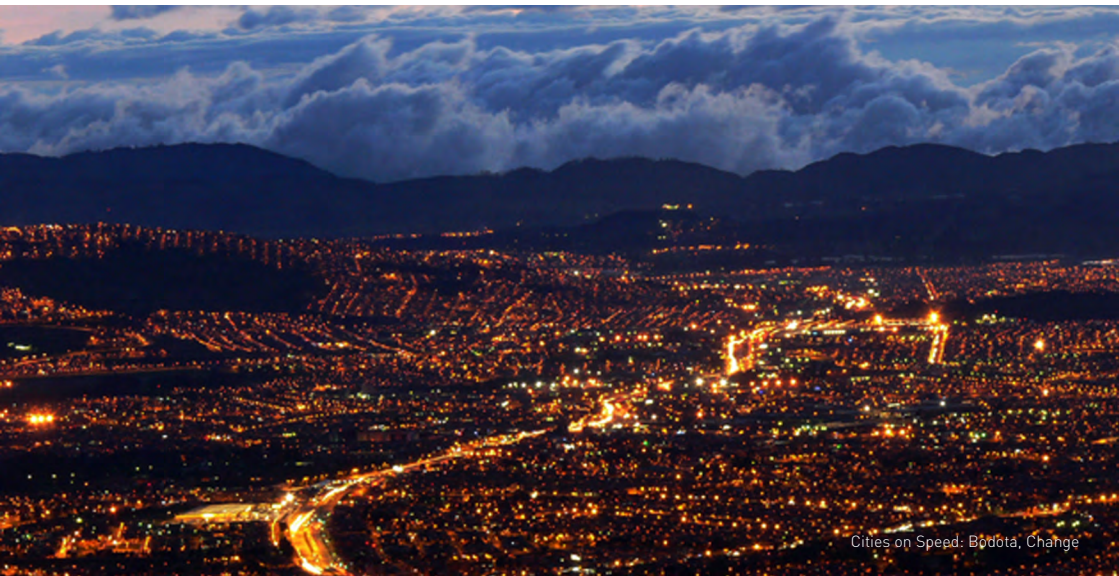


Sheharnama

a city/film festival



act:onaid



CURATORIAL NOTE.

Sheharnama: A City/Film Festival brings together films that turn their gaze into the crevices of our cities.

Our cities are most often represented within the cinema of crisis and confrontation. We have attempted to bring together films that look askance, at the quieter moments, the unseen corners, the unmarked maps.

