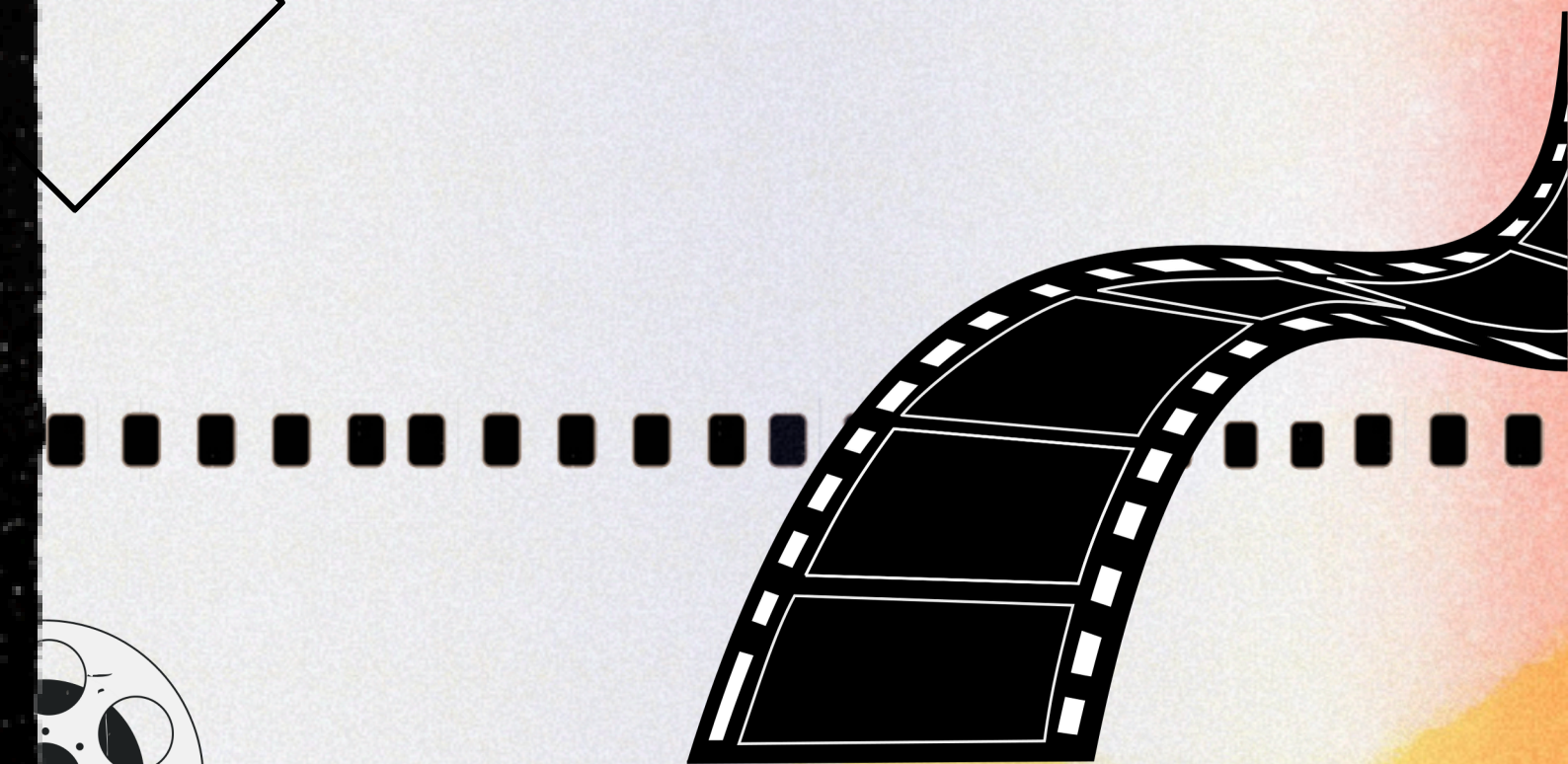
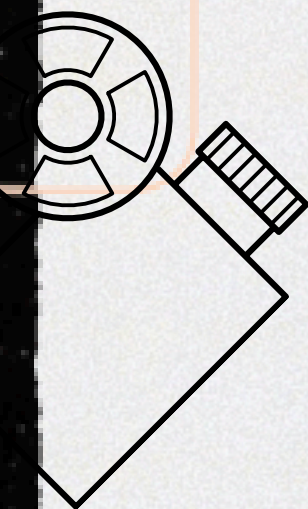


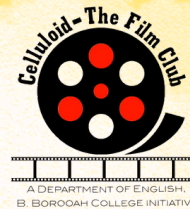
NEWSLETTER

CELLULOID-THE FILM CLUB

A DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, B. BOROOAH COLLEGE INITIATIVE

ISSUE II, SUMMER 2024





NEWSLETTER

CELLULOID - THE FILM CLUB

A Department of English, B. Borooah College Initiative

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It gives me immense pleasure to learn that Celluloid - The Film Club, A Department of English, B. Borooah College Initiative is ready to publish the second issue of its annual newsletter. It is heartwarming to note that since its inception, the club has consistently initiated various activities that are true to the essence of a students' film club. It has been observed that in addition to students of the Department of English, those of other disciplines have also found the club to be a platform not only for watching films but also for expressing their views on issues of contemporary relevance. I hope that Celluloid - The Film Club continues its onward journey with full gusto and wish the club all the very best.

Dr. Satyendra Nath Barman
Principal, B. Borooah College (Autonomous)

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

I am very pleased to pen these lines for the second edition of the newsletter of our cine club, Celluloid. The pilot issue had generated plenty of excitement and it was received with much enthusiasm by the cine aficionados. The newsletter provides an excellent opportunity to delve into myriad aspects related to filmmaking. It also presents our students, especially from allied disciplines, with a platform to engage in film criticism. I extend my compliments to all the contributors of this edition. I also record my sincere approbation for the core team who have worked tirelessly. I am quite sanguine that this edition will also be received with enthusiasm and appreciation.

Dr. Abhigyan Prasad
Head, Department of English,
B. Borooah College (Autonomous)

From The Editors' Desk



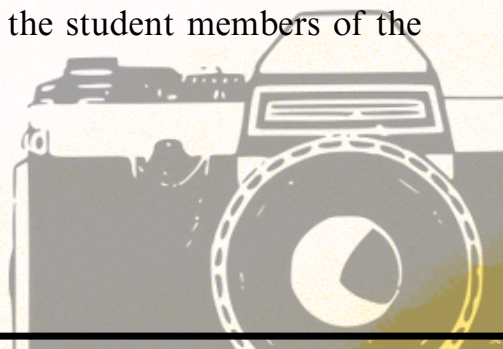
Through the initiative of the Department of English, B. Borooah College, Celluloid - The Film Club was officially formed in March 2021, emerging as a result of the shared interest and love that students as well as faculty members have for cinema. The film club provides a platform to cinema lovers to gather and watch movies and documentaries of various genres which are followed by lively discussions that capture the club members' shared passion for cinema. Our members, diverse in backgrounds but united in their love for cinema, contribute unique perspectives that enrich every viewing experience.

The sheer hard work of the core committee and the cooperation of the faculty members and students of the department have resulted in the growth of the club and the continuing expansion of its horizon. One such expansion materialized in the form of the pilot issue of the e-newsletter of Celluloid - The Film Club, released in June, 2023. The e-newsletter aims to provide an outlet of expression to cinema enthusiasts for sharing their perspectives, observations, and experiences gained by indulging in cinema.

