

# Persistence Resistance: A festival of contemporary political films

Organised by Magic Lantern Foundation and India International Centre

**28, 29 and 30 April 2008**

Venue:

**India International Centre**

40 Max Mueller Marg, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110003

## The Event

In the last decade or so Indian image-makers have crossed new boundaries, carried out different formal experiments and also recast the notion of political film making. Women have played a significant role in this and have given a new formal twist to political documentaries that explore and engage with form and the political terrain in a nuanced manner with spaces for ambiguities and multiple readings.

Hence, the festival aims to create a cinema space that celebrates the diverse nature of films in India today. The idea is to showcase the range of subjects and forms the films work with, and to interrogate the emerging aesthetics of political filmmaking. It is becoming clear that political films are no longer bound by the binaries of the past, perhaps developed during war filmmaking, and yet there is no one picture emerging, for the formal explorations are as vast as the diverse subjects.

The festival will also carry a section on international documentaries that are difficult to access in India. And although these films deal with issues and themes that are unique and not very well known in India, there is indeed a common resonance or a common resistance. So the festival is also attempting to explore the notions of internationalism in the present scenario of neo-liberal globalisation.

Simultaneously the festival will aim to present films in multiple ways of seeing, interacting and engaging by creating installations, parlour screenings, video library and film displays along with regular auditorium screenings.

Nearly 100 films will be screened from the collection of films that are distributed through **Under Construction**, a non-broadcast, non-commercial, educational distribution initiative.

## The Vision

*The creative act is not performed by the artist alone; the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his contribution to the creative act. This becomes even more obvious when posterity gives a final verdict and sometimes rehabilitates forgotten artists.*

-Marcel Duchamp,

*(Session on the Creative Act; Convention of the American Federation of Arts, Houston, Texas, April 1957.)*

Marcel Duchamp's abstraction of the *Nude Descending the Stairs* had two varied intentions. As a prelude to the movie camera, it provided a beginning to understand the idea of "*persistence of vision*" or why we see images in a continuous motion and not in flashes. But it also offered an antidote to the static nature of Cubist paintings, mocking its pretensions and offering vitality to the act of viewing that had not been seen before in the painting medium.

What happens when art gets inextricably linked to the politics of subversion and resistance, not only of other art forms but the processes of human movement as well? What persists then, the art or values residing in resistance?

In trying to address this vast jigsaw puzzle of the multiple meanings of the words persistence and resistance this festival was conceived. It is also an ode to the persistent vision of films, closely guarded by an ever-changing relationship between the film and the viewer.

In the beginning, there was a sheer delight of man, in seeing something just "moving"... aided by the apparatus of the magic lantern and then the zoetrope and praxinoscope. But with the passage of time, this relationship has changed not only because film content has acquired a multiple personality, but also because the spectrum of viewing spaces has undergone paradigm shifts. The nickelodeon, the movie palace, the studio chain and the multiplexes have been the dominant exhibitor strategies in America in their respective eras. The movie palaces that flourished in the 1920s, found a remarkable coincidence with celluloid dreams, where the movie-going experience was an event to enter a cultural space full of grandeur and the excesses of materialism. The contemporary exhibition rationale of the multiplex is rarely that of titillating the imagination, but rather, comes close to that of manipulative buying complete with McDonalds and vinyl dreams.

From the gaps of these so-called pleasure domes, have emerged certain crucial spaces of viewing, but they have been encountered on the sly. The trend started with the video parlours, then the cyber cafes, shifting to the dark lanes of Palika Bazaar which then magically opened up to a maddening world of pornography, Bergmans and Herzogs and yes, even Karan Johar. Today the BitTorrent has come to our rescue, creating a global collective force of cinephiles and cinema-collectors, empowering the viewer to exhibit films on their rooftops, and thus, redefining the constricted notions of the passive audience.

Art as an emblem of cultural production has been deeply engrossed in human movements, acquiring an inherently political nature.

However, now the time has come to acknowledge that the audience is probably an equally resistive force, constructing ways of using and recycling images in an attempt to break out of the censorious trappings of the cinema hall, emerging as a powerful social agent in making meanings of cinema and thereby, culture.

"Persistence Resistance 2008", as a film festival resonates with a gesture not only towards the dynamic aesthetics of political filmmaking, the attempts to stretch the boundaries of imagination and confined terrains but also this new audience, trying to carve a niche for itself, waiting for filmmakers to take notice of them and create a space for dialogue.

The festival attempts to create diverse spaces of viewing films, from the auditorium to the video parlours and video libraries. It offers a space for interacting with filmmakers as well as outdoor installations and a series of animated films, and all of these aim to take account of the viewers' sensory perceptions, as well as recognizing the viewer as having a self-identity.

"Persistence Resistance 2008", wishes to bring all the movements of the audiences and matters of films a little closer together, in a collective space to experience the diversity of films.

