All Aboard the Red Carpet!

jfw MOVIE AWARDS
A Toast to All the Talented Awardees at a Starry Night!

ON DIVA RADAR
Best Trends from Indian Fashion week!

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The nutritional need for women at every stage of life.

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5 Summer foods to beat the heat

PLUS BLUE MAKEUP, SUMMER SMELL PERFUMES, CROCHET AND MORE!
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A Starry Night

A toast to talents and endeavors at a star studded extravaganza!
Neha K. Jain, Chennai
don Parenting
Ms Barkha your tips on balancing work and family, though pointers that we are all too familiar with are something we constantly need to be reminded of. Knowing stories of moms facing situations similar to all of us reassures me to stay motivated and strong in the long journey of parenthood.

Maria
on Spotlight
I loved the movie ‘Soorarai Pottru’. Bold women who are not afraid to experiment with narratives are very motivating. The effort they put in, the research they undertake. I agree every job requires its fair share of struggles for success, but the ones that do come to light, encourage the other half to take the plunge to do something different, to show what they’re made of.

Hi Maria,
Rightly said! This month we are inspired as we celebrate eminent personalities who strive for excellence in the cine field. Happy Reading!

Kalyani, Coimbatore
on Beauty
The salad bowl ideas were very nice and the story on how a group of ladies started their own business, very good. Just visited their website also.

Kalyani, Coimbatore
on Spotlight
Simple and easy to read, I love how it drives home the central point.
THE THIRD EDITION OF THE JFW MOVIE AWARDS
PRESENTED BY TWIN BIRDS AND POWERED BY TAMIL MATRIMONY, CO-PRESENTED BY PRITHVI INNER WEARS, COLOUR PARTNER NIPPON PAINT, ASSOCIATE SPONSORS AMRUTANJAN ROLL-ON, LAKSHMI KRISHNA NATURALS AND SUPREME FURNITURES
WAS HELD ON MARCH 13, 2021 TO AWARD THE WINNERS IN TAMIL CINEMA UNDER VARIOUS CATEGORIES FOR THE FILMS OF 2020.
THE 3RD EDITION OF THE
JFW MOVIE AWARDS
TURNED OUT TO BE A MEMORABLE AND UNFORGETTABLE STAR-STUDED EVENING WITH THE BEST OF THE TALENTS SEEN UNDER ONE ROOF.

It was a night of celebrating stalwart women artists from on and behind the screen. The sets were chic and extravagant and the whole atmosphere was filled with a celebratory mood for this one-of-a-kind award show. The highlight of the JFW Movie Awards is that it is the only awards with the highest women based categories in Cinema. The spectacular night was hosted by the very lively duo Deepak Dinakar and Kiki Vijay who kept the audience entertained with their witty humour and engaging questions.
THE WINNERS WERE ADJUDGED IN 15 CATEGORIES, BASED ON THEIR WORK IN 2020. THE EVENT SAW ALL THE AwarDEES AND PRESENTERS ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN CINEMA, BE IT IN FRONT OR BEHIND THE CAMERA AND LAUDED Jfw FOR INITIATING THIS PLATFORM TO FOCUS ON SUCH TALENTS.
Among the awardees and presenters at the event were actresses Simran, Aishwarya Rajesh, Sneha, Vani Bhojan, Aparna Balamurali, Poornima Bhagyaraj, Gouri Kishan, Ritu Varma, Parvathy Jayaram, actors Jayaram, Prasanna, Arun Vijay, Shantanu, Kalidas Jayaram, Ashok Selvan, Directors Gautham Vasudev Menon, Sudha Kongara, Arunraja Kamaraj, Halitha Shameem, Cinematographer PC Sreeram, Actor/Director Bhagyaraj, Singers Srinivas, Vijay Yesudas, Uthara Unnikrishnan, among others.

THE EVENT WITNESSED A HUGE LINEUP OF THE BEST OF THE BEST FROM THE TAMIL FILM INDUSTRY.
"JFW was started to empower and recognise powerful, strong women from across South India and create platforms to highlight their talent. To know that our initiatives are reaching the right people and places gives us immense happiness and pride."

– SUJIT KUMAR
FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR
AWARD PRESENTATION

“Best Actress in a Women-Centric Film
Aishwarya Rajesh
won the Best Actress in a Women-Centric Film award for her
terrific performance as Ariyanachi in the film Ka Pae Ranasingam. The
award was presented to her by her friend and Kanaa director Arunraja Kamaraj.
Aishwarya further added that this is her hat-trick award at the JFW Movie awards, having won
previously for Kanaa and Namma Veetu Pillai.

“Best Actress in a Lead Role
Aparna Balamurali
won the Best Actress in a Lead Role award for her
terrific performance as Bommi in the film Soorarai Pottru. The award was
presented to her by her director Sudha Kongara and Mr. Mohan, Managing
Director of Lakshmi Krishna Naturals.

“Best Actress – OTT
Simran received the
Best Actress in a lead role – OTT award for her
brilliant performance in the OTT anthology Paava Kadhaigal. The award was
presented to her by her co-star and director of Vanmagal, Gautham Vasudev Menon. Simran shook a leg with anchor
Kiki after receiving the award. GVM for his part said how he had only
Simran in mind for this role while conceiving this story and further added

—I have heard of families that struggled with bodies of their loved ones and have remained helpless. I have seen their tears, felt their pain and this is exactly why I chose to do Ariyanachi. She is a rebel with a cause and I know every woman is as well.”
—AISHWARYA RAJESH

“I have heard of families that struggled with bodies of their loved ones and have remained helpless. I have seen their tears, felt their pain and this is exactly why I chose to do Ariyanachi. She is a rebel with a cause and I know every woman is as well.”
—AISHWARYA RAJESH

“Sudha Ma’am is my everything and I cannot thank her enough for giving me Bommi and letting me make her my own.”
—SUDHA KONGARA

“I cannot thank Gautham enough for trusting me with a role as intense and amazing as Madhi. It was very emotional for me playing this role. Madhi represents every doting mother who is fighting everyday to keep herself and her child strong.”
—SIMRAN

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—SIMRAN
that he may have written a different story if she had refused the role. The director-actor duo then went on to recreate the iconic proposal scene from Suriya's Vaaranam Aayiram.

**BEST ACTRESS IN A LEAD ROLE – CRITIC**

Sneha received the Best Actress in a lead role – Critic's Choice award for her impeccable action sequences and performance in the film Pattas. Sneha's husband and the amazingly talented actor Prasanna surprised her with his entry with her award and presented it along with Actor/Director Bhagyaraj. Sneha went on to celebrate her mother's birthday on the stage and talked about how she and Prasanna have been huge pillars of support in her career and personal life.

**DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR**

The brilliant Sudha Kongara bagged the Director of the year Award for creating a film as amazing as Soorarai Pottru and showcasing different narratives to her audience. The award was presented to her by the superbly talented actor, Jayaram.

**BEST WOMEN-CENTRIC FILM OF THE YEAR**

Ponmagal Vandhal bagged the Best Women-Centric Film award for carefully and sensitively curating a film that narrates an important message on child sexual abuse. The award was collected by Mr. Rajasekhar Pandian of 2D Entertainment. The award was presented by singer Srinivas and Mr. Balan, the Managing Director of Prithvi Inner Wears.

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHER**

Preetha Jayaram won The Brilliant Sudha Kongara bagged the Director of the year Award for creating a film as amazing as Soorarai Pottru and showcasing different narratives to her audience. The award was presented to her by the superbly talented actor, Jayaram.

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**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHER**

Preetha Jayaram won
the Best Cinematographer award for her beautiful visuals in the film Vaanam Kottatum directed by Dhanan. The award was presented to her by legendary cinematographer PC Sreeram.

BEST DIRECTOR OF A WOMEN-CENTRIC FILM
Debut director JJ Fredrick took home the Best Director of a women-centric Film award for the film Ponmagal Vandhal which starred Jyothika in the lead. The award was presented to him by Sillu Karupatti director Halitha Shameem and Mr. Srinivasan, General Manager, Supreme Furnitures.

BEST DIRECTOR – OTT
Director Gautham Vasudev Menon won the Best Director – OTT award for his sensitive portrayal of child sexual abuse in the film Vanmagal in the anthology Paava Kadhaigal. The award was presented to him by the handsome actor Arun Vijay. The director-actor duo went on to perform a scene from their film Yennai Arindhal much to the audience’s delight. The director has successfully completed 20 years in the film industry and JFW did not miss the opportunity to celebrate his journey, on stage.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION – OTT
Kalidas Jayaram

“I had only Jyothika Ma’am in mind when I wrote the role of Venba in my film. She knows to subtly yet sensitively reach the message to the audience.”
- JJ FREDRICK

“I think a visionary like Gautham Vasudev Menon is the kind of director you could blindly trust when it comes to good quality films and roles.”
- ARUN VIJAY

“Actors like Arun Vijay are the kind you need to improvise a scene you have visualised only five minutes ago. He is dedicated and he is the kind of talent that requires more diverse roles from directors.”
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received the special recognition Award for his stellar performance as Sathaaru in the film Paava Kadhaigal. His 'Thangam' and the talented Shanthanu Bhagyaraj, surprised the former with his award. The duo went on to recreate a crucial scene from the film that brought the audience to tears.

BEST PLAYBACK SINGER

Dhee received the Nippon Paint Breeze Star – Palichchidum suvargalin Superstar Best playback singer award for her unique voice in the song Kaattu Payale from Soorarai Pottru. She received the award from actor Kalidas Jayaram. Dhee went on to perform the amazing Enjoy Enjaami which is breaking records currently. Her performance simply mesmerised the audience.

BEST COSTUME DESIGNER

Poornima Ramaswamy won the Best Costume Designer award for carefully curating the costumes for the entire team of Soorarai Pottru. The award was presented to her by actress Poornima Bhagyaraj and actress Gouri Kishan.

BEST DEBUTANTE

The Best Debutante award was awarded to Ritu Varma for her performance in the film Kannum Kannum Kollaiyadithal. Ritu stated that this was her very first award in the Tamil film

“Even after a shot, Kalidas would find it hard to snap out of the role and continue talking to us like Sathaaru even off-set. He completely deserves the award.”

- SHANTHANU

“Talking about his difficult role, Kalidas said, “The intensity with which I had to prepare for the role was unbelievable.”

- KALIDAS

“Only after I quit acting, I realised my passion for clothes and design. Poornima’s mother was the one who encouraged me to take up fashion designing and today, I am so glad that I did.”

- POORNIMA BHAGYARAJ
industry and felt proud that that it is from the JFW platform. The award was presented to her by singer Vijay Yesudas and Ms. Sai Chithra, Chief Portal and Mobile Officer, Tamil Matrimony.

**BEST ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE**

Vani Bhojan received the Amrutanjan Roll-On Best Actress in a Supporting Role award for her performance in the film Oh My Kadavule as Meera.

**BEST CHILD ARTIST**

Aangelina Abraham won the best Child Artist award for her brilliant performance in Gautham Menon’s Vanmagal in the anthology Paava Kadhaigal. The award was presented to her by child prodigy and National Award winner, Uthara Unnikrishnan.

Bigg Boss fame Gabriella Charlton set the stage on fire with her killer moves. She grooved to the tunes of Vaathi Coming, Vaathi Raid, Chellama Chellama to name a few.

We would like to thank our presenting sponsor Twin Birds, powered by sponsor Tamil Matrimony, co-presenting sponsors Prithvi Innerwear, Colour Partner Nippon Paint, Associate sponsors Amrutanjan Roll-On, Lakshmi, Krishna Naturals and Supreme Furnitures. This would not have been possible without you!

“When I went on to read the script I fell in love with Meera. She is someone I can vibe with.”

- VANI BHOJAN

“When no one agreed to do the role, Vani effortlessly carried this role on her shoulder.”

- ASHOK SELVAN
WHILE THE GENERAL MOOD WAS RELAXED YET POISED, THERE WAS ALSO ENOUGH ROOM FOR GLAMOUR AND SHINE. WE SCOUTED THROUGH ALL THE SHOWS FROM SIX DAYS TO BOOKMARK THE BIGGEST TRENDS YOU CAN TRY THIS SEASON!

TREND REPORT
HIGHLIGHTS FROM INDIAN FASHION WEEK 2021

The FDCI X Lakme Fashion Week saw the coming together of two huge conglomerates of Indian fashion industry to present the country’s first ever ‘Phygital’ fashion show. The season-free fashion week saw a number of designers old and new showcasing headline making collections for 6 days. By Sruthi Ravinder
Sexiest trend of the season are the array of midriff blouses that the runways at the Fashion Week witnessed. This risqué summer trend accentuates waists and hips with fitting crop tops, bralets or midriff exposing bodysuits. Looks to bookmark to try the trend: Arpita Mehta’s summer coordinates, lehenga blouse from Geisha designs and Manish Malhotra, Pankaj Nidhi’s tulle tops, Blonie Atelier’s tech embracing bralets and crop tops from Bodice.

Joining the post pandemic trend of athlesuie are a number of Indian designers with fun and comfy street wear inspired work wear. With a touch of Indianness in print, flare, silhouettes complete with capes, Indian athlesuie was one of the biggest highlights of FDCI X Lakme fashion week. A pair of new harem hybrid joggers from Payal Singhal might be just what your denim filled wardrobe needs for a breezy fit in summer.

