

# LEGACY OF LENSES

## The enduring charm of vintage cameras

On Thursday, PUFF 2024 hosted an extensive collection of vintage cameras to foster curiosity and interest in the newer generation for analog photography and how it results in outputs with peculiarities, such as the bokeh or vignette effect. The exhibition displayed various types of cameras collected by Mr Karunakaran Govindaraj, from vintage reel cameras, medium format cameras, box type cameras, one-time film cameras, 35 mm cameras, miniature film cameras, point and shoot analog cameras to analog movie cameras. The exhibition also showcased his collection of anamorphic lenses and digital cameras set with vintage analog lenses. One spectator from the Department of French, Hadiya Backer, shared that she wishes analog cameras would make a comeback. She recalled fondly that the exhibition took her back to her childhood when her mother would take photos of her younger self with an analog camera. "What is a man but the sum of his memories?" These words may come from a video game, but they reveal what humans hold in paramount regard our memories that serve as recollections of significant events. Since its inception, cameras and photography have been among the most widely used inventions. The ability to freeze time, capture happy, celebratory, bittersweet moments and revisit them with nostalgic smiles has made cameras an integral part of our everyday lives. Although we now have cameras at our fingertips on our phones and laptops, it wasn't always that

way. Once upon a time, only the professionals used 0cameras, and even amateurish dabbling in the art of photography was extremely costly. But technologies have changed, and digital cameras have made photography easy and accessible. While DSLRs are now commonplace, some individuals still have an unending love for analog cameras. One such person is Karunakaran Govindaraj, an employee of Pondicherry University, whose passion for photography is only second to his love for analog cameras. Karunakaran's fascination with photography began during his schooling days when he would borrow his friend's camera and take it with him on trips. By 2006, he became interested in how analog lenses would work with digital SLR cameras. Since he couldn't buy lenses separately, he started buying cameras, which soon turned into a grand collection of approximately 90 cameras with 40 additional lenses. His keen interest in monochrome photography with vintage cameras has led him to start a YouTube channel (Karuna's Vintage Edition) where he uploads videos that teach viewers about operating analog cameras and shooting with them. The exhibition was hosted at Parvaai at DEMMC from 10 am to 8 pm.

**PUFF**  
pondicherry university film festival

**OFFICIAL  
DAILY  
BULLETIN  
DAY 2**

## 'Mad Max: Fury Road' Revvs up PUFF

On the second day of PUFF, cinephiles were treated to a mesmerizing showcase of George Miller's visionary masterpiece, "Mad Max: Fury Road" as part of special screening. The cult favourite film was a natural choice for the special screening, captivating audiences with its thrilling narrative and breathtaking visuals. As it also keeps the anticipation building for the upcoming instalment, "Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga," slated for release later this year. Muthamil sir joined the screening with the students with exhilaration. The audience was enthralled by the high-octane chase across the desert, where Max and Imperator Furiosa unite to defy the despotic rule of Immortan Joe and liberate a group of captive women. With accolades ranging from Best Film to critical acclaim at the 88th Academy Awards, "Mad Max: Fury Road" stands as a testament to the power of cinematic storytelling, seamlessly blending action, emotion, and social commentary in a post-apocalyptic world. The film's impact was palpable, leaving an indelible mark on all who experienced its awe-inspiring spectacle. The movie was screened at 11 AM in "Amaippu."



**D**ecay is a strong word. More frightful than 'death' or 'end'. Because decay symbolises the process of dying—the process of wearing out and becoming useless and dead. Movies, memory, and mankind, everything ultimately will decay. Being captured on film, every movie ever was destined to die. And thus the history and memory along with it.

Kummatty (1979) by G. Aravindan has been in the process of decay for a long time. The film follows a stray and mysterious man, with a lot of tricks up his sleeves, spawning from the nature unexplained and lures the carefree children roaming around, like the Pied Piper. The film is essentially a mood poem that is very strict in its stature but a lot more playful in its form. The film follows no concrete storyline and focuses more on the tone and creating a sense of fleeting unexplained yet interesting images like a folklore. The only print available of the film was a shabby and fading print that did not do any justice to the amazing cinematography and compositions in the film.