Though the club is still in its formative stage, it has been able to grow into a community that holds the gamut of ideas coming from various individuals that never ceases to impress the club's members as well as other viewers. The discussions that follow the screenings is a prime example of the rich thoughts and views coming from cinema lovers of varied backgrounds. The post-screening discussions give rise to analytical and emotional discourses that bear testimony to the comfort and awe that the world of cinema provides. The e-newsletter aims to capture this very dynamism of the visual media by combining it with the written.

In this issue of the e-newsletter, readers will find a captivating mix of reviews, insights, anecdotes, and behind-the-scenes glimpses into the world of cinema. Publishing this issue would not have been possible without the support of the respected principal of B. Borooah College, Dr. Satyendranath Barman Sir and the head of the department of English, Dr. Abhigyan Prasad Sir. We are also indebted to the faculty members of the department, the contributors of the write-ups in the present issue, the core committee members, and the student members of the club for their support.

Plabita Sarkar
Debarsish Das





GUNJAN SAXENA: THE KARGIL GIRL

Nikita Das

3rd Semester, Dept. of English , B. Borooah College

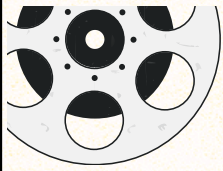
Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl is a 2020 Indian biographical drama film directed by Sharan Sharma and produced by Karan Johar. The film is inspired by the life of Gunjan Saxena, an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer and one of the first Indian female air-force pilots in combat. Released on Netflix, the film stars Janhvi Kapoor in the title role, alongside Pankaj Tripathi, Angad Bedi, and Manav Vij. The film traces Gunjan Saxena's journey from her dreams of becoming a pilot to her crucial role in the Kargil War of 1999. Gunjan Saxena grew up in a supportive family environment that nurtured her dreams. Her father Anup Saxena, played by Pankaj Tripathi, is portrayed as a progressive and encouraging figure who supports her ambitions despite societal norms and gender biases.

In a pivotal moment, Gunjan and her father engages in a heartfelt conversation about patriotism where the later imparts a profound lesson on desh bhakti(patriotism). The strongest point of this film is a scene where Gunjan confides in her father: "Air Force needs cadets jinmey desh bhakti ho. Mujhe toh bas plane udaana hai", she confesses her guilt. She wonders if she is being disloyal towards her country in order to fulfill her dream. Her father explains to her that desh bhakti is not about shouting slogans or jingoism but doing your job with utmost sincerity. "Tum behter pilot ban jao, Desh bhakti apney aap ho jayegi." These lines complement the mood and sentiment of the film perfectly.

The movie portrays the struggles of a female fighting the prejudices in a male dominated field perfectly. Being the only woman in her department poses additional challenges for Gunjan: there are no facilities such as a ladies' restroom or a changing room, making her daily life more difficult. Gunjan's merit is judged by a game of arm wrestling against a man. Every time she is defeated in the game, she shudders with the painful acknowledgement of the demeaning terms on which a woman has to compete with a man in a men's world designed by men. The film showcases her physical and mental endurance, pushing through rigorous drills and proving her mettle.

In the last scene of the film, after Gunjan successfully completes her mission, she receives praise from her colleagues. Her brother, filled with pride, acknowledges her achievements, and says, "Maine kaha tha na ke har waqt main tujhe bachane nahi aa paunga, par itna jaroor janta hoon ke kal agar mujhe teri zaroorat pari toh tu mujhe har bar bachane ayegi." He then salutes her with respect, saying, "Jai Hind, Officer Saxena!" This scene really touched my heart.

Janhvi Kapoor's portrayal of Gunjan Saxena is commendable, capturing the vulnerability and strength of her character. Pankaj Tripathi's performance as her supportive father adds depth and warmth to the narrative. Sharan Sharma's direction balances the film's biographical elements with dramatic storytelling, creating a compelling and inspiring narrative. The music, composed by John Stewart Eduri and Amit Trivedi, complements the film's tone, with songs like "Bharat Ki Beti" becoming anthems of empowerment. I highly recommend this film as it is inspiring, emotional, and exciting. It teaches us not to give up on our dreams easily because of gender biases. The story of Gunjan Saxena is a powerful reminder of the importance of perseverance, courage, and the relentless pursuit of one's goals despite societal obstacles.▲



THE MOVIE MAGIC

Bismita Rabha

Alumnus, Dept. of English , B. Borooah College

Why do we watch films? Often, one sick with the ailment of interrogation may find themselves questioning this seemingly ordinary activity of an average person's life-because why? What makes us stick to a screen for hours even while a great decrease in attention span haunts every generation in this age? I have found this pull of cinema, the 'movie magic', to be the most wonderful aspect of multimedia at present.

Literature has long served as the portal to a world of vivid imagination for people who can read. Films, for me, have acted like a medium that has emerged from the harmony of literature, music, and cinematography and has made each individual element better than it already was. Beyond our own imagination, films allow a person to delve into someone else's world, created from the point of views of multiple creatives at once. It is fascinating that modern technology and cultural choices have brought the society to a point where one can, at least temporarily, be transported to a better world and find themselves in parallel characters.

Here, I find one of the many answers to the question expressed in the first line of this write-up: finding a relatable character in films is a great contributor to its viewership. It is this reason that so many cinephilia-oriented pages and accounts have an enormous reach on social media handles. Reading the dialogues pasted over movie stills, or watching a clip posted on Instagram reels, one is moved to explore the film more deeply or revisit it if it has already been watched.



It is the movie magic through which we relive our heartbreaks with Jordan, romanticize random nights with Celine, cheer for freedom with Ved, and justify being hung up on 'the one' with Begum Hazrat (in moderation, of course).

It is as if we find a soul twin in carefully crafted characters in films. Like poetry, it unites us in a singular joy, a unique sorrow. Despite our differences, we are reassured that there is someone who has gone through the same experience as us, the fictionality of it all never bothering us. However, it is not just the similarity of our life with films that draws us towards them. At times, it is the grandeur of the medium that serves as an escape instead of a mirror. When the pain of life approaches us as a stranger, it is the perfect fate of happy-ending movies that brings solace. The shock of tumultuous changes in reality is always soothed by the blissful monotony in slice-of-life movies.

Be it as a stress reliever after a long week or a couple hours of silent bonding with a loved one, films have been my comfort zone for years. Once we find the trick to appreciate them as they engage us, the movie-magic takes us in, opening a Pandora's box of spectacular visuals, timeless dialogues, and unforgettable music in front of our eyes. I wish for you to discover this magic. Looking forward to many filmy afternoons and movie discussions on our home screens and at the Celluloid – The Film Club screenings together. ▲

THE SCENT OF GREEN PAPAYA

Anwesha Dash

Alumnus, Dept. of English, B. Borooah College

The Scent of Green Papaya (1930) is a unique cinematic experience that appeals to the senses. It is the debut work of the Vietnam-born French filmmaker Tran Ahn Hung which garnered immense critical acclaim including two awards at the Cannes Film Festival and an Oscar nomination in the category of Best Foreign Film. Set in the time between late 1940s and the early 1960s in Saigon (current official name Ho Chi Minh City), it was filmed in a soundstage in the studios of Bry-sur-Marne in Paris, France. This film has a minimal plot and sparse dialogues. Its story centers around a young peasant girl, Mui, who arrives at an affluent household and works (along with a senior maid) for that family consisting of the master, the mistress, three sons, and the grandmother. After working for them for a decade, Mui is sent to work for a family acquaintance which alters the fate of her life.

