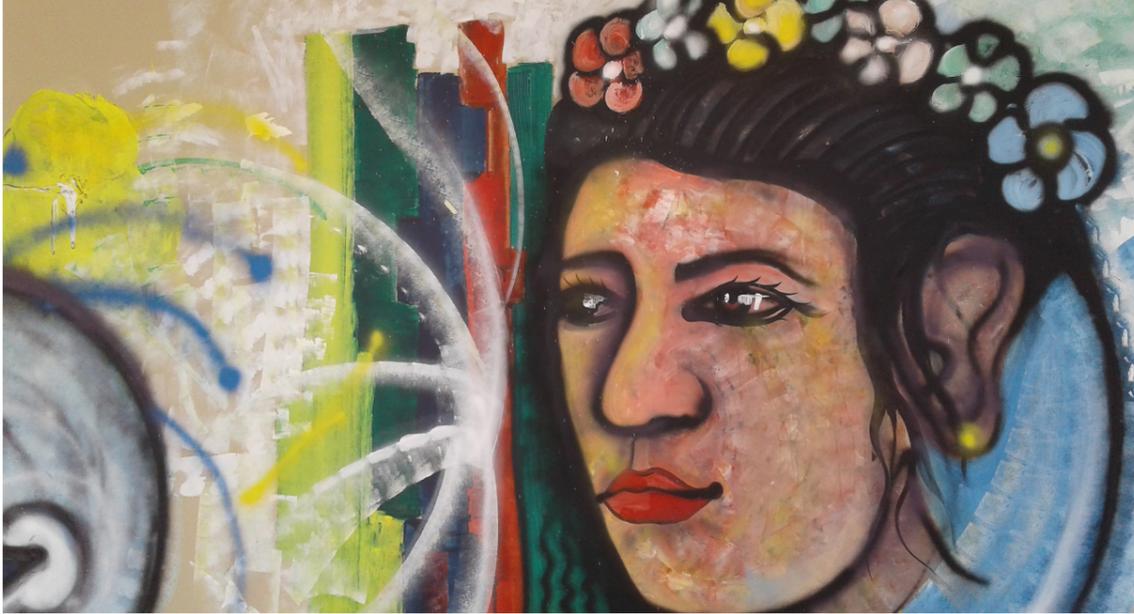




Art, beyond the walls



A graffiti at the Rangoli- Metro art centre, PHOTO BY: ANAND PRINCE

ART & CULTURE ALDA JOSEPH

Bangalore, a city which walks very fast, slows down at its streets and lanes for some surprises. One will find these surprises on the walls, bridges, flyovers and even on the roads. They say some people become cops because they want to make the world a better place and others become vandals because they want to make the world a better looking place.

Graffiti, an art form which is often termed as 'vandalism' has emerged in India's shady street walls as a means of self-expression in society. The range of work and the popularity it has gained among people is proof of that.

Graffiti and street art are completely out of the box. The growing culture of street art has also found a place in 'Namma Bengaluru'. The

dirty walls and boring lanes are now a visual treat for the people, thanks to talented artists who create perspectives on the walls. Those walls, bridges and flyovers are now places where one goes in search of art culture. You can be an active or a passive viewer but the graffiti never fails to inspire.

Badal Nanjundaswamy is an innovative street artist who rose to fame after creating and placing a life-sized crocodile in one of the potholes in the city. Being someone who focuses on civic issues, he is famous for his 3D paintings and his drawing of Yama's face around a manhole on the road, thereby attracting the authority's attention to cover the manhole.

Ullas Hydoor is an architect and also a street artist in Bangalore. His art work reflects the socio-cultural issues of today. He shows us the

changing times through his canvas. Like them, we have a few artists who believe that art should not be restricted or confined. They use drawings, scribbling, spray paints, and marker pens through which they draw out the artistic expressions.

Today, the empty spaces, corners, crosses, lanes of Malleswaram, Koramangala, St.Mark's Road, Indiranagar, MG Road, Kalyan Nagar and Hennur all have an explosion of creativity.

