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MYSTIC AURA

MAGAZINE

Hongkong
FILMART
wan chai

DELAYED
But Not Denied

BEAUTY
BEYOND RECOGNITION

WHERE JOY MEETS SILENCE

BIHU

Threads of Tradition
Classic roots, modern grace

2026

MYSTICAURA

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April month arrives to awaken where we feel the change of season – with a new financial year opening on the calendar. This edition is built on that seasonal shift, where every element converges to radiate positivity. Trends may fade, but combinations endure – like the colours of the season itself. Each pairing becomes a point of view, an expression of individual beauty. April is not just a month; it is a moodboard for the year we intend to lead, and the joy it brings is felt all around.

Beyond the trends, this issue brings you thoughtful features on compelling themes, followed by our Aura pages – curated moments of attraction and inspiration. We hope our readers find as much joy in these pages as we found in creating them.

Regards

GITALI PATHAK DEKA
Proprietor & Editor-in-chief

CONTENTS



06 ON THE COVER

07 WHERE JOY MEETS SILENCE - BIHU

By Manikangkana Devi

10 AURA PHOTOGRAPHY
Photography: DB Photography

11 ARE WE ENGINEERING BEAUTY BEYOND RECOGNITION?

By Brian La Cour

14 THE LANGUAGE OF COLOUR: FASHION

By Adriti

16 YOUR DELAY IS NOT YOUR DENIAL

By Vanessa Jacqueline D'cruz

FILM REVIEWS

18 ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER

By Dr. Dipsikha Bhagawati

21 A REVIEW: DHURANDHAR PART 2

By Lalit Rao

24 DINNER FOR LONERS: A QUIET CRY BEHIND A CROWDED TABLE

By Jishnu V Nair

FASHION

26 INDIAN STYLE GALA NITE -3

By Dipankar Kashyap

28 AURA FASHION

Collection of Dipankar Kashyap

30 FILMART: HONGKONG



A POET'S MIND

32 WAITING FOR THE DAWN

By Monali Bhuyan



On the COVER

Model
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Mua
Ahana 's makeover

Photography
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I am a technologist by training and a fashion enthusiast by instinct – two identities I refuse to separate. Personally, I view style as intellect made visible. I do not subscribe to the false binary between ambition and artistry; I inhabit both, fully and without apology. My ethos is simple, live boldly with purpose, elegance, and unwavering self-respect. I am committed to a future where fashion is not merely aesthetic but intelligent, inclusive, and visionary – where beauty and brilliance are not at odds, but in dialogue. My journey is anchored by my parents, especially my late father, whose belief in me, along with the love of my family and well-wishers, remains the foundation of who I am today.



Where Joy Meets Silence

A Different View of **RONGALI BIHU**

By **Manikangkana Devi**

Writer, Poet, Artist and Translator

Every year, as spring arrives in Assam, the air begins to change. There is a certain rhythm to it—the distant sound of the dhol, the laughter of people gathering, the rustle of new clothes being unfolded. Rongali Bihu is not just a festival; it is a feeling, a season of joy that seems to wrap itself around everyone. Or at least, that's what it looks like. Because somewhere, just beyond

the circle of dancers and the echo of songs, there are people who don't quite feel the same joy. And yet, they smile. They clap. They blend in. They pretend. Not because they are dishonest—but because festivals, especially ones like Bihu, come with an unspoken rule: 'you are supposed to be happy.'

No one announces this rule.

It exists quietly, woven into expectations. When the entire world around you is celebrating, not feeling the same way can feel like a personal failure. So people adjust their expressions. They rehearse their smiles. They participate just enough to avoid questions. Take the student living far from home, for example. In another city, maybe surrounded by unfamiliar streets and people who



don't quite understand what Bihu means, the day passes almost like any other. There is no dhol in the distance, no husori group arriving at the door, no smell of traditional food drifting through the house. Just a phone screen, filled with photos and videos of celebrations happening miles away. They double-tap the pictures. They type "Happy Bihu!" in group chats. They

might even post an old photo to feel included. And then they put their phone down, sit quietly, and try not to think about the home they are missing.

Back in Assam, even among the celebrations, not everyone is fully present. There are those who stand at the edges—the quiet observers. They watch others dance with effortless joy, their

movements free and expressive. They clap at the right moments, smile when someone looks their way, but never quite step into the circle themselves. It's not that they don't want to belong. It's just that belonging, for them, doesn't come through loud music and crowded spaces. Their version of Bihu is softer, more internal. It exists in fleeting moments—the rhythm of a song they recognize, the sight of a familiar tradition, the comfort of simply being there.

And then there are those carrying something heavier. Festivals have a way of amplifying emotions. When you are happy, they make you happier. But when you are not, the contrast becomes sharper. A person dealing with stress, loss, or quiet heartbreak does not suddenly transform just because the calendar says it is time to celebrate. Instead, they move through the day carefully. They laugh when expected. They join conversations. They wear the right clothes. From the outside, they look just like everyone else.

