

THE PEACOCK

THURSDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2021



Sounds of Music

When the idea of organizing the first ever Konkani music festival occurred to Konkani Bhasha Mandal (KBM) of Goa, many eyebrows were raised. Is there anything like Konkani sangeet? Is music not universal? I was then serving as the President of KBM. I too was intrigued by this idea. But then suddenly it all became crystal clear. Sitar maestro and musicologist Pandit Bhaskar Chandavarkar was invited to deliver a lecture prior to the festival. His speech was very inspiring. He deliberated on the overall music scenario in India and also addressed our apprehension. He provided us with a simple and logical answer: Konkani is a language, which means Konkani has a culture. When you have a culture, you have music. That infused confidence in us, and there was no looking back.

We approached Gaan Saraswati Kishori Amonkar in Mumbai to grace our festival. The famed classical vocalist, a Padma Vibhushan awardee, was proud of her roots in Goa and spoke chaste Konkani. There were no bounds to our joy when she readily agreed to inaugurate the event. And who else could we think of other than our own star musician-singer, Remo Fernandes, for the concluding session? The Sangeet Mahotsav became a super success as it brought the East and West together. The invocation, orchestrated by Fr. Peter Cardozo, set the tone of the harmonious festival. I recall how Kishori Amonkar, a purist deeply rooted in classical traditions voiced her dislike for fusion music, to which Remo respectfully disagreed. The nightingale of Konkani songs, Lorna Cordeiro, well known as just Lorna, regaled the adoring audience. The classical singer Pandit Prabhakar Karekar, Konkani-Marathi singer Swapnil Bandodkar, and a host of renowned singers performed at the event. *Bhajans*, *natyasangeet*, and *cantar* from *tiatros* (local drama form) by popular *tiatrists* thrilled aficionados of these genres. *Mando*, the ball-room dance song, was performed, and folk



songs varying from *hoviyo* and *vers* to *fugddi* were played by folk groups from all corners of Goa and beyond. The pandal erected on 15000 sq.ft. area was so crowded that we had to take down its side panels to accommodate the crowd.

The lessons that dawned upon us during this festival were stunning. *Zagor*, the folk form that is a lovely combination of play, music, and songs was rapidly going extinct. The *perni-zagor* and *shena-zagor* performed at our event are barely to be witnessed

now. Grinding stone songs are also quickly fading. Fortunately researcher Heta Pandit has recently published a collection of these songs with interpretations in English. Unless concrete steps are taken by government agencies and NGOs, we will lose these beautiful folk forms.

I always wondered why Raj Kapoor found Goan music so charming. Why did he choose to use the tune and words from our folk song *Ghe Ghe Re Saiba, Maka Naka Go*. I'm sure his answer would be, "When I love Goa, how can I not absorb its soul?"

A percussion instrument common among all across Goa is the *ghumatt*, which is made of an earthen pot with openings on both sides. The larger opening was traditionally covered with a tightly stretched skin of the endangered monitor lizard; this is being now replaced by other leathers. Most people in the villages play the *ghumatt* as they sing *aartis* during Ganesh festivals or when *khell* (street plays) are played during Carnival, and in almost all other folk performances. *Dhol*, *dholkem*, *shamell*, *taso*, and *kansallem* are some of the other percussion instruments.

Cinebuffs will remember the famed Goa-born percussionist Dattaram Wadkar, assistant to the Shankar-Jaikishan duo, and a graceful *dholak* player. A unique beat he created later came to be known as Dattu Theka. A huge contribution to Bollywood cinema came from Goan musicians. The mid-century Bollywood music scene was dominated by string and brass musicians of Goan origin like Sebastian D'Souza, Chic Chocolate, Frank Fernand, Anthony Gonsalves, and others.

Bardroy Barretto's award-winning musical *Nachom-ia Kumpasar* (2014), based on the lives of Chris Perry and Lorna, two most beloved Konkani music legends, was screened at hundreds of screenings in prestigious movie halls as well as in tiny village squares. It showed just how much the people of Goa love music, especially their own Konkani music. I hope more such epic musicals follow in the coming years.

SHORT TAKES



I come to IFFI to get ideas for my work and gain more knowledge on script writing from countries across the world.

Menino Mario Araujo
Tiatrhist, Goa



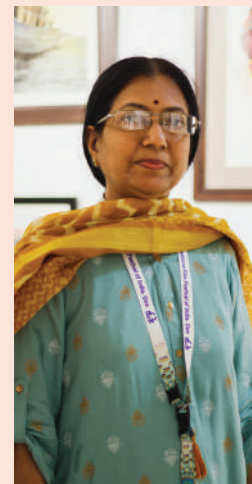
I come here just to watch the Korean, Iranian, and Chinese films. They are so different from the Indian films. If it wasn't for IFFI I wouldn't get a chance to see these films.

Shabana Motwani
Housewife, Goa



My film *Manikbabur Megh* is about loneliness and a man who falls in love with a cloud. It is a kind of story that is very rare in Indian filmmaking.

Chandan Sen
Actor, Kolkata



I see all films as works of art on a screen. I love all the art films by Shabana Azmi and Sharmila Tagore which have also had an influence on my own work.

Anita Kubal
Painter, Goa

Cinema's Great Acts Booked



Photos by Michael Praveen

BY PATRICIA ANN ALVARES

Getting up close and personal with two authors, Sumant Batra who co-authored *An Actor's Actor: The authorized biography of Sanjeev Kumar* and Rahul Rawail who has penned *Raj Kapoor – The Immortal Master at Work*, **The Peacock** got an insight into the books that were discussed at the In-Conversation session at IFFI.

Movie stars spin a magic that inevitably draws us to know more about the intimate details of their lives. This desire has spurred many autobiographies and books on the lives of our famous stars.

This year at IFFI, two of Indian cinema's greatest – the 'Showman' Raj Kapoor and actor Sanjeev Kumar are being paid a tribute with insightful biographies.

Born Harihar Jethalal Jariwala (1938-1985), Sanjeev Kumar was one of India's cinema most versatile and talented actors. He also always remained an enigma. Now 35 years after his death, we are treated to a personal

close-up of him.

Sumant Batra, one of India's best insolvency lawyers with an abiding passion for Indian cinema (he has a mammoth collection of cine memorabilia) and writer Hanif Zaveri joined forces to craft this book, which was in the making for around seven years. Enamoured with the extraordinary talent of the actor who played nine different roles in *Naya Din Nai Raat* (1974), Batra was keen to preserve the legacy of this legend in a biography.

On convincing Sanjeev's two sisters of this need, they authorized an autobiography and provided him with details of his life. "We interviewed over 100 family members, close friends, co-stars and others from the film fraternity. This gave us a deep insight into the private persona of Sanjeev," says Batra, who knew that readers, like him, were keen to know more about this legend. Among other facets, the book covers his conflict with his mother about his career choice, his dilemma about being a father figure to his younger siblings, and his deep loneliness.

