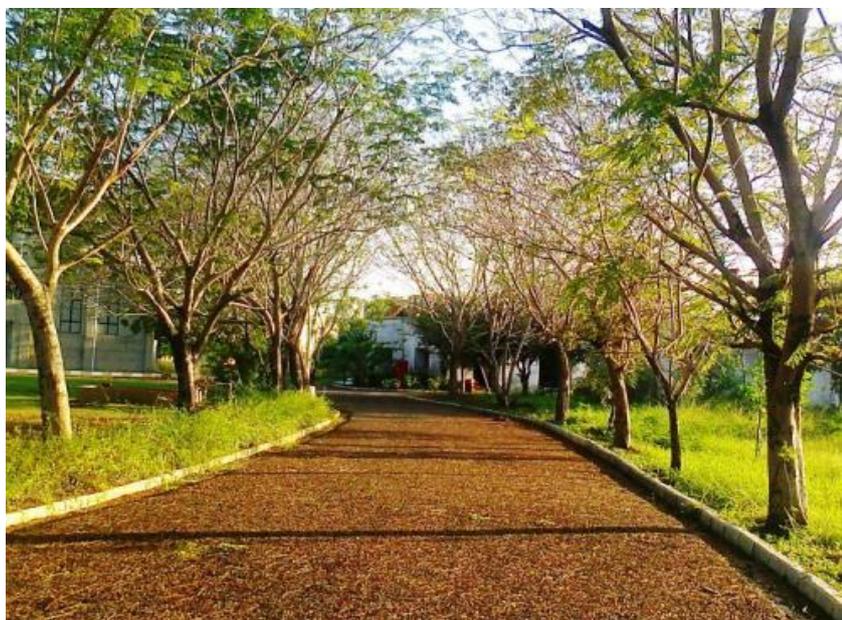


**Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development**  
Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu – 602 105



**Festival Guide Booklet**

06 & 07 February 2015

at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development

Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, India – 602 105



**BITS Pilani**  
K K Birla Goa Campus



**Festival Director:** Meenakshi Raman

**Festival Founder and Co-Director:** Rayson K. Alex

**Festival Booklet Editor:** S. Susan Deborah

*tiNai* Ecofilm Festival-Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (TEFF-RGNIYD) Guide Booklet

TEFF-RGNIYD 2015

Email: [info@teff.in](mailto:info@teff.in)

Cover Still from RGNIYD Archive

Published by the TEFF and RGNIYD

## Welcome Note

**Rayson K. Alex**  
**Festival Founder and Co-Director**

In the environmental history of India, films have not been considered an effective medium to represent our environment and to bring about change. Digital technology has made it handy for anyone with a camera or a mobile phone to document environmental issues, ecocommunities and ecological interrelationships between natural entities. However, though there are telling and compelling environmental stories and perspectives that individuals have documented, there are very few venues for them to be screened and viewed.

The success and reach of TEFF 2014 prompted the organisers to travel with TEFF to different parts of the country and TEFF at Sriperumbudur is the first place in our initiative. TEFF-RGNIYD 2015 invites you to partake in this new venture which brings together inter-disciplinarians like humanitarians, ecologists, activists, musicians and policy makers.

I welcome you to TEFF-RGNIYD 2015 at Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

**Joseph Thiyagarajan. A**  
**Festival Coordinator**

Lecturer, School of Life Skills Education & Social Harmony  
Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development  
Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, India  
&

**K. Samuel Moses Srinivas**  
**Festival Coordinator**

Assistant Professor, Department of English  
Madras Christian College  
Tambaram, Chennai

The hazards of today's environmental degradation have far-reaching effects in the lives of people. Protection of our environment is no longer an attribute but our duty and responsibility. This responsibility calls for action of various kinds in the protection of every element of our environment—a holistic approach. This cannot be achieved with technology/science/humanities alone; there should be a dynamic interaction between disciplines and disciplinarians. tiNai Ecofilm Festival in Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Youth Development aims to initiate a discourse among practitioners and theoreticians from various walks of life to get together in a single platform—TEFF-RGNIYD 2015. The event is targeted at the young minds, by sowing a seed of ecology, which will certainly grow, flower and fruit. As coordinators of TEFF-RGNIYD 2015, we proudly and profoundly present global concerns on ecology through the medium of film. Let these films inspire you to think and act ecologically.

We welcome you to TEFF-RGNIYD 2015.

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## Messages

**Latha Pillai**

**Director**

**Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development**

**Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu**

Indeed it is my pleasure to unveil the *tiNai* Ecofilm festival at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, India.

