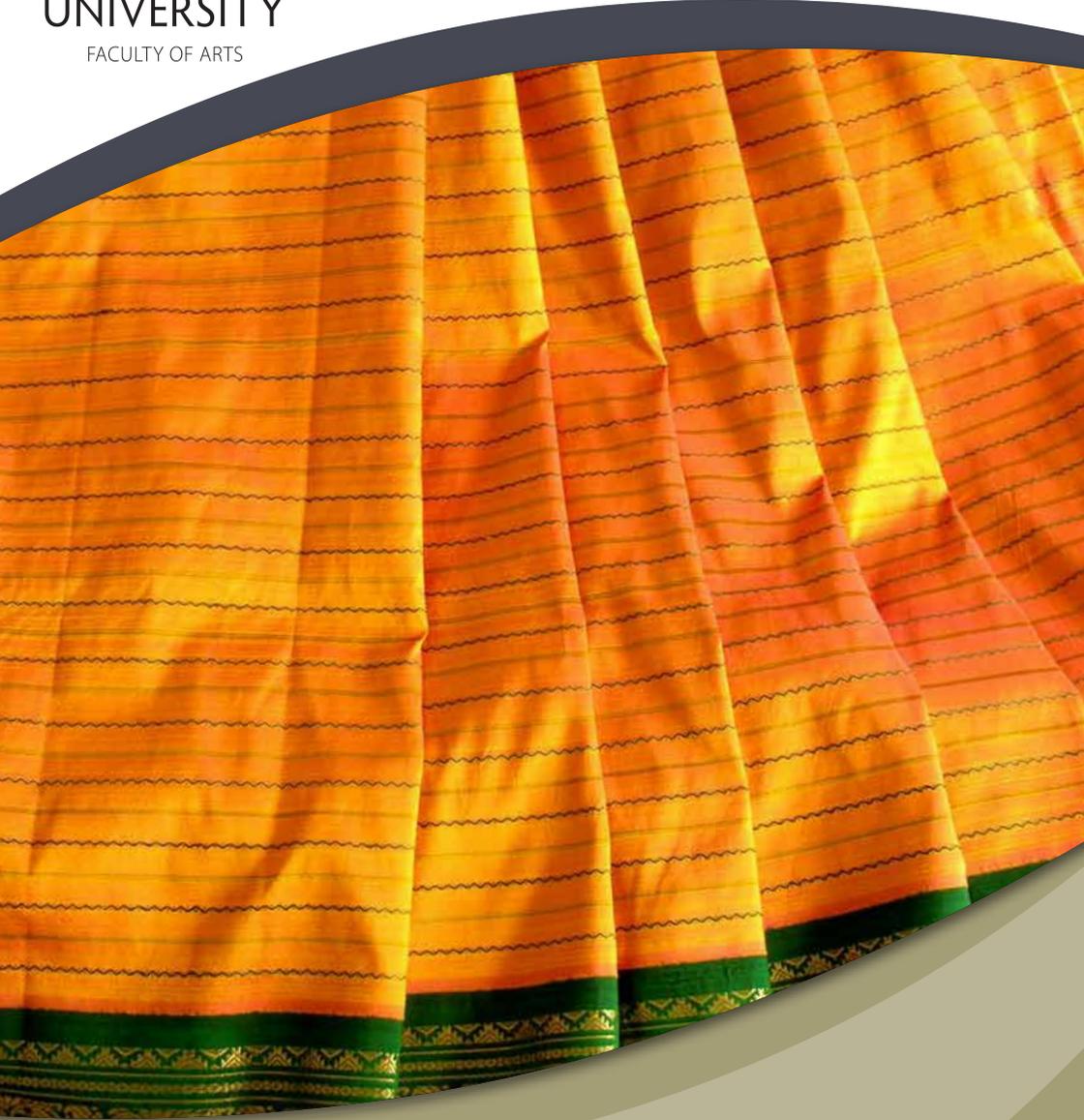




**MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF ARTS

India Research Centre Launch Week



November 16 - 17 & 19 -20, 2010

Building Y3A, Macquarie University

The India Research Centre is designed to act as a focus, a catalyst and a showcase for the exciting styles of research on India already taking place within the Faculty of Arts at Macquarie University.