The pace of the film appears to be rather slow; however, deliberate space has been created in it to allow its audience to be able to revel in the ethereal, sensually striking narrative. Its title aptly connotes the impression that the film intends to deliver. It is affect-driven in the sense that it elicits awareness of the intrinsic sensibilities of the work through sensory stimulation. The tale of Mui's coming-of-age takes place in objectively treacherous circumstances; however, the narrative imitates the perception of the highly sensitive, intrigued protagonist, especially in its visuals.

The Scent of Green Papaya is filmed with a perspective that at times seems blatantly voyeuristic, exaggerated by the manner in which the set is designed. It is replete with intentional symbolism which range from being easily noticeable to being highly nuanced. The acting and movement in it, upon close observation, seem theatrically melodramatic and acutely synced to the background score in an intrinsic and subtle manner.

The music score of this film is by the Vietnam-born French composer Ton-That Tiet. It is a central instrument of narration in the film because not only does it set the ambience of the work but it also echoes, and in various instances, foreshadows the events that play out to it. It is intended to be more emotive than the few scattered dialogues that appear in the film. The soundscape can be described as a combination of ambient nature sounds and traditional music.

The method of storytelling utilized in this film is exceptional for it has little to articulate and yet it undertakes numerous nuanced commentaries. There are various references to the contemporary truths and realities of the time and place it is set in. It depicts the state of women and explores the nuances in their experiences of kinship, rivalry across ages, and class differences. It is simultaneously a meditation on aristocratic lifestyle and class mobility. A lot can be said about *The Scent of Green Papaya*; however, it is meant to be experienced as it cannot be described within the bounds of articulation. ▲



WAKING UP TO REALITY: A DIVE INTO *WAKE UP SID*

Darshana Sarma

5th Semester, Dept. of English , B. Borooah College

A good movie makes the audience feel like they've journeyed with the characters.

-Rich Moore (American film director and animator)

Why do people watch movies? Most people watch movies for entertainment and to combat boredom. Some believe that people watch movies to avoid facing real problems. According to Jean-Luc Godard, the French-Swiss film director, "Cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world." Personally, I feel that people watch movies because they can relate to the characters on screen and their stories. I like movies that convey meaningful messages to their audience, have a simple storyline, and depict life in a way that people can easily relate to. *Wake Up Sid* is such a movie that feels like home.

Wake Up Sid (2009) is a Bollywood movie written and directed by Ayan Mukherji and produced by Karan Johar. The movie is appreciated for its relatable storyline that touches our hearts, genuine portrayal of characters, and meaningful messages about finding one's purpose in life and embracing responsibilities. Siddharth Mehra, also known as Sid (played by Ranbir Kapoor), is portrayed as a spoiled brat who fails his last semester examination in college. He is a carefree guy who does not have any purpose in life. Most youngsters can relate to Sid's characters after graduation, they are not sure about their goals in life. The movie shows how a carefree guy finds his purpose in life. It is Aisha Banerjee (played by Konkona Sen Sharma), an aspiring writer from Kolkata, who teaches Sid to embrace responsibilities and helps him find his passion in life.

Ayan Mukherji beautifully crafts Sid and Aisha's characters that are poles apart. I find Aisha's character inspiring. Her desire for independence is truly charismatic. She is represented as an ambitious woman who is full of confidence and passion. She steps out from her hometown and embraces the city of dreams, Mumbai, to fulfill her goal of becoming a writer. How she converts her new flat into a comfortable home is also admirable. When Sid says, "Yeh ghar nahi, khandar hai," and asks her to find a new flat, she refuses as she has already decided to make the *khandar* her home.

Another character I admire is Sid's mother (played by Supriya Pathak). How she tries to learn English to connect with her son is heart-touching. When she tells Sid, "Tumhare friends ki tarah agar main bhi English mein baat karungi toh kya pata, shayad tum bhi mere friend ban jao," my heart just melts.

One scene that is close to my heart is when Aisha asks Sid to accompany her for celebrating her birthday, which is in ten minutes. Sid asks her why she had not told him earlier so that he could have planned something. Aisha replies, "Kyu yeh bhi toh party hai, tum, main aur do cup chai". This scene highlights her simplicity, showing how little moments can also bring happiness in our lives.

The turning point in Sid's life comes when Aisha scolds him for messing up her room, "Iss ghar ki halat dekho... Yeh mera ghar hai, Sid, aur tumne aake ise kabadkhana banadiya hai." It is from this moment onwards that Sid starts thinking about his career. Before, as a responsible father, Ram Mehra (played by Anupam Kher) wanted to involve his son in his business. However, business is not Sid's cup of tea. He feels suffocated working in his father's office for a week. He finds his passion through Aisha's help and starts working as an intern photographer for the magazine *Mumbai Beat*. Ultimately, the way Sid and Aisha's platonic relationship evolves into a romantic one is also quite moving.

Unlike typical Bollywood films, this movie lacks unexpected twists. Overall, *Wake Up Sid* is a charming and emotional film that adeptly portrays the challenges and victories of maturing, making it essential viewing for anyone on their personal path to self-discovery. ▲



DUTT'S *PYAASA*:

A TIMELESS REFLECTION ON DREAMS AND REALITY

Arif Sadique Laskar

5th Semester, Dept. of Pol. Science , B. Borooah College

ये महलों ये तख्तों ये ताजों की दुनिया..
ये इंसों के दुश्मन, समाजों की दुनिया..
भूके रिवाजों की दुनिया..
ये दुनिया अगर मिल भी जाए तो क्या है...

These lines by Sahir Ludhianvi in a song from *Pyaasa* (1957) reveal the complexities of human desire and societal norms. They serve as a tool of exploitation, reinforcing the rule of the powerful over the weak. *Pyaasa*, set against the backdrop of post-independent India, is more than just a film; it is a dusted mirror that vividly reflects the polluted relationships within families and the pervasive influence of greed and money among individuals.

The film narrates the tale of Vijay, an idealistic and struggling poet who despairs at the materialistic world around him. His poetry, which delves into the pain and suffering of people, faces rejection from publishers and disdain from his own family. The film traces Vijay's journey from obscurity to fleeting fame and back, underscoring his unending quest for recognition and appreciation of his artistic vision.

One of the central themes in *Pyaasa* is the conflict between idealism and materialism. Vijay's pure and genuine love for poetry stands in stark contrast with the commercial, money-driven publishing industry. This conflict is further accentuated by the characters surrounding Vijay: his ambitious yet selfish brothers, the avaricious publisher, and the pragmatic Gulabo (played by Waheeda Rehman), a kind-hearted prostitute who empathizes with and supports Vijay's dreams. Vijay, a poet with grand aspirations, finds himself trapped in a world that prioritizes money over art. His heartfelt verses are dismissed by publishers and ridiculed by his own family. His journey from anonymity to brief fame and back underscores his relentless pursuit of recognition and respect for his craft.

