



SATYAJIT RAY
FILM & TELEVISION
INSTITUTE



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प्रसारण मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF
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ArCUREA

archive | curate | restore

16-22 March 2024





ArCuREa

archive | curate | restore



**SATYAJIT RAY
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INSTITUTE**



ArCuRea

ArCuRea is a portmanteau term derived from 'archiving, curation, restoration et al.' It is an event comprising a national colloquium on archiving and restoration in the global context, followed by a curation workshop, aimed at providing students with a foundational understanding of curation, particularly focused on Indian cinema. ArCuRea also hosts a series of e-Talks, a festival of restored films, live performances, an exhibition of film memorabilia and the 1st P. K. Nair Commemoration Lecture.

The event is organised by Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI), Kolkata, an autonomous institution established in 1995 under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. A premier film institute in India, SRFTI is member of CILECT, International Association of Film and Television Schools (Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinéma et de Télévision).

संजय जाजू, भा.प्र.से.
सचिव
SANJAY JAJU, IAS
Secretary



भारत सरकार
सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्रालय
शास्त्री भवन, नई दिल्ली - 110001
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
SHASTRI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI - 110001

26th February, 2024



Heartfelt Congratulations on ARCUREA 2024!

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is delighted to celebrate the inception of ARCUREA 2024, a platform that undeniably reflects SRFTI's unwavering commitment to excellence in the field of visual arts and filmmaking. This initiative perfectly aligns with our collective vision of fostering creativity, innovation, and artistic expression within the realm of film and television. I am confident that ARCUREA 2024 will serve as a forum for profound discussions, the exchange of knowledge, and the appreciation of artistry, thus significantly contributing to the preservation and elevation of our cinematic heritage.

The Ministry commends SRFTI for its steadfast efforts in cultivating an environment conducive to the growth of aspiring filmmakers and artists. We are optimistic that ARCUREA 2024 will act as a catalyst for pushing the boundaries of visual storytelling. It will not only kindle a fervent passion for cinema among cinephiles but also inspire and guide emerging filmmakers, archivists, and curators alike.

We extend our best wishes for a successful and enriching journey ahead.


(Sanjay Jaju)

नीरजा शेखर, भा.प्र.से.
NEERJA SEKHAR, IAS
अपर सचिव
Additional Secretary



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I am delighted to convey my best wishes to Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI), Kolkata, for organising ARCUREA 2024. This multi-event program symbolises our commitment to the preservation and celebration of our cinematic treasures. ARCUREA shall serve as a global platform for stimulating discussions on film archiving, restoration, and curation worldwide. SRFTI's unwavering dedication has been instrumental in propelling this initiative to remarkable success.

Over nearly three decades, SRFTI has been a steadfast supporter of emerging filmmakers, continually evolving alongside the dynamic media landscape. With ARCUREA 2024, SRFTI is celebrating and recognising our local and global film communities.

I extend a warm welcome to all participants to the event.

I also appreciate Team ARCUREA for their tireless dedication and inspiring contribution. May we all continue to forge ahead together, preserving the art of filmmaking and shaping the future of cinema with boundless creativity and passion.

Warm regards,


(Neerja Sekhar)

Dated : 15.03.2024



पृथुल कुमार
संयुक्त सचिव
Prithul Kumar
Joint Secretary



भारत सरकार
सूचना और प्रसारण मंत्रालय
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Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001



Dear Attendees, Filmmakers, and Enthusiasts,

Welcome to ARCUREA, the celebration of cinematic heritage at SRFTI. As we gather to immerse ourselves in the timeless allure of archival films, we embark on a journey that transcends temporal boundaries, transporting us to eras long gone yet perpetually alive through the magic of celluloid.

ARCUREA beckons us to delve deep into the annals of cinema, to uncover hidden gems and rediscover masterpieces that have shaped the very fabric of our collective consciousness. Within these reels lie the echoes of bygone narratives, captured with the artistry and craftsmanship of visionary filmmakers. Each flicker of light upon the screen tells a story - of cultures, revolutions, loves lost and found, and the human spirit in its myriad shades.

SRFTI, a premier film institute in India, remains steadfast in its commitment to nurturing talent and promoting excellence in the field of cinema. I commend the dedication and effort put forth by all organisers and contributors towards making ARCUREA a platform for insightful discussions, enriching workshops, and memorable experiences.

As an institution committed to the preservation and promotion of India's rich cinematic heritage, we at NFDC-NFAI, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, are privileged to support this initiative aimed at fostering dialogue and innovation in the realms of film archiving, curation, and restoration.

To the esteemed audience, your presence enriches our collective experience and reaffirms the enduring power of film to unite, educate, and inspire.

May ARCUREA be a beacon of inspiration and enlightenment, furthering the cause of archiving, curation, and restoration in the ever-evolving landscape of Indian and global cinema.

With warm regards,

[Prithul Kumar]

Message from the Director, SRFTI



I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you to ArCuRea 2024, a celebration of cinematic heritage like no other! Hosted by the esteemed Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) in Kolkata, this event promises to be an exhilarating journey through the realms of archiving, curation, restoration, and beyond.

ArCuRea, a portmanteau of 'archiving, curation, restoration et al', embodies our collective passion for preserving the rich tapestry of cinematic treasures from around the world. It is not merely an event but a global platform for fostering creative discussions, sharing knowledge, and celebrating the enduring legacy of cinema.

At ArCuRea 2024, we have curated an eclectic mix of events to cater to diverse interests. From an international colloquium on archiving and restoration to a cinema curation workshop for film students, from a film festivals showcasing India's cinematic heritage to curated screenings in 'Curators' Picks', there is something for everyone to delve into and appreciate.

We are deeply grateful to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, NFDC, NFAI, and the Film Heritage Mission for their unwavering support in making ArCuRea a reality. Their commitment to preserving and promoting our cinematic legacy is truly commendable and inspires us to strive for excellence.

As we come together to celebrate the magic of cinema, let us not only revel in its past glories but also look towards the future with hope and enthusiasm. Let us nurture a vibrant and creative community of film curators who share our passion for cinema in all its forms.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our partners, participants, and attendees for joining us on this incredible journey. Together, let us embark on a memorable exploration of the art, history, future and culture of cinema at ArCuRea 2024!

Warm regards,

Himansu Sekhar Khatua

Director

Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute

Message from the Dean, SRFTI

Artistic Director, ArCuRea

ArCuRea: Archiving Perspectives and Curating Interdisciplinary Discourses on Cinematic Evolution



Vipin Vijay

ArCuRea emerged as an endeavour centred around archiving, curation, and restoration to reclaim Indian cinema heritage. It has been conceived as a transcultural attempt, with a willingness to adopt new perspectives, technologies, and methodologies to better appreciate, document, and share the rich legacy of cinematic contributions. The conceptual framework of the initiative has been meticulously crafted to serve as a scaffold for the assertion of the image and the aural history of Indian cinemas. At the nucleus of this construct resides the fundamental premise that cinema, as an expressive medium, inherently harbours the capacity to elicit and materialise such cultural memories.

Cinematic time transcends temporal confines, constructing a 'now' where past and present converge. Our fascination with new and impactful narratives which supplant older narratives in the realm of imagery and information fosters a crisis of collective amnesia. In order to recover from this crisis and restore a sense of the past, it is crucial to actively engage the faculty of the imagination. ArCuRea emerged as a creative impetus to address the psychological impacts of this collective forgetfulness, entailing a purpose-

ful exploring of overlooked aesthetic concepts and their cultural milieu through the landscapes of the imagination.

In the realm of cinematic contemplation, discussions about objects – physical or conceptual entities that are depicted or referenced within cinematic narratives – prompt introspection into the essence of thought, inseparable from time. Modern filmmaking represents temporal intricacies, offering a unique perspective on the interplay of thought and time. Going beyond discursive practices, it encompasses interactions with reality. Endowing these objects with agency transcends their materiality, becoming a foundation for sensory exchanges with the world. This interplay broadens our understanding of discourse and underscores its profound role in shaping our perceptions and cognitions across time. The act of recovering involves an intimate engagement of sight, sound, and emotion, affirming resilience to a sensor tracking through historical continuities and disruptions.

One of our key aims in organising ArCuRea is to assess the responsiveness of cinema students to innovative concepts presented in everyday language. The initiative will delve into the mechanisms of retrieving and creating memory, exploring diverse mnemonic strategies within the broader context of a shared historical oblivion. Our intention is to discern whether these concepts surrounding collective memory could inject fresh perspectives into academic discourse. Our challenge is to create a living archive that showcases interconnected themes highlighting the breadth and richness of cinema. Anchored in the acknowledgment of a substantial reservoir of cinematic elements, this initiative underscores their foundational significance. Through meticulous archival, curation, and restoration processes, these elements become instrumental in sensing and forging connections among diverse facets of cinematic expression.

Archival materials are animated by the active engagement of researchers and artists, who seamlessly integrate factual investigation with imaginative journeys into past epochs. They delve into the essence of the medium, uncovering historical narratives, and develop personal interpretations of sensory experiences within specific cultural contexts. The importance of curation becomes evident when exploring various aspects of film history, grappling with challenges in referencing and comprehending the historical context of techniques and materials. This interdisciplinary approach encompasses aspects of media anthropology and considers the globalised shift towards ambient cultures. Moreover, these encounters confront the inherent complexities of accurately capturing the medium's influence and significance.

From a pedagogical perspective, integrating curatorial knowledge into the curriculum of a film school serves as a strategic effort to empower students to cultivate conceptual depth in critically engaging with a variety of cinematic forms and enhances their appreciation of their cultural legacy. Such a proficiency holds significance within social and cultural contexts, affirming the lasting impact of their creative contributions in an evolving social milieu. This innovative approach also lays the groundwork for new avenues of research in the study of cinema, contributing to the ongoing evolution of historical materialism within this dynamic field.

The implosion of new media aesthetics in this era of 'soft cinema' – a form of interactive media that departs from traditional linear storytelling to create personalised audio-visual narratives – and the foray of cinema into gallery and museum spaces prompts a fundamental reassessment of our perception of the medium. It entails investigating the disruption and redefinition of traditional cinematic norms as they transition into curated environments. In this process, one must seek to illuminate the shifts in audience perception, engagement, and interpretation within these alternative exhibition spaces. ArCuRea is also an attempt to provide a framework for deciphering the complexities of contemporary cinema, extending the exploration into broader cultural landscapes. It serves as a mental instrument to train our focus and keep our bearings in the world. The role of an audio-visual artist can be profoundly meaningful in engaging with this multitude of concepts. I sincerely hope that this pursuit will endure in articulating the past, and steering the narratives of the future.

Message from the Programme Head, ArCuRea

ArCuRea - Inspirations, Impulses, Hopes



C. S. Venkiteswaran

".. the task of curating is to make junctions, to allow different elements to touch. You might describe it as the attempted pollination of culture, or a form of map-making that opens new routes through a city, a people or a world.." (Hans Ulrich Obrist)

Changing Shades of the Curatorial

Curation or curating, terms that were associated with arts, museums, galleries and film festivals, has now become a catchword for assemblage of all kinds and across domains - of culture,

communication and consumption. It is used to indicate the act and art of exploring, assembling and/or exhibiting art experiences through select conceptual trajectories, new contexts or cultural intersections. Archival and contemporary resources, tangible and intangible traditions, live and past performances - all constitute its sources of inspiration, triggers for contextualisation and sites for manifestation. The curatorial premises span the spatial or temporal, conceptual or sensual: it could be explorations of locations/sites, juxtaposition of temporalities or sensorial experiences.

But most often curation becomes the mere act of bringing together works of audio-visual art or performances under a theme. As the slogan goes, the need of the hour is to 'stop curating! Start thinking about curation!'. So, if one could go beyond such compilations, curation becomes a creative act of discovery, dialogue and critical engagements with pasts, presents and futures - of art, life, culture, history and politics: an art/act of triggering and provoking new conversations, creating interesting and disturbing juxtapositions, and making possible stimulating interfaces between genres, traditions and schools of thought and practice. It calls for deep understanding about art/cultural history, the daring to transgress disciplinary boundaries and a passion to forge and envision new connections and intersections.

Traditions of Curating

Is the act, art and function of what is called curating alien to Indian cultural scene? Is it something that developed solely out of museum practices and art exhibitions? If one looks at curation in the wider perspective of creating 'sociabilities, collectivities and convivialities', we can see its manifestations in many of our festivals and celebrations, religious and secular: the bringing together and calibration of various arts, artists, ritualistic and cultural activities across different sites and in defined temporal sequences have been essential aspects of many of our 'traditional' festivities like Durga Puja, Kumbh Mela, Ram Lila, Thrissur Pooram, Uroos festival etc. All the village/community festivals include complex and

diverse elements of installations, performances, rituals and roles. Though they may look chaotic and diffuse from the outside, they follow certain order/patterns and are calibrated assemblages of ritual acts, cultural events, and collective celebrations, almost always punctuated by meditative moments and reflective interludes. Many of them have also always easily adapted new modes of expression, forms of celebration and technologies of display. Obviously, these collective and community festivities have evolved through time, through complex processes - social and formal - of inclusion and exclusion, adoption and adaptation, negotiation and hybridisation. The processes of evolution of these festive events, the various socio-economic and cultural negotiations that shape its patterns and forms etc need to be studied in depth. Maybe one could call such events as 'community curations' - event-forms/formats that have evolved from within certain socialities, spatialities and temporalities. But, is it possible to draw lessons from these events? What are their strategies in terms of choice of content (some are fixed while some of them change, some are old, while new ones are always included), the integration of role plays (intentional and strategic, and also playful and random), engagements with power structures, and spatio-sequential negotiations (who, where and in what order etc) in programming?

Why ArCuRea ?

Among various art institutions, academies, galleries and museums across India also, the practice of curating and showcasing works of art, artefacts and artists have been prevalent for a long time. It includes various national cultural festivals organised by literature and art academies, and global events like the Triennale, International film/theatre festivals etc. But most of them have followed conventional curatorial conventions, programming practices and aesthetic protocols. Barring a few exceptions, such practices have seldom been critically analysed, researched, documented and theorised upon, especially from an Asian or Indian perspective.

Considering the wealth of cultural resources in India - in the form of artefacts and objects in the archaeological and other museums, documents and texts, images and audio-video materials in various public and personal archives, the huge repositories of diverse musical institutions and folk arts across the country, the curatorial potential and opportunities they offer, as well as the challenges they pose, are immense and complex.

It is all the more so in the field of Indian cinema, where thoughtfully and provocatively curated film programmes are still a rarity. This is despite the fact that Indian cinemas (always plural) constitute one of the most vibrant, diverse and prolific of film industries in the world. Such an incomparable wealth of cinematic narratives, materials and archives offer opportunities to seek fresh avenues of historicising, modes of assemblage and flights of curatorial imagination.

Archive | Curate | Restore

The liquidity of capital, the mobility of bodies, the connectivity of localities form a complexity that outstrips any single methodology, intellectual or political tradition, or medium. (Janine Marchessault and Susan Lord (Eds), Fluid Screens, Expanded Cinema)

ArCuRea's appeal 'Archive, Curate, Restore' is a call to film students, scholars and cinephiles to look at film history, culture and archives from new angles and fresh perspectives. All these acts/arts - of

archiving, curating and restoring - are interconnected, and offer synergistic possibilities. For, any act of curation prompts one to dig into archives - physical or virtual - which most often leads to need/call for restoration. Conversely, restorations and discoveries of film materials also always trigger curatorial imagination. ArCuRea's vision is to further deepen such linkages and interconnections.

ArCuRea @ SRFTI

The idea of ArCuRea emerged out of the felt need for an academic and institutional platform to probe into the art, theory and practice of film curation. The venue of ArCuRea - the Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute - is also significant as one of the objectives of ArCuRea is to include film curation as part of the pedagogy and curriculum in film schools in India. The city of Kolkata where SRFTI is situated is also extremely significant as it was one of the most prominent sites of origins of Indian cinema and home to many of its pioneers and pioneering institutions and film creations.

We hope to convert ArCuRea into an annual festival of film curation at SRFTI, where the curatorial art and practice, concepts and imaginations will be discussed, theorised and showcased.