The cosmopolitan people of Bangalore contribute to the rich diversity that is reflected in the city's artwork. While globalization brought a lot of changes in the traditional aspects, it has also brought a global outlook for the city and its creativity. And all this makes the art culture of Bangalore something worth admiring.

Bangalore: The city of dying lakes

ENVIRONMENT
SAMANTHA RUTH D'SILVA



The Plight of Rachenehalli Lake. PHOTO BY: SAMANTHA RUTH D'SILVA

Mesmerizing lakes sparkling like quicksilver with a pleasing quietude were filled with families, love-struck couples and the chirping of birds. This was the scenario almost a year back around the Bangalore lakes. But now, the wetlands in the city are dying.

There were 285 lakes in Bangalore which were constructed in the sixteenth century by Kempe Gowda and the Wodeyars of Mysore but the number has now shrunk to 80. Several lakes such as the Bellandur, Varthur, Ulsoor, Puttanahalli and Jakkur lakes are already polluted and require immediate attention.

The lakes in Madiwala, Nagavara, Agara and Yediyur are moderately polluted and a further few have left their water tables and are now utilized for stadiums, sports complexes, bus stations and are occupied by slums.

Some are dried up and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has made them as construction sites.

Dumping of garbage, uncontrolled weed growth, industrial wastes, sewage water, construction of roads and public offices are the major causes.

The lakes in our city are dried up and the population of our city is increasing.

"The people can come up with different ideas to work together and ensure that these lakes are not utilized as dumping grounds. Strict penalties should be imposed for offenders", says T.A Salam, Ex-Councilor of Austin town.

Lakes are covered with solid and liquid waste. There have been increased reports of fish deaths, lake fires and foul smells in the lakes of Sankey tank, Jakkur and Munnekolala.

Foam formation was seen in lakes such as Bellandur, Maragondanahalli, Rampura, Sarakki and Varthur. The aquatic species have also been adversely affected by the large scale pollution.

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Gendered lives

RIGHTS ASHYL ELIZABATH PAUL

There is a community whom we have sidelined, separated, disrespected and feared. We fail to realize they are one of us as well.

Kalki Subramaniam was born in Polachi, a small town in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. She was raised in a typical Tamil family of five. As a student, she was always bullied by her classmates and teachers due to which she used to hide herself and spend her time in the park nearby, rather than attend classes.

It was during one of these times that she had met Apsara, who became her foster mother. Later she finished her Masters in Journalism and Mass Communication from Madurai Kamaraj University. During her student life, she started publishing a monthly magazine called 'Sahodari', which means sister in Tamil.

While she was working in the media, she was also involved in creating awareness in the society. Later, she quit her job and started 'Sahodari

Foundation', an NGO for supporting girls who face similar hardships in society. She has won a lot of accolades and recognition for her work. K. Prithika Yashini, at the age of 25, fulfilled her dream of becoming a Sub-Inspector in Tamil Nadu. She went through a lot of struggle but refused to be discouraged.

During her degree, she left home and moved to Chennai as things didn't go down well with her parents. She survived alone by taking up different jobs from being a hostel warden to a hospital attendant.

She fought her way into success and still aspires to become an IPS (Indian Police Service) officer. She worked at multiple places for meager salaries. "There is so much I want to do. I want to work towards reservation in education and employment for transgenders and for the cause of women and the underprivileged" she says.

Padmini Prakash has become the face of Lotus TV. She is the most famed news reader the channel has

ever produced and this stardom was not a cake walk for her. At the age of 13, she was abandoned by her parents. This forced her into a suicide attempt after which she embarked on a voyage of self-discovery. Later, she went on to learn Bharathanatyam and Kathak after which she ventured into acting in television. She was discovered by famed anchor Rose Venkateshan and was introduced into the television news industry on the 15th of August, the day which she got her ultimate freedom.

Shanthi Sonu, a well-known RJ (Radio Jockey) who had started her career as a sex worker, now holds her head high at a great position in the society. She has become an inspiration to a lot of individuals today.

These are the stories of four amazing women with a daunting spirit that led them to live beyond the perceptions and discouragement from the society, friends and family. They reached great heights, thereby proving that being a transgender is

not a flaw or a weakness but their identity.

