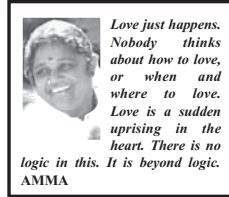


# Campus Beats



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**International Film Festival special issue**

## Sizzlers at Swaralaya



**Anaswara Bhanu & Priya A Nair**  
Reporters

The fifth Swaralaya International Film Festival 2008 was held at Hotel Fort Palace and Priyathama theatre in Palakkad from September 5 to 11. The film festival was organized by Swaralaya, a popular arts and cultural forum in Palakkad, in co-operation with the District Tourism Promotion Council.

This year's national award winning director Priyanandan inaugu-

rated the fest at Hotel Fort Palace on September 5th. In his inaugural speech he said, "The movies from different languages will help the audience understand the culture of the land, the people, the system and as a whole the country itself. It is unfortunate that some classic movies can be seen only in special occasions like film festivals like this".

N N Krishnadas, MP, quoted Priyanandan's one interview in which he has said that he would be pleased if he could see art films

being screened in theatres at least during noon shows. "The sad part is that this comes from a national award winning director", said Mr Krishnadas. According to him good movies need good audience and encouraging audience who can appreciate and enjoy good movies is the motive of Swaralaya fest. He is the President of Swaralaya and he presided over the function.

Jose Baby, the Deputy speaker was the chief guest for the inaugural function. K.R Mohanan

(Chairman, Kerala Film Society), Subaida Ishhakh (President, District Panchayath), P.Jayapala Menon, T.R Ajayan (Secretary, Swaralaya) were also present. National Film Award winners like Priyanandan, M.P Sukumaran Nair, Madhu Gopinath, Sajeew Vakkam were also honored on the occasion.

Sixteen Malayalam, seven Hindi and six Tamil films were screened at the festival including *Adayalangan* directed by M.G. Sasi, which has won the State

awards for the best feature film and best director of 2007 in Malayalam. The films screened included *Naalu Pennungal* directed by Adoor Gopalakrishnan, latest Mohanlal starrer *Akashagopuram* by K.P. Kumaran, *Gulmohar* by Jayaraj, *Jodha Akbar* by Ashutosh Gowariker, *Evano Oruvan* by Nishikanth Kamath, *The Edge of Heaven* by Fatih Akin etc. A competition for short films and documentaries were also conducted and films by students were also screened.

## Golden Lotus and the Midas

**Priyanandan** has emerged as one of the most promising directors in our country today, even though he has only two films to his credit. His films are not only hardhitting but also provide a backdrop of strong socio-political themes. He had proved his excellence with his film "Neythukaran", which earned him the best debutant director award of that year. "Pulijanam", his next film, created waves amongst the critics and was well received. He recently came back into focus when it won the national award for best film.

Now let's have a freewheeling chat with *Nishanth M V*, Priyanandan, talks about his arrival in the Malayalam film field from the theatre.

**Is there any change in the way people observe you ...like before getting the National award and after that?**

I don't think that I have changed... but the way people observe me might have changed...especially after getting the award, now I am being invited for lot of public functions...like that. But personally, I want them to treat me in the same way that they used to do before.

**What do you actually convey through your films..?**

We all belong to a society and so we do have some commitments to give back to the society and so I believe that I can do that through films. Also we are unaware about many truths. For eg. The myth behind the art form in Kannur i.e. Theyyam. People in Trivandram or any other place may not know much about



Priyanandan in a relaxed chat; (right) a still from 'Pulijanam'



this art form. So if we can do this through our films, it is indeed more valuable than getting any award...I really think so. So Art can be used to transcend various boundaries and through which you can create awareness among the people.

**You are also engaged in the field of dramatics...Which is more important to you-Drama or Films?**

Both are equally important to me. But I have dedicated my entire life for Drama... lets say to learn more about dramatics, famous people in this field like. Fyodor dostoevsky All these have helped me to understand the difference

between "literature" and "our life".