### **Schedule of Festival**

Auditorium 1:	IIC Auditorium
Auditorium 2:	IIC Conference Room 1
Video Parlour:	IIC Fountain Lawns
Video Library:	IIC Gandhi King Plaza

### **ENTRY FREE**

## **Auditorium 1: IIC Auditorium**

**28 April 2008, Monday**

**Life Ways:** What would a woman truck driver, a Sherpa, a mid wife or a 92-year-old actress have in common? **Life Ways** attempts to showcase a range of startling testimonies of some men and women who carry on extraordinary movements, both in the private and public sphere. And in each the personal has a political quotient, almost like a mirror reflecting the changing nature of art, culture and the society.

The evening ends with an exploration of the confluence of literature, theatre, films through the work and writing of Habib Tanvir: illustrated talk by Sudhanwa Deshpande, followed by the Delhi premiere of a film on Habib Tanvir.

9:00	<b>Born at Home</b> Director: Sameera Jain English (subtitled), 61 min, 2000, India Indigenous birth practices and practitioners of rural and urban India.
10:03	<b>Snapshots from a Family Album</b> Director: Avijit Mukul Kishore English (subtitled), 63 min, 2004, India A critical time in a family's history: that moment when the idea of 'home' is being reconfigured across three distinct cities and cultures.
11:08	Tea Break
11:30	<b>P(l)ain Truth</b> Director: Ilppo Pohjola No Dialogue, 16 min, 1993, Finland The pain of a man trapped in a woman's body.

- 11:48 **Gender Trouble**  
 Director: Roz Mortimer  
 English, 24 min, 2002, UK  
 Four inter-sex women speak about their lives.
- 12:14 **The Pink Mirror**  
*(Gulabi Aaina)*  
 Director: Sridhar Rangayihh  
 English (subtitled), 41 min, 2002, India  
 Underneath a humorous exterior, an exploration of the Indian gay landscape, underlining the deep, humanly tender bondings that exist between drag queens.
- 12:57 **Milind Soman made me Gay**  
 Director: Harjant Gill  
 English (subtitled), 27 min, , USA  
 About desire and notions of 'home' and 'belonging', juxtaposing memories of the filmmaker's past against stories of 3 gay South Asian men living in the diaspora.
- 13:26 **Calcutta Pride March**  
 Director: Tejal Shah  
 English (subtitled), 12 min, 2004, India  
 A march to assert the rights of sexuality and gender minorities.
- 13:38 Lunch Break
- 14:30 **Manjuben Truckdriver**  
 Director: Sherna Dastur  
 English (subtitled), 51 min, 2002, India  
 A woman who has broken the stereotypes that are part of the social landscape she lives in, her identity is deliberately 'male', that of a macho trucker. But is she a crusader?
- 15:24 **They Who walked Mountains**  
 Director: Manju Kak  
 English (subtitled), 33 min, 2002, India  
 A film on the Bhotias, an ancient trading community of the Himalayas.
- 15:59 **Nima Temba Sherpa**  
 Director: Margriet Jansen  
 English (subtitled), 52 min, 2003, The Netherlands  
 A Sherpa, who climbs for the umpteenth time one of the highest Himalayan summits. But his life and achievements are seldom in the spotlight.
- 16:52 **Kamlabai**  
 Director: Reena Mohan  
 English (subtitled), 47 min, 1992, India  
 Kamlabai, one of the first actors of India, and the first lady of Indian film.
- 17:42 **Sundari - An Actor Prepares**  
 Director: Madhusree Dutta  
 English (subtitled), 30 min, 1999, India  
 An exploration of femininity and performance, through the tale of a popular female impersonator of early 20th century.
- 18:12 Tea Break
- 18:30 Literature, Theatre, Films: The Work and Writing of Habib Tanvir, illustrated talk by Sudhanwa Deshpande
- 19:35 Tanvir ka Safarnama (**Premiere**)  
 Director: Ranjan Kamath  
 English (subtitled), 79 min, 2007, India  
 The enthralling theatrical journey that happens when a pipe-smoking urban sophisticate like Habib Tanvir travels via Europe to return to his homeland - in Chhattisgarh - to create an essentially Indian theatre.

## Auditorium 1: IIC Auditorium

29 April 2008, Tuesday

**Refractions** provides diverse ways of viewing, not only of a film but also the lived experiences of everyday life. It traverses a vast spectrum of human landscape striving for different styles of existence, acknowledging the differences of experience in constructing innovations to fight the juggernaut of homogenization. It also holds a trajectory of films that attempt to construct an emblem, by piecing together words, memories and dialogues with history.

From novels to poetry to films, words have found a different presence. But how do words lend themselves to the cinematic imagination of animated films? Refractions also looks at the world of animations in their attempts to break away from the formal aspects of cinema, creating a new world of imagination, that perhaps provides a different view of the lived world. Noted graphic designer Orijit Sen has curated this section.