Inside, it is different. There is a strange kind of loneliness in being surrounded by joy you cannot fully feel. It creates a silent question that lingers in the mind: "Why does this feel different for me?" Modern celebrations have added another layer to this experience. Social media has turned festivals into performances. Perfect outfits, coordinated dances, smiling faces frozen in carefully captured moments—it all looks effortless. It all looks complete. But Behind



many of those posts lies quiet effort—multiple retakes, constant comparisons, and an unspoken pressure to present a version of happiness that feels as perfect as everyone else's. Because now, it is not enough to celebrate. You have to prove that you are celebrating well. And yet, amid all this, there is a quieter truth that often goes unnoticed.

Not enjoying Rongali Bihu loudly does not mean you do not value it. For some, the festival lives in memory rather than in the moment. It exists in childhood recollections—the first time they heard the dhol up close, the excitement of wearing new clothes, the simplicity of joy that did not need to be explained. As people grow older, life becomes

more complicated, and those feelings do not always return in the same way. But that does not make their connection to Bihu any less real.

In fact, sometimes, the quietest experiences are the deepest ones. A person sitting alone, listening to a distant Bihu song, may feel more than someone dancing in a crowd. Someone watching others celebrate might be holding onto emotions that are richer, more layered, and more personal than what is visible on the surface. Festivals are often defined by what we can see—dance, music, color, energy. But they are also shaped by what we cannot see—the thoughts, memories, and emotions that people carry within them.

Perhaps the beauty of Rongali Bihu lies not just in its ability to bring people together, but in its capacity to hold all these different experiences at once. The loud and the quiet. The joyful and the uncertain. The visible and the invisible. So the next time the dhol plays and the celebrations begin, it is worth remembering that not everyone is experiencing the festival in the same way. And that is okay. Because Bihu, like life itself, is not a single emotion shared equally by all. It is a collection of moments—some bright, some soft, some complicated. And sometimes, the people who don't celebrate it the loudest are the ones who feel it the deepest.

AURA PHOTOGRAPHY

Model
Sangeeta Das

Mua
Ahana's makeover

Photography
DB Photography



There was a time, not long ago, when beauty was something you caught in passing. In the reflection of a storefront window. In the quiet, unfiltered moment between laughter and stillness. It was imperfect, fleeting, and, above all, human.

Today, beauty is engineered.

Not enhanced. Not refined. Engineered.

Scroll through any social platform, and you'll encounter a familiar face, not a person, but a pattern. High cheekbones. Poreless skin. A sculpted jawline that seems mathematically precise. Lips, full but restrained. Eyes, wide and luminous. It is a face that transcends geography, ethnicity, and even age.

It is the face of the algorithm.

What began as playful augmentation, dog ears, soft lighting, and a touch of sparkle, has evolved into something far more consequential. Filters are no longer accessories; they are architects.

Artificial intelligence now studies thousands of facial structures, learning what holds attention and what converts to engagement. It subtly adjusts proportions, symmetry, and texture, not to reflect reality, but to optimize it.

The result is a digital ideal so consistent that it has earned its own name: *the filter face*.

And here lies the quiet disruption: We are no longer comparing our-

Are We Engineering Beauty Beyond Recognition?

By : Brian La Cour, USA

selves to other people.

We are comparing ourselves to data.

What happens in the digital world rarely stays there.

A growing number of aesthetic practitioners report a shift in consultations. Patients are no longer bringing photos of celebrities. They are bringing versions of themselves, filtered, edited, perfected.

“I want this,” they say, pointing to a face that doesn’t exist.

The tools of transformation, dermal fillers, neuromodulators, skin resurfacing, have become more precise, more accessible, and more normalized. Subtlety, once the gold standard, now competes with something more exacting: replication.

And so the line begins to blur.

Where does enhancement end, and imitation begin?

Beauty, in its rawest form, has always resisted formula.

It lives

in asymmetry, in contrast, in the tension between what is expected and what is uniquely one’s own.

But AI does not favor tension. It favors predictability.

Algorithms reward symmetry. They amplify features statistically

proven to hold attention longer. Over time, this creates a feedback loop:

- Certain faces perform better
- Those faces become aspirational
- Aspirations become requests
- Requests reshape reality

We are, quite literally, optimizing ourselves for engagement.

And yet, something is lost in the process.

The Psychological Cost of a Perfect Image

Perfection, when constantly visible, becomes quietly oppressive.

Young women, and increasingly, men, are navigating a landscape where their “default face” feels insufficient. A face that wakes up in the morning, unedited and unenhanced, must now compete

with a version of itself that has been digitally refined.

The result is not always dissatisfaction. Sometimes it is something more subtle.

A dissonance.

A feeling that one’s real self is merely a draft.

From Los Angeles to Seoul, Dubai



to São Paulo, the convergence is unmistakable. Different cultures, once defined by distinct beauty signatures, are beginning to echo the same visual language.

Yet the motivations remain deeply personal.

For some, these tools offer empowerment, a way to align outer

appearance with inner identity. For others, they are a quiet response to pressure, an unspoken requirement to remain competitive in a world that rewards visual perfection.

Neither perspective is entirely right. Neither entirely wrong.

But both exist within a system that is accelerating.

As with any extreme, a counter-current is forming.

There is a growing appetite for what feels unfiltered, unforced, unmistakably human. Skin with texture. Faces with movement. Features that tell a story rather than erase one.