The vast majority of movies from the silent era are now considered lost forever due to various reasons, such as the deterioration of the highly flammable cellulose nitrate film stock, intentional destruction, and a lack of preservation efforts.

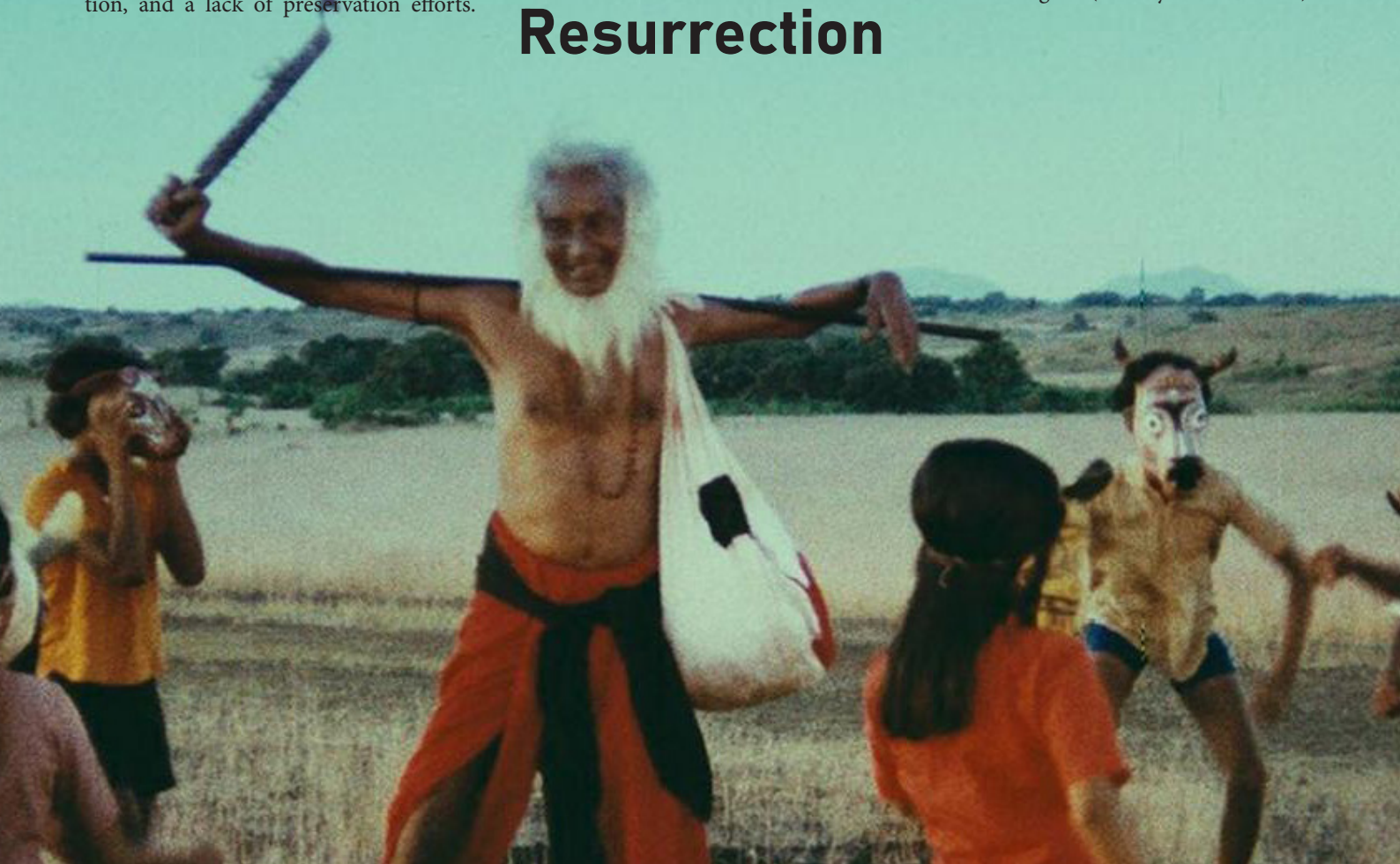
**“**  
**To deal with the dying is equally tiring and humane. PUFF will premiere the restored version of ‘Kummatty’ as a token of respect and love and the constant labour of love that goes behind the restoration and the making of films.**  
**”**