Art/Act of Film Curation

It's natural to expect that such a strong tendency of the transformation of stable forms into forms of mobility could not be confined solely to means of form: this tendency exceeds the boundaries of form and extends to subject and theme. (Eisenstein on Disney)

At the most basic level, curating films is the act of creating contexts and connections, historical, socio-political or conceptual. All the processes involved in film curation are equally important and challenging: the identification and selection of films or film-related materials could be driven by an idea, concept or theme. It could be explicative or polemical, exploratory or intersectional; it could be an attempt to ponder or interrogate certain concepts, or to trigger dialogues through creation of challenging contexts and juxtapositions. It naturally demands a deep understanding about history, technology and aesthetics of the medium, as well as the socio-political issues and global media ecology encompassing or enclosing it. The potential resources could be as diverse as texts/documents, voices/sounds/music, and images, still or moving, and the final outcome could be an exhibition, an art event or film festival, the manifestation or display of which could be physical or virtual, online or offline.

The digital era has expanded the possibilities on all fronts: right from sourcing necessary inputs, textual, visual or audio, to the choice of platforms of display/screening and modes of engagement with the spectators. The age of Expanded Cinema we live in is an immersive, interactive, and interconnected and is characterised by synesthesia, intermediality and a global public. The malleability and mobility of the image that Eisenstein was referring to now extends to the entire field of digital screen culture, encompassing imagination, production, consumption, appreciation, sharing, screening, storage and the endless recycling and repurposing of images. Such radical shifts, in turn, have also transformed curatorial imagination. As for the vocation of the curator, Nick Waterlow's testament could be a starting point:

"A curator's Last Will and Testament: Passion:

An Eye for Discernment

An Empty Vessel

An Ability to be Uncertain

Belief in the Necessity of Art + Artists

A Medium - Bringing a Passionate + Informed Understanding of Works of Art to an audience in ways that will Stimulate, Inspire, Question, Making Possible the Altering of Perception"

ArCuRea is a beginning, an attempt to curate a programme on film curation, and an invitation to think about curation, anew, tangentially and subversively.

References:

Eisenstein on Disney, Seagull Books, 1986

Hans Ulrich Obrist, Ways of Curating, 2015

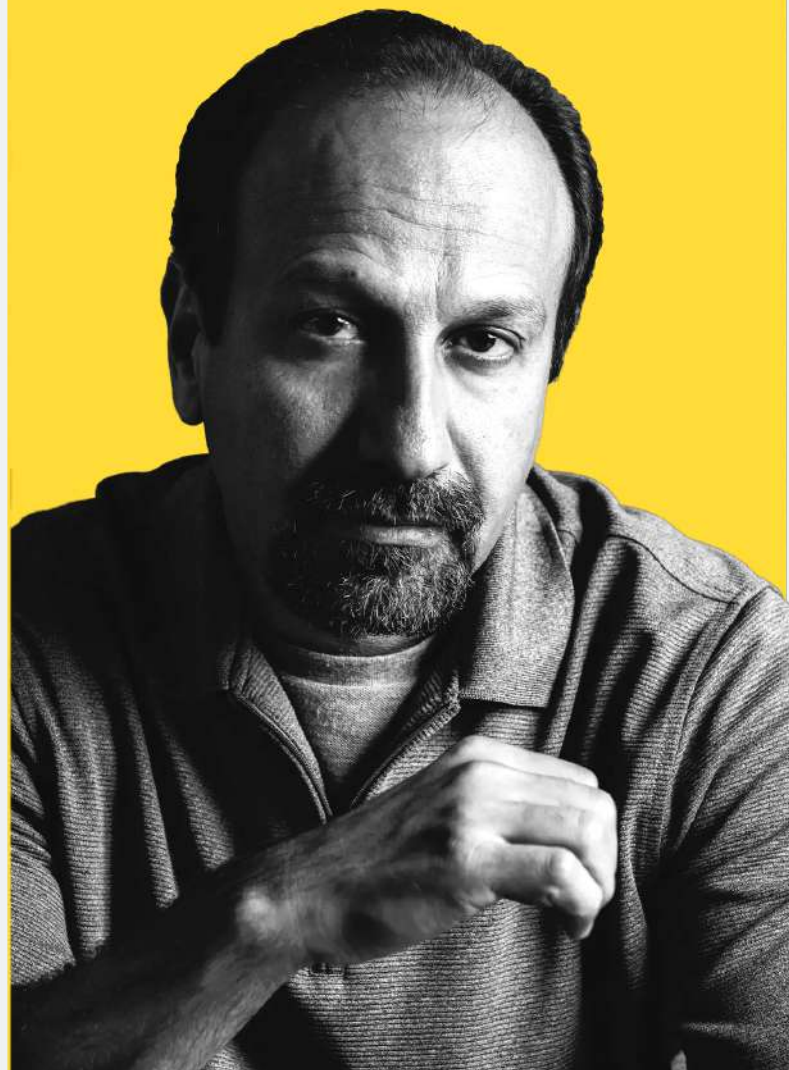
Janine Marchessault and Susan Lord (Eds), Fluid Screens, Expanded Cinema, University of Toronto Press, 2007

Nick Waterlow, A Curator's Last Will and Testament, 2009

Naomi Kawase



Asghar Farhadi



Guests of Honour

Naomi Kawase

Naomi Kawase (b. 1969) is a Japanese filmmaker who has found international prominence, captivating audiences with her distinctive cinematic voice and intimate storytelling style. Her films are imbued with a distinct sensitivity, inviting viewers to contemplate the beauty and complexity of life.

Throughout her illustrious career, Kawase has garnered widespread acclaim for her evocative narratives, poetic visuals, and nuanced character portrayals. She received the prestigious Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival for her debut feature *Suzaku* (1997). Kawase's visual poetry continues to captivate audiences worldwide, reflecting her status as a visionary filmmaker.

Since, Kawase's film *The Mourning Forest* (*Mogari no Mori*) (2007) premiered in June of 2007 and went on to win the Grand Prix at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. Her film *Hanezu* (2011) premiered at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival.

In 2013 Kawase was selected as a member of the main competition jury at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. Her film *Still the Water* (2014) was selected to compete for the Palme d'Or and her 2015 film *Sweet Bean* (2015) was screened in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes. In April 2016 she was announced as the President of the Jury for the Cinéfondation and the short films section of the 2016 Cannes Film Festival.

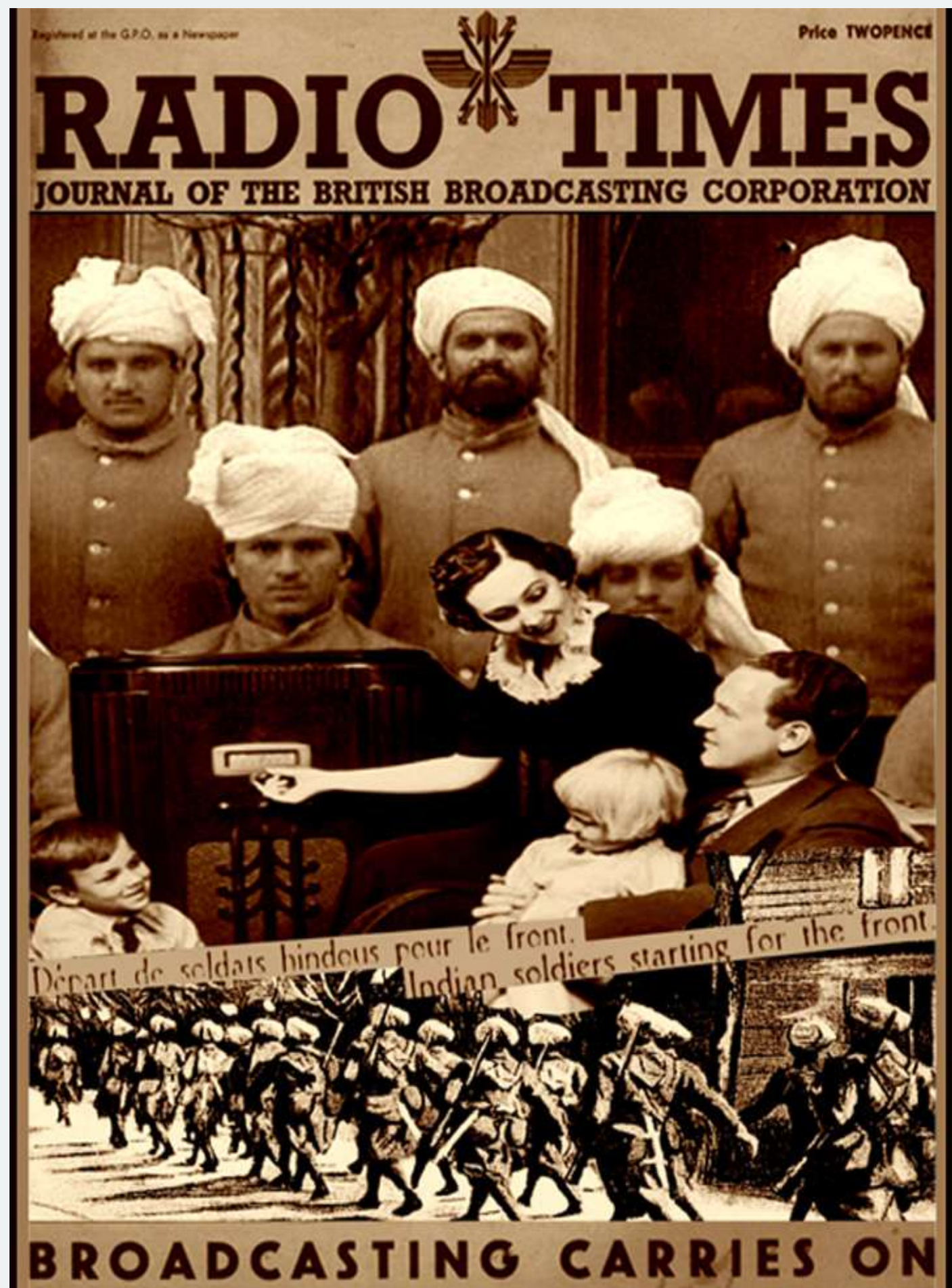
Kawase was named UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural and Creative Industries in 2021.

Asghar Farhadi

Celebrated Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi (b.1972) stands as a distinct figure in contemporary cinema. Renowned for his profound storytelling and meticulous craftsmanship, Farhadi's journey into the realm of cinema began with his love for storytelling, cultivated during his studies in theater at the University of Tehran.

Farhadi's cinematic oeuvre is marked by an unparalleled ability to delve into the complexities of human relationships and societal norms, navigating the intricacies of Iranian culture with both sensitivity and insight. His breakthrough film, *A Separation* (2011), earned him widespread acclaim and accolades at the international stage, including the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. His film *The Salesman* (2016) was selected in competition at the Cannes Film Festival, where Farhadi won Best Screenplay while Shahab Hosseini, the lead actor, took home Best Actor. *The Salesman* (2016) also received the Academy Award for Best International Feature which made him one of the only few to have done so. *Everybody Knows* (2018) was selected as the 71st Cannes Film Festival's opening film while also being in competition and, at the 74th Cannes Film Festival, Farhadi's film *A Hero* (2021) won the Grand Prix.

Renowned for his nuanced character portrayals and emotionally resonant narratives, Farhadi's films serve as poignant reflections on universal themes. Through his unique directorial eye, he crafts cinematic experiences that invite audiences to contemplate the diverse and essential questions of life.



ArCuRea e-Talks

(2, 3, 6, 9 & 10 March 2024)

ArCuRea e-Talks is a curtain raiser to the main event. It is designed to initiate the students to the idea of archiving, curation and curatorial imagination.

The Speakers:

Alexander Keefe

(Writer & Critic)

Topic: (I Am Not) Sorry, I Am Late

Concept Note: A lecture that asks: what is the Films Division of India's archive good for? And answers: laughter, boredom, and tears. This talk, which addresses the theme of the future in some films from the past, begins with a brief look at the genesis of Sarkari Shorts, a Tumblr page I created in 2014 that turned into a yearlong excavation of the Films Division youtube channel and associated online materials. I will discuss this as an example of a generative approach to archival materials, less committed to explication than expansion; less about what actually happened and more about what still might. The title refers to an Emergency-era short film called *Sorry, I Am Late*, which warns against tardiness. I will discuss this, alongside other short films related to family planning, wild elephant capture, the nighttime worlds of late 60s Mumbai, ancient but sexy statues, and the projected benefits of the Bhakra Nangal dam project.

Cathy Lane

(Professor of Sound Arts at the University of the Arts London & Co-Director of CRiSAP)

Topic: Re-fERENCE, Re-use and Re-cycle: thoughts about sound arts and the archive

Concept Note: A talking and listening session thinking about the nature of sound archives in general (focusing on the UK) and how archival sound might be used in sound art practices. Cathy will focus on aspects of my work with sound, history and memory - specifically works with composed sound that collect archive material in real time; re-use existing archival recordings and re-sound materials when histories or voices are silenced.

Markus Ruff

(Head of Archival Projects, Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art E.V)

Topic: The Living Archive

Concept Note: Starting point of this online lecture is Arsenal's project "Living Archive - Archive Work as a Contemporary Artistic and Curatorial Practice" (2011-2013). Looking back into the history of the institution, the concept of the "Living Archive" can be seen as a continuation of Arsenal's institutional practice since its foundation 60 years ago. At the same time, this project gave shape to an archival practice that continues to evolve with each new project and thus with new partnerships with archives around the world. The lecture will give an overview of key projects such as the "Animated Archive" in Guinea-Bissau and an ongoing collaboration with the national film archive of Nigeria.

Madhusree Dutta

(Filmmaker & Curator)

Topic: Expanded Cinema: From Programming to Curating

Concept Note: Films are curation friendly as it works across temporalities. Curating, as it is practised in different sectors, within and outside the art world, is about caring, incubating, restoring, displaying, annotating but also about disturbing the status quo. All these actions require a good volume of material in hand to play around. Hence curating also requires a running collection - as in museums and archives. But what can we do when the material itself disappears or when the archive turns into a ghost? Expanded cinema is to trace cinema through other parameters than films. This is prompted by an understanding that cinema has been more than only films.

Riyas Komu

(Artist & Curator)

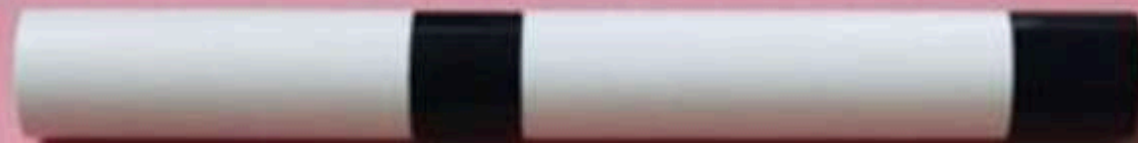
Topic: Curatorial Premises and Challenges: The Kochi-Muziris Biennale Experience

Concept Note:

1. The Origin of the idea of KMB.
2. Why Kochi?
3. Kerala artists, Indian artists and the global Art world/market - how were these equations addressed?
4. What impact did KMB make on the local art economy and Indian art scene?
5. Challenges, Risks in the Indian & Kerala contexts.
6. Way forward - lessons to learn.
7. The relevance for Institutions for art & aesthetics + arts management & curation in the context of new emerging liberal arts education and cultural economy prospects.