Some aesthetic professionals are shifting their language from transformation to preservation. From alteration to refinement.

“Make me look like myself,” clients are beginning to say.

It is a small but significant rebellion.

Technology will not slow down. AI will become more sophisticated. Filters will become indistinguishable from reality. Procedures will become safer, faster, more precise.

The tools are not the problem.

The question is how we choose to use them.

Are we enhancing individuality, or standardizing it?

Are we expressing identity, or editing it into something more acceptable?



Are we still discovering beauty, or simply selecting it from a menu?

There is a particular kind of beauty that no algorithm has yet been able to replicate. It lives in movement. In expression. In the way a face changes when it forgets it is being seen.

It is not perfect.

It was never meant to be.

And perhaps that is the point.

Because in a world increasingly shaped by artificial precision, the most radical thing a person can be... is real.



The language of colour

Fashion

Compiled by **Adriti**,
Ex- student NIFT, Mumbai

The Language of Color: Why Combinations Define Fashion's Most Enduring Trends

In fashion, silhouette catches the eye, but color holds the memory. A cut can be replicated, a fabric can be sourced, yet the alchemy of two hues placed side by side is what transforms clothing into a statement. For the April edition — a season of renewal and recalibration — we look beyond prints and patterns to the quiet authority of color pairings. Because when it comes to lasting style, the right combination doesn't just complement. It communicates.

The most sophisticated wardrobes are rarely monochromatic. They are conversations between shades — some whispered, others declared. Understanding these dialogues is what separates dressing from styling. And in 2026, as fashion continues its pivot toward intentional, narrative-driven design, color combinations have become the new shorthand for mood, power, and identity. Here are the pairings shaping the season, and why they matter.

1. Navy Blue & Light Blue: The New Definition of Sophisticated*



If black is fashion's punctuation mark, navy is its prose — measured, intelligent, and endlessly articulate. Pair it with light blue and the effect is immediate: boardroom clarity meets coastal ease. This combination works because it's tonal without being flat. The depth of navy grounds, while the softness of a sky or powder blue lifts. Think of a structured navy blazer over a light blue silk shirt, or a Mekhela Chador where deep indigo borders frame a handwoven pale blue body. It's a pairing that signals competence without coldness, tradition without rigidity. In Indo-western contexts, it translates beautifully: a navy bandhgala with a light blue pocket square, or a chambray kurta layered under a midnight blue Nehru jacket. The message is clear — you are in control, but you are not unapproachable.

2. Grey & Black: Bold, Powerful, Uncompromising

This is the palette of the modern architect — of cities, of companies, of self. Grey and black together remove noise. There is no distraction, only form and intention. Charcoal grey tailoring with black leather accessories reads as decisive. A slate grey saree with a jet black blouse and bold silver jewellery becomes armor, not ornament. The power lies in contrast of texture, not hue. When both colors are neutral, the eye looks for cut, drape, and detail. It forces the wearer to be the focus, not the outfit. For eveningwear, this duo is unmatched: a gunmetal gown with black velvet gloves, or a grey linen co-ord set with black kolhapuris. It says you did not come to be liked. You came to be remembered.

3. Yellow & Brown: Vibrant Ener-

gy, Grounded in Earth

Yellow is optimism. Brown is root. Together, they create a visual energy that feels both joyful and credible. Mustard and umber, sunflower and walnut, turmeric and teak — the spectrum is wide, but the effect is consistent: warmth with weight. This combination dominates resort and festive wear because it photographs like sunlight on soil. A brown leather belt cinching a marigold dress, or a yellow raw-silk kurta with dark brown handloom trousers, captures the spirit of Bohag and Bihu — celebration tied to the land. In accessories, it's transformative: a chocolate brown bag against a canary yellow jumpsuit elevates both. The key is proportion. Let one lead, the other support. When balanced, yellow and brown don't shout. They sing.

4. Chocolate Brown & Orange: The Classy Contrarian

This is the pairing for those who understand restraint and rebellion in equal measure. Chocolate brown is inherently luxurious — think vintage trunks, aged wood, 70s couture. Orange is its disruptor. Together, they create a look that feels curated, collected, and quietly expensive. Burnt orange with deep cocoa is the color story of heritage interiors and new-age runways alike. Picture a chocolate brown wool pant suit with a silk orange camisole, or a traditional Assamese silk in rich brown motifs over a tangerine base. The combination works because it's unexpected yet harmonious — both col-

ors share a red undertone, so they don't clash, they converse. It's classy, but never conservative.

5. Brown & Beige: Effortless Elegance

If navy and light blue are corporate poetry, brown and beige are quiet luxury. This is the palette of old money, of Italian summer, of heirloom textiles. Camel and sand, taupe and cream, mocha and ivory — the variation is subtle, but the impact is significant. These tones suggest time, taste, and ease. A beige trench over a brown knit dress, or a handwoven eri silk saree in natural beige with brown minakari, doesn't demand attention. It deserves it. The elegance comes from tone-on-tone layering, from letting fabric quality speak louder than color. For Indo-western styling, it's a masterclass: a beige dhoti pant with a brown embroidered crop top, paired with antique gold. No logos needed. The color story is the label.

