

Film Review:

Title	:	<i>Cinemawala</i>
Year	:	2016
Director	:	Kaushik Ganguly
Producer	:	Shree Venkatesh Films
Cinematographer	:	Soumik Halder
Music	:	Indraadip Gupta
Running Time	:	105 minutes
Available on	:	Hoichoi

Kaushik Ganguly's 2016's film *Cinemawala* pays homage to the vanishing single-screen film theatres in West Bengal through this slow burn film that depicts the generational clash between a father and his son. Director Kaushik Ganguly employs the veteran Bengali actor Paron Bandopadhyay to portray the life struggles of an old-time idealist Pranabendu Das and his ideological conflict with his son Prakash played by Parambrata Chattopadhyay, that forms the crux of this film.

Pranabendu once lived with the 'cultural memory' of the glorious days of his cinema hall 'Kamalini', but today it has been destroyed by the impact of the digital age. On the other hand, son Prakash, although respectful of his father's tradition, has taken to selling pirated DVDs for financial security. This moral conflict between father and son and the bitterness of their relationship are the central themes of the film. The entire drama of Kaushik Ganguly's *Cinemawala* is built on Pranabendu Das' conflict borne out of his beliefs. Pranabendu was a blind fan of Uttam Kumar and Pramothesh Barua. Each frame that passes through the gate of the celluloid projector transports him to such a state of extreme perfection that he can forget about his wife who left him so carelessly and spend his days abandoning his family. This is why he believes that pirated DVDs are the co-wife of the theatre called 'Kamalini', which is suffering due to lack of

audience.

Every frame of this film, expresses deep emotions and on the other, reflects the tragic reality of changing times. The powerful performances of Paran Bandopadhyay and Parambrata Chattoopadhyay, the exquisite cinematography of Soumik Halder and the emotional music of Indraadip Das Gupta take the quality of the film to a unique level. Director Kaushik Ganguly's slow and thoughtful style of storytelling may test the patience of some audiences, but the depth and social message of the film definitely make it memorable. *Cinemawala* is not just a film; it is a parable of a time and a tribute to a lost era. *Cinemawala* is a spectacular reflection of the clash of values and reality in our society. Pranabendu Das and his son Prakash, poses a deep philosophical question to the audience, is adapting to changing times the only way, or should one fight to protect one's ideals and beliefs?

Pranabendu Das is an idealist who has dedicated a large part of his life to cinema. His cinema hall 'Kamaliní' is not just his livelihood; it is a symbol of his self-respect and the embodiment of his love for the art. Pranabendu, on the one hand, is steadfast in his ideals, on the other hand, he realizes that his cinema hall is facing destruction. His son Prakash, is the exact opposite. This conflict is not only a strained father-son relationship, but it also marks an ideological clash between generations. The question here is, is the father's ideals relevant to his child as well? Or does the definition of morality change with time? This raises a profound question for the audience: how is it possible to abandon the past for the future, and does it risk losing one's roots?

In this film, through the character of Pranabendu Das, the director portrays the once-passionate attitude towards single-screen film theatres and the sad picture of their loss of importance in today's digital age. The conflict between the father and his son Prakash is not just a family conflict, it portrays the difference in morality between two generations. Pranabendu says, *Cinema shudhu binodan noi, eta jibon* (Cinema is not just entertainment, it is life) this dialogue proves that he is steadfast in his beliefs and ideals. On the other hand, Prakash says, *Jibonta Cinemar moto noi Baba. Ekhane tike thakte hole aapos korte hoi* (Life is not like cinema, father. To survive here, you have to compromise) this dialogue expresses the attitude towards the reality of the new generation.

Cinema Haller pardata shudhu ekta screen noi, eta amader jiboner ayna (The screen of the cinema hall is not just a screen, it is the mirror of our life), re-

flects the changes in our society and people's passion for art. Every scene in this film evokes nostalgia for the past. On the other hand, it points to the harsh realities of the future. Pranabendu's cinema hall 'Kamalini' is not just a hall, it is a 'cultural space' of his life. On the other hand, selling pirated discs of Prakash, is not just a crime for the father, it is a severe blow to his ideals and traditions. *Cinemawala* is not just a story of a cinema, it is a mirror of the changes in our society, where we are forgetting our roots and traditions and embracing the new reality.

His face displays all of the intense emotional turmoil he is experiencing on the inside as Pranabendu tells him about the sale of the two projectors! The extremely deteriorated state of the theatre was preventing him from pleading with his master to somehow change the machines and resume operating the movie theatre. The night before the projector's sale, he meticulously cleans it with teary eyes, saying, *Notun bari te jacche to, tai ektu porishkar kore pathai, ekebare Raja jinis!* ("The projector is moving on to a new house and a new owner. So, I am making it look a bit more beautiful, a Royal thing indeed!").

The audience is forced to think after watching this film, does morality change with time? Or is it a fixed principle, which must remain unchanged, no matter the circumstances? This film gives a message that is not easily forgotten. It not only creates nostalgia in the audience, but also forces us to think deeply about our personal values and the changes in society. *Cinemawala* is therefore not just a film, it is a spectacular reflection on our lives. *Cinemawala* is a must-watch for cinema enthusiasts and anyone who has grown up watching films in single-screen theatres. The movie serves as a moving ode to the dwindling craft of conventional filmmaking and a timely reminder of the value of conserving our cultural legacy.

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