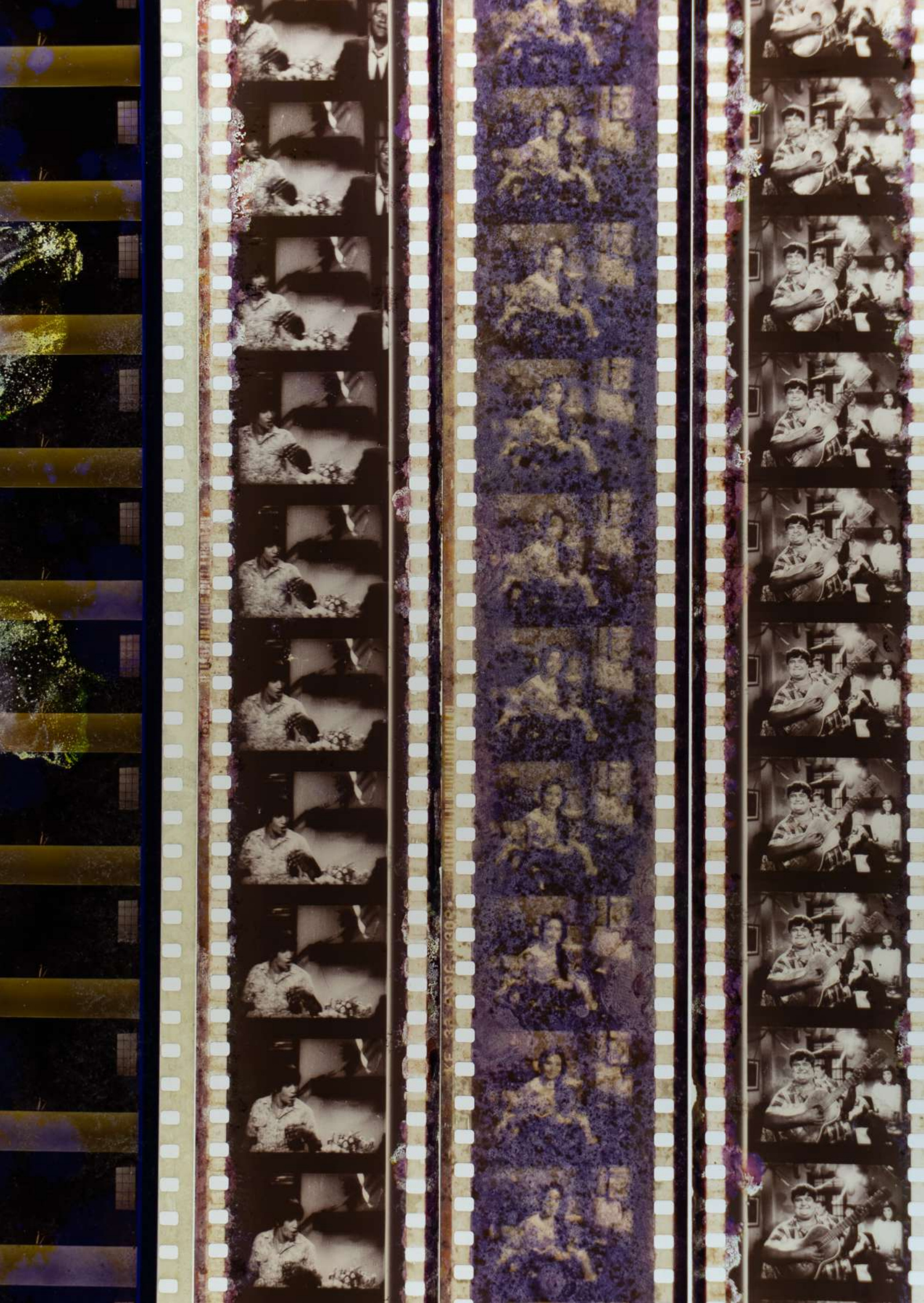


Living



Archive





Sabih Ahmed

(Associate Director & Curator of Ishara Art Foundation, Dubai)

Topic: Unpacking the Curatorial, the Museological and the Archival

Concept Note: In the current media landscape, the distinction between a still and a moving image no longer holds. All images today are moving, mutating and leaking, calling for a new paradigm of curation that abandons its moorings in the museum. The lecture proposes new theoretical frameworks for the exhibition in the 21st century that test the museological and archival impulses dominant among institutions.

Sudhir Mahadevan

(Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature, Cinema and Media at the University of Washington)

Topic: The Impossible Task of Archiving Indian Cinema: Thoughts on Archives, Cultural Memory, and Film History

Concept Note: This talk broadly formulates reflections on the relation between film archiving, cultural memory, and film history. Do film archives exist to protect Indian cinematic heritage for its content, or to preserve, restore and conserve expressions in the material format of celluloid? Given finite resources, if archivists must necessarily also be curators, what challenges do the sheer number of films produced each year in India pose for film archives and film history? Can Indian film history be preserved in other ways, such as through collections of film memorabilia? What do digital spaces and other forms of historical evidence, such as the personal anecdote and the reminiscence, have to contribute to the task of conserving Indian cinema's pasts?

If curation is unavoidable, the speaker suggests that scholars have a role to play, but this would entail developing new methods of analysis, aggregation, and assessment of India's cinematic vast output beyond, or in addition to those of judgments of artistic relevance and cultural value.

ArCuRea e-Conversations

Speaker: **Asghar Farhadi**

Asghar Farhadi, a celebrated Iranian filmmaker, is renowned for his emotionally charged dramas and intricate narratives. His films delve into the complexities of human relationships and societal norms within Iranian culture. Notable works like *A Separation* (2011) and *The Salesman* (2016) have earned him the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Through *About Elly* (2009) and *The Past* (2013), Farhadi explores themes of truth, deception, and consequences. His storytelling prowess and profound insights into the human condition have garnered global acclaim, establishing him as a master filmmaker.



Speaker: **Vidhu Vinod Chopra**

Vidhu Vinod Chopra is a prominent Indian filmmaker, screenwriter, and producer, known for his profound contributions to Hindi cinema. He rose to prominence with the critically acclaimed *Parinda* in 1989, and since then, has delivered a string of cinematic gems, including *1942: A Love Story*, *Mission Kashmir*, *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S* (as writer-producer) and many others. His films seamlessly blend artistic integrity with commercial success, earning him widespread acclaim and numerous awards. Chopra is known for his uncompromising vision and commitment to storytelling. His films often tackle complex social issues with sensitivity and nuance, earning him a reputation as one of India's most influential filmmakers.

Beyond his directorial prowess, Chopra is also a prolific producer, having collaborated with some of the finest talents in Indian cinema. He established Vinod Chopra Films in 1985, which has since produced an array of successful films across genres.





Curators' Picks

(16-17 March 2024)

Where does a curatorial idea emerge? Is it due to the compulsions of the contemporary or an impulse to archive? Is it an act of recall or recoil? How much of thinking and feeling go into the act of curating? What role does archiving and documentation play in the process of curating? Is it mere programming of what is available or is it an adventure of enquiry into the unknown?

Like art-making, curation too is a process of discovery - there is search and research learning and unlearning; there is excavation into unknown depths in unpredictable sites. One also sifts through what is left of the past, find connections, reveal disjunctions, in the attempt to make them speak across times and to the present.

This festival of sample films from curated packages titled Curators' Picks showcases some such flights of curatorial imagination. They provide a peep into how a curator's mind and imagination work, what are the different and diverse inspirations and resources that s/he draws from, and in what all ways that can finally manifest and enter the world of visual discourse at large.

These films are selections from packages and film programmes curated by eminent curators who will also conduct sessions at the ArCuRea cinema curation workshop. These packages/installations featured in various international festivals and art events, and have received critical acclaim. The curatorial or concept notes of these packages or programmes along with these films are intended to give the viewers a glimpse into the curatorial process: how the act of curating evolves from ideation to actualisation; how a curatorial concept is contextualised and elaborated through films or images, and their selection, sequencing, and presentation.

Selection of Films:

Curating in the Age of Expanded Cinema: Putting Mani Kaul into the Art Museum

Ashish Rajadhyaksha

Films to be screened:

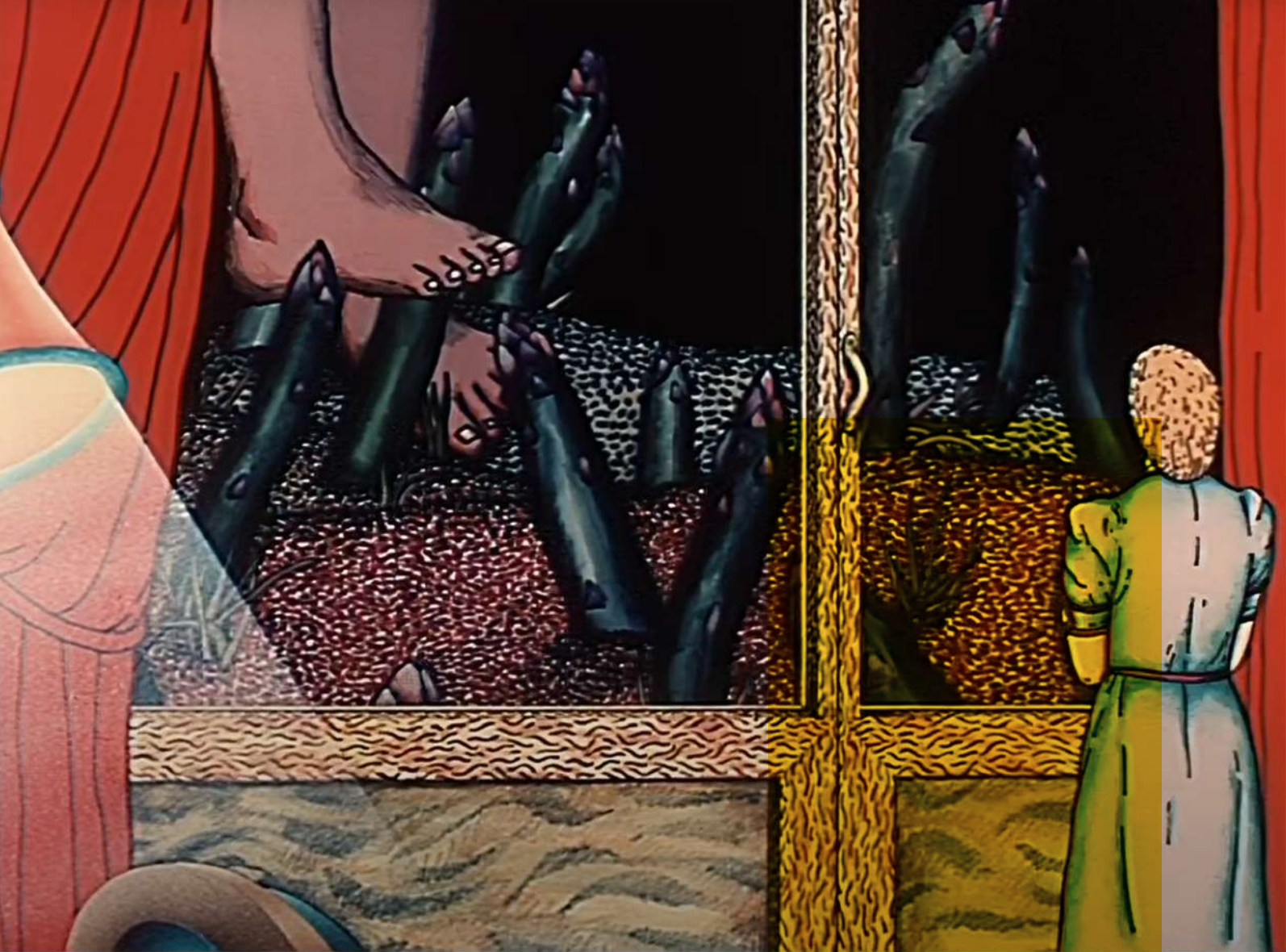
Uski Roti (Mani Kaul, 1969), digitally remastered version: first 15-20 min.

Daata (Piyush Kashyap, 2017): 9 min

Mati Manas (Mani Kaul, 1985), digitally remastered version: first 15-20 mins

Iti (Piyush Kashyap, 2017): 14 min

Crossings (Ranbir Singh Kaleka): 5 min



One Film at a Time

Shai Heredia

Films to be screened:

Tambaku Chaakila Oob Aali (Marathi, 1982): 25 min

Tales from Planet kolkata (Ruchir joshi, 1993): 38 min

Pop & Politics

Oberhausen International Short Film Festival

Films to be screened:

Pop and Politics: 82 min

A program of award-winning animated short films in which the filmmakers often articulate themselves primarily politically despite pop-cultural references. The program takes a journey through the history of the genre: from *Surprise Boogie*, which was painted directly onto celluloid, to *St. Mickeyland*, in which a reservation inhabited by cartoon and media icons shown in painting-like tableaux become classics of the genre. They come from the Festival's film archive and at the same time reflect Oberhausen's festival history.

Haan Aur Na Ke Beech Mein: Between Yes and No

Shabnam Virmani

Films to be screened:

Koi Sunta Hai: Journeys with Kumar & Kabir (English Subtitles): 96 min

Interweaving the folk music traditions of the mystic poet Kabir with the life and music of the late classical singer Kumar Gandharva, this film searches for that elusive sound, that *jhini si awaaz* Kabir urges us to hear. Where does it resonate, that subtle sound? Journeying between folk and classical, oral and written, rural and urban expressions of this 15th century mystic poet of north India, the film finds moments of both continuity and rupture between these disparate worlds.

How can I forget? The legend of Marui (English Subtitles): 45.20 min

Delving into a Sufi tale about a simple village girl held hostage in the fortress of a powerful king, this film grapples with questions of freedom and imprisonment, longing and belonging. It weaves together the apparent and the hidden meanings of this tale—which is at once spiritual and social, personal and political, historical and timeless—about a woman, her lost homeland and the struggle to remember who we truly are.

The Kabir Project

Fiercely iconoclastic in their social critique, Kabir and other Bhakti, Sufi and Baul poets urge us towards deep inner and outer transformations through the power of love and compassion. Their poems insist on an unblinking self-interrogation, asking us to reflect on how we construct and perpetuate narrow divides through identity, while also reflecting on life, impermanence and the human quest for meaning. Over the last 18 years, the Kabir Project has curated, translated and re-expressed this poetry and music through documentary films, music CDs, books, folk music concerts, urban festivals, travelling rural *ya-tras*, school workshops, exhibitions, college curricula and a large web archive called 'Ajab Shahr' which is open to all. The Kabir Project was seeded at the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology in the year 2002.

Film History in the Absence of Archives

Nida Ghouse

Films to be screened:

Frauen in Berlin (Women in Berlin): 139 min

Camera: Thomas Plenert

Editor: Petra Heymann

Subtitles: Tobias Hering

Chetna Vora began studying directing at the Film and Television Academy of the GDR in Potsdam-Babelsberg in 1976. *Frauen in Berlin* was supposed to be her diploma film submitted for evaluation in 1982. Shot almost entirely indoors, and composed of long and barely edited interviews with women in East Berlin, the film pictures their lives with rare candour. They talk about work, family, relationships, and what's left of the day.

Courtesy Lars Barthel.

Thanks to Lars Barthel, Neelesha Barthel and Tobias Hering.

OYOYO: 67 min

Direction: Chetna Vora

Camera: Lars Barthel

Editor: Petra Heymann

OYOYO was Chetna Vora's third-year submission film which she completed in 1980 while studying at the Film and Television Academy of the GDR in Potsdam-Babelsberg. The entire film is shot inside the student housing complex of the University for Economics in Berlin-Karlshorst. Against the larger political backdrop which made foreign students eligible for higher education in the German Democratic Republic, the film portrays intimate conversations about love, life and dreams, carried by song and dance. The chorus of a tune by Os Tubaões in Cape Verdean Creole gives the film its title.

OYOYO, Film and Television Academy of the GDR 1980, digitisation and restoration of the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, supported by the Film Heritage Funding Programme, financed by BKM, Länder and FFA.





International Colloquium on Archiving and Restoration

(18-19 March 2024)

Nurturing Cinematic Legacy: Unraveling the Complexities of Film Heritage

The two day International Colloquium will be a platform for in-depth explorations into the idea of film as a cultural heritage. The deliberations in the Colloquium will delve into various facets related to institutional history, technological processes, and trace the changing landscape of film restoration and archiving in the Asian region.

This event is intended to map and navigate through the history of Indian cinema right from the Silent Era, through the pre- and post-Independence periods of Indian cinema and the emergence of Parallel Cinema, and finally the transformative impact of television, digital technology, and internet platforms. The colloquium aims to shed light on the rationale, evolution, and role of key public institutions/events dedicated to cinema in the Indian context: it will cover institutions such as Films Division (FD), National Film Archives of India (now NFDC-NFAI), NFHM, the Film and Television Institutes of India, International Film Festivals of India, and the Film Societies movement.

Another interesting development in this field is the democratization of film archives. Once the exclusive domain of public institutions and professionals demanding sophisticated technical knowledge and capital, in the digital era film archiving has become more accessible, affordable and democratic. This positive shift, while opening up immense possibilities, has also brought in new challenges and issues.

