

21st Chennai International Film Festival - Day 06

Dec 19, 2023

We welcome you all to the DAY 6 of the 21st edition of the Chennai International Film Festival. We thank you all for being such an encouragement and support to us and for writing such amazing movie reviews. We love your spirit!!

Movies that were a huge hit among the audience are: Inshallah A Boy, Rabiye Kurnaz vs. George W Busch, Sweet Dreams, I Can Speak, How to Steal a Dog, Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell and The Doll!

If you wish to share movie reviews or any feedback about the festival with us, please send it along with your name to icaf.2021@gmail.com

MOVIE PICKS OF THE DAY



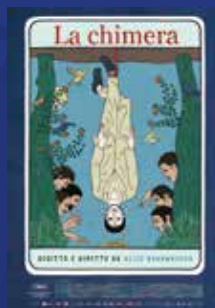
Afire (Roter Himmel)
Dir.: Christian Petzold
Germany | 2023 | 102' |
Anna Cinemas @ 4.15 pm



In Times of Rain (Tiempo de Lluvia)
Dir.: Itandehui Jansen
Mexico|2018|89'|
PVR - 6 Degrees @ 9.15 am



Sister & Sister (Las hijas)
Dir.: Kattia G. Zúñiga
Panama, Chile|2023|80'|
Anna Cinemas @ 12 noon



La Chimera
Dir.: Alice Rohrwacher
Italy, France, Switzerland | 2023 |
130' | PVR - Santham @ 7:15 PM



Kidnapped (Rapito)
Dir.: Marco Bellocchio
Italy, France, Germany | 2023 |
134' | PVR - Santham @ 2:00 PM

Photo Corner



At 21st CIFF



At the Screening of MY NAME IS GULPILIL
with Ms. Sarah Kirlew, Consul General of
Australia in Chennai



Screening of MY PAPAROTTI with
Mr. Chang-nyun KIM, Consul General
of Republic of Korea in Chennai



Team Saayavanam



Screening of Taiwanese movie WOMAN
REVENGER with Mr. Ming Shunn Tsai,
Deputy Director of Taipei Economic and
Cultural Center in Chennai



Team Thandatti

A Short Film is a Great Place for Experimentation: Director Ariel Rotter

Director Ariel Rotter is one of the new age directors from Argentina whose films have made it to the highly reputed Berlin International Film Festival and won/been nominated in Golden Berlin Bear/Silver Berlin Bear categories! It has been an absolute delight for Ms. Divya Jay from the CIFF team to understand his breathtaking and soulful journey of becoming a filmmaker!

How and when did cinema making happen to you?

I have been curious about various disciplines before I started making films. Radio, theatre, painting, art history, but above all photography. I started in cinema with the desire to tell stories through a camera and then I dedicated myself to writing and directing. I worked many years as a DOP (Director of Photography) and this background has made perhaps made me a director who cares a lot about aesthetics and framing.

What motivated you to make 'Un Pajaro Azul'?

'Un Pajaro Azul' is a story about the internal process of a person. The beginning of his maturity, leaving behind the place of a son to start finding his place as a father. There are two central motivational cores on which this story is built.



Interviewer: Divya Jay

The first one revolves around the eight-year search I went through with my partner until we became parents. The second is linked to the death of my father and specifically, to the impossibility of processing that pain and how, despite the passage of time, it struggles to emerge from the past.

When I was seven years old, my father woke me up and asked me to get dressed quickly. We got into his car. The road we took was not the usual one. He told me that I would not be going to school that day. We arrived at a bar next to a Sanatorium. He ordered me a chocolate, two croissants and asked the waiter to take care of me. I remember that the waiter put The Pink Panther on TV.

Soon after, my father came back with a strange look on his face. First, he stood next to me and then he fell to the floor on his knees, hugged my waist and started crying. He said to me, "I'm going to die." He added, "Please don't let me die."



Ariel Rotter

My father died 17 years later, from the complications of that diagnosed disease. But since that morning, there has not been a single day in which I have not lived with the threat of his death. That endless agony, that torturous condemnation, also seeped into the drift of this film.

