

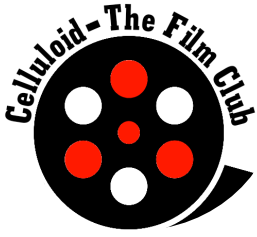
NEWSLETTER

CELLULOID - THE FILM CLUB

A DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, B. BOROOAH COLLEGE INITIATIVE

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-NEWSLETTER-

CELLULOID - THE FILM CLUB

A Department of English, B. Borooah College Initiative



Summer 2021-2023

Pilot Issue

Message from the Principal

It is a matter of immense pride and happiness that the students of the department of English, under the guidance of their teachers, have formed their very own film club named “Celluloid - The Film Club”. The goal of the club is to screen diverse films and facilitate discussion centered on the films’ features and themes. These screenings attract students from the entire college, thereby enabling the creation of an atmosphere of shared learning and growth. I congratulate the department of English on this initiative and wish the club success and glory in days to come.

Dr. Satyendra Nath Barman
Principal, B. Borooah College

Message from the Head of the Department

The study of literature subsumes a great variety of allied art forms, of which cinema is the most ubiquitous. A keen interest in and a sound knowledge of such art forms is richly rewarding for a student of literature. As an acknowledgement of the same, most universities have courses on film adaptations/film theory as part of their literature programmes. Therefore, the endeavours of Celluloid in screening films regularly for an eager audience is worthy of warm approbation. In my opinion, one of the USPs of our film club is the extensive and animated discussions that follow each screening. I am sure that the present newsletter will be, inter alia, an extension of this USP.

The relationship of literature and cinema is not as cosy as meets the eye. While a number of films based on books have been successful and much appreciated, on the other end of the spectrum are authors who fume at the directors/producers. R. K. Narayan’s experience with his best work, *The Guide*, is a case in point. Moreover, the all-powerful graphic/visual medium is seen by many as also a threat to the written word. Apart from accommodating writings on various aspects of cinema, which I am sure the newsletter will do, I would be very happy if subsequent editions also consider the kind of uneasy questions raised above. Best wishes to the entire team.

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

From the Editors' Desk



Celluloid - The Film Club materialised as the result of an initiative of the Department of English, B. Borooah College which is motivated by the shared interest and inclination that the students as well as the faculty members have for cinema. Born out of the camaraderie shared by faculty members and students of the department and the regular exchange of ideas between them, the club is a space where students and faculty members of literature as well as other disciplines gather to watch and discuss the incredible world of cinema. Since its inception, the club has been screening and enabling discussions on films ranging from documentaries to anime with utmost enthusiasm.

In the past two years, the club experienced significant growth as it was able to welcome more participants because of the efforts of the core committee that conducts all the screenings and is responsible for the upkeep of the club at large. In the previous semester, there was a surge in club activities and the number of members also increased as the result of a successful membership drive. These advances inspired the thought of an e-newsletter. Therefore, in the official closing meeting of the previous semester, this idea was proposed and discussed subsequently.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an outlet for the exploration of the myriad perspectives and impressions that arise from indulging in cinema. It is a platform for individuals to share their observations and experiences arising from interacting with the cinematic media. It is not bound by any strict adherence to particular disciplinary, theoretical and critical frameworks, rather, it aims at inclusiveness and inquisitiveness. However, it also aims to facilitate conversations around difficult areas regarding the form and the content of films.

Celluloid - The Film Club, in its mere two years of existence, has been able to sprout a community. Although still in its nascent stages, this community shows the potential of growing into a widespread network of promising individuals. The discussions that follow the screenings are evidence of the prowess of the medium that film is. Not only does it inspire emotional and analytical discourses but also functions as a source of awe, comfort and respite to many. This newsletter intends to capture the multifaceted nature and purpose of cinema. It strives to embody the universal appeal of films as a microcosmic representation of the same by being in conversation with the concerned milieu and facilitating it further in whatever way possible.

In this pilot edition of the newsletter, there are a variety of pieces concerned with the experience of watching films and being a part of a film club. It features reviews, impressions, analyses and personal accounts. This newsletter would not exist without the support of the principal of the college, the head and faculty members of the department of English, the core committee members, and last but not the least, the students who constitute the film club.



Anwasha Dash
Ikрана Arleen Hussain

Celluloid - The Film Club: A Historical Report

Inamul Haque

Alumnus, Department of English, B. Borooah College

While I was pursuing my graduation in English at B. Borooah College, an initiative was undertaken by the department to constitute a film club. Formed under the guidance of the head of the department, Dr. Abhigyan Prasad and the leadership of two faculty members, Dr. Kabita Chiring and Snigdha Deka, it is the first film club of the college. After several brainstorming and discussion sessions regarding the name of the club, the founding members came up with "Celluloid" and the club was named "Celluloid- The Film Club, A Department of English, B. Borooah College Initiative". As its pilot screening, the club screened *Death of a Salesman* (1985, dir. Volker Schlöndorff) on 29 December 2020 for a select group of students. The first open screening of the club was *Dead Poets Society* (1989, dir. Peter Weir) on 30 January 2021 followed by *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021, dir. Jeo Baby) on 20 February 2021.

These three initial screenings of the club spearheaded its growth and guided it in the process of its formalization. On 20 March 2021, the club was formalized in the presence of Dr. Satyendra Nath Barman, Principal, B. Borooah College who also became the chief patron of the club. The principal was felicitated with a sapling and a memento in recognition of his patronage as well his authorization of the club's formalization. On the same day, the club screened the film *Bicycle Thieves* (1948, dir. Vittorio De Sica). After the club's formalization, it has screened a number of films, viz. *Garm Hava* (1973, dir. M.S. Sathyu) on 28 June 2022, *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004, dir. Hayao Miyazaki) on 13 February 2023 and *Schindler's List* (1994, dir. Steven Spielberg) on 18 March 2023. The latest screening of the club was the Oscar winning documentary *The Elephant Whisperers* (2022, dir. Kartiki Gonsalves), screened on 10 April 2023.

Through its monthly screenings, Celluloid - The Film Club seeks to provide students of the college with a platform to not only watch movies but also engage in meaningful discussion about the same. Films of different languages, directorial styles and themes are democratically selected by the club for screening, based on feedback or polls. Students of the department as well as from other courses and programs watch films screened by the club. Faculty members also regularly attend the screenings and teachers and students together participate in the post-screening deliberations over cups of tea. A student-led and administered endeavour, the club's core committee comprising members under various heads attempt to ensure that screenings are smooth and successful. They also tackle challenges faced by the club in consultation with their teachers.

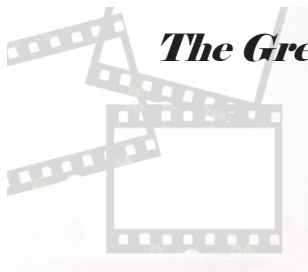
I wish the club a lot of success in the coming days. I hope that the affection and dedication the past and present members have for the club is imbibed by the future members, continuing the legacy of the club.