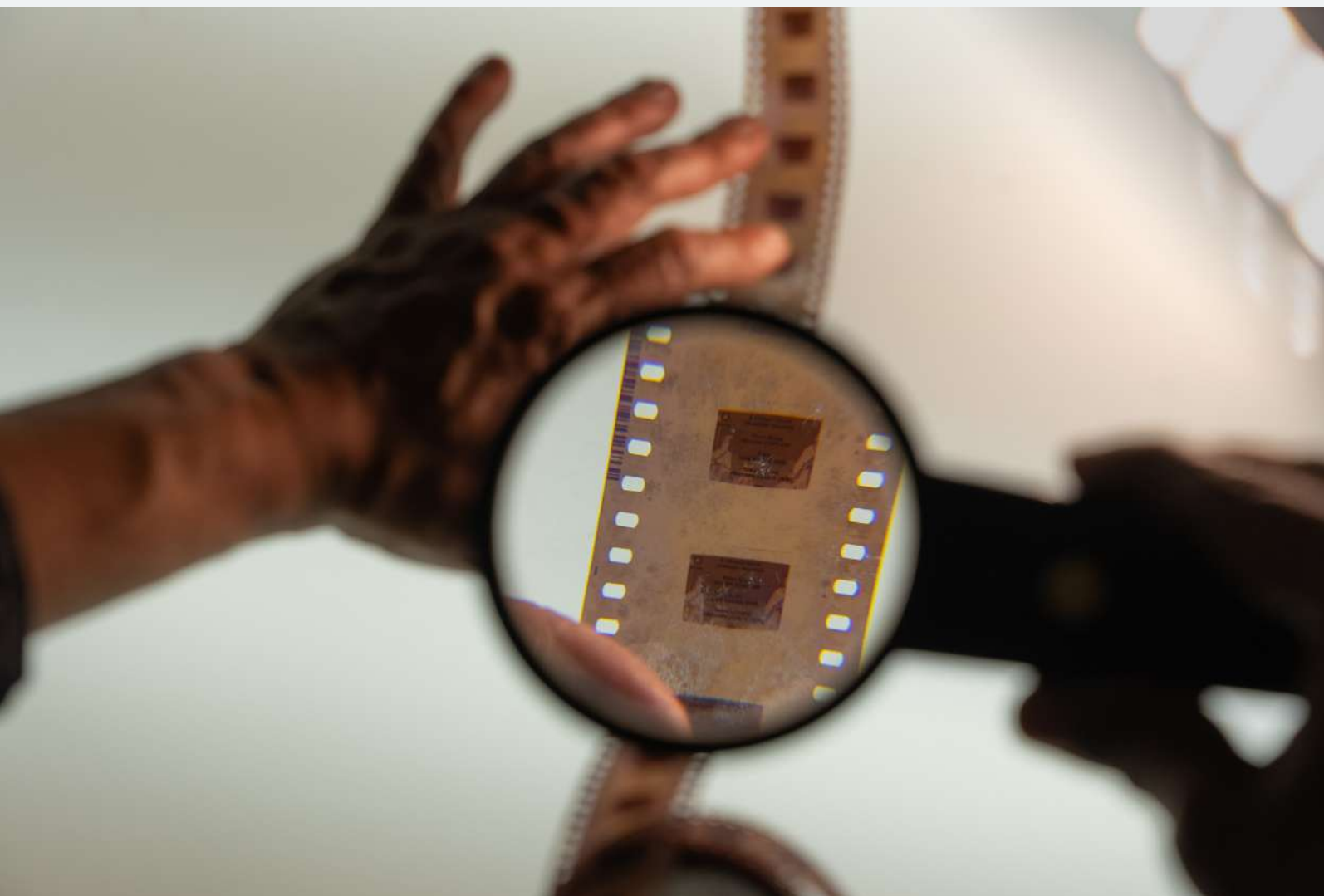
Experts will delve upon various technical and aesthetic aspects of film restoration, and archiving that offer innovative and challenging avenues for curatorial imagination, theory and practice. The ethical considerations surrounding the shift to the digital and the pervasive influence of AI will also be key areas of concern, addressing issues related to cultural sensitivity, intellectual property, artistic intent etc.

The Speakers:

Notes Towards an Expanded Archive of Cinema: Short film and Intermedia

Speaker: **Ravi Vasudevan** (Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi)

Concept Note: Scholars of Indian cinema have for long been confronted with the challenges posed by the limited holdings of the celluloid archive. They have worked around this absence by assembling an expanded archive which looks to non-celluloid resources for information about the cinema. By this we mean tracking reference to and remediation of cinema in sound media like gramophones and cassettes and audio-files, in evolving video formats, in print and paper, in photography and visual culture. There is a corollary to this agenda, that such an archive is always an intermedial archive, relating to a dynamic transfer and circulation of sensory features amongst media. In *Expanded Cinema*, Gene



Youngblood invokes the artist John Mchale to make this point: “The cinema isn’t just something inside the environment; the intermedia network of cinema, television, radio, magazines, books, and newspapers is our environment, a service environment that carries the message of the social organism. It establishes meaning in life, creates mediating channels between man and man, man and society.” (sic.)

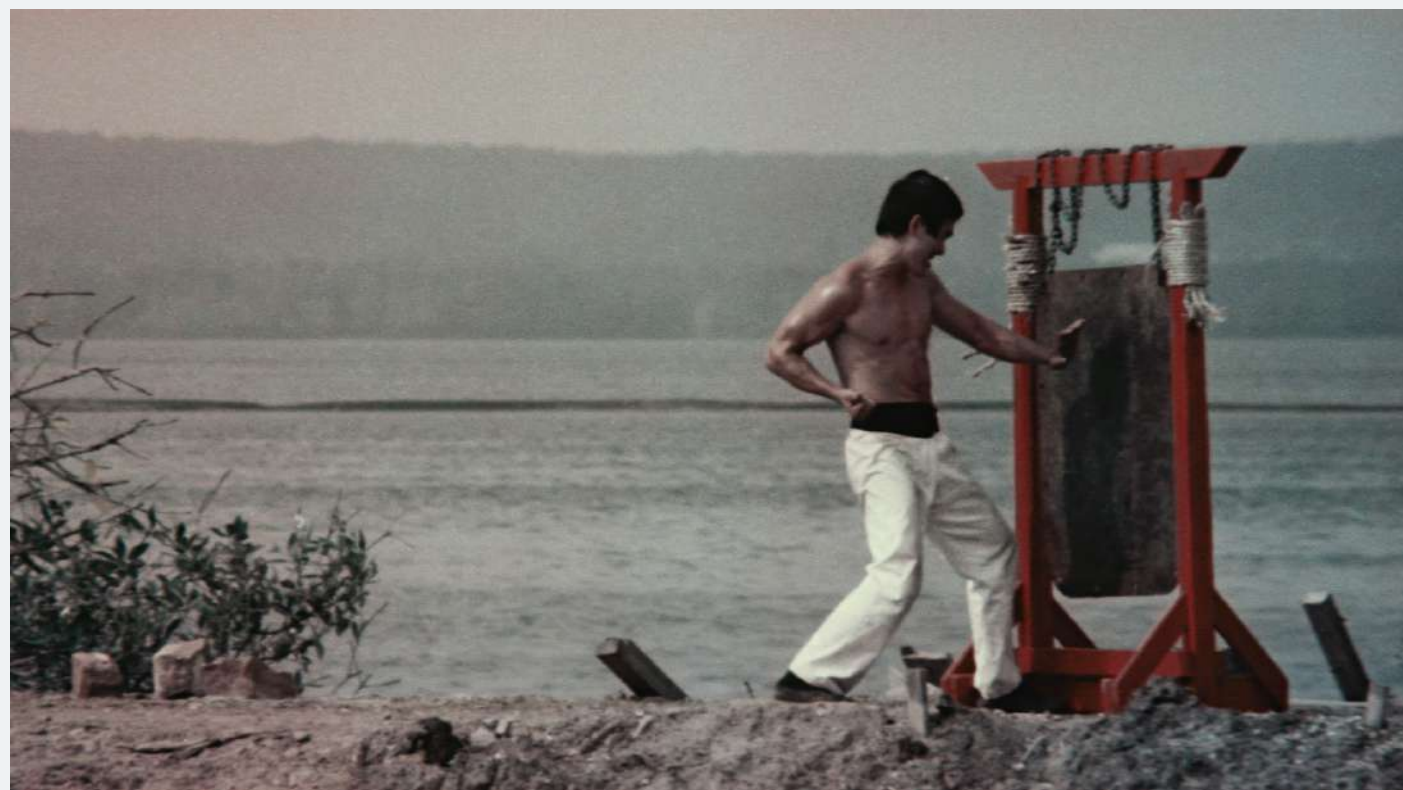
While drawing on this intermedia argument, I also suggest that the archive of cinema needs to attend to certain neglected film-types, amongst which I particularly focus the short information film. Short information film is associated with genres such as the newsreel and state propaganda, a host of minor genres such as topicals, actualities and scenics, educational, instructional and process (how-to-make) films, travel and cultural films, promotional, public relations and advertising films. It is important to stress that the short film crossed amateur and professional practices. This blurred line, along with the other elements I use to describe the short film resonate with contemporary video, suggesting a long and dynamic technological history. While appearing “minor”, short film is also associated with the more ambitious concept of the documentary film, and the term documentary was often used interchangeably with the short information film in the South Asia context. I hold that particular connotation at a distance, preferring to stick to the more modest category of information.

To focus on the short film expands the archive of cinema by addressing the history of celluloid as one differentiated by formats – 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, 9.5mm, later Super 8 – and thereby also highlighting the differentiated circuits, forms of circulation and of exhibition that made up the history of cinema. Short film moves the archive beyond the cinema theatres into a host of spaces and publics, facilitating the possibility of capturing local and embodied experiences of the cinema, and generating media infrastructures that were used by feature film distributors as well. Dispersed into a variety of sites and used for a variety of functions, this is a dimension of the film archive that speaks to a much wider and deeper penetration of the social world by cinema.

Repurposing the Past

Speaker: **Ollie Huddleston**, Film Editor (UK)

Concept Note: In this session the speaker talks about his love for editing old film archive footage, as it offers many possibilities to imagine or reimagine the past. Used well it can add multiple layers to storytelling and play with time in a way that contemporary footage cannot. Seeing the lead character in a story young, in an old photograph, and as an old person now, is a fantastic tool to understand or imagine the life they have led, and can be extremely important in creating the necessary curiosity and involvement from an audience. It adds a different dimension to the story. Working with archive and sound can create an extraordinary immediacy, making the film a notable experience, allowing audiences to witness the past as it unfolded without the fog of memory. It can surprisingly showcase how far the human race has come or how far they still have to go.



Institutional Legacies & Initiatives - NFDC, NFHM, AIR & DD

Keynote address: **Prakash Magdum**

Speakers: **Iyesha Geeth Abbas**, Curator NFDC-NFAI, **Bhavesh Singh**, Dy. Manager NFDC-NFAI, **Monica Gulati**, Program Executive DD Archive, **Ajoy Chandran**, Secretary, Kerala State Chalachitra Academy, **Johnson Rajkumar**, Film Conservator at Manipur State Film Archive

Archiving in Government Institutions - Prasar Bharti, AIR, DD et al.

Concept Note: An overview of various institutions and initiatives in the field of film production, archiving, restoration, preservation, and digitisation in India, such as FD, NFAI (now NFDC-NFAI), NFHM, Doordarshan and All India Radio (AIR).

Bhavesh Singh: As part of National Film Heritage Mission (NFHM), NFDC - National Film Archive of India (NFAI) started digitising its collection from 2020. More than 5000 films including features, documentaries, short films and news reels, are to be digitised under NFHM by 2025, of which approximately half will be restored eventually. The presentation would give an overview of the digitisation, restoration and conservation projects being carried out at NFDC-NFAI and related challenges, and how NFHM would facilitate increased access to the collections not only for researchers and academicians, but also the general public.

Iyesha Geeth Abbas: Through film frames, photographs, audio recordings, documents and other selected items from the collection of the National Film Archive of India, this talk travels through founding ideals, found and lost objects, resurrected films and filmographies and nurtured networks.

Cultivating Collections: Insights from Asian Archives

Session Overview: This session focuses on various archival practices across diverse Asian regions, exploring the art and science of cultivating collections. Our panel of esteemed archivists from various Asian archives will share invaluable insights, strategies, and experiences in the stewardship of cultural heritage materials. Attendees can expect to gain a deeper appreciation for the unique challenges faced by Asian archives and the inventive solutions employed to ensure the vitality and relevance of their collections.

Moderator: **Leenali Khairnar**, Manager (Preservation) NFDC - National Film Archive of India

Speakers:

Chalida Uabumrungjit, Director, Thai Film Archive

Topic: Becoming Thai Film Archive



Concept Note: The Thai Film Archive is approaching its 40th anniversary this year. Along the journey from its inception to the present day, it has encountered numerous struggles and challenges that resonate with many other archives.

Karen Chan, Executive Director, Asian Film Archive (Singapore)

Topic: Preserving a Living Record

Concept Note: Film was introduced to Asia at the end of the 19th century, becoming one of the most powerful, persuasive, and accessible art forms within the world's largest and most diverse continent. Despite its long history, film preservation in Asia has had a relatively late start. The immense loss of films is felt keenly, and this has led to greater advocacy for the archiving of cinematic heritage collections.

This presentation introduces the Asian Film Archive (AFA), its mission and philosophy. As a young transnational film archive, its collection is cultivated through an array of strategies that employ a unique navigation and evolution of its selection, acquisition, and preservation policies. Covering the spectrum of legacy and digital film formats and their accompanying related materials, we will share how a small institution adapts the standards and practices of film/AV archiving to the needs of its collection. We will delve into how the AFA experiments with access and outreach methodologies to further its preservation cause.

Teresa Huang, Head of the Collections Department, Taiwan Film & AV Institute (Taiwan)

Topic: TFAI's Journey from Preservation to Digital Restoration

Concept Note: Teresa will present the collections of Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute (TFAI) and explain the acquisition policies of TFAI. She will also explain how TFAI developed their digitisation and digital restoration team and set up their digitisation and restoration workflow since 2013. Her talk will also address the challenges they face in film preservation.

Mohammad Arifuzzaman, Assistant Director (Maintenance), Film Archive, Bangladesh

Topic: Embracing the Digital World

Concept Note: Bangladesh Film Archive has passed 46 years since its establishment in 1978. It preserves the glorious history and heritage of the country. The Bangladesh Film Archive is one of the modern archives in the Asian region. At present it has reached a comfortable position by collecting films and allied materials, preservation and digitisation. However, it is still improving its facilities and scope. It is also maintaining liaison with other renowned archives of other countries to increase its capabilities.

The Ethics of Film Preservation, Revisited

Speaker: **Paolo Cherchi Usai**, Senior Curator, Motion Picture Department & Director of the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation, George Eastman House (USA)

Concept Note: The film preservation field faces unprecedented challenges amid global upheavals like the Covid-19 pandemic, regressive ideologies, artificial intelligence, and climate change. Archivists grapple with maintaining the status quo or embracing change through technology, activism, or sustainability. These crises, reshaping 20th-century cinema's landscape, particularly impact younger professionals and educational ethics in preservation. Traditional humanities-based training, though valuable, lacks relevance to current urgent issues. A proposed contextualised approach to archival ethics, building upon FIAF's Code of Ethics, aims to address this gap. By redefining "ethics," it encourages innovative thinking on the purpose of moving images, their societal contribution, and sustainable preservation practices. This multidisciplinary framework seeks to ensure film preservation aligns with broader societal goals without exacerbating environmental destruction.



Unidentified decomposed film, ca. 01925. Reel 4. Frame enlargement from a 35mm nitrate print. George Eastman House.

