



**OFFICIAL
DAILY
BULLETIN
PRE FEST**



Welcome to PUFF, Pondicherry University's premier student-led film festival that aims to celebrate cinema, imagination and the craft of filmmaking. Cinema forms the fabric of our culture. Across this land of diverse languages, our admiration for movies helps us form connections with fellow cinephiles. Strangers who enter a theatre with different experiences and backgrounds, leave as companions with memories of shared laughter, tears and moments of awe. Films transport us into different worlds through a multitude of narratives and emotions, fostering empathy and understanding.

Discussing movies, critiquing performances, and analysing themes provide avenues for meaningful conversations while deepening our understanding of society. In this way, cinema becomes a universal language, bringing people together by tapping into our shared humanity and collective imagination. Dear students, delegates and film enthusiasts, we eagerly await your presence at the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication from 3rd to 5th April. Join us and hop on the omnibus, which will take us across India and traverse the globe to share our love for films and storytelling excellence.

FOREWORD

As students of Electronic Media and Mass Communication at Pondicherry University, we embarked on our academic journey with a tapestry of aspirations and a mosaic of ideologies. Our cohort is a vibrant blend of individuals from varied educational and linguistic backgrounds, united by a common pursuit.

We all have a love for cinema. One day we thought, why not have our own film festival right here at our university? So, we got together, did some research, and turned to people who knew about organizing film festivals. When we shared our idea with our classmates, everyone was excited and wanted to help. This support made us believe we could really do it. We decided to call it the Pondicherry University Film Festival (PUFF). With help from our juniors, teachers, and department, we planned to screen around 30 movies, have contests on short films and photography, and invite special guests who are prominent in the

Indian film industry for dialogical discourse.

But we faced a challenge: we needed capital to run a festival without glitches. Amazingly, we overcame this challenge as our friends, teachers, and even former students helped us with this. Everyone showed their love for this initiative of ours. Each and every student of our department enthusiastically stood to conduct the festival. We very joyfully announce that our dream is turning into reality. We're so grateful to all the students, teachers, staff, and alumni who supported us. PUFF celebrates the collective spirit and its power to rise above hurdles and uncertainties. Beyond cinema, we truly believe that PUFF stands as a monument to what bringing people together can create, just like cinema!

- K Sri Surya

A NOTE FROM THE CURATOR

Welcome to the First Edition of Pondicherry University Film Festival (PUFF)!

I believe that one movie can change one's life. When I watch films like 'Close' (2022), directed by Lukas Dhont, the level of elevation my life gets is immense. This film beats guilt into the soul while slowly healing it at the same time. As an aspiring filmmaker, such films inspire me to make films and kindle the process of thinking about what I will give to the world from the formidable filmmaking process.

Cinema is magical and cathartic and can move even the strongest among us to weep with grief and joy. While talking about the magic of cinema, I have to mention the classic 'Cinema Paradiso' (1988). This coming-of-age film of a kid growing up in a cinema theatre for most of his life made me sit with him throughout the development of cinema in that smoke-filled, sweating cinema theatre. As a kid lost in the theatres, he wanders through his life and returns to the cinema (home). Homecoming is incredibly emotional for everyone; we identify with the kid who comes back home and all cry for that kid.

Once appreciating the classics was done and dusted, I curated 'Joyland' (2022) and 'Fallen Leaves' (2023), some of the

more recent films for the PUFF lineup. Celebrated in film festivals around the world, these films from Pakistan and Finland bring the empathy of humankind knocking on our doors in the Southern part of India. On the other hand, 'Fandry' (2013) is a homegrown masterpiece. It is an unmissable piece of art, a subtle yet hard slap in the face of every Indian who is still immersed in regressive discourses. 'Fandry' is simply a gamechanger in Indian cinema.

