



Toxics Link
for a toxics-free world

Shillong Film Festival

Date – 26th March & 27th March

**Venue - STATE CENTRAL LIBRARY, SHILLONG for 26th March
NEHU SCIENCE CENTER, MAWLAI for the 27th March**

Programme Schedule

2 p.m. Opening Film

Ganashatru – Satyajit Ray – 100 minutes – India

Dr. Ashok Gupta, a scientifically – inclined physician in the small town of Chandipur in West Bengal discovers that water – borne diseases are suddenly on the increase. Investigations reveal that the water from the holy well of the Tripureswar temple is contaminated. Dr. Gupta suggests that the temple be closed down till the holy water is made safe enough for drinking. His younger brother Nishith, who is the Chairman of the Municipal Corporation, does not accept the suggestion, since his business partner Mr. Bargava who is a trustee of the temple, wants the affair hushed up for fear of scaring away the devotees who represent good business for the small temple town. A fierce confrontation ensues with Dr. Gupta being declared Public Enemy.

3.20 p.m.

Shorts on Survival

Life Goes on- Suprna Gangal – 6 minutes - India

A simple documentation of what goes on in broad daylight when it comes to disposing hazardous bio-medical waste. It depicts how indifferent Indian society is towards environmental issues. What comes through in this documentary is the shocking fact that even the citizens of an up-market urban locality in a progressive metro like Pune are totally oblivious to blatant negligence by a local hospital.

The narrative is centered on a rag-picker couple who have been picking trash from the local dustbin for years. They narrate how the hospital authorities dump bio-medical waste day in and day out. There is no municipal corporation or police authority to check this clear violation of environmental laws. The rag pickers endure this hazard simply because they have no other means of survival but to scavenge in the dirty dustbins. What is shocking is the matter-of-fact narrative of the rag picker woman about how she braves the danger of harming her own health and that of her husband's. While they do so the life goes on for those living in favourable conditions.

Electronic Waste Flooding the Earth – Toxics Link – 2 minutes – India

E-waste is the latest buzzword in the world of toxics. The increasing use of electronic products and their shorter utility time has brought in this new kind of waste of twenty first century. Toxics Link has been working actively on the issue trying to bring policy level changes to deal with this issue effectively. This animation film has been produced with the intention of making manufacturers and consumers the danger aware of the danger and how by adopting recycling and take – back methods this waste can be managed.



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Thekey pe kya karte ho – Spandan Banerjee – 5 min- India

Livelihood is the answer that Rajiv, Monu and Sagar would give to the question posed by the film “Thekey pe kya karte ho”. Their homes are in the nearby “Jagdamba camp” located right behind the Sheikh Sarai Market, New Delhi, the place where these children spend the formative years of their childhood opening beer bottles for the never-ending customers at the local wine and beer shop. Their primary interest being the empty bottles handed to them by the customers, which they sell to Imran Kabadi Shop, the recyclers, and earn their bit to supplement their family’s earnings and have their own share of fun. They have many stories to tell and secrets to guard, as their space of livelihood is also their only playground. The film tries to capture and document a possible snippet of a day in the life these three friends.

3.30 p.m.

Point Calimere – A Little Kingdom by the coast - Shekhar Dattatri- 25 min- India

Point Calimere is a unique sanctuary by the sea in Tamil Nadu, famous for its herds of blackbuck and flocks of flamingos. It is also known for its feral ponies, and an 18 square kilometre patch of dry evergreen forest full of medicinal plants. In 2002 the swamps around Point Calimere were declared a Ramsar Site, a designation given to wetlands of international significance. Over a hundred species of migratory water birds visit these swamps in winter, but over the years their populations have been declining. Point Calimere – Little Kingdom by the Coast offers a glimpse into this remarkable ecosystem and the problems that confront it. Calimere – Little Kingdom by the Coast

Day 2 – Morning Session

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Panel discussion

11 a.m.