These styles include scholarly as well as other kinds of research practices based in music, media and performance. Centre members are currently drawn from a wide range of disciplines, including Anthropology, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Music, Media, Law and Asian Languages.

We aim to create a research community of work on India in this university, and so to strengthen the broader research community of South Asia scholars in the rest of Australia, as well as to develop further research links with India and other countries.

These connections will take the form of institutional linkages, research collaborations, hosting high quality research and performance events, as well as promoting the intake of high quality higher degree research students specific to our research strengths.

We envisage 3 key elements of Centre activities: (1) cultural, political and social science research on India and Indian immigrant diasporas; (2) engagement with Indian performance culture both in written and practice based forms, opening up new forms of collaboration; and (3) collaboration with the Indian community, on issues of community concern, as well as through the arts.

The events of the Launch showcase each of these areas of our vision for the Centre. We also celebrate the endowment of a new Tagore Chair in Art and Culture by the Government of India. It is envisaged as a Visiting Chair, bringing in to Macquarie University eminent cultural practitioners in the field of the arts as well as those engaged in research in the field of cultural practice.

Please visit our website www.irc.mq.edu.au for details on current research by staff and students of the Centre as well as our publications.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Tuesday 16 November

Macquarie University Y3A 246

10:00 - 12:30 **Doctoral Graduate Scholars Presentations**

12:30 - 1:20 *Lunch*

1:30 - 2:30 **Special Guest Seminar.** Professor Partha Mukherji
(Ford Professor: S.K Dube Chair, Institute of Social
Sciences, Dehli, 2003 - 9)
*Multi-national state or multi-ethnic nation-state? Mono-to
Pluri-cultural Nation-State: the case of post-colonial India*
(Jointly hosted by IRC/Sociology)

2:30 – 3:00 *Afternoon Tea*

3:00 - 5:00 Community Forum: Dialogue on Issues Facing Indian
Students in Australia. Key participating groups will include
community workers, NSW government representatives,
students, activists (*For Invited Participants*)

Wednesday 17 November

Macquarie University Y3A 212

Current Research by Arts Faculty IRC Members:

10:00 – 11:30 Session I: Music, Poetry and Translation

11:30 – 12:00 *Morning Tea*

12:00 – 1:00 Session II: Australia/India Relations

1:00 – 2:00 *Lunch*

2:00 - 3:30 Session III: Modern discourses of politics and justice:
Re-examining Secularism, Nationalism and Left-Liberal
Projects.

3:30 – 3:45 *Afternoon Tea*

3:45 – 4:15 Performance: Literary Readings & Music (in the foyer)

4:30 – 6:00 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Associate Professor Ranjani Mazumdar
(Cinema Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi).
*Terrorism, Surveillance and Conspiracy in Bombay's recent
Urban Cinema*

6:15 - 7:15 **LAUNCH OF CENTRE**

Reception and Drinks, Formal Launch.
(Y3A Café and balcony)

7:30 – 9:00 Musical Performances by IRC members

Special exhibition in Y3A foyer



This exhibition is the story of how newspapers acted as a public voice for mass protest by ordinary people during the 1920s and 1930s freedom movement in India. The gallery of 50 images presents two little known aspects of India's movement for independence - one in Allahabad, United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) in British India, one in the French territory of Pondicherry (Tamil Nadu). The research was carried out recently by a team led by Macquarie Visiting Professor Jane Chapman, partly based on an original idea by Executive Dean Professor John Simons and funded by UK research council ESRC (also supported by Lincoln University, UK), Wolfson College & the Centre for South Asian Studies.