Guru Dutt's direction in *Pyaasa* is a masterclass in filmmaking. Through skillful use of light and shadow, he visually portrays the inner struggles of the characters. The iconic scene where Vijay walks amidst ruins, reciting his poetry, symbolizes both shattered dreams and unwavering hope. The screenplay by Abrar Alvi is rich with poetic dialogue and profound thoughts. Dutt, portraying Vijay, conveys every emotion from despair to hope with subtle brilliance. Rehman as Gulabo defies stereotypes and gracefully supports Vijay's artistic aspirations. S.D. Burman's music, coupled with Ludhianvi's poignant lyrics, seamlessly weaves into the narrative. Songs like "Jaane Wo Kaise Log The" and "Yeh Duniya Agar Mil Bhi Jaaye" serve as reflections of Vijay's state of mind as well as powerful commentary.

Pyaasa transcends mere cinema; it offers a piercing look at life's harsh realities. It compels us to question what truly matters- money or genuine human connections. Decades after its release, it remains one of the greatest films ever made, a testament to the enduring place of true art in a world often obsessed with wealth and materialism. ▲



A REQUIEM FOR THE CINEMA HALLS OF GUWAHATI

Ambar Chatterjee

Film Critic at EastMojo

I was in preparatory in 1993, but the memory of that matinee show is still fresh. My elder brother took me to watch Mithun Chakraborty's *Phool Aur Angaar* at the majestic Udesha Cinema Hall in Guwahati. What captivated me more than the film itself was the theatre. The lush, vibrantly colored cinema had bright maroon curtains on the screen that rolled up before every show, complemented by flashing red and blue lights and music from the latest *Bihu* songs. The beautifully decorated ceiling, with lights resembling stars in the sky, felt like a pathway to the heavens for a kid of my age. It was the stuff dreams are made of. As the curtains rolled up, the milky white screen felt like a portal to a world of dreams and magic. The cinema halls of the 90s were just as majestic and surreal as the films of the era, doing everything in their power to be larger than life. Every subsequent visit to the cinema hall was as much about the film for me as it was about the cinema hall itself.

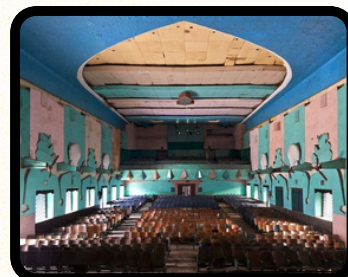
The sight of massive and evocative hand-drawn cut-out posters was another mesmerizing aspect of the experience for me. I can still visualize the huge hand-drawn poster of the movie *Species* (1995) at the Apsara cinema, showing the half-woman, half-alien star of the film. Another poster that I vividly remember is that of the Sunny Deol starrer *Jeet* (1996), depicting an aggressive Deol almost tearing out of the poster with outstretched arms pointed toward the viewers. These posters were one of the few means of grabbing attention in those days when marketing options were limited.

It will be hard for the current generation to believe that cinema tickets back then cost between INR 8 and INR 34 in most theatres. Black marketers would sell tickets for houseful shows at three times the price. The highest I remember paying was INR 200 for front stall tickets of INR 15 for Kamal Haasan's *Hindustani* (1996). Ironically, the sequel to this film is releasing very soon and we all know what the ticket prices will be like. BookMyShow and "surge ticket pricing" of multiplex chains are the new

"black marketers," doing a far worse job than the poor young lads looking for quick earnings in those days.

The arrival of multiplexes was just as exciting at first as my initial visit to the cinema. However, with each visit to the multiplexes, I realized how heartless, commercialized, and unromantic the film exhibition process had become. I frequently visited Anuradha Cinema to remind myself of the joy of watching films in traditional cinema halls. Multiplexes offer a corporatized version of the movie-watching experience that is as unremarkable as the corporate churning of films as products. The emphasis is not on the film's magic but on selling popcorn, displaying a barrage of annoying advertisements, charging exorbitant ticket prices, and pushing you out just as quickly as herding you in. There is nothing to marvel at in these cubicles we now call cinemas. They have no history. There are no rolling curtains, no grand music, no imaginative lighting, and very little room to breathe. With surging ticket prices, the middle class has been largely cut off from watching films in theatres, sterilizing the once boisterous and fun cinema experience.

It is a tragedy that this generation will never know the sound of 1,000 souls cheering on a protagonist. Tragically, it is only one of the countless other things they will never know about the movie watching experience. Some good, some bad but everything to be emotional about. ▲



3 IDIOTS

Ankita Kar

3rd Semester, Dept. of English, B. Borooah College

A plot involving romance, comedy, adventure, drama, and a significant focus on social satire, Rajkumar Hirani's 2009 movie *3 Idiots* is an intriguing blend of tangy flavors one can crave for on their platters. The movie has a top-notch narration, perfect cast, and a strong message to deliver to its audience. The story revolves around three friends who, in the setting of a renowned engineering college, navigate their journey through academics and societal expectations to finally follow their passion.

The thought-provoking and emotional yet humorous rollercoaster ride of three friends Rancho (Aamir Khan), Farhan (R. Madhavan), and Raju (Sharman Joshi) is unique and different from that of their other classmates. Farhan, a photography enthusiast, compromises with his dream to fulfill his father's desire of making him an engineer. Raju, coming from a family facing many financial and health adversities, is under pressure to support his family at any cost. Their lives change for the best when Rancho enters the college and captivates the two friends through his rebellious and free-spirited attitude. I personally admire the three friends ardently, however, Rancho a bit more. All his dialogues and actions are inspiring. He particularly enlightens me through two of his scenes. The first scene is where as a child, he is curious and able to solve sums of higher classes, showing how much he loves learning new things. The second scene is where he and his friends magnanimously deliver the child of elder daughter of Viru Sahastrabuddhe (Boman Irani) despite many complications; the famous "Aal Izz Well" line worked out so well in this scene, signifying the application of knowledge in real life situations.

3 Idiots criticizes rote learning and societal expectations and encourages the application of knowledge in our lives. Grades and marks are secondary, as far as our curiosity to learn and change our lives and the lives of others for the better are concerned. The character of Chatur Ramalingam popularly addressed as "Silencer", played by Omi Vaidya, is about those students who depend on rote learning and pay least attention to practical knowledge for achieving success. An appreciation of this movie will be incomplete without mentioning the fantastic performance by Boman Irani. Professor and director of the college, his character of Sahastrabuddhe, also referred to as "Virus", is obstinate, single-minded, and proud. His preferences are solely based on marks and grades; his ignorance about innovative ideas lead to the tragic end of one of the students, Joy Lobo, played by Ali Fazal. People like Sahastrabuddhe are common in everyone's lives. In India, a rigid education system has led to many cases of suicide, mainly from medical and engineering fields. A study shows that 1.71 lakh suicides were recorded in 2022, registering a 4.2% increase over 2021 and a jump of 27% compared to 2018. The rate of suicide per one lakh population has increased to 12.4 in 2022 which is the highest rate of deaths from suicides since 1967.

The friendship and camaraderie between the three friends are the most loved part of the movie. Raju, persuaded by Rancho, finally takes a stand to overcome his fears and proceed in life with determination and Farhan follows his dream of photography because of Rancho. Another important aspect of the movie is the romance between Rancho and Pia (Kareena Kapoor Khan), the younger daughter of Sahastrabuddhe. The relationship of Rancho and Pia faces complexities due to Rancho and Sahastrabuddhe's dispute. However, at the end, their love story receives a happy ending.

