
INDIAN CINEMA 1991

DIRECTORATE OF FILM FESTIVALS
New Delhi



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Cover Design: Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity

© Directorate of Film Festivals, January 1992

Published by the Directorate of Film Festivals

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Government of India

Lok Nayak Bhavan

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New Delhi 110 003

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Produced by the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity,
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

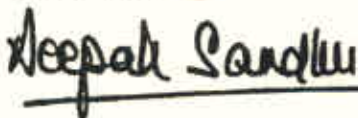
Printed at Nu-Tech Photolithographers, New Delhi.

Foreword

With the changing trends in Indian cinema, each year's harvest of Panorama films has reflected successive changes, in its style, presentation and social content. Since 1978, when Indian Panorama was first introduced, every year has brought forth a new bouquet of Panorama films, each reflecting the diversity of the soil from wherein it sprang and each enhancing the diverse shades and colours of its region and culture. More important, together they have reflected a common Indian ethos. In so doing the Panorama package has combined its varied perceptions of contemporary India and established itself as a dynamic representation of the cultural identity of the country.

The Indian Cinema book, which is annually published by the Directorate of Film Festivals, is brought out to coincide with the unveiling of the year's selection of Panorama films at the International Film Festival of India. The book not only details these films, but also attempts at reflecting the various changing trends in Indian cinema, both past and present. Several stimulating and thought-provoking articles on cinema provide insight into the film scene in the country.

As always, this year's selection of Panorama films attempts to present the most significant and artistically and technically satisfying films from among the entries that have come to us. The information provided by the Indian Cinema book on these films will be, I hope, of lasting value to both students and connoisseurs of Indian cinema.



Deepak Sandhu

Director

Directorate of Film Festivals

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Indian Cinema, the Southern Perspective

P.R.S. Pillay

Kannada and Malayalam films, together with films from Bengal had helped the Indian cinema to achieve international recognition.

The popularity achieved by Kannada cinema in its early days can be traced back to Dr Raj Kumar, a multi-faceted Kannada star. At the national level, the first Kannada masterpiece to achieve recognition was Pattabhirama Reddy's *Samskara*, made in 1971 and featuring Girish Karnad. Then came another Kannada masterpiece, *Vamsa Vruksha*, which bagged the President's Award for best direction. Nandini and Shankar Nag won best actress and best actor awards in subsequent years, bringing further glory to Kannada films. *Chomana Dudi* which won the President's gold medal in 1975, was a socially relevant film. The leading role, that of Choma the untouchable, was so realistically played by Vasudeva Rao that he won acclaim from the press and the public alike. The new wave in Kannada cinema found expression in *Ghatashraddha*, a national award winner, directed by Girish Kasaravalli, a talented product of FTII, Pune, and President of the Adarsh Film Institute. *Bannada Vesha* directed in 1988 by Kasaravalli, and *Mane* made by him in 1989, won President's Awards for being the best regional films. For a while, Kannada cinema had appeared to record a decline in terms of cinematic excellence, with the release of purely commercial movies. Then came director M.S. Sathyu with his *Bara*, produced by its leading man Anant Nag. The film realistically portrayed the plight of a well meaning District Collector, caught in the cross-fire of State politics. *Phaniyamma* directed by Prema Karanth, was Kannada cinema's contribution to idealism and social reform. The film took a close look at the changes in the status of Indian women in the present century. *Phaniyamma*, a brahmin lady widowed in her childhood, throughout her life explored the devastating effects of restrictions imposed on women by a ritual-bound society.

Kannada cinema could thus tackle a few of the burning problems of recent times with courage and conviction. Modernity as opposed to oppressive tradition; civilization as opposed to primitive life spent close to nature; and idealism as opposed to political corruption—all these found expression in good measure in Kannada films. The

reason was that some of the most committed writers, talented artistes and competent directors of the Indian cinema could test their mettle on the Kannada screen. In the process, Indian cinema was enriched with films of the excellence of *Samskara*, *Vamsa Vruksha*, *Chomana Dudi*, *Kadu*, *Hamsa Geethe*, *Pallavi*, *Ghatashraddha* and *Phaniyamma*. Unfortunately, this enviable tradition is sought to be broken, off and on, by purely commercial considerations, represented by cheap remakes of popular Tamil and Telugu movies and also films dealing with sensual sex, such as *Premaloka* by Ravichandran.