A green agony – Geeta Singh – 22 minutes – India

In an idyllic corner of the Bay of Bengal, where rivers meet the ocean, lies a labyrinthine maze of a world that obeys no boundaries. A world that has long defied all descriptions and set its own rules; but one gradually vanishing under the burden of an industrialised world. Green Agony explores the unique ecosystem of the Sundarbans, and analyses the impact of global climate change on the inhabitants of the region; man, mangroves and wildlife. Having already witnessed the submergence of four of its islands due to accelerated sea-level rise, Sundarbans today fights the battle to stay afloat.

11. 22 a.m.

Traditional water harvesting methods – Rakesh Khatri – 23 minutes – India

The film makes a serious effort to understand the traditional, popular and successful water conservation methods. The film was shot in the semi desert area of Rajasthan, which registered an average annual rainfall of 60 to 100mm, but had century’s old traditional methods of water conservation. These are known by the name of Taanka and Kuin. In this film we will examine these water collection methods. How they were made and what are the socioeconomic and cultural aspects of these methods.



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11.45 a.m.

Lake of Despair – Snehasish Das – 30 minutes - India

Shikaras (House boats) have lost their glory and the owners of houseboats have been suffering for the last 15 years because of militancy in Kashmir. Tourist inflow trickled down because of the terrorist activity in Kashmir. Above all, the environmental degradation of lakes and rivers in Kashmir is alarming. Lakes are shrinking because of encroachments. Giving special focus to the community of the Hanjees, the film justifies few characters and how they sustained their livelihood during the troubled span of 15 years. Taking their example, the film tries to portray the present state of Kashmir.

12.15 p.m.

Only an axe away – P. Baburaj & C. Saratchandran – 40 minutes – India

A film on the struggle to save the unique ecosystem of Silent Valley. The film narrates the history of a unique campaign to save the valley from destructive development. Silent Valley was declared a National Park twenty years ago in 1984. The Kerala State Electricity Board plans to build a dam on the fringes of the Silent Valley National Park at Pathrakkadavu across the river Kunthi. Nature lovers are concerned that the proposed dam will harm the pristine evergreen forests in the valley. This film shares the anxieties of the people of Kerala about the future of the Silent Valley.

Afternoon session

2 p.m.

Water business is good business – Sanjay Barnela & Vasant Saberwal – 26 minutes – India

India's water bottling industry today stands on an annual worth of about Rs 1,800 crore (1 crore = 10 million). While this may be partially related to the emerging purchasing power of the middle class it is also an accurate reflection of the accelerating water crisis in urban India. This crisis does not, of course, affect everybody to the same extent. If Lutyen's Delhi receives 400 litres per person per day, the slums of Najafgarh receive less than 30 litres per person per day. This crisis is rooted not so much in the overall availability of water, as in the patterns of consumption and failure to regulate consumption through appropriate and equitable tariff structures. The problem is further compounded by a general urban mindset that seeks to source water from the rural countryside, rather than focusing on its conservation. The film travels from Delhi to Indore and from Bombay to Chennai, exploring the politics and economics of urban water supplies. In each instance we come across the same solution – the construction of mega projects to bring water from distant rivers to our various cities. But this is fire-fighting at best! For, even as we source water from distant locations, with all the attendant problems of displacing rural people from their homes and livelihoods, the growing needs of exploding, upwardly mobile urban populations will simply ensure a continually growing need for water and more water.



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2.36 p.m Closing film
Mountains in the mist – Alex Wohlgroth- 40 minutes- Switzerland

Have you never heard of cloud forests? Then you are definitely not alone! These intriguing ecosystems are very rare. Only 20% of the world's tropical forests are cloud forests - and yet, these mountainous brothers of lowland rain forests are important treasure houses of biodiversity and suppliers of large volumes of high quality streamflow. For hydrologists, these forests still harbour many secrets. But they have to hurry with their investigations because cloud forests are among the most threatened forest ecosystems of the world. Enjoy with this film the beautiful and mystical world of these forests high up in the clouds. See how scientists try to unravel the secrets of these amazing ecosystems and how the forest protection works in Costa Rica - and hope with us, that these forests in the mist can be saved for future generations. The Swiss Grammy Award winner and harp musician Andreas Vollenweider offered his music for a unique soundtrack.