



When I am exposed to the way others tell stories in film, it affects the way I tell stories. I just wish there was more shade for those standing in queues.

**Isaac Newcomb**  
Cinematographer, New Zealand



# ANTI-CLIMAX

BY JONATHAN RODRIGUES

Three years ago, Gaspar Noé gave IFFI a three-dimensional erotic art experience which pleased some and scarred others. *Love* (2015) explored relationships through sexually stimulating, yet remarkably honest love-making scenes, and the jam-packed auditorium rose to give him thunderous applause at quarter past two at night. So, you can imagine the anticipation in the air when diehard IFFI 2018 delegates learned Noé would be back with another film this year.

On Thursday night, a huge crowd piled into Kala Academy on a pilgrimage to witness *Climax* (2018). The movie eventually began 35 minutes late as the serpentine queue turned and twisted, and wrapped itself around the otherwise quiet venue. With 900 tickets booked and at least 1,500 people trying their luck, organisers roped in extra security and logistics personnel, as the fear of missing out grew among the fans. Very close to the Peacock's tired team, a frenzied scuffle broke out between strangers. These long queues serve almost like foreplay to Noé's films at IFFI, and all of us watched voyeuristically as the police separated some of the French filmmaker's biggest fans.

This crowd atmosphere was genuinely feverish, as young and old waited for the movie to begin. There was much hand-waving, as people signalled each other for reserved seats. It wouldn't be wrong to say that it is essential to sit next to people you can trust while watching a Noé film. Unlike three years ago, where people mostly sat on the edges, this time the central column of rows was packed. "I think it's a positive

and encouraging sign that people are opening up to abstract and non-cliché themes," we heard someone say in the row in front of us, as he licked some selfies, while others around him scanned panoramic shots for their Instagram "I was here" moment.

There were three kinds of people seated in the theatre. Some were clearly interested in the film-making technical genius that Noé is - the rarest of rare camera angles, engaging sound scores, extreme emphasis on lighting on sets. Others were there

cinema.

The whistling and groaning from the Indian men in the audience crescendoed, and then suddenly, there was a 52-second break. But once the national anthem ended, those animal instincts kicked in again. The first scene began with a girl dragging herself on thick ice, bleeding and wailing in pain - and the audience clapped!

*Climax* begins with a series of short, stitched-together interviews, where the cast (all professional dancers) speak their minds on the subjects of dance, dreams and drugs. The film then shifts into second gear with a free-styling

classical dancer.

With alcohol and smokes in surplus, the director turned the rave into a whodunit scene where his subjects realised their drinks were spiked with acid, and now burst into a blame game. In the next few minutes, there was a stabbing, a lot of wild smooching, incessant grinding, feisty fist fights, an impromptu abortion, an incestuous sexual encounter, a sad break-up, passionate gay love-making and a homicide wherein a mother locked her drugged minor child in a room where he got eaten by some creature.

Another masterstroke which proves that Noé knows his audience well was letting the film credits roll right after the opening scene. He did that twice in the first 15 minutes, and nobody budged.

An elderly lady seated behind me kept expressing her disapproval of what was happening on screen, providing all her neighbours with an alternate soundtrack to Noé's film. Every time the dancers downed a drink or snorted a line, she expressed disappointment, and when they began fighting over physical pleasure, her maternal instincts

made her say, "Someone must help them. Don't they know what they are doing?"

*Climax* was dark and uncomfortable throughout. However, just like the characters in the film who were literally detained in a horror room they couldn't leave, this audience stuck through it all, hoping somewhere there would be a cathartic experience like Noé provided in his last IFFI contribution. But it simply didn't come.



Scene from *Climax* (2018), directed by Gaspar Noé

for the sex. I have never been able to understand the thrill Indian men derive from howling like wolves simply because they're watching erotic cinema. Then again, there were serious cinephiles, who are there just to experience great

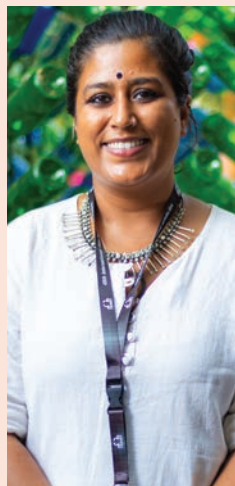
dance sequence, alternating between hip-hop to breakdancing to popping and locking to waacking, the ace cinematographer spun a simple dance-off into a rave. "Dance to me is sacred. I would never drink and dance," said the Team Peacock member who happens to be a professional Indian

## SHORT TAKES



I am glad that they have added a selection of LGBT films. They organisation isn't as good as last year and more youth should be taken as volunteers.

**Sharlaine Menezes**  
Student, Goa



I saw *An Israeli Love Story* (2016) last year and was moved to tears. I hope to catch more Israeli films this year.

**Nikita Kurup**  
Student, Chhattisgarh



I like to come alone for IFFI. It is when I am in my own space, and can do whatever I want.

**Kriti Choudhary**  
Film editor, Delhi



I am a solo traveler and cyclist. So, I really liked the movie *Maine* (2018). I am looking out for more such travel-oriented films.

**Prakash P Gopinath**  
Engineer, Trivandrum



# SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

BY KINJAL SETHIA

A young girl who regularly snoozes through her 7am alarm at opens up Instagram, only to see an Insta-Story of Alia Bhatt diligently heading to a shoot three hours earlier. This is how she realises she needs to get started earlier in the mornings, and is inspired to start doing that immediately. This is just one side-effect of what Instagram and Facebook have done for millennials. They've brought their favourite stars down from the silver screen right on to their cell phones. And now they can relate to heroes and heroines on a deeper and personal level.