Debunking Sanjeev as a 'miser', Batra highlights the fact that the reclusive actor was anything but the tight-fisted man he was made out to be. Actor Shatrughan Sinha in his foreword to the book explains how Sanjeev sent him bundles of money when he was going through a rough patch.

The essence of Sanjeev, Batra reveals, was in his steadfast belief that he was only an actor and not a star. Entirely unconscious of himself as a star, he performed a diverse number of roles with aplomb, be it the man in short pants with a glimpse of his paunch in *Pati, Patni aur Woh* (1977) or as Amitabh Bachchan's father in *Trishul* (1978).

Raj Kapoor – The Immortal Master at Work is director Rahul Rawail's tribute to India's greatest showman and legendary filmmaker. The book, which has been three years in the making, will be released next month to commemorate Raj Kapoor's birthday on December 14, reflects on the days Rawail spent at RK Studios. "I joined Raj-saab when he was making *Mera Naam Joker*. In fact four of my films *Love Story*, *Betaab*, *Arjun*, and

Dacait have been inspired by his techniques, the human emotions, the qualities of music, and the art of visual storytelling," says Rawail. "I was able to closely observe him in all his humanness – his quirky sense of humour and his relationships with his crew and actors spanning three generations. He was an exceptional storyteller. *Bobby* was not his genre of filmmaking, yet he handled it so beautifully."

Once the seed of the book was sown, Rawail wanted to have the Kapoors on board. Given their longstanding relationship, that came in easily.

Speaking during the session, Raj Kapoor's eldest son Randhir Kapoor, who has been an immense support to the author, recalls the time the father and son visited the Soviet Union. "People would refer to him as Comrade Raj Kapoor. Each and every one of his films was popular in that part of the world. He was perhaps more well known in Russia than in India. I strongly endorse this book which is a tribute to my father's work and I am privileged to be talking about it at IFFI."

SHORT TAKES



The city looks so beautiful; everything is sparkling. I want to spend more time on the street at night. Our film *Talendanda* is premiering at IFFI.

Mangala N.
Theatre Practitioner,
Bangalore



IFFI is a wonderful experience to interact with movie buffs and people who have committed themselves to films. I'm really looking forward to my Masterclass.

Sab John Edathattil
Screenwriter,
Chennai



The movies at IFFI this year are more interesting than the previous ones. I loved *Rafaela*. I got the chance to discuss Konkani films and Goan culture with film professionals.

Dr Minal Joshi
Actress, Goa



I'm running a movement called Kolhiwood and this is a good place to connect with upcoming South Indian filmmakers. I enjoyed the Kannada film *1978* which was very realistic.

Umesh Deokar
Filmmaker,
Kolhapur

Islands of Apathy

BY SACHIN CHATTE

In Mia Hansen-Løve's *Bergman Island* (2021) screened at IFFI this year, a filmmaker couple played by Vicky Krieps and Tim Roth decide to spend time on the Fårö islands in Sweden. The island is famous because the legendary Ingmar Bergman lived there, till his dying day. The film tells of a Bergman safari that takes visitors around the island to various places of significance to his films. There is also reference to the bed that was used in *Scenes from a Marriage* (1974), a film that caused "a million divorces" according to *Bergman Island*.

It made me wonder where we in India stand in terms of preserving our rich culture and heritage, especially when it comes to cinema, music, and books. Let us start with the granddaddy of Indian cinema, Dadasaheb Phalke. He made 90 odd films during his illustrious career. Only eight of those survive today and some of them are in fragments. Let those numbers sink in – there is no trace of 80 films made by the pioneer of Indian cinema.

Most of the silent films of that era suffered a cruel fate. The reels were made of silver nitrate which is highly combustible. They were made by dissolving pure silver in nitric acid and had a higher silver content than other film bases. The silver became more valuable than what was printed on the film, and the resultant greed devoured thousands of our film prints. In the case of India's first talkie *Alam Ara* (1931), some of the family members sold the nitrate print to improve their sinking finances.

But the lack of preservation and appreciation of our culture goes much beyond films. A couple of decades ago when I first visited Mirza Ghalib's haveli in Ballimaran, Delhi, to my horror and disappointment I discovered an STD phone booth and a small shop selling coal within the

premises where one of the greatest poets ever spent his days. Years later, thanks to the efforts of Gulzar and other connoisseurs, the place was restored and today, a museum exists there.

I recall reading of an Amitabh Bachchan retrospective in New York – one of the films

that was selected, but could not be screened, was *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977). Now this is not exactly an antique film but the reason it was dropped was because there was no 35mm print of it available!

In Goa, there is no print of *Mogacho Anvddo* (1950), the first Konkani film ever

made. A single reel of that Al Jerry Braganza film was found, which was stuck, warped, and fragile. After years of painstaking work at a laboratory in Italy, part of the reel has been restored sans the sound.

While preservation is one aspect, appreciation of our art is another. The eloquence with which Martin Scorsese speaks about Satyajit Ray's films is heartwarming. Yet, even though Ray is revered in our country, not many have seen his body of work. The same applies to other artistes. Derek Malcolm, the well-known British film critic, once told me that in the 70s and 80s, he would travel from England to IFFI only to watch the work of Indian filmmakers, as a part of the Indian Panorama. Malcolm also went on to call *Ship of Theseus* (2012) a life-changing film, but sadly not many back home have seen it.