When I started writing this script, I wanted to be a father. In between, many things happened, I made some films and my daughter was born, and along with her, an unimaginable and unknown dimension of love. How does our pain connect with what we love the most? How does being parents connect with being able to review our place as children? Some of all of this, I hope, is at play in this story.

Your most liked films and moviemakers?

I am interested in films that allow me, as a viewer, to determine what these films are about, what battles are being fought in the minds and minds of their protagonists.

What makes you like some filmmakers more?

Telling a personal story, in a personal way, and having the ability to convey a genuine emotion as a result of that journey, is what I expect from every filmmaker, whether established or unknown.

How do you feel about your film participating in 21st Chennai International Film Festival

It's a great pleasure to shear our films with other cultures, and one of my dreams to be able to visit India one day.

Movie Review Section



Movie Reviews by Ram Arunachalam

Paris Memories (2022, French) – Trauma still haunts a woman survivor of a terrorist attack in Paris, while she tries to reconstruct the sequence of the shoot-out event interacting with the other survivors and determine who helped in her survival during the shoot-out. It's available in the MUBI app to watch

Club Zero (2023, Austria) – A nutritionist in an elite international boarding school makes a special bond with five of her students making them do extremely conscious eating and taking bar minimal or no food is healthy. A different league movie, especially the state, taste and mood of today's young generation stays a puzzle, making every parent concerned and worrisome.

The Palace (2023, Italy) – Set on a 2000 New Year's Eve party at a luxurious Swiss hotel hosting many celebrities of various interesting natures/characters and the sequence of events that roll on. More of a commercial format, just keeps you engaged.

Movie Reviews by Filmmaker Vinod

The Old Oak – People from war torn Syria entering the UK and struggling to mingle with locals and in the end, everyone integrates due to certain circumstances. It's about the faults and kindness of people beautifully told. It was raw but authentic and deeply moving. All immigrants were too perfect which was a bit unrealistic. I would give it a 9/10

The Teacher's Lounge - The film tackles classroom politics in quite a direct and moving fashion. Filled with powerful performances, many from the child actors. This drama forged through betrayal holds us upright from the very first scene. By the time matters come to an explosive head, we ourselves are so fully committed to the journey that it's hard to take a breath. Miller raises the pressure with a brilliant score, underlining the distress without overwhelming it. I would give it a 9/10

Yannick - A dark comedy film which runs just over an hour is consistently hilarious and it owes it all to its incredible performer. Yaanick played by Raphael has taken the film up a notch. With just one location and few characters, Dupieux shows us that he's at ease with any genre. I would give it a 8/10

Without support from family a filmmaker’s creativity gets hindered: Director Arul Subramaniam

Interview

Ms. Divya Jay from Team CIFF talks to Director Arul Subramaniam of the movie PATTU that was showcased in the Indian Panorama section of our 21st Edition of CIFF. He tells us how important it is to have the support of loved ones to become a successful filmmaker and how his wife was his biggest support in his journey of filmmaking! And how he became a Film Director from being a Techie!!



After having 10 years of career in VFX, one fine day I quit my job and started writing my 1st script. Later after 10 years, I made my debut film PATTU. From childhood I used to listen to movie songs and watch lot of Indian movies in Doordarshan. My father introduced me to various foreign movies which made me to fall in love with CINEMA!

PATTU is a story in day-to-day life, also I thought it will be interesting when we narrate a normal event occur in an abnormal condition. After a decade of struggling, I got this opportunity to direct a movie. Though the budget was unimaginably low I didn’t want to miss the chance. Delivering a quality movie in such a small budget is challengeable. Then I thought of doing this particular story which will fit into the budget. I didn’t work as an AD to any director, I learnt the art of cinema on my own and by doing many short films. I am not a student to one director, but many masters from India and all over the world. My gurus are K. Balachander, Balumahendra, Manirathnam, Bharathiraja, Anurag Kashyap, Imtiaz Ali, Clint Eastwood, and the list goes on. My list is very huge.

