

# dna OF mumbai

## City colleges host film festival on changing gender definitions

Preksha Malu@prekshums

Greek film director Annetta Pathanasiou was in for a shock when she went to teach theatre in Afghanistan. In her 80-minute documentary 'Playing With Fire', she talks of how women aspiring for a career in acting have been murdered, gone missing and even threatened by the Taliban. The film was just one of many screened at the Sama-Bhav film festival on February 4, held at Patkar Hall in Marine Lines to create a dialogue on gender, masculinity and relationships.

In a first, the SNDT College of Arts and SCB College of Commerce and Science for Women collaborated with MAVA (Men Against Violence and Abuse) to host such a festival for two days. The first day itself saw a packed auditorium and an interaction with film-makers Kalpana Shar-

ma and Aruna Raje Patil and advocate Jai Vaidya, who spoke on sexual harassment of women at workplace.

Among other shorts, documentaries and films screened was *Out! Loud!*, directed by Betty Bernhard from California, where segments of the play 'To-Ti-Te' (He, She, They) were captured. It



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spoke of LGBT existence and real-life narratives of queer people. Kanchan Bhalerao, 21, who watched the documentary, came out a changed person.

"The festival was an eye-opener. I did not know what LGBT meant till today. I thought if a girl is a lesbian then why should I socialise or be around her. With the film, I understood that they are people just like us and sexuality does not make their complete identity," she said. Harish Sadani, co-founder of MAVA, was present to guide everyone through the multilingual film festival. "Through this festival we are talking about all three genders and addressing the common enemy of patriarchy. We are trying to break gender stereotypes and trying to say that the attitude of men is a problem, not the men, and we should create an interaction regarding that," he said.