Youth are the backbone of any nation's well-being. They are an important source of creativity and drivers of social change. The Census of India 2011 reveals that India has the largest youth population in the world, with a median age of 25, around 66 per cent of the total population under the age of 35 years and they will have to live longer with the consequences of current environmental decisions than will their elders. They also have a sheer potential role towards protecting the greener environment, which is yet to be unravelled in Indian context. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to expose the importance of Eco-criticism to the contemporary youth through a vibrant channel called film festival. RGNIYD being the apex institute for youth development is concerned with shaping the mindset of youth to produce eco-friendly generation. I am sure this event would ignite the ecological spirit among youth and contribute for the larger picture of sustainable environment.

**K.E. Raman**

**Professor and Director, BITS Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus**

At the outset I would like to congratulate the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu for hosting the *tiNai* Ecofilm Festival. The word "ecology" has become the key word of our times and by conducting this festival, RGNIYD is joining the discourse and discussion on the preservation and conservation of our culture and nature. I am glad that the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of our Campus has joined hands with RGNIYD in organizing this festival. I wish the organizers and participants a successful and resourceful event.

**Meenakshi Raman**

**Professor and Head**

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**BITS Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus**

I am extremely delighted to share through this message my enthusiasm about the *tiNai* Ecofilm Festival (TEFF) organized by the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Chennai during 06-07 February 2015 in association with Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus. I appreciate the efforts put forth by Dr. Latha Pillai, her colleagues and Dr. Rayson K Alex of BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus, in organizing this important film festival with a view to provide a forum for Ecofilm enthusiasts to share their films not only with people of similar interest but also with a wider audience comprising students, faculty and experts in Ecocriticism.

With films becoming increasingly important in creating an impact on our societies, we need to focus on using them as an effective medium for enhancing awareness on our environment among people of all ages. TEFF, I am sure, would serve as a starting point to this endeavour by sensitizing youth towards green environment. The films which are screened during this unique film festival and the workshops conducted by Ecofilm experts

would go a long way in creating not only an everlasting impact on their minds but also persuade them to spread the green awareness among their respective societies. In addition, the festival may impact many academic institutions to start a course in Ecocriticism.

I wish TEFF great success in achieving its objectives.

**Rayson K. Alex**  
**Assistant Professor, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani**  
**K.K. Birla Goa Campus**

*tiNai* is a pan-Indian ecocritical theory, poetic convention and a social order of the prehistoric people in India. *tiNai* is a well-structured critical tool to analyse texts. It (was and) is a poetic convention because literature is a cultural production of a community, though written by an individual. Critically explained, *tiNai* is an interesting combination of the qualities of nature, culture and super-nature. Cultural productions with combinations of two or three of these could depict *tiNai*. TEFF is a conceptual film festival unlike other festivals in India and abroad.

*tiNai* Ecofilm Festival is a continuation of the academic work that a group of committed people were doing for the past 10 years under the banner of OSLE-India (Organization for Studies in Literature and Environment-India) and later renamed as *tiNai*. OSLE-India organized academic conferences, seminars, workshops in schools, colleges and universities of national and international repute. They also introduced “Ecocriticism” as an academic course in various educational institutions, across the country. In 2007, responding to the need to address the physical and visual imagery of ecology and create visual documents, all the media committed people in the group joined to form The Ecomedia Team. Since then, The Ecomedia Team commissioned projects, organized ecofilm screenings and discussions in various educational institutions and made ecodocumentaries.

The objectives of TEFF are to popularize the medium of ecocinema, to initiate ecofilmmaking in educational institutions, to encourage students to make ecofilms and to promote more research in the field. TEFF is meant for people who care for their environment for those who worry about their land and life on it. The success and reach of TEFF 2014 prompted the organisers to conduct TEFF 2015 in Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu as a precursor to TEFF 2015 at BITS-Goa.

A bouquet of 15 ecological/nature/environmental films is scheduled to be screened during the festival, showcasing local and global ecological issues from India and the world. I am sure our delegates will have an awe-inspiring two days of creativity, innovation and meeting similar kinds of people. The festival offers you workshops on interesting topics, lectures, demonstrations and consultation in ecocriticism.

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Latha Pillai, The Director of RGNIYD, for her vision and perseverance to support this cause provide us with everything that we need to organize this event. I would like to welcome you all, especially our distinguished guests and delegates, to RGNIYD, Tamil Nadu and TEFF 2015. I hope that this festival will indeed be very memorable for all of us.

**Nirmal Selvamony**  
**Associate Professor of English**  
**Central University of Tamil Nadu**

To my knowledge, film has not yet been adequately approached from a *tiNai*ological perspective. In this regard, Alex’s effort at BITS Goa and now at Rajiv Gandhi National

Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, is a pioneering and historic one. I hope TEFF-RGNIYD 2015, like its first edition at BITS-Goa with its rich fare for the eye, ear and mind, will open up new avenues of *tiNai*ological scholarship and inspire many more young scholars to explore the terrain. My deep sense of gratitude, I would like to convey to BITS Goa, and RGNIYD, Tamil Nadu, for providing the necessary “space” for an event such as this, and my very best wishes to Alex and his team, and also to all the participants of TEFF 2015. Enjoy, Share.