My masters’ movies pulled me towards filmmaking. I learnt movie making from outside i.e., from watching other directors’ films. From those creators I learnt various aspects and techniques of cinema. They are not merely movies, but a textbook for me. Yes, as an independent filmmaker I took part in all the crafts of filmmaking. Like art department, costume, designing, etc. because budgets made me do all the work right from a light man to a director.

My days in Taramani Film Institute introduced me to World Cinema. Those days internet was rare, watching world movies was hard. One DVD costs around Rs. 500 which was not affordable. So, IIFI Goa and Film chamber weekly movie screenings were our hub. Without their support we cannot work or write scripts peacefully, our creativity will be hindered. Moreover, our victory without friends and family is nothing.

India, Iran, Korea & Hollywood helped me during my journey of filmmaking

Happy.... proud... about my film participating in the 21st Chennai International Film Festival.

MOVIE REVIEW
★★★★★

Of women, gender equity & the feminine gaze by S Viswanath

Gender equity, gender representation and providing that feminine perspectives has become the new normal at film festivals lately. The issue has been adhered to most vigorously and diligently in recent years thanks to the #MeToo movement that brought to fore the discrimination and habitual subjugation talented and aspirations women have faced across various streams of vocations, the film and entertainment industry not withstanding.

The democratisation and providing due representation for women in the competitive film and entertainment industry has risen beyond tokenism and condescending attitudes. As a result film festivals across the world have seen a fundamental change in the way the organisers have ensured women representation across different streams ensure true fair play.

It is heartening to note that the Chennai International Film Festival is also following in the precedence set by peer film festivals. A cursory glance into the number of films by women directors being represented at the Chennai International Film Festival speaks of the due diligence done by programmers and curators in this regard. As many as 20 films drawn from diverse countries by women directors from the 70 plus films in the contemporary world cinema competition and cinema of world section besides a representative retrospective showcased constitutes nearly 28% of films being shown at the film festival.

What is further heartening to note is that each of these women directors who have found favour bring a multifarious tableau of themes and narrative styles and sociopolitical concerns in their auteur works. It is emboldening to note that the closing film festival is the French director Justine Triet's Anatomy of a Fall wherein the wife faces trial being suspected of her husband's murder. Justine has been hailed as the promising new emerging talents of contemporary nouvelle vogue filmmakers.

Likewise, the retrospective representation figures a prominent and promising faces of Brazilian cinema - Lais Bodanzky whose three films - Brainstorm - spotlighting on a young teen dispatched to a corrective mental institution by his suspecting father and the true state of the corruptive workings of the cruel institutional system. Her Just Like Our Parents once again throwing light on filial relationships rounded off with her historical film -Pedro, Between the Devil.

The two documentaries on the aboriginals by the young Australian filmmaker Molly Reynolds. Similarly the French films focus featuring the troublesome and thought provoking film on the socially marginalised sections of society and the elitist's deprecating views on them in director-duo team of Lise Akoka & Romance Gueret.

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Alice Winocour's psychological and surreal explorations of a woman who survived a terrorist attack at a cafe. It holds an alarming mirror to the trauma survivors go through after such a life threatening cataclysmic attack. Similarly, forcefully focusing on the societal attitudes towards abortions in the 70s Blandine Lenoir brings to table another of the core concerns women face today and the laws on the issue.

The universal issue of immigration finds voice in Nathalia Syam's Footprints on Water as it follows an immigrant dad seeks his missing daughter, or for that matter the two other enterprising and engaging films A Letter from Helga by Iceland's Asa Helga Hjorleifsdottir and Act Natural by Alice Gruia. The other dozen films the Cinema of the World section provide for a perspective and periscopic look into the diversity of thematic concerns and independent styles of film making that these women filmmakers makers bring to the table providing audiences variety of ensemble engagements with the films at home.