"Social media and digital marketing are driving the way people look at films. It is no longer enough to have conventional modes of marketing like newspapers, television and radio channels. Production houses are engaging with the audiences on a more real-time and immersive level, and using digital platforms to create excitement and anticipation around a film," says Diwaker Chandani of Facebook. India recently claimed first place in terms of members on this ubiquitous social media behemoth with 293 million registrations, surging far ahead of second-place United States, with 203 million.

Today, an actor can stream a live story from any part of the world, so that followers and fans know what their star is working on. Chandani says, "It increases the shareability of your content. If you resonate with the star on

a personal level, you are more inclined to share it with your friends. You will go and watch the film not only for the story, but also because you relate to the actor. It is a more active form of marketing, than the earlier passive approaches."

The media research firm Ormax says Instagram and Facebook drive an amazing 21% of a film's business at the first day at the box office. YouTube follows with 18%, with conventional promotions on television and newspaper contributing much less. But while social media has changed the way users connect with cinema, it has not changed the way films are being made. Chandani says, "Digital marketing has not affected the core art of film making. The content of films is still based on the sensibility of the audience. What has changed is that people would create a behind-the-scene knowing they would push it for promotion. Now this happens automatically, as it can be posted on social media to engage the audience before the film completes production. Now people are in fact, planning their whole promotions around social media, especially the big production houses."

The ascendant millennial generation is often criticised for seeking instant gratification, and social media is seen as one main culprit that furthers this tendency, but Chandani disagrees, "Even today cult films do well when they are broadcasted on television, and even today, films can achieve a cult status. The accusation of

momentary consumption is more to do with the way the present generation of users is wired, and not to do with the content that is being produced or the films being made."

Another facet of the dynamics of social media on film making is that it has spread the reach of film to smaller towns. Chandani says that while people still admire a megastar like Shahrukh Khan, they would rather go

and watch a film based in a small town with Ayushmann Khurrana. This might also be the reason for the shift towards small budget and small-town films, because even Aamir Khan and Salman Khan cannot guarantee a hit. He says, "Social media has reduced the disconnect between actors and audiences, ensuring that films have entered daily lives on a more intrusive level."



## SHORT TAKES



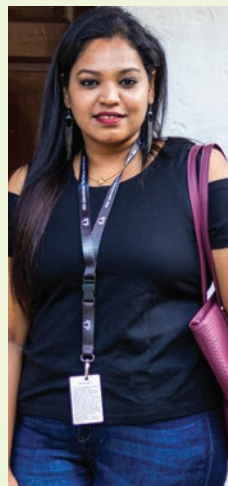
IFFI has a very intimate and friendly format. I have fun not only inside the theatres but outside too, and I think of everyone in the queues as my extended family.

**Maria Sandblad**  
Journalist,  
Sweden



Everyone is expressing frustration about the lack of guidance. We need to know the schedule in advance and the volunteers just direct us to other people.

**Roshan Raykar**  
Animator, Goa/  
Karnataka



The selection of movies is great but screenings are often delayed. I think the comment made about 'Malayalis' was wrong. We have to remember that they make up half the crowd.

**Navami Prakash**  
Teacher, Goa



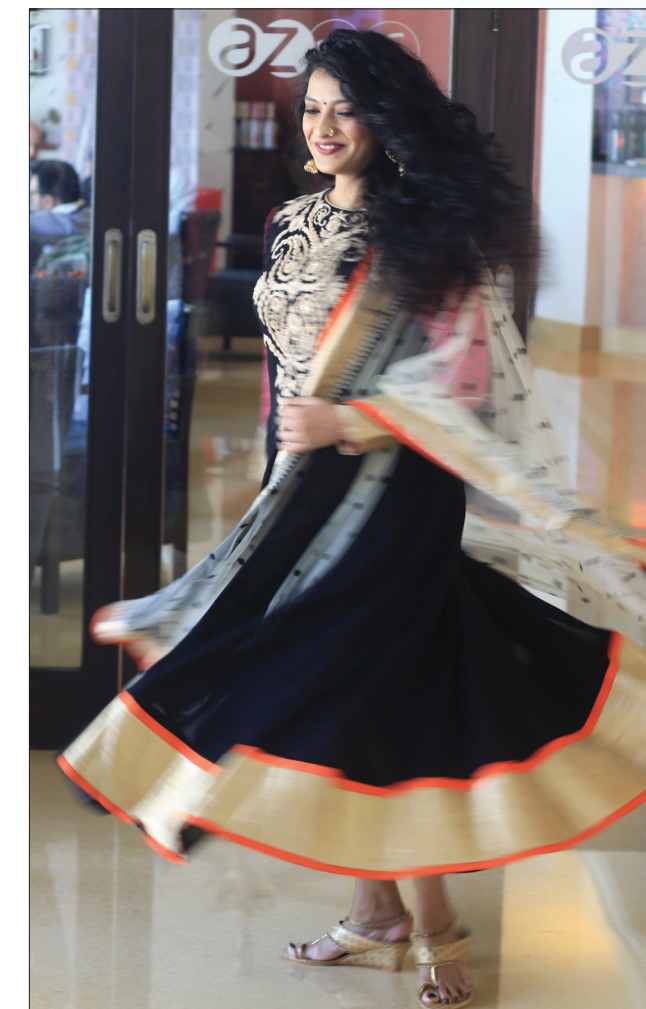
There should be more Masterclasses, especially those that touch upon the revival of celluloid, crowd funding and the legality of filming with drones.

