

## PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

Whether it is the rapist's lynching in *Dimapur* or the social ostracism of *Murugan*, whether it is the beef ban in *Maharashtra* or the liquor ban in *Kerala*, whether it is the patriotic denial of *Priya Pillai's* right to dissent or the nationalistic refusal to air the documentary 'India's Daughter', whether it is Comrade *Pansare's* corporeal end or the legal trap surrounding *Teesta Setalvad...* questions like "Is this biological determinism or a social construct? Is my marginalization as an artiste personal or political?" emerge. Transformation of an individual sin/act into social aesthetics, and our tacit-explicit participation in the same poses a daunting hurdle in self-resolve. Times when such events doubt the personal endurance while demonstrating meaningless mockery of seemingly singular struggles, one turns to Art whether it is on canvas or on celluloid. Films like the ones I and *Sandhya* are presenting to you, is an exercise of catharsis for us! These films also underscore the feminine in cinema in commemoration of the International Woman's Day just passed on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

The lack of apparent meaning in *Iris's* life in *The Match Factory Girl* could be that of any woman on a city street of Finland during recession. *Satrapa's* internal conflict in *Persepolis* or a silent woman's scream of rage in *The Patience Stone* against repressive religious patriarchy could be that of any Iranian or Afghan woman seeking freedom. What binds these protagonists is their defiant self respect. The cumulative fight in *Moolade* or *Marina Abramovic's* personal resistance in *The Artist is Present* reflects hope that personal rise can crush the tapeworm of subjugation. At the end, one gets a surreal experience through the hyperrealist remnants of each film.

While we are watching these films, I'm sure few more Siberian Cranes raised in captivity must be following Putin's motorized delta-plane, huge stretch of *Ganges* must have been projected to be cleaned using the auction money amassed from The Golden Pinstripe Suit, and the separating threshold between personal and political must have been blurred!

**AMOL PALEKAR & SANDHYA GOKHALE**