* Founding Members *

Arbas Ali
Inamul Haque
Partha Ranjan Sonowal
Uddipana Bharadwaj
Vikram Upadhyay

Dubari Kalita
Kazi Monsur Ahmed
Punam Nishi Deka
Sabir Hussain
Saptarshi Chakraborty



***The Great Indian Kitchen* : Film Watching as Community Building**

Kabita Chiring, M.Phil., Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Department of English, B. Borooah College

During the early days of Celluloid, I came across the trailer of a newly released Malayalam film called *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021). Monotonous snippets of a woman cooking for the men of the house in a grimy, dingy kitchen, her expressions shifting from happiness to placidity to rage and her actions from acceptance to acquiescence to revolt were enough to make me recommend the film's screening to our club. A little into the film, I could sense that it had captured the attention of viewers, teachers and students alike, although it did not have the usual elements of popular cinema. The film enumerates the journey of a newly married woman who, in her initial days, enjoys catering to the needs of her new family members, viewing those activities as a way of becoming an insider. However, she soon realises that her care work is nothing more than a miniscule part of the various expectations the entitled men of the house have of her. An episode in which the menstruating woman is subjected to a series of regressive, isolating measures and is expected to blindly follow them particularly stands out. The brilliant directorial work of the film ensures that the plot advances in sync with an increase in the intensity of housework, each day pushing the woman further into the abyss of unacknowledged chores dictated by patriarchy. A poignant metaphor of the burden of housework is the leaking sink in the kitchen. The men turn a blind eye to the leakage in the same way that society/family does not bother about women's condition and their likes and dislikes. At the end of the film, in an act of tremendous defiance and courage, the woman leaves her confined existence behind for good, but not before splashing the accumulated water of the sink on both her husband and father-in-law. It is a heart-warming moment for the audience to see the woman choosing to put an end to her misery; she marches out of the house into the open and continues walking on the road, suggesting the possibility of alternate courses of action. One of the first things she does after reaching her natal home is rebuking her brother who asks the mother for water; "why can't you get the water yourself?" she screams, and flings a glass on the floor. The camera zooms in on her, effectively capturing her rapid breathing and her raging eyes and flaring nostrils as she finally comes to terms with long suppressed anger. Unnamed in the movie, her character is intended to represent the common challenges resulting from oppressive patriarchal social frameworks that diverse women encounter regularly. As a teacher, the high point of the screening for me was the impassioned applause by the students when the woman stages her walk-out. I believe that at that moment, the ability to question and address the unfair was instilled, even if in a nascent form, in the young minds. During the post-screening discussion, the students expressed their views not only on the film but also on gender roles and expectations in general. A few of them later wrote on the film as well. It is envisioned that through screenings like these, the club will help build a community of like-minded people secure in the belief that they will not be alone in adhering to, expressing and acting on their beliefs.



***The Sky is Pink:* An Emotion-Charged Watch**

Munmi Deka

2nd Semester, Department of English,
B. Borooah College

The movie *The Sky is Pink* (2019) is a heartwarming story narrated with a balanced mix of emotions. It is difficult to describe this emotional roller coaster because this movie is not only tear-jerking but it also has fondness, happiness and sadness. The actors starring in this film are Priyanka Chopra (Aditi), Farhan Akhtar (Niren), Zaira Wasim (Aisha) and Rohit Saraf (Ishaan). The movie is based on the real life story of Aisha Chaudhary who suffered from lung disease. In the film, Aisha provides her lively narration from beyond the grave in flashback form which acts as an element of ornamentation. Shonali Bose (director) is the captain of the ship who has handled this real story with much sensitivity. Through this biographical piece, the director wants to show us the reality that in this world of sycophants, it is family that stands by us in our good as well as bad days. The importance of family and the sacrifice of parents for their children are clearly reflected in the film. The fantasy of *The Sky is Pink* is that Aisha's death allows her to see her mother with adoring omniscience.

In the film, there is a dialogue where Aditi says "no one can tell you which colour your sky should be, you are the one who paints your own sky" and it touched my heart because it is true that, after one point in our lives, our parents might leave us and there will be no one with us to guide us. It is we who have to drive the car of life by ourselves. No one can drive another's life car but one can only help us find the right path in our lives.

The Sky is Pink is definitely a stirring film. Most of the scenes in the film have not only made our eyes wet but also our hearts weep. The dialogues, music, cinematography, etc. are brilliantly crafted in the film which help it to grab a position in the hearts of people. Thus, it can be concluded that *The Sky is Pink* goes beyond the underlying themes of death and motherhood as it highlights the importance of living life to the fullest no matter what fate is destined for us.

***Pink:* A Voice Against Patriarchy**

Himashruti Sarma

2nd Semester, Department of English,
B. Borooah College

The movie *Pink* (2016) is a moving story of three young and independent women who have lived in New Delhi for a few years. The movie stars talented actors like Taapsee Pannu (Minal), Kirti Kulhari (Falak Ali) and India's Big B Amitabh Bachchan (Deepak Sehgal). Three girls meet some affluent boys who try to molest them one night, which, as contemporary viewers, we can easily relate to. Rajveer Singh, one of the boys from that group, is a politician's nephew and acts as a dominant authority in the film. After the incident, these boys threaten the girls persistently. But towards the end of the movie, the girls take legal action with the help of an old man named Deepak Sehgal (lawyer) and the boys get punished. Thus, the girls challenge the patriarchal power structure which is a difficult thing to do.

The movie shows the harsh reality of contemporary society. There is a very famous dialogue in this movie, "no means no". A man is not allowed to touch a woman without her permission no matter whether she is a wife, a girlfriend, a friend, or a sex worker. But the three boys behave with the girls as if they have the right to do so. People judge a girl for the way she dresses, if she comes home late, if she drinks, and if she has male friends. But nobody points the finger at boys. The movie strongly opposes such conventional rules of society. Although the girls are judged and stereotyped by people, towards the end of the movie, they earn back their respect with dignity.

The movie shows women's survival in a modern, male-dominated society. A good movie makes the audience feel like they have journeyed with the characters. I also feel the same about this film. The dialogue, acting, cinematography and directing - everything is up to the mark. The movie ends with a strong message to society that intrusion into someone's privacy without the consent of the person concerned is against the law.

Halodhiya Sorai e Baodhan Khai: The Fearless Echo

Meghashree Borah

2nd Semester, Department of Zoology, B. Borooah College

What we talk about when we talk about art reveals how we have enriched ourselves with the human sense of beauty. Great artists often evade what words can express. *Halodhiya Sorai e Baodhan Khai* (হালধীয়া চৰায়ে বাওধান খায়), directed by Jahnu Barua and produced by Patkai Films, is an epoch making film, released on 31 August 1987. The storyline of the film has been taken from the well-known novel of Homen Borgohain. Instead of bringing a high standard of abstraction into perspective and imposing some kind of critical purpose, the story of this film is focused solely on the exploitation of poor and innocent people by aristocrats, an issue worth pondering upon in modern capitalist society. Such social movies are devoted to unveiling oppression and injustice prevalent in our society.