**What do you think about our film festivals?**

Actually conducting or organizing Film festivals really shows that we have a culture... The number of audience is actually not a problem, the significant thing is whether it is existing or not? So it is really successful. Even if there are only two or three individuals, they are coming here with the desire to know something, so this actually makes film festivals successful. Conducting film festivals is very important as it gives a chance to the local public to watch world class

films. This kind of experience would help them in trying to understand life better.

**Do you think that you have achieved everything in your life...or do you think that you can achieve it through your films?**

No...I don't think so. As I said earlier, we have responsibilities towards the society and if people do believe that I'm capable of doing it through my films, then I am successful. There are lot of issues that need to be looked into and I hope that through my films, I can make my own contribution to society in a small way.



## 'Aayirathil oruvan'

Anaswara Bhanu

*Evano Oruvan*, actor R. Madhavan's first production venture comes as a refreshing change to Tamil film industry. *Evano Oruvan* (Remake of a Marathi film called *Dombivili Fast*) is about a common man who ends up fighting the injustice around him in the ways he can. The hero here is not a superhuman. He is just like any ordinary man, who struggles to meet the demands of his family, who is not ready to compromise anything even for the sake of his family or the organization he works for. The USP of the movie is the portrayal of the middle class mentality of blaming others but lacking the guts to take on issues of corruption in politics, inefficient police, poor health services, misuse of powers and malfunctioning of Government system etc.

The film opens with showing the routine of a family that lives in the outskirts of Chennai. Their daily life is full of struggles for various things like water, space in a train, time to relax and even for money. Sridhar Vasudevan (Madhavan), a middle-class bank employee, at first protests against the unfairness happening in front of his eyes but later reacts to them in his own way. He is a straight forward guy and doesn't seem to fit in contemporary society. Sridhar's uncompromising attitude only adds to his woes and even his wife Vatsala (Sangeetha) cannot digest his virtues and principles. Constant nagging and taunts by his wife, colleagues and friends make him

**Film:** Evano Oruvan  
**Genre:** Social drama  
**Direction:** Nishikanth Kamath  
**Producers:** R. Madhavan, Abbas Mastan

burst out with anger and despair finally.

One incident instigates him to react and from then onwards he becomes the target of the police. Sridhar goes berserk and roams through Chennai, fighting drug peddlers, corrupt cops, politicians and doctors. But his actions cannot be accepted as he is not portrayed as a man with psychic problems. He is an educated man with a responsibility towards his family and place of work. A shoot at sight order is issued against him and he goes down fighting Vetrimarana (Seeman), the cop in cahrage of spotting Sridhar, personally feels the actions of Sridhar as natural and honest. But he is the one destined to end Sridhar's hysteria. The climax is superb and very touching.

The film sees strong acting displays by Madhavan, Sangeetha and Seeman. Madhavan comes out from the usual chocolate boy image and after *Kannathil Muthamittal*, he flaunts his acting prowess with vigour and integrity once again in this film. The film as a whole is not at all a waste of money. Tamil film industry needs films like this, to prove to the world that Tamil cinema is not only about dances, colourful costumes and superheroes.

## Down nostalgic lane...

Priya.A.Nair

Jayaraj is coming back to Mollywood again with a mainstream cinema, *Gulmohar*. It was ten years back that Jayaraj first attempted to make an actor out of a very successful director. Lal (of Siddique-Lal duo) was introduced as an actor by Jayaraj in his 'Kaliyattom', an adaptation of *Othello*. Today, Lal is a busy actor than a director. Jayaraj is all set to repeat the feat again, with 'Gulmohar', by using the acting capabilities of leading scriptwriter-director Renjith, offering him the lead character, Gulmohar.

It is a political movie based on a real incident, set in the background of late 70's. Induchoodan is a well respected teacher, but still he is committed to the happenings around him in the society. He can't live as if he is not the part of the society and keep his eyes closed to the injustice happening around him.