Masaba’s relaxed coordinates will make do perfectly for airports and brunches.

The runway had several options for the dramatic bride-to-be. From Manish Malhotra’s silver and gold extravagance, Suneeth Varma’s whimsy ruffles and heavy sequins, to Gauri and Nainika’s floral explosion OTT gowns, the ‘more is more’ aesthetic is continuing its stance in wedding fashion this year.

Bodice brought back tennis shoes paired with breathable shirts, sporty skirts, straight cut pants or frocks.

**DARE TO MIDRIFF**

**OTT BRIDE**
Pankaj Nidhi collection played with geometric prints and a number of designers including Arpita Mehta and Masaba made breezy variations of printed coordinates. Make the best of the kaleidoscopic trend this season and don’t shy away from clashing your florals with polka or stripes!

KALEIDOSCOPE OF PRINT

Brownie points for the biodegradable sarees from Coccon and handloom sarees from The Fusion Edit by Taneira.

Payal Pratap’s collection married wild florals with stripes and checks, and Nidhi Yasha had pants with two different prints in each leg.

SARI FOR BRUNCH

The runway witnessed varied versions of casual of casual and chic sarees, something you can adorn for brunch or even to work and not keep aside for ethnic days. With quirky prints, whimsy standout blouses these drapes are anything but conventional. Sanjukta-Dutta’s Shukoolaa made the case for a jacket over saree, Varun-Chakkilam tulle sarees brought in minimalism to a maximalist trend, Payal singhal’s saree was teamed with sports bra and a fanny pack.
Out of the Blue

It’s not easy to conquer the depth of this look, but what a statement it makes when done with the right tools! Do you, do blue.
Saravanan Master is a kind, soft-spoken man too. I wonder if all martial arts experts tend to be gentle and kind simply because they are aware of their strength and power.

Try Harder
Be Better

“Saravanan Master is a kind, soft-spoken man too. I wonder if all martial arts experts tend to be gentle and kind simply because they are aware of their strength and power.”
Some of my best memories of working out in the YMCA grounds in Chennai revolve around my Kalari classes taught by Kumar Master. I used to absolutely enjoy them.

While in school, I developed a fondness and respect for my first teacher that never diminished with time. It was the same with Kumar Master. Some teachers are special for they know exactly how to encourage the student to try harder, be better.

His gentle approach and kind attitude belied his strength and there were times when I recall being sent flying across the floor as he caught me in a grip and threw me.

There were several other incidents too, but the most amusing one that I recall was when I was practicing Kaippor (unarmed combat). Since I was taller than most people in the class, I invariably got paired up with a 16 year old boy who was roughly my height. Until that day I had not done with him and so I was unprepared for the ferocity of his attack. Halfway through, I stopped him and said “Hey, hey, hey... I am your mum’s age, da... please! Don’t hit so hard.” Everyone in the class doubled up with laughter. And even now when I recall the incident, I feel a smile tugging at me.

When we started Kalari classes once again, my disappointment that it wasn’t going to be with Kumar Master quickly faded when I learned that the new teacher- Saravanan Master was referred to us by Kumar Master.

Saravanan Master is a kind, soft-spoken man too. I wonder if all martial arts experts tend to be gentle and kind simply because they are aware of their strength and power. Empty vessels make noise and all that, maybe? As he took me through the basics that I had learned thirteen years ago, I felt the moves slowly coming back. My stiff wrists loosened up a bit. The trick is to start the move right and then let the stick direct you and I learned once again, when to direct the stick and when to follow it.

I learned to not hold my breath, but to allow it to flow along with my movement and although rusty, I could see the improvement in every video we shot during class.

Just the other day was one of those really fun days. Saravanan Master decided to teach us the 2nd Pirivuchuvadu – which is a sequence of moves in the unarmed combat series in Kalari. And I realized that apart from the first two moves, the rest were

“YOUR FOOT MOVEMENT IS STILL NEAT AND ASSURED. I DON’T SEE ANY STUMBLES OR UNCERTAINTY.” MY HEART SOARED AND I WAS GRINNING LIKE A MONKEY AT HIM!! THE AGE SLIPPED AWAY AND I WAS BACK IN SCHOOL, BEING APPRECIATED BY MY FIRST TEACHER.
him and added a note: “Master, I really miss our days in the YMCA but I am very happy to be learning again.”

Imagine my delight when he called me on a video call! His first words were, “I am very happy you are getting back to Kalari. I saw you about a year ago and you were limping and unable to walk. This is good improvement.”

I was grinning widely as I said “Yes Master, I have strengthened the knee and my fitness levels are much better. I am so happy to be learning. I don’t remember everything but it is slowly coming back.”

He smiled and said, “Your foot movement is still neat and assured. I don’t see any stumbles or uncertainty.”

My heart soared and I was grinning like a monkey at him!! The age slipped away and I was back in school, being appreciated by my first teacher.

As he introduced me to everyone else in his family, his daughter joined us on the call and said, “You are doing very well,” and I smiled knowing fully well this was a child who was extremely good at Kalari. And I thought “Like father, like daughter.” Gentle, encouraging and kind.

As I said goodbye to Kumar Master, ever the teacher, he asked me, “Are you practicing Kurunthadi?” This was the sequence where we used 3-feet long sticks. I was surprised that he remembered that I used to love Kurunthadi. When I said I wasn’t, he nodded and said “Ok I will send you some videos, you can show it to Saravanan and he will be able to teach you since he knows those sequences.”

I was still smiling as I put down the phone. I couldn’t wait to practice more and send the improved videos to Kumar Master. And maybe I could also polish up on my Kurunthadi skills and maybe – just maybe – he might be impressed with my hard work. My smile widened.

Some teachers are special for they know exactly how to encourage the student to try harder. Be better.

"As I said goodbye to Kumar Master, ever the teacher, he asked me, “Are you practicing Kurunthadi?” This was the sequence where we used 3-feet long sticks. I was surprised that he remembered that I used to love Kurunthadi."

...
A Whiff of Summer

Pretty bottles, perky notes and precious memories can all come alive with a single spritz. Line up your perfume rack with these extra-special concoctions.

Kate Spade, Eau de Parfum
A bright, colorful blend of fruits and flowers, including wild strawberry, rose essence and freesia, with alluring hints of velvety ambrox and cashmeran.

Chloé Rose Tangerine, Eau de Toilette
A fresh and fruity signature perfume with tangerine essence and white rose, blackcurrant absolute at its heart extended with base notes of cedarwood, amber.