### **Refractions**

- 9:00     **Story Tellers**  
Directors: Prasanth Kumar R & Daya J  
English (subtitled), 25 min, 2006, India  
Challenges in the life of a shadow puppeteer and his art.
- 9:27     **Hot Off the Press**  
*(Tazaa Khabar)*  
Director: Bishakha Dutta  
English (subtitled), 31 min, 2006, India  
'Khabar Lahariya', published every fortnight from a small town in Uttar Pradesh's Chitrakoot district, covers all the news that mainstream media forgot.
- 10:00    **In the Forest Hangs a Bridge**  
Director: Sanjay Kak  
English (subtitled), 40 min, 1999, India  
The indigenous Adi tribe in Arunachal, north-east India, gathers to build a 1000 ft long bridge of cane and bamboo.
- 10:42    **Pretty Dyana**  
Director: Boris Mitic  
English (subtitled), 45 min, 2003, Serbia  
Gypsy refugees in a Belgrade suburb make a living by transforming Citroen's classic 2CV and Dyana cars into Mad Max-like recycling vehicles. But the police doesn't always find these strange vehicles funny....
- 11:27    Tea Break
- 11:50    **Portrait of Sakhi**  
Director: Karenza Bowen  
English (subtitled), 8 min, 2003, Australia  
Journey of an asylum seeker, an Afghani artist who was forced to flee his home to escape the Taliban.
- 12:00    **Monsoon Cloud**  
*(Mungaara Mugilu)*  
Director: M. S. Prakash Babu  
English (subtitled), 13 min, 2005, India  
A surreal look into the a few hours in an old man's life as he encounters a series of situations and emotions.
- 12:15    **Hope Dies Last in War**  
Director: Supriyo Sen  
English (subtitled), 80 min, 2007, India  
Struggle of the families of the prisoners of the 1971 Indo-Pak war to get their loved ones back.
- 13:33    Lunch Break
- 14:18    **Nusrat Has Left the Building... But When?**  
Director: Farjad Nabi  
No Dialogue, 20 min, 1997, Pakistan  
Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's metamorphosis from a genuine popular artiste to a mass produced exotica of the east.

- 14:45 **Planeta Alemania**  
*Observations From Invisibility*  
 Director: Dogfilm & Companeros  
 English (subtitled), 38 min, 1999, Germany  
 A cinematic portrait of a woman living and working in Germany like a “criminal”, but without having committed any “crime”.
- 15:25 **Scribbles on Akka**  
 Director: Madhusree Dutta  
 English (subtitled), 57 min, 2000, India  
 A musical documentary on the 12th century saint-poet Mahadevi Akka.
- 16:24 **Word Within the Word**  
*(Sabad Nirantar)*  
 Director: Rajula Shah  
 English (subtitled), 74 min, 2007, India  
 Seeks to comprehend and expand upon the spirit of Bhakti Movement, comprising of mystic poets like Kabir, Gorakhnath and others, blooming from within the ‘wretched of the earth’ and coming to form cogent dialogues across socio-philosophic fractures in an ancient landscape ravaged by history.
- 17:40 Tea Break
- 18:00 Comics, Animation, Films: Package of Animation films, curated by Orijit Sen

## **Auditorium 1: IIC Auditorium**

**30 April 2008, Wednesday**

**Celebrating Margins** weaves tales of struggle of opposites, incidences of an inevitable pitting of the traditional against the modern, and the individual versus the nation, often resulting in an ultimate fight of man versus man. Sandwiched in the middle of not only a political but also an emotional turmoil, celebrating margins pays an ode to the indomitable human spirit, raising questions about what it means to be free.

This section also expands the notion of freedom to free speech and the repercussions of a clampdown on this human right.

In a celebrated production of Best of Kolkata Campus, “*Hamletmachine*”- Heiner Muller's slim text undergoes a geographical shift and vacillates between movements, activist aspiration and dangerous dreams....

This section concludes with the narratives of individual poetical voices taking on a journey to understand the past and the present in Amar Kanwar's “A Night of Prophecy” and his films on Burma.

- 9:00 **Bushman's Secret**  
 Director: Rehad Desai  
 English (subtitled), 65 min, 2006, South Africa  
 One cactus stands between hope and hunger – Hoodia, a cactus used by Bushmen for centuries, has caught the attention of a giant pharmaceutical company.
- 10:07 **Holiday Camp**  
 Director: Jennifer Lyons-Reid & Carl Kuddell  
 English (subtitled), 48 min, 2002, Australia  
 Investigates the current Australian immigration policies in the context of 200 years of colonization.
- 10:57 **From Dust**  
 Director: Dhruv Dhawan  
 English (subtitled), 56 min, 2005, Sri Lanka / UAE  
 The untold story of a ‘100 metre rule’ after the Tsunami.
- 11:53 Tea Break
- 12:08 **Narrow is the Gate**  
 Director: Katarina Uibo  
 English (subtitled), 65 min, 2002, Estonia  
 Sister Teodora, the 86 year-old gatekeeper of the Granica convent, an isolated Serbian enclave in post-war Kosovo, balances her hostility to Albanians and her religious calling to love them.
- 13:15 **My Migrant Soul**  
*(Porobashi Mon Amar)*  
 Director: Yasmine Kabir