Why Combinations Matter More Than Singles

A single color is a word. A combination is a sentence. In an era of fast fashion and digital feeds, the



combinations you choose become your visual vocabulary. They tell people whether you lead or follow, whether you honor craft or chase trends, whether you understand that style is not about having more — it's about putting together better.

As we step into April, into new financial years and cultural new years, let your palette be deliberate. Sophistication is navy meeting light blue at dawn. Power is grey standing shoulder to shoulder with black. Vibrancy is yellow borrowing gravity from brown. Class is chocolate letting orange speak. Elegance is brown exhaling into beige.

Fashion will always sell you new colors. Style will always ask how you wear them together.



YOUR DELAY IS NOT YOUR DENIAL

by **Vanessa Jacqueline Dcruz**, Singapore

I want to ask you something. Have you ever felt like everyone around you is moving forward... and you're still standing at the same door, knocking?

Have you ever looked at your life and thought — "Why is it taking so long for me?"

If you have... this is your moment. Stay with me.

We live in a world that celebrates arrivals. We post the graduation photo. We announce the promotion. We celebrate the wedding day.

But nobody talks about the waiting room. Nobody talks about the years you spent figuring out who you are. The applications that came back rejected. The doors that closed so hard, you felt it in

your chest. And in that silence, a lie starts to whisper — "Maybe this isn't meant for you."

But I'm here today to tell you — that is a lie. Your delay is not your denial.

In August 2025, the World Economic Forum spotlighted young changemakers across South Asia — young people rising through adversity and rewriting their region's story. One of them was Manan Batra, who launched Project Zarat in India — a grassroots innovation to help smallholder farmers who had been left behind by decades of progress. He said it was born out of witnessing how farmers suffer — not due to lack of effort, but due to missing infrastructure that fits their realities.

These were young people who the

world had overlooked. Who had waited. Who had been delayed by systems, by poverty, by geography. But they didn't wait for permission. They built the door themselves.

And right now, Bangladesh — at 54 years of independence in December 2025 — stands as a story of extraordinary ambition, struggle, and achievement, having reduced its extreme poverty rate from nearly half the population in 1991 to a fraction of that today - not because everything was perfect, but because a people refused to let delay become defeat.

That is you. That is your story in the making.

The great sociologist C. Wright Mills once said that the task of the sociological imagination is to con-



nect personal troubles to public issues — to understand that your struggle is not just yours alone. It is shaped by history, by society, by the systems around you. What does that mean for you today? It means — when you feel behind — it is not always because you are lacking. Sometimes, the world just hasn't caught up to you yet.

Your delay may be structural. It may be systemic. It may be generational. But your response to it — that is entirely yours.

I write poetry. And I've learned that poems, like lives, cannot be rushed. You cannot force the last line before the first line is ready. So I leave you with these words — from my own heart, to yours:

"You are not late. You are not lost. You are a seed in the dark — not forgotten by the ground, but held by it. The delay is not the denial. It is the deepening of your roots, so

that when you rise, no wind can take you down." — Vanessa Jacqueline Dcruz

So what do we do with this? We stop comparing our Chapter 3 to someone else's Chapter 20.

We start asking — What can I do today, with what I have, where I am? We build a world that is more lovable — by loving ourselves first, even in the waiting. We build a world that is more sustainable — by not burning ourselves out chasing someone else's timeline. We build a world that is more inclusive

— by making room for those who are still in their delay, still in their dark, still becoming.

Because growth is not always visible. But it is always happening.

You are not behind. You are being prepared. The fruit doesn't fall before it's ripe. The butterfly doesn't leave the cocoon before its wings are ready. And you — you will not rise before you are truly, deeply, powerfully ready.

Your delay is not your denial. It is your development.





ONE BATTLE After ANOTHER

Dr. Dipsikha Bhagawati

Award Winning Film Critic | Published Author | Translator

An original film directed by Paul Thomas Anderson creates anticipation the same way that gravity affects tangible objects. Close detailing, quietness, close listening; and an individual's willingness to take their time all will be necessary

when watching any of his films. The latest film *One Battle After Another* will take viewers through an extremely mixed up political landscape that exhibits a variety of different styles of action and areas; the tension between political rivals and at times the very same

people, and a sense of connection between people in the Kinship category. Ambition is very clear in this movie, although balance is not always met. Occasionally during timeliness in creating a perception of being "on board" with what a movie is trying to do by representing its subject matter it can become challenging, at least visually. For example- placing the elements under loud sounds can overshadow their actual meaning. Along with that, Bob Ferguson (Leonardo DiCaprio) upon reflection represents an individual, respected, and nurtured by his past; he is a man of no comparison who represents to his daughter Willa (Chase Infiti) the sound that will stay in her mind as a memory of how great his personality was. And, while the years have passed and seemingly "old" people have been somewhat forgotten, there will come a time when they will return in form and take Bob forward, the things he fought to bring closure to will continue to do so and affect his life just as much as they have done before the revolution ended. The events he experienced throughout his life are where he has to develop the capacity to feel, consequently the emotion of sadness and anger has not yet been recognized for their own depth, due in part to the fact the creator has prevented them from existing on their own.

