

OTT : AN OPTION, NOT A PRIORITY



Has the language of cinema changed because of the digital platform? The world-wide pandemic has compelled human-kind to turn to the OTT platform for recreational activities since the past one year. While OTT existed much earlier but the inevitability of its existence and acceptance was foregrounded because of the pandemic.

Saurav Das, the moderator of the evening, kept the audience entertained through this very thought-provoking and time-appropriate debate.

Dhrubo Banerjee, the maker of films like *Guptodhoner Sandhane* and *Durgeshgorer Guptodhon* felt that the language of cinema had been evolving since its inception. Depending on which platform the film is being made for the narrative technique changes. The audience too knows which platform to choose for which film.

Actor Anindita Bose was of the opinion that cinema got the courage from OTT platforms to experiment with the narrative as well as it opened up opportunities for new actors and new content. *Sacred Games* allowed Nawazuddin to share the same amount of screen time with a star like Saif Ali Khan.

Arjun Chakraborty agreed that cinema is evolving and through OTT cinema is reaching unreached corners. He also strongly objected to mobile phones being allowed inside movie halls. The big screen experience cannot be replicated elsewhere and he couldn't imagine watching *Inception* on OTT.

Ishaa Saha concurred that due to the pandemic everyone was missing the big screen and OTT has become a reality. But she expressed her belief in giving her best in all mediums.

Rwitobroto Mukherjee suggested that the choice of viewing platforms is very subjective. While he loves watching cinema on big screen, OTT provides big opportunities for new actors.

Sauraseni Maitra agreed that Covid has made us reliant on OTT platforms and the film industry has learnt to co-exist with OTT. She also felt that the OTT gives us an opportunity to watch world cinema.



Arijit Dutta, the owner of Priya Cinema said that films and OTT belong to the same family but films like *Sound of Music* and *Sholay* can only be enjoyed on large screen.

Abir Chatterjee opined that cinema needs investments and returns. OTT can take risks. However he agreed that the competition is tougher on OTT because it is easy to switch from one film to another. As an actor he expressed his desire to explore all platforms and said that he would love to work on OTT provided he gets the right role.

Haranath Chakraborty advocated that content still rules and the director would always like his audience to go to a cinema hall to watch his film. The OTT offers at the moment some censor-relief which gives it more freedom in terms of the narrative and content.

Arjun Chakraborty felt that the OTT platform had opened up the space for different ideas for different audience.

Riddhi Sen believes that language has not changed but technique has evolved. Many master film-makers like Mrinal Sen and Kim Ki-Duk had given us narratives and forms far ahead of time many years before OTT came into existence. However the OTT format allows many new and small film-makers to come up. It also allows more "shelf-life" for films as they get stored on Cloud. But technical detailed nuances in a film can only be seen and enjoyed on large screen. "The OTT can only be an option, not a priority."

The discussion was summed up aptly by Dhruba Banerjee who asked the audience how many of them had seen the *Game of Thrones* and how many of them had seen it a second time. Cinema, he said, is a social medium and the magic of cinema can never be over. The thread of television, VCR or OTT can only be a transient phase.



ATTRACTION MAGNET



Blindfold, an Ukrainian sports drama by Taras Dron caught all eyes and was the highpoint of Sunday's festival. A house-full show post pandemic made it all the more memorable. The audience response was overwhelming.

Sromona Ghosh, a student of literature, mentioned how she found the MMA sequences coupled with the visuals of Eastern Ukraine mired in conflict delightful and thought-provoking. She did not hesitate to say that she would love to watch the film again.

Shamik Dasgupta, an IT professional, had tears in his eyes after he left the theatre. Even though he is an ardent fan of the cult movie *Warrior*, he confessed how equally overwhelming it was to witness the great performances of the actors in this film. He added that the characters were believable and had a certain depth.

Mainak Sen, a High School Teacher, was all praises for the ingeniously crafted script and the performance by the talented cast. He did not hesitate to say that the film should be up for Best Picture.

- Somak Simlai

BEYOND WORDS



Kumar Chowdhury's film *Priyo Chinar Pata, Iti Segun (Fire of Teak, Flame of Chinar)* talks of the struggles of a young Rohingya Muslim girl Shomi, who finds shelter in a care centre in Kolkata. The director was present at the Media Centre for a press conference of his film, which was screened at Rabindra Sadan, later on Sunday. Chowdhury talked about his

hurdles while shooting a particular sequence in Kashmir. "Due to the sudden abrogation of Article 370 we had to go via Punjab and Jammu, as direct routes were difficult to navigate. And for a long period of time, I abstained from talking about the film's premises as it involved a lot of political and religious dichotomy." The screening evoked an array of emotions in the hearts of the audience which turned up in huge numbers.

Sandeep Dutta was blown away by the director's dynamic storytelling as he watched the relationship developing through the shared struggles of a Rohingya girl, Shomi, and a Kashmiri boy, Iqbal.

A heavy hearted **Pooja Bhowmik** felt the film represented the emotional turmoil of Rohingya refugees and Kashmiri Muslims, one, a displaced person, the other who is fighting marginalisation in his own country. She felt privileged for never having to face such conflicts in her life.

- Sukanya & Zoya

UPCOMING EVENTS

Topic : Song Watching or Song Listening
Venue : Ektara Mancha
Time : 5pm.

Moderator : Arindam Sil

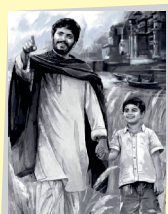
Speakers : Rupankar Bagchi, Surajit Chatterjee, Lopamudra Mitra, Somlata Acharya, Lagnajita Chakraborty, Bikram Ghosh, Swapan Basu



PRESS MEET

- The Wanderlust of Apu, Avijatrik (Competition on Indian Language Films) by Subhrajit Mitra at 2pm.
- Between One Shore and Several Others (Asian Select) by Sreekrishnan KP at 3pm.
- Eco- Friendly Gangasagar Mela by Shila Dutta at 4pm.

Editor's Pick



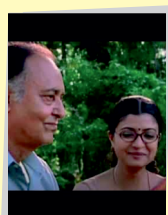
Avijatrik
2020 | B & W | 136 mins
Director : Subhrajit Mitra
Country : India
Nandan II
Time : 11am



Bittersweet
2020 | Colour | 101 mins
Director : Ananth Narayan Mahadevan
Country : India
Nandan II
Time : 3pm



The Presumption of Guilt
2019 | Colour | 92 mins
Director : Oleg Asadulin
Country : Russia
Nandan I
Time : 12 Noon



Dekha
2001 | Colour | 121 mins
Director : Goutam Ghose
Country : India
Sisir Mancha
Time : 6pm



The Young And The Passionate
1953 | Colour | 104 mins
Director : Federico Fellini
Country : Italy
Nandan II
Time : 6pm



Ghost Image
2020 | Colour | 83 mins
Director : Sang Jun Lee
Country : South Korea
Nandan I
Time : 3.30pm

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