
7th CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY AND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL 2019

6 – 10 February 2019
Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Chennai



Jointly organised by

Marupakkam and Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan, Chennai

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7th CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY AND SHORT FILM FESTIVAL 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Festival Director

R.P. Amudhan

Festival Co-ordinator

Geetha Vedaraman, Goethe-Institut, Chennai

Indian Films curated by R.P. Amudhan

TWO FLAGS

Dir.: Pankaj Rishikumar | 86 min.

'Two Flags' chronicles the life and politics of a quaint French town: Pondicherry (South India). As the 46000 Tamil French people belonging to the Tamil ethnic community, gear up for the French Presidential elections (2017) the film explores the idea of identity, citizenship and home in the post-colonial era. Shot between 2012 to 2017, the film is a visual journey through the town, its homes and its people.

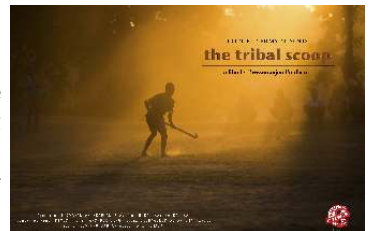


'Two Flags' is a chronicle of a legacy that is not easily evident, but manages to shine through ordinary events and occasional mishaps and which brings together this tiny population in celebration, in grief, in anxiety and in serene acceptance.

THE TRIBAL SCOOP

Dir.: Beeswaranjan Pradhan | 53 min.

A small town of Sundergarh lying in the interiors of the state of Odisha has never been touched by modern civilisation, but is paying for it with the blood of the tribal people living there. A people so backward that they still depend on forests for survival.



And even those forests are fast being uprooted to make way for urban life. In the midst of this cockpit of destruction there's one hope that they are desperately clinging on to Hockey. The game that was once the only form of entertainment for a people cut off from the rest of the world has now become a weapon with which Sundergarh is trying to claim its place in a world that never recognized it.

WE HAVE NOT COME HERE TO DIE

Dir.: Deepa Dhanraj | 110 min.

On 17th January, 2016 a Dalit, PhD research scholar and activist Rohith Vemula unable to bear the persecution from a partisan University administration and dominant caste Hindu supremacists hung himself in one of the most prestigious universities in India.



His suicide note, which argued against the 'value of a man being reduced to his immediate identity' galvanised student politics in India. Over the last year thousands of students all over the country have broken the silence around their experiences of caste discrimination in Universities and have started a powerful anti-caste movement. The film attempts to track this historic movement that is changing the conversation on caste in India.

THE DEATH OF US

Dir.: Vani Subramanian | 76 min.

The debates on the death penalty today are marked by a cacophony of strident assertions. Going against this tide is 'The Death of Us' - a quiet contemplation on a range of cases in which the death penalty was pronounced, ending in execution, commutation to life sentence, acquittal or even pardon.



Speaking only to those who have been on death row or those very closely involved with the cases, we engage in complex conversations on crime and punishment, revenge and justice, popular rhetoric and personal experiences. Only to find ourselves confronting larger ethical and moral questions across time and space.

KOOTHU

Dir.: Sandhya Kumar | 52 min.

In many villages in Tamil Nadu, a theatre tradition still links people with a past. Closely connected with religion and caste rituals, koothu brings to life stories about gods, demigods, kings and demons from the Indian epics.



A typical koothu performance is an all night show in which performers wear elaborate make-up, costumes and wooden ornaments and simultaneously sing, dance and act on stage.

THE COLOR OF MY HOME

Dir.: Sanjay Barnala & Farah Naqvi | 48 min.

What happens to people when they are violently displaced? Forced out of their home and ancestral village, buffeted by winds of hate, running for their lives, scattered like human debris in relief camps. Never able to return. How do they rebuild new homes and new lives, with hearts unable to leave the old one behind?



THE SLAVE GENESIS

Dir.: Aneez K Mappilla | 64 min.

The documentary 'The Slave Genesis' deals with the social transformation of Paniya tribals, who belong to South India's hill district of Wayanad. 'Paniya' literally translates to 'worker'.



REASON

Dir.: Anand Patwardhan | 240 min.

Reason takes us to a macrocosm – India, the world's largest democracy. Its eight chapters are a chilling account of how murder and mind control are being applied to systematically dismantle secular democracy in a country which once aspired not just to Liberty, Egalite and Fraternity, but to lead the post-war world out of its mindless spiral of violence and greed.



THERE IS NO MOON

Dir.: Ajay TG | 26 min.

This film bears witness to the gross neglect of environmental and human rights by the so-called 'development' sponsored by the State in Chhattisgarh, India.



THOSE STARS IN THE SKY

Dir.: Debaranjan | 58 min.

When people die, they become stars is a common belief. This film promulgates such belief in view of those killed by the State forces like in police firing, fake encounter, in custody and by the private armies of the corporations. Killing of common people and the rise of corporations have been a reality since economic reforms in India.

SQUEEZE LIME IN YOUR EYE

Dir.: Avijit Mukul Kishore | 57 min.