Nonetheless, the narrative extends out from the previous chapter, as it adds up to more figures and additives of friction

without grounding them, as each new sequence is created similarly by creating urgency rather than revealing new insight; and while it is hurrying on as it tries to hurry along, the lack of heart surges ahead of the noise. In every case, as new paths are added, it continually seems to lessen in fullness, someday. Unpredictable transitions in mood make the moving harder to pull together; and humour is much too sudden to combine with violence, although there are occasions when humour is added where tension exists, and similarly in reverse. If these polar opposites were balanced well, the intended purpose would have worked out as intended, that has created a hole of a round way confusion. Wide-ranging themes correspond with the expanse of imagery. Although touching on rebellion, disillusionment, inter-generational conflicts and cyclical movements in politics, unresolved is the meaning from such issues. Dialogue imitates the theme of betrayal through memories of deceased comrades, yet those memories don't form a solid base for resolution. The images seem to capture desires for formerly supported causes; where as, at other times they create harshly ironic images to undermine rigidity. Clarity evaporates at a time when it should blossom. The movie implies its characterization of rigid authoritative structures at various points, however it doesn't go into depth to understand these characterizations. In short, what is left is an unresolved narrative



that doesn't want to stay on its own questions until it reaches an answer.

Remarkably the film stands out because of its visuals. Working with Michael Bauman Anderson makes scenes that feel big and detailed. You can almost touch those landscapes. They have a lot of color and presence while wide frames mix beauty with loneliness. Yet at times such images stay on screen long becoming too much. Often shots go on longer than they need to showing off their side instead of moving the story forward. During conversations the visual beauty takes over even the characters' presence. Shadows make indoor settings feel heavy suggesting hidden motives and

unease. Outside bright sunlight hits hard highlighting characters separation from others. The way light moves through each scene shows skill behind the camera. Still its boldness can seem forced drawing much attention to itself. Like the films score and visual framing lighting often pulls focus away, from events happening on screen.

The film has intensity because of Jonny Greenwood's score. Tense strings, along with rhythms build unease. Making key dramatic moments stronger. Silence appears rarely throughout the film. Busy soundscapes fill scenes, taking away space for quiet emotional depth. The music controls emotion than letting it develop on its own.

Even with its flaws, the acting stands out as a highlight. A tired figure weighed down by duty and recollection is brought to life through DiCaprio's intense physical performance. His depiction of fatigue feels real; yet uneven storytelling sometimes breaks the flow of his role.

Teyana Taylor steps into *Perfidia* with a restless energy that refuses to be ignored, shaping each moment with raw presence. Because of her, the character breathes like someone real, caught in emotion rather than performing it. Few others on screen reach that level of believability - she simply lives inside the part without reaching for effect. Occasionally gripping, Sean Penn's performance as the villain sometimes slips into exaggeration. Though dramatic, his depiction leans toward symbolism rather than realism. Not quite human, the role feels more like an idea than a person you might fear.

Willa's quiet strength surfaces most clearly through Chase Infiiniti's acting. Though the script often falters, her presence adds depth where little exists. When the camera lingers on exchanges between father and daughter, a different rhythm takes hold. Instead of spectacle, something raw begins to emerge. Without drawing attention, those sequences suggest an alternative path - one built on closeness rather than noise. What holds the film back is its refusal to hold back. Overloaded with subplots, drawn-out monologues, and excessive visuals, it rarely lets mo-

ments breathe. Instead of ending when they should, scenes drag on - piling up detail without meaning. Its length isn't just long; it drags under its own weight, weighed down by choices it never trims.

It is strange enough that in the case of small scenes, impressions are the deepest. A fighting parent and a fighting child do not matter as much as a quiet conversation between the two has the power. Instead of music swelling loud, an empty pause speaks volumes. Under intense editing and striking lighting, the always-unspoken word proves to be the truth in the world. It is one single movie but at the same time, it is fighting many battles.

Seeking grand political weight, while chasing explosive set pieces, and meanwhile tethered to quiet domestic moments. The reach is extensive and at times, the scenes fail to uphold it. Goals collide where there could have been harmony. Each aim distracts the others and none is complete. Eventually, there are no answers,

but only fatigue remains. Going from clash to clash, the movie plays on the continuous circle suggested by its title. Meaning can be reasoned at times but reflection on the fall out of struggle is rarely seen. Finally, there are only answers left in fatigue after some time and reflection on the aftermath of struggle rarely arrives, the movie follows from one clash to another in a manner similar to the unbroken cycle suggested by its name and meaning is seen as possible at times but what remains as the last resort after reflection is done is tiredness, there is always value in this film.

The performance showcases exceptional technical expertise with an incredible stage presence. The depth of intensity shown through this performance keeps the audience captivated and demonstrates a level of commitment to entertaining the viewers. *One Battle After Another* will provide viewers with an abundance of ideas and concepts that will create a vibrant and immersive experience.





Indian director Aditya Dhar's film
DHURANDHAR PART 2 (2026)

represents the rise of uncompromising cinema
 © film critic **Lalit Rao** (FIPRESCI) dated 20.03.2026

Indian director Aditya Dhar's "Dhurandhar Part 2" got released worldwide on 19 March 2026. It has emerged as one of the most debated Hindi films in recent times. More than just a sequel, it represents a shift in storytelling—combining espionage drama with emotional depth and political undertones. The film has drawn both praise and criticism, making it a significant cultural talking point.