Friday 19 November

University of Technology, Sydney Bldg 2, Room 4.11

Indian Cinemas/Oceanic Assemblages Conference

(co-hosted by the Indian Ocean & South Asia Research Network, UTS)

9:00-9:30 Welcome

9:30 – 10:45 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Dr. Rajinder Dudrah, University of Manchester, UK.
*Unthinking Global Bollywood: from Film Studies to
Rasa Theory to New Media Assemblages*

10:45 - 11:00 Morning Tea

11:00 – 1:00 Session I: Itineraries, Power, and Becoming

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch

2:00 - 4:00 Session II: Migrations & Pedagogies

4:00 – 4:30 Afternoon Tea

4:30 - 5:30 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Associate Professor Ranjani Mazumdar, JNU, Delhi
Global Tourism in 1960s Bombay Cinema

Saturday 20 November

University of Technology, Sydney Bldg 2, Room 4.11

Indian Cinemas/Oceanic Assemblages Conference

9:30 – 10:45 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

Prof. Vijay Mishra, Murdoch University, Australia
Bollywood Songs Across Troubled Waters

10:45 – 11:00 *Morning Tea*

11:00 – 1:00 Session III: Itineraries of Race & Place

1:00-2:00 *Lunch*

2:00 – 4:15 Film Screening: *Sthaniya Sambaad*, 1 hr, 45 min,
Bengali (2009) [English Title: *Spring in the Colony*],
Directors: Arjun Gourisaria & Moinak Biswas
Q&A session with Moinak Biswas

4:15-4:30 *Afternoon Tea*

4:30 – 5:00 Closing Remarks: Rajinder Dudrah



COMPLETE PROGRAM OF MACQUARIE EVENTS

Tuesday 16 November

Macquarie University Y3A 246

10:00 - 12:30

Doctoral Scholars Presentations

Chair: Dr Selvaraj Velayutham

10.00 -10.30

Monica Dalidowicz (PhD candidate, Department of Anthropology)

Place-making, mobility, and the case of a trans-national Kathak guru

'Kathak, a classical dance of North India, is today constituted in large part through the ongoing flow of teachers, students, performers, video images, music and textual resources, as they travel between India and its many diasporic communities. For some artists and lineages of kathak, the dance is lived and defined amidst such trans-cultural flows. In this paper, I trace the movements of one kathak guru, PanditChitresh Das, and his students as they move between Kolkata, India and the San Francisco Bay area, America. There is remarkable continuity in practice and consistency in student's

experience as both guru and student move between multiple sites. The charismatic effect of the guru exerts a very strong force on the experience of place, and becomes crucial to the process of 'place-making'. While such cases of trans-national gurus and their travelling students tempt a theorizing of the trans-cultural that sees a disjuncture between locality and culture, the importance of place and local quotidian worlds in this dialogue remains. The institution of the guru carries a powerful constituting force, constructed in the lived relationship between guru and disciple. By taking a nuanced look at the relationship between master and disciple as it is played out in multiple geographic settings, I will discuss this process of 'place-making', and what 'being-in-place' means to a group of dancers who are often in-between places.'

10.30 -11.00

M.Stockey-Bridge (PhD candidate, Department of Anthropology)

Pilgrimage to the womb. Being the womb and being the womb-less; how Indian women experience being a commercial surrogate and Australian couples journey to use/employ them

'My research project aims to explore the ideas of objectification, exploitation and commodification that have led many Western countries to ban commercial surrogacy. Are these laws just and reasonable or do they simply export the ethical dilemmas to enable laissez-fair commercial surrogacy in the global south? This project aims to explore the current situation through a closer understanding of Australian couples who use commercial surrogacy in India. The study will not confine itself to the Australian couples, but examine the total situation, which will involve the surrogate mother in India, her experience, and the perception of her experience by the Australian couple. This project will also aim to gain insight into how commercial surrogacy as a form of medical tourism adds to our understanding of the globalization of maternity. This paper will explore the logics of the legal status of surrogacy, with particular emphasis on commercial surrogacy in India and it's place within the economy and state. I will conclude this paper with a few research questions related to this framework with which I will be approaching fieldwork.'