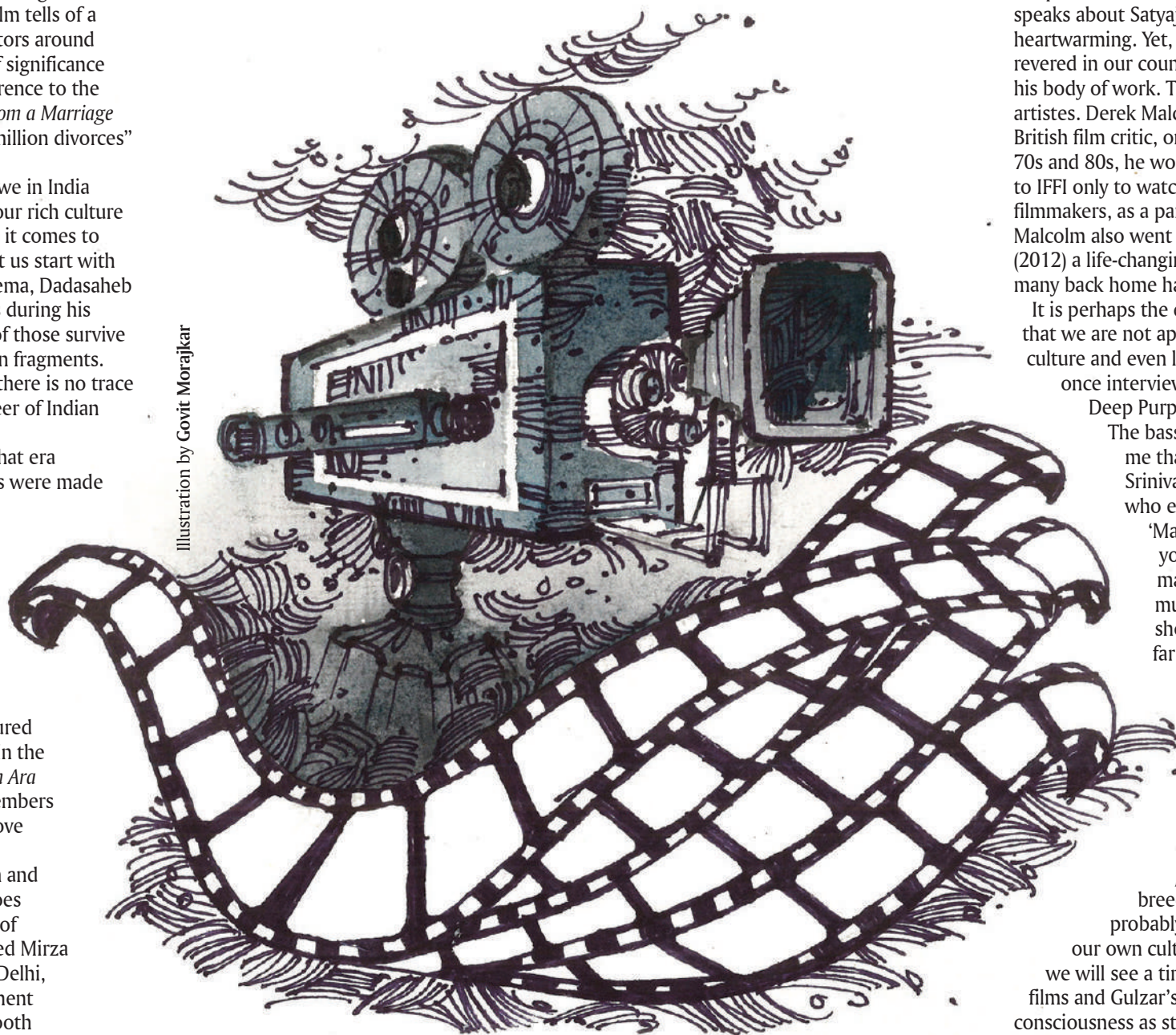
It is perhaps the effect of colonization that we are not appreciative of our own culture and even look down upon it. I

once interviewed the hard rock band Deep Purple for All India Radio.

The bassist Roger Glover told me that he was a big fan of U Srinivas, the mandolin maestro who earned the moniker of 'Mandolin' Srinivas at a very young age. However, not many in India have heard his music which has crossed our shores and become popular far beyond.

As the proverb goes in Hindi, *Ghar ki murgi daal barabar*, meaning the hen of the house is as good as a grain of lentil. In Goa, we say *Ghor mogreak pormoll na*. Familiarity breeds contempt, which probably explains our apathy for our own cultural legacy. Hopefully, we will see a time when Ritwik Ghatak's films and Gulzar's poetry will coexist in our consciousness as strongly as *Money Heist* and the Marvel universe.

Illustration by Govit Morajkar



SHORT TAKES



I'm glad the films are available to watch virtually and physically. IFFI has done a great job of maintaining the joyful spirit of the festival even during the pandemic.

Nirupama Santhosh
Film Curator,
Chennai



The masterclasses are the best part of IFFI. I liked the atmosphere and the performances in *Clara Sola*. *Titane*, the winner at Cannes, is another film I hope to watch.

Dinesh Anant
Filmmaker,
Mumbai



I really enjoyed *Promises* which is a very simple but powerful movie. I'm looking forward to watching the murder mystery thriller *Hinterland*.

Mukta Mathur
Data Consultant,
Mumbai



This year it's been hard to get tickets. I enjoyed the opening film, but I feel like the selection for the Indian Panorama category was not up to the standard.

Ramamohan I.
Retired Nurse,
Kerala

"The perfect jugalbandi between the physical and virtual"

BY PATRICIA ANN ALVARES

Festival Director Chaitanya Prasad, who is also the Additional Director General of the Directorate of Film Festivals, is handling the onerous task of guiding the prestigious International Film Festival of India through its 52nd edition. He spoke to *The Peacock* about the challenges and the resounding response to the festival.

How is the Festival going so far?

An important index of how things are going can be reflected in the programming, the flow, and the response to the festival. The halls are overflowing, there is a wonderful interface between the people, the spirit and the inspiration of the youth here and that of the delegates is unmistakable, the red carpets are dazzling, and films from across the globe are drawing packed audiences. Look at the opening film *The King of All The World* (2021) – despite the fury of the rain, all four auditoriums were packed for the viewings. *The Power of the Dog* (2021) promises to be another showstopper.

The OTT participation is unbelievable, master classes are going full house, people are enjoying the flavour of discussions, the in-conversations are being appreciated to the fullest, and even virtual cinema is going packed.

People wanted an inspirational getaway and the festival with its Goa backdrop has provided the perfect foil for it. The Entertainment Society of Goa has also done a fantastic job in ensuring that it goes on seamlessly.



What are the challenges posed by the pandemic?

Despite the pandemic, we have managed to bring about a continuity in the festival. In fact this year, we have more programmes in the virtual and physical realm than other years, and also more participation from India and abroad.

All our protocols are in place for the pandemic and the government has done its part to spread awareness. However, people also need to be extremely careful and cautious as the virus can spring back at any time. In fact it is surging back in Europe. No system is fool-proof, but the best is being done.

There have some glitches in getting information out in time.

We are moving on to an E-platform for the first time, we are the first ones to do so, hence there may have been a bit of a gap. Our endeavour is to ensure that it moves smoothly in the hybrid format that we have devised. We are looking at IFFI from a different perspective and trying it out. There is a process for the selection of films and there is necessarily a pre-screening. We do not want any film to be left out. So there have been time lapses but we are trying to put things together. Also this year, due to the pandemic and technological glitches, the receipt of international films was delayed.

Lessons are learnt every day to ensure that the festival moves seamlessly. Nevertheless, every IFFI is an improvement over the other and every day is a new challenge to make sure people are satisfied.

What is your proudest achievement in IFFI?

Our 52nd edition is a perfect 'jugalbandi' between the physical and the virtual in its hybrid format. In fact, the IFFI we held this year – in the virtual and physical format has been a trailblazer that many countries are trying to emulate.

Another very proud moment for us is the institution of '75 Creative Minds' to coincide with India's 7th year on Independence. This stands out as an iconic moment for IFFI. A novel initiative and brainchild of the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Mr. Anurag Thakur, it is an unbelievable dream run for the young creative minds of India, with the youngest being from Bihar. To pair this initiative with a mega event like IFFI is outstanding in itself.

What are the other highlights of IFFI this year?

The Panorama section this year is screening so many movies in regional languages that have never been showcased before. More so, most of the films screened this year have strong original and inspiring content.

