



Puff
pondicherry university film festival

**OFFICIAL
DAILY
BULLETIN
DAY 3**



The packed auditorium listened keenly to the celebrated director as he talked about how his movies shaped up and on how the space has evolved over time to be more fitting to speak of similar subjects as those dealt with in his movies.

When asked about his controversial yet critically acclaimed film 'The Great Indian Kitchen', he replied that the film came into being after he accidentally got a chance to do the household chores, especially in the kitchen. The film being about household chores and the repetitive nature of them, he said the film was designed in such a way to ultimately make the audience feel the boredom. The shots and actions were repetitive, and the cinematography emphasised the actions rather than the actual scene. The director, who is generally tagged as a political filmmaker in the cinephile circle, repeated how politics in his movies was not a deliberate choice but happened as a result of the shift in the industry. He added that there is a reverse conditioning happening in the society as a result of the feminist movements and other political movements in the country. He also noted how the global viewership that OTT platforms brought about accelerated the paradigm shift to conceptual cinema in the Malayalam industry. Talking about two of his most acclaimed movies, The Great Indian Kitchen and Kaathal-The Core, both of which revolve around the premises of family relationships, the director emphasised how the current family system should be restructured. He noted how patriarchal notions are perpetuated inside the family and how both family and the education system teach us to go to war with others, especially with those who are of different identities.

**'...We keep
on
performing'
says
Jeo Baby**

Kaathal - The Core that deals with homosexuality in the country. He describes Kathal as a film in which the characters are innocent and society and its corrupted structure are the sole antagonists. In many places, including India, attitudes towards homosexuality have evolved over time. While there has been progress in terms of acceptance and representation, there can still be significant stigma and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. Movies like "Kaathal" can contribute to conversations about LGBTQ+ rights and representation in cinema, helping to foster understanding and acceptance within society.

The journey of understanding the plight of homosexuality in Kerala was very harsh, as the literature on homosexuality and related topics was very rare. He recalled how a couple of his friends who were from the community were in a relationship and how a few of his friends reacted to the couple. Jeo notes this incident as the one that triggered him to learn more about the community.

Jeo later talks about how little schools teach about peace and art, and how they teach a lot about how to fight. Fighting on either ideologies or ideas, schools foster competition and insecurity in the children. Jeo said that schools are not interested in teaching the basics like cooking, gardening, etc. They are solely interested in the war with ideas. Freedom of expression and whether to draw the line is an important discussion of our times. Jeo, who was dismissed from his college for making a provocative short, noted that art is something that is used to question existing structures. He believes that the most important job of an artist is to keep performing without fear.





Film Festivals

More than mere celebration

Festivities are always a matter of joy and celebration. They are gatherings of like-minded individuals and celebrations of what they stand for. Festivity often symbolises unity.

A film festival is no different. Film fests are vital in celebrating cinema in a theatre with audiences whose shared love transcends into much more- collective prayer that is spiritual, emotional, and, at times, both.

Film festivals are essential in giving smaller, independent cinemas stage to a wider audience. They often act as places where smaller launches attract huge audiences and interested distributors. These film festivals are frequently the only way these small films get a public screening, and the collective viewings act as a confidence boost for the up-and-coming.

A good word of mouth does wonders in the circuit of cinema. A well-connected film festival offers a healthy space for fostering relationships that stem from the love of cinema. This love and connection often lead to the sharing of ideas and the forming of friendships. The film festival also offers a space for networking with potential collaborators, distributors, or even investors. These associations can develop into future opportunities for funding or partnership.

Film festivals also provide venues where filmmakers can get genuine feedback and criticism, sometimes from the masters.

Film festivals feature many guests and experts known for their craft and offer a space to learn from them. The venues host masterclasses, workshops, and seminars conducted by industry veterans. These sessions often cover a wide range of topics, including directing, screenwriting, cinematography, editing, and producing. Filmmakers share their experiences, practical knowledge, and philosophical views on filmmaking and related activities. Participants have the chance to learn firsthand from experienced filmmakers, gaining insights about their creative process, techniques, and career trajectories.

PUFF, a student-led initiative, emphasises the importance of nurturing an open and tolerant view for art and differences. We wish to promote inclusivity and a safe space to express ideas. From innovation to rebellion, student-led initiatives have always been a voice for the underrepresented and repressed. This shared space acts as a collective, broadening the audience's minds to a multitude of philosophical and political ideas. As an alternative to mainstream tendencies, these initiatives stand as a monument of unity and celebration of cinema in its purest form.