**Mathieu Roy**  
**Director, BBC, Canada**

Making *Surviving Progress* was a long journey that started in 2005. Researching a film about progress is an infinite journey from the Big Bang to Global Warming! This project has made me much more aware of the mechanisms of our civilizations, its destructive power and the massive media propaganda that prevents a wider, honest and unemotional conversation about the global military regime that is highjacking 'democratic' and legal institutions worldwide.

It is an honour to learn that TEFF is in its second edition and I fervently hope that TEFF-RGNIYD 2015 is as engaging and stimulating as TEFF 2014, of which I was a part of.

I wish the festival all success and hope that TEFF finds a permanent place in the literary and film circles of India.

**Mark Deeble**  
**Director, BBC, U.K.**

We would like to congratulate the organizing team for putting on such an important festival. We were honoured that our films were invited to be showcased. We believe that the genre of 'Ecofilms' represents an important and creative way of focusing global attention on wildlife and the environment, and the threats that both face.

Films have the ability to make us wonder at the natural world - and wonder, promotes love and from that grows care - and ultimately action. We hope the festival continues to grow and reach an ever-increasing audience. We wish it all the best for the future.

Keep up the good work!

**Adela Peeva**  
**Film director and Producer**  
**Bulgaria**

I send my best wishes to all participants and organizers of the second edition of *tiNai* Ecofilm Festival 2015. I hope together we could succeed to protect our common home - the Earth.

**Pramod K. Nayar**  
**Professor of English**  
**The University of Hyderabad, India**

TEFF is a notable effort in 'screening Nature'. Positioning the films between education and entertainment, TEFF is a topical project that combines aesthetics with politics in a larger cause. Indy media, such as TEFF, remains one of the key modes of enunciating the messages of ecocritical projects. My best wishes TEFF's new edition.

## Programme Schedule

### First Day – 06 February 2015

#### Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD

09.00 a.m. to 09.45 a.m. – Registration and Tea

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09.45 a.m. to 10.35 a.m. - Inauguration

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09.45 a.m. - Arrival of Guests  
09.46 a.m. to 09.50 a.m. - Welcome of Guests  
09.50 a.m. to 09.55 a.m. - Earth Prayer  
09.55 a.m. to 10.05 a.m. - Welcome Address - The Director, RGNIYD  
10.05 a.m. to 10.10 a.m. - Lighting the Lamp and Releasing TEFF booklet  
10.10 a.m. to 10.20 a.m. - Chief Guest's Address – Sunanda Bhat, Filmmaker  
10.20 a.m. to 10.25 a.m. - Introducing tiNai Ecofilm Festival – Meenakshi Raman  
10.25 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. - Address – The Registrar, RGNIYD  
10.30 a.m. to 10.35 a.m. - Vote of Thanks – Joseph Thiagarajan  
Coordinator of the Festival

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10.35 a.m. to 10.45 a.m. – Tea

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10.45 a.m. to 12.15 p.m. – Inaugural Film Screening – *Have you Seen the Arana?*  
(Duration: 1 hour 12 minutes)  
12.15 p.m. to 12.45 p.m. – Discussion led by Sunanda Bhat  
(The Director of *Have you seen the Arana?*)  
12.45 p.m. to 01.15 p.m. – Screening: *Timbaktu* (Duration: 35 minutes)  
01.15 p.m. to 01.30 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K Alex

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01.30 p.m. to 02.15 p.m. – Lunch

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02.15 p.m. to 03.15 p.m. – Ecotalk: P. Dayanandan  
Title: **Web-of-Life: Multidimensional and Mysterious**  
03.15 p.m. to 03.30 p.m. – Discussion

#### Parallel Session: I

##### Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD

03.15 p.m. to 05.15 p.m. – Workshop: Sunanda Bhatt  
Title: **Textures of Life .... Layers of Meaning:  
Understanding the intricacies of non-fiction cinema**

#### Parallel Session: II

##### Venue: Seminar Hall, RGNIYD

03.15 p.m. to 05.15 p.m. – Workshop: Rayson K. Alex  
Title: **Ecofilm Appreciation**

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04.00 p.m. to 04.15 p.m. – Tea

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## Music Concert

**Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD**

04.15 p.m. to 04.30 p.m. – A presentation on the Culture and Ecology of Bamboo – S. Susan Deborah

04.30 p.m. to 05.30 p.m. – Music Concert by Vayali Bamboo Orchestra  
(The philosophy of Bamboo Orchestra is to compose and perform music which is derived from bamboo, a natural material. The creation of bamboo music transcends all ethnic identities, personalities, multitudes of music knowledge and genres when each person humbly faces the bamboo--one of nature's gifts--and its resonating sound. The process of such creative musical synthesis results in the evolution of new relationships between nature and people, and between people themselves.)