While not giving into the aura of films with strong political and emotional narratives, we ought to cherish the well-crafted genre films and showcase them in our film festival. Films such as 'Clara Sola' (2021), 'Kummatty' (1979), 'Lamb' (2021) and 'The Medium' (2021) are simply craftsmanship at its best.

Cinema is not just limited to the arthouse population but is celebrated in the streets and cities worldwide. The lineup also includes films such as, 'Garuda Gamana Vrishabha Vaahana' (2021), 'C/O Kancharapalem' (2018), 'Aaranya Kaandam' (2011), 'Great Battle' (2018) and 'Hateful Eight' (2015). These action noirs have been screen-killers across the globe and rocked us with a unique sense of thrill.

To me, a textbook example of a world cinema made with the heart of a woman

is 'Wadjda' (2012). With '5 broken cameras' (2011), it gives a peek into the Middle East. Wadja's selection is the headnod we give a historical event as it is the first film made by a Saudi Arabian woman. In the age of emerging voices from all over the world, our homegrown 'Kaathal' (2023) has reached the homes of every woman whose voice was never heard before.

Our shared love for cinema has propelled us to celebrate this art form through the medium of a festival. Films curated for our first edition encapsulate the idea of "Films for Everyone". We thus present you with this diverse palate of films from around the world, catering to various genres and tasting an array of languages. From the profound classics to the recent festival candidates, from action to romance, from Indian to International, I wish for this edition of PUFF to promote a culture of film watching and appreciation on our campus.

Here's to the love of cinema!

- B Keerthivaasan



BIRTH OF CLASSICS

AND THE IDEA OF TIME

Cinema being a fairly recent art, classic is a tricky word to ornate a film with. When you look at literature or music, which boasts a very long history, the term classic makes much more sense and holds much more weight. Dante, Shakespeare, Jane Austen—everyone has stood the test of time and has seeped into this collective subconscious regarding the idea of a work being profound.

One very profound aspect of the idea of a classic is its originality. The term 'original' encompasses a lot of ideas like how the medium is used, how the sounds are played, how the camera moves, or even how the wind blows in the film.