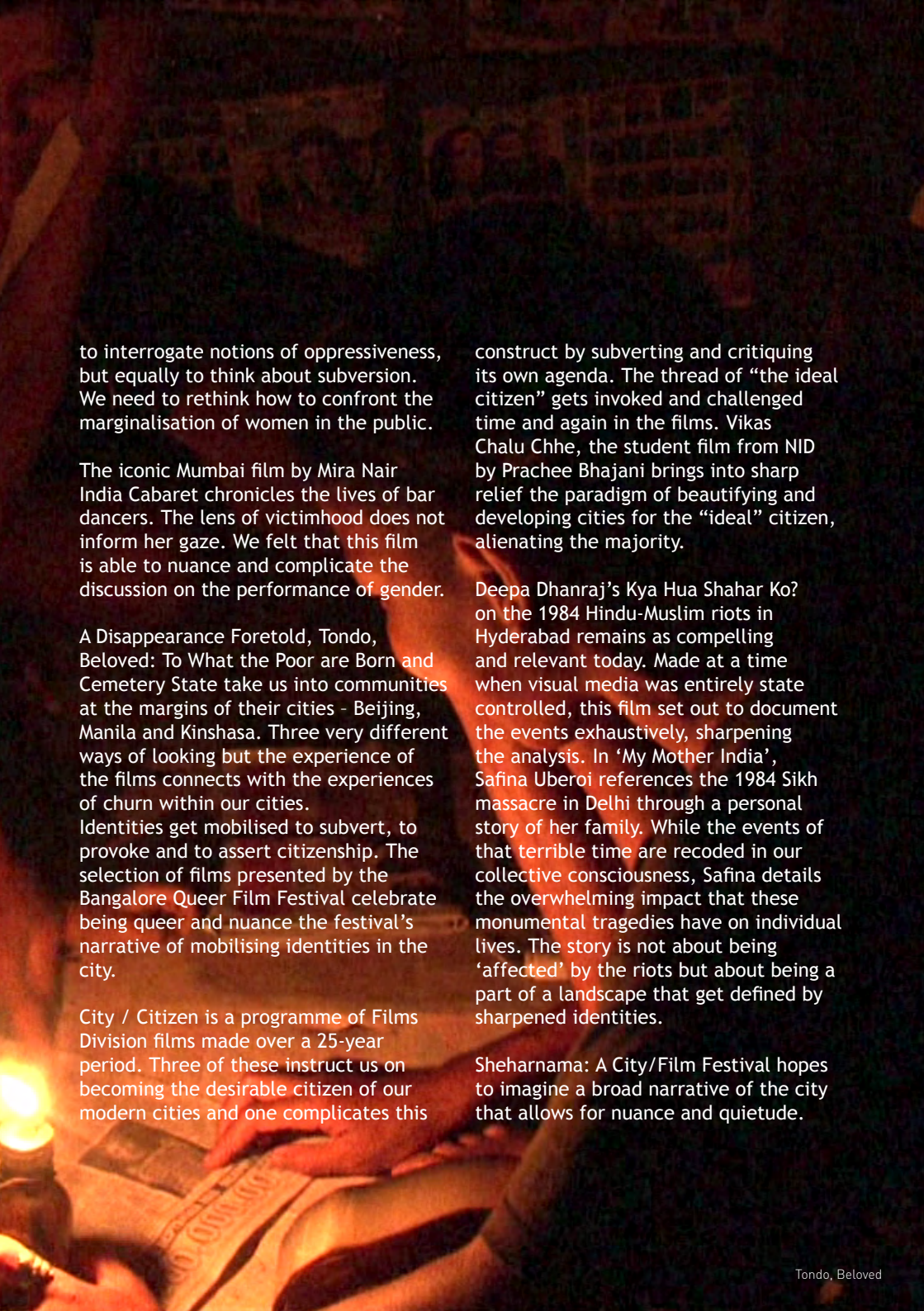
Anirban Dutta's *Wasted* meditates on the spectacle of waste in our cities. The film draws together images and conversations from all over the country to reflect on the philosophy of waste and rebirth. Uma Tanuku's *Night Hawks* follows the observational mode to explore Delhi's life at night.

The grace and delicate detail in Sameera Jain's *Portraits of Belonging- Bhai Mian*, about a kite maker in Old Delhi, is all the more valuable today in the times of a brash mediascape. Heddy Honigmann paints a picture of her city, Lima, forgotten by history and international hype, with equal care, through the lives of her protagonists in *El Olvido*. The NID student film by Megha Lakhani, *Prakash Travelling Cinema*, begins a conversation on labour in the city with an erstwhile mill worker who makes a livelihood out

of junk and worn out film prints. The camera follows the protagonist through the city opening up the frame to look at the transformation of Ahmedabad.

I Sing The Body Electric, another NID student film by Shaline Ghosh, makes labour visible through a poetic, abstract piece. *Hamare Ghar*, Kislay's student film from FTII, uses fiction to take a sharp look at the benign feudalism that we foster in our homes towards the people who work for us. Nishtha Jain's *At My Doorstep* pieces together the lives that barely create a shadow but toil away in our neighbourhood. Yashaswini R. and Ekta Mittal's *Presence* does not attempt an unveiling of lives but instead overwhelms the hectic transformation of Bangalore with stories of ghosts and desire narrated by the migrant workers building the metro. Amudhan R.P.'s *Shit*, makes visible the notion of caste in labour in the city.

