

## REPORT ON QUEERTESENTAIL 2.0

'QueerTessential 2.0', the first Queer Film Festival in Tezpur University was held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The event was held at the screening hall of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism and was organised by XOBDO in association with the Jyoti Prasad Agarwala Film Club (functioning under the aegis of Tezpur University). The program was hosted by Mr Bhargav Das (Co-worker, XOBDO) and it began with Arpana Choudhary (co-founder, XOBDO), giving an introduction to QueerTessential and a short presentation on Queer and the various terminologies associated with Queer. She said that the word 'Queertessential' derived from the word quintessential meant 'queer talk is essential'.

A total of six films were screened in total, these films were produced by Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT). The screenings began with the documentary 'A Safe Person to Talk to', which was narrated through the voice of a young person studying in a progressive South Delhi school who is straddling the binary world of genders. The second film to be screened was 'Breathe' which told the story of Swati and Ray as they navigated the intersections of sexuality, mental health and identity. After a short five minute break the third film to be screened was 'I'm Not There' which explores the relationship between gender, sexuality and migration and talks about leaving behind a sense of self that one can't identify with ones they grow up and moving to new vistas of space and identity. This was followed by the fourth documentary 'Zara Nazar Utha Ke Dekho' which juxtaposed narratives from the intersections of society about cruising and public space for the Queer. After a fifteen minute break for refreshments the penultimate film to be screened was 'Please Mind the Gap', which follows Anshuman a young transman on a journey in the Delhi Metro as he narrates humorous and often heartbreaking instances while navigating public spaces and his sense of self. The final film to be screened was 'Ishq, Dosti and All That' which explored the lives of a transman and a Lesbian as they reflected on desires, friendships, community, love and intimacy.

The screening was followed by a short interactive session where Indrani Kalita (co-founder XOBDO) answered queries from the audience. Questions were raised on what constitutes or defines Queer, and the problem of lack of intersectional representation of Queer in popular culture. There was discussion on stereotyping and how any representation helps carry out dialogue about Queer and Queer issues.

The event was a grand success and was attended by students, scholars and faculties across various departments of Tezpur University and finally there was also a discussion on the possibility of forming a Queer Collective in the Tezpur University campus to generate further awareness about not just Queer but other social issues as well.