An Oasis English Press Publication

The Moonlit Missives



Issue One

Editorial

Happy Halloween! It has been quite a happening day! From taking credit for all the work done yesterday to bullying my juniors into agreeing, I have really achieved a lot.

However, what I'm not achieving is writing this useless editorial. In every fest press, I have scoffed at those incompetent Chief Editors who were always scrambling at the last minute for something to write. Smugly looking down on them is now just a hazy memory, as my designers urge me to 'write anything at this point because we also have to sleep.'

Looking around me, I am really grateful to everyone who is still here at 7 AM. But then, of course, I realise that I'm also here. So I'm thankful to myself as well, the best of all those who remain (not my words since I'm very humble).

Saumya (spelled G-O-A-T)
Editor-in-Chief

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Chief Guest Interview

It was hours before the official high-energy Inauguration and the Oasis English Press (OEP) had the absolute privilege of sitting down with the Chief Guest, Siddhant Bhatia, an acclaimed musician and Grammy-nominee.

Coming from a highly academic background—with a family firmly rooted in education and professionality—Mr. Bhatia's entry into the world of arts was vastly organic and profound. He was introduced to music early on by his mother, and he naturally gravitated towards classical music and masterpieces. He found a humbling fascination in the complex compositions of Pandit Bhimsen Joshi before finally refining his craft looking up to revered musicians like Ustad Munir Khan, and later studying music production and business in Australia.

Mr. Bhatia deeply reflected on his core artistic vision: a relentless pursuit of spirituality. He described music as a divine gift from God, instead of a mere acquired skill, and he aimed to create a global spiritual experience. His goal was to seamlessly weave chants, mantras, and chakras into his contemporary compositions, which birthed 'Sounds of Kumbha' and the surging cultural phenomenon of 'Bhajan Clubbing'. 'Sounds of Kumbha' was a mystical and flowing collaboration that was born naturally out of the preparations for the religious sacred gathering, while 'Bhajan Clubbing' bridged traditional devotional chanting with modern and engaging community formats.

Talking about global recognition, Mr. Bhatia recalled the surreal moment that he learnt of his Grammy nomination while sitting in a hotel room. He shared that his mother, friends, and collaborators were all 'left completely spellbound with the grace that was awarded to them'. Despite this, he admitted that he had never taken a break to celebrate his milestones of success, true to his relentless work ethic.

He said that he chose to instead thrive in a self-driven and creative chaos where all his obstacles were vital fuel for his personal and artistic growth.

The topic of cultural fests like Oasis came up, and when asked about their importance within engineering institutions such as BITS, Mr. Bhatia championed the event as a crucial outlet for the brain. He called it an essential mechanism that fostered human creativity, especially since the current era was heavily influenced by Generative A.I. tools like ChatGPT. He further emphasised that more cultural spaces should exist to encourage the raw and unhindered expression that lives inside the current youth.

To conclude with some heartfelt advice for young aspiring artists and student musicians, Mr. Bhatia urged them not to follow fleeting industry trends. Instead, he advised students to build a separate and more sustainable source of income so that their artistic growth can remain pure, unhurried, and fundamentally true to themselves.

Guest of Honour Interview

Before an energetic and eventful inauguration, the Oasis English Press sat down with the Guest of Honour, Antara Raju Srivastava—filmmaker, storyteller, and researcher whose work bridges cinema, history, showcasing the human stories behind extraordinary acts of courage.

Her journey as filmmaker includes, most notably, the web-series "Operation Safed Sagar" which they began conceptualising in 2018—originally as a feature film. She played a pivotal role as researcher and associate director in shaping the narrative of the Indian Airforce's courage and sacrifice during the Kargil War. She also worked on Netflix's documentary film, "The Last Salute", as the co-producer and her feature film, "Vodka Diaries", as associate producer.



Recipient of the prestigious National Bravery Award in 2006, at just twelve years of age, Antara added that the experience was a great encouragement for her and had been her inspiration to tell stories of courage and bravery. These themes were ingrained in her values and her art through her father, the late comedian Raju Srivastava, who always pushed her to be more confident, bold, and brave.

Talking about success, she explained that though the reception to "Operation Safed Sagar" had been overwhelming and had given her a lot of satisfaction, she still did not feel successful. She aspires to keep working hard and added that this is only the beginning of a long journey for her, where she would face many more highs and lows.

Antara said that one of her greatest inspirations had always been her father. He had been a strict and disciplined man—even though he was a stand-up comedian—which had helped her realise the hard work and dedication that goes into working in the creative field.