Classics are usually

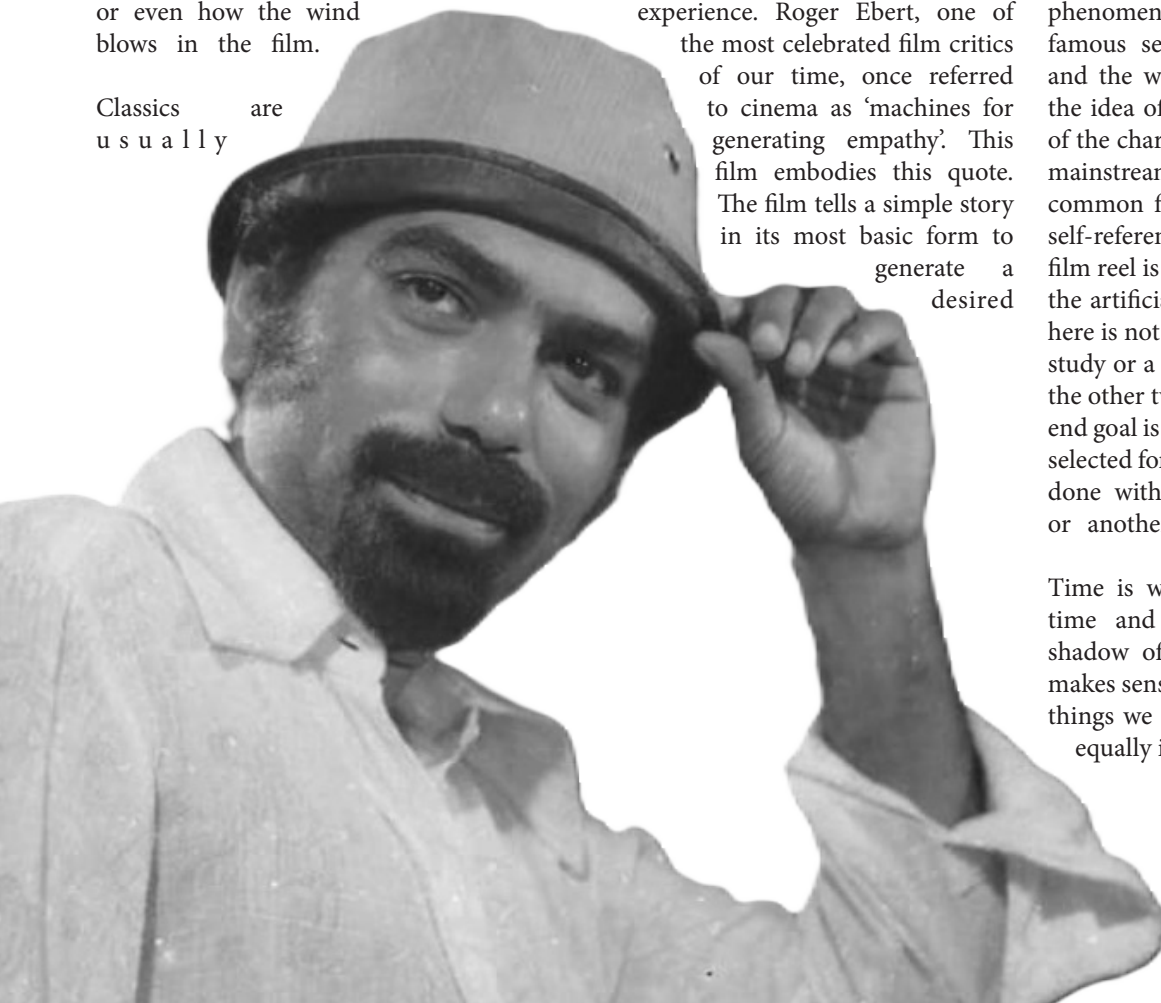
remembered as pieces of art that opened a new way or showed us a new light. Take the film 'Yavanika' (1982) by K.G. George, for example. The film opts for a very meta approach when it comes to the unravelling of mysteries and discoveries happening inside the story. A very interesting turn of course, that the film takes is in its subdued and grounded portrayal of an investigative officer and the investigation itself. The film talks about perspectives and identity in a very novel manner.

'Cinema Paradiso' (1998) by Giuseppe Tornatore talks about the magic of cinema and its need for a shared experience. Roger Ebert, one of the most celebrated film critics of our time, once referred to cinema as 'machines for generating empathy'. This film embodies this quote. The film tells a simple story in its most basic form to generate a desired

reaction from the viewers. This cinema makes us nostalgic for a time, place, and culture that we've never seen or been to. This maximalist sentimental drama is a clear example of a classic. It showed us how melodrama can be used to its full extent, risking all the drama that may have merely been a gimmick to paint a moving yet simple portrait of the love and magic of cinema.

Being a classic clearly comes with a burden. And the burden is the weight that comes with time. The innovative parts are now a commonplace. 'Persona' (1996) by Ingmar Bergman is an example of this phenomenon. The film features a very famous sequence involving a film reel and the way in which the film explores the idea of identities and the psychology of the characters has now seeped into the mainstream and has become part of the common film language as a whole. This self-referential meta way involving the film reel is really a tool to call attention to the artificiality of 'Cinema'. The ambition here is not to create a grounded character study or a maximalist melodrama, unlike the other two films mentioned above. The end goal is very different for all three films selected for the screening. What they have done with the medium is, in one way or another, influential and innovative.

Time is what makes a classic. Without time and being under the unending shadow of mortality, none of this ever makes sense. We go against the clock. The things we adore now may not be adored equally in another era.



Three halls and three days PUFF starts from Wednesday

The first edition of PUFF will be screened across three screens in the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication, Kathaikalam (Auditorium), Amaippu (Gallery Classroom 1), and Thirairangam (Gallery Classroom 2).