- English (subtitled), 34 min, 2000, Bangladesh  
 A story about modern-day slavery - Shahjahan Babu, a young migrant worker from Bangladesh left for Malaysia in search of work. Having sold his property - and virtually mortgaging his life - he arrives in the host country only to experience disillusionment, misery and frustration.
- 13:49 Lunch Break
- 14:20 **Shit**  
*(Pee)*  
 Director: Amudhan R. P.  
 English (subtitled), 25 min, 2003, India  
 A day in the life of Mariammal, a woman sanitary worker, who cleans the shit from a lane in Madurai.
- 14:47 **Tales From the Margins**  
 Director: Kavita Joshi  
 English (subtitled), 23 min, 2006, India  
 The grim human rights situation in Manipur and the extraordinary protests by its womenfolk for justice and peace.
- 15:15 **Temporary Loss of Consciousness**  
 Director: Monica Bhasin  
 English (subtitled), 35 min, 2005, India  
 An exploration of the boundaries of internal and external spaces of people in exile.
- 15:52 **Waiting ...**  
 Directors: Atul Gupta & Shabnam Ara  
 English (subtitled), 39 min, 2005, India  
 On women and children surviving amongst conflict in war-torn Kashmir.
- 16:33 **A Certain Liberation**  
*(Shadhinota)*  
 Director: Yasmine Kabir  
 English (subtitled), 38 min, 2003, Bangladesh  
 30 years ago, during the Liberation War, Gurudasi Mondol had lost her entire family. But through her indomitable presence today, she has kept alive the spirit of the Liberation War.
- 17:13 **Somewhere in May**  
 Director: Amar Kanwar  
 English (subtitled), 37 min, 2005, India  
 The film lies in the intersection of two trajectories that occur on the same day – the 17th of May celebrations of the Norwegian National Day in 2004, which was also the day the Burmese military dictatorship began a sham National Convention for Democracy inside Burma. Through the 'Democratic Voice of Burma' (DVB), a small radio station in Oslo, the Burmese resistance reports on this sham convention, secretly heard by thousands within Burma.
- 17:50 Tea
- 18:20 Art, Censorship, Films: Hamletmachine, a play  
 Performance by Best of Kolkata Campus
- 19:25 **A Night of Prophecy**  
 Director: Amar Kanwar  
 English (subtitled), 77 min, 2002, India  
 A film about poetry and witnessing the passage of time. Through poetry emerges the possibility of understanding the past, the severity of conflict and the cycles of change.
- 20:47 **Films on Burma**  
 Director: Amar Kanwar  
 15 min

## **Auditorium 2: IIC Conference Room 1**

**28 April 2008, Monday**

**Retrospectives:** "Persistence Resistance 2008" also presents a series of **retrospectives** of some well-known documentary filmmakers, whose work finds a common resonance in their dealings with rhythms of art, land rights, gender politics and social injustices. But with each passing work, one finds a formal innovation has been

carried out changing the very nature of the film. This section of retrospectives gives a unique opportunity to view the filmmakers not only as artists but also as reflecting the changing history of our times.

### **Films by R. V. Ramani**

- 9:00     **Saa**  
No Dialogue, 25 min, 1991, India  
An exploratory journey seeking one's own rhythm, through the magnetic flux of rural and urban rhythms.
- 9:27     **Last Family**  
English (subtitled), 26 min, 1995, India  
Nine Experimental theatre groups from different parts of the country meet in Chennai. Egos clash, fuse and melt. A film as theatre
- 9:55     **Face Like A Man**  
English (subtitled), 30 min, 1993, India  
Nine painters try and express their preoccupations, in their canvas. The filmmaker, with his own preoccupation, strikes a relation.
- 10:26    **Through the Window**  
English (subtitled), 30 min, 1993, India  
A painter and a filmmaker. A dialogue of non-figuration and abstraction with the painter vis-a-vis filmmaking
- 10:58    **Blue Black Yellow**  
Director: R. V. Ramani  
No Dialogue, 6 min, 1995, India  
A quizzical journey, through colours, forms, space, movements and gestures
- 11:04    Tea Break

### **Films by Sehjo Singh**

- 11:30    **The Women Betrayed**  
*(Atmaghat)*  
English (subtitled), 40 min, 1993, India  
Why women in Jharkhand are branded and hunted as witches.
- 12:12    **Who is Afraid of Little Girls?**  
*(Akha Teej)*  
English (subtitled), 32 min, 1993, India  
What forces the people of Rajasthan to push their little children into matrimony.
- 12:46    **Sona Maati - A Very Ordinary Gold**  
Director: Sehjo Singh  
English (subtitled), 38 min, 1996, India  
One woman's fight for land rights in Bikaner.
- 13:24    Lunch Break
- 14:30    **Conversation with Filmmaker: Sehjo Singh**