## **Film Restoration; Death and Resurrection**

Film preservationist Robert A. Harris explains that many early films were not saved because studios didn't see them as valuable and needed space for newer productions. Therefore, there's a pressing need for film historians to prioritise the preservation of surviving silent films.

The Film Foundation's World Cinema Project, led by Martin Scorsese, announced on July 19, 2021, its plan to restore the film "Kummatty." Collaborating with the Film Heritage Foundation and Cineteca di Bologna, they worked on restoring the film's lost color palette using prints from the National Film Archive of India. Scorsese expressed his admiration for director Aravindan and hailed "Kummatty" as one of his greatest works. He emphasised the importance of sharing such cinematic gems with a wider audience, calling it a significant discovery. The film was restored in 4K, making use of a vintage 35mm print struck, which was the best surviving print; that was the original camera negative, which was preserved at the National Film Archive of India. A second 35mm print with English subtitles was used as a reference. Colour grading was overseen by the film's cinematographer, Shaji N. Karun.

The screening will take place at 9 a.m. at Thirairangam (Gallery Classroom 2).





## IN CONVERSATION

# Cinematic language and gender politics

Pondicherry University Film Festival will host Mollywood director Jeo Baby in a discussion about gender politics and cinema on the final day of the festival. Theatres are spaces for breeding or garnering political discourse. Cinema is evolving itself, reshaping its palette, and so are the viewers. Cinematic language manifests and shapes how a thing or an idea is conceptualised in society, and the redefined gender lens in cinemas is readjusting the orientation of power and influence.

Jeo Baby is an acclaimed director from the Malayalam film industry, whose recent movies have been a loud critique of the notions of patriarchy, gender identities and has brought a novel female perspective to the industry. His movies have been received on both ends with praise and criticism alike. Jeo Baby will be leading the dis-

cussion titled, "Cinematic language and gender politics" which is scheduled for 3:30 pm at Kathaikalam on the final day of PUFF.



*"Its unique storytelling and suspenseful plot make it a must-watch for fans of realistic crime thrillers."*

- Aaranya Kaandam

*"Gripping from start to finish. Loved every bit of it."*

- Wadjda

*"The movie is loved for being simple, real, and touching, making it a must-watch for fans of meaningful films."*

- C/o Kancharapalem

*"It's praised for its creative storytelling, strong performances, and impressive visuals, making it a captivating movie for me."*