**Sanskar Desai**  
IDBA general  
secretary,  
Mumbai





PHOTOGRAPHS BY ASSAVRI KULKARNI





# IFFI 2018: TAKE A WALK...

BY NANDINI DIAS VELHO

// You must mention the Mutiny of the Bounty (1962), one of the few films that features trees prominently," physician Dr. Usha Desai, who is attending IFFI for the fourth time, told The Peacock. The film famously stars Marlon Brando and the renowned offshore rebellion, but for Dr. Desai, by far the most interesting part of the narrative was how the breadfruit - which is native to Tahiti - spread right across to the Caribbean on the other side of the globe.

Dr. Desai is a keen tree enthusiast, who once started tree walks in Mumbai after she retired as Head of Department of Medicine from Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Hospital. In January 2019, she and her friend Renee Vyas will complete their hundredth tree walk, but in the meanwhile, she has some very special tree plans in Goa.

This time, while she attended the International Film Festival of India 2018, Dr. Desai spotted a dye fig tree (*Ficus tinctoria*) in the parking lot at the festival multiplex. The species name tinctoria comes from the fruits and other plant parts, which are used to extract a red dye. Other parts of the plant are also useful - some tribal communities use the rough leaves as a tongue cleaner.

Dr. Desai is full of interesting natural history tidbits like this. A few years ago, she remembers seeing the rare Southern Birdwing, one of the largest butterflies in India, in the Joggers' Park above the rest of Panjim in Altinho. The presence of the Southern Birdwing means its host-plant *Aristolochia*, on which its caterpillars depend, is also present, she says.

For me, a wildlife biologist and long-time Ponjekar, coming across 'flying rat' memes for pigeons tends to distract from the city's interesting flora and fauna, and the experience of living with nature in the city.

Exploring Panjim's wildlife is also a window into the lives of the people who are forging connections with urban wildlife in diverse ways. It's easy to miss these stories in most cities, given that, more often than not, we doubt—and even ignore—the existence of wildlife all around us. Scientist Joscha Beninde and colleagues write in the journal *Ecology Letters* that the stigmatisation of the urban landscape as non-pristine can distract from the high levels of biodiversity that actually flourishes within our cities. I'm all set to try and learn about biodiversity in the city, and through it, discover the people who are part of the Panjim's wild side.

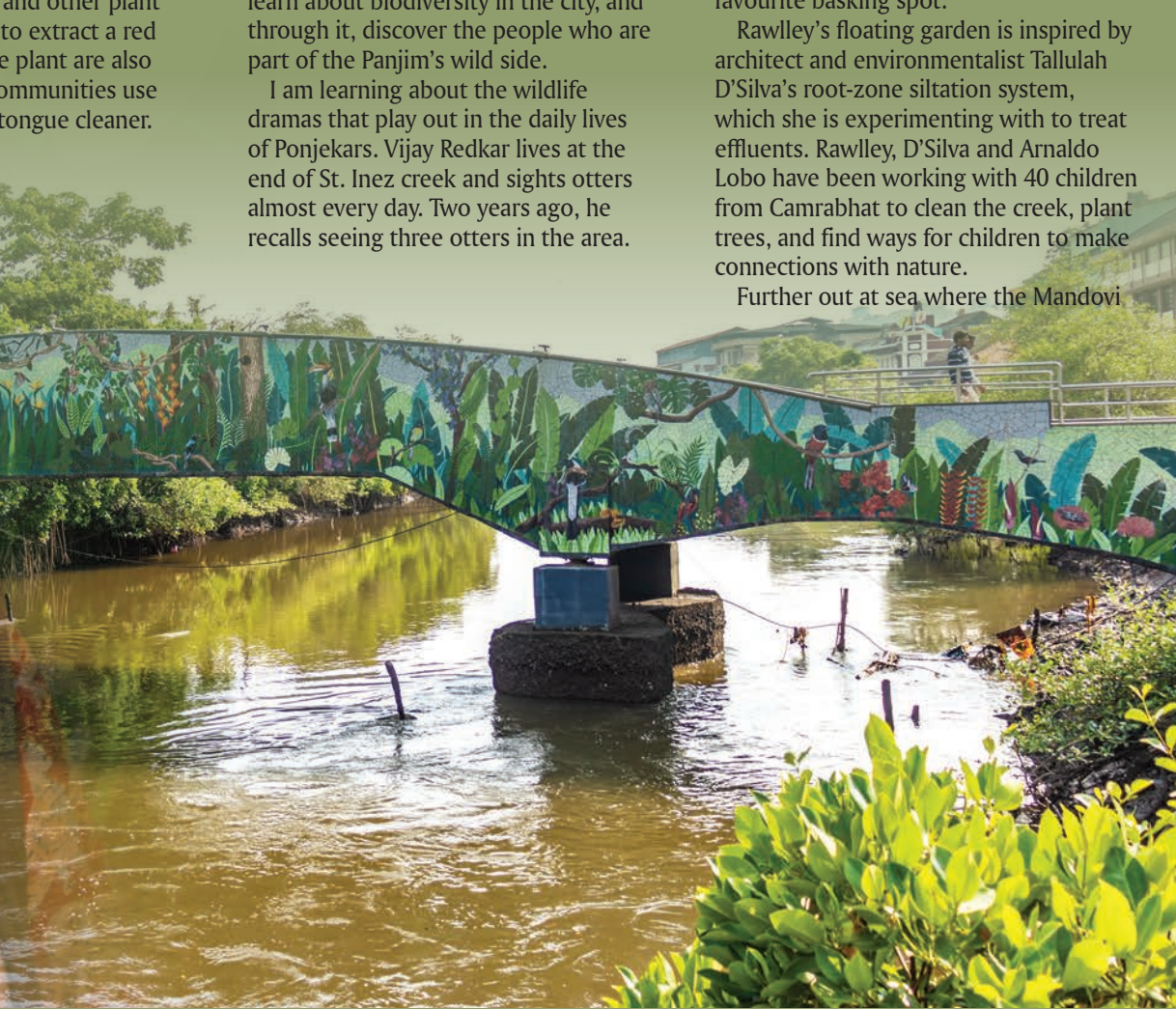
I am learning about the wildlife dramas that play out in the daily lives of Ponjekars. Vijay Redkar lives at the end of St. Inez creek and sights otters almost every day. Two years ago, he recalls seeing three otters in the area.