Boss Alive, Eau de Toilette
Light-hearted and delicate with notes of plum, vanilla, jasmine and apple, it is a contemporary fragrance that leaves a trail of joyful energy in its wake.
Giorgio Armani *My Way*, Eau de Parfum
A sparkling floral fragrance with bergamot, orange blossom blended with a bright floral bouquet of tuberose, jasmine, cedarwood, extended with sensual vanilla and musk.

Marc Jacobs *Daisy Spring*, Eau de Toilette
With inviting bursts of pink rosebuds and rosewood blossom paired with spicy cardamom for texture, it is a seasonal twist on the classic daisy fragrances.

Michael Kors *Gorgeous*, Eau de Parfum
A bold floral woody fragrance, reinterpreting a classic, lush white floral bouquet in a totally modern way and enhanced by a smoky tobacco accord.

Marc Jacobs *Perfect*, Eau de Parfum
Playful and unexpected, a fun mix of elegance and modernity this floral scent has juicy notes of rhubarb and bright daffodil that reveal a comforting heart of almond milk.

Gucci Bloom *Profumo di Fiori*, Eau de Parfum
A radiant twist on the classic Gucci Bloom, it unleashes the addictive magnetism of Tuberose Essence, Jasmine, Ylang Ylang.

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A sparkling floral fragrance with bergamot, orange blossom blended with a bright floral bouquet of tuberose, jasmine, cedarwood, extended with sensual vanilla and musk.
Take a closer look at the JFW awardees this year. You'll find every one of them is gifted with far more than just talent – there's originality and a strong devotion to their craft. They're here to stay and make waves, each one bigger and more impactful than the last.
Aparna Balamurali
Best Actress in a Lead Role

Sooorarai Pottru

Aparna Balamurali’s role as Bommi the ambitious, strong woman in Sooararai Pottru created big waves in the industry. The audience fell in love with the raw emotion and beauty she brought to the screen. She gave life to a character that brought in so much depth to the film as Maara and Bommi’s relationship is possibly the best example of a marriage: supportive of each other yet flying high to fulfill their own dreams. Aparna’s feisty Bommi has been a bold step in the right direction as far as female roles in Tamil cinema go. Such strong women characters are what’s needed in commercial films of huge actors. Aparna Balamurali is a fine example of how actresses today must choose roles in commercial films and is a sensation everyone must watch out for because the game for her has just begun.

Aishwarya Rajesh
Best Actress in a Women-Centric Film

Ka Pae Ranasingam

Her on-screen roles have been delightfully robust, showcasing a lovingly welcomed anti-thesis of the stereotypical heroine. When choosing to break free from clichés, disciplining one’s talent into (what Aishwarya defines as) “fitting the role” is what it takes to stay in the film industry; even though the entry to it is often barred by conventional expectations that are hard-hitting. This year, her performance as Ariyanachi, fighting for her husband’s body to reach the village quicker was an intense one to say the least. Her character’s struggle felt real, the emotions transcended beyond the screen, and it took the audience on a journey in empathy with the woman on screen. Aishwarya is an actor who has always outshone others through her potential and depths.

APARNA BALAMURALI IS A FINE EXAMPLE OF HOW ACTRESSES TODAY MUST CHOOSE ROLES IN COMMERCIAL FILMS AND IS A SENSATION EVERYONE MUST WATCH OUT FOR BECAUSE THE GAME FOR HER HAS JUST BEGUN.
Simran
Best Actress – OTT

Vaali, Arasu, Piriyaamaanavale, Thullaatha Manamum Thullum – films like these have come to be part of the backbone of Tamil cinema. Their common denominator? Simran. Her roles over the years have represented tenacious, hard-working, passionate as well as kind women who believe in their own strength and don’t merely lean on the male lead. Simran has lead many of these films with her versatile art form – through dance, comedic timing, romance, formidability and much more. Her most recent role as Mathi in Gautham Menon’s film in the anthology Paava Kadhaigal stole the show in a whole new light. With her nuanced screen presence, Simran was able to convey the unique maternal sensibilities of a simple south Indian mother. She set the pace for the story with a layered mother-daughter relationship and what it means to be a woman in a household. This kind of diversity in her work is one of the many reasons Simran is so well regarded in the industry.

Sneha
Best Actress in a Lead Role – Critic

Pattas

Challenging herself physically, Sneha decided she would work around her pregnancy when she played the fierce Kanyakumari in the movie Pattas. Apart from landing a pivotal role to essay, audiences were also in awe of her performing Adimurai, a martial arts form.

The strength, elegance, determination and dignity she carried through her role and the hard work she put in to earn her applause is truly commendable and inspiring. Needless to say, her performance outside the physical realm of it was also on a league of its own.
IN 2020 THE GRITTY VISUALS IN VAANAM KOTTATUM WERE BROUGHT TO LIFE BY PREETHA WHOSE EYE FOR DETAIL WAS ONE OF THE MOST DEFINING ASPECTS OF THE FILM.

Preetha Jayaram
Best Cinematographer
Vaanam Kottatum

One of the most sought-after woman cinematographers, Preetha Jayaram brings over two decades of work experience in the Tamil, Hindi and Kannada film industry. In a male-dominated industry she is breaking new ground in cinema by bringing in quality aesthetics and distinct vibes to all her films. In 2020 the gritty visuals in Vaanam Kottatum were brought to life by Preetha whose eye for detail was one of the most defining aspects of the film.

Poornima Ramaswamy
Best Costume Designer
Soorarai Pottru

Among other things, the film Soorari Pottru was praised for its costume design. Each outfit worn by the cast, especially by Suriya carried meaning, symbolism and timeline of its own. Poornima Ramaswamy started her career as an entrepreneur running her family business; she later shifted to costume design. She won a national award in her very first film in 2013, Paradesi, after which she continued to work as a costume designer. Her contribution to Indian cinema and stage spans for a decade and she has worked in more than ten films.

Sudha Kongara
Director of the Year
Soorarai Pottru

A master filmmaker in her own right, Sudha Kongara’s standards are self-defined, self-imposed and universally admired. Perhaps her most appreciable feat is the hat-trick of fresh, successful releases in the year ridden with pandemic, quarantine and lockdowns. Sudha credits this ability to come through creatively no matter what, to her disciplined research. Once she commits to an idea, she agonises over its smallest detail in order to depict a realistic version of that world. It’s hard to miss this in any of her top three of the year: Soorarai Pottru, Thangam from Paava Kadhaigal and Ilamai Idho Idho from Putham Puthu Kaalai. Her settings are accurate, her story is raw and taut, her characters are authentic and all her narrative devices work in harmony to enrich the overall effect of the film and its intelligent message. Sudha’s films are highly relevant to the modern, ever-evolving scene of south cinema and sensitive to the larger social scene itself.