An Archaeology of Sound

Speakers:

Nida Ghouse, Writer & Curator

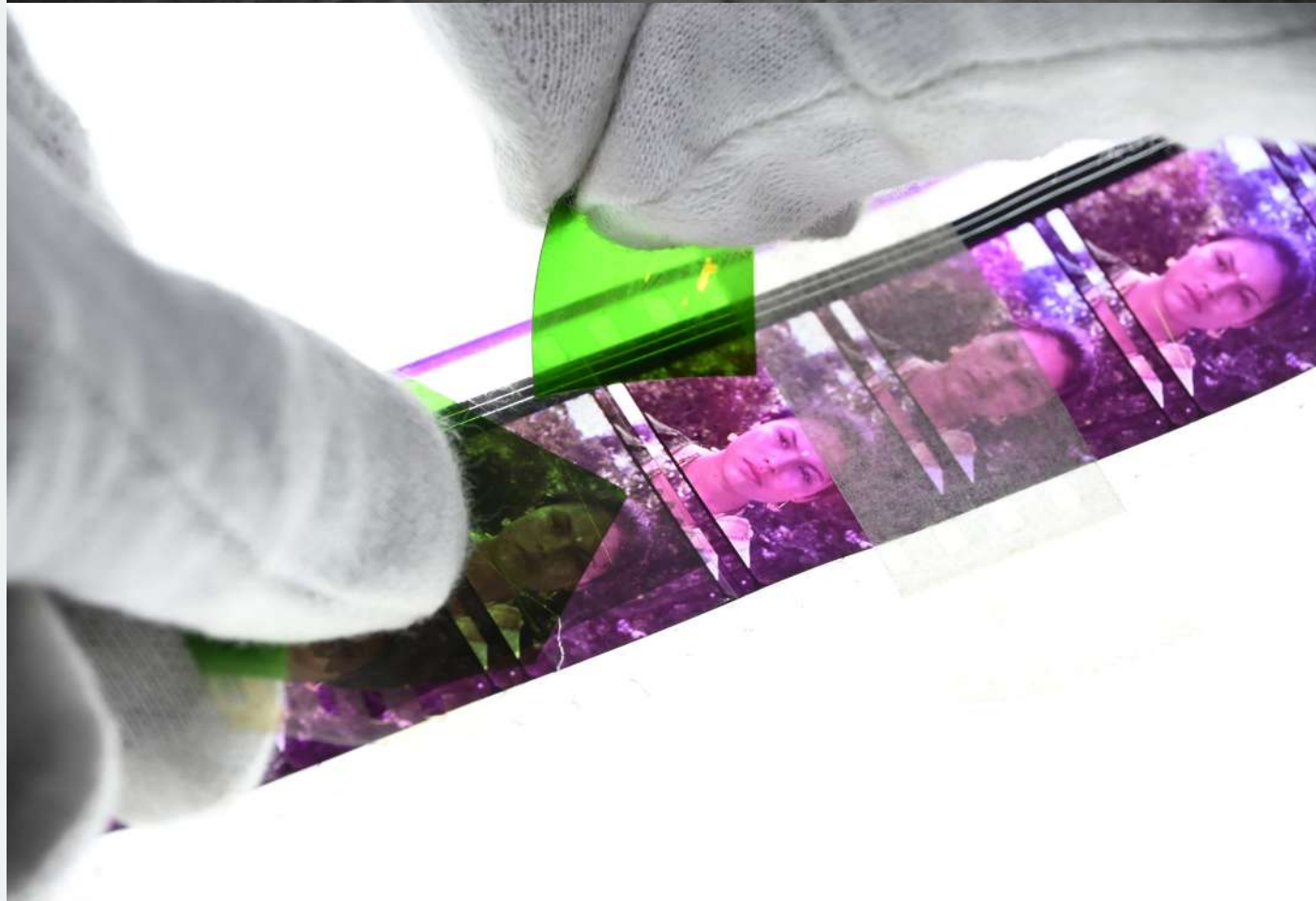
Umashankar Manthravadi, Sound Recordist & Sonic Archivist

Concept Note: In the mid-1990s Umashankar Manthravadi began his research in acoustic archaeology by measuring the acoustic properties of Ranigumpha, a double-storied structure of rock-cut caves dating back to circa third century BCE, generally believed to have been a monastery, but arguably a theatre. One day he was on site making some tests with his headphones on when an officer of the Archaeological Survey of India came up to him and pried, "So, can you hear them?" Hear whom, exactly? Or what? The people who built the place? The sounds once made? The officer's question will echo through this discussion with Umashankar, who began his career as a journalist in Madras in 1967 but quit a year into the Emergency and moved to Delhi. There he found himself working as a freelance sound recordist for independent documentary films and experimental television productions. From this vantage point we will ask: what does it mean for cinema to try and listen to the past, and to its absence which remains. Positing the past as that which cannot be captured, the session will attend to what is lost but nevertheless always with us, a collectivity across time beyond possession, instrumentalisation, and accumulation.

Five versions of *Titash: theses on celluloid*

Speaker: **Ashish Rajadhyaksha**, Film Scholar & Art Curator

Concept Note: In exploring the digital challenge to celluloid, I propose examining five versions of Ritwik Ghatak's *Titash Ekti Nadir Naam*. Giovanna Fossati outlines two archival approaches to digiti-



sation: one sees it as a radical change in the medium's nature, while the other integrates digital technology within the broader media landscape. I argue against the notion that digital versions are not films but acknowledge their novelty. I extend Bazin's ontology, examining *Titash's* journey through five stages: from a missing film to an uncovered print, a claimed director's cut, an official edit, and finally, a digital remaster. Each stage presents a different facet of the film's existence, raising questions about memory and fidelity. These theses probe the digital 'afterlife' of cinema and its impact on archival practices, challenging us to reconsider the relationship between celluloid and its digital reproductions.

From celluloid to digital - The ethics, challenges and practice of preserving and restoring India's cinematic heritage

Speaker: **Shivendra Singh Dungarpur**, Film Archivist, Restorer & Filmmaker

Concept Note: The lecture will delve into: the history of film preservation in India and the colossal loss of our audiovisual heritage; the crucial role played by P. K. Nair as a custodian of this heritage during his time at the National Film Archive of India; the circumstances that lead to the establishment of Film Heritage Foundation and its impact in India and the subcontinent; the practice of film preservation against the backdrop of the shift from celluloid to the digital era and the consequent challenges associated with the obsolescence of hardware and software and the constant need for migration to newer formats and the technicalities, ethics and workflow of film restoration. The lecture will be illustrated with photographs, film clips and case studies of the restoration of Satyajit Ray's *Apu Trilogy* and Film Heritage Foundation's restoration of Aravindan Govindan's Malayalam films *Thamp* and *Kummatty* and Aribam Syam Sharma's Manipuri film *Ishanou*.

What are films good for?

Speaker: **Dilip Menon**, Mellon chair in Indian Studies, Director, Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, University of Witwatersrand (South Africa)

Concept Note: In this session, Dilip Menon shall argue that films serve as a parallel archive and supplement the historical imagination of modern India. They not only reflect the conditions of a time as envisaged by auteur directors but provide an alternative time space that brings together the past present and future. They also imagine a desirable present and utopian future.

Apropos Archiving...

Speaker: **Markus Ruff**, Head of Archival Projects, Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art E.V (Germany)

Concept Note: In the 60-year history of the institution, a curatorial practice can be traced that establishes a connection to the present, not least by bringing contemporary cinema into a constant dialogue with works from film history. This applies to the programming of the Arsenal cinemas as well as to the programming of the Berlinale sections Forum (since 1971) and Forum Expanded (since 2006),



both of which have been organised by the institution since its inception. The title of the project “Living Archive - Archive Work as Contemporary Artistic and Curatorial Practice” (2011–13), which has significantly shaped Arsenal’s archive practice, also reflects this approach and remains groundbreaking for participatory archive work that sees the potential of the archive in its accessibility to the public. The presentation introduces this and other Arsenal projects, which led to the founding of the “Archival Assembly” festival in 2021, and which will take place for the third time in 2024.

Book Release ‘**One Film at a Time**’ by Shai Heredia.

Guests:

Shai Heredia Filmmaker, Curator & Founding Director of Experimenta

Ruchir Joshi Filmmaker

In conversation with **Markus Ruff** (Head of Archival Projects, Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art E.V)

Film Digitisation: Present Status, Challenges, Potential

Session overview: As the title suggests, the panel “Film Digitisation: Present Status, Challenges, Potential” aims to investigate the theoretical as well as practical complexities related to the digitisation of analog film heritage. Four subject experts from the academic and practical field of film preservation will present salient aspects of film digitisation, particularly with respect to contemporary transdisciplinary research and practices. Considering the premise of digital turn of film archiving and restoration, of which digitisation has evidently become an integral part over the past three decades, the panel will chart out the technological aspects that are to be considered for digitising analogue film heritage and the related ethical-scientific considerations. Additionally, the role of public institutions in this context, and how digitisation contributes to the transformation of archives into participatory spaces and learning platforms will also be reflected upon. The panel will elaborate further upon each of these aspects through accompanying discussion and Q&A sessions.

Moderator: **Sreya Chatterjee**, Scientific Researcher, HTW Berlin - University of Applied Sciences (Germany)

Speakers:

Ulrich Ruedel, Professor of Conservation and Restoration, Audiovisual and Photographic Heritage, University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Berlin (Germany)

Topic: Digital Restoration: From OCN to 4K and AI

Concept Note: Since its emergence in the 1980s, restoration-ethical issues have been predominant in the world of film preservation from the analog to the digital era. These range from issues of original photography (often in historical color systems with their characteristic appearances) and modern and historical photochemical duplication chains to digitisation scanning equipment and workflows and the potential and temptations of digital image manipulation. At the core the question of authentic image restoration ethics are the elusive issue of the “original” (original negative, vintage print, artistic intent), the inherent losses in the authentic medium of photographic duplication, and questions of improved capture or even deliberate potential “improvements” in the digital realm. This talk will provide an overview of these issues - including the “red lines” outlined in FIAF’s Digital Statement - and review cases ranging from classic Hollywood color restorations to more recent and current developments, including home cinema and the amateur ‘restorations’ circulating within the online social media sphere.



Lou Burkart, Secretary General, CCAAA - Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (Germany)

Topic: The Role of Public Institutions

Concept Note: Since 2013, the DFF has been digitising its collection as well as numerous other titles that are part of Germany's film heritage. 2019 has been a pivotal year, as a new funding programme was introduced - Förderprogramm Filmerbe (engl. Film Heritage Digitisation Programme) - which allows for the comprehensive restoration of more than 30 titles per year. The films are selected collectively by the digitisation team on the basis of curatorial and conservation criteria, with input from other DFF-departments. The selection of a wide range of titles is capital, as the works made available digitally will help define the canon for decades to come. The aim of restoration projects is to provide the best possible and most complete version of the film for future generations. This often means reconstruction with the help and support of FIAF archival colleagues. Respect for historical tints, intertitles and development processes is paramount. To this end, the selected elements are precisely inspected to ensure they are properly represented, before the workflow is discussed in detail with specialised laboratories. The DFF's restorations have been shown at archive festivals such as Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna, Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone and Cannes Classics.

Alice Plutino, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Topic: Technological Aspects/Directions

Concept Note: As part of the panel "Film Digitisation: Present, Status, Challenges, Potential," Alice will be speaking on the technological aspects and directions. She will present an overview of the current technologies used in film digitisation and restoration, as well as the most recent advancements of the research project DREAM-FILM, a project that aims to develop methodologies and tools that meet audiovisual archives' needs, reducing cinematographic film costs in time and resources by combining technical-scientific sciences with humanities and social sciences. The main guidelines for film digitisation and digital restoration will be presented during the talk, and some tips and tricks to make this practice feasible through the use of different instruments (from commercial film scanners to prototypes) will be presented. Furthermore, an overview of innovative techniques to characterise the film materials, such as multi-spectral and hyper-spectral imaging, will be explained, and their potentials and limits will be underlined.

Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, Curator of Silent Film, Eye Filmmuseum (Netherlands)

Topic: How will Digitisation Help/Facilitate the Transformation of Archives into a Participatory and Learning Space/Platform

Concept Note: The digitisation efforts undertaken by the audio-visual archives in the last two decades impacted the dissemination of the archival footage in various ways. Formerly, the film archive was the domain of professionals; necessarily involving high technical knowledge of filmmaking and laboratory skills around printing, grading, editing, etc. Nowadays, digitisation allows a lower threshold for the end-users; not only can everyone handle audio-visual files, they can also access them on various platforms, often for free. However, these developments place an extra toll on the film archives who not only must find additional resources and outlets to provide and share the digital versions with the users (while also adapting to technical innovations), but also must safeguard the film heritage for the long term.

Eye Filmmuseum has taken up this challenge and is constantly negotiating the balance between sharing its assets on various platforms while also maintaining sustainable policies that will ensure the preservation of the audio-visual heritage for future generations.

Cinema Curation Workshop

(20-22 March 2024)

A cinema curation workshop tailored for students passionate about film history and culture will delve into the intricacies of curation. Through comprehensive sessions, participants will gain expertise in curatorial ideation, methodology, and historical perspectives while also uncovering the diverse career avenues within film curation, from festivals to cultural events and art institutions. Here is an overview:

Cinema Curation Workshop



Ashish Rajadhyaksha
Film Scholar & Art Curator
Curating In The Age Of Expanded Cinema: Putting Mani Kaul into The Art Museum



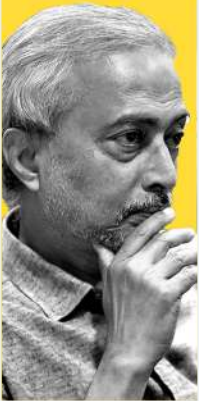
Ravi Vasudevan
Film Scholar, Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)
Cinema and the World as Process



Shai Heredia
Filmmaker, Curator & Founding Director of Experimenta
Experimenta - Critiquing the Mainstream



Nida Ghouse
Writer & Art Curator
Curator as Cat's Whisker



Moinak Biswas
Film Scholar, Professor & Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University
Film History in the Absence of Archives



Bina Paul
Editor, Former Artistic Director of International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) & Vice Chairperson of Kerala State Chalachitra Academy
Potential and Challenges of Film Programming/Curating in the Indian Context



Shabnam Virmani
Filmmaker, Writer & Artist
Journeys with the Documentary



Meenakshi Shedde
Film Curator, Critic, Journalist & Consultant
Contemporary Challenges of Film Programming and Curation



Soundcamp
(Grant Smith, Donn Scarfe & Maria Papadomanolaki) Arts Cooperative
Live Archiving and Acoustic Commons



Prof. Sanil V.
Professor of Philosophy at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi
Curating Temporal Objects



Dayanita Singh
Photographer & Curator
Mining the Archive



Patrick Campos
Associate Professor, Film Institute, University of the Philippines Diliman
Curating South-east Asian Cinema: Islands, Borders, Peripheries



Madhusree Dutta
Filmmaker & Critic
Curating the Time of Cinema: Project Cinema City



S. V. Srinivas
Film Scholar, Professor, School of Arts and Sciences, Azim Premji University
Curating Popular Culture: Reason, Resources and Methods for Making a Megastar Chiranjeevi Archive

Concept Notes:

Ashish Rajadhyaksha, Film Scholar & Art Curator

Topic: Curating in the Age of Expanded Cinema: Putting Mani Kaul into the Art Museum

Concept Note: This presentation returns to two art exhibitions in which the filmmaker Mani Kaul's work was transformed and repurposed into becoming a series of museum artworks. One was at the Fourth Guangzhou Art Biennale in 2011, called *Memories of Cinema*, and a second, more important, called तह-सतह *A Very Deep Surface*, at the Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur, in 2017. Both exhibitions showed Kaul's films alongside those of the eminent video artist Ranbir Singh Kaleka. In Guangzhou, we projected three of Mani Kaul's films on a single projector inside the art museum on a black wall. In Jaipur we went further. Filmmaker Piyush Kashyap converted Mani Kaul's legendary film *Uski Roti* into a five-channel work titled *Daata*. He also took five of Kaul's films, *Siddheshwari*, *Dhrupad*, *Arrival*, *Mati Manas*, *I am No Other* and *The Monkey's Raincoat*, to create a three-channel work called *Iti*. Both exhibitions, in Guangzhou and Jaipur, explored the concept of an expanded cinema, i.e. a cinema that expands beyond the limits of its conventional showing defined by three characteristics:

- (1) a single-screen presentation contained by
- (2) a movie theatre or other enclosed space, watched
- (3) by a static spectator who did nothing but watch the film.