The main lead, Rakeshwar, who is an impoverished farmer, is portrayed as a victim of socio-economic inequality. His wife Taru and son Mohen also have to tolerate this discrimination along with him. Mohen also falls prey to child labour, another notorious social curse. The film delves into the harsh realities faced by marginal communities to raise awareness, evoke empathy and inspire the oppressed people to express their anger against prolonged and perpetual exploitation. Through its raw and visceral storytelling, the film *Halodhiya Sorai e Baodhan Khai* confronts the viewers with the dehumanising effects of capitalism, and the inherent disappointment faced by a certain class of people and the limited opportunities available to them. Through its brilliant casting and dialogue, the film also succeeds in shedding light on the corrupt systems of society. "Corruption is in our blood" - a dialogue by the prominent actor Pranjal Saikia reveals the bare picture of moral failure in some so-called educated individuals of our community.

Halodhiya Sorai e Baodhan Khai is a film not devoted solely to artistic expression and deep philosophical realisation. Rather, it promotes a sense of social responsibility and raises a voice against such socio-economic discrimination. It includes elements of realistic struggle and highlights the degeneration of moral values in order to encourage viewers to be aware about and unite against such injustice. The film is definitely a work of art, reflecting its motive to utilise art for a greater purpose.

Colour in Films

Uddipana Bharadwaj

Alumnus, Department of English, B. Borooah College

Of all God's gifts to the sighted man, color is holiest, the most divine, the most solemn.

- John Ruskin

Tracking colour palettes and trends in films is a requisite insight on part of the viewer. A colour palette is often chosen meticulously so as to convey the movie characters' moods, emotions, conflicts and thoughts in delicate but sophisticated ways whilst in accordance with the overarching narrative structure. From Alfred Hitchcock's dramatic use of black and white in *Psycho* (1960) to Chad Stahelski's use of primary colours in *John Wick* (2014), cinema's effectiveness hinges on colour to make its story powerful. In this vein, Wes Anderson's cinematic style and skill is distinguished by the importance he gives to carefully crafted chromatic colour composition intended to confer an aesthetic logic to the film.

For Anderson, his every film needs a dominant

colour that, combined with a specific palette, allows one to identify each story as different from the other. From the beige of *Isle of Dogs* (2018), the yellow of *Moonrise Kingdom*, the blue of *The Life Aquatic* (2004), the orange of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (2009) to the pink of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014), each film presents itself as a vivid colourful experience emblematic of the microcosm it wants to describe.

The use of the colour red in the elevator scene of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, for example, is to suggest a feeling of tension. This feeling can be seen on the face of Madame D. who is also dressed in a hat, gloves, dress and lipstick of an intense red. In later scenes involving Zero and Agatha, the pastel tones of pink and light blue make the contrast less accentuated, expressing a harmonious situation of intimacy and love, in which even the chaos of the confectionery boxes appears positive and delicate.

The analysis of the cinematographic images of Wes Anderson is an interesting starting point to understand how colour is an integral part of filmic narration. The cultivation of such observation allows for an easier understanding of colour psychology in real life and also in other forms of visual narration.

Exploring Love, Time and Unexpressed Emotions : A Comparative Study of *Source Code* and the Song “লগন উকলি গ’ল”

Debarsish Das

2nd Semester, Department of English, B. Borooah College

In the realm of cinematic narratives and lyrical compositions, few themes resonate as deeply as love, time, and unexpressed emotions. Duncan Jones’s thought-provoking sci-fi thriller *Source Code* (2011) and the song “লগন উকলি গ’ল” (the time has passed), written by one of the most prominent artists of Assam, Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha, intertwine in these themes, offering a profound exploration of the human experience. “লগন উকলি গ’ল” is all about the innermost human emotions and feelings that could not be expressed by one to another due to the crucial universal nature of time. It is all about finding a state of solace amidst all the melancholy. This is a cinephilic comparative study of these two works that delves into the depths of their narratives to uncover the parallels and connections that enrich the understanding of love and the constraints of time.

Source Code invites us into a world where Captain Colter Stevens becomes Sean Fentress, a victim of a devastating train bombing. Through this transformation, we witness many scenes along with the consequences of unexpressed emotions. Sean’s untold love for Christina remains trapped within him, echoing the poignant lyrics of the song: “লগন উকলি গ’ল, তেওঁ যে নহ’ল কোৱা” (the time has passed, yet my emotions still remain unexpressed). Both works resonate with the sense of unexpressed emotions, painting a portrait of longing and desire to deliver love’s message.

Within the narrative of *Source Code*, Dr. Rutledge’s proclamation, “every second that passes is a second closer to an end” encapsulates the transience of time. This sentiment is echoed in the lyrics of “লগন উকলি গ’ল”, acknowledging the expiration of time and emphasising the urgency to express our feelings. Both the film and the song invite us to seize the present moment, transcending the limitations of time itself. At the heart of *Source Code*, Captain Stevens assumes Sean’s identity, becoming the means for delivering his unspoken love to Christina. In this act, the limitations of time are challenged and the potential to alter fate is revealed. The song’s lyrics resonate with this transformative power:

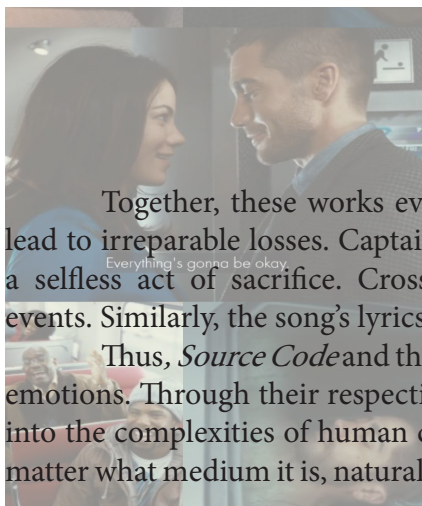
“মলয়াই কাণে কাণে
মনৰ বাতৰি আনে
নিখিলৰ সুৰে সুৰে
হিয়ায়ো গান জোৰে
শুনিছানে সেই সুৰ,
পৰাণত তোলা মোৰ
হৃদয়ৰ গোৱা গান,
ভালপোৱা ভালপোৱা”

Both works affirm the profound impact of love, underscoring its ability to bring about positive change. Furthermore, regret weaves its threads through the tapestry of *Source Code* as Captain Stevens confronts the consequences of missed opportunities and unexpressed emotions. The song’s lyrics echo this sentiment:

“কিমান হেঙুলি উষা
কিমান জোনালি নিশা
মিছাতেই গ’ল মোৰ
কিমান গধূলি পুৱা”

Together, these works evoke a deep sense of longing and the realisation that unspoken feelings can lead to irreparable losses. Captain Stevens’ unwavering commitment towards protecting Christina showcases a selfless act of sacrifice. Crossing the boundaries of time, he challenges the predetermined course of events. Similarly, the song’s lyrics highlight the internal conflict between hiding and expressing feelings.

Thus, *Source Code* and the song “লগন উকলি গ’ল” offer profound reflections on love, time and unexpressed emotions. Through their respective mediums, these works captivate cinephiles as well as art lovers by delving into the complexities of human connections and the urgency to express emotions before time slips away. No matter what medium it is, natural human emotions are always laid bare and that gives art and life true meaning.



