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Founder President

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FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES OF INDIA, CENTRAL OFFICE, MUMBAI

### From the Desk of General Secretary :

## **CEC APPROVES NEW AGENDA**

The Central Executive Committee had a meeting in Mumbai on February 6, 2010. The FFSI programme after Golden Jubilee Year was one of the key points on the discussion agenda.

The General Secretary put forward the proposal that FSI should organize Regional Language Film appreciation Courses in collaboration with NFAI. The NFAI has been conducting one-month appreciation courses in Pune and short film appreciation courses at different places all over India since its inception. However, both these courses are conducted in English and keep away a common cinegoer not proficient in English. As the FFSI expands the movement to smaller towns with the help of world cinema DVDs, the FA Courses Regional Language could prove to be very useful to connect with the local cineastes. There are adequate resource persons available now in each language.

After detailed discussions, the CEC approved the new programme.

After CEC approval, the General Secretary wrote to the I & B Ministry to seek the NFAI co-operation. With the initiative from our President Shyam Benegal, I & B Ministry approved the FFSI request for NFAI co-operation free of cost. Accordingly, I will meet.

FAI Director soon and chalk out seven-day Film Appreciation Courses in different Regional Languages.

A uniform timetable would be chalked with a uniform fee of Rs. 2,000/- for each course. NFAI Director or his representative would be invited to attend the course. The participation certificates will be signed by Vice President of each Region and the NFAI Director.

The appreciation course programme roll on from April, 2010. The Regions interested in conducting these courses are requested to write to the General Secretary with a schedule of probable dates.

**Sudhir Nandgaonkar**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference to be held in New Delhi**

CEC also finalized the dates of 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial Film Society Conference at New Delhi on August 28-2010.

The last conference was held in Pune in 1999. In Triennial Conference, representatives of all film societies meet and provide a direction to the Film Society Movement. The 8<sup>th</sup> Triennial meeting will coincide with Golden Jubilee year.

### **Indian Film Culture to be published.**

CEC also authorized the General Secretary to publish the 15<sup>th</sup> issue of Indian Film Culture, the FFSI annual. All regions are requested to help the central office concerning the financial aspects of the issue. The General Secretary will edit the number.

## **DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD**

**For V K Murthy – Cinematographer**

Mysore born V K Murthy has become the first cinematographer to be chosen for the Dada Saheb Phalke Award.

Murthy is best remembered for his lighting techniques in *Pyasa*, *Kagaz Ke Phool* and *Sahib Bibi aur Gulam* as he crafted some of the finest images in Indian Cinema.

His 'beam shot' in the 'Waqt, ne kiya kya haseen sitam sequence' from '*Kagaz Ke Phool*' is considered a classic in celluloid history. Inspired by a light boy who was reflecting light with a mirror, he got that parallel beam using a pair of ordinary mirrors. This won him the Film Fare Best Cinematographer Award for 1959.

Born in 1923 Mr. Murthy did his Diploma in cinematography in Sri Jayachamarajendra Polytechnic, Bangalore in the first batch (1943-46) He worked in all of Guru Dutt's Films, He was the cinematographer for the country's first cinemascope movie, '*Kagaz Ke Fool*'

In an interview during his last visit to Mysore, Murthy said: 'I met Guru Dutt for the first time while working for the Famous Studios as an assistant cameraman. It all began when I suggested a difficult shot, which Guru said his Cameraman would not be able to execute. I requested him to ask his cameraman to allow me to attempt the shot. Guru Dutt allowed me make two or three attempts. But I managed shot in the first take. After pack-up he asked me to work for the film. I told him that it was not right to desert a cinematographer in the midst of a film and I would worked with him on his next film'.

Murthy worked for '*Hoovu Hannu*' a classic in Kannada cinema, directed by Rajendra Singh Babu. He created some of the most significant shots in black and white era. While training in London to work on colour films, he worked with the crew of '*The Guns of Navarone*'

**Courtesy – The Hindu**

### **Guru Dutt Retrospective at Hongkong IFF**

A mini-retrospective of Indian cinema legend Guru Dutt will be held in Hongkong International Film Festival (HIFF)2010. The 34th edition of the festival will take place from 21st March to 5th April. In the section called as Tribute, four films of Guru Dutt will be screened which include films with Dutt as director and actor, These film are *Mr. and Mrs.55*, *Pyasa* (Thirst), *Kagaz Ke Phool* (Paper Flowers) and *Sahib, Biwi aur Gulaam* (Master, Mistress and Servant).

Often referred to as India's Orson Welles and equally famous as director, producer and actor, Dutt was named one of the greatest film directors of all time by Sight & Sound magazine. In particular, both *Thirst* (1957) and *Paper Flowers* (1959) are acknowledged as classics, having appeared in Time magazine's 100 Best Films of All Time list.

**President : SHYAM BENEGAL**

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## Is Cinema an art?

