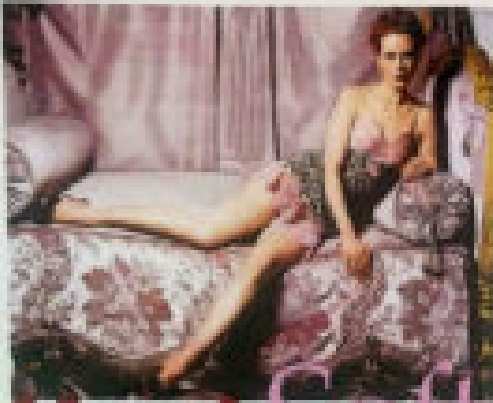


# Hard Soft by Manohar Khushalani

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## Hard Soft

Filmakers are trying to understand the real intentions of America in its "war on terror" in the post-September 11 world

Manohar Khushalani writes

There has been a perceptible shift lately in the subjects chosen by politically inclined filmmakers around the world. Cinema of the kind not created for pure escapism, often reflects the prevalent political and social climate. In the 1970s and 1980s, many filmmakers focused on the issues that followed the problems of newly independent post-colonial (non-western) nations, the Cold War, among other things. In the 1990s and 2000s filmmakers commented on matters like the Vietnam war and the various proxy wars being fought by Soviet and U.S. allies. In the 1990s, focusing on Asia, South America, the Iran Gulf war and the conflict in Yugoslavia provided fodder for politically and socially aware cinema.

Now, in the post-September 11 world, filmmakers are trying to understand what the true goals of the U.S. really are in its "war on terror." Does the U.S. want unconditional surrender when it is not on its side? Or is it genuinely seeking the world of those who really pose a threat to humanity? And is Israel's war a just war?

The 10th International Film Festival of India showcased several films on these subjects.

Sayam Mukherjee's *Five-6-App*, an Iranian film set in post-1979 Iran, depicts a young refugee woman, dreamer of becoming the President of Afghanistan. She witnesses a girl and a father village, put-up campaign posters for her in an abandoned palace where the only resident is an owl. The film explores the experience of immi-

grants' identity in a changed land where power is still a dream. The film also depicts the plight of refugees who have to fight for small corners of space and a few drops of water. In an amazing final sequence, scenes, lighted and the father runs on old man in the dream who says he is going to Kandahar to meet Mullah Omar. "The film," says Mukherjee, "the filmmaker have already experienced this."

The Olive Harvest is Palestinian director Haniya Elwan's first feature film. She has made several short movies about Palestinian women. *Olive Harvest* is a romantic triangle involving two brothers and a woman. Always has not returned to his village from an Israeli prison and his brother Tarek has arranged a bride's wedding for him. Now, Haniya falls in love with Huda, the brother's fiancée. Haniya's political father pushes Huda, the brother's bride as a gesture for his daughter. Haniya/Musa was a prisoner of Palestine. The film is a verbal commentary on the lack of unity amongst the Palestinians.

The most talked about film in the festival was French film-maker Lucie Van Trier's highly stylized *Diary of a Young Man*. The film is set in a small town in the north of France, where a nation of cinema through it was really was American. The movie film is about a man representing a small town called *Diary of a Young Man*. The central character is suffering from various times played with remarkable intensity by Michel Kahan, who is the man from gangsters who have just a price on her head. The movie is set in *Diary of a Young Man* where a young writer gives her stories. Some come before the film's commentary on the possibility of negotiating and the fear of "the other" is actually an endorsement of the U.S., which post-September 11 is ignoring the "war on terror" who continues to do "war on terror".