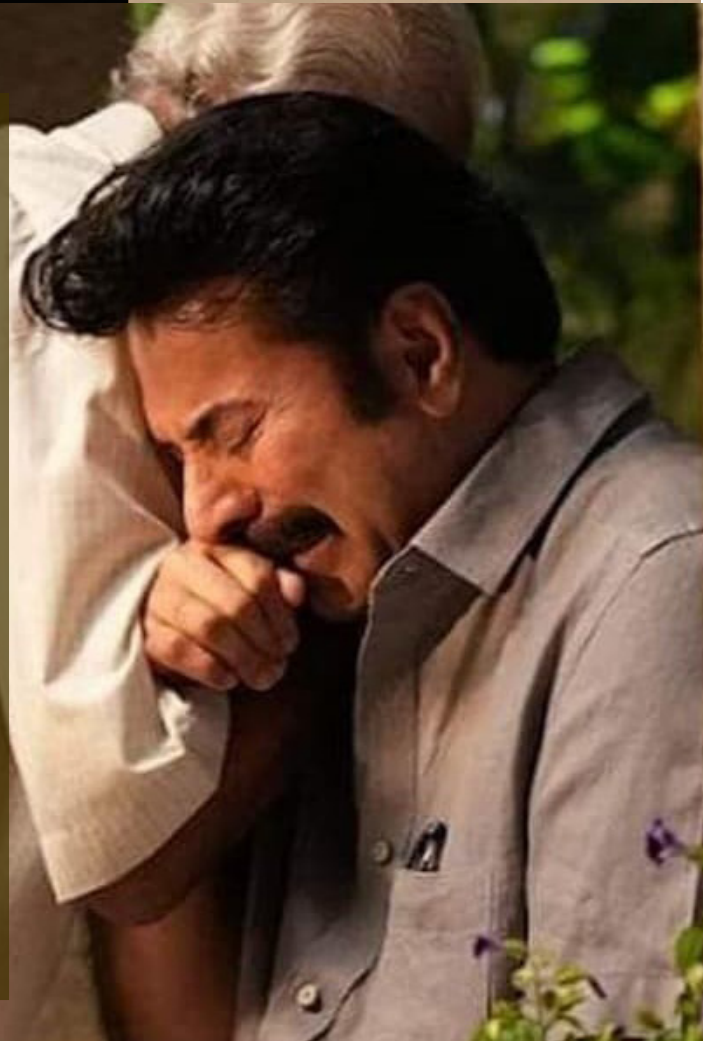
- Garuda Gamana  
Vrishabha Vahana

## Addressing the Unaddressed:

### Kaathal set to screen at 1pm

Jeo Baby's most recent work, 'Kaathal: the Core', is set to screen at PUFF on Friday. Starring Mammooty and Jyothika, the film comfortably addresses a subject that is still considered taboo in today's society. The widely acclaimed 2023 movie was also screened at IFFI and IFFK. The movie was also met with retaliation from

religious groups, citing that the content was about the LGBTQ community. Jeo Baby comes at a full circle, from getting expelled from college for making a feature film to making a mainstream movie with one of the industry's veterans with similar theme. Kaathal will be screened in Kathaikalam at 1 p.m. on Friday.







# SCHEDULE

## DAY 3

09:00 AM - 12:00 PM

01:00 PM - 03:00 PM

03:30 PM - 05:30 PM

06:00 PM - 08:00 PM

**KATHAIKALAM**  
(AUDITORIUM)

CLARA SOLA  
NATHLIEALVO ALVERZ  
MESEN  
FANTASY  
106 MIN  
2021 - SPANISH

KATHAL  
JEO BABY  
DRAMA  
112 MIN  
2023 - MALAYALAM

**INTERACTIVE  
SESSION WITH  
JEO BABY**

ONLY YESTERDAY  
ISAO TAKAHATA  
ROMANCE DRAMA  
118 MIN  
1991 - JAPANESE

**AMAIPPU**  
(GALLERY  
CLASSROOM 1)

LAMB  
VALDIMAR  
JOHANNSSON  
FANTASY  
106 MIN  
ISLANDIA

A DEATH IN  
THE GUNJ  
KONKONA SEN  
SHARMA  
THRILLER  
110 MIN  
2016 - ENGLISH

ONE CUT OF  
THE DEAD  
SHINICHIROUEDA  
COMEDY  
97 MIN  
2017 - JAPANESE

**THIRAIARANGAM**  
(GALLERY  
CLASSROOM 2)

KUMMATTY  
G ARAVINDHAN  
DRAMA  
90 MIN  
1979 - MALAYALAM

AWE  
PRASANTH VARMA  
MYSTERY  
150 MIN  
2018 - ENGLISH

THE MEDIUM  
BANJONG  
PISANTHANAKUN  
HORROR  
131 MIN  
2021 - THAI