This year has the largest participation, both nationally and internationally, with several Asian, Indian and European films debuting here. The diverse International Jury with legendary Iranian film maker Rakhshan Banietemad helming it is another win for us.

Photo by Assavri Kulkarni

SHORT TAKES



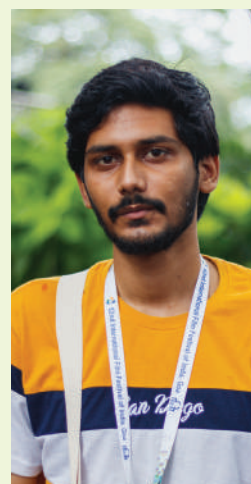
It's been a good surprise that my film *The Night Belongs to Lovers* was selected for the festival. My film is very 'French' so I'm very excited and curious to see how it is received by Indian audiences.

Julien Hilmoine
Filmmaker, France



I teach French, so I hope to watch French films at the festival. Sitting with kindred souls who laugh and gasp at the same things on the screen is a wonderful experience.

Jayashree Jagannatha
Teacher, Mysore



I'm trying to find like-minded professionals who can work with me. I want to learn more about cinematography so that I can create better videos for my music.

Shivam Jadon
Content Writer, Gurgaon



This is a well-executed festival. I enjoyed watching the sports films. I got a glimpse into different cultures and what people in other countries go through.

Smita Soni
Director of Quality, Pune

Why Should Boys Have All The Fun?

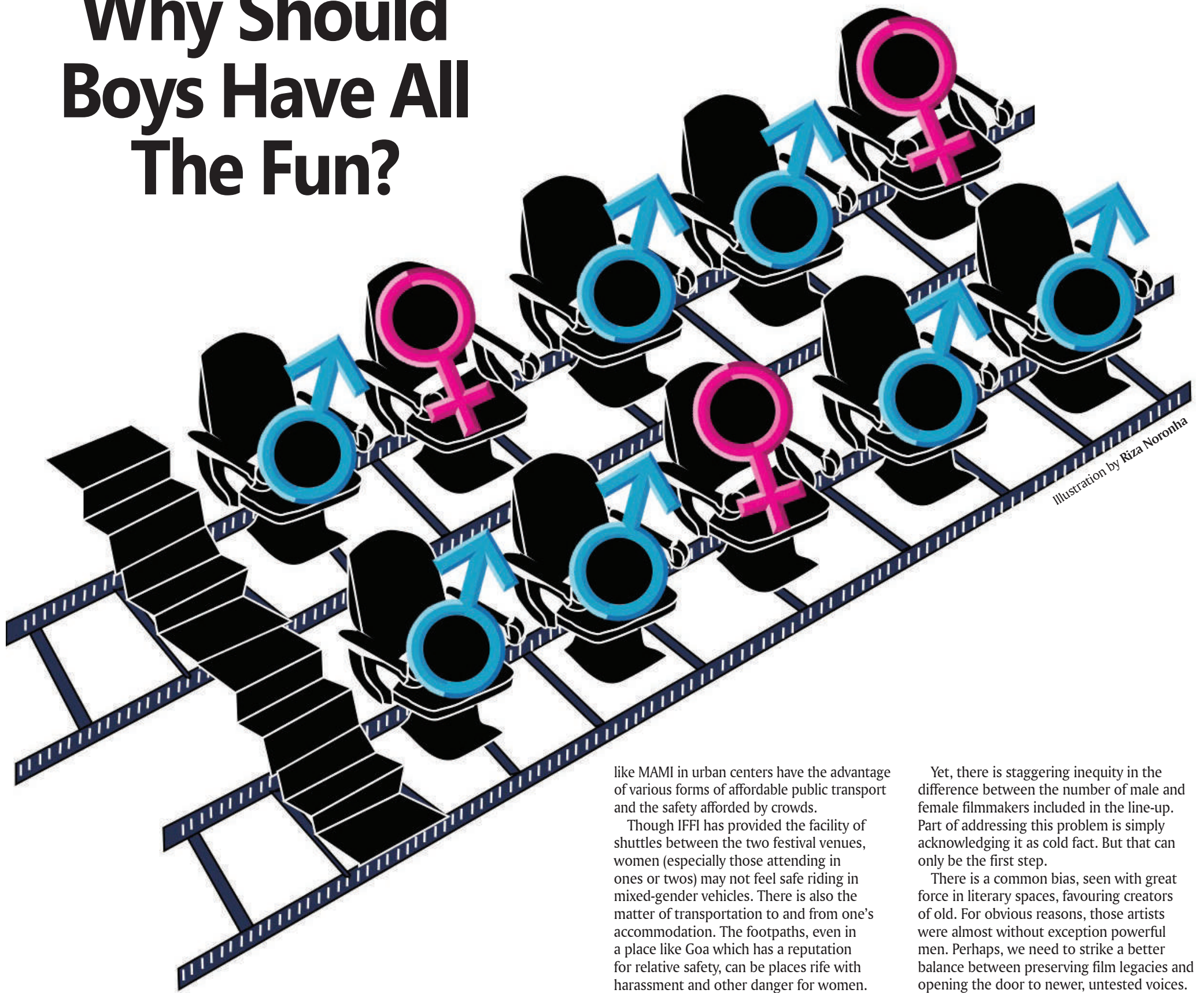


Illustration by Riza Noronha

BY URVASHI BAHUGUNA

IFFI's delegate registration data for this year reveals a puzzling lack of women. The numbers suggest that for every eight male attendees, there are only two women in the seats. These figures must be taken with a pinch of salt for complex reasons ranging from the disparity between registrations and actual attendance (for which data is unavailable) to anecdotal evidence that the actual gap is closer to 70:30 in the festival halls.

In a 2014 study, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) found that women had consistently made up more than

half the audience in American cinemas since 2009, and a 2017 survey in India indicated a similar state of affairs here. Then why are festival goers at the 52nd IFFI largely male?

Are women choosing not to travel to the festival this year because of the pandemic? Studies indicate that women are employing more caution than men when it comes to protecting themselves from the virus. The same trend could be driving the notable absence of even local women coming to watch these movies.

But the pandemic can only realistically explain away part of the divide. Public spaces in India are notoriously hostile to women in both obvious and backhanded ways. Festivals

like MAMI in urban centers have the advantage of various forms of affordable public transport and the safety afforded by crowds.

Though IFFI has provided the facility of shuttles between the two festival venues, women (especially those attending in ones or twos) may not feel safe riding in mixed-gender vehicles. There is also the matter of transportation to and from one's accommodation. The footpaths, even in a place like Goa which has a reputation for relative safety, can be places rife with harassment and other danger for women.

The gender divide isn't restricted to audience members either. Of the nearly 160 films being shown from the 20th to 25th of November, only 26 are directed by women. Of that number, 5 of these female directors have a male co-director.