The Ghibli Experience at PUFF '24

The merging of emotion and imagination

The only animation film, "Only Yesterday," was screened on the last day of PUFF. The movie is a women-centric realistic drama directed by Isao Takahata and produced by Studio Ghibli. Unlike the usual Ghibli movies that are curated for children, this movie is focused on adults and their nostalgia.

The movie follows the life of 27-year-old unmarried woman Taeko, who has lived her entire life in Tokyo. When she decides to visit her relatives in the countryside, memories come flooding back to her as she goes on a nostalgic journey. The film showcases Taeko trying to reconnect with her forgotten past when she was 10 years old and see if she has been true to her childhood self. The film beautifully portrays the mundane day-to-day life during childhood and adulthood and forms a connection between the two, which leads Taeko to self-discovery through memories.

Only yesterday was screened at Kathaikalam at 6 p.m. on Friday.

Through the lens of conflict

Documenting resistance with '5 Broken Cameras'

History is nothing but a fleeting collective memory. Those who wield power could shape the memory to what they want it to be. That creates the necessity of documenting the different perspectives of history. A Documentary film is essentially storytelling, but one which speaks about already existing reality. This sense of reality, of truth, makes it more gripping and unavoidably hard-hitting.

'5 Broken Cameras' is the harsh first-hand account of the Palestinian resistance from the perspective of the director-protagonist, Emad Burnat, a farmer in the village of Bel'in in the West Bank. The movie is not just a depiction of reality but

a part of the reality. Emad brought his first camera after his fourth son was born to record his family and their lives.

This movie is a powerful portrayal of how personal is political. Emad makes this movie over five years and the title alludes to the five cameras that were broken in the attack and invasion by Israeli forces. The movie begins with a strong tone by showing the five broken cameras. The movie was finally made when Emad joined Israeli film-maker and activist Guy Davidi, who edited the raw footage. The movie directed by the duo was well received by the audience on the second day of PUFF.



The curtain falls on PUFF '24

The three-day cinematic extravaganza, which hosted movies from across the globe, celebrated its closing ceremony on Friday to conclude the premier edition of PUFF. The ceremony commenced with the Pondicherry University anthem echoing in the DEMMC auditorium. Following this, Abhiram M P, student coordinator, delivered the welcome address and a formal greeting to everyone in attendance. To celebrate the culmination of the film festival, faculty from the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication, delegates from various departments of the university and volunteers of the fest were present. The renowned Malayalam filmmaker, Jeo Baby, was invited as the Guest of Honour. Prof A Muthamil, Faculty Coordinator for the fest, delivered the Presidential Address, in which he extended his thanks to the

alumni who helped the fest financially. Subsequently, the Head of the Department, Dr Radhika Khanna, delivered the Felicitation Address and shared the importance of perseverance, persistence, and conviction in values when engaging in filmmaking. Mementos were presented to filmmaker Jeo Baby, as a token of gratitude for gracing the event and engaging in an interactive session with the delegates and to Mr Karunakaran Govindaraj, for his enlightening exhibition of vintage cameras held at the festival on Thursday. The faculty of DEMMC and the non-teaching staff were felicitated by the Guest of Honour, Jeo Baby, to show the PUFF team's appreciation for their continuing guidance and support. In an unprecedented move, the housekeeping staff of the department, everyone's beloved akkas, were also felicitated for helping to keep the festival venue spotless.

Jeo Baby also addressed the audience briefly and shared a famous Tamil quote, 'Namma Pesa Koodaathu, Namma Padam Thaan Pesanam', which roughly translates to the sentiment that we should let our films do the talking. K Sri Surya, Student Coordinator, shared a succinct anecdote about the realisation of the PU Film Fest from a concept into reality and the efforts needed to launch an event from scratch. As the ceremony drew to a close, Nagaraj N, Student Coordinator, delivered the vote of thanks on behalf of the entire PUFF team. The event ended with the National Anthem and a resonating hope that future editions of PUFF will continue to inspire cinephiles, urging everyone to seek out new perspectives, embrace differences and celebrate the universal language of film. See you at PUFF '25!

Encouraging talent, applauding creativity

Student competitions at PUFF '24

As a student led initiative, the PUFF team understands the importance of providing solid platforms to showcase the students' creative endeavours. Taking this into account, the first edition of PUFF featured two competitions, Photography and Short film, as a part of the film festival. The theme of the photography contest was set to 'Street Candid'. Street candid photography captures everyday moments and emotions of people in public spaces, revealing the beauty of ordinary life. The competition was open to all colleges in the Pondicherry biosphere. The entries were evaluated by experienced jury from the DEMMC faculty, and after due contemplation the winners were as follows: Mushin M N was awarded the first place for showcasing excellent photographic skills. Milon Jyoti Saikia was the first runner up and Chaitanya Venepally was the second runner. Subsequently, the short film competition had an 'open theme' which promised amateur film makers cre-

ative independence. Vijaya Kumar M bagged the first place with his film 'Suzhal Nilai.' The second place was awarded to Pavarasu M S for 'Vidiyal' and Sanjay R was awarded the third place for the short film 'Ctrl Z.' PUFF gives its best wishes to the winners for their future creative endeavours.



