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FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES OF INDIA, CENTRAL OFFICE, MUMBAI

From the Desk of General Secretary :

Kerala Resolved to Rejoin FFSI.

Film Societies in Kerala had moved out of FFSI purview. However, I am glad that at the Annual General Meeting of Kerala Societies held on June 29, 2008, the meeting resolved to reaffirm their FFSI membership.

Shri Narahari Rao, Vice President of Southern Region, was the special invitee to the meeting. He delivered the inaugural address at the meeting. (Rao's report attached separately)

July 1st, 2008

Mr. Sudhir Nandgaonkar
General Secretary FFSI
Mumbai

Report

I am happy to inform you that i attended the BRGM of the Film Societies in Kerala held on 29th June, 2008 at Trivandrum Hotel, Trivandrum. I had the opportunity to address the gathering and one of the items in the agenda was Formation of Sub Region. I am happy to report to you that they have unanimously passed a resolution forming the Kerala Sub Region as per the clause No.5 (b) (1) of the amended Rules and Regulations of FFSI.

Regards,

H. N. Narahari Rao, VP FFSI SR.

sanction in the Rules and Regulations of FFSI. Last year, the FFSI Rules & Regulations were amended.

Kerala societies will be part of the FFSI again after a gap of nearly eight years, and their homecoming has occurred in the FFSI 50th year celebrations is a happy coincidence. Kerala society has been a vibrant force in the film society movement. The state boasts of 86 film societies now. **Lets welcome to Kerala societies !**

Sudhir Nandgaonkar –General Secretary

Shri Lankan Film Festival -To celebrate 60 years of India-Sri Lanka diplomatic relations, Sri Lanka High Commission has brought in a package of 10 films that provide a glimpse into 60 years of Sri Lanka cinema. The package was offered to FFSI after the week-long festivals held in New Delhi and Kolkata. The Central Office quickly chalked out the schedule and the package will be circulated to Hyderabad, Pune, Bangalore, Chennai, Trivandrum and finally arrive in Mumbai.

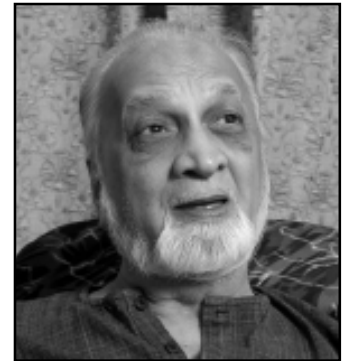
Rafique Baghdadi wins Best Critic Award : Shri Rafique Baghdadi, Film Critic and Regional Council Member of Western Region, won the Best Critic Award at the National Film Awards 2006 which were announced in June. The award ceremony is likely to be held in August this year in New Delhi.

Quote

“I am keen on getting right the opening five minutes and the closing five minutes of a film – they are crucial.” - Steven Spielberg, Film Maker

VIJAY TENDULKAR

(1928-2008)



A well known Marathi Playwright, film script writer, journalist & social thinker, passed away on May 19, 2008 in Pune Hospital. He wrote 17 film scripts. Manthan/directed by Shyam Benegal won him National Award for the best script. His most popular film was Ardhasatya, (Hindi) directed by Govind Nihlani. He was chairman of the International Jury of the 6th International FF Mumbai (2003).

see article on next page...

Tapan Sinha honoured with Special National Award:

Veteran Director Tapan Sinha (age 84) was awarded the Life Time Achievement award by the Govt. of India. The Govt. of West Bengal presented the award to him at his residence in Kolkata where he continues to battle an illness, on June 20. Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi, the I & B Minister, read out the scroll of honour. The I & B Ministry instituted this new award and Tapanda became the first awardee. The other names considered for the award included Dilip Kumar and Lata Mangeshkar.

President : SHYAM BENEGAL

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Vijay Tendulkar Is No More

- Ramu Ramanathan

The sms was short.

A very dear friend, one who guarded Tendulkar's life had sent it. It said : 'He's gone.'

Gone?

And what remains?

Memories? Staccato conversations ? Longish silences.

Tendulkar's body of work is formidable. He has penned 28 full length plays, seven collections of one-acts, six collections of children's plays, four collections of short stories, three collections of essays, a novel, and 17 film scripts, in a short span of 50 years. Everyone knows that.

What is unheralded is, his non-theatre jotting. His sketches on P. L. Deshpande, men in power, unknown underdogs are his best work as a journalist. The piece on Amar Sheikh and Hamid Dalwai is stunning. The Walk the Talk (before TV invented Walk the Talk) with Vasantrao Naik is Dario Fo.