Truly watching and catching up with some of these scintillating and fascinating films making for a deep understanding of women filmmakers and the singularly unique body of works they represent. From focus on women navigating societal discriminations to children caught in the crossfire of filial and institutional expectations and young adults, especially women teenagers confronting patriarchal and other issues across several strata of social fabric these women filmmakers live up to the promise they show in their empowering works. It is virtually charge of the women brigade, if on may say so.

SCREENING SCHEDULE

DEC 19 TUESDAY

SANTHAM	9.30 am After the Fire Dir.:Mehdi Fikri	11.45 am 35 Downhill (The Road to Eilat) Dir.: Yona Rozenkier	2.00 pm Kidnapped(Rapito) Dir.:Marco Bellocchio	5.00 pm Embryo Larva Butterfly Dir.: Kyros Papavassiliou	7.15 pm La Chimera Dir.: Alice Rohrwacher
SERENE	9.40 am The Thieves (Dodookdeul) Dir.:Dong-hoon Choi	12.30 pm Evil Does Not Exist Dir.:Ryūsuke Hamaguchi	3.00 pm The Business of Pleasure Dir.:Goce Cvetanovski	5.15 pm Manas: The Mind Dir.: Babu Thiruvalla	7.30 pm My Daughter My Love Dir.:Eitan Green
SEASONS	9.30 am Yannick Dir.:QuentinDupieux	11.15 am Bauryna Salu Dir.:Dong-hoon Choi	1.30 pm Man in Black Dir.:Wang Bing	3.00 pm Sembi Dir.:Prabu Solomon	6.00 pm Vindhya Victim Verdict V3 Dir.:Amudhavanan P
6 DEGREES	9.15 am In Times of Rain (Tiempo de Lluvia) Dir.:Itandehui Jansen	11.00 am Master Classes – 11.00 am & 12.30 pm	2.30 pm The Last Honour Dir.:Rosy Bora	4.30 pm Mankhurd Dir.:Praveen Giri	6.30 pm The Vaccine War Dir.:Vivek Agnihotri
ANNA CINEMAS	9.30 am Midwives (Sages-femmes) Dir.:Léa Fehner	12.00 noon Sister & Sister(Las hijas) Dir.:Kattia G. Zúñiga	2.00 pm The Palace Dir.: Roman Polanski	4.15 pm Afire (Roter Himmel) Dir.:Christian Petzold	6.45 pm The Plough (Le Grand Chariot) Dir.:Philippe Garrel

The Teachers' Lounge Unveils the Complexity of Classroom Crises: Abhinav Subramanian

Film: The Teachers' Lounge | 2023
Director: İlker Çatak

In The Teachers' Lounge, director İlker Çatak steers clear of the idealized educator narrative, plunging instead into a maelstrom of ethical quandaries within a German high school. The film, set in a deceptively familiar environment, presents a slow-burn drama-thriller that sometimes resonates and at other times infuriates. Carla Nowak (a rigid and ideal Leonie Benesch), becomes embroiled in a theft investigation. Her efforts to shield a student from prejudice spiral into a farcical unravelling of events. As I watched, the unfolding drama in The Teachers' Lounge struck me as less about the school itself and more a commentary on the unchecked mini-camps that bloom in such environments, magnified by smartphones and the internet, both smartly implied rather than overtly discussed. It's a tension that Çatak captures with a keen eye, blurring the lines between right and wrong, the oppressors and the oppressed.

Yet, as much as I was drawn into the narrative, there were elements that felt unconvincingly dramatized. Carla's unwavering stance against the bullying, facing physical and emotional onslaughts, sometimes stretched the bounds of realism. This idealistic portrayal clashed with the film's otherwise nuanced exploration of school dynamics. The film's abrupt conclusion left me both invested and puzzled. One might question the realism behind Carla's character – is such an unyielding stance feasible in the face of relentless adversity? Despite these reservations, The Teachers' Lounge succeeds as a thought-provoking piece, challenging the viewer to ponder the complexities of modern education systems and the realities they mirror. It's a film that lingers, echoing the unresolved dilemmas of our own school experiences.