11.00 -11.30

Victoria Loblay (PhD candidate, Department of Anthropology)

"It is Our Duty": Moral Values and the Negotiation of Bioethics in Chennai, South India

Attitudes toward new reproductive technologies in India are marked by a pervasive lack of trust in the medical profession. There is a widespread sense that the use of such

technologies is guided by the compulsion for doctors to make money, rather than a traditional ethic of service to the people. In this paper, I examine the way in which morality and bioethics play out in relation to the use of reproductive technologies in a genetic counselling clinic in Chennai. This particular clinic represents a peculiar cross-section of medical practice in India: while the majority of patients pay exorbitant fees to avail of the services, a certain number of patients are sent for free consultations from public hospitals. Moreover, the clinic is situated as part of an international network of scientific practices, resulting in a scenario where the practice of genetic counselling must be flexible enough to cater to a range of expectations regarding moral values and medical ethics. What emerges is an ethnographic snapshot of the creative negotiation of the foundations of bioethics in a multilingual world.'

11.30-12.00

Laavanya Kathiravelu (PhD candidate, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion)

Narratives of male low-wage Indian migrants in the Gulf

'Most labour migration out of India is highly gendered. The GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) is one of the most significant recipient regions of this migration, with the majority of migrants not just male, but working class. Most are employed as unskilled or semi-skilled labour in the construction industry and undertake circular forms of migration, leaving their family behind. Narratives of male migrants have been explored in the literature (Ali 2007; Dannecker 2005; Datta et al 2009; Herbert 2008; McKay 2007), but they have been primarily of returnees (Gardner 2003; Osella and Osella 2006; Osella and Gardner 2004; Osella and Osella 2000) and have not fully considered influences of the receiving state on constructions of self. Based on fieldwork consisting of in-depth interviews, focus groups and non-participant observation in Dubai in 2008, this paper interrogates how various narratives of the self in the context of migration act to sustain ideas of masculinity and manhood that are central to constructions of the Indian working class male. In doing so, it posits that the act of migration sustains narratives which perpetuate patriarchal power in sending communities, while allowing simultaneously presentation of selves that compensate for the emasculating discourses of state and employers.'

12.00-12.30

Sudheesh Bhasi (PhD candidate, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion)

Ritual Bonds: Religious Social Capital in Sydney's Hindu Diaspora

'My current, ongoing doctoral research examines the ways in which the Hindu religion generates levels of social capital among ethnic Indian migrants in Sydney, how it structures their diasporic identity and how it affects their sense of well-being. Through an ethnographic analysis of the use of rituals and food in the religious setting of the Hindu diaspora, I will show how social bonds are formed and further entrenched through norms of trust produced by ritual performance. In doing so, I am theorising the formation of social capital in religious avenues through an emphasis on its cultural and social aspects rooted in well-being. From the emerging data, this paper will argue that 'religious social capital' has to be considered as a category that is qualitatively distinct from secular 'social capital' both in terms of character and intensity.'

12:30 - 1:30 *Lunch*
(we invite you to lunch in the cafe)

1:30 - 2:30

Special Guest Seminar with Professor Partha Mukherji

*Jointly hosted by the Department of Sociology and India Research Centre
Chair: Dr. Kalpana Ram*

Multi-national state or multi-ethnic nation-state?

Mono-cultural to Pluri-cultural Nation-State: The case of post-colonial India

India by virtue of its unparalleled cultural diversity and complexity is a unique laboratory for social science research providing a testing ground for paradigms and propositions. In this paper I contest the classic Eurocentric concept of the nation-state. Its generalisability not only falls short of non-Western reality, but also of the evolving Western reality in the rapidly transnationalising, globalising world. I propose a more universalistic theoretical orientation that circumscribes both the Western and non-Western realities of the nation-state and its challenges.