To sum up, *3 Idiots* received worldwide extols from critics and viewers for its emphasis on practical education, steering through society's baseless expectations, friendship, and willingness to pursue one's passion as well as for its motivational messages, quotes, and resonating songs. This movie indeed is a revolution which focuses on changing the rigid patterns followed by many educational institutions. This movie is also profoundly entertaining and encouraging and is hailed as a classic in Indian cinema. ▲



STRANGER THINGS : A SCI-FI HORROR GEM

Pragya Paliwal

Pragya Paliwal, Class XII, Delhi Public School, Lokhra

You might not have watched the show but there is no way that you have not heard of it, unless you live under a rock. *Stranger Things* (2016) is a sci-fi horror series set in the small fictional town of Hawkins, Indiana in America in the 1980s. The series was created by the Duffer brothers and takes inspiration from authors like Stephen King, Steven Spielberg, and John Carpenter. The series stars Millie Bobby Brown as the protagonist who gained immense popularity through the series. Other actors in the show include Winona Ryder, Maya Hawke, Finn Wolfhard, Noah Schnapp, Sadie Sink, Joe Keery, and many others.

The storyline starts with four friends, Mike, Dustin, Will, and Lucas. When Will Byers mysteriously disappears in the woods, his family and friends embark on a relentless search to find him. In their quest, they stumble upon an alternate dimension known as the “upside down”. This eerie parallel world mirrors our own but is darker, colder, and inhabited by bloodthirsty creatures called “Demogorgon's”. During their investigation, Mike, Lucas, and Dustin encounter a mysterious girl with a shaved head possessing telekinetic abilities who is later revealed to have escaped from the Hawkins Lab. With only the number eleven tattooed on her arm, she is named Eleven.

Beyond its sci-fi and horror elements, *Stranger Things* delves into the complexities of human nature. Characters like Eddie Munson exemplify this perfectly- sometimes people surprise us, revealing hidden facets of their personalities. Eddie appears in the 4th season and is the leader of the Hellfire Club of which Mike and Dustin are a part. Eddie, in the beginning, is portrayed as a person who runs away every time things get too difficult. But at the end of season, he willingly sacrifices himself to buy some more time for his friends to defeat the enemy. The duality of Eddie's character questions how we perceive a character and our quickness to judge human nature.

Love, friendship, and the impact of upbringing also play pivotal roles in the series. Eleven, once a lab experiment, finds solace and strength in her friends' support. Vecna, before becoming a formidable villain, was a normal kid who thought that he was different from the rest due to his telekinetic abilities. His parents were not that involved in his life, and he spent most of his time alone. His parents then passed away in an accident and he was taken in by Dr. Brenner who then experiments on him for more than 10 years. Vecna eventually escapes the “upside down” because of his special abilities and vows to destroy the town of Hawkins responsible for all of his sorrows.

As the show approaches its end, viewers eagerly await the final season, wondering what twists and turns lie ahead. If sci-fi or horror is your cup of tea, then *Stranger Things* is an absolute gem. ▲



LAAPATAA LADIES: JAYA AS A REVOLUTIONARY WOMAN

Munmi Deka

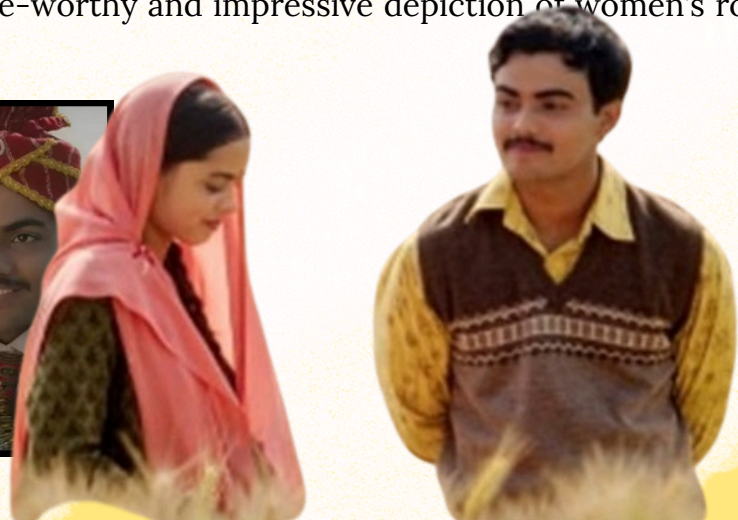
5th Semester, Dept. of English, B. Borooah College

Laapataa Ladies, a cinematic production directed by Kiran Rao and co-produced by Rao, Aamir Khan, and Jyoti Deshpande, is set in a fictional state named Nirmal Pradesh in the year 2001. The movie offers a vibrant and poignant exploration of the complexities of womanhood in contemporary India. As I delve into the layers of the narrative, my attention is captivated by the character Jaya portrayed by Pratibha Ranta. Jaya emerges as an unconventional woman in a male-dominated society embodying strength, resilience, and defiance - a pivotal element of the film's narrative.

Throughout the movie, Jaya is depicted as an independent and self-reliant woman who challenges traditional societal expectations. Unlike other female characters, Rao's portrayal of Jaya subverts the conventional archetype. This is evident in her dialogues, body language, and actions. One of her most distinguishing features - a visible tattoo on her hand- sets her apart from the portrayal of women as solely virtuous and passive. What truly resonates with me regarding Jaya's character is her unwavering desire for individualism. She adamantly rejects conforming to socially constructed gender roles, often placing herself at odds with established societal norms. In the movie, Jaya's revelation of wanting to pursue a course in organic farming in Dehradun serves as a testament to her revolutionary spirit- a determination to carve out her own path that is free from societal restraints.

Kiran Rao's portrayal of the character bears resemblance to the groundbreaking work of the famous 20th century feminist writer Simone de Beauvoir, particularly her influential book *The Second Sex* (1949). The author dives into the theme of emancipation intricately woven throughout its pages. Beauvoir asserts that "one is not born but rather becomes a woman". Women are called to transcend the roles imposed upon them by the society. Emancipation in De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* is a multi-faceted process that involves acknowledging and asserting women's freedom in economic, sexual, and educational spheres.

The movie *Laapataa Ladies* serves as an emotional and thought-provoking portrayal of women's experiences within a patriarchal society. The director attempts to highlight qualities such as independence, defiance, advocacy, strength, and impact through the portrayal of Jaya which showcases the resilience and significance of women in society. The movie strikes a chord with the audience offering a note-worthy and impressive depiction of women's role in the society. ▲



LOVING VINCENT: A STARRY TELLING

Deep Chakraborty

Alumnus, B.N College, Dhubri

Vincent Van Gogh, the renowned artist, grappled with severe mental illness. His depression led him to the drastic act of cutting off his own ear, which he then presented to a prostitute. Despite his inner turmoil, Van Gogh left behind a legacy of artistic masterpieces. Although only one of his paintings sold during his lifetime, that did not deter him from creating more. His iconic work "The Starry Night" is considered to his magnum opus and was painted while he resided in the Saint Paul Asylum. The painting reflects his unique perspective of the world influenced by his mental state and struggles.