Kausik Mukhopadhyay's art objects lie on the peculiar intersection of toy, machine and organism. Made out of discarded household gadgets, they have distinct personalities and quirks. They are noisy, humorous and sometimes break down. They invite the viewer to engage and complete the narratives embedded within them. These narratives contain signifiers of political, personal and art history. There is much beauty and poignancy in Mukhopadhyay's fragile art works. This film takes an intimate look at Mukhopadhyay's journey as an artist and teacher.



CORAL WOMAN

Dir.: Priya Thuvassery | 52 min.

This will be a filmmaker's journey with Uma, a certified scuba diver, exploring the underwater world & the threat to coral reefs of Gulf of Mannar, India. Born in a traditional family in Tamil Nadu 53 years old Uma, a homemaker, has been trying to bring attention to this alarming environmental issue through her paintings. It is, in fact, these corals that inspired Uma to learn how to swim, dive & paint in her 50s.



SANTHANA GOPALA

Dir.: Sandeep Ravindranath | 8 min.

A woman trapped in the dutiful bondage of an Indian arranged marriage grapples with the stigma of childlessness. Her faith is her only pillar of strength as an oppressive social order strives to create a servile and dehumanized other, whose subjugation is then ensured.



TIN SATYI

Dir.: Debalina | 51 min.

Tin Satyi...(In Fact...) captures the essence of three different life-stories that are defying the hetero-patriarchal norms of society at every breath. Aimed at understanding philosophies of non-conforming desires, the film also depicts ripples created by these lives in the society.



THADAYAM

Dir.: Dhamayanthi | 55 min.

Thadayam is a one hour meeting between two lovers after many years. Jeny is a divorcee and a cancer survivor who had been in love with Deva. Due to circumstances they couldn't get united in marriage. Deva who is married to another woman comes to meet Jeny who is in death bed because of her illness.



In the midst of reminiscences, complaining about each other for whatever had happened, there are still expressions of love and charm as they cry, smile and hug.



International Films curated by R.P. Amudhan

NIMBLE FINGERS

Dir.: Parsifal Reparato | 52 min. | Vietnam / Italy

The film brings out the living and working conditions of migrant women from the rural districts of Vietnam, in Hanoi working at one of the biggest industrial production sites in the world, through their eyes, dreams and fear and also by their drawings that become animations.



SECOND INCOME

Dir.: Gal Kedem | 54 min. | Israel

M, a 40-year-old divorcee and a mother of a 9-year-old girl, works by day as a sales manager while at night she chooses to supplement her income through sexual encounters with men in order to make it through the month.



We accompany her for a year as she ponders about her life and face an important decision. At a time when women's rights in general and sexual harassment, in particular, are on the international agenda every week, this film is more relevant than ever.

BAKUROV

Dir.: Yuliya Kiselyova | 55 min. | Russia

He went through the war from Leningrad to Germany. He was awarded two medals of valor and the Order of the Patriotic War of the 2nd Class. Vladimir lives in a small village of the Irkutsk region. Sometimes he goes to the city to his son, grandson and great-grandchildren by the train. But sometimes there are the moments of silence to sit and remember all the living and the dead. And the more silence, the more the memories, the ghosts of war.



MADMAN'S CONSPIRACY

Dir.: Algis Arlauskas | 50 min. | Spain

He wants to build a theatre with his own hands using no machine in a far-away village in Spain. His family, friends and well-wishers believe him. He achieves it finally and has a grant inauguration too.



HUMANS ON DISPLAY

Dir.: Lam Can-Zhao | 59 min. | China

There are many animals in the zoo, most of them are human. This documentary pointing camera at humans in the zoo, tries to re-examine the relationship between human and other animals from a new perspective.



GERMAN DOCUMENTARY FILMS RETROSPECTIVE: WERNER HERZOG



Werner Herzog was born in Munich in 1942. He grew up in a remote mountain village in Bavaria and studied History and German Literature in Munich and Pittsburgh. He made his first film in 1961 at the age of 19. Since then he has produced, written and directed more than sixty feature and documentary films. Werner Herzog has published more than a dozen books of prose and directed as many operas. Werner Herzog lives in Munich and Los Angeles.

DAS LAND DES SCHWEIGENS UND DER DUNKELHEIT (Land of silence and darkness) Colour | 85 min. | 1971

The Land of Silence and Darkness tells about the destiny of blind-deaf people, who – due to their lack of perceptive faculty – seem to be almost unable to interact with their surroundings in a creative way. The movie helps us to



understand the dramatic situation of these people, who are locked in their darkness but still struggle to build up a connection between their existence and the outer world.

The documentary focusses on the daily life of blind-deaf 56-years-old Fini Straubinger but also covers the stories of other blind-deaf people that Fini gets to meet in an unpretentious, moving way.

FLUCHT AUS LAOS (Little Dieter needs to fly) Colour | 81 min. | 1997

Driven by his wish to become a pilot in the U.S., 18-years-old Dieter Dengler leaves his hometown in the German Schwarzwald. After joining the Air Force, he starts a career as a fighter pilot at the US-Navy. When his airplane gets shot during a mission in the Vietnam War, Dengler is held captive. Only under great difficulties he manages to escape to Thailand and back to his unit.