G.V. Iyer, the well-known 'barefoot director' had made several films in Kannada as well as in Tamil. The highest national award went to him for his *Adi Sankaracharya* made in Sanskrit. Film makers of the eminence of Girish Karnard, B.V. Karanth and N. Lakshminarayan are keeping a low profile today, obviously because of the various problems faced by producers of good cinema. These should be gone into, and the Kannada State Film Development Corporation should be revamped to serve the industry better. If this happens, the well-known veterans mentioned above, as also directors of the calibre of Girish Kasaravalli, T.N. Nagabharana and S.V. Rajendra Singh (Babu) will venture forward to take Kannada cinema further ahead in the years to come.

* * * * *



Sathyan and Sheela in *Chemmeen* (Malayalam)

Malayalam cinema came into the national scene when *Chemmeen*, made by Ramu Kariat in 1965, won the President's gold medal. *Chemmeen* was the first film from the South to win this distinction. Adoor Gopalakrishnan won the President's gold medal for his *Swayamvaram* in 1972. M.T. Vasudevan Nair did the same for his *Nirmalyam* in 1973. With these awards, Malayalam cinema came to be recognized nationally and internationally.

There was a time when well made Tamil and Telugu films held sway over Malayalam speaking audiences. Those films attracted an audience in Kerala because of the absence of a sufficient number of Malayalam films. The situation changed notably with the coming up of Udaya Studios, built in Alleppy by the Koshy-Kunchako team, and the better equipped Merryland Studios in Trivandrum piloted by P. Subramanyam. Producers whose number gradually grew, were attracted to Madras, the film capital of the South. *Jeevitha Nauka* and *Nalla Thanka* made by the owners of Udaya Studios were real money-spinners. *Swamy Ayyappan* made by P. Subramanyam at his Merryland Studios was another box-office hit. In later years, *Chattakkari* produced by M.O. Joseph and directed by K.S. Sethumadhavan, *Manjil Virinjapookkal* directed by Fazil, and *Ee Nadu* directed by I.V. Sasi proved to be financial successes. *Padayottam* in 70 MM and with stereophonic sound, produced by M.C. Punnoose, was an outstanding technical achievement. Another achievement of M.C. Punnoose was his 3-D film, *My Dear Kuttichaththan* the first 3-D film to be made in India. Both films created box-office history.

The late John Abraham, the late Padmarajan, K.S. Sethumadhavan, P. Bhaskaran, K.G. George, P.A. Becker, P.N. Menon, A. Vincent, Sree Kumaran Thampi, Hariharan, I.V. Sasi, Bharathan, K.R. Mohan, V.R. Gopinath, Kamal and Actor-Directors Venu Nagavally and Balachandra Menon are among the well-known film makers of Malayalam cinema. Every one of them has contributed substantially to the development of cinema in this region. Cinematographer Shaji's *Piravi* won for him several national and international awards. *Purushartham* made by K.R. Mohan won the Kerala State Award for being the best Malayalam film of 1987.

Unnikuttanu Joli Kitti by V.R. Gopinath won a national award for being a socially relevant film. Ajayan won national and Kerala State Awards for his *Perumthachan*, a well acted and well mounted film. *Abhayam* made by Sivan for the Children's Film Society of India, won the Kerala State Award, and also the Jury's Special Award at



Abhayam (Malayalam) by Sivan

the 7th Children's International Film Festival of India held in Thiruvananthapuram in November 1991. Though a children's film, *Abhayam* has a special message for parents. Earlier, Sivan had made two notable films, *Swapnam* and *Yagam*.

The late G. Aravindan and Adoor Gopalakrishnan have been for many years the most well-known directors of Malayalam cinema. Together with Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen, Aravindan and Adoor Gopalakrishnan helped to raise Indian films to the level of world cinema. All the films made by Aravindan, from *Uttarayanam* (1974) to his last film *Vastuhara* (1990), had won Kerala State Film Awards. His *Kummatti* was acclaimed an excellent children's film. Aravindan's *Chidambaram* was judged at the national level as the best feature film of 1985. *Thamp* and *Kummatti* won for him President's awards for excellence in direction. Adoor Gopalakrishnan, who was trained at the Film and Television Institute of India, is a perfectionist and he makes his films with great care for details. His *Kodiyettam* won the 'Bharat Award' for Gopi who played the lead role. Later, through *Mukhamukham*, Adoor explored the failure in the life of a leftist trade unionist, and had to face political censure from certain quarters. *Elippathayam* an earlier film, is a

typical Adoor film. This is the story of a man who hides in his ancestral home, trapped by his inability to face the realities of the fast changing world. The film won for Adoor, the prestigious British Film Institute Award. The only other Indian film to win this award was Satyajit Ray's *Apur Sansar*. Adoor's *Mathilukal*, based on a story by Vaikom Mohammad Basheer, helped to enhance Adoor's stature as a filmmaker of international repute. Most of Aravindan's and Adoor's films were financed by Raveendranathan Nair (Ravi) of General Pictures, an enthusiastic patron of good cinema.