The three halls are named in Tamil, which symbolises the connection between cinema and culture.

Kathaikalam, refers to the “setting where the story takes place,” which sets the course of the movie.

Amaippu here implies “the process of laying the foundation of a film,” which

highlights the collective idea of film-making.

Thirairangam means “Theatre” where a film is considered complete as an artistic work when it premieres in a theatre because this is the final step that determines how the movie is received. Kathaikalam will accommodate 150 students, and Amaippu and Thirairangam will accommodate up to 80 students each.

Students will be let into the screening halls 15 minutes prior to the start of the film. Registered students will be given priority in seating, and the vacant seats

can be occupied by the students who come on spot. Around 30 films will be screened across the three days of the festival.

A Digital Debut: The Launch of the PUFF website

The afternoon of 2nd April saw the official launch of the PUFF at the hands of Dr R Sevukan, Dean, School of Media and Communication. He was accompanied by Dr Radhika Khanna, HOD, Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication; Faculty Coordinator from the Department, Dr Arul Selvan, Professor; with Dr A Muthamil, Asst. Professor and Dr M Shuaib Mohamed Haneef, Professor; and Student Coordinator, K Sri Surya.

While addressing the students during this joyous event, the Dean congratulated the spirit of the PUFF team and the students' determination for organising the event. He also expressed his wish for the students to turn this into an

annually recurring event. Subsequently, the HOD also gave her best wishes for the event.

The website is designed to enhance the experience of the attendees by providing them with a one-click solution to queries such as screenings, timings and venues. It also lists details regarding various competitions that would be conducted as a part of the film festival. The website can be accessed at www.pufilmfestival.in.

PUFF Delegate pass available from April 2

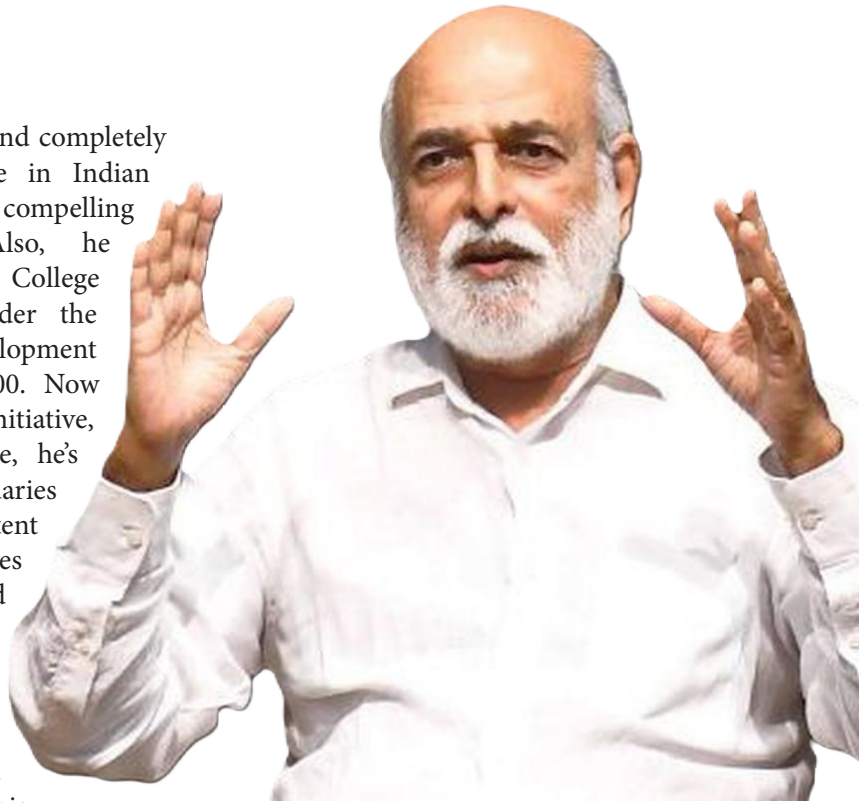
The distribution of delegate passes for the first edition of PUFF began on Tuesday. The first pass was handed over to the students by the Dean of the School of Media and Communication, Dr. R. Sevukan. Registered delegates can collect their respective passes from the special counters inside the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Students who were not able to collect the pass on Tuesday can collect the pass during any time during the three days of the festival.