The performance of masculinity in the city is the narrative that often gets sidelined when contemplating on gender. We chose Rahul Roy's *Majma*, Lalit Vachani's *Boy in the Branch* and two student films, from Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology and TISS, *Maachis ka Sinko* and *Breakin' Mumbai*,

A person is seen from the side, reading a newspaper in a dimly lit room. The scene is warm and intimate, with a soft light source on the left creating a glow. The person's hands are visible as they turn the pages of the newspaper.

to interrogate notions of oppressiveness, but equally to think about subversion. We need to rethink how to confront the marginalisation of women in the public.

The iconic Mumbai film by Mira Nair *India Cabaret* chronicles the lives of bar dancers. The lens of victimhood does not inform her gaze. We felt that this film is able to nuance and complicate the discussion on the performance of gender.

A Disappearance Foretold, *Tondo*, *Beloved: To What the Poor are Born* and *Cemetery State* take us into communities at the margins of their cities - Beijing, Manila and Kinshasa. Three very different ways of looking but the experience of the films connects with the experiences of churn within our cities.

Identities get mobilised to subvert, to provoke and to assert citizenship. The selection of films presented by the Bangalore Queer Film Festival celebrate being queer and nuance the festival's narrative of mobilising identities in the city.

City / Citizen is a programme of Films Division films made over a 25-year period. Three of these instruct us on becoming the desirable citizen of our modern cities and one complicates this

construct by subverting and critiquing its own agenda. The thread of "the ideal citizen" gets invoked and challenged time and again in the films. *Vikas Chalu Chhe*, the student film from NID by Prachee Bhajani brings into sharp relief the paradigm of beautifying and developing cities for the "ideal" citizen, alienating the majority.

Deepa Dhanraj's *Kya Hua Shahar Ko?* on the 1984 Hindu-Muslim riots in Hyderabad remains as compelling and relevant today. Made at a time when visual media was entirely state controlled, this film set out to document the events exhaustively, sharpening the analysis. In *'My Mother India'*, Safina Uberoi references the 1984 Sikh massacre in Delhi through a personal story of her family. While the events of that terrible time are recoded in our collective consciousness, Safina details the overwhelming impact that these monumental tragedies have on individual lives. The story is not about being 'affected' by the riots but about being a part of a landscape that get defined by sharpened identities.

Sheharnama: A City/Film Festival hopes to imagine a broad narrative of the city that allows for nuance and quietude.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

JANUARY 30TH:

2:00 pm

Inauguration by
V. S. Kundu, Director General, Films
Division
Shabana Azmi, actor and social activist
Kiran Nagarkar, writer
Manaswini Lata Ravindra, poet
Sandeep Chachra, Country Director,
Action Aid India.

3:30 pm to 4:45 pm

WASTED by Anirban Datta (52 min)
Q&A with the film maker

4:45 pm to 7:00 pm

THE BURNING SUN by SNS Sastry, Films
Division (21 min)
A DISAPPEARANCE FORETOLD by Oliver
Meys and Zhang Yaxuan (85 min)
Q&A with the Zhang Yaxuan

7:00 pm to 7:45 pm

IMAGING THE CITY
A presentation and talk by photographer
MS Gopal (Slogan Murugan)

7:45 pm to 8:20 pm

MORE THAN A FRIEND by Debalina Ma-
jumder (35 min)
From the Bangalore Queer Film Festival

8:20 pm to 9:45 pm

CEMETERY STATE by Filip De Boeck (72
min)

JANUARY 31ST:

10:00 am to 10:20 am

Talk by Arun Gupta, HOD Film and Video,
National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad
on two decades of city films by NID
students.

