

# Social media dictates our lives

Director Chaitanya KM feels that real life now mirrors the virtual world

In 1991 when I was in Christ College, they had started digitising all the academic records. That was my first tryst with information technology. Some seniors had floated rumours that it was possible to hack into that system and change attendance records. Nobody dared to. But even before we saw its benefits, we fantasised about the dangers of this new technology.

In my University, the first rudimentary form of the internet was used to find actual books in the library. The email was not yet in vogue. I wrote and received letters by post.

When I started working, the internet was first offered through dial-up. These dialled a number and made a lot of noise before connecting. We had Yahoo those days. It was used to search, send emails and

even chat. Yahoo had many chat rooms related to art, culture and romance. People went into these to kill time. Often we used false names in these chat rooms and were wary of disclosing our identity. It was usually fun and never serious.

Then there was Orkut. My first film 'Aa Dinagalu' was also released at that time. I got to meet people - often strangers - who had seen the film and had nice and not-so-nice things to say about it. And it was an interesting space.

And then came Facebook. Initially, it was a great way of connecting with long-lost



friends and relatives from across the world. I even met many who I didn't know in the real world - people with shared interests and sensibilities. We felt con-

nected. We interacted just like we interact in everyday life. It was like we were in some virtual cafe, sharing pictures, arguing and having fun. The virtual world

mirrored the real world.

With time, Facebook grew rapidly. More and more people signed on. What were once innocuous discussions, became more

serious and argumentative. We had heated arguments with strangers on various social and political issues.

It was common to see people in the real world stuck to their phones. So the interactions in the real world became less. And we saw people sitting in public spaces like buses or cafes, eyes glued to their screens and socialising.

What became more dangerous is that the tone of discussions changed. Trolling became rampant. Since we never actually knew each other, decency and basic human etiquette that is part of the real world, were conveniently abandoned. It became fashionable to be opinionated. Name-calling became an accepted thing.

In real life, an argument between friends is just that.

An argument. We have heated discussions. State our points of view. We agree to disagree and continue with each other. But in the virtual world, you can unfollow, unfriend or block those who you don't like.

What is worse today is that when we have disagreements on issues over social media, that disagreement overflows into our real-world interaction as well. So just like in the social media, we think that even in the real world, we should unfollow, unfriend and block people.

In the last decade or so, I have often lost more friends over political, social and religious issues, than I ever did in 25 years. Because when we argue with each other on the internet, we aren't just arguing with each other. We are performing before thousands of spectators who are watching that argument. And like gladiators in Colosseum, we

have to win that argument at any cost.

Earlier, discussions were also learning exercises. You didn't always win an argument but you learned that you can be wrong. And it was fine to be wrong. Our opinions of yesterday might be flawed.

And we can change those opinions. Today, when you state something, someone can pull up something you wrote on the same issue 5 years ago and ridicule you for changing your stance. So we all stick to our positions, our ideologies, to political leaders we once supported. And we rigidly stick to our positions. Technology works on a "yes-no-cancel" option. Humans need not.

Once, the virtual world mirrored real life. Today real life mirrors the virtual world.  
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## Cinema will never go out of fashion, says actor Arfi

Actor Arfi Lamba was recently seen in cinematographer and director Santosh Sivan's short film 'Dial K for Kill'. Arfi is a theatre artiste, and made his cinema debut in 'Slumdog Millionaire'. He was seen in movies like 'Fugly' and 'Singh is Bliing'. He also co-owns the production house 'Bombay Berlin Film Production' which produced the movie 'LOEV'. In a candid chat, Arfi shares his experience of shooting for the short online film.

**Tell us about your role in 'Dial K for Kill'...**

It is a short film produced by ARRI channel. The role is of an anti-hero who is hired to kill the daughter of a rich person. They wanted to try out a new camera and were looking for actors the role. They asked me, but Santosh sir told me that I have a boyish look and that he wanted a killer look for the role. I was determined to not let go of the chance to work with him. I arranged a photo shoot with the help of my friend. I sent Santosh sir a few pictures from the shoot, and he immediately agreed to give me the part.

**How was it working with Santosh Sivan?**

I got to work with one of the best in the industry. I couldn't believe my luck but I was also nervous at the set. After the take, I asked

him if my performance was okay, and he said it was good. He even told the crew I did a good job.

**Your view on the transition to online platforms...**

I personally believe that there is a change in the market. There are films that are meant to be watched on television, and there are the ones for the big screen. Yes, online platforms are doing wonders for independent producers and present the work to a larger audience, but cinema will never go out of fashion. I hope they don't take away the joy of going to cinema halls.

**What's in the pipeline?**

There are two feature films and two short films.

**Malini Raghu**



Arfi with Santosh Sivan on the sets of 'Dial K for Kill'.



Arfi Lamba

**I sent Santosh sir a few pictures from the shoot, and he immediately agreed to give me the part.**

Arfi

## Old styles making a comeback this Winter

Winter is here, and that calls for new trends. A lot of old styles have made a comeback this winter. To help you stay on par with new fashion for the season, Metrolife puts together a few of the top trends.

### Animal Prints

Leopard-print coats and leopard-print shoes were all over the catwalk along with an abundance of the snake, python patterns, zebra and cheetah patterns. Most of them are in neutral colours, but you can also find some striking hues like red and shocking pink.

### Leather

The most popular of all fabrics this season is leather, in skirts, trousers and trench coats. It comes in various colours such as green and tans but the colour brown dominates the space.

### Capes

Capes made a big comeback this season with vari-



ous tailoring, sharp, structured and forms of power play and dramatic overdresses.

### Oversized clothing

There is a larger preference for oversized jackets, slouchy pants, higher necklines and longer hemlines as it keeps one warm and cosy.

### Fringes

Fringes can be seen on jackets, dresses and even bags. Bringing back the flapper dresses trend of the 20's and the swinging sixties,

**Gloss 'n' Glamour**



Runa Ray

this is a trend that will stay around for a while.

### High Gloss

A high sheen, metallic fabrics, high-shine fabrics were striking on the catwalks. Vinyl, latex, plastic or leather, metallics in a glossy material is something you should check out.

### Plaid

Prince of Wales heritage or tartan, checks with more neutral and classy colours are the trends that dominate the catwalks.

### Big Hair

This winter brings back the "big hair" look; whether inspired by the dreadlocks or the frizzy look. Big hair, twisted or left loose, is here to stay this winter.

Runa Ray



## Travel pic of the week: Jurong Bird Park, Singapore



**I clicked this picture at Jurong Bird Park, Singapore. The park is a haven to various species of birds and animals.**

PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY RUBY JOSEPH



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