As a filmmaker she hopes to keep producing unique films that make noise and share the inspiring stories of India.
Giving advice to college students, Antara asked students to keep striving, keep dreaming, and most importantly executing said dreams. For students passionate about storytelling and filmmaking, she asked them to prepare themselves to work hard, to understand the workings of the field, and its technicalities before fully committing to it.

Antara was happy to see how dedicated the students of BITS were to art and creativity, applauding the deep-rooted club-culture. She explained how the arts are an integral part of the human experience and appreciated the stage that Oasis provides for them.
Concluding the interview, she said that while the creative fields may not always be necessary for survival, however, a life without them is not a life well-lived.

Treasure Hunt

Following the conclusion of the Inauguration ceremony on Day Zero of Oasis '26—and starting after a standard thirty-minute BST—the Informalz organised a late-night Treasure Hunt. Held at the FD-II QT, the event saw teams gather shortly past midnight to take part in it.

Unlike traditional treasure hunts that involve running across campus, this edition focused on a seated, mental challenge. Participants were provided with a shared Google Drive link containing five distinct puzzles along with their clues. The puzzles required teams to decode and decipher information across various mediums, ranging from analysing strategic chess positions to processing cryptic audio files for hidden messages.

Teams competed for a total prize pool of 2,500 rupees in current cash prizes, which allowed the winners to shop at the Oasis stalls as they wished. Despite the late hour following the Inauguration, the event maintained a steady turnout of puzzle enthusiasts. Speaking about the experience, one participant remarked that the seated format made the hunt feel surprisingly 'lite' compared to previous hunts this year, allowing teams to focus purely on solving the clues without the fatigue of navigating campus at night. Another attendee noted that while some of the clues were pretty difficult to catch on, the overall event made for an energetic start to the fest for them.

The event officially wrapped up at around 3:30 AM, with the winners being announced shortly afterwards. The overall setup of, 'no running, just brain braining', of the event provided a perfect prelude to all the other events lined up for Oasis.



Sukhmanch

On Day 1 of Oasis, the Department of Theatre took over the stage in the NAB Auditorium by organising Sukhmanch: a showcase of street and stage plays designed to do far more than just entertain. The event, scheduled for 7 PM, commenced half an hour late(as expected).

Sukhmanch theatre is a prominent New Delhi based theatre group known for its socio-political themes, and indeed the series of six plays conducted by the troupe targetted various social issues, primarily focusing on challenges faced by women.

'Karmawalia' began the event, featuring the plight of a young woman bound by the shackles of her marriage and how she finds her voice. The next play, titled 'saath sau bees kadam' focused on the struggles of a teenager fighting with problems of love, identity and mental health. This play in particular drew a huge amount of applause from the audience as it featured certain intimate, captivating scenes which the audience loved.

The auditorium started almost packed, and people slowly filled what was left of it as the show went on. Soon people were sitting on the floor, on the steps or even standing. The next two plays, labeled 'Lal Mirch' and 'Chhamak Chhalo' displayed vivid presentations on the matter of women objectification and violence inflicted upon women. 'Chhamak chhalo' starred a vibrant teenager, Chhalo, traumatised due to sexual assault by a passing 'motorwala'.

The fifth play titled 'Mard' attempted to portray what being a man is truly about and how women's voices are frequently silenced by society. It spotlighted a newlywed couple, Malik and Shamli as they navigated an arranged marriage. The last and final act, 'Yeh Kahani Nahi', was a tragic, poetic love story.

The event closed with the cast introducing themselves, giving a snapshot of their respective plays, and taking their final bows to the audience.

Classical Prof Show

The classical prof concert, featuring Vidushi Kruthi Vittal, Vidwan Vittal Rangan, and Vidwan Arjun Ganesh, drew an enthusiastic gathering of students and faculty members alike. The evening began with the traditional lighting of the lamp, symbolising the pursuit of knowledge, peace, and harmony.

The show in the main auditorium started with Vidushi Kruthi Vittal striking the opening note, backed by Vittal Rangan's violin and Arjun Ganesh's mridangam. The recital opened with the iconic Viriboni Varnam in Raga Bhairavi. The ensemble then moved on to Mahaganapatim, an invocation to Lord Ganesha, followed by Ninnuvina, a prayer to the Goddess. The highlight of the evening was the Ragam Tanam Pallavi in Charukesi, set to Adi Talam.

The artists also made room for requests from the audience between the planned compositions, adding an element of spontaneity to the recital. Broadening the repertoire beyond traditional Carnatic compositions, the ensemble presented Abhir Gulal, a popular Marathi abhang in praise of Lord Vitthal. The recital drew to a close with a lively Thillana in Raga Sindhu Bhairavi.

