

MA ADMISSION TEST, 2015

Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University

(Answers may be written in English or Bangla, but all in one language)

Full Marks: 100

Time: 2 Hours

1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the question given below. Please keep a limit of **500 words:** (30)

I still cannot forget the powerful impression that the French short film *Guernica* [Robert Hessens and Alain Resnais, 1950] made on me when I saw it. The film takes Picasso's mural *Guernica* as its subject matter, but it is essentially different from what we usually call art films. For example, it is not an "appreciation film" that attempts to penetrate into the meaning of the mural by moving the camera all over it, analyzing it into selected parts. Nor is it the kind of "enlightenment film" that attempts to express the feeling and interpretation of the filmmaker by showing the whole tableau, thereby revealing the world of the painting itself using the expressive powers peculiar to the cinema... it seems to me that the director of this film, Alan Resnais, is one of the few directors who can consider the contemporary situation [*jokyo*] with a sadistic eye: the film casts aside all lukewarm sentiment and analyzes Picasso's passionate image by tearing it to pieces. The camera cuts the painting into multiple parts; stealing away the meaning of those "fragments" as it sets them off against each other and brings them into violent juxtaposition. Battered images of people from all periods of Picasso's work (for example, the Blue Period) appear and disappear through a masterful use of double exposure, producing an eerie sense of a supernatural world, and overwhelming the viewer with a feeling of peculiar tension.

And yet, what does it mean that in the whole of the film *Guernica* there is not a single full shot of the mural *Guernica*? Surely it is inconvenient to deal with this somewhat horizontal composition in the standard 4:3 aspect ratio. Still, if the goal was to reproduce the tableau as it appeared to the director, a tracking shot that took in the whole painting could create a single shot of the entire image. It follows then that from the very beginning Alan Resnais had never intended to "show" [*miseru*] Picasso's *Guernica*.

—Toshio Matsumoto, 'A Theory of Avant-Garde Documentary'.

In relation to Matsumoto's observations critically elaborate on the ways in which cinema can analyze and transform works of art.

2. Write short notes (of not more than **500 words** each) on **any two** of the following:

(2 X 20= 40)

- a) Graffiti Art
- b) Samar Sen
- c) *Miss Lovely*
- d) Edward Snowden
- e) Kanti Shah
- f) The First International Film Festival of India
- g) Chittaprosad
- h) *Malgudi Days*

3. Write an essay on **any one** of the following:

(30)

- a) Medieval Fantasy and Contemporary Media
- b) Documentary Practices and Political Activism in Contemporary India
- c) Magic Realism in Film and Literature