Today there are ten, including three pups. His camera is not good enough to capture the lives of these playful aquatic mammals up close, but he has plenty of phone videos and stories to go along with his recollections. "You can't get too close to see them, especially when they have pups. I saw them attack a stray dog the other day," he says.

In the same Camrabhat area, Vishal Rawlley uses his ingenious "origami boat" to access a floating garden. He built the vessel at home, by sandwiching and folding a tin sheet between planks, with nuts and bolts to secure the final shape. The whole contraption cost less than two thousand rupees, and he uses it to paddle to the floating garden he built with similar imagination. On a small raft mid-river, he steadily constructed this big floating brick-shaped island a year ago, using Tulsi, Canna, Colocasia and Marigold plants that help to create a self-sustaining ecosystem. The roots filter water through the porous bottom. Above are wasp nests and bird perches, while fish swim below. He also added a platform extension for people to sit on, and soon a mugger crocodile had a favourite basking spot.

Rawlley's floating garden is inspired by architect and environmentalist Tallulah D'Silva's root-zone siltation system, which she is experimenting with to treat effluents. Rawlley, D'Silva and Arnaldo Lobo have been working with 40 children from Camrabhat to clean the creek, plant trees, and find ways for children to make connections with nature.

Further out at sea where the Mandovi





# ...ON PANJIM'S WILD SIDE

rivers spills so beautifully into the wide Arabian sea, it is possible to easily see the endangered Indian Ocean Humpback Dolphin that flourishes so close to the city. These magnificent ocean mammals are residential, and live in relatively shallow waters, as they cannot dive deeper than 25 metres. As river-mouth hunters, they often come a fair-bit inland to hunt mullet (*shevte* in Konkani). "We are lucky to have a residential endangered species of coastal dolphin," says Puja Mitra of Terra Conscious, which specializes in responsible tourism. Often, tour operators play loud music and go closer to dolphins than necessary, says Mitra, and she encourages tourists to instead choose operators that follow international guidelines to minimise disturbance when watching these friendly, shy animals.

Amidst the chaos on Miramar beach, some species are still hanging on despite immense pressure. Researcher Abhishek Jamalabad has seen the common seahorse and wide-nose guitarfish turn up in hand-net by-catch just across from his office at WWF-India, metres away from the high tide line. He also talks about other species, such as the blue-button, a relative of the dangerous Portuguese Man of War, that are relatively "cosmopolitan in distribution".

But the serious challenges for Panjim's flora and fauna are numerous, and easily evident if you take a gentle walk around IFFI's venues. The large mud-skipper installation in the children's park (between Kala Academy and the festival's heritage precinct headquarters) is made entirely from plastics and debris that have been washed ashore on Goa's coastline. And the renovated culvert at the mouth of St. Inez creek does not allow the tide to drain sewage often, forcing the creek's otters onto adjoining

fields, says Redkar.

These are just some of the highlights and opportunities connected with Panjim's wildlife, right here and now. After IFFI, 79-year old Dr. Desai's schedule will involve taking people on dedicated tree walks in Panjim, including Campal Garden and Kala Academy that you have become so familiar with during your favourite film festival. Meanwhile she encourages you to look out for *Canna indica* around INOX, the seeds of which, she says, were used as ammunition in the Battle of Plassey.

*Nandini Velho is an award-winning wildlife biologist.*





# EVERY STONE TELLS A TALE

BY CHRYSSELLE D'SILVA DIAS

I have often heard from visitors that when you're driving into Panjim you can feel your blood pressure going down, and equilibrium returning. Perhaps it is the sight of the Mandovi river that cheers you up. Perhaps you feel excited by the prospect of a good time during your stay. Maybe the colourful old houses to the left of the bridge make you feel as if you have entered another world, quite distinct from the majority of the country.

This writer has the privilege of living in one of these beautiful old houses along the waterfront. The house has been in my husband's family since 1904 and has a tremendous history. It was the Mint of Goa (Casa da Moeda) from 1834 – 1842. Since their arrival in Goa in 1510, the Portuguese claimed Velha Goa (Old Goa) as their capital in Goa. It was a significant port for trade with Europe and the Far East, and the city flourished. Over the years, though, diseases like malaria and cholera caused the city's residents to flee. The capital was officially moved to Panjim in 1843 and all the important government offices were relocated here

as a result.