These four women stand as proud examples of human rights and have proven that those who are different need not accept being sidelined.

The society is made up of different kinds of people and those who do not conform to the norms also constitute an integral part of the mould. It is all about looking beyond differences and embracing humanity.



K. Prithika Yashini
Kalki Subramaniam
flowers in the fissures

Youth swap: Social media to social responsibility

Indian society, despite having its diverse culture and rich tradition, has its downside as well. We see gender discrimination, child labor, casteism, communal and linguistic barriers all still prevailing in modern society.

Although atrocities relating to these ill practices have gradually reduced over the decades, the discrimination is still a very real problem that has to be dealt with. We still see Dalits being ill-treated, young children working in factories and honor killings being committed.

Even with the most sincere efforts of the Government, it is the people who ultimately create the change. The youth, in particular, can lay the foundation for an India with no such societal barriers, making it a country which embraces its diversity and is intolerant towards outdated practices which work against the minorities. Youthful exuberance and a hunger for a better future combine as powerful agents of change and can pave the way for a brighter future for the country.

The youngsters of today are blessed with various tools of mass communication which can be used as channels for propagating positive messages and highlighting loopholes in our society. Armed with broader minds and technological know-how, the millions of young men and women of the country are in a perfect position to carry the country forward.

Social media, for example, is perhaps the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of the youth in the quest to bring in societal change. We can already see many social media pages dedicated for societal good and a vast majority of these pages are controlled by youngsters. In present times, it is especially significant as India is making its stride from being a developing country to a developed country. So it is important that the various forms of discrimination must be put to a halt and to bring the country together as one in order to complete the transition into a developed country, and the youth are the most important agents of change in this regard.

Bangalore: The city of dying lakes

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The swans which added much beauty to the lakes, are now hardly seen and it is the same case with other forms of life that reside in these lakes.

"The Government should make good facilities in the villages to reduce migration of villagers as they occupy the place near the lakes", says Maya Sreenivasan, a resident of HSR Layout.

The lakes have become ponds filled with garbage and sewage water. The Government has failed in maintain-

ing the lakes and seems to be least interested in maintaining these lakes. There is a failure in co-ordination and a lack of funding.

"The BDA is not coming up with a proper plan, they make land deals with corrupt politicians and many buildings are being built" says Phibert, a resident of BTM layout. Lakes have been rented to private builders and the authorities themselves have built their own buildings and some have been transformed into residential and commercial areas. Some

Tips for Media Aspirants from Broadcast Veteran Bansi Kaalappa

DIALOGUE

ANURAG THOMSON K

Bansi Kaalappa is the chief reporter and anchor of News 9, Namma Bengaluru's popular English news channel. He has also worked with Times of India as a reporter for ten years.

You are a reporter and anchor with experience in print media as well. How important is that kind of versatility in the industry today?

Yes, I've been privileged to work with The Times of India for over a decade and that helped me smoothly transition into electronic media. It is not advisable for a journalist to stick to his preferences. I have found that print and electronic media complement each other and it is always good for an upcoming professional to experiment. So in that way, I think it is very important.

What personality traits do you think make a good journalist?

A journalist should be willing to work long hours, willing to take on the high and mighty of our society and make peace with the reality of personal and professional threats. So courage is very important. In addition, there should be an intimate passion for the line of work. These two things make a good journalist.

News 9 is a local English news channel. Your thoughts in regards to job opportunities for journalism graduates in such channels

The challenges of the media industry results in the rate of attrition be-

ing on the higher side, so there are jobs always available for young and aspiring graduates. However, the difficult part is succeeding in your job. It depends on the amount of hard work and dedication that you are willing to put in. If you are good at it, the experience is rewarding.

What are the credentials that news 9 looks for in hiring a potential employee?

Language is a necessity. We are always looking for candidates who have a command over the English language and an ability to play with words. Another important aspect is whether or not the individual has a nose for news. A good sense of what makes news is vital. At News 9, these are the two things we mostly look at.

What are the pros and cons of working in the media industry?