Werner Herzog meets the former fighter pilot in his new domicile in San Francisco. Together they visit his old home in the Schwarzwald and travel to Far East, where Herzog asks Dengler to reenact stations of his escape. A follow up tells about Dieter Dengler's funeral on a soldier cemetery in Arlington in 2001.

GLAUBE UND WÄHRUNG (God's Angry Man)
Colour | 44 min. | 1980

God's Angry Man (Literal translation of the German title: 'Faith and Currency') is a documentary about the U.S.-American television preacher Dr. Gene Scott. Almost every day Scott talks about his ideas of Christianity on T.V. In the first place they are about gaining enormous amounts of financial donations. Therefore, according to Scott great income signifies a religions triumph.



Werner Herzog accompanies the controversial Dr. Scott who has been accused of tax evasion, fraudulent conversion, defamation and blackmailing several times. The director abstains from personal judgment on Scott: The statements of Scott and interviews with his family serve the viewer to form his or her own opinion.

RAD DER ZEIT (Wheel of Time)
Colour | 80 min. | 2002-03

Werner Herzog observes Buddhist ceremonies and rituals in three places: At Bodh Gaya (India), Mount Kailash (Tibet) and Graz (Austria) and specifically focusses on the Kalachakra-Initiation, held by the Dalai Lama. The documentary shows the first film record of secret Buddhist rituals ever and covers footage of a pilgrimage to Holy Mount Kailash in Tibet as well as exclusive interviews with the Dalai Lama.



THE WILD BLUE YONDER
Colour | 81 min. | 2005

An alien reports about his escape from a solidified planet in a far galaxy. He tells about his attempts to settle on earth and finally discloses his secret knowledge on how to travel in the opposite direction. Seeking for new living space five astronauts travel to space and explore the abandoned planet, the 'The Wild Blue Yonder'. When they return home after 820 years they find the World being deserted.



Retrospective: Indian Films

by Reena Mohan



Reena Mohan is an award winning independent documentary filmmaker and editor who has worked out of India, Dubai, Kathmandu and London. She has received several awards for her work including 3 *Rajat Kamals* (National Awards) as producer, director and editor.

She graduated from the *Film & Television Institute of India*, Pune, in 1982, with a specialization in editing and since then has edited several features, television serials and over 50 documentaries for leading producers and directors.

She produced and directed her first award-winning documentary *Kamlabai* in 1991. This was followed by more than 10 documentaries that have received widespread recognition including *Skin Deep* (1998), *On An Express Highway* (2003), *Kill Or Cure* (2005).

She has published a paper in *Deep Focus* magazine titled *Of Wayward Girls and Wicked Women* on the contributions of pioneering women to early cinema. She has also written articles on documentary film making in Afghanistan and Bhutan for leading newspapers and journals (*The Hindu*, *Himal*, *Hardnews*).

She has conducted workshops on documentary practice for over three decades in leading educational institutes in India (FTII, SRFTI, NID to name a few) and was also the course coordinator at SAE, Dubai.

She has served as jury member of several prestigious international film festivals in India and abroad.

As a curator, she has been associated with major documentary festivals in India – Mumbai International Festival for Documentary, Short & Animation Films (MIFF), International Documentary & Short Film Festival Kerala (IDSFFK) and IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival (Delhi). She has also been Co-Director of the IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival, New Delhi, from 2010-2012.

She was the Managing Trustee of the India Chapter of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) from 2012-2015.

Awards: Best Editing, Indian Documentary Producers Association, 1988. Best First Film as a Director, Bombay International Festival for Documentary, Short & Animation Films (BIFF), 1992. National Awards (Producer & Director), Best Debut Non-Feature Film, 1992. National Award, Best Non-Feature Film Editor, 1998.

FILMS

KAMLABAI

Dir.: Reena Mohan | 47 min. | 1991

Kamlabai Gokhale was one of the earliest theatre actresses of India. She and her mother are also credited as being the first ladies of Indian cinema having acted together in Dadasaheb Phalke's *Mohini Bhasmasur* in 1913.



Eighty eight years old when the crew starts filming with her, she lives by herself in a flat – an invalid confined to her bed. But her personality beams forth power especially when she recalls her early life and career on the stage in which she frequently played male roles.

Interviews with her form the cornerstone of the film. Past mingles with present as photographs, dramatic re-enactment and period music evoke the near forgotten years at the dawn of the 20th century. However, the film is not purely nostalgic. It gives an impression of the history and the changes, particularly the history of Indian film and theatre as it was experienced by a woman who struggled against the social structures of her times.

TALES FROM PLANET KOLKATA

Dir.: Ruchir Joshi | 38 min. | 1993 | edited by Reena Mohan

Part fiction, part spoof, part essay, part documentary, the film weaves together disparate strands: a critique of Western media's construction, from the 1960s to the 1990s, of Calcutta as 'the black hole' and 'the worst place in the world'; an elegy to Deepak Majumdar, one of Calcutta's great intellectual mavericks, a teacher and friend to Joshi and many others, who died while the film was being made; and the images and song of a *patua* – a traditional Bengali scroll-painter.



Starting with a variation on the opening of *Apocalypse Now*, moving through the performance-interpretations of the scroll-painter, the film-maker himself and an Afro-American video-artist from New York, the film asks questions about one's sense of place and belonging, about the links between memory and image, and about the permanence and transience of this thing we call 'culture'.