### **Films by Paromita Vohra**

- 15:30    **Annapurna**  
English (subtitled), 27 min, India  
A portrait of a women's group named Annapurna. Started in 1975 by 14 khanawalwalis - women who prepared meals for migrant workers, thus earning the name food-lady.
- 15:59    **Cosmopolis :Two Tales of a City**  
English (subtitled), 15 min, India  
Two short tales wonder about the idea of Bombay as a great cosmopolis while examining its divisions of class, language and food.
- 16:16    **Where's Sandra?**  
English (subtitled), 19 min, India

Who is Sandra? And if she's from Bandra where is she? If you saw her would you know her? The film wanders around Bandra wondering about Sandra – stereotype or fantasy? Affectionate parody or vicious mockery? Still here or just a figment from the past?

### **Films by R. V. Ramani**

- 16:37 **The Voyeur**  
English (subtitled), 29 min, 2000, India  
Preparing for the Act: The Other Festival, Chennai, 1999.
- 17:08 **Lines of Mahatma**  
English (subtitled), 20 min, 1999, India  
The spirit of Mahatma Gandhi through the drawings of Adimoolam, a Chennai-based artist.
- 17:28 Tea Break
- 17:50 **Where Are You?**  
*(Nee Engey?)*  
English (subtitled), 154 min, 2003, India  
An impressionistic ethnography, reflecting on shadow puppet theatre, history, mythology, cinema and our lives.
- 20:20 **Conversation with Filmmaker: R. V. Ramani**
- 17:32 Tea Break

## **Auditorium 2: IIC Conference Room 1**

**29 April 2008, Tuesday**

**Refractions** provides diverse ways of viewing, not only of a film text but also the lived experiences of everyday life. It traverses a vast spectrum of human landscape striving for different styles of existence, acknowledging the differences of experience in constructing innovations to fight the juggernaut of homogenization. It also holds a trajectory of films that attempt to construct an emblem, by piecing together words, memories and dialogues with history.

The day then continues with **retrospectives**.

### **Refractions**

- 9:00 **My Land My Life**  
Director: Rehad Desai  
English (subtitled), 52 min, 2002, India  
The complexities of a fast changing political landscape in Zimbabwe
- 9:54 **Autumn's Final Country**  
Director: Sonia Jabbar  
English (subtitled), 66 min, 2003, India  
Four women speak about the circumstances leading to their rootlessness, revealing an intimate dimension of the Kashmir conflict.
- 11:00 Tea Break
- 11:30 **Way Back Home**  
*(Abaar Ashibo Phire)*  
Director: Supriyo Sen  
English (subtitled), 120 min, 2003, India  
A family's journey back to their homeland in Bangladesh after more than fifty years.
- 13:30 Lunch Break
- 14:30 **Right to Information**  
Director: Anurag Singh  
English (subtitled), 33 min, 1999, India  
Battle of common people against corruption in rural India.

15:05 **Invisible**  
Director: Roz Mortimer  
English (subtitled), 63 min, 2006,  
When scientists tested breast milk from Inuit mothers, they were shocked to find the milk loaded with chemicals migrating from the south.

16:10 Tea Break

**Films by Paromita Vohra**

16:40 **Q2P**  
English (subtitled), 55 min, India  
A film about toilets and the city. It peers through the dream of Mumbai as a future Shanghai and searches for public toilets in Bombay with a small detour in Delhi, watching who has to queue to pee.

17:35 Break

**Films by Madhusree Dutta**

18:00 **I Live in Behrampada**  
English (subtitled), 49 min, 1993, India  
On a Muslim ghetto during the Bombay riots in 1992-93.

18:51 **Ailo Bailo Sailo**  
English (subtitled), 13 min, 1999, India  
A musical on the fear of young girls' sexuality and trafficking.

19:06 **Scribbles on Akka**  
English (subtitled), 57 min, 2000, India  
A musical documentary on the 12th century saint-poet Mahadevi Akka.

20:05 **Conversation with Filmmaker: Madhusree Dutta**

## **Auditorium 2: IIC Conference Room 1**

**30 April 2008, Wednesday**

### **Retrospectives**

**Films by Rehad Desai**

9:00 **Born into Struggle**  
English (subtitled), 75 min, 2004, South Africa  
A personal journey mirroring a nation's fight for freedom.

10:17 **Bushman's Secret**  
English (subtitled), 65 min, 2006, South Africa  
One cactus stands between hope and hunger – Hoodia, a cactus used by Bushmen for centuries, has caught the attention of a giant pharmaceutical company.

11:22 Tea Break

**Films by R. V. Ramani**

11:47 **Brahma Vishnu Shiva**  
No Dialogue, 20 min, 1999, India  
An exploration of the process of creation, sustenance and destruction.