***Howl's Moving Castle:* A Journey Filled with Magic and Heart**

Farhana Parveen

6th Semester, Department of English, B. Borooah College

The film *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) is visually stunning and enchanting which seamlessly blends fantasy, romance and adventure. Directed by the renowned Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki, this animated masterpiece takes viewers on an extraordinary journey through a world filled with magic, heart and remarkable characters. The story spins around Sophie, a youthful milliner who is reviled by a witch and changed into an elderly person. Sophie flees to the enigmatic moving castle of the mysterious wizard Howl, determined to break the curse. A fire demon by the name of Calcifer and a charming scarecrow by the name of Turnip are two of the many captivating characters Sophie encounters as she moves through the magical world.

One of the films' greatest strengths is its beautifully crafted animation. Miyazaki's attention to detail is remarkable, and every frame is filled with vibrant colours, intricate designs and breathtaking landscapes. The moving castle itself is a marvel of imagination, constantly shifting and transforming in ways that spark wonder and awe. The animation brings the characters and their emotions to life, capturing the nuances of their expressions and gestures with remarkable precision.

Beyond its visual splendour, *Howl's Moving Castle* also excels in storytelling. The narrative unfolds with a perfect balance of humour, drama and suspense, keeping viewers engaged from start to finish. The themes explored in the film, such as self-acceptance, inner strength and the transformative power of love, are beautifully woven into the fabric of the story. The characters grow as individuals and learn important lessons along the way which not only make their journey captivating but also deeply meaningful.

The film's soundtrack, composed by Joe Hisaishi enhances the emotional impact of the story and complements the visuals. The music, ranging from whimsical melodies to hauntingly beautiful tunes, further immerses the audience in the film's enchanting world by evoking a wide range of emotions. In addition to being visually and auditorily appealing, *Howl's Moving Castle* initiates a discourse on war, insatiability and personal conflicts. The film has a thought-provoking depth to it that enhances the overall experience of the viewer by subtly addressing

these themes without overshadowing the main story.

To sum up, *Howl's Moving Castle* is a cinematic masterpiece that is recognised for its artistic brilliance, compelling storytelling and unforgettable characters. With its stunning animation, captivating narrative and profound messages, this film appeals to audiences of all ages. Whether you are a fan of fantasy or romance or simply appreciate exceptional storytelling, *Howl's Moving Castle* is an absolute must-watch that will leave you spellbound long after the credits roll.



***Across The Spider-Verse* and the Landscape of Animation**

Abhinav Kashyap

6th Semester, Department of English, B. Borooah College

A Marvel in the modern age of cinemas and a work of popular iconography spread over two hours, *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* (2023) is a remarkable accomplishment that deserves worldwide admiration and respect. This is art at its most imaginative, heartfelt, passionate and wittiest. Within the first five minutes, it becomes obvious that *Across the Spider-Verse* is something special, and I never doubted it as I sat in front of this spectacle.

Animation has made incredible leaps in recent years, engaging audiences with visually spectacular and emotionally compelling tales. *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* is the movie that will irrevocably change the animation landscape. This much-awaited *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* (2018) sequel has further pushed the bounds of animation in motion pictures, revolutionising the genre in terms of aesthetic flair, storytelling methods and influence on spectators.

The visually stunning *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* uses a variety of animation concepts, art styles and methods to construct dynamic and compelling worlds. In order to create an emotionally captivating and aesthetically pleasing atmosphere in the movie, the filmmakers and animators use a wide variety of visual aesthetics, fusing traditional hand-drawn animation, computer-generated imagery (CGI) and experimental approaches. The depth, poignancy and intricacy of the story are increased by this creative blending of styles, which also transports viewers into a multiverse brimming with imagination and ingenuity. Each world looks like it was painstakingly crafted with details and its own unique art style.

Across the Spider-Verse enhances its rich story by effectively expressing the characters' emotions and motives through the creative use of colours, abstract backgrounds during emotional scenes, detailed textures during action scenes and imaginative animation of character movements and details. It is very hard for animation movies to make characters feel like real individuals but *Across the Spider-Verse* makes it seem like child's play. Such blended artistic expression in a mainstream western animation movie sets a new standard for animation, just like its predecessor *Into the Spider-Verse* did five years ago, hopefully inspiring future filmmakers and studios to further explore the uncharted territories of

what is possible in animation. The artistry in *Across the Spider-Verse* is so breathtaking that it nearly brings you to tears if you are a lover of animation. But even beyond the awe-inspiring animation, the story's irresistible blend of sincere storytelling and themes of epic spectacle redefine what can be accomplished in the animation medium. The film deftly tackles themes of identity, self-discovery, loneliness, self-acceptance and the consequences of one's choices, and many of the plot threads will be resolved in the sequel. Through the multiverse concept, it explores the notion of the interconnectedness of different Spider-Man iterations and their sufferings.

Across the Spider-Verse defies the restraints of conventional animation storytelling by stretching the boundaries of animation. It deftly moves between several universes and protagonists and introduces many Spider-Men, each with their own distinctive experiences, points of view and uniquely distinguished character designs. The characters and their relationships have layers of depth, and thanks to this narrative complexity, the film resonates with audiences at a deeper emotional level than most live-action movies. As a result, the animated medium has been elevated by the movie, demonstrating the effectiveness of animation as a storytelling and an emotional engagement tool while at the same time paying homage to a character that has been an inspiration and role model for millions of kids and youngsters for many decades.



***Inception* : Translating Dreams**

Arbas Ali

Alumnus, Department of English, B. Borooah College

Five minutes in the real world gives you an hour in the dream.

-Arthur

It is said that Christopher Nolan spent ten years writing his screenplay for *Inception* (2010). That sounds about right because of the complexity and dedication to world-building in the film: dreams within dreams within dreams, “inception”, trained extractors, impersonators, dream-architects, unconstructed dream-space (limbo), and more.

Nolan has adapted the abstract and surreal stuff of the dreams into concrete, real projections. Let us take the first dream with which the film opens: it tells us a little bit about how a person’s unconscious designs a dream-space with the help of preferences and “taste”. Inside Saito’s dream, pointing at a painting on the wall, Mal says to Cobb, “Looks like Arthur’s taste.” To this, Cobb replies, “Actually, the subject is partial to post-war British painters.” It is called “Study for Head of George Dyer” by Francis Bacon. If you look up the context of this work of art, you will find that it contains a loose microcosm of the overarching tragic love story of Cobb and Mal. (A good filmmaker always hides puzzles for his viewers to find and add more meaning to the film.) The architect then, we see, has to design the dream in such a way that the subject (from whom they are going to steal information) feels at home and does not become hostile.