While referring to the reconstruction of Calcutta in the Hollywood production of *City of Joy*, (the film based on Dominique Lapierre's bestseller) or weaving a fantasy about getting Jack Nicholson to act as Majumdar in a film on the latter's life, the film asks: can 'the worst place in World' be anywhere else but in your eyes and your heart?

SKIN DEEP

Dir.: Reena Mohan | 86 min. | 1998

Six first person narratives comprise the basic structure of the film which is an exploration of body image and self-identity among contemporary middle class women in urban India. The feelings of being too tall, too short, too thin, too fat, too dark, too old that women experience and attempt to come to terms with.



ON AN EXPRESS HIGHWAY

Dir.: Reena Mohan | 30 min. | 2003

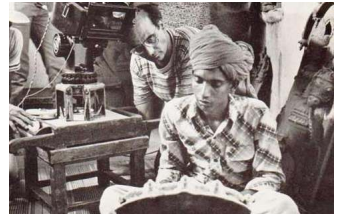
The film traces the journey of a woman who gave up the material world for the austere life of a Jain Sadhvi.



MATI MANAS

Dir.: Mani Kaul | 92 min. | 1985
edited by Reena Mohan

Director Mani Kaul poetically observes the ancient art of pottery and its deep cultural significance.



IN THE FOREST HANGS A BRIDGE

Dir.: Sanjay Kak | 39 min. | 1999
edited by Reena Mohan

This is a film about an intense period of community life.



VELVET REVOLUTION

Dir: Nupur Basu | 57 min. | 2017
edited by Reena Mohan & Nirmal Chander Dhandriyal

In this exciting collaborative film – Velvet Revolution - six women directors take their lens up-close to Women Making News. In a world riven with conflict and dictatorial regimes where journalists are constantly under threat of both, state and non- state actors, what drives these women journalists to do their jobs?



Contemporary German Films

curated and presented by Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Chennai

HAPPY

Dir.: Carolin Genreith | Colour | 85 min. | 2017

Since separating from his wife, Dieter Genreith has escaped his loneliness once a year by going from the Eifel to Thailand. There, he got to know Tukta, who is about the same age as his own daughter, Carolin. Carolin has serious problems with the relationship: What differentiates her over-60-year-old father from the countless German sex tourists? In an attempt to understand her father, his longings and his fears, she has made a very personal documentary in which both sides are open, honest and tolerant enough to learn from each other. In Thailand, Carolin ends up as her father's maid of honor – whether the marriage can survive all the existing differences and preconditions remains to be seen.



MEIN WUNDERBARES WEST-BERLIN

(My wonderful West Berlin)

Dir.: Jochen Hick, colour and b/w | 98 min. | 2016/17

Germany's infamous Paragraph 175, which had made sexual acts between men a criminal offence since 1872, was only officially repealed in 1994. However, since the 1960s - with West Berlin being the only place where men could at least dance with other men - there had been public locales there, which became a refuge for young gay men from the Federal Republic. Using hitherto unpublished and often provocative archive material and with support from many contemporary witnesses, Jochen Hick in this documentary film is researching the historical development of the gay scene from its antecedents until today.



FRIEDLAND

Dir.: Frauke Sandig | Colour | 85 min. | 2015

Friedland is an idyllic town in Lower Saxony. Its claim to fame goes back to 1945, when the British military occupation administration established a camp for internally displaced persons and war returnees here. It has welcomed people ever since, from Hungary, Chile, Vietnam and the former east German GDR. Today it is a reception camp for asylum seekers mainly from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan. Documentarist Frauke Sandig lets former German inmates narrate their experiences of fleeing and of life in the immediate post-war era and she confronts their memories with the experiences of today's refugees. The result is a moving document of hardship, hope and humanity.



GEHEIMSACHE GHETTOFILM (A film unfinished)

Dir.: Yael Hersonski | colour and b/w | 89 min. | 2010

Secretly filmed extracts from the Warsaw ghettos are critically revisited by witnesses from the era.

During the month of May in 1942, a few weeks before deportations to the extermination camp Treblinka began, secret films were ordered to be shot in the ghettos of Warsaw, on the orders of the SS. The barely touched original footage survived the war, to then emerge from the film archives of the GDR. Up to now, the material has provided detailed insight into the everyday life of the ghettos. The images show the gatherings of the Jewish security services set up by the SS, the work of the Jewish Ghetto Police, the kosher butchering of a hen, death on the streets and burials in mass graves. The filmmaker Yael Hersonski, granddaughter of a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto, sets the 60-minute long, silent, black and white images in the context of comments from witnesses of the era.



DENK ICH AN DEUTSCHLAND IN DER NACHT

(If I think of Germany at night)

Dir.: Romuald Karmakar | colour | 105 min. | 2015-17

Impressions and reflections of a music scene that is probably only truly familiar to insiders, but which nevertheless enjoys international regard: German techno music. Karmakar observes and interviews five prominent DJs: Ricardo Villalobos, Sonja Moonear, Ata, Roman Flügel and David Moufang. The focus is on the fluid evolution of former 'disc jockeys' into sovereign, experimental musicians whose activities keep them moving between seemingly makeshift studios full of barely recognisable electronic equipment and glamorous gigs at diverse clubs.