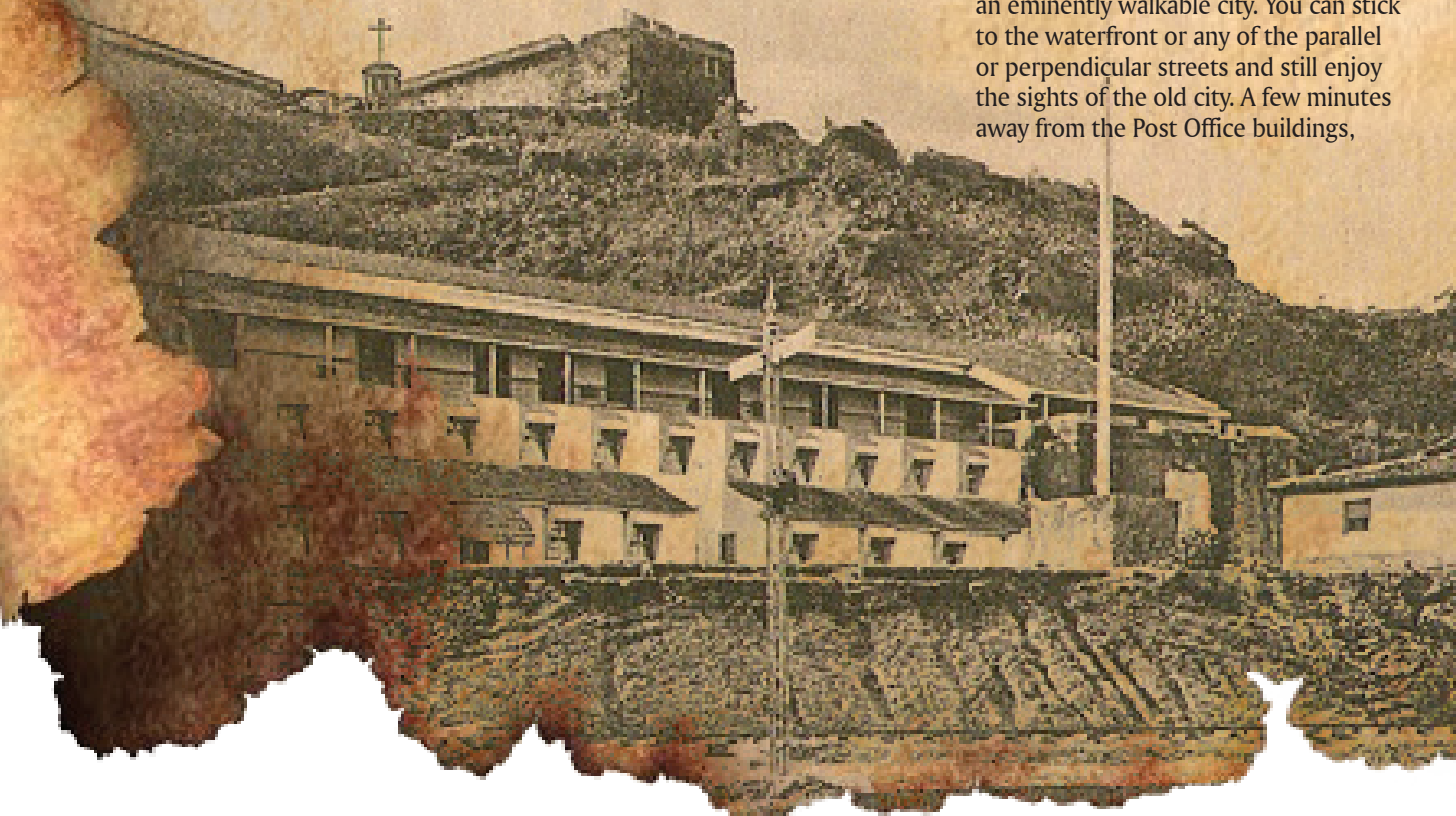
Our house became the Mint in 1834 but it was standing long before that. We have dated it to the late 1700s when it was a private residence. It was the Treasury before it became the Mint. After the Mint was moved back to Old Goa in 1842, the building became the Telegraph Office for both the Portuguese and British governments until 1902, which is an interesting fact. How often do you have two governments running offices in the same premises?

In 1904, the building was purchased by Dr. Miguel Caetano Dias, an eminent Goan doctor whose bust can be seen in a little garden in front of the house. Here's a connection with the International Film Festival of India: Dr. Dias's statue was erected during his lifetime and placed in the Escola Médico-Cirúrgica

de Nova Goa (Medical-Surgical School of Nova Goa) which is now known as the Old GMC building and the heritage precinct headquarters of IFFI. After his death in 1936, the statue was brought in procession to be installed at its current location. Four generations of the Dias family have worked in the Old GMC as doctors, and have a long history with the very same buildings you are now watching movies in.

On either side of the Casa da Moeda (literally meaning 'House of Coins') are the red and white buildings of the **Head Post Office** and the **Office of the Post Master General**. These were once depots for a flourishing tobacco trade. The area was in fact known as Tobacco Square.

Panjim was a planned city with a design along the lines of Lisbon's Baixa, with streets on a grid and buildings along the waterfront. This is also what makes it an eminently walkable city. You can stick to the waterfront or any of the parallel or perpendicular streets and still enjoy the sights of the old city. A few minutes away from the Post Office buildings,





opposite the District Sessions Court, is the **Mermaid Garden**. At the centre of this little garden, stands a one-of-a-kind porcelain statue of a mermaid set in a tiled fountain. In 2012, extensive restoration work revealed the porcelain hidden under eighteen layers of paint. The revealed porcelain was a beautiful cream colour but it has unfortunately been covered up yet again in the pre-IFFI beautification drive, with bright white paint.

The **Adil Shah Palace** or the Old Secretariat building is one of the most important heritage structures in the city. Built by Adil Shah of Bijapur in the 1500s, this was his summer palace and fortress. The river was a lot closer then and the palace was surrounded by a moat and an arsenal with an estimated 55 cannons. The Portuguese took over the building in 1510, and it was used as a rest house for arriving and departing Portuguese Viceroy. From 1759-1918, it became the official residence of the Viceroy. After Goa's assimilation into India in 1961, the building functioned as the Secretariat of the Goa government until that seat of power moved to Porvorim, across the river. Since then, this magnificent building has undergone several years of refurbishment and renovations. We see it coming into play occasionally for various arts festivals like the forthcoming Serendipity Arts Festival in December.