In 2020 the gritty visuals in Vaanam Kottatum were brought to life by Preetha whose eye for detail was one of the most defining aspects of the film.
Aangelina Abraham
Best Child Artist

Paava Kadhaigal

Aangelina Abraham won hearts with her performance in Vaanmagal where she played a sprightly young school girl, who undergoes sexual abuse. Portraying a 12-year-old victim of rape in the aftermath is no mere task, but Aangelina rose to the challenge with purpose. As a child artist Aangelina debuted in Malayalam cinema and worked in a number of Malayali films. Her debut in 2016 in the film titled Aadupuliyatam was a stepping stone to her important role in 2018’s Aami, which is a biopic on the life of renowned author, Kamala Das. After acting in films, the Malayali artist appeared in an award-winning short film, Pencil Box, in 2020. This young star has a long way to go and is definitely someone to watch out for!

Kalidas Jayaram
Special Recognition – OTT

Paava Kadhaigal

Kalidas Jayaram caught his big break as Sathaaru in Thangam, directed by Sudha Kongara. His Sathaaru as a trans-woman who faces oppression in the form of ridicule, abandonment and brutal physical abuse in his community on a daily basis was gut-wrenching to watch. His deft mastery over the specific Tamil dialect is especially impressive considering he is a Malayali. Add to that his body language, speech pattern and other modes of expression as a trans-woman – Sathaaru was instantly received with resounding applause. And who can forget his dually dimensioned role in Oru Pakka Kathai from the anthology film Putham Pudhu Kaalai? Starkly distinct from Sathaaru, his character in this one moved with the ease and effortlessness that one comes to expect from young energy. This range of performance from Kalidas has already secured him a niche in the industry.

HIS DEFT MASTERY OVER THE SPECIFIC TAMIL DIALECT IS ESPECIALLY IMPRESSIVE CONSIDERING HE IS A MALAYALI.
Gautham Vasudev Menon
Best Director – OTT

Paava Kadhaigal

Gautham Menon is a director who thrives particularly in bringing a love story to the vanguard of any film by creating couples who live on for decades. Introducing a genre of his own to Tamil cinema, he has nurtured the GVM effect for more than two decades now. His movies inspire emotions, relations and old-school love. Menon is also gifted in portraying plucky realism when he chooses to. An example of this is Vanmagal in the anthology Paava Kadhaigal which deals with a very sensitive storyline of child abuse and how a family comes to grips with it. Menon in his signature style of storytelling did not omit any of the pain, the suffering, the stigma, the whirlpool of emotions or the venom of societal perceptions and delivered to his audience a diligently wrapped, timely message.

Dhee
Best Playback Singer

Kaattu Payale – Soorarai Pottru

Dheekshitha Venkadeshan, aka Dhee was a star long before she became a global sensation with her release of her independent music Enjoy Enjaami. Having begun singing from a very young age, this 21-year-old playback singer made her debut almost eight years back with Disco Women in Pizza 2. By 2014, her impact on music became unmistakable with her songs Rowdy Baby one of the most viewed Tamil songs on YouTube with over a billion views. In 2020, she sang Kattu Paiyaleh for the movie Soorari Pottru which became sensational for its visceral rhythm. Eclectic, fun, peppy, she is one among the most exciting artists who directly speaks to her audiences through her songs. Dhee is currently managed by Maajja who is also producing her upcoming début album in English.

ECLECTIC, FUN, PEPPY, SHE IS ONE AMONG THE MOST EXCITING ARTISTS WHO DIRECTLY SPEAKS TO HER AUDIENCES THROUGH HER SONGS.
RITU IS UNAFRAID TO CONFESS THAT SHE HAS VERY SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES WHEN IT COMES TO MAKING HER FILM DECISIONS. 2020 SAW RITU IN TWO STRONG ROLES THAT MARKED HER ENTRY IN KOLLYWOOD.

Ritu Varma
Best Debutante
Kannum Kannum Kollaiyadithal

Her foray into films was more of a happy happenstance. Ritu is unafraid to confess that she has very specific standards and principles when it comes to making her film decisions. 2020 saw Ritu in two strong roles that marked her entry in Kollywood. The witty and deceiving con artist in Kanum Kanum Kollaiyadithal and a simple, loving granddaughter in GVM’s short film Avarum Naanum Avalum Naanum from Putham Pudhu Kaalai: both distinctive roles allowed Ritu to explore polar opposite characters and allowed audiences to see the promising potential the actor holds.

Vani Bhojan
Best Actress in a Supporting Role
Oh My Kadavule

An early career in the small screen gave rise to early popularity on social media for her. Vani Bhojan has been loved by all for not just her charming roles but also for her offscreen personality and charisma. Vani began her acting career in 2010 with the film Orr Iravu, however, she won millions of hearts with her small-screen appearance with Dheivamagal. With a huge fan-following Vani re-entered the film industry with her debut film Oh My Kadavule which turned out to be a massive hit. With over four films including a magnum opus with Karthik Subbaraj and Chiyaan Vikramand a web-series in her kitty today, Vani Bhojan is one of the most popular actresses of her times.
JJ Fredrick
Best Director of a
Women-Centric film
Ponmagal Vandhal

While most directors would not risk much with their debut and go for a sure shot with commercial films, JJ Fredrick decided to enter the film industry through the road less travelled. His debut film Ponmagal Vandhal, which revolves around child sexual abuse has been well-narrated and directed for a debutant. Frederick’s narrative style bears its own stamp of uniqueness and speaks a social message of grave importance. Needless to say, the film has gone on to garner a lot of positive response and love from the audience.

FREDERICK’S NARRATIVE STYLE BEARS ITS OWN STAMP OF UNIQUENESS AND SPEAKS A SOCIAL MESSAGE OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE FILM HAS GONE ON TO GARNER A LOT OF POSITIVE RESPONSE AND LOVE FROM THE AUDIENCE.

Ponmagal Vandhal
Best Women-Centric Film of the year
Ponmagal Vandhal

A story not many would – to raise a voice against those who are at fault. The film Ponmagal Vandhal is a story of a lawyer who takes up a 14 year old open and shut case as her first case ever. What unfolds during the court room drama and the twists that come up as a result is the storyline. The story discusses an issue which is the need of the hour. Girls as young as age five and six become victims of various sexual abuses, physical violence, rape and molestation. The team behind the film did a commendable job of releasing the film on Amazon Prime making it available for families so that they could watch good films like these together and learn about the alarming scenario young children go through.
The Summer Fare

Perfect for snacking, or to aid your sudden hosting plans, here are some healthy, traditional and luscious treats to rapidly cool down those hot afternoons!
Immune Boosting Snack Bites

A great snack for both kids and adults with the goodness of dried fruits and nuts. Can be a great dessert too.