It is arguable that none of these categories have obtained in anything like their classical imagination in India: with the cinema routinely spilling out, reproducing itself in ancillary technologies and modes, expanding into political spaces and new economies around, but not limited to the cinema. This presentation explores some of the aesthetic consequences of expanded film, and the curatorial challenges this posed.

Ravi Vasudevan, Film Scholar, Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)

Topic: Cinema and the World as Process

Concept Note: The cinema configures our relationship to bodies, characters, objects, the human and non-human, and the built and natural environments they inhabit. It does so by drawing audiences into sensory engagement, the play of images and sounds, of editing, movement and duration. We can situate such an experience contextually, in relationship to determinate audiences; but we can also consider its affects archivally and through curatorial assemblages. Here, we open the screen to reflections on how the surface we see was composed, how the things we see and hear and even feel were assembled for camera capture, and what other spaces and practices they gesture to, a kind of centrifugal dynamic that pushes outward from the screen.

This presentation is an invitation to think about the theme of Cinema and the World as Process, through an analysis of films, film sequences, and other media forms. There are two dimensions to this curatorial focus. A recent trend in Film Studies scholarship has highlighted a cinema variously referred to as "useful" and "instructional", as "films that work", as opposed to films that entertain. The functional uses of films are explored, specifically, for how they impart an understanding of how things are done, for example how an object is manufactured as a process, in a step-by-step way. Such films address target audiences with a view to instruct and teach for practical effect, in order to get a task imple-

mented. Secondly, if there is a process in the world – in a factory, in the building of roads and railways, irrigation canals and dams, in agricultural practice, in specialized fields such as engineering or medicine – then a cinema that seeks to instruct and inform about these processes also constitutes a process in itself, a mobilization of cinematic techniques to represent such processes.

As Salome Aguilera Skvirsky has argued, the process film, first identified with industrial process films, has great purchase on a variety of practices. In her analysis, the capture of process could extend to the patterns of everyday life and of mundane tasks such as bathing and cleaning (*Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, Chantal Akerman 1975), the detailing of the stages and materials involved in a bank heist (*Rififi*, Jules Dassin, 1955), and the careful preparation of a prison escape that carries with it an elevated, spiritual attainment (*A Man Escaped*, Robert Bresson, 1956). In this presentation, I want to consider the extension of this understanding of process further. While featuring films on industrial processes and the related phenomenon of transporting and sorting of goods in the market, I consider the police station and the court of law as other sites for the processing of subjects, and the possibility of cinema creating an expositional frame to capture the formation of a corporate personality.

Shai Heredia, Filmmaker, Curator & Founding Director of Experimenta

Topic: Experimenta - Critiquing the Mainstream

Concept Note: Founded in 2003 by filmmaker and curator Shai Heredia, Experimenta, the moving image art biennial in India, has nurtured uncompromising, fresh, compelling and critically urgent experimentation with the moving image in India. Experimenta has created a context for avant garde film in India, which has in turn played a significant role in countering the hegemony of the mainstream film industry. As an alternative community that reflects upon, and examines, the different traces of artists' cinema, both historical and contemporary, Experimenta has pioneered independent, new and radical discourse on moving image art practice. By bringing together Indian and international film artists with similar creative and socio-political concerns to compare local narratives, make global connections and identify translocal characteristics of artists' moving image experimentation, Experimenta has influenced and shaped both local and global trajectories of experimental cinema. Through this workshop, Shai Heredia will present the curatorial framework and key ideas that have served to nurture the festival for the past 20 years. For more information on the festival visit www.experimenta.in

Sanil V., Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi

Topic: Curating Temporal Objects

Concept Note: Cinema is a temporal object. How do we curate "time passing"? How do we distinguish the task of the historian from that of the curator? How does the curator relate to knowledge? We shall discuss these issues by considering some curious cases where cinema curates itself.

Nida Ghouse, Writer & Art Curator

Topic: Curator as Cat's Whisker

Concept Note: A cat's whisker is a fine metal wire shaped in a curve. In a non-electric radio set, as the antenna picks up signal from the ether, this wire is dragged around the surface of a crystal until it detects a point through which the current can flow. At the turn of the twentieth century when the gale-na crystal radio came into popular use, the physical principles by which the semiconductor worked were not properly understood, even assumed by some to be bordering on the mystical. Thinking through this operation, as one informed by a series of internal connections, this session asks what it means for curatorial practice to be true to material.

The session will move across two curatorial formats: a film programme "A Supplementary Country Called Cinema" which traces the arrival of sound reproduction technology to the Indian subcontinent; and an exhibition project "A Slightly Curving Place" which considers the political and performative potential that listening to the past opens up.

Moinak Biswas, Film Scholar & Professor, Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University

Topic: Film History in the Absence of Archives

Concept Note: A tiny portion of films produced in pre-independence India survives in the archives. The silent period is almost wholly lost. What exists from the 1930s and 40s is woefully inadequate for arriving at a historical understanding. How does the student of history proceed then? We shall focus on Bengali cinema to show how early press reports and newspaper advertisements from the end of the 1890s, followed by entries on film business and film reviews in the periodicals, help us visualize an elementary picture of the first three decades, and how a clearer sense of 'evidence' of the people, institutions and projects emerges when one adds the material from film magazines launched in the 1930s. Autobiographical accounts, increasingly common to come by from the decades that follow, serves as the most valuable material not only to glean and cross-check facts, but to get an idea of the connection between the historical personae with their times.

Madhusree Dutta, Filmmaker & Critic

Topic: Curating the Time of Cinema: Project Cinema City

Concept Note: The city and cinema: twins in the large clan of wars, moving people and moving goods, technology-based modernity, and colonial and post-colonial identities of the 20th century. They have never been separated in a crowded fair, and so have never got a chance to rediscover each other at the peak of their youth and at the height of their adrenalin rush – as happens in popular Indian film, finding the estranged brother. Instead, city and cinema have spun a thicker plot in which they impersonate each other. The city became a cinema to fantasize about and the cinema became a city to find a shelter into. This session will map the time of cinema by the marks it leaves on the body of a city.

Shabnam Virmani, Filmmaker, Journalist, Singer & Curator

Topic: Journeys with the Documentary

Concept Note: From musical travelogues to digital archives, lockdown Zoom films to animations for children, Shabnam Virmani shares insights from her journeys with 'film' and the diverse social contexts into which she has forayed with it - women's collectives, village yatras, cross-border conversations, urban festivals and, more recently, the Indian school classroom.

S. V. Srinivas, Film Scholar & Professor, School of Arts and Sciences, Azim Premji University

Topic: Curating Popular Culture: Reason, Resources and Methods for Making a Megastar Chiranjeevi Archive

Concept Note: This session looks back at an archiving initiative from the late 1990s to make the case for the film star as a curatorial frame for tracing intersections between texts, agents, activities, spaces and institutions that go into the making of the field that we conveniently call popular culture. The star in question is Chiranjeevi who had by the early 1990s become the fulcrum of the Telugu film industry—among India's largest and most prolific—and a fan mobilisation which had few parallels. A range of ephemeral objects and ritualistic practices from postcards written to the star to blood donation camps organised by fans complemented film viewing. These texts and activities also narrowed the gap between cinephilia, fandom, entrepreneurship, identity politics and political mobilisations. Tracing the linkages between them offers valuable insights into the place of stars, and the cinema, in society. The session will draw attention to a selection of materials and explain how and why they belong in an archive of stardom.

Meenakshi Shedde, Film Curator, Critic, Journalist & Consultant

Topic: Contemporary Challenges of Film Curation & Programming

Concept Note: This session will deal with challenges specific to programming and curating Indian films for international film festivals, emerging curatorial trends etc. Aspects like the changing perceptions of major European festivals about Indian cinema in general and about Indian independent cinema in particular will also be discussed apart from challenges before young Indian curators in the contemporary context.

Bina Paul, Editor, Former Artistic Director of the International Film Festival of Kerala (IFFK) & Vice Chairperson of the Kerala State Chalachitra Academy

Topic: Film Curation & Programming in the Indian context

Concept Note: The conversation will be about the challenges of curating and programming film festivals in the Indian context, especially with regard to access to films from non-European countries. Issues related to curating socio-culturally relevant film programmes that are globally contemporary in terms of form and aesthetics, and locally relevant with regard to sociopolitics will also be discussed.

Soundcamp

Grant Smith, Donn Scarfe & Maria Papadomanolaki

Topic: Live Archiving And Acoustic Commons

Concept Note: Soundcamp will describe their work with live audio streams as part of the Acoustic Commons network (acousticcommons.net). Feeds from a variety of sites and situations are relayed to an Icecast server, forming a 'live archive' of everyday sounds (locusonus.org/locustream). Working with live materials involves a different workflow and potentially a different set of approaches to those familiar from field recording, with its related kinds of editing, labelling, composition and archiving (Mark Peter Wright). For some artists, work with live transmission has led them to abandon recording altogether (Jiyeon Kim). For Soundcamp, recording becomes a way to document a relation, more a record of an act of listening, witnessing or transmission, than of an event or place per se. Often long and bordering on 'eventless', such listening situations involve a variety of technologies from sensor to playout that aim to be affordable and intuitive, widening participation in an often exclusive practice. Reflecting on recent work between rivers in London and Berlin (acousticcommons.net/~), and the ongoing project: Radio With Palestine (acousticcommomns.net/listen), we ask what kinds of approaches, tools and 'transmission ecologies' can facilitate the free circulation and exchange of sounds? In particular, what kinds of archives can document 'everyday resilience' or 'minor kinds of resistance' without drawing the energy away from grassroots initiatives and organisations (Burgum 2022)? In the frame of 'acoustic justice' as set out by Brandon LaBelle, we invite discussion on 'acoustic commoning' as a tactic that can support and extend the right to be heard (Ella Finer, Soundcamp).

Dayanita Singh

Photographer & Curator

Topic: Mining the Archive

Concept Note: "The Photographer - is an archivist of the world around them." I believe that of all the forms of photography - documentary is the most crucial - most needed. Yes we know everyone can photograph with their phones and AI can deliver images on call - but there is a tenaciousness, a rigour with which a photographer can keep archiving their subject day after day, year after year, decade after decade. It is this aspect of photography I would like to share with you. The photographer as the archivist. The aspect of time that photography captures better than any other medium. The aspect that creates a record for history. Once you have built the archive and it takes decades - then you start

mining it and that's when the form suggests itself. Sometimes new narratives emerge in this process, that I call book building. For me just making images is not enough - the images are the raw material from which you build something. Often in just their cataloguing the form will suggest itself. The analog contact sheet has led to many of my forms. I hope to explore this aspect of archiving with you - as the photo architectures/sculptures I have developed came from photographing in various archives in India. I continue to record and learn from the various archives that I gain access to. an Archivist of archives, perhaps. In a world where everyone makes photos - the photographer of the future may well be an archivist.

Patrick Campos

Associate Professor, Film Institute, University of the Philippines Diliman

Topic: Curating Southeast Asian Cinema: Islands, Borders, Peripheries

Concept Note: The lecture offers an overview of contemporary Southeast Asian films by reflecting on the strategies by which we name, describe, research, and curate them as cinematic formations. It takes off from familiar categories like "popular," "national," "auteur," and "independent" cinema and introduces newer ones like "little cinema," "film islands" and "Lumad cinema" vis-à-vis particular film histories. By helping us understand the uses, provenance, and limitations of such categories and appreciate the potential of alternative ways of imagining and speaking about filmmaking in Southeast Asia, the lecture provides a topology of the region's dynamic cinema cultures and the various ways we can flesh out connections between and among islands, borders, and peripheries, especially through curatorial practice.

ArCuRea AWARD FOR THE BEST CURATORIAL PROPOSAL

Sponsored by NFDC

As part of Arcurea 2024, awards will be presented to the Best Curatorial Proposals.

A four-member jury that includes a representative from NETPAC will select the best proposals from among those submitted by the workshop participants.

A NETPAC award for the Best Curatorial Proposal will also be presented.

Jury Members:

Patrick Campos (Associate Professor, Film Institute, University of the Philippines Diliman)

Patrick F. Campos, a film scholar, critic, and associate professor at the UP Film Institute, studied cinema and literature at the University of the Philippines and the University of Westminster in London. He authored *The End of National Cinema*, edits *Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema* and *Moving Image*, and programmes the Tingin Southeast Asian Film Festival. Campos co-organizes the Association for Southeast Asian Cinemas Conference. He is involved in various film festivals, including Singapore International Film Festival, Kolkata International Film Festival, Guanajuato International Film Festival, QCCinema International Film Festival, Jogja Asian Film Festival, Madani International Film Festival, Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival, Cinema One Originals, Image Forum Tokyo, Minikino Bali, Asian Film Archive Singapore, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design Manila, SeaShorts Kuala Lumpur, Cinema Rehiyon, Gawad Urian, among others.

Campos' work challenges notions of 'national' and 'regional' cinemas, in the Philippines and Asia. He has curated for institutions like the Cultural Center of the Philippines and participated in events like Cinema Rehiyon and Gawad Urian, contributing significantly to the discourse on Asian cinema. He is a member of NETPAC and FIPRESCI.

Prof. Sanil V. (Professor of Philosophy, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi)

Sanil V. is Professor of philosophy at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, India. He obtained his bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering and worked as a scientist in the Defense Research and Development Organisation. In 1995, he obtained his PhD in Philosophy from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. His recent publications include *Kolayude Koreography* (Choreography of Murder), *Public Sphere from Outside the West* (ed. Bloomsbury, London), *Time Passing: Kant Goes to Movies*, *Mathematical Idea and Cinematic Image*, *Special Effects and Reality*, *The Map of Objects* (On Sergey Parajanov) He teaches courses on Art and Technology, Philosophical perspectives on Fascism, and Philosophy and Film. He was the Watumall Distinguished Professor at Department of Philosophy University of Hawaii, USA, Charles Wallace Fellow at the Department of Philosophy, University of Liverpool, UK and Directeur d'études Associés, at Maison des sciences de l'homme Paris, Research Excellence Fellow, CEU Budapest, Scholar in Residence, Kerala Council for Historical Research. He also writes and publishes in Malayalam.



**Patrick
Campos**



**Prof.
Sanil V.**

Anindya Sengupta (Assistant Professor, Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University)

Anindya Sengupta is Assistant Professor at the Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University where he has been teaching for the last 20 years. His doctoral thesis was on auteur criticism and Satyajit Ray. His research interests include cinematic realism, auteur criticism, cinemas of Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak and Mrinal Sen and genre films. He regularly writes on cinema, media and culture. He has also authored a science-fiction novel titled *Aparthibo* and an anthology of science-fiction stories.



**Anindya
Sengupta**



**C. S.
Venkiteswaran**

C. S. Venkiteswaran (Indian Film Critic, Professor, Documentary Filmmaker & Writer)

C. S. Venkiteswaran is an Indian film critic, professor, documentary filmmaker, and writer. His writings on film and media, in English and Malayalam have been published in journals including *Deep Focus*, *Film International*, *Cinema in India*, *Bhashaposhini*, *Pachakuthira*, *Indian Express*, *The Hindu*, *Mathrubhumi* among others. He won the National Film Award for Best Film Critic in 2009 and for Best Arts/Cultural Film for the documentary film, *Pakarnattam* in 1995, jointly with M.R. Rajan. He is the Artistic Director of the Signs film festival for short films and documentaries. He was a jury member for best writing on cinema at the 60th National Film Awards.

Festival of Restored Films

(16-22 March 2024)

Celluloid Memories

Films constitute an important part of our cultural memories. Unfortunately, large parts of our cinematic heritage have either been lost or are inaccessible to us. Many films shot on celluloid have been destroyed due to natural causes or cultural neglect. Most of what survives lie imprisoned in cans in archives, labs or obscure places, inaccessible to the cineastes and the public. Every strip of film is a record of history; they are time capsules that capture time and space, history, and life-narratives. One can trace the ethos, traditions, and cultural nuances of bygone eras in them. When we lose those films, we lose a part of our collective memory.