One of the defining revolutions of our times has been the recognition and redressal of the historic marginalization of certain voices. The festival line-up boasts an incredible array of linguistic and geographic diversity. One of India's states, Uttarakhand, has been represented for the very first time in this edition with the screening of Rahul Rawat's *Sunpat* (2021) and the first-ever film in the Dimas language of Assam and Nagaland, Aimee Baruah's *Semkhor* (2021), opened the Indian Panorama section.

Yet, there is staggering inequity in the difference between the number of male and female filmmakers included in the line-up. Part of addressing this problem is simply acknowledging it as cold fact. But that can only be the first step.

There is a common bias, seen with great force in literary spaces, favouring creators of old. For obvious reasons, those artists were almost without exception powerful men. Perhaps, we need to strike a better balance between preserving film legacies and opening the door to newer, untested voices.

There are several avenues for a festival hoping to draw in more female viewers such as reaching out to local colleges, offering discounted passes to women and other minorities, screening popular films more than once to provide opportunity and flexibility to women balancing a range of responsibilities, and possibly retaining a hybrid format beyond the existence of the pandemic.

Since there is always a portion of films in the line-up that is meant to attract regular cinema audiences such as popular Bollywood flicks or old iconic Hollywood ones, it may be a worthwhile exercise to conduct a survey of local women cinemagoers to understand what their preferences and concerns are and cater more closely to those.



The Grand Slum

The depiction of the slum in cinema has become more violent in recent times. Contemporary films on slums are more focussed on creating visual feasts and box office successes for the entertainment industry. It has become less about understanding the structural inequities of poverty that give rise to slums.

Akin to defining poverty, there isn't even a universally accepted categorization of what constitutes a slum. Films help shape the popular imagination to clearly mark out the slum as an urban underbelly — an arena of darkness. The cinematic slum is a place of gun slinging, drug dealing, sex work and other urban dark arts. In the real world it is simply a home to the marginalized blue collar workers who are essential to keep the city going.

This was not always the case. Post-war filmmakers inspired by Italian neo-realist cinema tried to demystify the slum for their audiences. Children were frequently used by directors like Luis Buñuel in movies like *Los Olvidados* (1950) to bring home to audiences issues of juvenile delinquency, street crime, and failing reformatories.

Inspired by Buñuel, a new generation of filmmakers like Héctor Babenco in *Pixote: a Lei do Mais Fraco* (1981) and Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay!* (1998) similarly focussed on the child protagonists and the inescapable cycle of structural poverty they were caught in. Through film, these filmmakers reached out to a middle-class audience and politicized the condition of the marginalized. They barely focussed on the built form and the architectural features of slums in their movies.

The liberalisation of the Indian economy in the 1990's saw the disappearance of the slum from cinema screens altogether. The Indian film industry became more intertwined with multiplexes and the commercial returns they could generate. Formula films more focussed on entertainment were a safer bet for the increasingly large investments finding their way into films.

The influence of globalization and the development of multiplexes in Brazil lead to exactly the opposite of what happened in India. Slums, or *favelas* as they are called

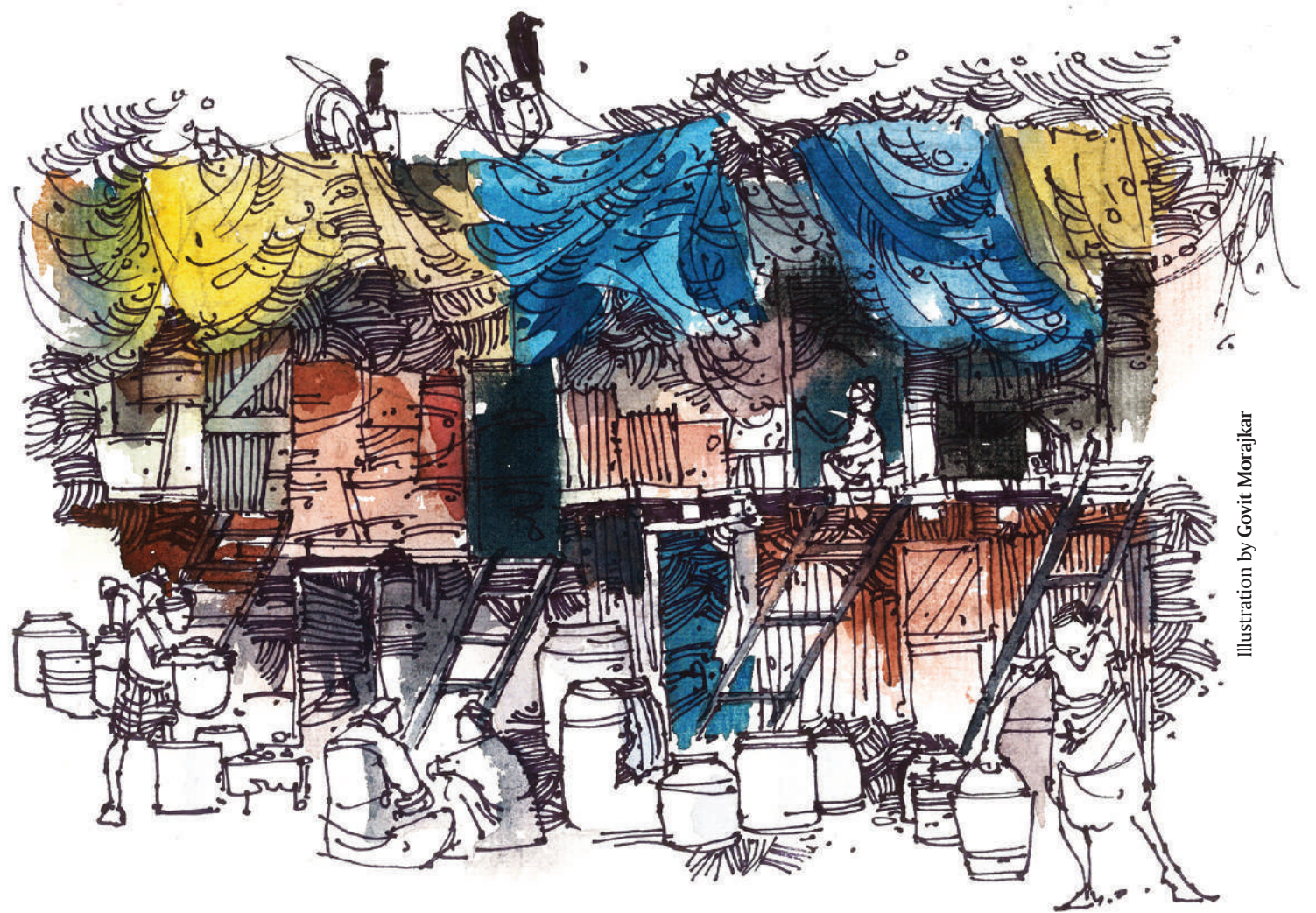


Illustration by Govit Morajkar

in Brazil, could now be leveraged to create stunning box office success not seen in the history of Brazilian cinema before.