The buildings on the other side of the Palace (currently the Accounts Department and the State Bank of India building) were once part of the Palace divided by the moat (where the road is now).

Across the street from the Adil Shah palace, stop a moment to admire the statue of **Abade Faria**. This is a homage to one of Goa's own, a pioneer of hypnotism, which the statue depicts.



He has been fictionalised in the classic 'Count of Monte Cristo' by Alexander Dumas. Near the statue are two impressive cannons which were part of Adil Shah's arsenal. Walking further along the waterfront you'll come to a beautiful old building, painted blue and white. This is the **Customs and Central Excise Museum**, a little gem hidden in plain sight. It's the first of its kind in the country, it showcases information about the ancient ports and details of trade Goa and other ports. You might enjoy the 'Battle of Wits' gallery that displays the *modus operandi* of smugglers and tax evaders. Take a peek also at the 'Seizure Gallery' (no chances of a heart attack here) where confiscated goods are displayed.

Continuing along the waterfront, **The Mandovi Hotel** is Goa's first multi-storeyed building built in 1952 and designed in the Art Deco style. The rounded corners, lightning motifs on the railings and murals on the walls are typical of this period. Just opposite

the **Panjim Ferry**, is the magnificent block of beautiful yellow buildings beginning with the iconic **Institute Menezes Braganza**. Long before the Kala Academy, the Menezes Braganza Hall was the centre of all events in Panjim. It used to host the Central Library before it moved to its new location at Patto. Walk into the entrance to see a fantastic example of azulejos depicting voyages from Portugal and their discoveries.

Completing the block is the **Panjim Police Station**, the **Government Printing Press** and the **North Goa District Collectorate**. The architecture, symmetry and scale of the properties are something to be admired. The Panjim waterfront has a collection of buildings where history has been written and re-written repeatedly. Every stone tells a tale. Remember that, when you next pass by.





# OUTSIDERS WHO LIVE INSIDE OUR HEARTS

BY APURVA ASRANI

In a nepotistic film industry, where star children irrespective of talent or looks have the inside route to becoming movie stars, there is much respect for the “outsider” who made it on their terms. Today I pay homage to two phenomenal male actors with whom I’ve had the pleasure of working closely—Manoj Bajpayee and Rajkummar Rao.

It was the Summer of 1997; I was all of 19, and had been enlisted by Ramgopal Varma to edit *Satya* (1998)—a film on the Bombay underworld. In the days leading up to the shoot, I got a chance to bond with the actors in Varma’s suburban Bombay home. That is where I met Manoj for the first time. He was a lanky, curly haired young man, with an infectious laugh and intense eyes that arrested you on first contact. He had done small roles in significant films like *Bandit Queen* (1994) and *Drohkaal* (1994), but his restless energy conveyed an incredible talent that was yet to be harnessed.

Manoj refused to wear a cloak of self-importance that is usually associated with actors, and this made him very approachable. He submitted himself totally to Anurag Kashyap and Saurabh Shukla’s affable gangster character, and he gave Bhiku

Mhatre a heart that he wore—to a fault—on his sleeve.

As an editor, I often look to follow the protagonist’s energy while pacing the narrative. And even though a brooding Satya was the titular role, it was Bhikhu Mhatre’s restless, nervous energy that I found most attractive. When I look back at my process, I think the frenetic pace and jumpy cuts bear allegiance to Manoj’s performance, more than any other. I remember watching the rushes of *Satya* and being absolutely blown away by the spontaneity of the actor. You just never knew which direction he would take the scene in.

In one scene Bhikhu slaps his wife (played by the terrific Shefali Chhaya) for being rude, and she glares at him angrily. Now you’re expecting Manoj, the ruthless gangster, to maintain a brutish character, but instead, he melts. Not only is he afraid of her wrath, he actually seems turned on by it. His wife hits him back and he

takes it, laughing and cuddling her.

Manoj and I also bonded as friends and I would often pick him up on my scooter and take him to the set or the office, chatting excitedly about new scenes in the film. I once forced him to come to a gay party, where he giggled nervously as boys pinched his bottom. Not once did he display a shred of disgust or disrespect, he was curious and observed the goings-on. Little did I know that 18 years later we would make a film where he would play a gay man.

In 2011, I had returned to Bombay after two years of a self-imposed exile. Hansal Mehta (who Manoj had introduced me to in 1999) was making a film after years, and he insisted that I cut it. This new film, then titled ‘Based On a True Story’ was about a young pro bono lawyer who was assassinated in 2010. Hansal had a sketchy script outline but knew who he wanted to cast—a new

actor named Rajkummar Rao.

Raj had played character parts in *LSD* (2010), *Shaitan* (2011) and *Gangs Of Wasseypur* (2012) and I had recently seen his ‘spirited’ performance in the horror film, *Ragini MMS 2* (2011). He was by far one of the most exciting and virile talents out there, but nobody had imagined him as the protagonist who could headline a film yet.

Two days after I moved to Bombay to work on the film, I went shopping to a mall. Across the denim wear section, I saw this lanky boy with big hair, politely talking to the sales staff. I called up Hansal and said, ‘your actor is here, what’s his name again?’. “Rajkummar,” Hansal replied, ‘go say Hi’. I did, and Raj hugged me warmly. His



Nishant Saldanha



eyes gleamed with excitement to see a new team come together to make a film he richly deserved.

We struggled hard for almost two years to make and release *Shahid* (2013) a film that put Raj on the map, and gave many floundering careers a new lease of life. Like Manoj, Raj is also an extremely spontaneous actor. But he belongs to the digital generation - one that has redefined stardom to include regular people who play by their own rules.