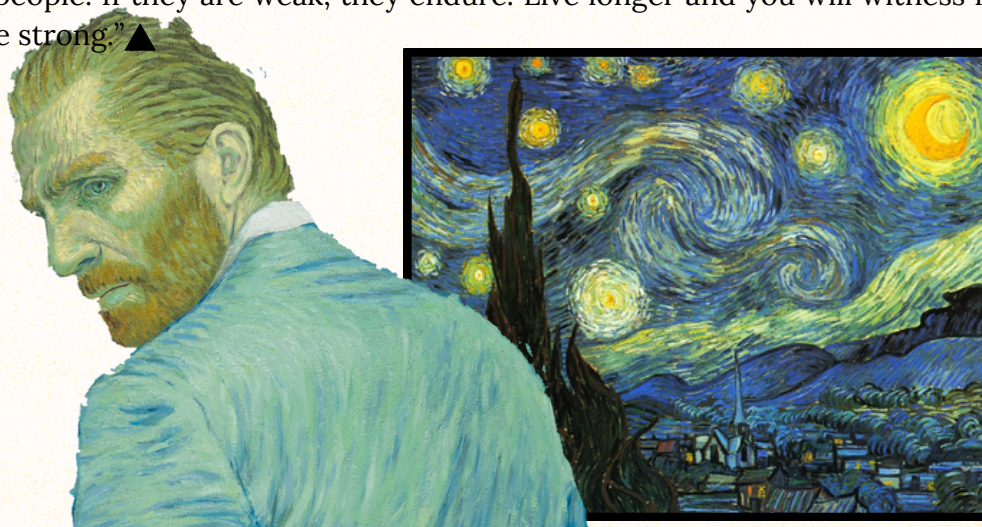
In the film *Loving Vincent* (2017), we witness the final days of Van Gogh through the eyes of various individuals. Some view him as a good and kind man, while others pity him or perceive him as an enigmatic force. Above all, he grappled with loneliness and inner turmoil. His inflexibility in relationships set him apart - a man whose true nature remained exposed, devoid of protective layers. Six weeks before his tragic end, he wrote a letter expressing the calmness that he felt, only to take his own life a few days later. Was it suicide or was he a victim of foul play? His haunting final words still echo the weight of the above stated question: "there is no one to blame." Joseph Roulin, the postmaster and friend of Vincent, entrusted his son Armand Roulin with a crucial task of delivering Vincent's last letter to his brother Theo. Reluctant at first, Armand's journey transformed from a simple delivery to an investigation into Van Gogh's death.

Loving Vincent, a film entirely composed of oil paintings, features 65,000 frames created by over 100 artists worldwide. It serves as a poignant tribute to Van Gogh's life and artistic style. The following are some of Van Gogh's famous quotes:

"Who am I in the eyes of most people? A nobody, a non-entity, and an unpleasant person- someone who has not and never will hold any position in society. In short, the lowest of the low. Well, even if all that were absolutely true, one day I will have to reveal through my work what this nobody, this non-entity, has in his heart."

"In the life of a painter, death may not be the most challenging aspect. As for myself, I confess I know little about it. However, the sight of the stars always ignites my imagination. Why, I ask myself, should those distant points of light in the firmament remain inaccessible to us? Perhaps we can journey towards death as one would walk to a star, passing away peacefully from old age. For now I'll return to bed because it's late. With a handshake, I bid you good night and wish you luck. Yours sincerely, Vincent."

I will conclude this article by sharing a quote that resonates with his life: "He had a breakdown- it happens to people. If they are weak, they endure. Live longer and you will witness how life can even bring down the strong." ▲



SECRET KILLINGS OF ASSAM

Ipchita Das

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Shadow Assassins (2022), directed by Nilaanjan Reeta Datta, draws inspiration from the infamous secret killings of Assam. The film delves into Assam's darkest political history which permanently scarred the years from 1998 to 2001. Based on real-life events involving Ananta Kalita and Dr. Dharani Dhar Das, both victims of a state-sponsored strategy to eliminate the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and terrorize their sympathizers, the movie sheds light on the brutality committed on people who were suspected to have ties with the ULFA.

The director's intent is to reveal the truth, focusing not on notions of good or evil but rather on the innocent lives lost in the name of eradicating groups like the ULFA. The film narrates the seemingly ordinary lives of Nirbhay Kalita and his family. During his semester break from studies in Pune, he returns home. However, tragedy strikes when he is abducted and tortured while he is with his family and a few days later, his family is ruthlessly shot in their home- a scene reminiscent of Dr. Dharani Dhar Das's real-life experience. The Das family faced threats and abduction due to their blood relation with Dipak Das, also known as Mithinga Daimary, the central publicity secretary of the ULFA. Dr. Dharani Dhar Das was specifically targeted to coerce his brother Dipak Das into surrendering. The resultant events led to the merciless murder of Dr. Das and his entire family.

Rather than criticizing the actions of the ULFA or the SULFA(former members of the ULFA that have surrendered to the Indian government), the film aims to highlight the suffering endured by innocent individuals caught in between. The sole mistake of such people was sharing familial and blood ties with ULFA members. By making a movie like *Shadow Assassins*, the director seeks to illuminate the pain and fear faced by innocent people. In conclusion, it can be said that *Shadow Assassins* masterfully captures Assam's troubled history and serves as a poignant reminder of Assam's long-forgotten dark past, earning praises from both critics and viewers. It not only brings to the fore innocent lives lost in secret killings but also serves as a cautionary tale for the future generation. ▲



INTO THE WILD - A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY AND SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Mahek Seikh
3rd Semester, Dept. of English, B. Borooah College

Sean Penn's 2007 film *Into the Wild* is a profound and thought-provoking adaptation of Jon Krakauer's book about Christopher McCandless's remarkable story. As I watched the movie, I could not help but feel a deep connection to Christopher's quest for the meaning of life, his desire for freedom, and his longing for spiritual connection.

The film masterfully captures Christopher's journey from a privileged college graduate to a young man living off the grid in the Alaskan wilderness. His rejection of material possessions and societal expectations resonates with me as I have often felt suffocated by the pressures of modern life. Christopher's courage to abandon the familiar and embrace the unknown is both

inspiring and haunting, echoing the spiritual call to surrender and trust in the universe. Through his experiences, Christopher grapples with fundamental questions about happiness, purpose, and human connection. His encounters with Jan and Bob, two kind-hearted strangers who take him in, show the beauty of genuine relationships and the power of community. Yet, his ultimate decision to venture into the wild alone speaks to the enduring human quest for spiritual growth, self-discovery, and union with nature.



As I reflect on the movie, I see parallels with my own spiritual journey. Christopher's story reminds us that true fulfillment lies beyond the boundaries of the ego and the material world. His journey encourages us to listen to our intuition, trust in the unknown, and embrace our own uniqueness. In the stillness of the wilderness, Christopher finds a deeper connection with himself, others, and the divine. Christopher's poignant realization in the end—"happiness is only real when shared"—resonates deeply with me. This profound insight speaks the truth that our experiences, no matter how beautiful or transformative, are incomplete without someone to share them with. It highlights the importance of connection, community, and love in our lives.

Into the Wild is more than a movie - it is a reflection of our collective longing for authenticity, freedom, spiritual connection, and shared happiness. Christopher's story may have ended on a tragic note, but his spirit and legacy live on, inspiring us to re-evaluate our own paths, seek our own truth, and connect with something greater than ourselves. ▲

THE SECRET WORLD OF ARRIETTY

Geremsa Basumutary
Class XII, Holy Child School, Chandmari

The Secret World of Arrietty (2010), another of the geeky cast's Ghibli movies, is a fantasy film in which little people live with their families under the floorboards of houses occupied by normal sized people, and they survive by "borrowing" tiny items from them. Arrietty's father forces her to go on a quest for food. While searching for food, she meets Sho and the story is carried forward. The emotional heart of the story lies in Arrietty's complex relationship with the sick human boy, Sho.