Filmmaker in Focus: Supriyo Sen

A *Berlinale Talent* (2007, 2008, 2009) and winner of *Berlin Today Award* and *German short film award* (2009) for his short documentary 'Wagah'.



Supriyo Sen is one of the well-known documentary filmmakers from India. He has produced and directed feature and short documentaries like *Wait Until Death*, *The Dream of Hanif*, *The Nest*, *Way Back Home*, *Hope Dies Last in War*, *Rupban – The beautiful*, *Wagah* etc.

Supriyo has won 36 International awards for his films which include, *Crystal Globe* at Karlovy Vary Film Festival, *Grand Prix* at Bilbao International Film Festival, *BBC Award* at Commonwealth Film Festival, *Black Pearl Award* at Abu Dhabi Film Festival, *National Geographic Award* at Flickerfest, *Golden Conch* at Mumbai International Film Festival, *Jury* and *Audience Award* at Krakow, Tampere, Hamburg, Uppsala, Munster, Huesca, Winterthur, Damascus, Zagreb, IFFI (Goa), Rio-de-Janeiro, Parnu, Faito, Saguenay etc.

He has also won three *National Awards* including *Swarna Kamal (President's Gold Medal)* for the best Documentary of the year, 2007, for *Hope Dies Last in War*.

His documentaries have been screened at festivals in Busan, Berlin, Sundance, Los Angeles, Karlovy Vary, Sydney, Traibecca, Amsterdam (IDFA), Hot Docs, Silverdocs, Nyon, Palm Spring, Krakow, Sheffield, Cork, Yamagata, Bilbao, Tampere, Uppsala, Indian Panorama (IFFI), Mumbai (MIFF), Kerala etc.

Supriyo has received grants from *Sundance Documentary Fund*, *Jan Vrijman Fund* (IDFA) and *Asian Cinema Fund* (Busan International Film Festival), DMZ Docs Fund, several times and worked with NHK, DW TV, Planet etc. and German, French American and Japanese producers. He has also made films for Films Division and PSBT and Goethe-Institut.

Supriyo has served as juror in Busan International Film Festival, Taiwan International Documentary Festival, Eagle Awards – Indonesia, DMZ Documentary Festival (Korea), Kolkata International Film Festival, Dhaka International Short and Documentary Festival and Indian National Award selection (two times).

Retrospective of his films was organized by Thiruvananthapuram International Short and Documentary Festival in 2009 and Persistence and Resistance – Independent Documentary Film Festival, New Delhi.

FILMS

WAY BACK HOME

120 min. | 2003

In 1947 India achieved freedom from British colonial rule at the cost of dividing the nation into two.

Pakistan was born as a country for the Muslims. A million were killed in the wake of violent communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. 15 million more became refugees, amongst whom were the director's parents.

After more than 50 years Supriyo Sen follows his parents as they visit their lost homeland in Bangladesh. The mother tries to trace out one of her sisters who was abandoned during the holocaust of partition.

The film is about this journey, individual and collective memories and the historical consciousness arises from personal interactions and recollections.



HOPE DIES LAST IN WAR

80 min. | 2007

54 Indian soldiers taken as Prisoners of War during the Indo-Pak war of 1971 are yet to return home.

While waiting for them, some of the parents died, some of the wives remarried and some children lost hope and committed suicide.

But the real ordeal has been for those who did not give up. For them life has become a tight rope walking between hope and despair.

But they have fought the mental battle of attrition for almost four decades and are still not willing to resign.

This film is a saga of these families' struggle, spanning three generations, to get their men back. It records a tragic stalemate, sufferings of love and shining moments of humanity, courage and hope.



WAGAH

13 min. | 2009

Every evening, the only border crossing along the 3323 km frontier between India and Pakistan becomes the site of an extraordinary event.

Border guards on both sides orchestrate a parade to lower the flags. Thousands of people gather to witness the ritual and afterwards the masses move as close to the gate as possible to greet their former neighbours. The film looks through the eyes of three children who sell DVDs of the parade to the onlookers.

With a dream of crossing the border they remain quite unmoved by all the 'patriotic' madness around them.



SWIMMING THROUGH THE DARKNESS

76 min. | 2018

Hailed from a poor family, blind boy Kanai Chakraborty chooses the daring life of a swimmer than becoming a singer and begging for living.

But his success in the sport couldn't ensure him a job. Even at the age of 40, he has to continue swimming to retain a respectable identity. He participates in the world's longest swimming competition and tames mighty river Ganges covering 81 KM! His success brings in temporary glory but Kanai continues stumbling off the water while sailing smooth on it!



The film chronicles the roller coaster journey of Kanai who constantly negotiates with destitution, desire and destiny while chasing his dream.

9 Pencinemakal: a package of nine visual experiences from women curated by Archana Padmini

Every single film in this package of nine Malayalam short fictions is a different experimental attempt in the language of cinema. In the realm of cinematic visual language, they are a step ahead in their craft and narratives. Through, independent expressions of Malayali women from various socio-cultural backgrounds, every bit of this package demonstrates an honest approach towards cinema as an art form. Regardless of their differences in storytelling, content, craft and inherent politics, all of them drew Archana as a viewer, owing to their genuineness in expression.

