

Oppol

("Elder Sister")

India : 1981 : dir. K. S. Sethumadhavan :

: 143 min

prod: Mrs Rosamma George : scr: M.T. Vasudevan Nair : dir.ph.: Madhu Ambat

[Master Aravind](#)

Menaka; Balan K Nair; Sankaradi; Aranmula Ponnammma

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω 8 ∞ M ∞	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Source: *International Film Guide 1982*

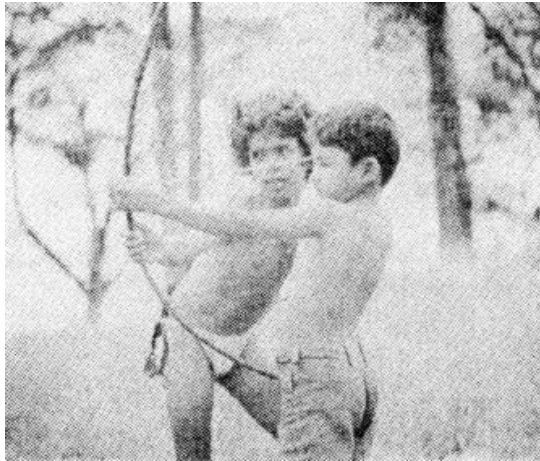
International Film Guide 1982 review:

“ **"OPPOL"** is essentially the story of an unmarried mother and her loved but otherwise unwanted child. What makes the film interesting is that it is projected mostly from the child's point of view. He is a stubborn, resilient little five-year old. The young girl, Oppol (played by Menaka), accepts her fate with fortitude and resignation. She has a mystifyingly maternal relationship with her ward Appu (Arvind) [sic], supposedly her brother. She lives with a disgruntled old aunt who hates the child and resents the girl for the disgrace she has brought on the family.

Appu is increasingly conscious of being a misfit. He becomes aware of the mystery and humiliation that shrouds his beloved benefactor. He realises vaguely that he is to blame. The boy's imagination is lit with thoughts of his sister's marriage, celebrated in

full public pomp and glory. Deep down maybe he knows that his existence needs some such open avowal of social acceptance. Oppol is married off hastily to an elderly ex-serviceman (Balan K Nair). The boy is told lies about her absence and treated with sudden affection by his dreaded aunt. He runs away in search of his Oppol. He finds that a strange, fierce man now has rights over her that keep him out. He fights back with an almost animal cunning.

The husband turns out to be a sinewy son of the soil, given to hewing the earth and bouts of drinking. He is also a kindly soul, attentive and grateful to his young wife. Although strongly attracted to her, he is understanding and gentle about her initial passivity. The obtrusive child quite naturally gets on the husband's nerves. He accepts him for a brief stay on his wife's request (who tells him that the child is an orphaned relative). The



Source: NFT Bulletin

competitiveness between him and the boy becomes unbearable. He is enraged enough to strike at him, and out of frustration, at his wife.

This peculiar love triangle has sexual overtones, with both rivals wanting the woman physically and emotionally to the exclusion of the other. The woman's defiant spirit and sense of dignity leads her to walk out on her marriage. She tells her husband the truth. He finally forgives her earlier indiscretion and accepts the boy. There is a smile of triumph on the boy's face. He knows he has been the catalyst to bring about a real marriage between the two who control his life. The soundtrack at this point breaks into traditional bridal music. Filmed in the Malayalam language. Scr: M.T.

Vasudevan Nair; dir.ph: Madhu Ambat; editing: Srinivasulu; prod: Mrs Rosamma George."

NFT Bulletin – September 1982 – review:

"This Malayalam film is the story of Appu, a six-year old boy whose whole world revolves around his elder sister, Malu. He doesn't know that he is her illegitimate son and accidentally intrudes on her marriage. The situation becomes more and more difficult for him until he runs away and hides in a cave. Sensitive direction, warm sentiments and splendid performances from the boy and his mother."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "Bloomsbury Foreign Film Guide", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Radio Times Guide to Films", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Not to be confused with Satyajit Ray's "**THE WORLD OF APU**" ("APU SANSAR" 1959). Well, somebody might.. The hackneyed plot of a small child obstructing his parent's new marriage receives an unexpected twist here, with the boy identifying his mother as a sibling protector. The separate plot element of the girl's arranged marriage to a much older man would also be a relevant theme to this archive, if the girl were younger than 16, but not if she were a young woman of conventional marriagable age. Both stills here seem to show Appu being taught hunting by an unidentified older boy. According to *The Moving Picture Boy*, "Master Aravind" appeared later in "**MY DEAR KUTTICHETAN**" (86), where he would be about 12/13 himself, but nothing else is known of him.

See subject index under [ASIA](#), **MATCHMAKER KIDS / MATCHBREAKER KIDS** and **RUNAWAYS / STOWAWAYS**.