Malayalam cinema has derived much of its strength from literature. Several plays of eminent playwrights such as actor-writer Thikkurissi Sukumaran Nair, T.N. Gopinathan Nair, N.P. Chellappan Nair and Thoppil Bhasi were turned into successful films. *Odayil Ninnu* by P. Kesava Das, *Randidangazi* and *Chemmeen* by Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, *Kallichellamma* by G. Vivekanandan, and *Asuravith* by M.T. Vasudevan Nair were a few of the novels which got transformed into much discussed films.

The role played by lyricists, and national award winning playback artistes has also been significant. As for acting talents, Sathyan, Nazir, P.J. Antony, Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair, and Adoor Bhasi deserve to be remembered with gratitude. None of them is alive today. Sarada from the land of the Telugu cinema won two national awards for acting in Malayalam films. 'Bharat' award winner Gopi is not very active as an actor these days due to illness, but has taken on the mantle of a director. Actresses Sheela and Jayabharathi had won state awards consecutively for years. Actor-Director Madhu, Thilakan, Innocent, Nedumudi Venu, Jagathy Sree Kumar, Bahadur, Sreenivasan and K.P.A.C. Lalitha among others continue to serve the industry with distinction. Talented young actresses Suhasini, Urvasi and Revathi, have already won recognition. *Kilukkam* starring Revathi is at present creating box-office records. Mohanlal and Mammooty are the two versatile artistes who rose to prominence recently. They are today the super stars of Malayalam cinema.

The film society movement is fairly strong in Kerala. Kerala University has a proposal to start a course in film appreciation. State Awards for Malayalam films is an annual event. A government subsidy of rupees one lakh is available for every film made in the state. The Kerala State Film Development Corporation, in addition to promoting the documentary film movement, and

building several theatres, succeeded in building the modern, self-sufficient Chitranjali film studio which won the appreciation of many filmmakers including Satyajit Ray.



Architect's view of the Chitranjali film studio in Trivandrum

Variety, freshness and social relevance are the primary qualities which distinguish Malayalam cinema. The industry suffers from all the ills that have afflicted the Indian film industry in general, including over-production. However, in spite of all problems, Malayalam cinema has been able to sustain some of its basic qualities.

* * * * *

The power of cinema to influence people is proved beyond doubt by the manner in which the late MGR (M.G. Ramachandran) and subsequently his one time film heroine Jayalalitha, came to power in Tamil Nadu. Sivaji Ganesan, Rajanikant and Kamalahasan, each with massive fan support, continue to draw packed houses. Among the younger artistes, Karthik and Nagarjun, Amala, Jayaprada and Vijayasanthi have carved out their star images. Tamil cinema is particularly dominated by the star system.

Early Tamil films were photographed stage plays with songs predominating over cinematic treatment. The situation changed with the emergence of filmmakers like S.S. Vasan, A.V. Meyyappan, T.R. Sundaram and M.S. Sriramulu Naidu, all of whom had their own studios. M.K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar, P.U. Chinnappa and Honappa Bhagavathar were good singers, though indifferent actors. Their songs helped them to draw crowds even in the case of not so well made films. *Haridas*, which starred Thyagaraja Bhagavathar, ran for over a year at the Broadway theatre in Madras. T.R. Rajakumari, with her sensuous features, became a hot favourite with her very first film.

Udaya Shankar's *Kalpana* made at Gemini Studio was a rare aesthetic experience. His visualization of life and society through dance forms was the highlight of the film. The dances were superb and the photography by Ramnoth was a treat for the eyes. In 1947, A.V. Meyyappan came out with his *We Two*, which brought new hopes for Tamil cinema. This was followed by S.S. Vasan's extravaganza, *Chandralekha*, starring Ranjan and T.R. Rajakumari. The film, made in Hindi and Tamil, was entertainment par excellence, and proved popular all over India. This paved the way for the production of Hindi films in the South. The entry of C.N. Annadurai, an excellent writer and orator into the field, marked the beginning of the politicization of Tamil cinema. Karunanidhi, a film writer of repute who rose in later years politically, wrote the script for *Parasakthi* which starred Sivaji Ganesan. The rise of comedy actor N.S. Krishnan and matinee idol MGR were two more significant events. MGR created for himself the image of a protector of the downtrodden, with great effect.