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## Second Day – 07 February 2015

**Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD**

### Theme I: The Web-of-Life

09.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. – Screening: *The Queen of Trees* (Duration 55 minutes)

10.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. – Ecotalk: Nirmal Selvamony  
Title: **Tree as *tiNai* and *tiNai* as Tree**

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11.00 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. – Tea Break  
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### Parallel Session: I

**Venue: Class Room - D**

11.15 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. – tiNai Music (Artist: Nirmal Selvamony on Guitar)

### Parallel Session: II

**Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD**

#### Theme II: Land, Justice and Myths

11.15 a.m. to 11.45 a.m. – Screening: *City's Edge* (Duration: 31 minutes)

11.45 a.m. to 12.00 a.m. – Discussion led by K. Samuel Moses Srinivas

12.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. – Screening: *The Story of Mudugar* (Duration: 29 minutes)

12.30 p.m. to 12.45 p.m. – Discussion led by K. Samuel Moses Srinivas

12.45 p.m. to 01.15 p.m. – Screening: *Get Up Stand Up* (Duration: 28 minutes)

01.15 p.m. to 01.30 p.m. – Discussion led by K. Samuel Moses Srinivas

### Parallel Session: III

**Venue: Seminar Hall, RGNIYD**

#### Theme III: Urban Ecology

11.15 a.m. to 11.50 a.m. – Screening: *The Plastic Cow* (Duration: 34 minutes)

11.50 a.m. to 12.00 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K. Alex

12.00 p.m. to 12.20 p.m. – Screening: *E-Wasteland* (Duration: 20 minutes)

12.20p.m. to 12.35 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K. Alex

12.35p.m. to 12.50 p.m. – Screening: *Pristine Water* (Duration: 16 minutes)

12.50 p.m. to 01.00 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K. Alex

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01.00 p.m. to 02.15 p.m. – Lunch  
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**Parallel Session: I**

**Theme IV: Interconnections**

**Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD**

- 02.15 p.m. to 03.15 p.m. – Screening: *The Tides of Kirawira* (Duration: 52 minutes)
- 03.15 p.m. to 03.30 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K. Alex
- 03.30 p.m. to 04.30 p.m. – Screening: *Mzima-Haunt of the River Horse* (Duration: 52 minutes)
- 04.30 p.m. to 04.40 p.m. – Discussion led by Rayson K. Alex

**Parallel Session: II**

**Theme V: Land and Community Living**

**Venue: Seminar Hall, RGNIYD**

- 02.15 p.m. to 02.45 p.m. – Screening: *The Rhythm of Rutledge* (Duration: 28 minutes)
- 02.45 p.m. to 03.00 p.m. – Discussion led by S. Susan Deborah
- 03.00 p.m. to 04.15 p.m. – Screening: *In God's Land* (Duration: 75 minutes)
- 04.15 p.m. to 04.30 p.m. – Discussion led by S. Susan Deborah

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04.30 p.m. to 04.45 p.m. – Tea  
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**Screening of films from the competition section**

**Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD**

04.45 p.m. to 05.15 p.m.

**Valediction (05.15 p.m. to 05.45 p.m.)**

- 05.15 p.m. to 05.18 p.m. – Welcoming the gathering
- 05.18 p.m. to 05.23 p.m. – Summary of the Festival – S. Susan Deborah
- 05.23 p.m. to 05.28 p.m. – Felicitations – The Chief Guest
- 05.28 p.m. to 05.33 p.m. – Felicitations – The Director, RGNIYD
- 05.33 p.m. to 05.35 p.m. – Declaration of the prizes for the Ecofilm competition
- 05.35 p.m. to 05.40 p.m. – Responses of the award-winning filmmakers
- 05.40 p.m. to 05.45 p.m. – Felicitations - The Registrar, RGNIYD
- 05.45 p.m. to 05.55 p.m. – Responses of the participants
- 05.55 p.m. – National Anthem

*The earth has received the embraces of the sun*

**Behold, my brothers, the spring has come; the earth has received the embraces of the sun and we shall soon see the results of that love!**

Every seed has awakened and so has all animal life. It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being and we therefore yield to our neighbours, even our animal neighbours, the same right as ourselves, to inhabit this land.

Yet hear me, my people, we have now to deal with another race - small and feeble when our fathers first met them, but now great and overbearing. Strangely enough they have a mind to till the soil and the love of possessions is a disease with them ... They claim this mother of ours, the earth, for their own, and fence their neighbours away; they deface her with their buildings and their refuse.