Appreciating and celebrating gender equality is as important as discussing it. Thus, here we are creating a space for woman filmmakers and thereby bringing gender sensitivity in to the semantics of filmmaking.



Archana Padmini is an actor, curator, selector, director, film society activist, film festival organizer and a researcher from Kochi, Kerala.

FILMS

CATHARSIS

Dir.: Indira | 35 min.

The film is mapping out the malady of political vendetta in Kerala which rips through the ethos of democracy. As the orgy of violence, fanned to ogreish flames by political parties, is unleashed with impunity, the existential angst of a common man breeds pity and fear. The victims, caught in ideological cross-fire, are ironically hailed as martyrs who slide into oblivion waving the flag of hatred, animosity and vengeance. Those left behind, the grief-stricken families, are consigned to eternal suffering and anguish.

A film committed to stirring the political conscience of our time, Catharsis is a plea for sanity.



ORE UDAL

Dir.: Asha Achy Joseph | 14 min.

Traumatised and unable to face life after a physical assault a nun looks into herself for answers. Her body and mind are dejected. Her faith, spirituality and being are at stake. The film is a sojourn of a woman through her own hallucinations and despair for hope after the harrowing violence of a life time.



RHYTHM

Dir.: Sivaranjini | 28 min.

Every film is an autobiography. Everyone has that one story; You run away from it but it chases you down. Rhythm is one such story. It's the same story of life which has been repeating over and again. The past and the future looks one and the same when you are here. Time freezes and space stay motionless. The only truth is this very moment and us.



Gi'

Dir.: Kunjila Mascillamani | 30 min.

Gi and her grandfather who are originally from Kerala live in Kolkata, West Bengal. They are dealing with different planes of memory, abuse and pain while trying to make peace with the city and its people.



EYE TEST

Dir.: Sudha Padmaja Francis | 15:30 min.

Eye Test is a short fiction film which explores the affective atmosphere of a mother-daughter relationship, death and bereavement through the realm of memory, following her own mother's death a few years back. The narrative delves into the mindscape of the 27 year old Nivedita when she visits an eye clinic. The eye clinic territory transforms into a sensorial one for her, invoking memories of her single mother and her own lonely childhood.



Artists' Cinema

curated and presented by C.S. Venkiteswaran

Moving image practices, especially since the advent of digital technologies, are expanding and enveloping every field. Today the State and Capital constitute the two biggest image producers and users in the world, for their panoptic surveillance cameras, fixed in every public and open spaces – streets, malls, parks, pubs, offices, transport stations, public transports etc - are constantly at work recording and collating images of everything and everyone passing in front of them. What does this torrent of images amount to and do to us? Today, how does an image-artist work with, through and in this flood of visual information and narratives? How does and can the artist capture Life from the flow?

These films by artists working in various mediums try to grapple with the very texture, tone, flux and flow of images; they ponder and meditate, interrogate and excavate, counterpose and juxtapose visuals to invite the viewer to enter into certain kinds of intensities of interaction with images: it could be their profound concern with nature, interrogations about hegemonic notions that rule our lives and dreams, explorations into other modes of sexual orientations and experiences, excavations into and through time, reinvention of space etc.

Free from the dictates of conventional narratives, beginning-middle-end structures, meaning-making compulsions and the market impositions about audience expectations, these image essays invite the viewers into exciting journeys into other realms of perception and experiences of the visual.



C.S. Venkiteswaran is a critic, columnist, curator and documentary filmmaker from Trivandrum, Kerala.

Artists' Cinema

GIGI SCARIA

DISCLAIMER

9 min. | 2018

Disclaimer addresses the political reality of contemporary India through a set of tricks performed by a magician. Cups and balls is a famous attraction for any magic show. In this case, the magician takes us for a ride where we witness the



transformation from a poor rural reality to a material success story that finally leads to the lynching and scattered dead bodies on the streets. We as citizens willingly give away the realities we possess/address in the hands of magicians who wipe out our realities with their dirty tricks and make us believe we are entertained throughout the show.

LATA MANI | NICHOLAS GRANDI

DE SIDERE 7

38 min. | 2014

De Sidere 7 is an experimental work that interweaves performance, dance, poetry, storytelling and text to reflect upon aspects of desire. Shot in Bangalore and Delhi, the film scripts the work of five performing artists into a sensorially rich meditation on desire's vexed status as at once, animating force, object of suspicion and ground of contention. *De Sidere 7* is conceived as a video contemplation: a formally plural, multilayered composition intended to be experienced as an integrated whole. The artist book plays with image, frame, text, process notes & artist-critic responses to stage an encounter with the film in print duration.

NOCTURNE I & NOCTURNE II

5 min. | 2013

The Nocturnes were made in context of the Cross Pollination Lab of the Peaking Duck Arts Network, an interdisciplinary group active in Bangalore, 2012-2013.

VIPIN VIJAY

SMALL SCALE SOCIETIES

27 min.