Sivaji Ganesan in *Parasakthi* (Tamil)

The arrival of K. Balachander on the scene marked the beginning of the new Tamil cinema. His themes were bold and his style was cinematic. *Aval Oru Thodur Kathai*, *Apoorva Raagangal*, and *Thanneer-Thanneer* were a few of his widely acclaimed films. The entry of Bharatiraja became still another landmark. His film,

Pathinary Vayadhiniley, starring, Kamalahasan, Rajanikant and Sridevi made him literally the darling of the masses. *Kizhukkey Pogum Rail* was another creation of his which ran for a year in several theatres. Bharatiraja's assistant, K. Bhagyaraj, turned into a writer-actor-director. All the films of this enterprising filmmaker, from *Suvar Illatha Chitrangal* to *Mundanai Mudicchu* have been super hits. A rare achievement indeed. Two more names deserve to be mentioned here, that of Ilayaraja the musical wizard who adds box-office pull even to average films, and Silk Smitha (SS), the actress who is synonymous with sex, capable of drawing crowds just by her presence in a film.

Coming to current films, *Chinnathampi* directed by Vasu, has proved to be a hit, running in several cinema houses for over a year. *Valkashi Puranthachu* stras new faces and is a refreshing experience. *Dalapati*, starring Rajanikant is quite an expensive production, and is on its way to celebrate jubilees at several centres. *Guna* directed by Santhana Bharati, and starring Kamalahasan is an enjoyable experience for discerning audiences. Kamalahasan, who is a sensitive artiste, does the role of a mad man, who gets killed in his effort to save his lady love. *Marupakkam*, directed by K.S. Sethumadhavan, won the national award for being the best feature film made in India in 1990.

In terms of commercialism, Tamil cinema ranks second to Hindi cinema. Gemini and several other studios have vanished. Vijaya Vauhini Studio is still partly utilized. Production costs have spiralled. Majority of the films fail at the box-office. The situation is grim but not entirely disappointing. K. Sethumadhavan, Bharatiraja, K. Bhagyaraj, Balu Mahendra and a growing band of young filmmakers can be expected to lift Tamil cinema to higher levels of aesthetic quality in the years to come. Tamil Nadu has a Theatre Corporation. The scope of its services could perhaps be expanded to include the production sector with advantage.

* * * * *

NTR (N.T. Rama Rao) in Andhra Pradesh and the late MGR in Tamil Nadu are the two stars who came into political limelight through the medium of the cinema. Their names are inseparably linked with Telugu and Tamil cinema. NTR is still active in the field, as is evidenced by his film *Viswamitra*, acted, produced and directed by him. NTR's son has followed the footsteps of his father as an actor. There was a time when the dominance of NTR was

threatened by the emergence of A. Nageswara Rao (Dada Saheb Phalke Award winner), and Krishna. Their popularity was matched by that of female stars such as Kanchanamala, Jamuna, Savitri and Bhanumathi.

The contribution made by the late C. Pullaiah to the early development of the Telugu cinema can never be forgotten. Starting from the 'silent' days this veteran remained active in the film industry throughout his life.

The first Telugu talkie was *Bhakta Prahlada*, made by H.M. Reddy. He successfully followed this up with a series of films dealing with contemporary themes. He made *Grihalakshmi* in 1937. *Sumangali* and *Mallipelli* were equally significant films. Kanchanamala, who combined beauty with talent, had starred in *Mallipelli*. All the films made by H.M. Reddy proved to be popular with Telugu speaking masses, as well as with people in the other linguistic areas of the South.

The outstanding success achieved by *Balanagamma* and *Chandralekha* made by the late S.S. Vasan at his Gemini Studios in Madras, changed the trend in the Telugu film industry, which went after folklore. Expensive sets, rich costumes, popular stars and technical standards made Telugu folklores also a success. The emergence of the Vijaya-Vauhini Studios in Madras, one of the largest studio complexes in Asia, deeply influenced the South Indian cinema scene. B.N. Reddy was the guiding force behind the studio. *Patala Bhairavi*, *Devata*, *Swarga Seema*, and *Malleswari* were popular films directed by him. Chakrapani, the writer, who turned many a novel into successful scenarios, was a pillar of strength to B.N. Reddy. L.V. Prasad was another prominent producer, whose *Samsaram*, starring Nageswara Rao, was acclaimed as a significant film. The success of Vijaya-Vauhini Studios helped to swing Telugu film production to Madras. Other production establishments came into being as well, which included Sarathi, Bharani and Prasad Art Pictures.