The India Research Centre is fortunate to have at its launch, Professor Partha Nath Mukherji who is a Visiting Fellow at the Department of Sociology. He has held a series of prestigious and influential scholarly positions in India's leading social science institutions., the most recent being the S.K Dey Chair and Ford Professorship at the Institute of Social Sciences in New Delhi (2003-2009). The positions he has held prior to that include the Directorship and Vice Chancellor position at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (1984-1006). Professor of Sociology at the Indian Statistical Institute both in Delhi and Calcutta (1983-1996), Associate Professor of Sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University (1972-1979) and Reader in Sociology at Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi (1970-1972).

His books include *The State of Sociology: Issues of relevance and rigour* (with N. Jayaram and Ravinder Kaur), *Sociological Bulletin* 2005; *Indigeneity and Universality in Social Science: A South Asia Perspective* (with C. Sengupta, Sage Publications, 2004); *People's Rights: Social Movements and the State in the Third World* (edited with

Mohanty and Tornquist, Sage Publications, 1998); From Left Extremism to Electoral Politics (Manohar Publishers, Delhi, 1983). He has published extensively on multi-culturalism and the nation-state. His other main areas of research include social movements (Gandhian, Maoists, Farmers Movements), democratic decentralisation and local self-government (Panchayati Raj in India), and issues of methodology that address questions of indigeneity and universality in the social sciences.

2:30 – 3:00 *Afternoon Tea*

3:00 - 5:00

Community Forum: Dialogue on Issues Facing Indian Students in Australia

Chair: Dr. Maya Ranganathan

Key participating groups will include community workers, NSW government representatives, students, activists (For Invited Participants)



Wednesday 17 November

Building Y3A Room 212

10:00 – 11:30

Session I: Music, Poetry and Translation

Chair: Dr. Dalbir Singh

Andrew Alter, Music, Dept. of MMCCS

'Drum Repertoire in the Pandavalila Ritual: Caste Dynamics and Sound in Mahabharata Performance'

'Pandavalila is a performance tradition that is unique to the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. Performances are dramatic in that scenes from the Mahabharata are re-enacted by actors. High caste men portray kingly characters and thereby reaffirm village-level social hierarchies by demonstrating kingly attributes. At the same time, performances are religious acts through which local communities create auspiciousness and thereby protect their communities from malevolent forces. Significantly, however, action and ritual in Pandavalila is 'danced' because actors portray their characters through choreography. In addition, parts of the ritual incorporate group dancing as a result of which actors become possessed by the spirits of their characters. Accompanying the whole performance are low-caste drummers who use a specific repertoire to guide the ritual aspects of the performance. Through this performance they reinforce their claim to being lay officiates who provide alternative access to the sacred.'

Ian Bedford, Dept. of Anthropology
'Translating Indian Muslim Verse'

'As an anthropologist, I am privileged to work in both India and Pakistan. My acquaintance with Muslim Sufi shrines on the subcontinent has been mainly in Pakistan, up and down both banks of the Indus. But as a translator, my acquaintance with the shrines has been with verse produced in Urdu in Delhi during the 18th century CE. In particular, I have been working with the verse of one family of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, that of Khwaja Mir Dard and his brother Mir Asar, sections of whose one long poem I have translated and published in English for (I believe) the first time. The poets of this family are famous both for their devotion and for their attachment to music (unusual among the Naqshbandi).

What is specifically 'Indian' about this verse? What do the two kinds of translation – 'cultural' and 'literary' – have in common? Does one kind of practice illuminate the other? Why is this verse – so far in its subject-matter from present-day experience in the West – at once so captivating, and so odd?'