ArCuRea presents a festival of restored films that will give viewers a rare glimpse into the pasts of cinema. These once-lost or forgotten treasures that were restored to life serve as a journey into the history of Indian cinemas; they are cultural relics and historic evidences that present certain forms of narration, trajectories of imagination and styles of visual rendition. They prompt us to remember and recall, reflect and ponder. They explore themes as diverse as mythology and spiritualism, caste and class divisions, and urban-rural divide.

The Indian films to be shown during the festival are divided into four sections.

Early Indian Cinema: Bombay Talkies includes films made by one of the most important film production houses of the early studio years. *Light of Asia* (1925), an Indo-German co-production, is a landmark in the history of Indian cinema. It has been meticulously restored by the National Film Archive of India.

Lost and Found features films which were presumed to be lost forever but were recovered many years later due to some happy coincidence. Films like *Tero Nodir Parey* by Barin Saha will be screened as part of this section after almost three decades. This section also includes *Marthanda Varma*, the only film from the silent era that survives today.

Centenary of Luminaries pays tribute to three legends of Indian cinema whose centenary is being celebrated - Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sinha and Arundhati Devi. *Oka Oorie Katha*, *Admi aur Aurat* and *Chhuti* are among the attractions of this section.

Frames of Diversity brings together a representative collection of films from across the country, made in almost a dozen languages.



Festival of Restored Films

Early Indian Cinema & Bombay Talkies

1. Prem Sanyas (The Light of Asia/Die Leuchte Asiens)

Director: Himanshu Rai, Franz Osten, 1925/Silent/BW/97'

Synopsis: Living an indolent life in a luxurious palace, Prince Gautama is insulated by his family from the harshness of the outside world. But he is destined to learn greater truths. He is shocked to discover the pain and suffering of so many in his kingdom. He abandons his privileged existence and his wife to become a wandering teacher, eventually finding enlightenment and founding Buddhism.

2. Nirmala

Director: Franz Osten, 1938/Hindi/BW/128'

Synopsis: Nirmala, born into wealth, was betrothed to Lokenath in childhood, fulfilling her mother's promise to a dying friend. Despite this, she pursues education fervently, becoming the first woman in her family to attend college for a master's degree. Her academic achievements cause tension with Lokenath. In college, she meets Ram Das, another bright scholar, and they form a close bond. Despite interference from Lokenath, Nirmala completes her education with determination, proving that a woman's role extends beyond household duties to contributing to society through education.

Centenary of Luminaries

3. Oka Oori Katha (The Marginal Ones)

Director: Mrinal Sen, 1977/Telugu/Col/116'

Synopsis: A father-son duo living on the fringes of a village believe that working is a fool's game, for the lord takes what little the workers make. However, tensions begin to rise when their indolent life is threatened by the arrival of the son's new wife.

4. Aadmi Aur Aurat (Man and Woman)

Director: Tapan Sinha, 1984/Hindi/Col/56'

Synopsis: The film depicts the journey of a pregnant rural woman who struggles to reach the town hospital crossing many adversities on the way. Surprisingly, she is helped by a man who is despised by his fellow villagers for being a poacher and a womaniser. The man, a Hindu, discovers at the end that the woman is Muslim and she prays to God for his well being.

5. Chhuti (A Vacation)

Director: Arundhati Devi, 1967/Bengali/BW/119'

Synopsis: Bhramar is a teenage girl who lives with her father and stepmother. Her relationship with her stepmother is strained. Despite harboring a talent for singing, Bhramar keeps her aspirations hidden. When Amal, a young man, arrives to spend vacation with them, a deep connection forms between him and Bhramar, leading to love. Encouraged by Amal, Bhramar begins to explore her passion for singing, but tragedy strikes when she falls seriously ill. The diagnosis reveals she is battling leukemia.





Lost & Found

6. Marthanda Varma

Director: P. V. Rao, 1933/Silent/BW/118'

Synopsis: Based on the Malayalam novel *Marthandavarma* by C. V. Raman Pillai, the film recounts the adventures of the crown Prince, Marthandavarma as he eliminates his arch rivals one by one in order to ascend to the throne of Kingdom of Travancore. The film also featured seven-minute actual newsreel footage of the temple procession of the late Sri Chithira Thirunal, Maharaja of Travancore.

7. Tero Nodir Parey (Beyond Thirteen Rivers)

Director: Barin Saha, 1961/Bengali/BW/78'

Synopsis: When a travelling circus troupe decides to hire a dancing girl to attract more crowds, the clown vehemently opposes her inclusion in their daily roster. In a drastic turn of events, the clown meets with an accident, and the dancer becomes his caregiver. Struggling to tolerate her presence within the troupe, the clown eventually loses control.

Frames of Diversity

8. Parashakthi (The Goddess)

Director: Krishnan Panju, 1952/Tamil/BW/188'

Synopsis: Brothers Chandrasekaran, Gnanasekaran and Gunasekaran are Indian immigrants living in Burma. Things take a turn when their brother-in-law dies in an accident and their father dies of shock.

9. Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe (Silence! The Court Is In Session)

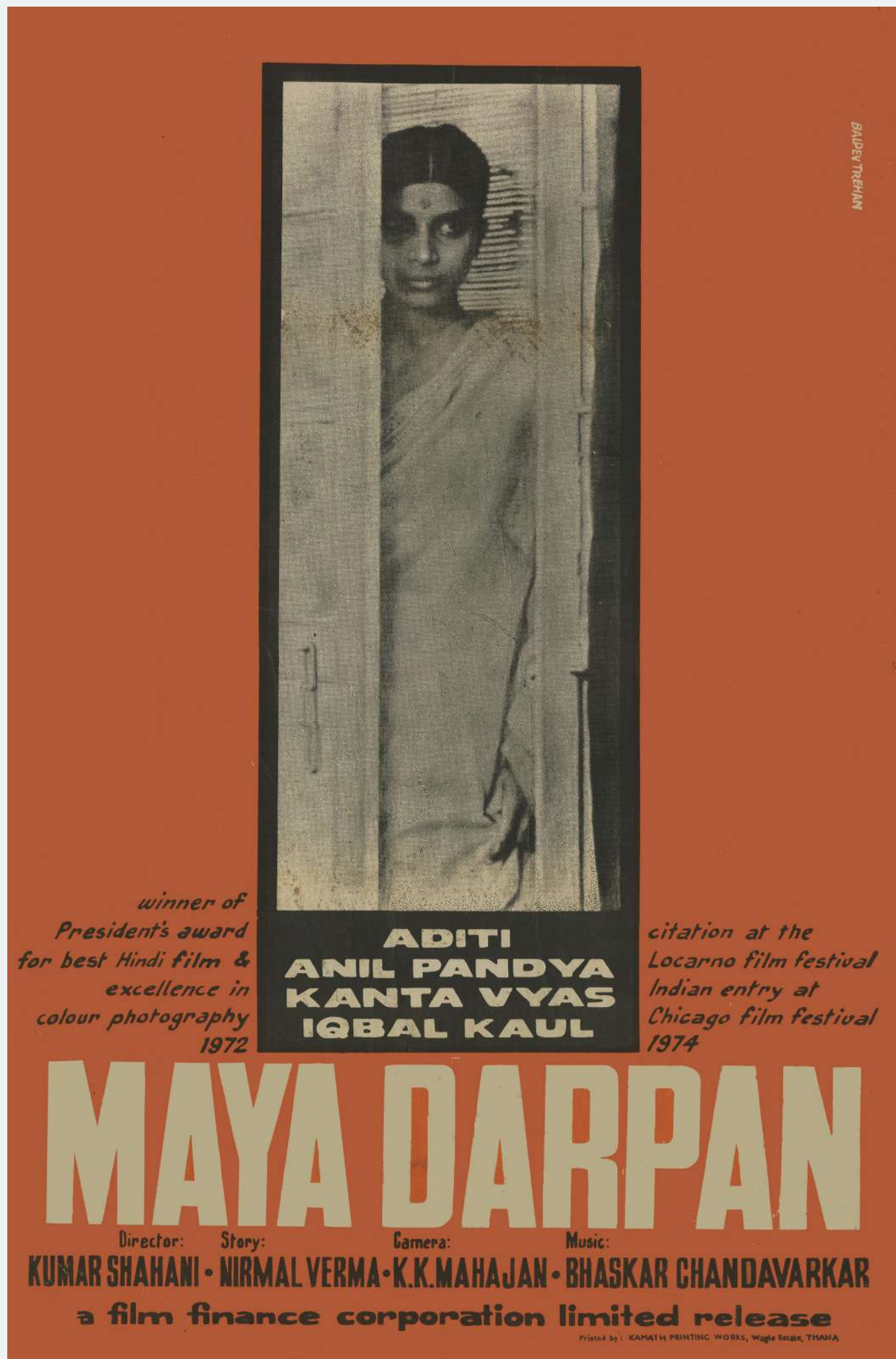
Director: Satyadev Dubey, 1968/Marathi/BW/94'

Synopsis: A group of teachers plan to stage a play in a village. When a cast-member does not show up, a local stagehand is asked to replace him. An improvised, free-flowing 'rehearsal' is arranged and a mock trial is staged to make the novice understand court procedures. A (mock) charge of infanticide is leveled against Miss Benare, another cast-member. All of a sudden, the pretend-play turns into an accusatory game when it emerges from the trial that Miss Benare is carrying an out-of-wedlock child from her failed illicit relationship with Professor Damle, the missing cast-member.

10. Samskara (Funeral Rites)

Director: Pattabhirama Reddy, 1970/Kannada/BW/113'

Synopsis: Naranappa is an anti-Brahminical Brahmin who spent all his life in defying Brahmin beliefs and lifestyles. He brought a lower-caste prostitute to the Agarahara and lived with her in his house. He even invited Muslim friends to the Agarahara and openly consumed alcohol and non-vegetarian food so as to insult the other Brahmins. When Naranappa died, his cremation became a complicated issue.



11. Aranya (Forest)

Director: Samarendra Narayan Deb, 1971/Assamese/BW/159'

Synopsis: A young forest ranger arrives at Rangamati forest reserve and encounters the forest mafia dealing with illegal timber and also finds them involved in killing rhinos for their horns. The forest ranger makes it his duty to fight the forest mafia who tries to eliminate him in order to continue his illegal dealings.

12. Maya Darpan (Mirror of Illusion)

Director: Kumar Shahani, 1972/Hindi/BW/107'

Synopsis: Set in post-independence Northern India amidst political upheaval, Taran, the daughter of a wealthy landlord, grapples with societal expectations. Labor union protests underscore the changing times. Taran's bond with a railroad engineer hints at romance. Encouraged by her renegade brother, she confronts her father about her future, challenging entrenched patriarchal norms in a shifting social landscape.

13. Agraharathil Kazhuthai (Donkey in a Brahmin Village)

Director: John Abraham, 1977/Tamil/BW/96'

Synopsis: Narayanswami, a modern man living in Madras, brings an orphaned donkey to his village, much to the annoyance of his family and the other villagers. Finally, they kill the donkey. However, as several favourable events begin occurring in the village thereafter, the villagers plan to establish a temple in honour of the donkey.

14. Kummatty (Bogeyman)

Director: G. Aravindan, 1979/Malayalam/Col/90'

Synopsis: The arrival of a mysterious old man in their village interrupts the idyllic life of Chindan and his friends. Upon trailing him, they discover his magical abilities, and are soon captivated by the spell-binding scenes as he conjures up fruits and even turns the children into animals. Before bidding farewell to the villagers, he turns Chindan into a dog.

15. Bhavni Bhavai (The Tale of the Life)

Director: Ketan Mehta, 1980/Gujrati/Col/130'

Synopsis: The film narrates a tale intertwined with issues of untouchability and the water crisis in India. It adopts a storytelling approach reminiscent of folk traditions, drawing inspiration from the well-known Gujarati folk art form called 'Bhavai'.

16. New Delhi Times

Director: Ramesh Sharma, 1980/Hindi/Col/123'

Synopsis: When a politician is killed, a journalist discovers that a Member of Parliament had the man assassinated. As his editor digs deeper, the complicity of higher-placed politicians comes to the surface, which leads to riots in one town and an attempt to suppress his story.



17. *Ishanou* (The Chosen One)

Director: Aribam Syam Sharma, 1990/Manipuri/Col/94'

Synopsis: *Ishanou* is a poignant tale of love and loss steeped in Manipuri culture, that tells the story of Tampha, a gentle, young wife who abandons her husband and daughter to join the Maibi sect of priestesses, responding to the inexorable call of the deity. She then goes in search of the Meibi Guru, whom she thinks has chosen her to be initiated into the sect. But behind her absorption in the mystical world of the Maibis lurks the anguish of a mother alienated from her child. The film beautifully juxtaposes the spiritual world of the Maibis with the rhythm of ordinary life.

18. *Shunya Swaroopa* (Contour Of The Void)

Director: Himansu Sekhar Khatua, 1997/Odia/Col/100'

Synopsis: Twelve years after joining the esoteric Mahima monastic order, Bikas goes with his guru on a journey in the outside world. Guru advises him to visit his mother and asks her for alms like a beggar. It is a ritual necessary for the monastic order, a symbolic cutting off all links with the past. However, his journey goes horribly wrong.

19. *OYOYO*

Director: Chetna Vora, 1980/English/BW/67'

Synopsis: *OYOYO* was Chetna Vora's third-year submission film which she completed in 1980 while studying at the Film and Television Academy of the GDR in Potsdam-Babelsberg. The entire film is shot inside the student housing complex of the University for Economics in Berlin-Karlshorst. Against the larger political backdrop which made foreign students eligible for higher education in the GDR, the film portrays intimate conversations about love, life and dreams, carried by song and dance. The chorus of a tune by Os Tubaões in Cape Verdean Creole gives the film its title.

OYOYO, Chetna Vora, Film and Television Academy of the GDR 1980, digitisation and restoration of the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, supported by the Film Heritage Funding Programme, financed by BKM, Länder and FFA.'

20. *Banga Darshan* (Travels in Bengal)

Director: William J Moylan, 1933/Silent/BW/10'

Synopsis: This is a one-reel silent film produced by the East Indian Railways in pre-Independence Bengal. It starts with a few scenes of the city of Calcutta, then moves to Darjeeling in the narrow gauge train and finally ends at Kamakhya Temple in Guwahati.

21. *All India Radio*

Director: Ezra Mir 1941/Eng/BW/10'

Synopsis: A brief documentary about the multiple programmes broadcast by the AIR. It depicts the proceedings inside AIR, such as the recording of musical programmes and news presentation of the radio station in Delhi, and the far-reaching impact of the broadcaster.



Live Performances

(17-22 March 2024)

Complex ideas of archiving and curation come alive as artistes take centre stage to disseminate archival knowledge through their performances. They engage in subjects as varied as lullabies, Kabir's philosophy, performing the archival absences to performances in silent cinema. These performances push the boundaries of common understanding of archives and the role of the artist vis-a-vis use of the archives, curation and research.

ArCuRea is presenting four live performances and each of them explores different ideas about archives. The meaning of archives, how one uses an archive, the possibilities that open up when one brings their use of archive into their practice, the access to archive and the absence of archives- all these aspects are touched through the conceptualisation of the programming of live performances.

Cinema Concert *Behula* (17 March, 6.00 PM, Main Theatre)

Live music by **Borno Anonyo** and other featured musicians with the screening of *Behula*, a digitised 1921 silent film, starring Patience Cooper. The film was directed by Camille Legrand and produced by Jamshedji Framji Madan.

Concept Note: *Behula* tells the story of rivalry between the goddesses Chandi, wife of Shiva, and Manasa, his daughter. The merchant Chand Sadagar is a faithful devotee of Chandi, and Manasa attempts to attract him. Rejected by Chand Sadagar, Manasa condemns his son, Lakhindar, to perish on the night of his marriage to the beautiful Behula. The next morning, Behula discovers her husband's inanimate body after he suffers a snakebite. She sets out on a long voyage along the River Ganges until she succeeds in bringing him back to life. The screening will be accompanied by a musical ensemble by Borno Anonyo and other featured musicians.

Lullabies Beyond Borders by Gurupriya Atreya and Vedanth Bharadwaj (18 March, 7.30 PM, Main Theatre)

Gurupriya Atreya and Vedanth Bharadwaj will be taking us into the holy land of peaceful sleep through sleep songs across boundaries, cultures and languages.