**Outer Cover**

15 Dried dates, pitted and finely chopped
2 Dried figs (30 secs in microwave and finely chopped)
4 Dried apricots
¼ cup Almonds, toasted and chopped

**For the Center**

2 tbsp Gulkand/rose petal jam
¼ cup Pistachios
¼ cup Walnuts

1. Pulse all the ingredients for the outer cover till you get a dough like consistency. Divide into equal portions.
2. Pulse all the ingredients for the center. Divide into equal portions.
3. Take a portion of the outer cover, roll between palms, make an indentation. Place a portion of center filling.
4. Seal it and roll to make balls. Roll them in powdered nuts or dried rose petals.

**Note:** Substitute with ¼ cup raisins if apricots are not available.

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Agua Fresca de Tamarindo

This tamarind drink made with tamarind pods is perfect for summer with many health benefits. Tangy, sweet and spicy, it is sure to win over your guests.

6-7 Tamarind pods
4 cups Water
½ cup Sugar (use ¾ cup sugar if you prefer a sweeter taste)
½ tsp Salt
Ice cubes, Chilli powder, Mint leaves, Lemon wedges for serving

Boil the water. Remove the brittle outer shell of the tamarind pods and pull off as many strings as you can. Discard the shell and strings. Drop the tamarind in boiling water. Turn the heat off. Set aside for an hour. After an hour, squeeze out the seeds and strings. Pass this through a sieve. Add salt, ½ cup sugar and heat until the sugar has completely dissolved. Turn the heat off. When the mixture has completely cooled down, pour it into glasses and serve.

**Serving ideas:** Add ice cubes, serve them in glasses rimmed with red chilli powder. Add a sprig of mint and a lemon wedge. For a variation, you can add some chaat masala.
Paan Ice Cream

Perfect dessert after a heavy meal. Very easy to make and is a crowd pleaser.

1 can  Condensed milk  
(14 oz/396g)
2 cups  Cream
10  Small paan leaves

Grind paan leaves in 3/4 cup of heavy cream until smooth. Now blend everything in a blender/mixer until well combined. If using ice cream machine, follow manufacturer’s instructions. If not, freeze for 4 hours, then take the container out of refrigerator, blend and freeze for another 4 hours.

For decoration: For garnish, you can sprinkle some mukhvas, candied fennel seeds or gulkand.
Warm the milk, soak the figs in warm milk for 10-15 minutes until softened. Chop the figs and grind them by adding a little milk. Blend this mixture with condensed milk, cream, walnuts, and remaining milk. If using an ice cream machine, follow manufacturer’s instructions. If not, freeze this mixture for 4 hours. Remove it from the refrigerator, blend and freeze for another 4 hours.

Warm the tablespoon of milk and add saffron. Add lemon juice to the remaining milk (1 cup), mix well. Set aside for 15 mins. Preheat oven to 350°F/180°C. Grease a loaf pan. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, cardamom powder, salt, and sugar. Add milk mixture and oil to flour mixture. Whisk everything until well combined. Pour batter into the prepared pan. Add chopped nuts. Bake for 35-40 mins or until toothpick inserted comes out clean.

Fig Walnut Ice Cream

Perfect ice cream for any party. Delicious figs combined with nutty walnuts make for a great pair.

Eggless Whole Wheat Saffron Cardamom Loaf Cake

A simple bake with extravagant flavors. Perfect accompaniment to your afternoon tea and is sure to delight any of your guests.

1⅛ cups Whole wheat flour
1 cup + 1 tbsp Milk
1 tbsp Lemon juice
¾ cup Sugar
1⅛ tsp Baking powder
½ tsp Baking soda
1/3 cup Oil
A pinch salt
Big pinch saffron
¾ tsp Cardamom powder
Some chopped nuts

1 can Condensed milk
1 cup Cream
1 cup Regular milk (not reduced fat milk)
8-10 Dried figs
½ cup Walnuts, toasted

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MARK OF A STRONG WOMAN

Let’s put our wholesome selves, and our bodies first. In every food choice, in every activity, keep mindful of the health needs to nourish the woman in you.
During their teens, girls from ages 9 to 18 years need more calcium and vitamin D to help build stronger bones and overall strength, to tackle disorders like osteoporosis in their later stages of lives.

From the age of 18 to 25 years, young women need slightly more calories to support their developing bodies.

After 25, to maintain a healthy weight, the calories and physical activity needs to be balanced. And in most cases, women need slightly lesser calories and more physical exercise.

And remember, the diet needs to complement the exercise and not compete with it. They should go hand in hand. Just because, you haven’t eaten well throughout the day doesn’t mean you don’t have to work out!

Apart from calories, what are the other factors that affect women’s health?

1. Eating at the right time is crucial to maintain a healthy body and mind. Skipping breakfast or lunch for the sake of weight loss or due to lack of time is not a good idea.

2. Stress and anxiety play major triggers in hormonal changes and the nutritional status of a woman. It is perfectly okay to seek help and handle your stress. In fact, I advise this to most of my clients who are looking to lose weight. When stress levels are high, there is a rapid increase in cortisol levels (stress hormone) which often leads to binge eating, which turn into habits.

3. Having nutrient dense food is important. Eating just because, and not focusing on nutrients leads to weight gain or no loss of excess weight in women. Adhering to a meal plan that is interesting both visually and nutritionally is important!

About the writer:

Priyanka Ramamurthy graduated in Clinical Nutrition from Indiana University in the year 2018. She is currently a clinical nutritionist at MGM Healthcare and also has her private practice at Armoraa Clinic, Chennai. She specialises in women’s health and has been an active speaker at several corporate wellness programs. Out of office, she can be found on a couch with her dogs.
Before conception or pregnancy, women need to have adequate levels of protein & folic acid in their body. Many doctors recommend prenatal vitamins or a folic acid supplement during this time. There is this big myth about eating for two people while you are pregnant. Yes, pregnant women require more calories. But, the calories need to come from the right nutrients. Calories from proteins, fibre and whole grains are much better for the development of the foetus. This also helps in gaining just the right amount of weight during gestation.

I advise about 10-15 kilos of weight gain during the gestational period for women of normal weight, pre-pregnancy. Gaining the right weight has proven to help in vaginal birth and a more comfortable postpartum in women.

It is hard to miss the struggles faced by working women in maintaining an ideal body weight. Firstly, it is important to understand that each body is very different. A particular diet that works for your friend might not work for you. Understanding the physiology, genetics and lifestyle is crucial. Blindly following a given “fad diet” might give results for a brief period. But, to sustain it in the long run is close to impossible. Try not to avoid one type of nutrient, say carbohydrates when you plan a diet. It is important to have all kinds of macros and micros in the right balance.