The Telugu film industry has always been influenced by trends in the Hindi film industry. Remakes of popular Hindi films became the order of the day. Commercial considerations controlled production, and costs went up disproportionately. This resulted in the failure of films at the box office. *Maro Charita*, an off-beat low budget film made by K. Balachander, and the super hit *Sankarabharanam* made by K. Viswanath, gave new life to Telugu

cinema. Dasari Narayana Rao and K. Raghavendra Rao rank among the more active producers today. Director Bapu, who is known for the lyrical treatment of his films, made *Mahabharata* in a modern setting. The film had the quality of an enjoyable ballet. Mrinal Sen's *Oka Oorie Katha* in Telugu was a notable cinematic achievement but it failed to have an impact on the Telugu film industry. *Daasi*, made by B. Narasingh Rao in 1988, won five national awards in addition to a Diploma of Merit at the Moscow Film Festival. His *Matti Manushulu* was a widely discussed film which won the National Award for 1990 for being the best feature film in Telugu for the year.

The Telugu film industry has talents in abundance but films tend to be more commercially oriented as compared to the other South Indian films. Andhra is the only state in India which sets apart a percentage of the entertainment tax for the development of the film industry. Utilizing this financial base, the Andhra Pradesh Film Development Corporation should be in a position to initiate measures for the artistic advancement of Telugu cinema.

Indian Cinema: In Search of a Place in the Sun

Sudhir Bose

In the context of world cinema, the Indian film scene presents some contradictions. At present, because of various factors—rising costs and the continuing impact of television and video on box-office receipts—film making, even in the developed countries, is becoming a matter of co-productions. But India still produces hundreds of films every year, more than any other country, and in so many languages. This burgeoning output, spread over a number of centres, however, does not get the recognition internationally, that some other national cinemas do, despite their much smaller number of productions. What are the reasons for this phenomenon? More importantly, is there such a thing as an Indian cinema?

If, as is generally accepted, India is a conglomeration of diverse cultures, film making here cannot but reflect this diversity. After all, there is very little in common between a film like *Aribam Syam*



Aravindan directing Neena Gupta and Mohanlal in *Vastuharam*



Nazar: Mani Kaul

Sharma's *Ishanou* (*The Chosen One*, 1990), made in the northeastern state of Manipur on a small budget, and the big budget block-busters from southern centres—films like Hariharan's *Oru Vadakkan Veceragatha* (*A Northern Ballad*, Trivandrum, 1989) and Mani Rathnam's *Anjali* (Madras, 1990), not to speak of the mega budget and star studded productions from India's Bollywood.

However, a film like the late Aravindan's *Vastuhara* (*The Dispossessed*, Trivandrum, 1990) brings us face to face with the biculturism—and, by extension, the multiculturalism—inherent in the Indian situation, through what may be called 'languages in contact'. As the 'Malayali bureaucrat' embraces his Bengali-speaking cousin when the two young men meet for the first time, there are no linguistic barriers—no words are exchanged. *Vastuhara*, therefore, reflects the natural diversity of India in its cinema. Obviously, there is not an Indian cinema, but Indian cinemas. The convenience of the singular should not obscure the plurality.

This does not imply that Indian films are ethnocentric. Among the various trends noticed in the recent past, one may mention the attempts to transplant the European literary works in the Indian



Anjali: Mani Rathnam



Rukmavati ki Haveli: Govind Nihalani

context—Satyajit Ray's *Ganashatru* (1989), based on Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*; Govind Nihalani's *Jazeere* (1989), based on Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*; Kumar Shahani's *Kasba* (1990), adapted from Chekhov's *In the Gully*; and Mani Kaul's *Nazar* (1990), based on Dostoevsky's *The Meek One*, which some twenty years ago had been used by Bresson in his *Un Femme Douce*, and thus doubly reflecting Kaul's delving into the European sensibility. He is now getting ready with *Ahmaq*, a screen version of Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, while Ketan Mehta has based his *Maya Memsaab* on Flaubert's classic, *Madame Bovary* and Govind Nihalani's *Rukmavati ki Haveli* is adapted from Lorca's *The House of Barnarda Alba*. Indian filmmakers are not, then, solely inward looking—culturally. Their visions—and cameras—focus on men and matters far as well as near, and this gives their films a certain catholicity, both in content and form.