The movie that undoubtedly set this trend was *Cidade de Deus* (2002) directed by Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund. If Héctor Babenco used the street kid Peixoto as a means to make a statement about the deprivations that society can heap on its street children, *Cidade de Deus* does them no such favour. In one of the most intense scenes in recent cinematic history, street kids are shown engaging in extreme and mindless violence on each other. The entire movie is a mix between a thriller and a gangster

film and is far removed from the earlier world of Italian neo-realism that influenced previous Latin American filmmakers and their engagement with the slum. It was a smashing global box office success and the new cinematic slum was born.

This was followed by other wildly successful movies like *Tropa de Elite* (2007) which were even more violent in character. This is a classic Hollywood cops and robbers flick that looks at the world in black and white. Heroic Special Forces Captain Nascimento, played by Wagner Moura, enters the *favelas* and wipes out drug dealers and gangsters. No prizes for guessing on whose

side the audience is meant to be cheering.

The slum may have gone extinct on Indian multiplex screens but it made a brief return to them in the form of *Slumdog Millionaire* (1998). It is more an orientalized intersection of Bollywood, filth, violence, and eastern social deprivation than a fair depiction of a Mumbai slum. It too used the bodies of children on its way to becoming a global box office success.

The contemporary slum film is more voyeurism and entertainment than serious introspection on urban and social inequalities. As a modern tool of urban cartography, it is failing badly.

SHORT TAKES



I feel like the film selection isn't up to the mark. They should inform us about changes and delays in advance and make better arrangements for transport.

Rani Bemenon
Scientist, Mysore



I think *Lamb* is a terrific film. I enjoyed the surrealism. Overall, the movie selection was not very good, especially in the Indian Panorama section.

Pradhu P.
Film Student,
Kerala



This is an amazing festival for film professionals. Whether you're a newcomer or an experienced person for the industry, you get the best exposure here.

Shruti Pattnayak
P.R Manager,
Orissa



It doesn't feel like a festival. I can't see anybody's face because of the masks and the pandemic. It just seems like a strange business event unlike the previous years.

Jayn Mangad
Filmmaker, Kerala

An Unreliable Narrator



Illustration by Chloe Cordeiro

Memento (2000) is a psychological mystery thriller directed by Christopher Nolan. It is about a character who suffers from extreme short-term memory loss, a condition termed as anterograde amnesia. The film follows the protagonist as he tracks down the people who attacked him and killed his wife. The fascinating aspect of the story is the way the hero constructs a method to remind himself of his past, through Polaroid photographs and information placed in tattoos. With a memory span of just 15 minutes or so, the challenge to the character is palpable. The film inspired two Indian films – Murugadoss's Tamil film *Ghajini* (2005) and an Aamir Khan Bollywood blockbuster of the same name *Ghajini* (2008). Stories of this nature make one conscious of the complexity, power, and beauty of Memory – it is something we cannot live without, and yet memory is unreliable and ephemeral too; it is constantly morphing, dependent on the external and internal experiences of an individual.

Working on the archival photography project *Goa Familia* (with Akshay Mahajan, for Serendipity Arts Foundation) over the past three years has forced me to consider the nature of memory and the role it plays in the documentation of alternative and oral histories. The project has been about gathering family histories viewed through the lens of photography. These are personal and community accounts that underlie dominant, conventional records of the past, and therefore present a range of otherwise hidden perspectives. Family lives interpret and reflect social, political, economic, religious, and cultural influences, and much of this is visible in private albums.

We had the opportunity to interview diverse Goan families, with members ranging from nonagenarians to teenagers. From generation to generation, often a single family member becomes the holder of the archive, and it is their task to care for it. Sometimes the lack of an interested family member means the loss of the archives, thrown away or neglected. There is always a 'memory keeper' who is key to handing over ancestral memory and stories to future generations, and their passing leaves a void for

a time, until someone else takes on the mantle. The nature of memory is such that four persons recollecting the same event may retell it in completely different perspectives. A photograph can bring an element of validation or proof, to substantiate a memory – but it is also true that photographs can be staged, with finely directed configurations of objects and persons that articulate something other than fact.

Photography and film have been central in channelling and preserving memory for over 150 years, enriching and augmenting our knowledge of people, places, and events. As mediums, they have the power to transcend time and space, they also alter and complicate known hierarchies of social interaction by *making visible*: the presences and absences, and inclusions and exclusions of community life. We are forced to contend with fluctuating meanings of permanence and physicality as related to the fragile nature of paper and negative – and contrast these with the experiences of today's *swipe-click-swipe* identity making, instantaneous memories, easy deletion, and act of deliberate forgetting in the virtual era.

On one occasion, we interviewed someone with mild dementia – she was extremely confused with happenings of recent years, and yet viewing old family photos yielded a steady flow of accurate recollections of people and places, of times from her childhood and youth. Dementia was central to the plotline of *Remember* (2015) a drama-thriller directed by Atom Egoyan and written by Benjamin August, with a strong cast of Christopher Plummer, Bruno Ganz, and Jürgen Prochnow in the lead. Plummer plays a widower struggling with memory loss, and the film follows his experiences as he embarks on a cross-country journey with help from a fellow Holocaust survivor, to find the former Nazi responsible for the deaths of their family members. Such is the dubious quality of memory that it makes him oblivious to his own past reality, with unexpected consequences.

Films and photographs can act as catalysts for memory, nostalgia, and longing. Memories in turn can distort reality; meanings are constantly changing through diverse acts of remembering and forgetting. But then, isn't the concept of 'reality' in itself perpetually debatable?

SHORT TAKES



Our film *Manikbabur Megh* is being screened at IFFI, and audiences have loved it. There should have been more interviews and photographs at our red carpet.

Monalisa Mukherji
Producer, Mumbai



It's been a wonderful opportunity to watch unique films like *1000 Dreams* which is a low budget film in black and white, with a great concept.

Avindhya S.
Filmmaker, Belgaum



I've learned a lot from the Masterclasses. I watched *21st Tiffin* and enjoyed the simplicity of it. I think everyone should watch it.

Khushi Garg
Theatre Actor, Faridabad



One of my older films *Joymoti* is being screened here. I've seen three Indian Panorama films. They're all in different genres but they tell great stories about the North East.

Manju Borah
Filmmaker, Assam



Silence of the Clams

Around the World in 24 Frames

BY URVASI BAHUGUNA

Andrei Konchalovsky's *The Postman's White Nights* (2014) takes the audience to the remote Archangelsk region of Northern Russia along the shore of the enormous Lake Kenozero. Most of us will never stand on that land looking out at that water that laps over 70 islands. Nor can I imagine making the 700 kilometre trek from Guwahati to the Assamese village of Ketetong where Manju Baruah's *Joymoti* (2006) was shot.