Two living bodies have been installed and improvised within a museum space, scattered with archaeological artifacts, terracotta pots and shreds. The idea of archaeological imagination has been extended from the organized and tagged space of museum with the sense of linear historical time, to various evocative, yet less visited prehistoric sites in India – from the site of survival of human ancestors confronting the catastrophe of volcanic ash, deep down in the past in Andhra, painted rock shelters and megalithic sites of Chattisgarh, to excavation sites and neolithic burial grounds in Kerala, where the interplay of life and death, dream and reality, embodied sense of the ground and hallucinatory perceptions in altered states of consciousness, seem to merge together. As a concept and working principle, the digital visual images have been treated here often as a thin surface of reality with an unknown abyss beneath, where supposedly a plethora of unseen



images remain frozen into darkness. At times layers of images have been thrust together using multiple digital tools, to suggest a way of illuminating and digging through that invisibility of the frozen images, an ambivalent effort towards the notion of digital rock art.

AMAN WADHAN

LETTER FROM KORLAI

22 min.

*"We've inherited hope – the gift of forgetting.
You'll see how we give birth among the ruins."*

-Wisława Szymborska

On India's Konkan coast, in the village of Korlai, a sense of quaintness pervades its Portuguese heritage, the Creole, the faces, and the fort. The filmmaker had visited this place once, as did his friend, of whom nothing is ever said. Years later, an assignment brings the filmmaker back to Korlai. Memories revive but what compels his wayward excursion this time is the elemental and the immemorial wherein his solitude finds refuge. In the time of yellow grass, with steps receding and prayers unanswered, a desire for oblivion forks the search for images of exile and belongingness. This experience surfaces through grainy 16mm images and an elegiac voice-over, which retrace a sense of remembrance, loss, perception, and time intersecting with an inner self and with history. A letter for Korlai also becomes a letter to a dear departed; and in reading this letter, in seeking a new way of inhabiting the world, a vision of Korlai emerges that is both attentive and phantasmagoric, a series of possible angles and tributaries that the viewer and traveller might possibly take.

PARVATHI NAYAR

AN OCEAN IN EVERY KITCHEN: FREEZE BOIL | 6 min.

BUBBLE | 3.08 min.

TIME AND SPACE | 3.30 min.

BY THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER | 12.49 min.



Parvathi's oeuvre has been called a philosophy of space and ways of inhabiting the spaces in which we live, often using science as a viewing prism. Parvathi uses the moving image as an extension of her drawing hand and the camera becomes an inscriptive tool in such cinematic explorations as the trilogy of Time and Space. Water as a continuing engagement is a through-thread in many of the films such as *Freeze Boil* and *Bubble* which are part of the 'An Ocean in every Kitchen' series, or *Haunted by Waters* and *By the mouth of the River*. Parvathi explores different aspects of this mysterious life-affirming substance that is created when stars are born. Nature needs to be treated as a stakeholder in her own right, in the age of the anthropocene, and

the videos give voice to her many aspects– the poetics of water, its essence as the stuff of life, its magical transmutability, and its threatened status in today's world. The work captures moving pictures through focussed and minimalist – but not reductive – detail, and how relationships between part and the whole are negotiated through the observation of such particulars.

MURALI CHEEROTH

PLEDGE | 3.30 min.

Through my work , I am trying to explore and understand the meaning of social pledge, through my memoire of childhood experiences. The idea of pledge has been developed through my conscious participation in political activities, for long. Idea develops over a long period of time, before it finds a political activity and humanitarian thoughts, so to speak.....



A sacred unity, desire to engage the notion of the modern multi cultural nation.

Current political situation since leads the threads to do the reality check, understanding and how nation offer common man to take the fake pledge, which infected everyone. No single object remains unaffected.

Meaning: A thing that is given as security for the fulfillment of contract or the payment of debit and is liable to forfeiture in the event of a failure.

SAHEJ RAHAL

BARRICADIA

Barricadia begins in the year 2017 – with a group of protesters huddled inside a parabolic structure, learning and rehearsing songs together. Singing an ubiquitous CND campaign refrain, they rebuke the UK, USA, Israel, India, Pakistan, China and Russia for their failure to commit to global nuclear disarmament, repeating together in fugue: “Where were you? Where were you? Why weren’t you there?” The song has no audience except for the participants of the group, who are clearly not the intended target of the questioning.



The group begin to produce vocal harmonies then gently fall apart before joining together again, each individual now confidently knowing their part. This cloistered preparation of song is an important part of their resistance – not simply a production of propaganda for the cause but a process of creating affect, community and conviviality. This is resistance. Beginning with this strange scene, this exhibition explores how we encounter resistance, protest and the end of the world in culture, to question what might be blinding us to reality.

In Rahal's film, we begin to witness that *Barricadia* is no more than a document of our world's already-collapse, by means of various cultural and political episodes occurring throughout 2016. The documentary merges footage of modern and historic rituals and familiar yet unstable landscapes, composed across two parallel images, which occasionally shift and pull away from one another. In one scene we witness a right-wing rally filmed in Mumbai in 2016, sound-tracked loudly with Bollywood dance music. In recent years, this genre has been adopted by Indian Nationalists to bolster the popularity of far-right movements. Throughout this exhibition, the affect of music is key. Across charcoal and ink drawings, text and film narrative Rahal mocks the assumed authority of the male DJ, bringing to life a mythology where the DJ has the power to change the world, to cast away spirits and to protect. His depiction of the legends of the DJ, and elsewhere: the architect, the artist and the writer shows us we can't escape from the paradox that culture also remains a structure of control.