Now, not to miss the gorgeous ladies post menopause. Lower levels of oestrogen might be a factor in other diseases or ailments. But, the right diet can keep you hale and healthy. Try to consume a lot of calcium and a variety of vitamins in your daily diet. Your omegas love you; so keep them close!

So ladies, keep a check on your health and don’t get lost in the so-called ‘health’ buzz of social media. Fact check all the information that you get. For women post 40, a master health check up every couple of years is key. A good diet gives you a good heart, mind and a fantastic ‘you’!
Weave & What Knot

Find sophistication as well as the comfort of boho between the loops and links of these beauties.
Following the Kurinji

Steal away from the snare of summer, into the pure air, stunning views and rare blooms of Kodaikanal’s hill town! By Vidya Raju Singh
Driving along the winding roads around the mountains on our way up to Kodaikanal, we began to see, a glimpse of blue. It was an exciting moment for us, for had we missed this, we would have had to wait until 2030. In any case the way things look, I wonder if there will be very much left, at the next 12 year cycle.

The elusive patch of blue that we were hunting is the Strobilanthes Kunthiana, the famed Kurinji flower. An endemic species in South India; it grows on the Annamalai, Nilgiri and Palani Mountains of South Western Tamilnadu.

The elusive patch of blue that we were hunting is the Strobilanthes Kunthiana, the famed Kurinji flower. An endemic species in South India; it grows on the Annamalai, Nilgiri and Palani Mountains of South Western Tamilnadu. It apparently does not to grow in any other part of the world. Although there are about 50 varieties of Kurinji, the blue variety alone, blooms once in 12 years. One hears from the locals who have seen the flowerings previously that entire mountainsides used to be covered with the plants, appearing like a blue haze over the mountains. The first recorded flowering was in 1838 and it seems that the tribals of these mountains were well aware of the flowering cycle.
This plant blooms once in 12 years and perishes after the blooming. A new plant takes its place with its genetic clock set for the next blooming. This rarity in flowering makes the Neela Kurinji, a legend in itself.

Trekking to Dolphin’s Nose, a landmark in Kodai is always challenging and we look forward to it every time. Coming downhill from the Upper Lake Road and heading through the little village, we step down onto the path that leads very steeply down and we need to climb over gnarled roots of the trees around us. Climbing further down through the forests of Eucalyptus, we finally reach a rocky path and have to climb up a narrow rockface to reach the rocky promontory that is Dolphin’s Nose. Spectacular visuals from here of the surrounding mountains, the Rhodendron trees all across the sides and a beautiful visual of the valley below us.

Heading back is always a challenge as it is a very steep upward climb all the way back. But we have time to catch a great breakfast at Altaf’s Cafe, that is set overlooking the entire valley. Great Bread Omelet and Masala Chai, along with healthy oats makes for a perfect choice. It is a climb up again to our starting point and then a walk home!

Usually, the focal point of any holiday with friends or family in the hills, is trekking and walking. It is a wonderful feeling of peace and tranquility that envelops me, when I am surrounded by these mountains, that I look around and feel grateful, that there are concerned citizens and forward thinking administrators, who have,
over the past few years, begun to designate areas as “protected”. Due to this, the Shola Forests have begun to thicken and expand and the Kurunji Flower has also been given a favored status. The areas between the Pambar River and Vattakanal, below Coakers Walk are protected as well. Besides the trekking and long walks, there is of course retail therapy! Great finds on the market street in front of the Kodai International School; Organic Coffee, Tea, Spices, Cheeses, quaint shops selling all kinds of interesting things and The Potters Shed for great ceramics all made in Kodai. Some great eating places as well!

Walking around the Lake at dawn has to be one of the most perfect ways to start the day. The air is fresh and crisp; the night’s cold has still not dissipated. The five fingered lake is about 5 km in length to walk, and twice around provides a great workout. It is peaceful, pristine and

THE TREK TO CLOUDLAND PEAK BEGINS AT VILPATI. AS WE CLIMB, THE AIR IS COLD, THERE IS A LIGHT MIST AND WE ARE SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES WITH LOVELY EUCALYPTUS TREES AND THEIR PERFUME FILLS THE AIR.
The most challenging trek that I have been on in these hills, led from Kodai to Vellakavi and then down through the forests to Thope in the plains, a distance of 22 kms.

The trek to Cloudland Peak begins at Vilpatti and we begin to climb up into the hills above and head through a couple of villages and finally we are on a beautiful trail leading through the forest. As we climb, the air is cold, there is a light mist and we are surrounded on all sides with lovely eucalyptus trees and their perfume fills the air. After a final push we are at the top and reach the edge of the peak. Looking down we can see into the valley below and all across, it is a stunning visual and we spend some time looking around and enjoying the feeling of being this high up and the fact that we are the only people there.

The upper reaches of the town are lovely areas to wander around and explore. There are great walks through all of these areas. The Upper Lake Road and of course, the beautiful Golf Course, one of the most stunning courses in India. If you get lucky, you may see a herd of Bison. Several herds have made this their home, venturing out from the forest after the golfers have packed up.

quiet, especially if it is off season or a weekday. My favourite Chaiwalla in front of the Boat House, serves up a really great Masala Chai, that I always look forward to! On our return home we are ready to tuck in to a healthy breakfast of all the organic food, which is so easily available here. It certainly does not get better than this!

Kodai has something for everyone, treks and walks, some challenging and some gentler. Among the more memorable ones are “The Priests Walk” and “Cloud Land Peak” and the climb to the stunning Perumal Malai. There are also treks to Berijam Lake, to Joe’s Point and Gundar Valley and a forest trek through “Nettle Shola.”

It is with an immense sense of regret and reluctance that we have to leave this little paradise and return to our lives in busy, bustling Chennai. We leave Kodai, with a slight sense of envy for those lucky people who have chosen to live here and have every intention of spending the rest of their days here as well.
WHO DRAWS
THESE LINES?
Shakila Zamboulingame’s musings about a sexist obsession in Tamil popular culture.

When I was a child, ‘Senthamizh Naattu Tamizhachiyi’ was one of those iconic songs that worked as an instant pick-me-up. Then, over the years and, as often when it comes to one’s experience with Tamil cinema, opinions have evolved, to say the least. This song is, indeed, rooted in the long history of women’s portrayal in Tamil films. In the post-independence era, cinema was used as the vehicle for the post-colonial ideology which, to this day, has strongly influenced the representations of women, men and ‘Tamilness’ on screen.

Thus, in movies such as Parasakthi, Velaikari or Ratha Kanneer, anti-British ideas were replaced by a gendered opposition between the indigenous culture and a threatening West, which sketched the first outlines of a trope, the dangerously westernized woman, steadily used in Tamil cinema since then.