FACULTY FEEDBACK

Sometimes I wonder! Looking at the students' faces when I introduce different elements of Film studies, I doubt my capacity to impress them. Now, without any doubt, I will tell you that they realised their Dream! PUFF. I hope future students also continue this wonder.

Once upon a time an editor...
- Dr T Balasaravanan

Allover it was a great watch! Nerve-wracking few scenes!!! As a crime thriller it was successful.

-A Death in the Gunj

I've watched movies based on true stories, but never seen an original camera shot during the event itself.

-One cut of the dead

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

'Pebbles' was disturbingly well made. Some scenes got me in tears.

-Pebbles

A TOAST TO OUR BEHIND-THE-SCENES HEROES

The PUFF team sincerely thanks our Dean, Dr R Sevukan, for his patronage and for the inception of a legacy. We are immensely thankful for the encouragement provided by the faculty of DEMMC and the financial assistance provided by Dr S Arulselvan, Dr D Niveditha, Dr V Shanthi Siri and Dr Samarjit Kachari for the realisation of the film festival.

We are incredibly grateful to the beloved alumni of DEMMC whose support made this event possible. Dear alumni, your involvement in the film festival has enabled us to organise the event and helped to enrich the love for films in the upcoming generations of media students.

Due to the contributors' generosity, the team could create a welcoming environment for cine-enthusiasts where they could gather in celebration of the love of cinema.

Alumni contributors

Aadith Narendar
Akshai P S
Anbazhagan
Anju S Kunju Mohan
Anna Keerthy George
Anup Dev Kishore
Bandreddi Sri Mukunda
Deepa Mohan
Deeshith
Devarajan
Gajalekshmi
Govindha Raji
Habeeb Rahman YP

Hariharan
Harikrishna
Jomith Jose
Karthik Kumar
Karthika
Kaushik Chakrapani
Kumara Guru V
Naveen S
Raj Anbu
Rajakumar
Ramesh Ram
Rose Maria Thomas
Santhosh Kumar
Sarath
Sayuj M
Sree Ranjini

Sreelakshmi B
Sunesh Parayil
Thasni T P
Viji

Alumni-founded companies

Adaline
LMNT
Motiontape

With Promise and Potential: PUFF 2025 Launch

The optimism for upcoming editions of the Pondicherry University Film Festival (PUFF) for the coming year is palpable, as the initial edition of the festival concluded on Friday. The students at DEMMC hope to keep this legacy going so that the love for cinema is celebrated with all the zeal and excitement going forward. In the closing ceremony of PUFF, the student representatives from the first year, Neelanjana Anil from 1st year Mass Communication and Pranav Bodhi from 1st year Electronic Media, launched the video for PUFF 2025. The video manifests the hopes, expectations, hard work, and love for cinema of all those who came before and will come after. The 40-second launch video was edited by 1st year students at DEMMC. The video was a stop-motion film that encompassed what PUFF stands for. "When the idea for the PUFF 24 edition started, the main challenge was that we never had a prototype to follow. Since this is a novel idea and we have set the template for the next edition, we hope the bar for the program goes up," stated Malavika, student coordinator, as she shared her expectations for the PUFF 25. Talking to Pranav Bodhi, student coordinator, about how he envisions PUFF 25 and about his aspirations for the second edition, he shared, "In PUFF 24, I was one of the first-year representatives in the core team, so I had a chance to learn how all this worked firsthand. Since all the work was done in a hurry, there were some small mistakes. But for PUFF 25, we hope to start the work in advance to ensure that everything goes clearly and smoothly by ensuring from the beginning that everyone is included and everything is communicated properly. We aim to keep this legacy going as such." The launch took place right after the closing ceremony held at Kathaikalam at 5 p.m. To inaugurate the festival's inception, Prof. K. Tharunikkarasu unveiled the festival's signature



TEAM PUFF 24

DAILY BULLETIN TEAM

SHREYA HUMNABADKAR
LAKSHMI VISWANATHAN
DEVANARAYANAN R
HARIKRISHNAN S

ANJANA KRISHNAN
DEVAKRISHNA S
RITWIQ B S
ANAGHA SURENDRAN