* * * * *

Film making in India is generally considered in terms of western, southern and eastern regions, although the division is somewhat artificial. The western region, centred in Bombay, is dominated by the pan-Indian Hindi cinema. Since films made in the Hindi language command an all-India audience, they have attracted



Kasba: Kumar Shahani

talents and resources from diverse quarters and enjoyed the greatest prestige. This is the cinema that has created dreams and icons for the millions—formula directors, mega stars, music directors and playback singers, who have become household names. Artistes who operated in this system in the 1950s and 1960s—Guru Dutt, Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, Nargis, Meena Kumari, Naushad, Rafi, Mukesh and many others—are today's cult figures. Who knows who will be the cult figures of tomorrow?

But the Hindi cinema has also given its share of creators who continue to make films that aim at literary-cinematic excellence; some of them have already been mentioned here. Except when such films are what may be called personal cinema—Mani Kaul's *Nazar*, for instance—many directors select the cast and the crew with an eye on the box-office. After all, film making today requires big financial outlays; and ideally, such films should get back their investment, and more. It is here that the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) and Doordarshan provide financial and screening support. A single telecast creates a bigger potential audience than weeks of screening. If the small screen cannot compete with the big one in terms of the audio-visual impact, it makes up for that by ensuring a much wider viewership, more often for regional films which are not easily accessible outside their own regions.

Included among productions in languages in this region that we hardly ever get to see, are the commercially oriented and imitative efforts of popular Punjabi, Haryanvi, Gujarati and Bhojpuri cinema.

In the eastern region, in Bengal the veterans, Ray and Sen, are back in action, but the younger directors who came into the limelight in the early 1980s, Goutam Ghose and Utpalendu Chakraborty, have not been so active lately. On the other hand, Assam has produced two directors, Bhabendra Nath Saikia and Jahnu Barua, who are steadily building up their *oeuvre*. Apurba Kishore Bir's first directorial venture in Oriya, *Adi Mimansa*, is part of a small but steadily growing band of serious and not purely commercial films from Orissa.

The southern region, with studios in Trivandrum, Bangalore, Madras and Hyderabad, is a bit of a paradox. While the Malayalam cinema has had at least two directors with an international following, Adoor Gopalakrishnan and the late Aravindan, this region also produces films that attempt to emulate the Hindi

blockbusters with big budgets, stars and impressive production values. Moreover, despite the effects of television and the video on box-office receipts, people still go to the cinema in large numbers. Thus film lovers in this region have their own icons.

To come back to the question: why does this cinema not get the international attention that other, much smaller national cinemas do? In recent years, no Indian film has won a top award at any of the major international festivals; nor do they appear in the rolls of the Oscar awards, a forum for popular cinema. There may be many factors in operation here, but one only has to look at the films that have won the best foreign language film Oscar in the last few years to understand why an Indian film has not been able to compete successfully for the award. The Indian entry is usually a pale replica of a particular kind of Hollywood cinema, while the foreign language Oscar winners generally display a difference in their themes and treatments, along with cinematic excellence.

* * * * *

When we come to the field of writing on cinema, we find the picture somewhat depressing. *International Film Guide*, for example, has since 1985 presented dossiers on recent French, Australian, Canadian, Scandinavian, Soviet, Spanish and New Zealand cinema, but so far ignored the Indian film scene, for reasons that are not obvious. Not only that, even in their regular 'World Survey', India now gets less space than it did earlier.

Thus, a heavy responsibility rests on film writing in India for the analysis and evaluation of our cinema. Most of the national newspapers have weekly columns—a few have them more frequently—on cinema and video. But they suffer from one obsession: quite often they are interviews with the director if the film is a serious one, and with the stars if the film happens to be from mainstream cinema. Such interview-based articles have led to two developments: the directors or the stars get publicity, and the film journalists do not have to undertake in-depth analysis and evaluation. Articles of this nature may be good copy in the media jargon, but in the end it is cinema as an art form that loses.

Apart from the popular film magazines, there are not many serious periodicals focusing mainly on Indian cinema; and the few that do exist are not doing well in terms of circulation. Among them is the Bombay based *Cinema in India*, an NFDC sponsored publication which began as a quarterly in January 1987, but turned into a

monthly from July 1990. A special issue called 'Annual '91' came out in January 1991. It is in two parts, the first part, a 'Focus on Directors', consists of interviews with directors or their statements on their *oeuvre* till date, while the second part—'Panorama Parade'—attempts analyses of the films selected for the Indian Panorama at the Madras International Film Festival of India. While the official handbook on *Indian Cinema 1990* contains, along with articles on some aspects of the Indian film scene, mainly the synopses of the Panorama films, the special issue of *Cinema in India* offers useful insights on many of them. One hopes they keep it up in the coming years.

