

Q & A with CIFEJ Board Member T.S. Nagabharana

T.S. Nagabharana is a socially committed Indian Film Director. He is the recipient of international, national, state and other prestigious awards for 20 of his 30 *Kannada Movies* in the last 26 years and 3 children films among which have gotten international recognition. His movies have been selected for international film festivals and Indian panoramas. He has also directed an Indo-Mauritius co-project based on children film. A stage director and an artist since his college days, T.S. Nagabharana has directed and acted in many stage plays and TV series for children. He recently received a gold medal from the Indian government for his achievement in theatre. He is the founder-president of the children theatre organization called "Benaka". He began his film career in 1978-1979. Rural villages that retain traces of the rich cultural heritage of India and her folklore are the hubs of his unique movie making, wherein concern to children and women are underscored. His films for children include: *Stone Boy* (1991), a children's adventure fantasy; *Tenali Rama* (1990), a television series for national broadcast; *Chinnari Mutha* (1993), a feature film which was shown at the festival in Udaipur in 1993 and the festivals in Chicago and Beijing in 1994. He has recently completed another film for children, *Naaviddeve Echarike* (*Beware! We Are Here*), screened in the Asian Panorama section at the 10th International Film Festival for Children & Young People held at Hyderabad, India in 1997. His latest children's film includes the feature "*The Silver Brush*". He has been a CIFEJ board member since 2002 and has also acted as a national and international jury in festivals for the last 20 years.

CIFEJ: What was the decisive factor for you to get involved in children's media?

Naga: The continuous flow of inspiration that I got from doing children theatre. The abundant imagination and never ending energy is rejuvenation for any person in this media.

CIFEJ: What has been your biggest challenge since then?

Naga: To create a product that is liked by one and all and to be able to reach children from all over with my stories.

CIFEJ: How do you assess the state of children's media in this new millennium?

Naga: ...Quite complicated, but there is always hope. If the governments and authorities pay more attention and get more involved they could spend more money on it than on weapons.

CIFEJ: How do you define children's film?

Naga: It's very difficult to define children's film- but I feel that it has to come from children to children and be somehow representative of children's state of mind, categorically the film must be thematically constructed for children.

CIFEJ: Films for children or children films, which is the right term and why?

Naga: Children's film is the right term for me since it defines only and directly the children.

CIFEJ: Why should we consider it a genre?

Naga: Speculation is the need of the hour today. Children's media is the most neglected media so it must have its own recognition.

CIFEJ: Which is the main condition to consider a film apt for children, the age of the public, the age of the main character, or the story itself?

Naga: The story, the concept and then the main children characters involved in it.

CIFEJ: Why is a children jury relevant to any children's film festival?

Naga: It's relevant because their approach, attitude and intelligence are quite different from adults. And it offers the opportunity to give them a special space to express their opinion.

CIFEJ: How do you view your input in CIFEJ?

Naga: Fantastic.... It took some time to grasp the situation but now we're planning the future well in advance.

CIFEJ: How important is the work of CIFEJ to you?

Naga: More than important because it contributes to my ideology and my work.

CIFEJ: If you were allowed one wish, what would it be?

Naga: That children all over the world be healthy and happy.