They threaten to take [the land] away from us. My brothers, shall we submit, or shall we say to them: "First kill me before you take possession of my Fatherland."

Sitting Bull's Speech at the Powder River Council, 1877.

(<http://www.pantheism.net/paul/history/native-americans.htm>)

## Film Archive – Synopses of films

### 1. *Have you seen the Arana*

**Director:** Sunanda Bhat I **Banner of production:** Songline Films I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** India I **Language:** Malayalam and English (with subtitles in English) I **Duration:** 73min

**Synopsis:** Set in Wayanad, part of the fragile ecosystem of the western mountain range in South India, the film takes you on a journey through a region that is witnessing drastic transformation in the name of ‘development’. A woman’s concern over the disappearance of medicinal plants from the forest, a farmer’s commitment to growing traditional varieties of rice organically and a cash crop cultivator’s struggle to survive amidst farmers’ suicides, offer fresh insights into shifting relations between people, knowledge systems and environment. Interwoven into contemporary narratives is an ancient tribal creation myth that traces the passage of their ancestors across this land, recalling past ways of reading and mapping the terrain.

### 2. *Timbaktu*

**Directors:** Sushmit Ghosh and Rintu Thomas I **Banner of production:** Black Ticket Films I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 29min I **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** When a small farming community in South India decided to switch from their decades-old practice of chemical agriculture to organic farming, little did they know that they were planting the seeds of a silent revolution. By showcasing the exemplary efforts of farmers of a tiny village in Andhra Pradesh, *Timbaktu* explores critical issues of food security and sovereignty. At its heart, *Timbaktu* looks at the relationship that a farmer shares with her land, her seeds and raises critical questions about food, the very essence of human life.

### 3. *The Queen of Trees*

**Directors:** Mark Deeble & Victoria Stone I **Banner of production:** BBC I **Year of Production:** 2005 I **Country:** UK I **Duration:** 52min I **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** Nature reveals the importance of an unlikely partnership between a regal tree and a tiny wasp in *The Queen of Trees*. It may be one of nature’s oldest oddest couples: a tiny wasp that can barely be seen, a giant fig tree, the sycamore, which shelters a remarkable menagerie of wildlife among its limbs. The wasp and the fig depend on each other for survival. Without the fig, the wasp would have nowhere to lay its eggs. *The Queen of Trees* shows this delicate dance of survival in exquisite detail, including spectacular close-ups of the wasp’s remarkable life inside a ripening fig.

### 4. *City's Edge*

**Directors:** Sandeep Kr. Singh, Shweta Radhakrishnan, Sharib Ali, Gin Khan Siam & Abhishek Yadav I **Banner of production:** Tata Institute of Social Sciences I **Year of Production:** 2011 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 19min I **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** The Deonar Dumping Ground is the largest dumping ground in Asia. Every day, thousands of trucks deposit half of all the garbage that the city produces. And everyday most of it finds its way back- picked and processed by the many men, women and children who make a living off the waste of the city. The dump is a powerful symbol of most of the city’s people who are constantly dumped, recycled, and dumped again, while perpetually remaining out of sight. The film explores this space through Mohammad Hussain aka Babu, 11 year old rag picker and Haroon, a local scrap dealer.

5. *The Story of Mudugar*

**Directors:** Rayson K. Alex and Arun Bose S. I **Year of Production:** 2009 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 29 minutes I **Language:** Malayalam and English (with Subtitles in English)  
**Synopsis:** An ecoethnographic account of the life, land, beliefs, myths, stories and songs of Mudugar – a tribal community in Attappady, Nilgiri Biosphere.

6. *Get up Stand Up*

**Director:** Sreemith N. I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 30 minutes I **Language:** Tamil, Malayalam and English

**Synopsis:** The documentary, *Get Up, Stand Up*, 30 minutes in duration, is in some ways, an answer to many of the myths surrounding the nuclear power projects, the world over. Though this film is set particularly in the back drop of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project and the people's struggle against it, it raises almost all of the questions regarding the safety of nuclear plants, development and its imposition on a people, alternate sources of energy and their contribution to the total energy needs, the lack of scientific know-how in disposing nuclear waste, the dependence on foreign resources in the running of a nuclear power plant anywhere in the Third World countries, the ups and downs of the People's Movement Against Nuclear Energy (PMANE), in Kudankulam etc, etc.

7. *The Plastic Cow*

**Director:** Kunal Vohra I **Banner of production:** Altair Films I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 34min

**Language:** English

**Synopsis:** The film focuses on the plight of cows, who are increasingly becoming unwitting victims of the ubiquitous plastic bags, which we use and carelessly discard every day. Among the junk they feed on there are the plastic bags that we've put our garbage and kitchen waste in and discarded. And, because cows can't open these bags, they eat them whole for the rotting scraps of food inside them. The focus of the film is on the cruelty to cows and other animals, who suffer because of our excesses and carelessness. The film is also a comment on the hypocrisy of the cult around the holy cow.