Rajkumar's style is quite different from Manoj's. He has an assuming quality - the guy next door that you could meet while out shopping; someone who will listen when you speak. This is a quality that, in my opinion, makes for the best kind of actor. He doesn't act, he reacts. He is that rare actor, absorbing everything his co-actor is saying or doing, without feeling the burning need to say his own lines. That level of grace and security is a quality seldom seen in mainstream actors, and that is probably what makes Rajkumar so sought after today.

It is hard to edit actors like Rajkumar, as they give you their best with each take. In *Shahid*, there is a crucial courtroom scene where the protagonist's final submission wins the case. *Shahid* almost breaks down in the scene because, like his innocent client, he too had been wrongly imprisoned. While there was a palpable choking in his voice, Rajkumar held back his tears. Each one of the three takes was pure gold, and on the table, I found myself confused about which one to choose. I mean it's not often that one gets the opportunity to edit great actors on the cusp of stardom. It gave me a great sense of responsibility.

That evening Raj came to my studio to watch another scene I had cut. He had none of the airs of greatness that I had been attributing to him while watching the rushes. He first nervously saw the scene, and then asked to see it again, before getting up to squeeze my shoulder excitedly. He seemed to be in awe of the editing process and of my skills. Before leaving, he asked permission to hold the Filmfare Award that I had won for editing *Satya*. 'Wow! This is really heavy' he said beaming proudly. 'I hope one day even I win one'.

There was no more doubt. I went with my instinct, and chose the right take for the scene. It was the

subtlest of the three, and turned out extremely powerful in the final film. Never did the director, nor Raj, ever question my choices. Raj eventually won the Filmfare (critics) award for *Shahid*.

If I got the chance to edit Manoj in his breakthrough film, and then Raj in his, I enjoyed the double bonanza of having them both star in *Aligarh* (2016), my debut film as a writer. This one was special on so many counts, especially because the characters that came from a place in my heart were being brought to life by actors who were not just brilliant, but also wonderful human beings. It would be an understatement to say that they interpreted the characters in ways I could never imagine.

The tenderness and simplicity that Manoj brought to Siras goes far beyond the pages of the script. His powerful eyes would twinkle sharply even in *Satya* Rai Nagpaul's most muted frames. His performance while listening Lata Mangeshkar's *Aapki Nazaron Ne Samjha* with a glass of whisky in his hand will go down as my proudest cinematic collaboration in 23 years. And to think that that scene had just a two-line description in the script.

As for Raj's work, it is probably the most generous performance I have seen in my career. To be at the top of your game (he had won the National Award the precious year) and to accept a role that is not author-backed takes a special kind of courage and understanding. Raj gave his all to the film, but he always looked up to Manoj and his

performance with awe.

He listened sincerely in the scenes where he, as the reporter, interviews the reluctant gay professor. He transformed his character from an ambitious rookie to a sensitive man who wanted nothing but justice for his friend. He never forgot that there was a bigger context to the film (it was still illegal to be gay in India when we made it). He wanted people to fall in love with the protagonist, and gave his faith, heart and rapt attention to Manoj. Even though there can hardly be a match for Manoj's phenomenal performance, Raj's work was hailed and appreciated in respectful tones.

And to think that many moons ago, Manoj played the supporting part to the titular *Satya*—with an equal amount of grace. Life had indeed come a full circle.

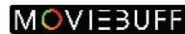
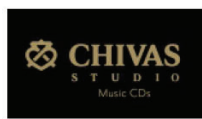


Apurva Asrani is a National Award winning filmmaker, film editor and screenwriter based in Mumbai, India. He has a multimedia body of work in film, television and theatre. He is best known for editing films like *Satya* (1998) and *Shahid* (2013), and for writing the acclaimed human rights drama *Aligarh* (2016).

Nishant Saldanha







INCREDIBLE GOA



For this charming cover painting, Pradeep Naik wanted to portray the reach and impact of the International Film Festival of India across the landscape of India's smallest state, which he says penetrates

even to the villages (he is a lifelong resident of stunningly beautiful Mandrem, on the coastline of North Goa). According to him, "The peacock reaches most houses. On the weekend especially, people from the countryside come to Panjim to check what the festival has to offer." In this delightful rendition, our favourite bird comes beak-to-beak with one of the old-style plaster lions that symbolically guard Goan gates.

## TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

### PRESS CONFERENCES

(Venue: Press Briefing Room, Old GMC Building)

- Meet the Directors: Non Feature Films at 10.30am
- Meet the Directors: World Cinema at 11.30am
- Indian Panorama at 3pm
- Members of International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication UNESCO at 4pm

### IDPA - Open Forum

Time: 1.30pm onwards  
 Venue: Old GMC Building (East wing)  
 First floor  
 "Director's Take, Biopics - How Much Fact? How Much Fiction?"

### MOVIE SCREENING

"Mahatma on Celluloid"  
**Uttarayanam**  
 Dir: G. Aravindan, Malayalam  
 Kala Academy, 1:30pm and 5pm

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Send us feedback and comments at [thepeacock@iffigoa.org](mailto:thepeacock@iffigoa.org)