12:09 **One Two Three Four**  
English (subtitled), 28 min, 1996, India  
A performer of bizarre proportions, struggling for an expression and identity in the social, glamour and the political arena of Tamil Nadu

12:39 **Language of War**

English (subtitled), 51 min, 1996, India  
A bilingual play based on the Mahabharata, on the dilemma of Arjuna - the rehearsals become performance.

13:30 Lunch Break

### **Refractions**

14:30 **Coding Culture**  
Director: Gautam Sonti  
English (subtitled), 92 min, India  
A series of three films that explores the diverse cultures of work in Bangalore's software outsourcing industry.

### **Films by Madhusree Dutta**

16:04 **Sundari: An Actor Prepares**  
English (subtitled), 30 min, 1999, India  
An exploration of femininity and performance, through the tale of a popular female impersonator of early 20th century.

16:36 **7 Islands and a Metro**  
English (subtitled), 100 min, 2006, India  
A tale of Mumbai through a tapestry of fiction. Or On the bodies and cities that make Bombay/Mumbai.

18:16 Tea Break

### **Films by Paromita Vohra**

18:30 **Unlimited Girls: A Fearless Tale of Feminism**  
English (subtitled), 95 min, India  
An exploration of engagements with feminism in contemporary urban India. It is told through the conversations of a narrator called Fearless who starts accidentally in a chatroom and embarks on a journey where she encounters diverse characters, all talking of their engagements with feminism and its place in their lives today.

20:05 **Conversation with Filmmaker: Paromita Vohra**

## **Video Parlours: IIC Fountain Lawn**

Cinema has become increasingly mobile, with a wide circulation of DVDs, VCDs and now the Internet itself, acting as a storehouse of images. But the genesis of this movement and circulation took place primarily through the video parlours, where people unable to access films due to rising costs of the cinema hall were able to view films at their leisure. The video parlours have more often than not been caught in the middle of the piracy debate. Moreover, their presence has raised issues of morality, leading to attempts of censoring the nature of these viewing spaces.

"Persistence Resistance" presents eight viewing spaces, in the nature of the video parlour, where films playing in a loop throughout the day can be seen without the space and time constrictions. Each video parlour is marked by a cross section of political documentaries ranging from caste politics to gender identities to environmental awareness. But above all, this space tries to find alternative methods of viewing, where the film gains a status by recognizing the rights of the audience.

### **Video Parlour 1: Exclusive Terrains**

Each society has formulated ways to maintain exclusive territories- inevitably defining the "us" and "them". The unequal nature of human arrangement perpetuated through centuries has spiralled in to the realms of education, politics and professional life. This video parlour tells the stories of people being victimized by caste mechanisms and also the collective actions being taken by certain sections of the civil society in order to be more inclusive.

### **Shit**

(Pee)

Director: Amudhan R. P.  
English (subtitled), 25 min, 2003, India

A day in the life of Mariammal, a woman sanitary worker, who cleans the shit from a lane in Madurai.

### **Vande Mataram - The Shit Version**

Director: Amudhan R. P.

English (subtitled), 5 min, 2005, India

Rehman's new version of Vande Mataram is an icon for India's modern and globalised image, but realities are uncomfortable.

### **Notes from the Crematorium**

Director: Amudhan R. P.

English (subtitled), 25 min, 2005, India

The world of undertakers, a community that is only remembered in the event of death.

### **The Die is Cast**

Director: Ranjan Kamath

English (subtitled), 82 min, 2004, India

An appraisal of three decades of the Naxalite movement in Bihar - has any benefit accrued to the Scheduled Castes or, are they mere pawns on the political chessboard?

### **Born at Home**

Director: Sameera Jain

English (subtitled), 61 min, 2000, India

Indigenous birth practices and practitioners of rural and urban India.

### **Voices**

*(Kuchh Awazen)*

Director: Sameera Jain

English (subtitled), 35 min, 2006, India

Three most marginalised communities among Dalits in UP give voice the oppression and marginalisation they have been subjected to for centuries.

### **Video Parlour 2: Mapping Icons**

The films travel from paying a tribute to man's ability to reuse, recycle and reformulate existing physical materials to create new and exciting styles of life. It then goes on to reveal the life of a painter, who despite his physical handicap creates a mesmerizing account on canvas. It finally tracks the process of circulation of icons in a culture- from their birth to their erasure.

### **A Car for a Dollar**

Director: Maximillian Spohr and Reiner Derdau

English (subtitled), 59 min, 2005, Canada

The story of a unique creation known as the Trabant.

### **Pretty Dyana**

Director: Boris Mitic

English (subtitled), 45 min, 2003, Serbia

Gypsy refugees in a Belgrade suburb make a living by transforming Citroen's classic 2CV and Dyana cars into Mad Max-like recycling vehicles. But the police doesn't always find these strange vehicles funny....

### **In the Forest Hangs a Bridge**

Director: Sanjay Kak

English (subtitled), 39 min, 1999, India

The indigenous Adi tribe in Arunachal, north-east India, gathers to build a 1000 ft long bridge of cane and bamboo.