8. *E-Wasteland*

**Director:** David Feedle I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** Australia I **Duration:** 20min I **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** Have you ever wondered what happens to your electronics at the end of their life?

Almost 50 million tonnes of e-waste (electronic waste) are generated worldwide every year. A large volume of second-hand and condemned electronic goods arrive in developing countries from the "developed" world, with a significant quantity arriving as e-waste, exported illegally as second hand goods.

Without dialogue or narration, E-WASTELAND presents a visual portrait of unregulated e-waste recycling in Ghana, West Africa, where electronics are not seen for what they once were, but rather for what they have become.

9. *Pristine Water*

**Directors:** Niyati Sengar & Amaresh Kumar Singh I **Year of Production:** 2012 I **Country:** India I **Duration:** 16 min 25 sec I

**Language:** English

**Synopsis:** In India, almost all rivers are worshipped as goddesses. For a majority of people in India Yamuna is Jeevan Dayini. However, the Yamuna that runs through present day Delhi is an open sewer and is clinically dead. The film, "Pristine Water", narrates the story of

Yamuna through the people whose lives are organized around it. There is an entire cultural life around the river and people still take ritualistic baths in the river. The film presents a glimpse of the life around the Yamuna and tries to find out the importance and significance of the river in the lives of people living on its banks. The film tries to bring out the plight of India's one of the most holy river through the eyes of the people whose lives depends on the river.

*10. The Tides of Kirawira*

**Directors:** Mark Deeble and Victoria Stone | **Year of Production:** 1994 | **Country:** UK |

**Duration:** 53 minutes | **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** The film is an absorbing exploration of the seasonal pools that litter the parched Serengeti plains. The story records the daily drama and intrigue that unfolds in these shallow 'ponds' as the resident clam, fish and crabs are forced to adopt intricate survival strategies.

*11. Mzima-Haunt of the River Horse*

**Directors:** Mark Deeble & Victoria Stone | **Year of Production:** 2003 | **Country:** UK |

**Language:** English | **Duration:** 52min

**Synopsis:** Kenya's Mzima Springs host a lush oasis where an intricate web of life revolves around massive hippopotamus who live there. The 3,000-pound herbivores raise families while fuelling a dynamic food chain that stretches from terrapins to crocodiles. The vibrant springs provide a place for the females to soak and rest their tired heads while the males fish and guard their territory. Hippo calves spend much of their first weeks of life avoiding danger – in the form of a crocodile or a territorial male hippo – and learn early to stick close to their mother for protection.

The story centres on the extraordinary relationships the hippos have developed with all the springs creatures and ends with the infanticide of a tiny baby hippo that had been born in the pool - the most dramatic and poignant sequence that this award-winning team have witnessed in twenty years of filming.

*12. The Rhythm of Rutledge*

**Directors:** The Last Volunteer | **Year of Production:** 2012 | **Country:** The United States of America | **Duration:** 28min | **Language:** English

**Synopsis:** Rutledge, Missouri is a town of one hundred residents, one general store, zero stoplights, and thousands of acres of corn and soy. This rural landscape is also home to three interdependent intentional communities: Sandhill Farm, an income-sharing agricultural community, Dancing Rabbit, a thriving off-the-grid ecovillage and Red Earth Farms, a young community of homesteads.

An experiment in observational cinema, *The Rhythm of Rutledge* immerses the audience into the environments of these communities, allowing minimal dialogue to echo through long sections of observation, weaving ideology with the beauty of hands-on work with the land.

*13. In God's Land (Kadavulin Nilathil)*

**Director:** Pankaj Rishi Kumar | **Year of Production:** 2012 | **Country:** India | **Duration:** 74 minutes | **Language:** Tamil and English | **Synopsis:** After taming a former wasteland through hard work and sweat and creating a community, the settlers start living there. The mythical birth of their village God Sudalai Swami unfolds the village's unique journey to fight the oppression of the 'big' Vanamamalai Temple. Now that the clergy owns the land, the settlers are reduced to being tenant farmers and must make way for redevelopment after the land is sold off for a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). A dispute over God's land begins. *In*

*God' Land* is not simply about the fight between the priests and the farmers. Using animation it recounts the history of the land and satirizes the exploitation perpetuated by religion and class distinction. The film looks at the land within the larger issue of development, forcing us to recognize the totalitarian attitude of the ideals of development, ostensibly to bring economic prosperity but rarely a benefit to real users. But the film's most interesting element is the people living on this god's land. Instead of fighting the temple or government, they accept this dire reality and try to find comfort in god's will, perhaps because for them it is still the land of god.