Plot overview - An intrepid spy's successful return

At its core, the film tells the story

of an Indian spy Jaskirat Singh Ranghi, who returns from Pakistan after completing a covert mission. However, this is not a triumphant homecoming. Instead, it is marked by alienation and emotional distance.

The narrative focuses on the psychological cost of espionage. Ranghi is a man who has sacrificed his personal life for national duty, only to realize that he no longer belongs to the world he left behind. This layered storytelling elevates the film beyond a conventional spy thriller.

Meticulous direction and astounding storytelling

Aditya Dhar's direction is one of the film's strongest aspects. He balances intense action with introspective moments, creating a narrative that is both gripping and emotionally resonant. His control over pacing ensures that the film maintains tension while allowing space for character development. Aditya Dhar's auteur style is evident in the film's structure and tone. He does not shy away from controversial themes, instead presenting them with confidence



and clarity. This boldness is a key reason why the film stands out in contemporary Hindi cinema.

Some amazing performances by all actors

The performances play a crucial role in bringing the story to life. Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh as Jaskirat Singh Rangi delivers a nuanced performance, capturing both the physical and emotional demands of the role. Veteran cinema and television actor Rakesh Bedi, as Pakistani politician Jameel Jamali, is particularly impressive. His portrayal avoids stereotypes, presenting a complex and believable character. This adds depth to the film's depiction of geopolitical conflict.

Overarching themes – action and patriotism

One of the central discussions surrounding “Dhurandhar Part 2” is whether it is patriotic or pro-

pagandist. The film clearly carries patriotic undertones, emphasizing national security and the sacrifices of intelligence operatives. However, labeling it as propaganda may be highly reductive. The film appears more focused on telling a gripping story rooted in national realities rather than promoting any specific political agenda. The

debate itself reflects the polarized environment in which the film has been released.

Representation and tone in “Dhurandhar 2”

The film takes a more serious approach to depicting Pakistan and issues related to terrorism compared to many earlier Hindi films. This shift in tone adds to its realism, though it may also make some viewers uncomfortable. Importantly, the presence of layered characters like Jameel Jamali prevents the narrative from becoming entirely one-sided, maintaining a degree of complexity.

Scenes of emotional turmoil

The most memorable scene in the film comes at the end. After completing his mission, Indian asset (spy) Rangi returns home and sees his mother and sister living peacefully. Realizing that his presence might disrupt their lives, he chooses not to enter. This par-





ulation about industry dynamics and differing perspectives. Audience reactions have been divided but engaged. Many appreciate the film's bold storytelling, while others question its ideological stance. Despite this, the film has performed well across languages, with dubbed versions finding success in multiple regions.

Conclusion: Dhurandhar 2 is a significant film that will change the way audiences appreciate good cinema

“Dhurandhar Part 2” is a film that provokes thought as much as it entertains. Its mix of action, emotion, and controversy makes it stand out in today's cinematic landscape. While it has its flaws—particularly in terms of violence and music—it succeeds in delivering a compelling and meaningful narrative. Above all, it reflects a growing maturity in Hindi cinema, where filmmakers are increasingly willing to take risks. Whether viewed as patriotic or controversial, “Dhurandhar Part 2” is undeniably impactful—a film that invites not just viewing, but intense discussion.

ticular scene struck an emotional chord so deeply that many in the cinema were moved to tears, some crying profusely without restraint. Its powerful performances, poignant background score, and raw authenticity created a moment of collective vulnerability, leaving the audience overwhelmed and silently reflecting long after the scene had ended. This moment is handled with subtlety and restraint, making it deeply moving. It highlights the personal sacrifices made by those in espionage, leaving a lasting impact on the audience.

ive, does not match the impact of the first film. It serves its purpose but somehow lacks memorability. Cinematography by DOP Kamaljeet Negi blends scale with intimacy, creating a visually and emotionally immersive cinematic experience.

Audience and industry response

“Dhurandhar Part 2” has received ample praise from established figures like maverick director Ram Gopal Varma, while much of Bollywood has remained silent. This contrast has sparked spec-

Technical aspects and music

The technical brilliance of Dhurandhar Part 2 is driven by its skilled technicians. The action sequences by Aejaaz Gulab are engaging and filled with suspense, keeping viewers on edge. However, some scenes feature unrealistic violence, which can feel excessive. The music by Shashwat Sachdev heightens emotional tonality while effective in supporting the narra-





DINNER FOR LONERS

A Quiet Cry Behind A Crowded Table

- Jishnu Vijayan Nair

Actor/Writer/Motivational Speaker - Keralam

Cinema often tells stories of love, ambition, and heroism. But sometimes, the most important stories are the quietest ones - the ones that reflect realities we see every day but rarely acknowledge. Dinner for Loners, a short film from the United Kingdom, is one such story. Subtle yet powerful, it explores a deeply contemporary issue: male loneliness.