Induchoodan is leading a peaceful life with his wife and two children and the real story unfolds as a flashback. He was part of a revolutionary outfit during his college days. Induchoodan, a brilliant

student was the leader of six extremists who couldn't tolerate injustice. But his group of activists was targeted by the police, after they conducted a public trial of a corrupt doctor. They were became more active in the fight against the oppressors and criminals in society. One of their operations was aimed to eliminate the people who intruded into the lives of aadivasis and raped their ladies. Unfortunately, that operation failed and the police nabbed them. Induchoodan was sentenced to six years of imprisonment. The story ends when Induchoodan realizes that the oppressors of those times are still prevailing, he once again decides to be part of the ordinary people and sacrifices his life for them.

'Gulmohar' is the code name of the young college lecturer, Induchoodan. Jayaraj is dealing the serious issue in this film by emphasizing the fact that the political situations in the late eighties are still prevailing. *Gulmohar* is symbolic. Induchoodan always hopes that there will be a day when Gulmohar will bloom in the dreams of every one.

The female characters have not

been given much importance. Gayathri, the girl who exchanges the letters between the comrades fell in love with Induchoodan and that creates the romance aura for the story. But her role is limited to four or five scenes. Other female characters like Induchoodan's wife and sister also are not given much importance.

*Gulmohar* reminds the golden age of the Malayalam cinema and Renjith has done an excellent work in the film. The main casts of the film include Renjith, Sidhique, Nishanth Sagar, Meghanathan and Minu Mathew. Football player I.M Vijayan also returns to the silver screen by playing the role of an aadivasi youth in this movie.

The film is produced by Saji Karuveli under the banner of Orient Films. Other highlight of the film is the script by Didi Damodaran, daughter of famous Malayalam scriptwriter T. Damodaran, who is attempting her first independent script for a film. The film will also mark the comeback of music director Johnson, who has been away from the limelight following an accident that happened to him a couple of years ago.



**Film:** Ore Kadal  
**Genre:** Social drama  
**Direction:** Shyama Prasad  
**Cast:** Mammooty, Meera Jasmine, Ramya Krishnan, Naren  
**Music:** Ousepachan

## A compelling must-watch

Nishanth M.V

'Orekadal' by Shyamaprasad is one of the finest movies about the depths of relationships and human situations. The film examines the moral, ethical and emotional issues like marriage and family. The director has rendered Sunil Gangopathy's novel *Heerak Deepthi* to celluloid, overcoming the time and space boundaries of the source text. Even if all his movies were successful literal adaptations, "Orekadal" stands as his masterpiece because of the skill he has shown in handling a sensitive issue like extramarital relationship in Indian society.

This film rests mainly on four characters. Dr. Nathan (Mammooty), a social scientist and economist who does not believe in love, Deepthi (Meera Jasmine), a middle class home maker who falls in love with Nathan, Sunil (Naren), who comes across as Deepthi's husband, a complex character in its self, a first time in his career and Remykrishnan does a commendable job as a socialite who is the best friend of Nathan.

Ore kadal, portrayed through deep undercurrents in the

minds of Nathan and Deepthi, is derived from the mythological subtext of true love between Radha and Krishna. Nathan's relationship with Deepthi changes their layers of understanding of each other with psychological progression that occurs in the story.

The movie does not resort to any capsule kind of messages but rather demands the audience to experience it. The director leaves an open-ended climax to the viewer's perceptions of values and morals and gives no rational excuse as to why Deepthi comes back to Nathan finally.

The movie, which bagged several awards, is being noted for its technical qualities, too. Vinod Sukumaran, the award-winning editor of 'Akale' through his meaningful montage, gives the movie a poetic touch in presentation by using fade ins and fade outs that help portray the ups and downs similar to tides. Azhagappan's stylistic frame with golden colored lighting proves to be a visual treat. Ousepuchan's music has not only topped the charts, but also brought laurels home by winning the award for best music direction. A must watch.