I have never been to the tiny island in the Gulf of Finland where Tove Jansson spent her summers growing up. But I feel like I have because I have read *The Summer Book* (1972). I haven't been to Karachi, Pakistan either, but the novels of Kamila Shamsie have taken me there. Living between Goa and New Delhi, a lot of my time was spent in this sort of travel by imagination.

I got to my destinations on the backs of artists who knew those places intimately, the specific visuals cobbled together in

my mind through the lens and limitations of my own experiences and prejudices. I kept reading because I craved the feeling of transportation, the reprieve of change.

When a national lockdown was announced in India in March 2020, I was in Delhi. I started watching a show called *The Expanse* (2015-the present), based on a book series by James S. A. Corey. The sci-fi show was set in a far-off future where Earth had successfully colonised the solar system, setting up human colonies on Mars, along the asteroid belt and on the moons of Saturn and Jupiter.

I was not prepared for the stillness, patience and faith that lockdown demanded of us as stakeholders who now had to depend on the caution of one another. I was not well-equipped to stay put indoors, trying to comprehend border closures, restricted

movement and limited rations for the first time in my life.

Responsible for other people and worried for my family and friends, like many people, I struggled to come to terms with a global pandemic no one understood. The fear was all-consuming. So, I watched *The Expanse* in lieu of thinking and feeling.

What I enjoy about movies and television set in space is how honest they are. No one is pretending to not be awed. No one is pretending that it is not a miracle they're there and able to see what they're seeing.

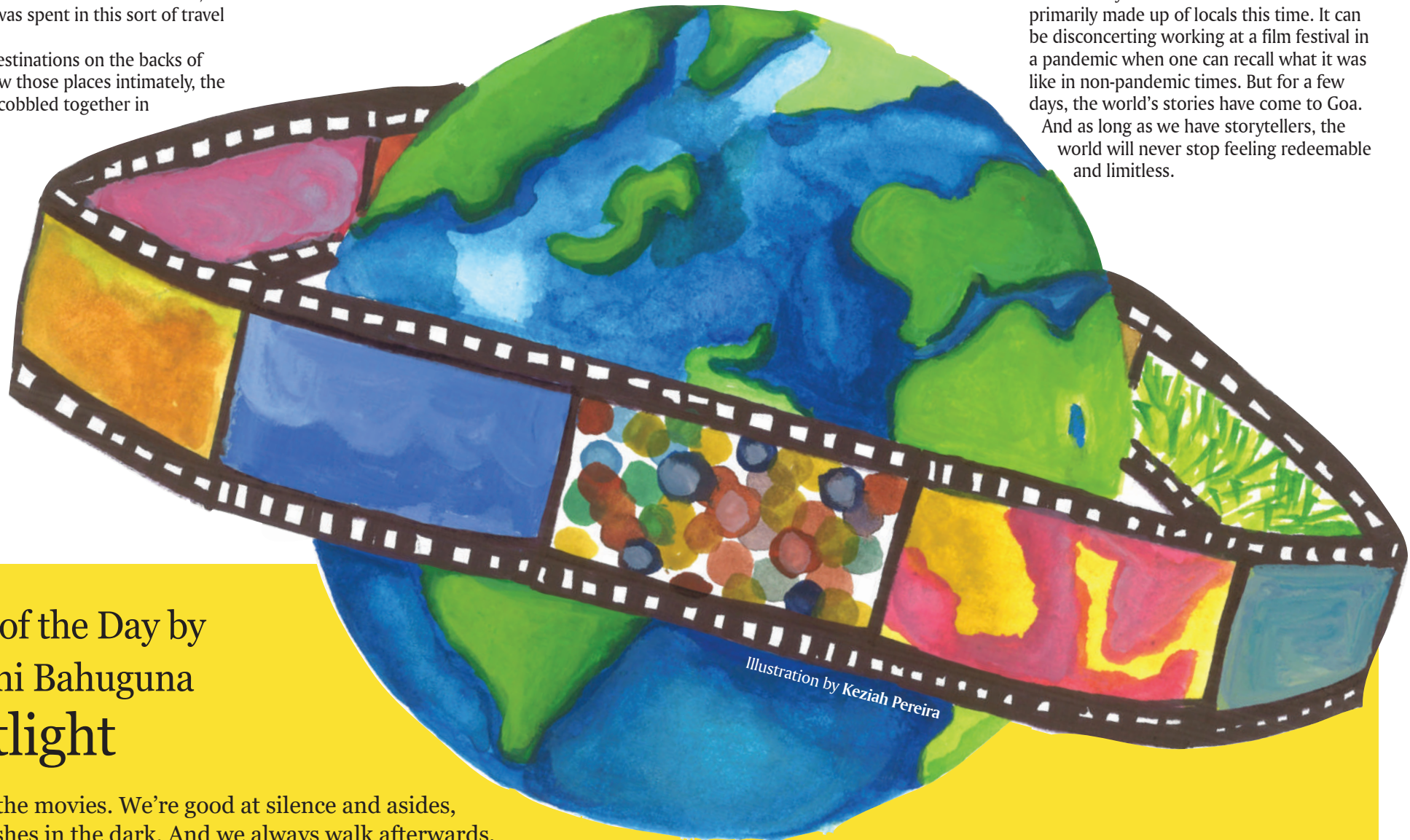
We breach outer space in fiction and suddenly, life is a spiritual mystery that will humble the worst of us. In that genre, *The Expanse* is a bit of a gritty outlier because the world has shrunk and we have remade remote corners of it in our image.

It was exactly right for that terrifying summer. I escaped, but it wasn't to idyllic shores. I left, but I carried my essential nature with me. I can still conjure the exact feeling of clicking on "Play Next Episode." I wasn't going anywhere, but the show allowed me to come along for its ride.

At this year's festival, there are films from a whopping 73 countries being shown. Georgia. Malta. Tunisia. Kyrgyzstan. The Dominican Republic. We've lost something of ourselves in these last two years – hope, fortitude, certainty. There have been moments of such profound insularity that the stakes of the world have shrunk down to the people we love the best or are most bound to.

Because of the pandemic, we have fewer international and out-of-state guests than we normally do. Even *The Peacock* team is primarily made up of locals this time. It can be disconcerting working at a film festival in a pandemic when one can recall what it was like in non-pandemic times. But for a few days, the world's stories have come to Goa.

And as long as we have storytellers, the world will never stop feeling redeemable and limitless.



Poem of the Day by Urvashi Bahuguna Spotlight

We go to the movies. We're good at silence and asides,
hand brushes in the dark. And we always walk afterwards,
going to movies that wind up at night. The city's less grimy
by streetlight. So, you forget your allergies and we speak to fill
the time. And I remember to show you a remarkably good
photograph of us and say, a little afraid, *here's looking at you, kid*.
You don't get the reference. Suddenly, we're up. Moment's ours.