### **Delinquent Angel**

Director: David Blackall

English (subtitled), 48 min, 2000, Australia

Life and work of John Perceval, famous Australian painter.

### **Made In India**

Director: Madhusree Dutta

English (subtitled), 37 min, 2002, India

A film on contemporary visual cultures in India.

### **Video Parlour 3: Blurring the edges**

This space called "**Blurring the edges**" provides a perspective on the institutions of information and education as well as the functioning of the democratic process within an education system. Are information and education

within the reach of all and if they are, how do they reshape identities and edges of the social boundaries around us?

### **Hot Off the Press**

*(Tazaa Khabar)*

Director: Bishakha Dutta

English (subtitled), 31 min, 2006, India

'Khabar Lahariya', published every fortnight from a small town in Uttar Pradesh's Chitrakoot district, covers all the news that mainstream media forgot.

### **A, B, She**

*(Aw Aakare Aa)*

Director: Subas Das

English (subtitled), 90 min, 2003, India

Story of a school teacher and her attempts to reform the education system.

### **Black Pamphlets**

Director: Nitin K.

English (subtitled), 84 min, 2007, India

A glimpse of democracy in practice through a chronicle of a students' elections at the Delhi University.

### **Karen Education Surviving**

Director: Scott O' Brien and Saw Eh Do Wah

English (subtitled), 29 min, 2003, Burma & Thailand

The story of Karen villagers living internally displaced throughout the Karen state in Burma.

### **Video Parlour 4: Of Bodies and Boundaries**

Of Bodies and Boundaries raises multiple questions of not just the physical body and the transformation it goes through in the event of a political turmoil, a performance, violence or even liposuction but also seeks to explore the boundaries that are set up when such processes occur. In the face of such externalities when the body can no longer survive in isolation, this video parlour expands the horizons of what a body has come to mean in the contemporary geo-political and social scenario.

### **Search for Freedom**

*A story about four Afghan women*

Director: Munizae Jahangir

English (subtitled), 56 min, 2003, Pakistan, USA

Four Afghan women recount their journeys through the turbulent history of their country since the 1920s.

### **Breathing Without Air**

Director: Kapilas Bhuyan

No Dialogue, 23 min, 2004, India

A rustic road show, Mundapota - the son buries his head in the ground while his father beats the drum, thrilled viewers applaud; but what happens in the darkness that engulfs him in the pit?

### **Colours Black**

Director: Mamta Murthy

English (subtitled), 31 min, 2001, India

An attempt to break the silences around sexual abuse within the family.

### **Skin Deep**

Director: Reena Mohan

English (subtitled), 83 min, 1998, India

The eternal search for the ideal femininity and how it permeates the self image of women.

### **Where the Heart Lies**

*(Dar pa Dar)*

Director: Samar Minallah

English (subtitled), 53 min, Pakistan

A film about the Afghan Refugee women living in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan.

### **Video Parlour 5: Searching Tolerance**

In **Searching Tolerance**, we look at a range of films that tackle issues of state violence, unfair foreign policies that benefit a certain section of the world, images of war and who controls them and also movements by social groups that raise awareness of the annihilation that the world might be heading towards. We search for tolerance in human minds and attitudes.

### **Dove Days**

Director: Barri Cohen

English (subtitled), 48 min, 2002, Canada

A critical view of the role of western media in selling war and blood, especially after 9-11.

### **Downwind**

*Depleted Uranium Weapons in the Age of Virtual War*

Director: Jawad Metni

English (subtitled), 49 min, 2000, USA

Blending broad issues of history and memory with the near ubiquitous control of war imagery by the military, this film raises questions about the true human cost when the desire for total victory outweighs the moral obligations of 'humanitarian intervention'.

### **Green Gold**

Director: Heidi Bachram

English (subtitled), 30 min, 2003, UK

The story of Sajida Khan, a South African woman with a hazardous dumpsite on her doorstep

### **Passengers - A Video Journey in Gujarat**

Director: Nooh Nizami and Akanksha Joshi

English (subtitled), 53 min, 2003, India

A tribute to the survivors of one of the worst failures of state machinery since the partition

### **Images of Development**

Director: Pramod Gupta

English (subtitled), 25 min, 2002, India

How the process of planning and development works by excluding, if necessary by force, the poor and the marginalized.

### **In Whose Interest?**

Director: David Kaplowitz

English (subtitled), 27 min, 2002, UK

A historical journey through the past 50 years of United States intervention, questioning motives and examining effects of US foreign policy.

### **Video Parlour 6: Turbulent Currents**

With the prediction of a global water scarcity fast becoming a reality, what happens when certain power groups do not address these warnings and continue ravaging this natural resource? **Turbulent currents** hosts a range of films that address this issue while at the same time, acknowledging the collective action being taken by people, who might just be on the brink of a clash between man and nature.