### **Earth Prayer**

Grandfather, Great Spirit, once more behold me on earth and lean to hear my feeble voice.  
You lived first, and you are older than all need, older than all prayer.  
All things belong to you – the two-legged, the four-legged, the wings of the air, and all green things that live.  
You have set the powers of the four quarters of the earth to cross each other.  
You have made me cross the good road and road of difficulties, and where they cross, the place is holy.  
Day in, day out, forevermore, you are the life of things.  
Hey! Lean to hear my feeble voice.  
At the center of the sacred hoop  
You have said that I should make the tree to bloom.  
With tears running, O Great Spirit, my Grandfather,  
With running eyes I must say  
The Tree has never bloomed  
Here I stand, and the tree is withered.  
Again, I recall the great vision you gave me.  
It may be that some little root of the sacred tree still lives.  
Nourish it then  
That it may leaf  
And bloom  
And fill with singing birds!  
Hear me, that the people may once again  
Find the good road  
And the shielding tree.

(<http://www.worldhealingprayers.com/2.html>)

## Lectures

### Lecture I (06 February 2015; Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD)

P. Dayanandan

Emeritus Professor and Former Head

Department of Botany, Madras Christian College, Tambaram

#### **Title: Web-of-Life: Multidimensional and Mysterious**

**Abstract:** Embedded within the Web-of-Life are mysteries not unlike of the cosmic web. What science reveals of this multidimensional web are often stranger than fiction truly fit for poetic rapture and celebrations! With Darwin and a *Sangam* poet I declare: “Chimpanzee is your sister and so is the *punnai* tree” and invite you to celebrate the grandeur of the web that evolved over four billion years. But the celebrant needs radical reorientation of cherished concepts of time and history, relationships and place in the web, and willingness to shed pride, prejudice and dogmas.

### Lecture II (07 February 2015; Venue: Auditorium, RGNIYD)

Nirmal Selvamony

Head, Department of English

Central University of Tamil Nadu, Thiruvarur

#### **Title: Tree as *tiNai* and *tiNai* as Tree**

**Abstract:** There is no better movie than Queen of Trees to know what ecology is all about. Very graphically and powerfully a tree exemplifies the concept of interrelationship (the basic meaning of the Tamil concept of *tiNai*), and, thereby, ecology itself, which is based on the latter concept. When ecology cross-fertilized criticism, a new critical approach, originally known as “literary ecology” and later as “ecocriticism,” emerged in the United States in the 1970s. The presentation will review the different names of this criticism, and also the problem posed by these “unstable signifiers.” It will also briefly introduce the history of this criticism, and consider its place in the departments of English. The definition advanced by William Rueckert and the possibility of extending it will also be discussed at some length. A sample demonstration of ecocritical analysis will also be part of the first segment of the presentation. The next segment will explain and illustrate what the present writer calls “envirocriticism.” The third segment will be devoted to a variety of criticism the present writer calls “*tiNai* criticism,” which is based on the theory of *tiNai* expounded in the early Tamil sources, especially, *tolkaappiyam*. Discussion in this segment will close with the argument that *tiNai* is best represented by the tree.

## Workshops

### Workshop I

**Title: Textures of Life ... Layers of Meaning: Understanding the intricacies of non-fiction cinema**

**by Filmmaker Sunanda Bhat**

Sunanda's interest in documentaries is to tell the stories of people living in the margins of a fascinatingly intricate and stratified Indian society. She believes that unravelling these layers reveal glimpses of life that are often far more interesting than fiction.

In a two-hour session Sunanda will share with the students her journey in the making of her feature length documentary "Have you seen the arana?" In the process she will discuss important aspects that go into the making of creative documentaries - generating ideas and concepts, research and development, different forms of storytelling, structure and form of non-fiction films, casting and characters and post production.

### Workshop II

**Title: Ecofilm Appreciation**

**by Rayson K. Alex**

The workshop is to equip participants to appreciate ecological documentaries. By introducing the various genres in documentary in general, Rayson K. Alex will discuss ecodocumentaries, focusing on the prefix "eco" in ecodocumentaries by showing examples of nature, wildlife, environmental and ecological documentaries. Apart from the thematic understanding of documentaries, the workshop will focus on the structure of documentaries as well. Issues such as visual affect, Ecofilm aesthetics, ecoirony and visual ecometaphors will be analysed through examples from documentaries. The methodology will include discussions, questions & answers, worksheets, interpreting video clips and identifying and discussing econarratives for documentaries.