When Pomegranates Howl
INOX Panjim, Audi 1, 1.15 pm
Afghanistan, Australia
Dir: Granaz Moussavi
80 min



Memoria
INOX Panjim, Audi 1, 10.30 pm
Colombia, Thailand, UK, Mexico, France
Dir: Apichatpong Weerasethakul
136 min



Feathers
INOX Panjim, Audi 1, 10.15 am
Dir: Omar El Zohairy
Egypt, France, Netherlands, Greece
112 min



Brighton 4th
INOX Porvorim, Audi 2, 8.00 pm
Georgia, Russia, Bulgaria, USA, Monaco
Dir: Levan Koguashvili
95 min

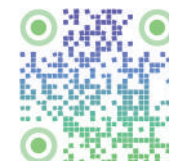


52nd INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA GOA 2021 25th November 2021														
INOX Panjim (AUDI 1)	E11	10:15	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E12	13:15	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E13	15:45	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E14	19:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E15	22:30
	Feathers (FK) Dir: Omar El Zohairy France, Egypt, Netherlands, Greece Arabic 112 min. 2021	When Pomegranates Howl (ICFT) Dir : Granaz Moussavi Australia Afghanistan Pashtu, Persian, English 80 min. 2020		Magoado (DD) Dir: Ruben Sainz Spain, Brazil Spanish, Portuguese 76 min. 2021 (WPr)	Chhorii Dir: Vishal Furia India Hindi 130 min. 2021		Memoria (MoC) Dir: Apichatpong Weerasethakul Colombia, Thailand, UK, Mexico, France English, Spanish 136 min. 2021 (IP)							
INOX Panjim (AUDI 2)	E21	10:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E22	13:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E23	17:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E24				20:00
	BHARAT, PRAKRITI KA BALAK (IP- NF) Dir: Dr. Deepika Kothari & Ramji Om Hindi 64 min KOOZHANGAL (IP-F) (ICFT Comp) Dir: Vinodraj P S Tamil 76 min	BHAGAVADAJJUKAM (IP-F) Dir: Yadu Vijayakrishnan Sanskrit 78 min		NEELI HAKKI (IP-F) Dir: Ganesh Hegde Kannada 109 min	PABUNG SYAM (IP- NF) Dir: Haobam Paban Kumar Manipuri 52 min BACKSTAGE (IP- NF) Dir: Lipika Singh Darai Oriya 85 min									
INOX Panjim (AUDI 3)	E31	10:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E32	12:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E33	15:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E34	17:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E35	20:30
	Introduction (SpIS) Dir: Hong Sangsoo South Korea Korean 66 min. 2021 (IP)	The Giants (WP) Dir: Bonifacio Angius Italy Italian 80 min. 2021 (AP)		Saving One Who Was Dead (IC) Dir: Václav Kadrnka Czech Republic, Slovakia, France Czech 90 min. 2021 (AP)	D'Costa House (Feature Film - Goan Section) Dir: Jitendra Shikerkar India Konkani 134 min		The Night Belongs To Lovers (La nuit aux amants) (WP) Dir: Julien Hilmoiné France French 88 min. 2021 (AP)							
INOX Panjim (AUDI 4)	E41	10:45	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E42	13:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E43	17:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E44	19:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E45	22:00
	The Red Tree (El Árbol Rojo) (WP) Dir: Joan Gómez Endara Colombia, Panama, France Spanish, Colombian 93 min 2021 (AP)	Commitment Hasan (Baglilik Hasan) (ICFT) Dir : Semih Kaplanoglu Turkey Turkish 147 min 2021		Charlotte (IC) Dir: Simon Franco Paraguay Spanish & Guarani 79 min. 2021 (AP)	The Guest (WP) Dir: Ana Mancera Spain Spanish 2021 78 min. (IntP)		Dark Matter (WP) Dir: Iman Tahsin Andorra Turkish 90 min 2021 (WPr)							
MAQUINEZ PALACE 1	E51	12:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E52	16:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E53	18:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E54				19:45
	Vaastupurush (HM) Dir: Sumitra Bhav Marathi 154 min. 2002 (Homage of Sumitra Bhav)	Sab John Edathattil Masterclass on Scriptwriting 90 min.		In-conversation session with Chhorii Team Manish Menghani, Vikram Malhotra, Jack Davis, Vishal Furia and Nushrratt Bharuccha 45 min. 2021	Inkaar (HM) Dir: Raj N Sippy Marathi 135 min. 1977 (Homage to Waman Bhonsle)									
INOX Porvorim (AUDI 1)	E61	11:15	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E62	14:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E63	17:00	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E64				19:45
	Whether the Weather is Fine (SoA) Dir: Carlo Francisco Manatad Philippines, France, Singapore, Indonesia, Germany, Qatar Waray- Waray 104 min. 2021 (IP)	The Restless (WP) Dir: Joachim Lafosse France, Belgium, Luxembourg French 117min 2021 (IP)		The Champion of Auschwitz (Mistrz) (Sprt) Dir: Maciej Barczewski Poland German, Polish 101 min. 2021 (IP)	Miss Osaka (WP) Dir: Daniel Dencik Denmark, Norway, Japan English, Japanese, Danish 90 min. 2021 (AP)									
INOX 2 Porvorim (AUDI 2)	E71	11:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E72	14:30	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E73	17:15	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E74				20:00
	Doctor Liza (BRICS) Dir: Oksana Karas Russia Russian 120 min. 2020	Atlantide (WP) Dir: Yuri Ancarani Italy, France, US, Qatar Italian 100 min 2021 (IP)		Private Desert (WP) Dir: Aly Muritiba Brazil, Portugal Portuguese 120 min. 2021 (IP)	Brighton 4th (WP) Dir: Levan Koguashvili Georgia, Russia, Bulgaria, United States, Monaco Georgian 95 min. 2021 (IP)									
INOX 3 Porvorim (AUDI 3)	E81	11:45	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E82	14:15	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E83	16:45	B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E84				19:30
	Xuan Zang (CF) Dir: Jiangli Huo China & India Chinese & Sanskrit 90 min. 2016	Sons of the Sea (BRICS) Dir: John Gutierrez South Africa English, Afrikaans 82 min. 2021		The Great Wall (CF) Dir: Yimou Zhang United States, China, Hong Kong, Australia & Canada English, Mandarin & Spanish 104 min. 2016	The Whaler Boy (Kitoboy) (CF) Dir: Philipp Yuryev Russia, Poland, Belgium Russian, English 93 min. 2020									
INOX 4 Porvorim (AUDI 4)	E91	12:00				B R E A K F O R S A N I T I Z I N G	E92	14:45						
	Chidambaram (India@75) Dir: G. Aravindan Malayalam 103 min. 1985	Airlift (India@75) Dir: Raja Krishna Menon Hindi 125 min. 2016												



Today's
cover
artwork
by Bhisaji
Gadekar
juxtaposes
a hardy
Peacock
against the
traditional
Kunbi sari.

These instantly familiar and ubiquitous red
grid patterns adorn the saris worn by the
women as well as the kashti (loincloth)
and head coverings worn by the men of
this age-old community of Goa.



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