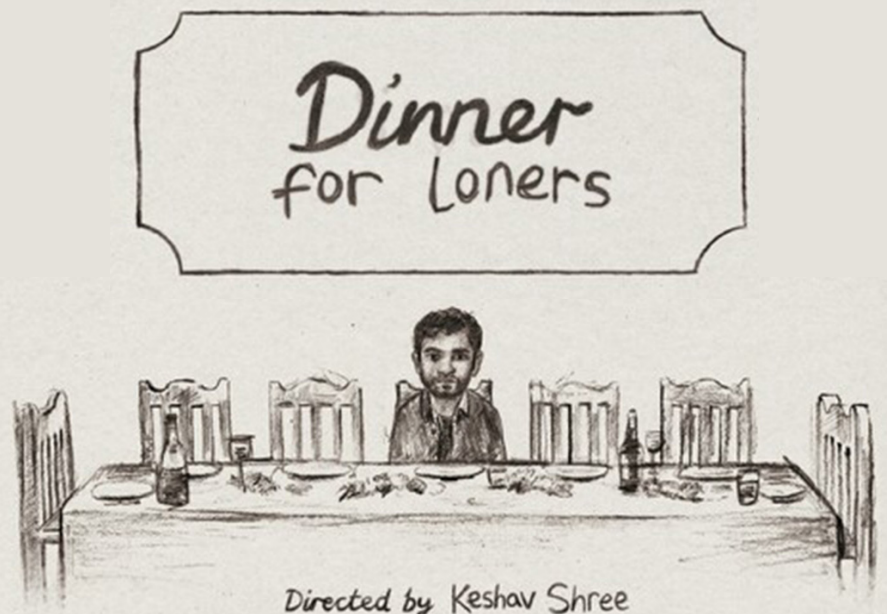
Having watched a wide range of films from different cultures and perspectives, including at the International Film Festival of Delhi 2026 (IFFD), Dinner for Loners stood out to me - not because it was loud or dramatic, but because it was painfully real.

Directed by Keshav Shree, the

film is a dark comedy rooted in the South Asian diaspora. It follows Dev, a newly single man struggling to cope with the emotional vacuum left after a long-term relationship. In a desperate attempt

to reconnect with his friends and regain a sense of belonging, he organizes a reunion dinner with the help of his dysfunctional Indian family.

On the surface, the film presents



Directed by Keshav Shree

a familiar setting - a lively household, food being prepared, conversations flowing, and the chaos of a family gathering. But beneath this vibrant exterior lies a silent tension. Dev is surrounded by people, yet he is profoundly alone.

This contrast is where the film truly shines. The storytelling does not rely on exaggerated drama or forced emotion. Instead, it allows the audience to observe, to feel, and to recognize the subtle discomfort that Dev carries within him. His efforts to bring people together are not just about hosting a dinner - they are a reflection of his longing for connection, validation, and emotional support.

The film's strength lies in its realism. Many individuals today experience a similar struggle - especially men, who are often conditioned to suppress vulnerability. In a world that encourages independence and emotional restraint, expressing loneliness is often seen as weakness. *Dinner for Loners* challenges this narrative with quiet courage.

The cinematography plays a crucial role in enhancing this experience. The camera moves through the chaos of the household, capturing overlapping conversations, awkward silences, and fleeting expressions. At the same time, it pauses during Dev's solitary moments, allowing the audience to sit with his discomfort. These visual contrasts create a powerful emotional rhythm throughout the film.



The performances, particularly by the lead cast, bring authenticity to the narrative. There is no theatrical exaggeration - only natural, grounded portrayals that make the characters relatable. The family dynamics feel real, filled with both warmth and dysfunction, adding depth to Dev's emotional journey.

What makes this film particularly significant is its social relevance. The statistics around male loneliness are alarming, yet often overlooked. Many men struggle to form deep emotional connections, and after life transitions such as breakups, they find themselves isolated without a support system. The film addresses this silent epidemic without preaching - it simply presents the truth.

The director's intention is clear: to start a conversation. Inspired by real-life experiences, Keshav Shree brings attention to the effort people go through just to feel connected. The idea that someone would organize an entire event just to feel less alone is both heart-breaking and deeply human.

The dark comedy element adds another layer to the narrative. Moments of humour emerge naturally from the situations, not to distract

from the theme, but to make it more accessible. This balance between humour and heaviness makes the film engaging while preserving its emotional depth.

The climax of the film does not offer a dramatic resolution. Instead, it leaves us with an important realization: external efforts alone cannot fill internal voids. Dev's journey suggests that acceptance and self-understanding are essential before meaningful connections can be rebuilt.

In today's fast-paced, digitally connected world, loneliness has taken on a new form. People are constantly surrounded - by notifications, messages, and social media interactions - yet genuine connection often feels distant. *Dinner for Loners* reflects this paradox with honesty and sensitivity.

In just under twenty minutes, the film manages to say what many feature-length films fail to express. It does not try to provide answers; instead, it encourages reflection.

Dinner for Loners is not just a film - it is a mirror. A mirror that reflects a reality many experience but few articulate.

And perhaps that is its greatest strength.



INDIAN STYLE GALA NITE '26

The grand event was held on March 29, 2026, at Guwahati, Assam, showcased an impressive lineup of talent and creativity of the fashion designers from India.