## **About Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu**

Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development functions as a vital resource centre with its multi-faceted functions of offering academic programmes at Post Graduate level encompassing various dimensions of youth development, engaging in seminal research in the vital areas of youth development and coordinating Training Programmes for State agencies and the officials of youth organizations, besides the Extension and Outreach initiatives across the country.

The Institute functions as a think-tank of the Ministry and premier organization of youth-related activities in the country. As the apex institute at the national level, it works in close cooperation with the NSS, NYKS and other youth organizations in the implementation of training programmes. The Institute is a nodal agency for training youth as a facilitator of youth development activities in rural, urban and also tribal areas.

The RGNIYD serves as a youth observatory and depository in the country thereby embarking on youth surveillance on youth-related issues. It has a wide network with various organizations working for the welfare and development of young people and serves as a mentor.

## **About BITS Pilani University**

Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani, a leading Institution of higher education and a deemed University under section 3 of the UGC act offers a wide range of Bachelors, Masters and Ph.D. programmes in English, Humanities, Social Sciences, Management, Economics, Sciences, Technology, Pharmacy and Engineering. With illustrious legacy, modern campuses and alumni in leadership positions across the world, BITS-Pilani has been the institute of choice for top students year after year.

## **About BITS-Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus**

Goa is a well-known and popular hotspot on the tourist map of India and the world. The name immediately brings to one's mind the lush green meadows, hills and valleys, the sea and its attractive beaches. This charm and beauty sets the right ambience for BITS, Pilani - K. K. Birla Goa Campus, an Institute of excellence in Technology and Sciences.

The Institute is committed to generating, disseminating, and preserving knowledge, and to working with others to bring this knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges. BITS is dedicated to providing its students with an education that combines rigorous academic study and the excitement of discovery with the support and intellectual stimulation of a diverse campus community. We seek to develop in each member of the BITS community the ability and passion to work wisely, creatively, and effectively for the betterment of humankind.

BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa campus, currently houses 10 departments spanning the gamut of pure science, applied science, humanities and management. Each of these departments is notable for their excellent faculty, the curriculum offered, the research it conducts and the number of sponsored projects the department has won.

## **Ecocriticism and Indian Ecocriticism**

**Nirmal Selvamony**

**Central University of Tamil Nadu**

Ecocriticism remains an infant wanting proper foster care. After Joseph Meeker's and William Rueckert's introductory attempts, this new critical approach, as defined by the latter, has been virtually abandoned especially in the USA with the emergence of what I may call, "envirocriticism." The latter has found global patronage and thrives like any invasive species. What goes by the name "Green Studies" is a close cousin of Envirocriticism. Besides these, India has its own *tiNai* theory and criticism which precede ecocriticism by two millennia and *tiNaiological* theory and criticism developed at Madras Christian College in the 1980s. Currently, we find all the three major varieties in various parts of India—ecocriticism, envirocriticism and the *tiNaiological* approach. (Rueckertian) Ecocriticism has been nurtured in India for three decades by, what may be called, the Tambaram school of which a prominent scholar is Rayson K. Alex, the organizer of TEFF 2014. Several departments of English and Humanities in India offer courses in envirocriticism under numerous names. The *tiNai*-based course commenced at Madras Christian College in the early 80s (perhaps, even before ecocriticism was offered as a separate course in the USA) and coexisted with Rueckertian ecocriticism without any difficulty. Now these two varieties are an integral part of the postgraduate and doctoral programmes of the Central University of Tamil Nadu also. Of the many earnest efforts to promote the indigenous variety of Indian ecocriticism, TEFF 2014 is a significant one. I have no doubt that it will contribute to the strengthening of *tiNaiology* in general and *tiNai*-based programmes in the Indian academia in particular.

### **Ecocriticism at BITS Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus**

Ecocriticism has found its place in the Indian academy only in the last twenty years. The optional course titled "Ecocriticism" offered at BITS-Pilani, Goa Campus is intended to familiarize the learners with ecological, deep ecological and *tiNai* critical principles and show them how these could be effective critical tools. The course gives various perspectives on how ecology is a new paradigm in cultural and literary texts. The course was launched in June 2013 after approval from the Senate of the University. The objectives of the course are:

1. to introduce the learners to one of the major postmodern critical trends
2. to familiarize the learners with some key ecocritical concepts
3. to equip the students to create ecocritical documents in literary, cinematic and other artistic forms and
4. to train the learners in the application of the critical concepts to various cultural texts.

## **TEFF-RGNIYD Team**

### **Patrons**

#### **Latha Pillai**

Director

Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Tamil Nadu

#### **K.E. Raman**

Director, BITS Pilani, K.K. Birla Goa Campus

### **Festival Director**

Meenakshi Raman

### **Festival Founders and Co-Directors**

Rayson K. Alex

S. Susan Deborah

### **Festival Chief Coordinators**

#### **Joseph Thiyagarajan**

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