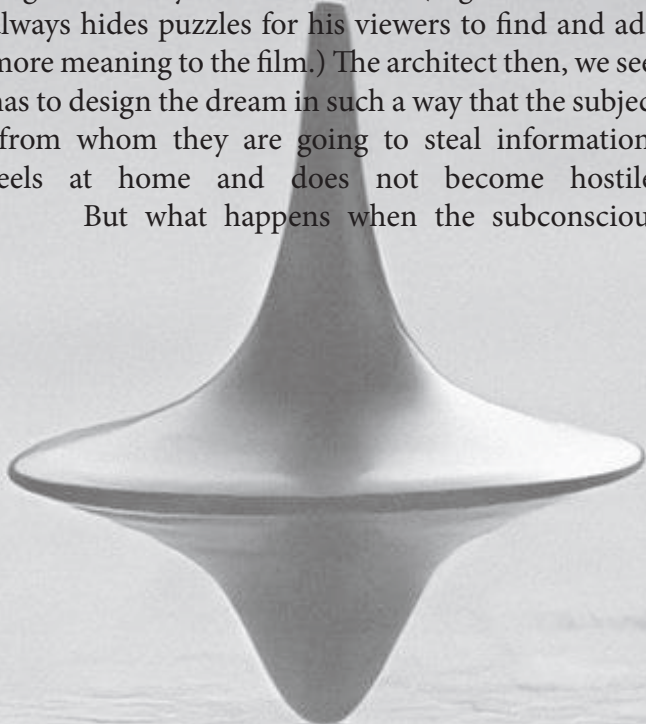
But what happens when the subconscious



becomes hostile? There are broadly two ways to go about it. When the team is afoot on a mission to incept Robert Fischer’s mind, his subconscious is militarised and professionally trained because he is a big shot VIP and there is plenty of money to go around. We see armoured commandos in black and grey on a freight train and with grenade launchers, crashing onto the extracting team. A violent chase-and-fight sequence ensues. On the other hand, in a common person’s dream, the attack is simply the people, on the sides of the streets going about their business, populating the dream, turning their heads because they feel threatened. They ambush the attacker like antibodies attacking a foreign body, which, sometimes, can be the body itself.

One of the key concerns of the film is converting economic terms of rivalry into emotional language for the mind to grasp better. The same emotional thread helps the reader get through the film for the first time, when the intellectual plotline becomes perplexing. It reveals the psychology of the human mind, a counter-view to the emotion/thought binary. Emotions are at the base of every fancy sky-scraping intellectual thought. So, when Saito wants the team to incept the idea that Fischer Jr. wants to break away from his father’s empire, it must come from a place of feeling. Robert has to feel like it’s something his father wanted him to do: “become [his] own man.”

It has been twelve years since the film’s first flush, are you sure you have figured out the whole thing? Like, for example, why is Mal in Fischer Jr.’s limbo? Is the limbo a hive-mind like space? I know I have not. Every new viewing reveals either an amazing detail or a frustrating plot hole. Perhaps it is time for you to take another look at the film, this time for its world-building.



Movies that Move You

Dr. Amar Deep Soren

Assistant Professor, PG and Research Department of Zoology, B. Borooah College

Being raised in a completely rural atmosphere in proximity with nature, movies were not something that interested me. It was always the outdoor cacophony, the company of the forest while passing through it and the giggling of the river and foraging wild fruits and veggies and listening to birds beckoning that caught my attention. Soon it was time to bid adieu to this rendezvous with nature since hostel life was calling exuberantly. And that is when I saw the television for the first time. We had movie nights, but it bored me to death. Since it was compulsory, I would stare at the roof, then the windows, then the tube light and anything else except the movie that was being played. By the time I was done staring at everything else in the room, the movie would get over and the happiness to get out was everything I could ask for. Movies never impressed me; it was still the love for nature that always caught my attention. After summer and winter breaks, classmates and other friends would boast of the movies they have watched and that was a conversation I always avoided.

As school got over and college began, it was under the compulsion of a friend that we bunked a class to watch a movie. I consented to go since there was nothing else to do to kill time in the city. I slept through half of the movie complaining that it was a waste of time and money. College days slipped away and university days started but the call for romance with movies always fell on deaf ears. Since I was new to the university and did not have any friends, a batchmate who I befriended asked me to accompany him to buy a laptop. The laptop was bought and as usual it was movie night to fulfil the formality of buying a laptop. With shared blankets and coffee mugs the size of toilet buckets, as we hilariously said, sitting mercilessly on the old screeching bed which was begging us to release it from our weights, the lights were dimmed, and the laptop proudly started showing us the best it could.

The laptop was screening *October Sky* (1999) and by the end of it, I felt an urge to watch more. This was something different, since movies never were on my to-do list. It was a movie that motivated me and made me move forward in life indeed - a movie with a message to pursue your dreams and not give up. I never thought that a movie could be so powerful. Initially, I always looked for inspiration from books; one such book is *The Alchemist* (1988), my all-time favourite. This was a magical turn and, since then, the romance with movies is on. Later, I went on to watch some wonderful pieces such as *Desert Flower* (2009), *Not Without My Daughter* (1991), *The Impossible* (2012) and many more and that's when I realised that movies can move you. Today, apart from being a voracious reader, I am an ardent lover of a particular genre of movies that depict nature and real-life stories. It is high time that such movies are shown to youngsters of this generation who are mostly stuck to gadgets and a variety of unproductive activities leading to depression, suicide and stress. Yes, take a break, and I holler with Adam Lambert in his song "so welcome to the show, bring on all the lights, let it shine on you, we're together here tonight". And yes, movies can move you.



On First Looking into an Anime Movie

Bismita Rabha

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Literature and cinema are closely related forms, yet, I have spent a long time limiting myself to a specific genre of films. Growing up watching commercial hits of Bollywood films, I developed an interest in art films and found a remote charm in mainstream movies much later. The Japanese anime industry unfolded before my eyes only recently, and I was introduced to them through social media posts analysing their characters and dialogues.

I have not watched many anime films, and the first one I did was by Studio Ghibli, called *Spirited Away* (2001). My first experience of the new form was quite magical, hand-drawn by Hayao Miyazaki. *Grave of Fireflies* (1988) was another Ghibli film that I watched which left a profound impact on my mind, since it was hard for me to grasp that a form which I initially believed was only meant for kids could cover such a gruesome storyline about how a global tragedy affects singular lives. The frames of a Ghibli movie are enchanting, making them the best entrance to the world of anime. I believe this space would be best suited for me to share my impressions about anime.



My third encounter with Miyazaki's work was through *Howl's Moving Castle*, when it was screened by Celluloid: The Film Club in the college. Looking at such art-in-motion on a big screen was fascinating.

The rich colours, the realistic portrayal of everyday life in a magical realm, the keen attention paid to every expression and every feeling of the characters took my appreciation for anime movies to a higher level. I noticed that these films are quieter, leading the audience to a space of calm and silence, enriched by music that is not too loud, the kind that stays with the listener for years. The merry-go-round soundtrack in *Howl's Moving Castle* is something I can think of when I write about calm anime music.

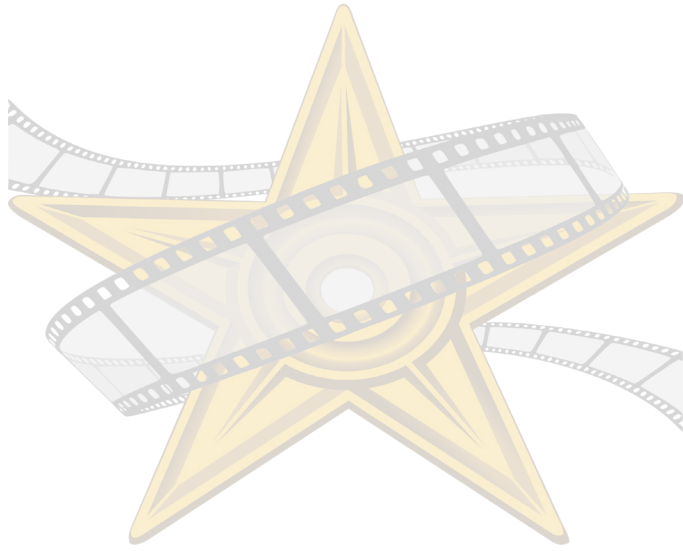
Though the form often portrays the stories of children or young adults, I have a belief that adults can see a reflection of themselves on the screen while watching anime. Though the action takes place in a fantastical land, every creature shows essentially human behaviour of kindness, envy, love and friendship. Another aspect of the form that I deeply appreciate is the portrayal of food and the power that is attributed to it of bringing people close. The theme of making or sharing food as a love language is commonly seen in anime, and as I get to watch more of them, I let the momentary magic of the frames transport me to another world full of magical beings.