25th November 2018

### INOX Screen I

E11 09:30 AM

**AYKA (FK)**  
 Dir: Sergey Dvortsevoy  
 Russia/Germany/  
 Poland/Kazakhstan/  
 2018/100 min

E12 12:00 PM

**DIVINE WIND (IC)**  
 Dir: Merzak Allouache  
 Algeria/France/  
 Qatar/Lebanon/  
 2018/96 min

E13 02:45 PM

**THE UNORTHODOX (CF)**  
 Dir: Eliran Malka  
 Israel/2018/94 mins

E14 05:30 PM

**OUR STRUGGLES (IC)**  
 Dir: Guillaume Senez  
 Belgium/France/  
 2018/98 min

E15 07:45 PM

**492 (WP)**  
 Dir: Henrique Goldman  
 Brazil/2018/98 min

E16 10:45 PM

**RESPETO (DC)**  
 Dir: Alberto Monteras II  
 Philippines/2017/96 min

### INOX Screen II

E21 10:00 AM

Repeat Screening of Opening  
 feature and non  
 feature films  
**\*KHARVAS (IP)**  
 Dir: Aditya Suhas Jambhale  
 Marathi/ 38 mins  
**OLU (IP)**  
 Dir: Shaji N Karun  
 Malayalam/ 109 mins

E22 01:00 PM

**\*AAJ SHAPATH (IP)**  
 Dir: Gautam Vaze  
 Marathi/ 14 mins  
**POOMARAM (IP)**  
 Dir: Abhid Shine  
 Malayalam/ 106 mins

E23 03:30 PM

**AAMHI DOGHI (IP)**  
 Dir: Pratima Joshi  
 Marathi/ 140 mins

E24 06:00 PM

**\*NANI TERI Morni (IP)**  
 Dir: Akashditya Lama  
 Nagamese/ 41 mins  
**NAGARKIRTAN (IP)**  
 Dir: Kaushik Ganguly  
 Bengali/ 115 mins

E25 08:45 PM

**PERANBU (IP)**  
 Dir: Ram  
 Tamil/ 148 mins

### INOX Screen III

E31 09:15 AM

**HIDE AND SEEK (LTA)**  
 Dir: Dan Volman  
 Israel/1980/90 min

E32 12:00 PM

**THE ORIGINALS (WP)**  
 Dir: Marwan Hamed  
 Egypt  
 2017/125 min

E33 03:00 PM

**IRO/HERE (IC)**  
 Dir: Hadi Mohaghegh  
 Iran/2018/ 82 min

E34 05:30 PM

**ROOBHA (WP)**  
 Dir: Lenin M. Sivam  
 Canada/2017/91 min

E35 08:15 PM

**53 WARS (IC)**  
 Dir: Ewa Bukowska  
 Poland/2018/79 min

E36 10:45 PM

**TOUCH ME NOT (FK)**  
 Dir: Adina Pintilie  
 Romania | Germany | Czech  
 Republic |  
 Bulgaria | France/2018/125  
 min

### INOX Screen IV

E41 09:45 AM

**THE HAPPY PRINCE (WP)**  
 Dir: Rupert Everett  
 Germany, UK, Belgium,  
 Italy/2018/105 min

E42 12:45 PM

**IN THE LINE OF FIRE (HOMAGE)**  
 Dir: Wolfgang Petersen  
 USA/1993/128 min

E43 03:15 PM

**7 EMOTIONS (WP)**  
 Dir: Marek Kotlarski  
 Poland/2018/116 min

E44 05:45 PM

**VISION (FK)**  
 Dir: Naomi Kawase  
 Japan/France/2018/  
 109 min

E45 08:15 PM

**GRASS (FK)**  
 Dir: Sang-soo Hong  
 South Korea/2018/  
 /66 min

E46 10:45 PM

**SUMMER (FK)**  
 Dir: Kirill Serebrennikov  
 Russia/2018/126  
 min

### KALA ACADEMY

E51 09:00 AM

**COLD WAR (FK)**  
 Dir: Pawel Pawlikowski  
 Poland/France/UK/2018/  
 85 min

E52 11:30 AM-01:00 PM

In Conversation  
**"Dha-One"**  
 David Dhawan  
 Varun Dhawan  
 Moderator  
 Rumi Jaffery

E53 03:00 PM

**THE GUILTY (FK)**  
 Dir: Gustav Möller  
 Denmark/2018/85 min

E54 05:30 PM

**YOMEDDINE (FK)**  
 Dir: A.B. Shawky  
 Egypt/USA/Austria/  
 2018/97 min

E55 08:00 PM

**A FAMILY TOUR (IC)**  
 Dir: Ying Liang  
 Taiwan | Hong Kong  
 |Singapore | Malaysia/  
 2018/107 min

E56 10:30 PM

**ASH IS PUREST WHITE (FK)**  
 Dir: Zia Zhang Ke  
 China/2018/150 min

### MAQUINEZ PALACE I

E61 09:30 AM

**DAYAVAN (DSPA Retro)**  
 Dir: Feroz Khan  
 India/1988/173 min

E62 12:30 PM

**EK THI RAANI AISI BHI**  
 Dir: Gul Bahar Singh  
 India/2017/125 min

E63 03:00 PM-05:00 PM

Masterclass  
**"POETRY IN MOTION"**  
 by  
 Pierre Gill

E64 06:00 PM

**SEETEE (Goan Film)**  
 Dir: Gopinath Chandekar  
 India/2018/15 min  
 06:30 PM to 07:30 PM  
 In Conversation  
**"A BROMANTIC THRILLER"**  
 1)Sriram Raghavan  
 2)Shridhar Raghavan  
 Moderator  
 Rahul Rawail

### MAQUINEZ PALACE II

E71 09:30 AM

**BEGUM JAAN (SF)**  
 Dir: Srijit Mukherji  
 India/2017/107 min

E72 12:00 PM

**AUTUMN SONATA (IB RETRO)**  
 Dir: Ingmar Bergman  
 Sweden/1978/99 min  
 (Col)

E73 03:30 PM

**PANCHLAI (SF)**  
 Dir: Prem Prakash  
 Modi  
 India/2018/107 min

E74 06:00 PM

**A DEATH IN THE GUNJ (SF)**  
 Dir: Konkona Sen Sharma  
 India/2018/107 min