Another serious film periodical, based in Bangalore, which may even be termed somewhat highbrow, is *Deep Focus*. It began as a quarterly in December 1987, but in four years, only about ten issues have come out. *Deep Focus* can be described as quasi-academic in approach and it has its committed followers. Its issue of January 1989, for instance, has an interview-based article on the late Aravindan, which is quite different in scope from the ones in newspapers. Aravindan, who was usually not considered good copy by film journalists, said about the interview that it was 'the first time I've spoken to somebody on my films in such depth'. This and another interview with the generally taciturn filmmaker in the Annual '91 issue of *Cinema in India* are among Aravindan's few statements on his work which now have archival value.

The third serious film periodical, based in Delhi, is *Cinemaya: The Asian Film Magazine*, a quarterly that began publication towards the end of 1988. As its subtitle indicates, *Cinemaya* covers Indian cinema as part of the Asian film scene. Even so, from time to time, there are in-depth articles on different aspects of Indian cinema and analyses of Indian films which demand serious attention.

Every year there is also a small crop of studies of aspects of Indian cinema published in book form in different languages and concentrating on films from one or two regions. One among them receives greater notice than the others, by being chosen the winner of the annual National Award for the best book on cinema.

On the whole, however, writing on cinema has not become self-sustaining in India, nor have film studies been introduced in the universities on a wide enough scale. Until that happens, cinema in India will continue to be treated as an ephemeral media phenomenon, and will not graduate to an art form worthy of academic study.

Strategies for a Rebirth

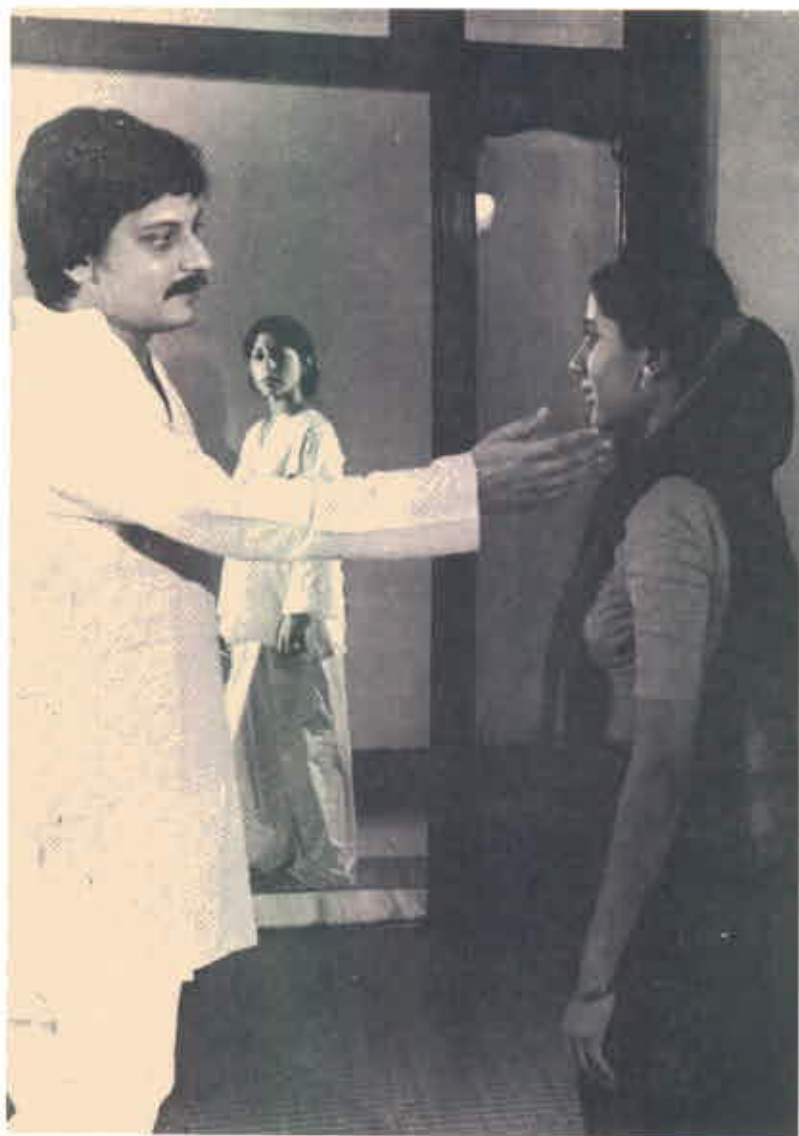
Aruna Vasudev

Much water has flowed under the bridge since the birth of a new cinema in India twenty years ago. Then there was pride in the genesis of a new language of film, now there is anxiety about the appropriation of that language and the absence of a sense of direction. Then there was an excitement about cinema as a form, now there is uncertainty about the survival of the cinema itself.