Adrian McNeil, Music, Dept. of MMCCS
'Hindustani musicians in Kolkata negotiate Globalisation: strategies, innovations and outcomes'

'Over the last decade or so, Hindustani musicians in Kolkata have been increasingly travelling outside of India to perform. This has been facilitated primarily through two ongoing processes: one being the increasing internationalisation of networks and structures of patronage for Hindustani music and the other being the establishment of world music networks promoting intercultural hybridity. Both of these phenomena can be seen as part of a larger sea of cultural consequences arising from economic globalisation. Drawing upon a close association over a number of years, this paper explores the innovative range of responses of these musicians to, and engagements with, new networks and expanding international spaces. It demonstrates that when it comes to these highly skilled musicians, the processes and outcomes of globalisation are far from straightforward.'

11:30 – 12:00 Morning Tea

12:00 – 1:00
Session II: Australia/India Relations
Chair: Dr. Andrew Alter

Selvaraj Velayutham, Dept. of Sociology
'Experience of Indians in Australia on 457 Temporary Work Visas'

'The study of temporary skilled migration in Australia is relatively new. As a rapidly emerging source of labour and immigrants for Australia's immigration program, temporary skilled migration will have a major and potentially long-lasting impact on Australia. Since the 1990s temporary skilled migration (under the 457 visa category) has overtaken permanent migration to Australia. After Britain and New Zealand, India is now the third largest and fastest growing source of temporary skilled migrants. This is a major new development in Australian migration history, yet to date there has been little or no qualitative research into the subjective experiences, motivations, and settlement patterns of Indian temporary skilled migrants in Australia, from the perspective of the migrant. This paper presents findings from a three-year qualitative study on the experiences of temporary skilled migrants from India living and working in Australia. It argues that many of the quantitative studies on this topic fail to offer a nuanced reading of their experiences in Australia, in particular, their situations of vulnerability engendered by the recruitment process, visa conditions, unlawful employment practices and living arrangements.'

Dalbir Singh, Asian Studies, Dept. of International Studies
'Australia-India Relations: Some Strategic Perspectives'

'A major objective of this paper is to focus on Australia-India relations over a period of the last six decades. Though both countries shared British heritage, during the cold war, both opted for different policy perceptions at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. With the end of the Cold War, Canberra and New Delhi reoriented their perspectives to fit an evolving global order encompassing their ally – the USA – and an emerging robust regional power – China. Within this broad framework, both have initiated policies of Look-East and Look-West to re-identify each other and construct economic and strategic bridges. However, the relationship has remained merely superficial. Against this backdrop, both countries should assure and commit only what they can honour. Simply signing Memoranda of Understanding, as has been the trend in the past, may not suffice in progressing the Indo-Australian relationship.'

1:00 -2:00

Lunch

(we invite you to lunch in the cafe)

2:00 - 3:30

Session III: Modern discourses of Politics and Justice: Re-Examining Secularism, Nationalism and Left-Liberal Projects

Chair: Dr. Andrew Alter

Goldie Osuri, Cultural Studies, Dept. of MMCCS

'Conversion and Nationalism'

'The project of Conversion and Nationalism is concerned with addressing the question of conversion and its relationship to religious freedom by examining how this relationship is expressed in the discourses of law (Freedom of Religion Acts), anti-conversion campaigns, popular cultural texts, in the language of those who convert, and in secularist and human rights statements. Some key questions that the project addresses are: Are the discourses of religious freedom as they have been currently formulated internationally adequate to the task of protecting it in the Indian context? Is there a different way of thinking about religious freedom which will enable a more just approach to religious difference?'

Maya Ranganathan, Media, Dept. of MMCCS
'The Pan-Tamil Rhetoric in Regional Media'

'This paper traces the agenda of the regional media, represented by some of the popular Tamil magazines, to push Tamil identity to the fore in its coverage of the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka. This is significant considering that the Indian government does not support secession which has been the demand of the Tamils in neighbouring Sri Lanka and that supporting the LTTE in India is against the law.'