It is pretty straightforward. The advantage is that you are well-known in society and you have a feeling that you contribute towards making it a better place. The disadvantage, at least initially, is the monetary returns. So it is important for a candidate to get into journalism for the right reasons.

With the advent of online media and social media, the news channels seem to have lost a bit of their audience and that affects the business. Your thoughts?

It is true that the online media has had an effect, but there is always room for quality. If you are delivering a good product for social

good, then there is no need to be afraid. If you lack quality, maybe then there is a need to watch your back. The internet is a different platform. News channels should compare themselves with each other and if you get it right and stand out from the rest, you have nothing to be worried about.

In conclusion, any words of advice for the aspiring journalists in Kristu Jayanti College? Would you suggest a career in the media?

It depends. The media industry requires a lot of sacrifice and dedication. People get into the field with a lot of expectations in regards to money and fame. I wouldn't recommend it to them, because more often than not they are left disappointed.

I would recommend it to those who have a passion for journalism and a burning desire to leave a mark on society.



Bangalore's tryst with poetry

CITYLIGHTS

SHEETAL R

Bangalore Poetry Festival was held in the city on 6th and 7th August, 2016 at Leela Palace by Atta Galatta, the art and cultural group.

The Festival was conceptualized as a celebration of all things artistic in nature.

The two-day festival was celebrated with events like poetry reading sessions, panel discussion, poetry performance, open microphone for people to read out their own poetry. The festival also had a book store

and a poetry workshop for people of all ages

Noted poets like Javed Akhtar, Anjum Hasan, Radha Thomas, Prathibha Nandakumar, K. Sachidanandan, Simon Napier Bell, Varun Gandhi, Sreekumar Verma were among the 67 poets who made the festival a rich experience by their presence.

The organizers were happy to see such a wonderful response from the citizens of Bengaluru and remarked that a second edition will soon be on the cards.

When fate becomes a revolution- A review of Kismath, the movie

REELSENSE

AJITH MS

Love is indeed a liberating experience, but for it to be thought-provoking is a task that only some movies have attempted. In his directorial debut, Shanavas K Bavakutty has attempted a similar feat by weaving the powerful, yet simple 'Kismath' in the backdrop of Ponnani, a port town in Kerala.

The movie unfolds around a police station where Anita (Sruthi Menon), a 28-year-old Dalit research scholar and Irfan (Shane Nigam), a 22-year-old Engineering dropout have come for seeking police protection from their parent's aggression. The movie offers a realistic portrayal of sheer unpredictability.

"This story is inspired by an incident that happened in the lives of two people at Ponnani, Kerala in 2011" says Shanavas. He has carefully scripted the narrative by including the stories of an

Assamese migrant laborer and that of a framed two-wheeler mechanic in the midst of the love story. These stories brilliantly emphasize the main narrative by conveying the agony of denial of justice to the powerless.

Kismath exposes the casteist blemishes in the visibly progressive face of Kerala. Anita is marginalized not just by Irfan's upper caste family but even by other characters as well. It shows the deep-rootedness of caste even in Muslim communities.

The film directs its gaze into the polarization by the *sangh* elements too, with its portrayal of saffron dhoti-welding patriarchs of culture pushing into the life of Anita. Shruthi Menon has portrayed Anita at just the right amount, without the cinematic cheesiness and emotional overbursts.

Irfan is devoid of any mainstream protagonist mould. Newcomer Shane

Nigam has magnificently reflected the convoluted, confused and befuddled youth who is only determined about his love.

Vinay Fort's portrayal of a corrupt police inspector has added a strong pivot for the movie. Vinay single-handedly unnerves the viewers with his brilliance. Sushin Shyam of the hard metal band 'The down Troddence' and Sumesh Parameshwar has blessed Kismath with their intense and odic songs. Suresh Rajan's frames have captured never seen before angles of Ponnani.

Surabhi Lakshmi, Binoy Namballa and Alencier Lay Lopez have carried their usual charm in this movie as well. Leaving aside few amateurish slips, Kismath will not be a disappointment and will undoubtedly decorate the wall of fame of new-wave Malayalam movies for touching many issues through a simple movie.

TOON NOOK

NIKHIL P SAM

