

Cinema and Society: National Workshop on Film Appreciation

Dept. of English
North-Eastern Hill University
Shillong
(15-20 May, 2017)

Cinema forms one of the most powerful medium of art and communication as well as a sophisticated discourse of social critique and resistance. Globally, apart from being a medium of entertainment, cinema has evolved over the years into a major narrative to address myriad social issues and concerns through its growing maturity crystallising into profound cinematic idioms. In the Indian context, from Pramathesh Barua to Satyajit Ray, from Guru Dutt to Addoor Gopalkrishnan, cinema has come a long way. The pioneers of Indian cinema have redefined cinema as a mode of reinventing the deeper essences of social and individual realities with extraordinary brilliance. Cinema in recent times has been exploring far more nuanced and complex issues turning itself into an intensely engaging medium.

However, intelligent understanding and appreciation of this immensely creative medium demands different set of competencies on the part of the audience; for cinema entails a wide range of incorporations in terms of its visuals, cinematography, imageries, sounds, music, narratives, space, colour and many other aspects. Therefore cinema demands an intelligent interface.

Meanwhile, the way we receive motion picture has undergone enormous changes in recent times following its huge evolution in the wake of tremendous developments in technology and mode of productions which have become all pervasive making enormous impacts. Cinema is no longer restricted to the mainstream alone; it has as much evolved into a powerful alternative medium as well. Reception of cinema has also been multi dimensional as there have been multiple vantages to engage with cinema- as an audience, a student, critic, an activist, an art aficionado and so on. Like a book, cinema is ever more vibrant with almost limitless possibilities of meanings, interpretations and significations. A broader understanding of cinema leads one to accept cinema as a much more complex medium than what it apparently appears to be for it involves understanding of its aesthetics, signs and syntax as well as its intimate associations with society, community and, *inter alia*, sense of history.

Quite significantly Cinema in the North East grew almost simultaneously as in the other parts of India. The year 1935 is an important milestone in the history of Indian cinema. That was the year when Pramathesh Barua of Assam directed and produced one of the most iconic films in the history of mainstream Indian cinema, *Devdas*, in Bengali and Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla directed and produced *Joymati*, the first Assamese motion picture and also the first film from the North East. Cinema from the North East has evolved significantly with many dimensions and has been an important component of Indian cinema in general. It is also equally important to trace the growth of Indian cinema not only in the major metropolises but also in the fringes. The course is designed to initiate a comprehensive exercise in understanding and appreciating cinema across geographies and cultures.

COURSE VISION

This workshop aims at providing the participants with an engaging insight into 'how to read a film in terms of its texts and contexts'. The broad technical parameters that the workshop aims to cover are:

- History of cinema
- Cinema and Society
- Basic history of visual storytelling
- The history of cinema
- Composition in painting, perspective, colour, texture and tones

- How to read an image in still photography
- Psychological interpretation of shots in cinematic storytelling
- Reading signs and syntax in cinematic storytelling
- Writing for cinema
- Introduction to film narratives (supported by screening of films and film clippings for discussion)
- An overview of cinema from across different continents, its historical trends
- Film criticism and the constructive role of a film critic
- Music in cinema
- The role of sound in cinema
- Documentary film narratives and contemporary approaches in documentary filmmaking
- Influence of the digital realm in cinema, the possibilities
- Film shows (Documentary, feature and short films)
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Classics along with contemporary films (documentary and feature) would be screened as an academic part of the course to help the participants gain insights into different approaches of storytelling in cinema as cinema has evolved with time. Both, films from abroad and from India would be part of the screenings.

Key Resource Persons and Plenary Speakers

1. **Maulee Senapati**, a graduate in Film Direction from FTII, Pune. Film director, documentary film maker and cinema critic. Former Head of the Department, Film Direction, Annapurna International School of Film and Media Studies, Hyderabad.
2. **Gautam Bora**, A graduate in Film Direction from East Germany, recipient of the 39th National Film Award (Swarna Kamal), 1992, an eminent film director and documentary film maker and actor.
3. **Manoj Borpujari**, National award winning film critic, poet and author.
4. **Pranjal Bora**, A documentary film maker and film critic, teaches English literature at Dikhowmukh College, Sibsagar, Assam.
Email: mrpb1975@gmail.com Phone – 9435052267
5. **Raphael Warjri**, Noted artist, media personality and film maker from Shillong, Meghalaya.
6. **Rubee Das**, art critic, writer and media consultant.

Venue NEHU Old Guest House
Programme Timing 15 May to 20 May, 2017 from 10 am to 6.00 pm
Registration*

Registration fees without accommodation **Rs. 1000.00**
Registration Fees with accommodation **Rs. 3000.00**

(Accommodation in the NEHU Guest House on prior intimation on twin sharing basis for seven nights. Accommodation will be available from 14 May afternoon to 21 May morning. Registration fees do not include food)

*For the students from the Department of English and other departments of NEHU, Registration fee is waived.

TA /DA Organisers will not defray travel expense of the participants.

Dates There are limited seats for the programme. Participants will have to confirm by **10 May, 2017**. Participants seeking accommodation will have to deposit Rupees 1000/- in advance in cash or direct transfer on or before **10 May, 2017**. The account number for money transfer will be provided on request.

Climate Shillong is pleasant in the month of May. However, it is advisable keep light woollens.

Programme Coordinator Jyotirmoy Prodhani
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REGISTRATION FORMAT

I want to join the National Workshop on Film Appreciation as a participant:

Name (in Capital)

Designation

Affiliation

Address with email and phone no.

Accommodation Required/ Not required

Food Preference Normal/ Vegetarian

Registration Fees Rs. 1000/-
Rs. 3000/-

(Mail it to mankhrawdunai@gmail.com/ rajaprodhani@gmail.com.)

Registration Fees will be collected on 15 May on arrival. To book accommodation remit Rs. 1000/- in advance. Bank details will be given on request)