Kalpana Ram, Dept. of Anthropology
'Subaltern Codes of Justice: Re-examining the Hidden Transcripts of Gender and Caste Justice in So-called "Folk Religion". Tamil Nadu, South India'

'The original thesis put forward by Ranajit Guha in *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency* was that there existed, among the peasantry, operative codes of justice which lay radically outside the purview of colonial modern systems of the state, but could be discerned in apparently random acts of violence. Scholarly debates today tend to view modernity as thoroughly pervading every aspect of life in India, even if only as a site of 'hybridity'. Taking up aspects of my book *Fertile Disorder: spirit possession and modern projects of subjectivity in the lives of Tamil rural women* (University of Hawaii Press, forthcoming), this paper will examine the 'courts' presided over by goddesses and saints, who speak through the bodies of Dalit women. A left-liberal reading of such sites tends to find only a further corroboration of what we already know of the injustices of caste and class. But a closer attention to the meanings underlying the 'complaints' brought to the courts shows that these are not, for the most part, the kinds of injustices that non-elites could or should be able to be taken to a modern court of law. Instead, the complaints refer us to a domain that is central to the many women who come to these courts - the sphere of tragedy and injustice in family ties, kinship and love - meanings which have not been adequately assimilated into modern codes of justice.'

3:30 – 3:45 *Afternoon Tea*

3:45 – 4:15

Session IV

Performance: Literary Readings & Music (Foyer)

Chair: Dr. Andrew Alter

Readings and Music –

Ian Bedford reads from his novels, Adrian McNeil on Sarod

4:30 – 6:00

Keynote Address

Chair: Dr. Kalpana Ram

Associate Professor Ranjani Mazumdar

(Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi)

'Terrorism, Surveillance and Conspiracy in Bombay's recent Urban Cinema'

This paper looks at the terrorist films set in Bombay to explore the relationship between conspiracy, surveillance and the city. These are films made in the 21st century and refer to various terrorist attacks of the last 20 years.

Conspiracy works as the organising principle through which urban paranoia, civil disturbance and the political intrigue, find a voice. Conspiracy also produces the movement between the police, the interrogation room, the terrorist hideout, the site of death, government offices, the news room, public spaces and courtrooms.

The films open out the vents through re-enactments and precision style unravelling to generate 'fantasies of knowing'. Thus a 'mobile script' is carved out to negotiate the relationship between paranoia and citizenship. If the social practice of paranoia is rooted in the belief that the truth is not fully available, then in these films, conspiracy is the form through which the audience is provided a sense of comfort and control over contemporary events, the city of Bombay and history.

Ranjani Mazumdar is Associate Professor of Cinema Studies at the School of Art and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her publications focus on urban cultures, popular cinema, gender and the cinematic city.

She is the author of *Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City* (University of Minnesota Press 2007). She is also a documentary filmmaker, and founding member of Mediasorm, India's first women's first film collective, which received the Chameli Devi Jain award for outstanding media professionals among women.

Her documentaries include *Delhi Diary 2001*, on violence, memory and the city, and *Prisoner of Gender*, which won second prize at an International Television documentary festival.

Mazumdar has been a visiting fellow at Princeton University, a British Academy Fellow at University of Westminster, and visiting faculty at the Department of Cinema Studies, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, at the Mass Communication Research Centre at Jamia Millia University, and at Film and Television Institute, Pune. Her current research focuses on film in the 1960s, globalisation and film culture, and the visual culture of film posters.

Mazumdar will also be giving an address at our Cinema Forum co-hosted with UTS.



Wednesday 17 November

6:15 - 7:15

LAUNCH OF CENTRE

(Y3A Café and balcony)

Drinks, food, Formal launch

This will include the announcement of a new Chair, the Tagore Chair in Art and Culture, endowed by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Government of India.

7:30 – 9:00

Musical Performances by IRC members

(Y3A Room 187 – Drama Studio)

7:30 – 8:00

Adrian McNeil/ Bobby Singh

(Hindustani instrumental music - sarod / tabla)

8:00 - 8.30

Sandy Evans, Sarangam Sriranganthan, Bobby Singh

(Indian-Jazz fusion music)

- A detailed program of the cinema forum is available on our India Research Centre web site -

NOTES:



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