Concept Note: Gurupriya Atreya and Vedanth Bharadwaj will be taking us into the holy land of peaceful sleep through sleep songs across boundaries, cultures and languages. The duo has researched and archived several lullabies passed down through oral tradition in over 40 languages from across India and the world. Soothe your senses with lullabies, said to be the oldest genre in music, and sink into a dreamlike state in this unique musical offering.



Aisa Des Deewaana

Folk Songs of Kabir & Other Mystics

by Shabnam Virmani, accompanied by Shreeparna Mitra
(20 March, 7:30 PM, Main Theatre)

A soulful performance of Kabir's bhajans by filmmaker, journalist, curator and founder of the Kabir Project, Shabnam Virmani.

Concept Note: Kabir leads us by the hand into a 'deewaana des', a 'crazy country' far beyond any small-minded, mean-hearted allegiance to one religion or one nation - a crazy land where a house arises from the ashes of the one you burn down, belonging arises from an unbelonging, and a heady state is attained, when you cut off your head.

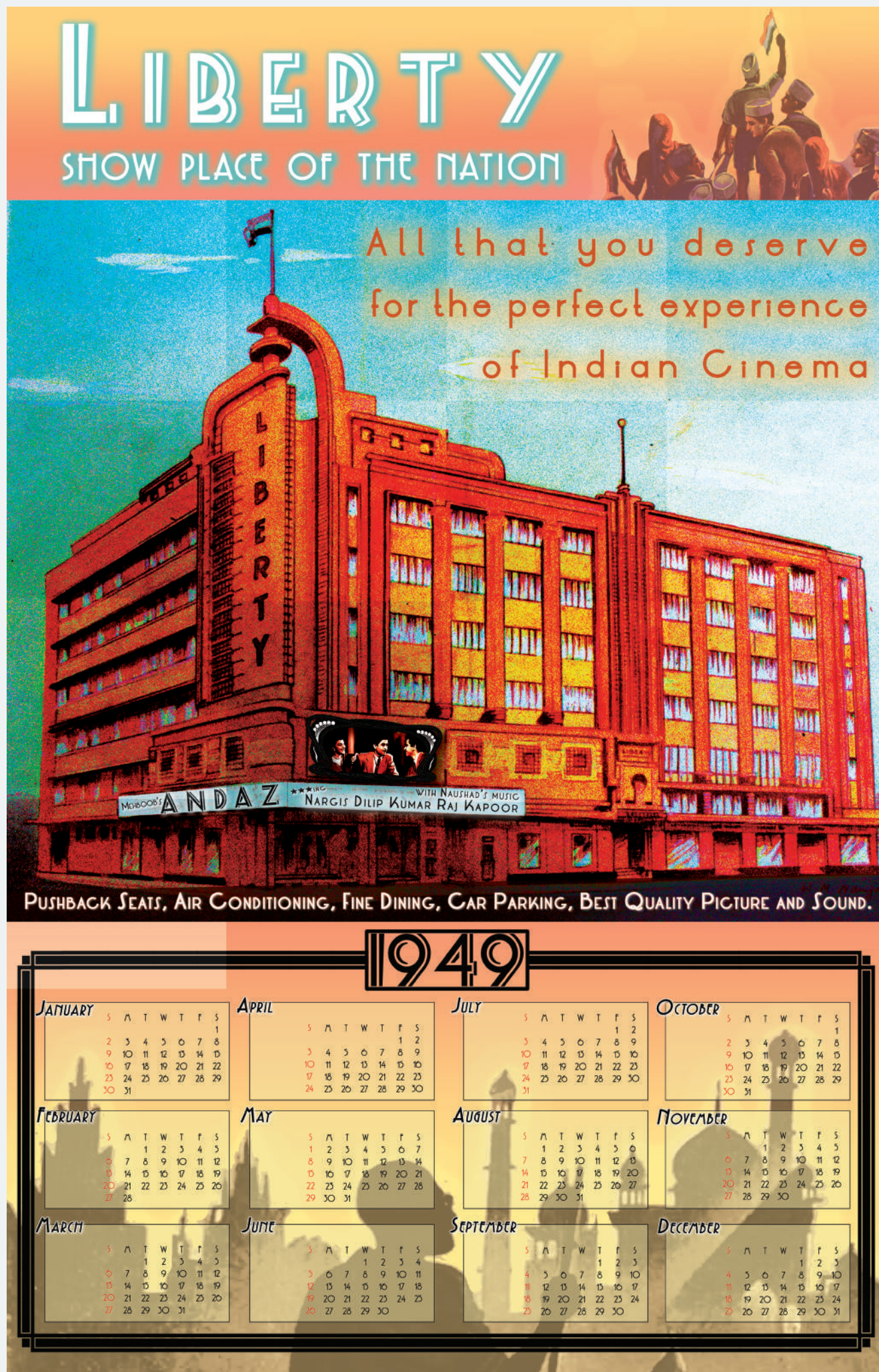
Lady Anandi: Redux

A documentary theatre performance by Anuja Ghosalkar
(19 March, 6.30 PM, Main Theatre)

Lady Anandi: Redux a documentary theatre performance by Anuja Ghosalkar, where an actor is haunted by the ghost of her great grandfather—a female impersonator in late 19th century Marathi theatre—every time she goes up on stage.

Concept Note: Lady Anandi: Redux, a continuation of Lady Anandi which was a documentary theatre performance by Anuja Ghosalkar that played across India, Germany and Sweden between 2016 and 2020. In that, an actor is haunted by the ghost of her great grandfather—a female impersonator in late 19th century Marathi theatre—every time she goes up on stage. It is the story of two actors separated by a hundred years: one who plays a lady convincingly, and the other, struggling to be a woman on stage.

Lady Anandi: Redux is a re-opening of the archives of previous shows, alongside excerpts of the "real" show. In the past three years the performer's body has changed, her way of embodying this performance has altered. The citation of past work in the present, is a deliberate gesture, as it brings with it the privilege and pitfall of processual and temporal distance. How can she re-cite her own work? What is unchanged? What is easily discarded? The original Lady Anandi was presented at that moment when research had ended, and the performance challenged the conventions of theatre. It drew the audience's attention to the process of making a work rather than a finished product. Lady Anandi: Redux may further unravel the murkiness of creating a performance. And critically, in the absence of a director, the audience takes on that role.



Exhibitions

(16-22 March 2024)

Exhibitions presenting film memorabilia and artistic installations seek to initiate meaningful discussions regarding the history, curation, and restoration of films.

1. Listen, The Photos Speak - Anuja Ghosalkar

In 2007, armed with an old dictaphone, I embarked on a mission to formally document the life stories of my maternal grandfather, Ram Tipnis, then the oldest living Hindi cinema make-up artist. My childhood memories are vivid with his captivating narratives - tales from his father's travelling theatre company, his overseas journeys, and his experiences as a make-up artist from 1948 to 1995. While my peers indulged in fairy tales, I was enthralled by firsthand accounts of Hindi cinema's golden era. Stories of daredevil drives with a 1960s dancing superstar navigating treacherous roads filled my evenings with excitement. My grandfather's one-room-kitchen was adorned with trophies and memorabilia, each holding a story. From a Dharmendra figurine swinging from a chandelier to photographs with Dilip Kumar and working stills from Shammi Kapoor's films, his collection encapsulated a bygone era. Motivated by a desire to connect with my heritage, I aimed to preserve the legacy of a forgotten technician, hoping to etch his tales into the annals of Indian film history.

2. Project Cinema City - Madhusree Dutta

An invigorating exhibition of 19 reimagined date-calendars by various artists under Project Cinema City. Project Cinema City was an art project on public culture. The project propagated free access to public culture material. It sought to renegotiate the process of iconisation of images in the public domain through the 20th century.

3. The Quondam Phone - Moumita Roy, Sukanta Majumdar

In 1874, Alexander Graham Bell and Clarence Blake constructed the direct ancestor of the telephone- the ear phonograph. It produced tracings of sound on a sheet of smoked glass. After speaking, users could immediately see the tracings of their speech. A telephone is not only a communication device; it makes the sound, an ephemeral material, somehow tangible by bringing it so close to us. The Quondam Phone takes us to the voices of the pioneering film artists who have contributed to the growth and development of cinema in India. The user can dial a number and hear them talking from the past. The audio interviews used to create the experience were conducted under the Oral History Project, a part of NFAL research programme, and are more than four decades old.

1st P. K. Nair Commemoration Lecture

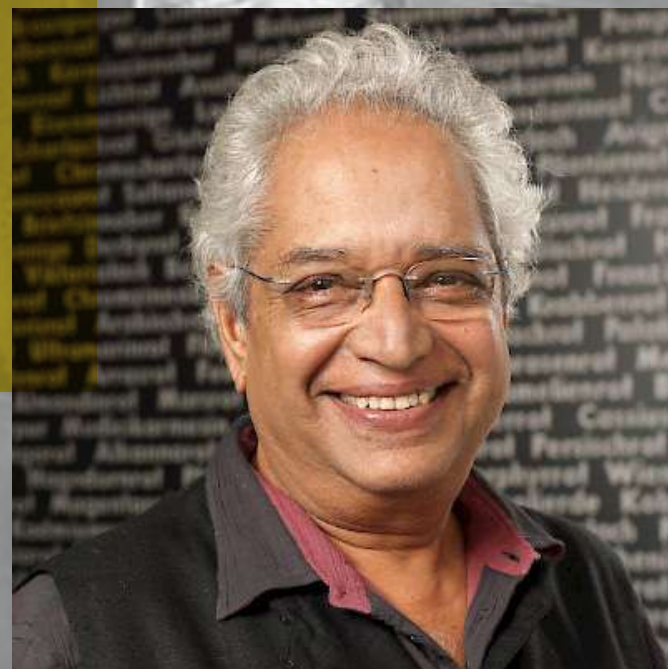
A memorial lecture centered around the themes of archives and memory, this event is scheduled to commemorate the legacy of Paramesh Krishnan Nair, an esteemed Indian film archivist and scholar who served as the founder and director of NFAI.

SRFTI wishes to pay homage to this crusader of Indian cinema by hosting a talk in his honor. These talks will deal with the idea of archiving and memory in their widest connotations, without restricting themselves to cinema alone. Our endeavour is to initiate wider discussions around different conceptions of memory in our world, the importance of preservation, and its relationship with other aspects of our culture.

Topic: Cinema and Psychology: A Personal Perspective

Speaker: **Dr. Sudhir Kakar**, Psychoanalyst & Author

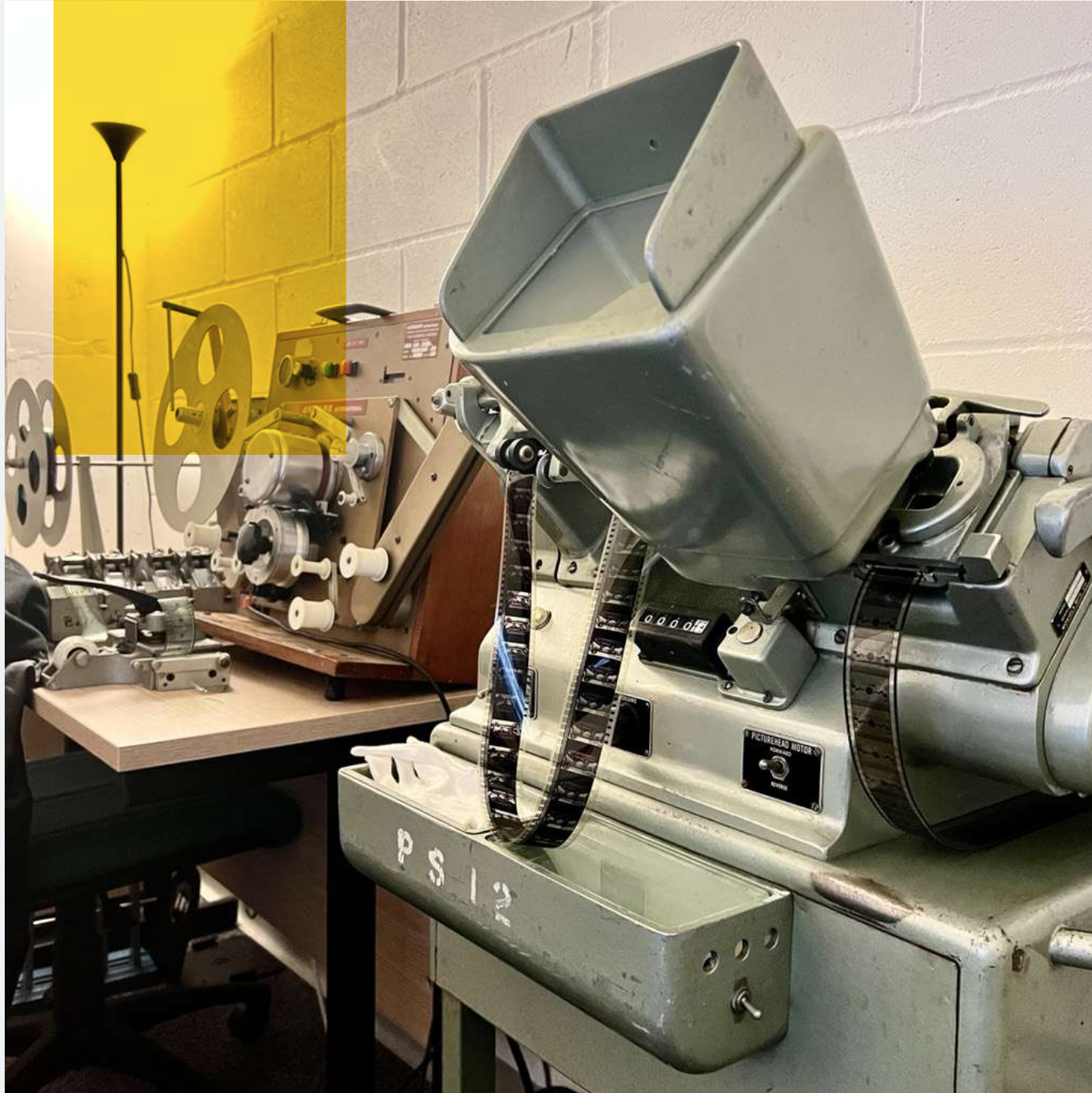
Concept Note: From the various psychological perspectives on cinema, this talk will focus on the analysis of spectatorship of Indian popular cinema and its cultural psychology. Beginning with his own promiscuous consumption of popular Hindi films as a child growing up in the 1940s, Dr. Kakar will talk about the various archetypal heroes and heroines over the decades.



Pramod Pati Cinema Art and Technology Museum

The Pramod Pati Cinema Art and Technology Museum, housed within the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) campus in Kolkata, aims to provide a comprehensive historical understanding of the art and technology of filmmaking. More than a repository of artefacts, it has been designed to serve as a valuable resource for research and encouragement for students, researchers and visitors to understand cinema as an evolving art form. An academic institution dedicated to building educational experiences, SRFTI has established the museum to bring synergy to the art of filmmaking, shedding light on the rich history of the craft. Hosting equipment and film memorabilia that shaped filmmaking in the analog era, the museum charts the evolution of filmmaking and technological advancement over time. Through interactive exhibitions and workshops, the museum enables visitors to delve into the intricacies of filmmaking, fostering a culture of inquiry and research, and in documenting the evolution of technology and cinema art, inspires the next generation of storytellers and innovators, shaping the future of filmmaking while honouring its illustrious past. The museum will be inaugurated and opened to visitors as part of ArCuRea 2024.

The museum honours the pioneering filmmaker, Pramod Pati, whose innovative work continues to captivate audiences even today. Pati's influential short films emerged during the 1960s and 70s, showcasing a blend of experimental and socially relevant narratives. After studying cinematography in Bengaluru, puppet animation in Prague, and the art of new wave filmmaking from Norman McLaren of the National Film Board of Canada, Pati, alongside colleagues like S. Sukhdev and S. N. S. Sastry, challenged cinematic norms as the Head of Animation at the Films Division of India. Pramod Pati's legacy, marked by his untimely demise in 1975, remains a significant part of India's avant-garde cinema. His films depict the societal reality of India in the 60s and 70s, artfully integrating western influences of animation filmmaking to blend past and future in tracking the changing political environment and administrative, infrastructural, and policy changes of the time.



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