### **Between the Devil and the Deep Sea**

Director: Saraswati Rao Kavula

English (subtitled), 73 min, 2005, India

A film on the troubles and travails of the traditional marine fisher folk from Andhra.

### **Restless Shores**

Director: Noel Rajesh

English (subtitled), 20 min, 2003, India

Challenges before the traditional fisherfolk from commercial trawlers, and their struggle to maintain control over local fishing grounds, their fishing livelihoods and economic security

### **Call of the Bhagirathi**

Director: Anwar Jamal

English (subtitled), 43 min, 1992, India

A film predicting the disastrous impact of the Tehri Dam.

### **Words on Water**

Director: Sanjay Kak

English (subtitled), 86 min, 2003, India

In a world where the use of violence has become the arbiter of all political debate, Words on Water is about a sustained non-violent resistance, that almost joyous defiance, which empowers the people as they struggle for their rights.

### **Video Parlour 7: Contested Commons**

The physical as well as the intellectual climate of the world are increasingly being overshadowed by a looming threat; the former by the excesses of man-made entities, corporatism and materialism and the latter by a highly

protectionist attitude that denies the right of survival to a vast section of the world. When different power groups such as that of the state or the corporate try to wrest authority over land and intellectual creations, the **Commons** becomes a highly contested territory.

### **Only An Axe Away**

Director: P. Baburaj and C. Saratchandran  
English (subtitled), 40 min, 2005, India  
A film on the struggle to save the unique ecosystem of Silent Valley.

### **Suits and Savages**

*Why the World Bank Won't Save the World*  
Director: Zoe Young and Dylan Howitt  
English (subtitled), 38 min, 2000, UK  
The Global Environment Facility looks promising on paper. But does this newest of the international financial institutions live up to its own rhetoric?

### **From Dust**

Director: Dhruv Dhawan  
English (subtitled), 56 min, 2005, Sri Lanka  
The untold story of a '100 metre rule' after the Tsunami.

### **Patents or Patients?**

Director: Joost de Haas  
English (subtitled), 25 min, 2002, The Netherlands  
Do the pharmaceutical companies really spend as much on the development of new medicines as they say they do? And do they need patents to protect their huge profits?

### **Trinkets and Beads**

Director: Christopher Walker  
English (subtitled), 52 min, 1996, UK  
Funny, heartbreaking and thrilling story of the battle waged by a small band of Amazonian warriors to preserve their way of life.

### **The Bitter Drink**

Director: P. Baburaj and C. Saratchandran  
English (subtitled), 26 min, 2003, India  
A film on the adivasi struggle against Coca Cola in Plachimada, Kerala.

### **Tunin' Technology to Ecology**

Director: Izzy Brown  
English (subtitled), 15 min, 2002, Australia  
This fun doc shows how easy it is to reduce your ecological footprint while having a great time!

### **Video Parlour 8: New Maps**

In charting new worlds, a space of **new maps** has been marked, where global concerns against a vast spectrum of discrepancies are voiced and addressed. The World Social Forum visualizes and almost prophesizes the dream of a better world that is waiting to take birth.

### **Hope Will Win Over Fear**

Director: Andreas Hernandez  
English (subtitled), 60 min, 2003, Brazil  
An exploration of the various meanings of the World Social Forum as an event and process as well as its historical importance coming out of 500 years of colonialism, developmentalism and neo-liberalism.

### **Rumble in Mumbai**

Director: Jawad Metni  
English (subtitled), 74 min, 2004, USA  
An extensive documentation of the World Social Forum held in Mumbai, India, in January 2004, that was attended by over 100,000 people, all looking to build solidarity -- and a better world.

### **Work in Progress**

Director: paromita Vohra  
English (subtitled), 59 min, , India  
A journey from being a document of the 2004 World Social Forum in Mumbai to becoming an impression of a worldwide movement for economic, political and cultural justice and a travelogue of ideas for change.

## **Video Library**

**Gandhi King Plaza: 28, 29, 30 April, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

### **Installations**

How do films reconcile themselves when projected against nature? In keeping with the spirit to stretch the nature of viewing practices, "Persistence Resistance 2008" will create a space of external installations where films of three artists exploring a range of subjects through the medium of video art will be projected. The artists to be showcased in this section are: Amar Kanwar, RV Ramani and Orijit Sen.

### **Video Library**

This space is a simulation of videos on loan, where audiences can take recourse in the event of having missed out a film being screened in the auditorium.

### **Display of Under Construction Films**

\*Programme subject to last minute changes

### **Magic Lantern Foundation**

J 1881 Chittaranjan Park, Basement, New Delhi 110019

P: +(91 11) 26273244; 41605239

E: [magiclf@vsnl.com](mailto:magiclf@vsnl.com); [magiclantern.foundation@gmail.com](mailto:magiclantern.foundation@gmail.com)

W: <http://www.magiclanternfoundation.org>

### **India International Centre**

40 Max Mueller Marg, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110003

[www.iicdelhi.nic.in](http://www.iicdelhi.nic.in)