Following the performance, Professor N. V. M. Rao, Dean of Administration, along with Professor Srinivasan from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, took the stage to felicitate the visiting artists with mementos on behalf of the institution. The evening concluded with a photo session featuring the musicians, faculty members, and the student organisers from Ragamalika. With the final notes of the recital still lingering, the audience dispersed after an evening that offered a glimpse into the depth and diversity of Indian classical music.

Film Festival

On Day One, the Film Making Club (FMaC) inaugurated its annual Film Festival at the JC Chaudhry NAB Auditorium. The Film Festival was an umbrella event that had a short film making competition, Metamorphosis, and an ad making competition, Hypercut.

The panelists for the inauguration included Neeraj Pandey, a screenwriter, novelist, and lyricist; Somrat Dutta and Divyansh Dwivedi, co-founders of Indian School of Motion (ISOM) and BITS Goa alums; and Dr Parichay Patra, Professor of Film Studies at IIT Jodhpur. The inauguration began with a lamp lighting ceremony by the guests and the FMaC Coordinator, Devansh Butan.

The panel discussion tackled topics such as the use of AI and technology in filmmaking. The panelists agreed that while new tools could be useful, filmmakers should not be too dependent on them. When asked whether cinema should adapt to dwindling attention spans, Neeraj Pandey stated that cinema was not competing with Instagram Reels. Dr Patra, on the other hand, challenged the assumption that attention spans were lowering, saying that there was an audience for all kinds of cinema.

After the panel discussion, the floor was opened for a QnA session with the audience. Somrat Dutta and Divyansh Dwivedi were asked about the unique career trajectories that led to them becoming founders of ISOM, India's first motion design school.

The event concluded with the screening of selected short films from Metamorphosis. The lights were turned off and the panelists, who would also be the judges for Metamorphosis, took their seats off stage. The films spanned multiple genres, and several of them received enthusiastic applause from the audience. Some showcased innovative editing while others had engrossing storylines. The winners are yet to be announced.

Purple Prose



The Poetry Club organised Purple Prose, a slam poetry competition, on Day One of Oasis '26. The evening's proceedings began post the inevitable BST, which was compensated for by an hour of open-mic recitations. Participants and audience members alike recited self-written poems and sonnets, ranging all the way from amnesia and war to destiny and the ethereality of the moon. The Chief Guest for the event was Ms Amisha Rajput, a Delhi-based poet and an avid writer on grief, politics, and feminism.

The event started off with a poem inspired by Greek mythology, namely, the tale of the prideful Icarus. The piece was a commentary on the thin line separating obsession and ego, and passion, and love. Shortly after, the audience saw the personification of time, the elocutionist accusing it of being disloyal. This well-written piece was followed by another Hindi-Urdu recitation. Some participants also took inspiration from pre-existing works.

The evening had its fair share of heart-wrenching performances. A sizeable portion of the engrossed crowd shed a tear to a powerful recital sharing the grief of losing a dear one to suicide. Other sensitive issues were also touched upon.

After three hours of poetic brilliance, the Chief Guest had nothing but praises to shower upon the budding poets. She eagerly urged them to read books religiously in order to bring them astep closer to perfecting their craft. She invited the audience to the many poetry clubs of Delhi, and concluded by expressing her gratitude for a 'beautiful evening.'



Indie Night

The most awaited event on the first day of Oasis—Indie night, starring Raman Negi—started at midnight in the Main audi, after two hours of delay. This 'BST' was apparently caused because the artist was running a high fever and he finally took the stage after popping a couple of paracetamols and lots of red bull. Negi, the ex-band member of the Local Train, started off with his own solo catalogue and charmed the crowd with his "badass" guitar skills.

The entire audience was packed and the multitude soon began nodding along to his heartfelt yet emotional songs. Negi gave off a nostalgic early 2010s vibe with his playlist and the hoard experienced a melodic catharsis. The sounds were also well balanced this time and the spinning spot light created a captivating atmosphere.

However, the performance was not without hiccups. The truss holding the lights had bent from the middle, creating a safety hazard for the enjoying audience. The artist was forced to swear at a couple of audience members who were constantly heckling him in the middle of performance.

The highlight of the concert was when Negi performed hit tracks Choo Lo and Aaoge Tum Kabhi from his former band. Everyone swarmed around the stage and the mood was bittersweet, especially for the couples who were busy with PDA. Negi's guitar fingering for the riff of Choo Lo was eye-catching and the song truly 'touched' the audience.

The concert was cut off mid song as the artist felt too sick to continue.
The mob started to disperse soon after, bringing the
eventful night to an abrupt end.

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