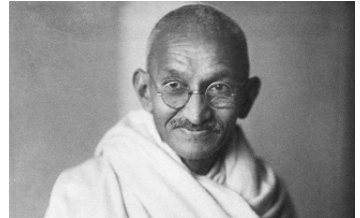
Elsewhere, the tropes of apocalypse appear in their droves – proud monuments consumed by the soil, ruined buildings, darkness and decay, a ghostly ship leaving a shadowy harbour, a fenced neighbourhood, a strange procession, a forest refuge, caped figures, water rushing in. These tropes are so well-worn that we forget they also represent reality. Rahal's work explores this apocalypse-aesthetic as a blinker for action - the end of the world is so abstract now that we can only continue to watch it unfold.

GANDHI, GANDHINESS AND CINEMA VIMARSHA

A special program curated and presented by Amrit Gangar

Curatorial note

The year 2019 combines two 150th birth anniversaries – of Bapu and B! It is Mohan-Kastur (MK) 150! Mohan never liked movies but yet he remained one of the most filmed persons in the world, wherever he went camera followed him. Narrative films continue being made around his persona in India and abroad. He remains a phenomenon. And he never liked cinema.



What is, however, relevant is Gandhiness; being close to Gandhian ethos and praxis. What are the factors that could essentially constitute Gandhiness? How could they be applied to making life and films in the changing environments of overwhelming consumerist forces and globalization in the age of technology? How could the omniscient and omnipresent moving image be a negotiating agent? Could the ancient Indian wisdom perceive the embrace of the all-prevading Trinity of Jnana (Knowledge), Abhyasa (Practice) and Vairagya (Detachment)?

Are there films and filmmakers and artists who believe in the rigor of austerity and yet produce profound thoughts through cinematographic minimalism? The holistic Gandhiness becomes more enduring and illuminating than the so-called Bollywoodian Gandhigiri.

In his 150th birth anniversary year, how could Bapu be evoked and invoked in a more interactive way through cinema? In the process, this curated event will turn into a kind of an interactive workshop.

Vimarsha = Deliberation



Amrit Gangar is a Mumbai-based author, curator, film theoretician and historian, working in the field of cinema for over three decades. He has worked both on production and creative sides of a number of film and video installation projects from numerous European and Scandinavian countries. Besides his curatorial engagements, for the past decade he is engaged with his theoretical concept of *Cinema of Prayoga* and has presented it at various venues including the Tate Modern, London; Pompidou Centre, Paris, etc. He had conducted a master class on *Cinema of Prayoga* for Ph.D. students at the Sorbonne University, Paris.

Amrit Gangar has authored and edited several books on cinema in English and Gujarati, two of which have been awarded by the Gujarat Sahitya Akademi. He was artistic consultant along with Marina Abramovic on

Total Masala Slammer, a dance-theatre production directed by Michael Laub, produced by Hebbel Theatre, Berlin. He was also a production executive on the Lars von Trier-Jorgen Leth collaboration, *The Five Obstructions* besides being part of *Classic Incantations: The German Film Orchestra Babelsberg Performs A.R Rahman* during the Germany Year in India, 2011-2012.

Over the years, he has been conducting many interactive film workshops all over Gujarat. Gangar was Indian correspondent for *ARTiT*, a Tokyo-based bilingual art journal and the *Film International* published from Tehran. At present he is on the editorial board of the bilingual monthly *Chalachitra Sameeksha* published by the Chalachitra Academy of Kerala

Films from Tamil Nadu

ARUNAGIRI

Dir.: Ambani Shankar | 10 min.

A fun loving young man gets a shocking lesson from his mother.

MOUNKIA

Dir.: Nelson Vasudevan | 9 min.

A little girl who can't speak and hear; her mother is a music teacher.

MARUPIRAVI MGR

Dir.: Kumar Rajaraman | 16 min.

An aspiring actor believes himself to be a reincarnation of late M.G. R., a famous actor and leader of a State.



KATHAIYIN NAYAGI

Dir.: Charulatha | 16 min.

The story revolves around an actress 'Renu' who is trying to make it big as a character artist and the struggle she faces to get roles due to her dark complexion.



PERANPUDAN

Dir.: SP Mani | 26 min.

A short film that portrays the day to day challenges faced by a young adult with autism.

RANAM

Dir.: Shalini Charles | 3 min.

For someone wearing ornaments is symbol of pride. For some it reminds them the loss.

KURUMPADAM

Dir.: M. Saravanakumar | 17 min.

When an aspiring filmmaker uses hidden camera to capture secrets of others, it can also evoke not so pleasant responses.

YENDRO ORU NAAL

Dir.: Kishore | 13 min.

An educated young man from rural area comes to a city looking for a better life. But he doesn't find any.

CHENNAI TAMIZH

Dir.: Arunmozhi | 8 min.

A take on portrayal of Tamil dialect from Chennai region, in Tamil films.

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