The Last of the Stars

Amartya Borah

2nd Semester, Department of English, B. Borooah College



Shah Rukh Khan, a middle class Delhi boy, has had quite an ordinary life like any of us. He lost both his parents at a very young age. Dealing with the hardships of life, eyes full of dreams and hope, this ordinary looking boy made quite an extraordinary life for himself with sheer determination, hardwork and perseverance.

He has made a place for himself in the hearts of millions not only through his films and work but also with his extremely charming personality. He never fails to express his gratitude towards the people, especially his fans for their love. He always says that it is not because of his talent or acting that he is who he is today, it is the love and support of the people that have made him such a huge star. Being at the top, it is quite easy to think of oneself as being above all, but Shah Rukh is extremely self-aware and knows that the level of stardom he has seen is a gift. He feels and says that he may not be the most talented of actors, but he says that he makes up for that with his modesty and respectful attitude towards others. In my opinion, he is the smartest, most sophisticated and one of the most intellectually enriched actors/stars of our country. His on-screen persona is exceptionally charismatic and endearing and at the same time, he is notoriously witty and sarcastic off-screen. He has a great sense of humour and enjoys making fun of himself, and he takes the jokes made on him sportingly and gracefully, which is a trait I think many famous people lack and need to learn.

The films of the eternal "Lover Boy" of Bollywood teach us about love - hopelessness in love,



rediscovering love, falling out of love and falling in love again. Every song of his romantic films beautifully encapsulates the different aspects of relationships.

He is one of the best when it comes to holding a crowd, being the centre of attention or making others comfortable around him, which can be seen in all his interviews and other appearances. He has established himself not only in India but also at a global level. In any country of the world, even where people may not know about the Indian film industry, they sure have heard the name Shah Rukh Khan. He represents the Hindi film industry worldwide and the whole world is bewitched by the spell of his exceedingly charismatic personality. He once said in an interview, "I am an employee of the myth of Shah Rukh Khan", which is the most appropriate way to describe his unworldly stardom. He is indeed, as he claims, "the last of the stars".



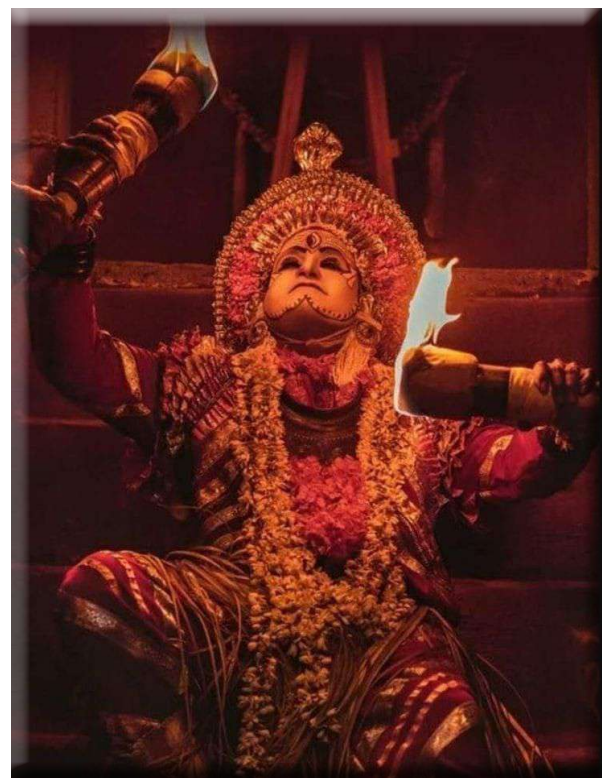
***Kantara* : A Legend**

Shilpa Aditya

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Rishab Shetty's *Kantara* (2022) is an Indian, Kannada-language action-thriller film. The word "kantara" denotes "mystical forest" (origin - Sanskrit). *Kantara* has the subtitle "a legend" and opens like a fable. An off-screen narrator tells the tale of a king who makes a pact in the mid-19th century and trades off vast stretches of his woods for obtaining the solace he had never attained in his life before. *Kantara* is a representation of "Daivam Manushya Rupena" meaning "god in the form of human". It is because the story is purely based on a folklore involving two *daivas* - Panjurli and Guliga. Panjurli, the young male boar feared for his disruptive strength by both animals and humans, is accompanied by Guliga, a kshetrapal (a guardian deity). The word *daiva* is sometimes translated as "demigod"; the origins of the latter lie in Greek mythology, where demigods exist as a sort of crossover between gods and humans. We witness the same in the film where Shiva and his ancestors are possessed by the Guliga *daiva* and act as a medium between God and the natives. Moreover, the portrayal of the *daivas*, Panjurli and Guliga, is utterly beautiful. The enigmatic deities with connections to Lord Vishnu serve key roles as the protectors of the unprivileged and aid their fight against feudal threats.

Kantara is very eye-catching. It is a visual spectacle and a shining example of the penchant and flair for storytelling. The movie is rooted in a combination of folklore and mythology and it builds a bridge between the enigmatic past and the complex present through a classic tale of good prevailing over evil. However, Shetty's overlaying of the *Bhoota Kola* performance, a key thematic aspect of the film, with the Sanskrit hymn "Varaha Rupam", whose lines invoke the third avatar of Vishnu, has been seen as an "appropriation" of Adivasi rituals by the homogenising forces of Hindutva. The word *bhoota* generally has a negative connotation and would immediately remind you of ghosts and evil spirits. However, in the Tulu culture, *bhoota* is the equivalent of *daiva* or God. Historically, the Tulus did not believe in God; they only believed in *bhootas* and considered them to be their gods; *colas* simply means a performance or play. And therefore, in essence, *Bhoota Kola* is a performance-based ritual that involves the invocation of spirits. However, in the film, there is little to no indication of the *Bhoota Kola's* association with spirits. It is shown to be purely related to gods.



From Peacock Calls to Professor Keatings

Snigdha Deka

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Growing up during the Doordarshan days, the evening calls of the *naamghor's doba* and *Chitrahaar* were ready distractions from the ancient history lessons of school books. Madhuri danced with her flowing gestures, Sridevi with her graceful eyes. I would seek permission from maa to watch the films the old TV showed. After singing the multiplication tables out loud for the entire neighbourhood to hear, I would relish the classic films of *Bollywood Bioscope*. I hurriedly gulped down morsels of rice, ran to deuta and sat by him, reveling in Shammi Kapoor's "Yahoo!" Cinema fascinated me since childhood.