**K. Shivram Karanth**

Screening of films has come into vogue throughout the world, whether we desire it or not. Just as a few fine arts have mingled in our culture from a longtime, cinema too has caused an obsession in use, sometimes to a greater extent. For urbanites, viewing films now and then has turned out to be a part of a daily routine. Watching films has become a habit just as the habit of reading news papers every day. It has spread to every village in Western Countries. Its popularity in Russia is unmatched in other parts of the world. Just as food gives nourishment to the body, cinema is the food for the minds of many people. It has gained prominence on par with literary works such as poetry and novels. It is not valid to condemn literature as a whole just because there are improper aspects in some literary works. Similarly, cinema can not be condemned going by a few bad and obscene films that we happen to see now. Can one denounce music and dance because they are used for lewd purposes by prostitutes! The arts are very essential to the lives of human beings. A great culture can not exist without great arts.

When one says so, one may get the following response: these statements apply to fine arts like music and dance and not to a mental addiction like cinema. On the other hand, one can not even say that interest being shown by many towards cinema is like alcoholic being addicted to drink. If cinema is dismissed for this reason alone, then all the fine arts have the same attracting power would have to be brushed aside. It would be improper on our part to castigate it only because it is too new. The first art that showed itself up among the primitive is dance; it too be seem new then. Later, singing came into being then, singing, too, appeared to be new. Much later, sculpture and painting came into existence. Then, they too appeared to be new. As human civilization progressed further, architecture came into being. For those times, architecture, too, was new. But in these times they are ancient. Hence, it is our duty to examine whether cinema has the features of an art instead of deciding it because it is new to us now.

At the outset let us discuss what is meant by art. Art is nothing but the means of producing in others the same emotion that one experience through a medium. When a child is hurt it cries; others too feel sad

on seeing it. Is this art? No, because expressing one's sorrow through crying is the nature of person that has come from birth. But art is not the nature or the quality that comes by birth in our lives. Though actions like crying while in sorrow, laughing when happy, being furious when angry can literally down other is sorrow, joy and anger, they can not be regarded as arts. There can be had qualities in art too. But they are not our natural qualities. They are not the realistic imitations of any natural qualities. To imitate the crying of the other person is not an art. In some aspects, immediately through art may appear to be imitation it is abstract in some aspects. Abstract elements are the products of the realm of imagination; they are things that cannot be seen in concrete terms. The creation that takes place by blending these two aspects is art. Whenever we want to create something, we definitely need concrete things before us. Similarly, actions that are visible to the eyes are also required. If we use just these, it can not be called a creation, an art. "A thing may be perfect imitation in terms of its outer shape size; yet it can provide the emotional joy that the things responsible for its creation can be give. The image of a person does not occupy the position of a person" (Paul Rotha) Let us now ponder over s small musical competition. It is composed by using seven notes. These seven notes are similar to the sound heard in nature. Notes alone are the contents of the song. But it is not the group of sounds that it is heard in nature now and then. Every bit of the song which comprises note could be the bunch of notes heard in nature. For example, a segment of the some may sound like the call of a cuckoo. Other bits may seem like the sound produced by different animals. These bits can make the creation of the song acquire a quality that inspires an abstract emotion. Now, let us take the example of a picture. The colours present in the picture are those found in nature. The parts of the human beings, animals, rivers etc. depicted in the picture might be quite close the real ones. However, the feeling the picture generates in us is completely new; it could even be something abstract that is not found in nature. One can speak about the elements of dance in the same vein.

Thus, the purpose of art is the creation of abstract conceptions that inspire emotions by using either abstract or realistic embellishments. In such creations it is the medium of the respective arts that determines

proportion in which imitation and abstraction could be employed. Charles Marriot says 'The nature of art is determined by its medium. Art is nothing but the blend of the exact imitation of nature and its abstracts form. The amount of abstraction and imitation that should be used depends on the medium we use'. Now let us take the example of dance. The imitation of nature is very less in dance. The gestures and various movements of the limits exhibited while dancing are not found in nature. There is more of the abstract in it. There is more of imitation in sculpture and painting.

When we ponder if the same is true of cinema, we do feel it is so. Though most of the pictures we get to see are imitations, a good film has the capability to create new work that displays more of the abstract. Instead of just being realistic it could be creative and hence truthful. "One could say no other art has the powerful dynamic energy and the ability to inspire emotion". (Paul Rotha). As Charlie Chaplin says "Films have the ability to provoke our imagination and our senses to rhythm and colour. Therefore, the film industry has gained such a grand and an attractive status. We have been rearing this monster that has amazing power. But, do we understand what we need to dos with it?"

(Continued ....)

### The 5th International Film Festival on Water

Voices from the Waters 2010. The 5th International Film Festival on Water.' the biggest, most dynamic and diverse platform of its kind invites you to be a part of the festival by contributing short, documentary, animation and feature films on water and related issues.

There is no entry fee. Submitted films will not be returned but will be part of Voices from the Waters library, one of the largest resources in the world for films on water.

Voices from the Waters is conceived as a travelling film festival. The Selected film after being premiered in Bangalore at the main event will be taken across to educational institutions, non governmental organizations, small towns and villages across India.

Last date for submissions. June 15th 2010  
For details contact

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