This 3rd year celebration, 10 fashion designers from across India participated, alongside the launch of the financial year calendar shoot set in Goa. Produced by Nilesh Pawar and shot by NK light and shade, the calendar was directed and styled by Dipankar Kashyap.

The evening also featured the pre-

miere of the 27-minute short film *The Last Ferry Home*, produced by Dipankar Kashyap and directed by Arunabh Chaliha. The film was officially launched by actors Kopil Bora and Krishna Baroorah.

The calendar launch was unveiled by Dr. Sanjive Narain of Prag Channel, Assam and Arpita Sharma of Devine Events, who flew in from Dubai for the occasion.

The fashion show concluded with a grand finale by Tejas Gandhi, featuring 32 garments. Actors Palashree Das and Anchit Udayaditya were the showstoppers for

the finale, while supermodel Arav Nawariya was the showstopper for Dipankar Kashyap's collection.

The third season drew to a close on a high note, cementing its place as a cultural touchstone for the region. The evening went beyond fashion — it was a statement of intent from Northeast India to the national stage. Spearheaded by Spruha Production and powered by a collective of visionary designers, directors -Ajan Akash Baruah, Minu Paul, Kuntanil Das, Harsh Gautam, and Kakoli Tamuly Choudhary. The entire event was produced by Spruha Production.





Aura Fashion

Dipankar Kashyap Collection

Designer: Dipankar Kashyap

Fabric: Pure Paat

Models: AI







HONGKONG

FilmMart 2026

Hong Kong FILMART 2026, has once again assured why it is widely recognized as a leading and influential platform in Asia's entertainment trade landscape. Organized by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), this major industry gathering was held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai from March 17 to March 20, concluding successfully after four days of vibrant engagement. The event distinctly reflected emerging trends in global storytelling, technological innovation, and cross-cultural collaboration. The mart had over 790 exhibitors from around 71 countries and regions, presenting

nearly 215 projects in film, television, animation, and digital media. Approximately 8,000 industry professionals participated, engaging in discussions about project development, co-production, and distribution strategies, highlighting a collaborative spirit in the global film industry.

Films from Hong Kong and Mainland China showed a variety of artistic elements. One notable film, "All Wishes Come True!", directed by Mu Zhengyang, blends modern storytelling with the ancient folktale "Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea," featuring advanced animation techniques. "Bird of Paradise," directed by Joey Wu, portrays a woman's journey of self-discovery

through dance and body movement. "Demon Agent," directed by Cheng Teng, is a mystery set in ancient Chang'an, balancing elements of rational inquiry and intuition. "Good Trip," directed by Norris Wong and Wong Hoi, explores a young filmmaker's journey to Japan to fulfill his father's dream, reflecting on memory and familial bonds. "Peng Hu," directed by Choi Cheang, presents maritime battles during the Qing dynasty, examining power and individual conflict.

FILMART was created in response to uncertainty in Hong Kong's film industry following its reunification with China in 1997. Nearly three decades later, the event has historical significance, symbolizing both commercial success and cultural recovery. Initially, FILMART aimed to connect Chinese-language cinema with international markets, a vision that has prospered with China's rise as the sec-

ond-largest film market globally.

Over time, FILMART has transformed from a film rights marketplace into a multifaceted entertainment ecosystem, covering television, cinema, digital media, and technology. The 2026 edition featured an AI Hub with live workshops on technology in creativity, reflecting ongoing changes in the industry. The FILMART IP Catalogue now includes over 1,600 projects, aiding coordination among creators, distributors, and investors through advanced search technologies.

The animation sector saw significant growth, influenced by the success of animated productions. This trend is popular among younger audiences, and the expansion of digital media is enhancing the cultural value of animated narratives. Overall, FILMART underscores Hong Kong's role as a significant connector between Eastern and Western film industries, promoting creativity and international collaboration.

This year, Mystic Aura, an internationally circulated magazine, established a notable intellectual and professional presence in the Animation and Digital Content section at FILMART as an official exhibitor. Represented by the Proprietor & Editor Gitali Pathak Deka and executive member and regular film-section contributor Dr. Dipsikha Bhagawati—recipient of the Assam State Film Award for Best Film Critic (2026)- the publi-



cation was positioned at the India Pavilion (Booth No. 1C-B11). Their participation enabled meaningful engagement with emerging global screen discourses, yielding intel-

lectually enriching and professionally significant experiences across the four-day event from March 17th - March 20.



WAITING FOR THE DAWN

It was unusual, I woke up to a silent dusk.

The sound was only my heartbeat.

Dusk, the time which is my own time of love.

Today I felt it's hostility and sadness towards human.

A crying Dusk asking to save ourselves, to save the
Humankind.

The Dusky evening before entering the darkness cried
for a safe beautiful fresh Dawn.

A Dawn where Humankind will live again with jest and
happiness.

The Sun Rays washing away the poison from the Earth.

A Plea of the Mother Earth to her children.

Just listen to the silent Earth's appeal to save the
Humankind.

Soon a beautiful dawn will knock at our doors to open it
wide.

- MONALI BHUYAN



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