Hailing from a small-town, middle-class family, mustering the courage to tell my parents how ardently I loved stories and taking a leap of faith from engineering coaching classes to the limitless world of literature was a feat. Desiring to be an author was a far better, however still not sought, career option than wanting to make films. Thus, I felt very out of place when I found myself nervous and shy in a classful of young and vibrant girls studying literature. As literature engulfed me and I started finding my feet in its world, I still could not tell if I liked the stories I read better than the ones I watched onscreen. But for a young, timid, malleable mind, all of these stories held the power to make me believe in dreams.

During the three years of English Honours, I rummaged for any cinematic adaptation, related even contextually, of stories I read. I was fascinated how a 21st-century American series like *Supernatural* could ease my understanding of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. I was mesmerised to see Stanley Tucci make Shakespeare's Puck leap to life. A riot of magic splashed at my younger self, the cinema I watched transported me to uncharted wonderlands. I started believing in the possibility of creating cinematic visualization of written stories. I was desperate to hold onto that dream. So, I finally gathered my guts to reveal to my parents my dream of pursuing a film-making course. Not surprisingly, it was met with disbelief but, more than that, the fear of failure. During those days, thinking outside the box still came with many strings attached. Though I went on to pursue an MA in English literature, my dream still struggled in a tiny corner romanticising holding

an Oscar, and thanking an endless list of people!

I would sit through long nights in my small hostel room, marathoning from one film to another, unhealthily binging on biscuits to suppress the late-night hunger pangs. My eyes never tired. My heart juggled through emotions to watch Andy Drufesne finally escaping to life in *Shawshank Redemption*, to feel a lover's anguish in Guru Dutt's *Kagajke Phool*, to understand the strength of a voice in *V for Vendetta* and to venture into the mind-maze of a lovelorn son in Hitchcock's *Psycho*. The peacocks called in the breaking of dawn, thus, closing my nightly reverie. As I looked at myself in the mirror, a calm overpowered the reddened eyes, reminding me of a satiated Dracula who, after a successful night, relishes retiring for the morning. Fortunately, I found a family of similar movie buffs in my hostel. Sharing newfound treasures was so exciting during those OTT-less days. We discussed films like ravenous wolves over evening *chai* and *samosas*.

It has been quite a few years since those Dionysian days, but amidst the humdrum of the everyday of a government employee, that tiny dream somewhere lingers still, gasping for breath. As I donned the role of a teacher, interacting with vibrant young minds, I felt exuberated to see how familiar those lit-up eyes are when they listen to stories. I have, across my humble journey, known the significance of films in shaping young minds. So, I was elated when my colleague Dr Kabita Chiring shared my thoughts. With the able support of our respected Principal sir, Dr Satyendranath Barman, the Head of the Department, Dr Abhigyan Prasad, Dr Manabendra Sarma, Pinky Das, Jintu Hazarika and Meghali Gogoi, and unending hard work and enthusiasm of the students, a hopeful seed germinated into a full-fledged film club in our college.

It was a cold January afternoon in 2021. I was a mixed bag of excitement and nerves before the first open screening of our club. We would open with Peter Weir's *Dead Poet's Society*. After the formalities rolled on, Robin Williams, as Professor Keatings, stood on a classroom bench and addressed his students, "I stand upon my desk to remind myself that we must constantly look at things in a different way." A slight gasp of revelation ran through the dark lecture gallery. I could sense an untainted sense of pure joy in every single young mind there. I knew that they had been touched by stories that are meant to be handed over from one generation to another to thrive as compassionate and tolerant humans. In the pallid rays of the January sun stealing through the corners of the slightly opened ventilators, I could see my suppressed little dream smiling.



A Feel Good Movie : *The Intern*

Partha Ranjan Sonowal

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Movies have the incredible power to evoke a wide range of emotions in their viewers. Different genres promise different kinds of emotions. Each person has their preferred genre, but with the abundance of content available, it can often be difficult to decide between watching a new movie or binge-watching a new series. More often than not, a tired mind seeks comfort in familiar and easy-to-watch content that provides a sense of relaxation without much mental effort.

One such movie that offers both a carefree viewing experience and a significant rewatch value is *The Intern* (2015) directed by Nancy Meyers, starring the talented Robert De Niro and Anne Hathaway. Christian Metz, a film theorist, suggests that one reason why people enjoy movies is because movies are able to connect them with the characters on the screen, seeing their relatability come to life through the actors' performances. Metz also observes that viewers often find joy in distancing themselves from the screen, watching characters do things they cannot do in their own lives. *The Intern* strikes a perfect balance between these two aspects, with characters who are both relatable and aspirational, leaving audiences wanting more. What happens when a calm and courteous man, holding 70 years of experience, works for a young, restless and ambitious boss? Can he keep up with her pace and OCD or does he walk through her office and life like a sweet-smelling flower that influences everything just by his presence? What are the chances that the movie accounts for both of these? You will know when you watch it.



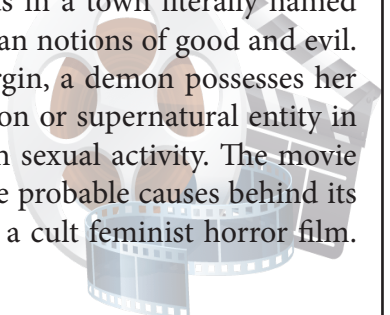
Review : *Jennifer's Body*

Shalini Barman

4th Semester, Department of English, B. Borooah College

The film *Jennifer's Body* (2009) at first glance might remind you of one of the clichéd high school teen horror movies from the early 2000s. Well, you are not exactly wrong, as the story is actually based on the lives of two high school teen girls. The catch is that despite the plot being set as a stereotypical American teen movie, *Jennifer's Body* turns out to be a very different type of movie. Initially, upon being released, the movie was not appreciated at all, instead, it invited negative reviews from critics and was a failure in the theatres. We can simply say that this movie was ahead of its time. The genre of the movie is quite difficult to ascertain as there are a plethora of themes and styles in the movie, ranging from commentary on the exploitation of young women to showcasing homoeroticism between two female friends. But, as a whole, *Jennifer's Body* serves as a cult feminist horror movie.

The two female protagonists, Jennifer (played by Megan Fox) and Anita aka Needy (played by Amanda Seyfried), are best friends who could not be more opposite to each other. While Jennifer is a popular cheerleader, Anita is the "plain Jane" or a typical high school "nerd", as known in the popular teen movies. In hindsight, it is easy to understand the fact that the two women represent the two sides of femininity: the dark, violent side and the bright, healing side. The story unfolds in a town literally named "The Devil's Kettle" to probably signify the relation of the movie with the Christian notions of good and evil. Jennifer is sacrificed by some men as a "virgin" girl, but since she was not a virgin, a demon possesses her which leads her into a men-killing spree. Jennifer is termed a succubus - a demon or supernatural entity in folklore, in female form, that appears in dreams to seduce men, usually through sexual activity. The movie frankly discusses the issue of male predatory behaviour, which may be one of the probable causes behind its initial failure. Despite these obstacles, *Jennifer's Body* will always be considered a cult feminist horror film.