Versatile voyage of Sashi Kumar

Sashi Kumar is the jack-of-all-trades in the media world. He has done everything from producing films to anchoring news and even dabbling in acting. His debut film, 'Kaya Taran' really shook things up, touching on some serious societal issues and even snagging him the G. Aravindan Award.

As a print journalist, he's written some insightful pieces on cinema, both local and global, and has interviewed some eminent personalities in the industry. He is an expert in covering international events like film festivals and Commonwealth Heads of State meetings. He was The Hindu's first West Asia Correspondent, covering social concerns, conflicts and politics.

He setup PTI-TV and completely changed the game in Indian television with compelling documentaries. Also, he founded the Asian College of Journalism under the Media Development Foundation in 2000. Now with his latest initiative, Asiaville Interactive, he's pushing the boundaries of multimedia content creation. This makes him a qualified advocate on the state of the media today, the necessity of critical voices in media and its future, due to his involvement with and experiences in the media and related fields.



The Visionary Filmmaker Redefining Malayalam Cinema



As an accomplished filmmaker from Kerala, Jeo Baby has been making waves in the film industry with his thought-provoking storytelling and unique cinematic style.

Jeo Baby's journey in entertainment began with writing for TV shows.

He helped create popular sitcoms like 'Marimayam',

'Uppum Mulakum', and 'M80 Moosa' in 2010, before moving into the mainstream by directing '2 Pennungal' (2016).

Jeo Baby's renowned work, 'The Great Indian Kitchen', has garnered critical

acclaim and ignited discussions about gender roles, family dynamics, and patriarchy in Indian households. The movie won him the prestigious Kerala State Film Award for Best Screenplay, adding to his list of accolades. This recognition is a testament to his storytelling prowess and ability to create narratives that resonate with audiences.

His most recent work, 'Kathal - The Core', explores the journey of self-discovery and the complexities of relationships. In today's world, where people often face societal pressures and expectations, the film's themes of love, identity, and personal fulfillment are highly relevant.



SCHEDULE

DAY 1

09:00 AM - 12:00 AM

01:00 PM - 03:00 PM

03:30 PM - 05:30 PM

06:00 PM - 08:00 PM

**KATHAIKALAM
(AUDITORIUM)**

YAVANIKA
K G GEORGE
CRIME DRAMA
147 MIN
1982 - MALAYALAM

FALLEN LEAVES
AKIKOURI SMAKI
ROMANCE
81 MIN
2023 - FINNISH
GERMANY

**INAUGURAL
SESSION**

**TRIANGLE OF
SADNESS**
RUBEN OSTLUND
147 MIN
COMEDY-DRAMA
2022 - ENGLISH

**AMAIPPU
(GALLERY
CLASSROOM 1)**

**CINEMA
PARADISO**
GIUSEPPE TORATORE
DRAMA
155 MIN - ITALIAN

DEV D
ANURAG KASHYAP
ROMANCE
144 MIN
2009 - HINDI

CLOSE
LUCAS DHONT
DRAMA
104 MIN
2022 - FRENCH

**THIRAIARANGAM
(GALLERY
CLASSROOM 2)**

PERSONA
INGER BERGMAN
DRAMA
83 MIN
1966 - SWEDISH

FANDRY
NAGRAJ MANJULE
DRAMA
102 MIN
2013 - MARATHI

JOYLAND
SAIM SAUDI
ROMANCE
127 MIN
2022 - URDU