About the writer:
Shakila Zamboulingame is a professor from the Tamil diaspora, born in Pondicherry, and living in France since she was a child. She is beginning a research project on Tamil Cinema and she has been running a blog ‘1916 tamilcinema’ and an Instagram account named ‘1916’, where she analyses Tamil cinema, especially through gender representations.
THE NARRATIVE IS QUITE SIMPLE: the westernized woman is depicted as the arrogant, educated and frivolous antithesis of the quintessential Tamil man who appears as the fervent protector of ‘Tamilness’, trying to de-westernize the lady so that she becomes a respectable ‘Tamil Ponnu’. Examples of this trope are plenty in the history of Tamil cinema as, after its emergence in the 1950s, there was clearly a revival in the 1990s and 2000s: the ‘alpha male’ kind of masculinity indeed dominated almost every blockbuster where the hero used to lecture the westernized woman with punch dialogues. Think about the confrontation between the modern and adamant Neelambari (Ramya Krishnan) and the conservative Padaiyappa (Rajinikanth), especially with his litany of moral rules for women that ends with the classic ‘Mothathula, pombala, pombalaiya irukkanum’. Think about how Sivakasi (Vijay) saves the scantily clad Hema (Asin) from a street harasser and then tells her: ‘If you behaved like a woman and came dressed covered up in a saree, men will not look at you as a girl but pray to you as goddess’. Above all, song sequences, and especially peppy numbers, are the ideal space for this kind of lecture about how a Thamizhachi should be, as they deliver the message through an entertaining and musical teasing of the westernized woman. Over the past 50 years, three songs can be considered as the perfect archetypes of this trope in Tamil popular culture.

THE FIRST ONE IS ‘KETTUKODI URUMI MEALM’ FROM P. MADHAVAN’S PATTIKADA PATTANAMA (1972), whose entire plot is based on the opposition between Kalpana (Jayalalitha), a
westernized, educated and ‘London return’ young woman and Mookkaiyan (Sivaji Ganesan), the typical Tamil villager from Sozhavandan she marries. This song is actually a musical battle that leads to their first night. The second one is obviously ‘Senthamizh Naattu Thamizhachiiy’ from Manoj Kumar’s Vandicholai Chinnaraasu (1994) where the westernized woman trope is only a sub-plot: Parvathi (Sukanya) is a modern, playful and minxy Michael Jackson lover who comes to visit her grandfather in Vandicholai where she meets Chinnaraasu (Sathyaraj), a more traditional Tamil man who wants to become a district forest officer. The first half of the movie can be summarized as a cat and mouse game whose acme is the song. The third one is ‘Club La Mabbu La’ by the musical duo Hip Hop Thamizha, a song from an independent album that became a massive hit when released in 2011. It’s an indictment against the over-westernized women who loosen up in clubs, made by rap artists who define their works as an ode to Tamil identity: their logo is a graffiti of Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiyar, many of their songs such as ‘Senthamizh Penne’ or ‘Thamizh Theriyum’ promote ‘Tamilness’.

INTERESTINGLY, SOME RECURRING THEMES IMPREGNATE ALL THESE SONGS. First, the westernized woman’s attire is obviously an issue: the dresses are described as too short, too sexy, unworthy of a good Thamizhachi. In ‘Club La Mabbu La’, girls are criticized for wearing ‘kerchief’ instead of ‘Kanchi Pattu’. In ‘Kettukkodi Urumi Melam’, Mookkaiya advises Kalpana: ‘Muzhangal theriyum aadaiyai maattri, thamizh magal nadai podu’. In ‘Senthamizh Naattu Thamizhachiiy’, the girl, reluctant to wear a saree, is described as wearing a bathing suit, showing a body that her husband only should appreciate. In fact, the song is preceded by a significant sequence where Chinnaraasu refuses that Parvathi and her friends pray in a Hindu temple because of their short skirts, ‘as if they were just out of their bath’ says Goundamani’s character. To respond, the girl gang comes fully covered in a burqa. There is actually a paradox in this dress issue: these women are willingly shown as westernized pleasurable objects in these video clips to please a triple ‘male gaze’ as theorized by feminist film theorist, Laura Mulvey: the director’s gaze, the male characters’ gaze and the audience’s gaze.
SECONDLY, THERE IS ALWAYS A CULTURAL CLASH as the westernized lady talks and behaves like a foreigner. In ‘Kettukodi Urumi Melam’, Kalpana first sings in English and wiggles as a Londonian gogo dancer whereas Mookkaiya promotes ‘urumi melam’ and ‘pattikaada raagam baavam’. In ‘Senthamizh Naattu Thamizhachiye’, the heroine is reproached for using ‘sticker pottu’ instead of ‘takkar kunguman’. In Hip Hop Thamizha song, the ‘club la mabbu la thiriyira pombala’ are defined by their ‘bad’ habits (‘I smoke, I drink, I am in a live-in relationship’, says a female voice in the introduction) and are warned that they should stop their ‘konjam konjam Tamil theriyum vetti scene’.

This rejection of their Tamil identity thus appears as a reflection of their arrogant hypocrisy and even more seriously, of an unbearable immorality, so far from the heroine’s ‘karpu’ (chastity), one of the main attributes of the typical womanhood in Tamil cinema.


This rejection of their Tamil identity thus appears as a reflection of their arrogant hypocrisy and even more seriously, of an unbearable immorality, so far from the heroine’s ‘karpu’ (chastity), one of the main attributes of the typical womanhood in Tamil cinema.

AS WRITTEN BY RESEARCHER AND FEMINIST WRITER C.S LAKSHMI
‘Good and bad women, in clear black and white divides, have been the obsession of Tamil cinema in a way. The good woman embodies all that Tamil culture stands for where women are concerned. She is chaste, intelligent, motherly and divine. The bad woman is a coquette, a temptress and a loudmouth who finally gets her dues.’

As a matter of fact, the westernized woman appears all the more scandalous when she is compared with a typical Tamil Ponnu who has all attributes of the traditional passive ‘katha-nayaki’ as theorized by researcher Sathiyavathi Chinniah: ‘accam (fear), madam (tenderness), nanam (coyness), payirppu (modesty)’.

ON THE ONE HAND, preserving the ‘Tamil panpadu’ from the Western influence in a context of globalization.

ON THE OTHER HAND, constantly exposing but controlling women’s bodies. What if this obsession had been reversed each time men suited up or wore something else than a ‘kayili’ in Tamil films?
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- #1 The #allu Family @alluarjunonline
- #2 Samudhirakani and Jyothika together in next!
- #3 Here are 5 things you need to keep in mind!

Meet Sarla, the grandmother who has 10,000 children!
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