The level of details as well as the fine animation display everyday mundane objects but from the perspective of the tiny borrowers in a grandiose yet dangerous way. *The Secret World of Arrietty* was generally well-received as a beautifully executed, small-scale adventure; its visual-based nature and lack of larger ambition has been viewed more in a reflective way. ▲



LOST AND FOUND

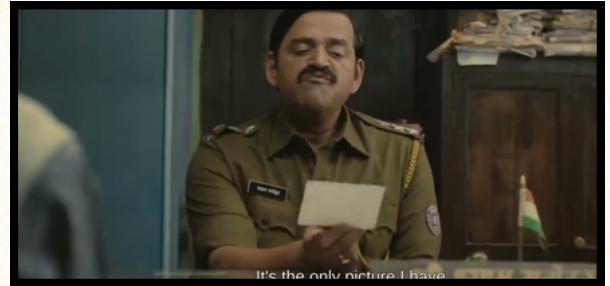
Priyanka Singha

5th Semester, Dept. of History, B. Borooah College

Netflix India brings us one of the finest comedy dramas of 2024, *Laapataa Ladies* (Lost Ladies), starring Nitanshi Goel, Pratibha Ranta, and Sparsh Shrivastav in the lead roles. The film is directed by Kiran Rao and jointly produced by Aamir Khan, Jyoti Deshpande, and Kiran Rao herself. The story revolves around two brides who are separated from their respective in-laws' family from the same train. From mistaken identities to laugh-out-loud escapades, the ensuing chaos guarantees both laughter and heartwarming moments.

The movie follows the journey of a newly-wed couple, Deepak and Phool, as they return to Deepak's village with Phool dressed in traditional red wedding attire. However, upon reaching home, Deepak discovers that Phool has been exchanged with another woman during the train journey. The exchanged bride Jaya introduces herself as Pushpa Rani, hiding her identity. Meanwhile, Phool finds herself lost at an unknown station where she befriends Manju Mai and others, all waiting with the hope that Deepak will return someday. Despite numerous hardships, the couple's unwavering belief and trust in each other lead to their reunion and the start of their new life together.

Laapataa Ladies also tells the poignant tale of Jaya and Phool, two female characters of contrasting personalities who discover their true selves in the course of the film. Deepak, portrayed as a good-hearted man, challenges patriarchal norms. His determination to find his beloved Phool breaks the myth of misogyny. Though Phool had her doubts, when she returns to her in-laws, they open-heartedly welcome her back. The character that intrigued me the most in the movie is that of Manju Mai, a tea stall owner who provides shelter to Phool. Manju Mai's character is portrayed as a bold and an intelligent woman who, despite facing rejections from both her husband and her son, chooses to live her life independently, running her tea stall.



Manju Mai's wisdom and knowledge about the world and its treatment of women in general profoundly impacts Phool who gradually emerges as a woman who now knows and understands her self-worth. Manju Mai tells Phool that women can cultivate paddy and cook, give birth to children, and raise them- all without relying on men. Her resilience motivates Phool and encourages her to become self-reliant. On the other hand, Jaya is also a gutsy woman who seizes opportunities in life. When she gets a chance, she does not let it slip away. Her dream is to study agriculture in the city, defying societal norms in a patriarchal context.

Kiran Rao skillfully portrays all the three women's characters and delicately presents them as sensitive, strong, and resilient. The story highlights the dynamic roles women play in the society. Despite fates separating them from their initial paths, they discover their inner strength and confidence. ▲



FILMMAKING: WHEN FANTASY MERGES WITH REALITY

Aryan Sinha
Alumnus, B. Borooah College

Consider that you are reading a book about fantasy and you encounter descriptions of a mystical city teeming with huge buildings, dinosaurs, creatures from other planets, or even a peculiar country with plant-like structures and humans sporting blue skin. When we read a book, these fantastical elements come alive in our imagination. But what happens when filmmakers attempt to bring these bizarre and unreal fantasies to life in their stories? This is where the magic of visual effects, special effects, and computer-generated imagery (CGI) come into play. These terms - CGI, Visual Effects (VFX) and Special Effects (SFX) - are often used interchangeably, leading to confusion about their distinct roles and applications for everyday viewers. Each of these elements plays a critical role in the storytelling process and understanding their unique functions can provide deeper insights into the art of filmmaking.

Special Effects (SFX):

One of the most exhilarating aspects of filmmaking revolves around special effects, commonly abbreviated as SFX. These effects are physically created on set during filming, occurring in real-time for actors and directors to witness firsthand. Various techniques fall under SFX, including:

- **Practical Explosions:** These controlled explosions are safe for the cast and crew. Often associated with action movie genres, they contribute to creating gravity-defying shots.
- **Fake Weather Conditions:** Filmmakers simulate rain, snow, fog, or wind to enhance the atmosphere in a scene. Since relying on actual weather conditions is not feasible, artificial rain showers, winds, and snowfall are commonly used on sets to achieve consistent weather effects.
- **Animatronics:** Robotic devices bring creatures or characters to life with lifelike movements. Notable examples include the animatronic dinosaurs in the first *Jurassic Park* (1993) film and the Phoenix Bird in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (2002).

Visual Effects (VFX):

Visual Effects (VFX) encompass a broader range of techniques applied to shots captured during production. Unlike SFX which occurs during filming, VFX are typically added in post-production. Key aspects of VFX include:

- **Compositing:** This process combines multiple layers of footage into a cohesive image. It involves merging live-action footage with CGI elements. For instance, the final fight scene in *Avengers: Endgame* (2019) seamlessly blends live-action actors with CG components and various special effects.
- **Rotoscoping:** This refers to the process of tracing over live-action footage to create realistic animation or isolate elements for compositing. *Doctor Strange* (2016) uses rotoscoping to enhance magical effects, adding surreal details to scenes.
- **Motion Capture:** Actors' movements are recorded to create realistic digital characters or enhance performances with CGI. Rocket Raccoon from *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014) is a prime example of this.

Computer-generated imagery (CGI):

CGI is a subset of VFX that involves digitally creating visual elements using computer software. It ranges from subtle enhancements to entire scenes or characters rendered entirely through digital means. Key applications include:

- **Digital Environments:** CGI constructs entire cities, landscapes, or fictional worlds. In *Baahubali: The Beginning* (2015), CGI brings the grand kingdom of Mahishmati to life.
- **Digital Characters:** CGI allows filmmakers to portray fantastical or dangerous characters. For instance, the ghost Munjya in the film *Munjya* (2024) is entirely digital.
- **Subtle Enhancements:** CGI can adjust lighting, add reflections, or remove unwanted objects in live-action footage.

To conclude, the integration of CGI, VFX, and SFX allows filmmakers to create visually stunning and emotionally captivating stories. As technology advances, these techniques will continue to push boundaries. ▲

LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND

Ikrana Arleen Hussain

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Leave the World Behind (2023), directed by Sam Esmail and starring Julia Roberts and Ethan Hawke, is an adaption of Rumaan Alam's dystopian thriller novel of the same title. From an environmental standpoint, the movie can be seen as a narrative that examines the effects of human dependence on technology and the exploitation of natural resources which ultimately results in ecological imbalance. In the movie, two families are stuck together in a house during a blackout which causes disruption of electricity, telephone lines, and other technologies. The Sandford family rents the house of George H (G.H.) for a family holiday. After the blackout, George and his daughter return to spend the night in their house with the Sandford family. Soon, things take a terrible turn and strange occurrences like the appearance of deer, flamingo, and the broken tooth of Sandford's son make them realize that something terrible might happen.

