

IFFI 2011

## Goa Film Festival

Abhijit Ghosh-Dastidar

DIFFERENT CINESCAPES transverged at the 42nd International Film Festival of India at Goa(Nov/Dec 2011). Besides World Cinema, the festival mounted retrospectives of Luc Besson (France) and Phillip Noyce (Australia); and tributes to Russian Classics. Indian Panorama focused on major works by Indian film makers of the earlier one year.

### PINA

Wim Wenders' "PINA" (Germany, 3D colour, 106 mins) converts ballet to cinema in analyzing modern ensemble dance of the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausuh. Pina died of cancer in June 2009, two days before shooting was to begin. But she had spent several years discussing the film with Wenders. Beginning with Stravinsky's "The Rites of Spring", Wenders' documentary dance film highlights archival/glimpses of Bausch rehearsing and recollections of her dances brightened, by engrossing visuals in excerpts of Bausch's exclusive dance language. An overhead shot of a cityscape shifts inside an auditorium, with Pina on stage and empty seats. With a xylophone on neck, Pina recounts the passage of seasons. It is "Winter", and men are in suits and women in robes. The dancers enter the stage, along with hard sounds of drums. Rehearsals have specific, brisk body movements. Pina continues speaking tending a garden. She describes her role in "Cafe Muller", a dance with themes of unconsciousness and desire. A female dancer is adorned with a red robe. Pieces of red cloth, are picked up from stage, and brought to the viewer, by each dancer. A dancer recalls that meeting Pina was finding a language. The archiving and recollections cease, as Wenders shifts the dances from the theatre building to the outside world of Wuppertal town with suspension railway and pavilions, and the Bergisches Land countryside. A couple are walking, and a girl keeps falling. A black/white film projection interpolates "Cafe Muller" with Pina. The finest details matter to Pina. Chairs, tables and the room set are arranged, with furniture being integral to dance. To the accompaniment of arias, a girl in white dances and walks, while a man in black suit keeps shuffling. In the outside domain, a man in suit dances, while a dog keeps barking. A girl is lifted in the arms of her lover. Pina gazes with penetrating eyes. Dancers recall associations with Pina. There is a repetitive action of a girl falling in the arms of a man. The images of Pina's fragility are for eternity. Pina's eyes turn everything beautiful.

An accompanying jazz song stirs men and women to dance, while men beat bogey beats on chairs. The dance gestures emphasize honesty and responsibility. Light and shadow are superimposed, as a man walks through woods. Long branches without leaves strike out. Gestures in "Full Moon" relate to joy. The dancers are shy of Pina. Thom Hanreichs film score varies from the sublime to heavy beats. The dancing disciples plead of Pina to visit in dreams. A

girl dances in rain, by a sea shore with huge rocks. The eyes see dreams and body power, as hands assist limb movements. Wenders follows Bausch's principle of "anti-illusion" by fracturing narrative and space. Helene Louvert and Jorg Windmer's camera swings from captured stage performances to the outdoor world, as perspectives keep changing. Illusion is ruptured by sharp close-ups and intruding 3D frames, which fracture the limbs of the dancers. Wenders' "Pina" juggles moving dance from stage to metaphorical landscapes.

### CAVE OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS

Werner Herzog's "Cave of Forgotten Dreams" (France/Germany, 3D colour, 90 mins) commences with a garden path, a ploughed track and shrubs of trees and plants, along the Ides river in southern France. A few days before Christmas in 1994, three explorers had cleaned rocks created shafts and descended into the Chauvet Cave, named after the man who had accidentally discovered the cave. The subterranean tunnels display the oldest cave paintings, dating back 32,000 years. Peter Zeithinger's photography pans the cave paintings of human faces, eyes, lines, cracks, horns and animals. Torches glimmer as the filming unwinds inside the dark cave. Only a small group of scientists and artists are permitted to enter. The cave with its rich iconography is like a piece of frozen flesh in the passage of time. The rocks inside the cave create a time capsule. A wooden walkway leads to entrance of the cave. A delicate climate prevails inside. The sanctioned film crew is restricted to four. Nobody is permitted to touch anything, during the one hour presence. Stalagmite columns abound. The first large chamber is the original/entrance to the cave. Years ago, a cliff had collapsed. The paintings still look fresh leading to doubts of authenticity. Big mammals and horses are painted. A plan of light and shadows emerges from the paleolithic paintings, which were executed under lit torches. There is a painted animal with eight spines and eight legs.

The walls are not flat, but have 3-D features, used by artists. There is an illusion of movement, as in an animated film. Laser scanners have marked and illuminated every millimetre of the 13000 feet cave, end to end. Archeologists stumble on representations, of what exists today. Herzog's voice over commentary follows the images inside the cave, reviving long forgotten dreams and the vision of the artist in the long abyss of time. Mythology and stories sprint from rocks, arches and pathways over river, 30,000 years ago, Europe was covered with glaciers. As depicted in the cave paintings rhinos, bisons, lions, bears, leopards, foxes and antelopes roamed in the dry climate. Water drops convey a porcelain sculpture appearance. From the menagerie of bones of animals, scientists have determined that humans never lived in caves. The caves were used for paintings and ceremonials. There are maximum details in the cave paintings. In the contours of underlined designs there are similarities with transparency of photos. Bare scratches are visible of which many scratches were done by fingers. Some drawings stretch over eight feet in height. The cave paintings appear to dance in firelight of yore, and in torchlight of present, also resemble Fred Astaire in silhouettes of "Swing Time".

Sketches denote rhinos attacking each other. Materials were mixed to create strong impressions. The supernatural world of the aboriginal spirits was the beginning of the modern

human soul. Ernest Reijseger's choral music, includes orchestral and electronic sounds. Herzog's film on prehistoric art, displays the rock art with vivid details. □□□