10:20 am to 11:15 am

A DREAM CALLED AMERICA by Anoop
Sathyan, NID (25 min)
SAMBHAVAMI YUGE YUGE by Madhusree
Dutta (5 min)
ZULMAT by Ishan Ghosh, Srishti School of
Art, Design and Technology (21 mins)

11:15 am to 12:15 pm

IN BETWEEN DAYS by Sankhajit Biswas
(58 min)
From the Bangalore Queer Film Festival

12:15 pm to 1:15 pm

PRAKASH TRAVELLING CINEMA by Megha
Lakhani, NID (13 min)
PORTRAITS OF BELONGING - BHAI MIYAN
by Sameera Jain (30 mins)

1:15 pm to 1:45 pm

BREAK

1:45 pm to 3:45 pm

HAMARE GHAR by Kislay (26 min)
I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC by Shalinee
Ghosh (6 min)
THE ADVENTURE OF A MARRIED COUPLE
by Keywan Karimi (11 min)
PRESENCE Yashaswini R and Ekta Mittal
(17 min)
SHIT by Amudhan RP (26 mins)
Discussion with Amudhan RP

3:45 pm to 5:00 pm

CITY / CITIZEN PACKAGE

DILLY DALLYING by KL Khandpur (11 min)

STINKING STORY by Loksen Lalvani (16 min)

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE by S Sukhdev (18 min)

THIS BIT OF THAT INDIA by SNS Sastry (21 min)

5:00 pm to 7:30 pm

NIGHT HAWKS by Uma Tanuku (58 min)

AT MY DOORSTEP by Nishtha Jain (65 min)

Discussion with Uma Tanuku and Nishtha Jain

7:30 pm to 10:00 pm

PLEASE VOTE FOR ME by Weijun Chen (58 min)

EL OLVIDO by Heddy Honnigman (93 min)

FEBRUARY 1ST:

10:00 am to 12:20 pm

MAACHIS KO SINKA by Radhamohini Prasad, Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology (11 min)

BOY IN THE BRANCH by Lalit Vachani (27 min)

BREAKIN' MUMBAI by Sandeep Kr. Singh, Aakriti Kohli, Shweta Ghosh, Gin Khan Siam and Sumit Singh (TISS) (33 min)

MAJMA by Rahul Roy (64 mins)

12:20 pm to 12:45 pm

THE PERFORMANCE OF MASCULINITIES IN THE CITY

Talk by film maker Paromita Vohra

12:45 pm to 1:45 pm

INDIA CABARET by Mira Nair (60 min)

1:45 pm to 2:15 pm

BREAK

2:15 pm to 5:30 pm

MY MOTHER INDIA by Safina Uberoi (52 min)

KYA HUA IS SHEHAR KO? by Deepa Dhanraj (95 min)

Discussion with Safina Uberoi, Deepa Dhanraj and Nicole Wolf (Lecturer in Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths College, London)

5:30 pm to 7:15 pm

TONDO, BELOVED: TO WHAT ARE THE POOR BORN by Jewel Maranan (76 min)

Discussion with Jewel Maranan

7:15 pm to 8:30 pm

VIKAS CHALU CHHE by Prachee Bajania, NID (15 min)

CITIES ON SPEED: BOGOTA CHANGE by Andreas Dalsgaard (52 mins)

8:30 pm to 10:00 pm

(From the Bangalore Queer Film Festival)

RED CHEWING GUM by Akram Zaatar (11 min)

MONDOMANILA by Khavn de la Cruz (75 mins)

THE SHEHARNAAMA TEAM

Films Division

VS Kundu - Director General
Anil Kumar - Co-ordinator, MIFF
Rita Hemrajani - Director of Administration
Suresh Menon - Deputy Director General
MM Mathialagen - Director
Premraj Rajagopalan - Deputy Director
Pankaj B Ahuja - Website Unit
Vinay Vairale - Publicity
Chandan Lokare - Programme Unit
and the entire MIFF team

ActionAid India

Sandeep Chachra, Executive Director
Meena Menon, Citizen Rights Collective
Nirja Bhatnagar, Mumbai Regional Manager
Celsa Estibeiro, Mumbai Team
Abhilash Babu, Delhi Team
Kaustuv Chakrabarti, Mumbai Team
Praveen Kumar M., Area Manager, Mumbai Fundraising

Curators

Surabhi Sharma
Avijit Mukul Kishore

Assistant

Rhea Shah

Films Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India : filmsdivision.org
Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) : miff.in
ActionAid India : actionaid.org/india