He once said to me : 'it's never about the writing. Anyone can write. It is about the observations.'

His project with TISS on Violence is a tour de force with its meticulous compilation of case studies which have been gleaned from India's jails. He used to unfold the most macabre episodes in a quiet pacifist tone. It was eerie.

In the tradition of Marathi playwrights, he was a brilliant reader. I attended a Tendulkar reading. It was a simple, unfussy format. He was alone on an enormous stage, accompanied by a few sheets of papers. He read his favourite poems by the new generation of Marathi poets, short stories, even newspaper columns. Basically, fragmented thoughts, and remarkably, the audience sat in rapt attention for more than three hours. This was the magic of the word.

Of course, it also provided a big boost to the popularity ratings of the poets, authors, essayists. In recent times, it boosted the career trajectories of many a mediocre playwright or poet. His preface to Manaswini's collection of plays is a case in point. But he was blinked by his love for 'the young ones.'

Pillar of Indian theatre

Above all, Tendulkar was one of 'the

famous four Indian playwrights' who changed the fate of conventional theatre. He inhabited a Nehruvian world. After a few wars and riots, India was witnessing a decline of idealism, there was disillusionment with socialism, the gentrified society was showing its greedy fangs.

Writing contemporaneously with Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar and Girish Karnad, Tendulkar tried to bring this sensibility to theatre, one which marks him out as having made a unique contribution to the way theatre has been practised. If Karnad delighted audiences with overturning conventions, and a freewheeling use of mythology, Rakesh brought a vibrance to naturalistic theatre, and Badal Sircar introduced a new politicisation to theatre, Tendulkar transformed the most fundamental tool of theatre, the spoken word, and even more than spoken word, the text (and its context) which had been hitherto used in theatre. The pauses and silences, the conventional communication between human beings was replaced with the staccato of the unsaid and the unutterable.

Did he succeed ? In the larger pantheon of things, yes. Tendulkar became a media icon. Importantly, he mastered the art of maintaining his mythic status.

He could do no wrong. It was a crucifix he had to live with.

Is he a good playwright ?

I am uttering a blasphemy but I don't think so. Today, almost each and every one of his plays is passe. Baby and Mitrachi Gosht and Gidhade are cringe-criinge-criinge.

He is a tough playwright to stage. Everyone speaks of 6.000 shows of Ghashiram Kotwale ! But other than Jabbar Patel's production of the play, almost all the other seven productions I've seen have been shoddy.

His last book, last three plays (like Girish Karnad's last three plays) have been an embarrassment. The Fifth Woman (his first play in English) should be hidden from the rest of the world.

Having said that one is aware that in these days, it is not easy to write a play. For a playwright, in today's time to confront a new-age audience is untenable. This is true

for a Tendulkar and Karnad, leave alone lesser mortals like the rest of us.

Mediocre people are hell

A few months ago, when Tendulkar Saab was ailing, I visited him in Pune. A bunch of bloyal friends had cast a protective ring around him. They call themselves the Shakha (they were obviously spoofing the Shiv Sena Shakha system) and met for chai-poha on Sundays and discussed movies, literature, politics.

The Shakha managed to prevent the news from leaking out to a predatory media. Tendulkar sat like a royal king on the bed. The body was frail. The mind was agile. He wanted to know about Naseer's Creon in Antigone. He was working on a translation. In the evening, Mohit Takalkar was going to read passages from Pamuk's latest. Tendulkar Saab commented: 'The characteristic note of our time is the mediocre man, and his commonplace mind. And this mind knowing itself to be mediocre, has the gall to itsrise to mediocrity, and goes on to impose itself wherever it can. Be it our theatrewallahs, be it our politicians. This is a living hell.'

The tragedy of Tendulkar has been, he had to suffer fools who inhabited the very same living hell, he was opposed to !

The final finale

What would he say if he reads Bal Thackeray's quote in the Saamna in which Thackeray says : 'Vijay was my pal.'

What would he say when he saw the shradhanjali on Star Majha with actors who have, quite obviously never read a play.... reading a Tendulkar play and messing it up.

What would he say, when he saw people bawling (dramatically) along with their sound bytes.

I half expect, Tendulkar to get up and say: 'Fooled ya buggers, I was not dead. I just want to see how all of you are making me into a God.'

The Final Act.

Salaam Tendulkar. Have fun wherever you are. One day we shall meet... in heaven or hell or watching a play in a run-down auditorium in Bhandup...

*The writer is the Editor of the Prithvi Theatre Newsletter.

Courtesy -Hindustan Times