Review : *Bulbbul*

Punam Nishi Deka

Alumnus, Department of English, B. Borooah College

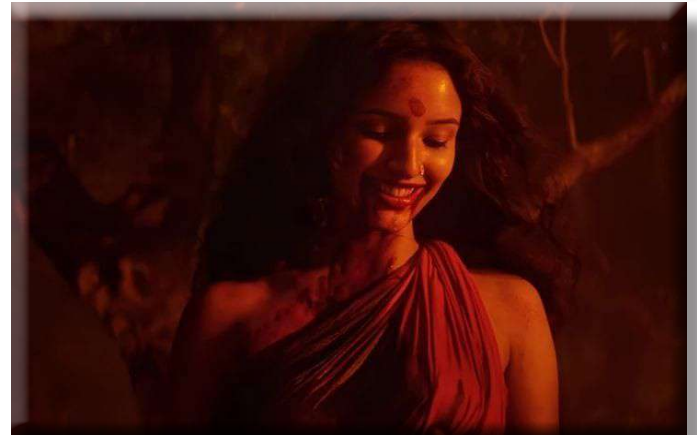
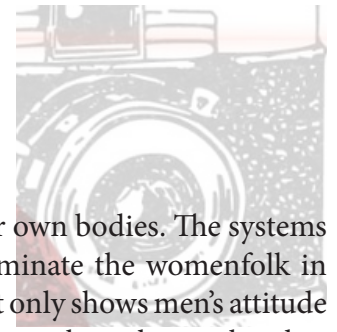
The Indian, Hindi-language film *Bulbbul* (2020) is written and directed by Anvita Dutt. Tripti Dimri plays the main role in the movie as Bulbbul. It is in the genre of supernatural thrillers, and fantasy or the supernatural mixes with suspense and plot twists and social issues are presented with the flavour of supernatural elements. The movie is set against the backdrop of the 1880s Bengal Presidency. The house where most of the scenes are shot is remarkable: it has only one door and many thick walls. It is like a prison, even the thought of coming out of it is impossible. The forest scenes are also interesting since they are shown in red light symbolising power, violence, danger and blood. The place where Bulbbul's sister-in-law Binodini stays after her husband's death is significant for the audience to understand the condition of widowed women in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

The movie is heart-touching because it details the social realities which were prevalent in that period in India, viz. child marriage. The scene of the wedding is showcased with such a realistic touch that the audience can understand and feel the emotions of the child bride. The film also uses some symbols to comment on the belief system of the society. For example, young Bulbbul, while getting ready for the ceremony, asks her aunt why she must wear a toe ring and gets the reply “क्यूंकि यहाँ पर एक नस होती है। उसे दबाओ नहीं ना, तो लड़की उड़ जाती है।” (Because there's a nerve here. If it is not pressed, girls tend to fly away). The purpose of the toe ring, thus, is to control the woman. The symbol of the toe ring is used in another scene where Binodini asks Bulbbul to get a new one as it seems to have loosened a bit.

Dutt also focuses on the issue of gender inequality and violence. The scene which shows Bulbbul's physical/sexual abuse by Indranil/Mahendra is visually presented. The audience can feel it closely, as

if someone is violating their own bodies. The systems of a patriarchal society dominate the womenfolk in every way possible. Dutt not only shows men's attitude and behavior towards women but also makes her audience realise that men as well as women internalise the dictates of patriarchy. Many scenes prove this point. One such scene is when Binodini comments on Bulbbul's work - “जिसका काम, उसी को साझे! ठकुराइन है आप ... ठाकुर नहीं” (It behoves us to do what we are meant to. You are the lady of the house, not the lord).

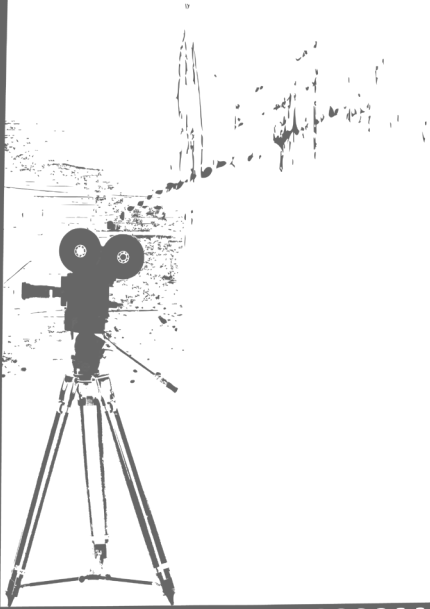
The movie is predictable; from the very beginning, the audience gets an idea about its ending. But we cannot deny the fact that it still keeps us engaged and wondering about what will happen next. Dutt's recent movie *Qala* (2022) also depicts patriarchal and gendered social realities and deserves to be watched. Films like these are significant as they create awareness in the audience about social evils and injustices. The efforts of Dutt as well as the entire cast and crew of *Bulbbul* are indeed commendable.



Lights, Camera, Growth : How Celluloid - The Film Club Shaped Me

Tuhin Majumder

6th Semester, Department of English,
B Borooah College



Participating in a college film club can be a great way to discover more about yourself and develop your personal identity. Film is a powerful medium that can inspire, challenge and provoke thought, and being part of a community of like-minded individuals who share a passion for cinema can be transformative.

Through my involvement in the film club, I have been exposed to a wide range of films and genres that I may not have encountered otherwise. It has expanded my knowledge and understanding of different cultures, perspectives and ways of thinking. It has also helped me in developing my skills at critical thinking because we analyse and interpret the films we watch and engage in discussions with our peers.

In addition to broadening my horizons, being part of a film club has also helped me discover more about myself. Perhaps I have found that I have a particular interest in a certain genre or style of filmmaking or that I have a talent for analysing and interpreting films in a unique way. I may have discovered a hidden passion for filmmaking or screenwriting and found that I enjoyed working behind the scenes during film screenings. I was given the special responsibility of being the treasurer of Celluloid and it gave me an insight into how things work behind the scenes. I learned a lot about management and communication (which I'm still working on). This gave me clarity about the things I am good at and how things can be done in a more effective and professional way.

Being part of a community of film enthusiasts has helped me connect with others who share my interests and values and has provided me with a sense of belonging and purpose. It has been a great way to meet new people. It has broadened my horizons and deepened my understanding of the world around me. Before joining this club, I was like the rest of the 90% of Indians who watch films for entertainment. However, after joining the club, I realised that I started looking into films more critically, observing things which I used to ignore. I wish I could spend more time as a member of the core committee and could keep on learning new things with every film that is screened in the future. I hope this club grows more and gets the recognition that it deserves.



Beyond Movies : Wishes from Alumni

Vikram Upadhyay, Subasana Baruah and Prerona Chetry

Alumni, Department of English, B. Borooah College

It is not merely just about the love for movies but also the company these movies receive in the form of a student- audience. A vague idea once, now a complete execution, Celluloid - The Film Club encompasses the different aspects of learning literature. Analytical skills to leisure and amusement, this club is sure to provide the best of times to its visitors. It has witnessed everything, from the initial days of chaos to successful events. May this little flower, grown with utmost care by the department of English, bloom to its highest extent.

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