The initial appearance of a deer in the backyard of their house hints at the "abnormality" of an advanced modern world where there is a distinct division between the habitats of humans and animals. Clay (Ethan Hawke) drives into the city in order to find more information about the disruptions. However, he ends up being more puzzled when he encounters a helpless Spanish lady waiting alone in the middle of the road. His refusal to help her symbolizes the anxiety and the lack of trust and harmony between different communities. Later, the vicious disposal of letters in a foreign language by an aircraft as well as unpredictable weather add to the existing tension in the environment, symbolizing uncertainty. On the other hand, Amanda's (Julia Roberts) attitude is rather rebellious despite the ongoing scenario - she is portrayed as someone in disbelief despite all the signs. This demonstrates the ignorance of people about exploiting the environment without giving any thought about ecology. Clay and Amanda, along with their children, decide to return to Amanda's sister's house. The car journey at first seems very pleasant but they are forced to turn back to G.H.'s house after narrowly escaping oncoming Tesla cars that crash into the motorway full of colliding brand-new self-driving Tesla cars. This scene represents society's faith in modern technology to enhance and organize the daily lives of people as well as the consequences of relying too much on these developments. Towards the end of the movie, the situation worsens and the movie falls into potential cataclysm.

It is important to note that *Leave the World Behind* does not have a justified ending and leaves it open for the audience to interpret. The director neither suggests any measures to address the concerns raised in the film nor concludes the occurrences of environmental abnormalities, leaving the audiences in awe of the future. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the movie is a cry for help to save humanity and the entire ecological system. It is also a reminder that the ability to manipulate nature is limited and can lead to dangerous consequences if overestimated. The film ends on a sombre note and leaves its audience to interpret the outcome of ecological disorder. ▲



JORAM: THE TRAGEDY OF JHINPIDI

Debashis Barman

5th Semester, Dept. of English, B. Borooah College

Cinema is often seen as a means of entertainment that serves as a way of escape for most people. However, cinema can also be used for sharing ideas and perspectives and portraying realistic pictures of different parts of our society. Cinema also helps in discussing sensitive topics in a more creative and tolerant way. An example of such cinema is the 2023 film *Joram* that aptly depicts the conditions of the tribal communities in India.

Joram, directed by Devashish Makhija, is a film that tells the story of Dasru, a tribal man from a small village named Jhinpidi in Jharkhand. Dasru, along with his wife Vaano, goes to Mumbai to escape a life of violence caused by Naxalites. However, Dasru and Vaano soon meet with a tragedy wherein Vaano is murdered and Dasru is framed as the murderer. This forces Dasru to return to his village with his three-month-old daughter where he tries his best to survive.

Through the lens of Devashish Makhija, we see the reality of the tribal communities in India, especially how they are exploited by big companies in the name of development. Even the law does not protect these communities; minors and innocent people are wrongfully arrested by the police by framing them as supporters of the rebels. The concept of sustainable development is largely ignored by private companies which can be seen in the film when they destroy the forests which are the souls of the communities living there. *Joram* perfectly portrays the conditions that forces people from tribal communities to join the Naxalite Movement or any other rebellious movements. The film throws light on the battle between the rebels and the government that affects common people the most.



Joram also portrays how adverse conditions force farmers to join the rebels and fight the government. The film gives us a deep insight into the lives of the tribals and how they either must leave their home and go to cities for work or are exploited by big companies, both being equally miserable conditions. *Joram* is a gem of a movie that explores harsh realities and depicts the condition of backward communities in our country. In my opinion, movies such as *Joram* where sensitive and important topics are talked about should be encouraged in Bollywood. ▲



NOLAN - A MASTER OF CRAFT

Nishant Sharma

5th Semester, B.Sc. IT, B. Borooah College

Christopher Nolan is one of the most talented and well-known directors of this generation who is famous for his storytelling, use of mesmerizing effects, and spectacular visuals in his works. His movies are known for jumping across time, using practical effects, and exploring the concept of time. In his films, he likes to dig deep into themes like who we are, what is right and wrong, and what it means to be human.

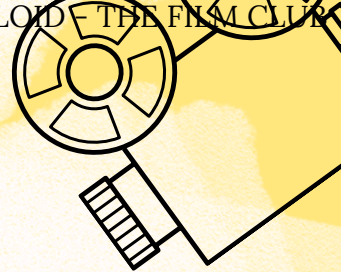
Nolan's storytelling in his movies, *Memento* (2000) and *Inception* (2010) makes you work to connect the pieces of the story like a puzzle for a deeper and more engaging experience. In *Memento*, the story is told backwards to mirror the main character's memory issues. And in *Inception*, different levels of reality and dreams are woven together, keeping you on your toes to follow the plot. Nolan likes to play around with time in his movies. In *Interstellar* (2014), he explores how space travel can mess with time, and in *Dunkirk* (2017), he tells the story in a unique way by intertwining three timelines. This time manipulation makes things more intense and highlights the crazy and urgent situations in the movies.

Nolan stands out in the world of cinema by sticking to practical effects and realism instead of relying on CGI like most of the film makers. By using real places, sets, and filming techniques, he makes his movies feel more real. This way, the actors get to act in real settings which makes their performances even more genuine and impressive. Nolan's movies often go deep into his characters' minds, exploring things like who they are and what is right and wrong as well as the condition of being human. In *The Prestige* (2006), two magicians go head-to-head and it becomes a big mind game about being obsessed, making sacrifices, and chasing after big dreams. And with *The Dark Knight* series, Nolan totally changes the superhero game by adding deep thoughts about the mind and morals.

In Nolan's movies, sound and music are very important. They help make the audience feel things at a deeper level and keep the story moving. Nolan and Hans Zimmer have together come up with awesome music that you can recognize in all his movies, like in *Inception*, where Zimmer uses an Edith Piaf song to connect different parts of the story. While making movies, Nolan focuses on wide shots, real places, and a ton of little details. He likes using IMAX cameras and wide shots to create a clear and immersive experience. The wide shots in *Dunkirk* and the super detailed cities in *Inception* are examples of top-notch visuals. Nolan's movies like to dig deep into the ideas of things having two sides to things and figuring out who we really are. He is always wondering about what it means to be yourself and what you might have to give up to make it big. He gets into the idea of two things going on at once in his storytelling, like in *Memento*, where the main character's messed-up memory tells two different stories that come together in the end to show what really happened.

In the end, Nolan's movies deal with the questions of life and its meaning, making us think about the important things. For instance, *Inception* talks about what is real and the mind's strength, and *Interstellar* looks at where we fit in the universe and how love can go beyond time and space. Nolan mixes personal stories with big ideas, and that is why he is known as a great storyteller. ▲





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ANNUAL CALENDAR 2024-25

AUGUST 2024

- PUBLICATION OF NEWSLETTER
- SCREENING 1

SEPTEMBER 2024

- SCREENING 2

8TH FEBRUARY 2025

- CELEBRATION OF GLOBAL MOVIE DAY
- ANNUAL LECTURE OF CELLULOID - THE FILM CLUB

FEBRUARY 2025

- SCREENING 3

MARCH 2025

- SCREENING 4

(COINCIDING WITH THE FOUNDATION DAY OF
CELLULOID - THE FILM CLUB ON 20TH MARCH)

SPECIAL SCREENING

- SPECIAL SCREENING IN THE PRESENCE OF
THE FILMMAKING TEAM
(DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED)