In those halcyon early days, all aspects of a cinema striving to develop its own vocabulary had validity. Institutions had been created to implement idealistic objectives and led to a flowering of talent. New filmmakers emerged every year from all corners of the country, in all languages. Everything was new, from an excitement about form and technique to a theoretical understanding; from a coherently structured narrative to the exploration of themes and issues, from an entirely new breed of actors, many of them trained at the National School of Drama, to cameramen and art directors, sound recordists and editors with a thorough grounding in



Uski Roti: Mani Kaul



Tarang: Kumar Shahani

technique, acquired as much through sustained exposure to great cinema at the National Film Archive, as through practical training at the Film Institute. Each year brought surprises, a freshness and

energy in films that stirred the imagination, that stretched the mind. It was as if the floodgates had been opened.

In all this, the role of the government was of crucial significance. It seemed to echo the views expressed with such force by the Ethiopian filmmaker, Haile Germia, a passionate spokesman for the cinema as a weapon, who nevertheless believes in 'the crucial and historic right to have the freedom to stumble and explore and experiment... while it is very important for food and shelter to be the primary objectives of any government, the development of the human intellect culturally is of equal importance'.

It was the government that recognized the work that was then produced, through national awards and international promotion. It established the Indian Panorama as a significant part of India's annual international film festival and later, by restructuring the Film Finance Corporation as the National Film Development Corporation, sought international outlets through theatrical and television release for these films. It was a radical opening up and it led to a fundamental shift in perceptions of cinema.

The press jumped with alacrity into the arena. A national recognition as much as an international one, inclusion in the Indian Panorama meant instant publicity. The stature of the filmmaker as artiste, as *auteur*, grew rapidly and at least in the urban areas, audiences were not found lacking. The one, continuing lacuna was a failure to permit the remodelling of the huge cinema palaces into the multiplexes of smaller theatres which such films needed. Commercial release, even in a limited way, remains out of reach.

But for that one major lapse, it was an ideal situation: full structural support from the government without any interference in the creative process. In those early days, this alternative movement, despite the variety of its approaches and the pulls in different directions, shared an attitude towards cinema that set it decisively apart from the mainstream. But as the initial enthusiasm settled into a sustained movement, positions became clearer—both among filmmakers and their votaries as well as among the authorities.

Within the movement, a split was developing between 'seriousness' which was equated with 'realism', and 'art' which was seen as a form of self-indulgence and, therefore, irrelevant. And it was



The Cyclist M. Makhmalbaf (Iran)

becoming increasingly apparent that 'realism' would win approval over 'art', that ideology would prevail over imaginative innovation.

Given the nature of the audio visual environment, where little effort of the imagination is required, and no demands made upon the intelligence, the victory of realism over art was inevitable. How much easier to consume images that confirm the existence of what is already known. How much more comforting to be absolved of guilt through the sole fact of witnessing representations of misery. Self-righteousness is confirmed, complacency re-established. Talk about what you have seen, it establishes your credentials as an intellectual. Write about it, read about it, give the film an award, send it to an international festival—you have proved yourself an upright, liberal, conscientious human being. No demand has been made upon you to look within yourself; hidden depths are left undisturbed. Where is the time, or inclination, for lyricism that lifts the heart and mind, for that sudden rush of feeling that overwhelms the soul? Life lived at its most superficial level is not open to experiences that threaten its easy equilibrium.

This is not to infer that the filmmakers themselves are not men and women of conscience, concerned and committed to their beliefs, but a superficial reproduction of reality rarely succeeds in being critical or subversive. On the contrary, the language it normally



Why had Bodhi Dharma Left for the East?: Bae Yong-Kyan (South Korea)

uses is easy to grasp, evoking immediate identification and an emotional rather than analytical response. And in recognizing and rewarding it, the government, against which the message is directed, appropriates it, aligns itself with it, assimilates the film and its thrust. Film critics with a sociological orientation tend to be swayed by the content, taking the way of least resistance by discussing the story rather than its presentation. Very rarely is the subject and its form analysed from an understanding of the manner in which cinema operates.

Whether it is the jury for the national awards, the selection committee for the Indian Panorama, or the press and media, it is the cinema of neo-realism that carries the day. As one filmmaker whose imaginative handling of cinema does not fall within these parameters puts it: 'If a film is about poverty or politics it is sure to win awards and accolades.'

Those awards and accolades themselves are losing their significance, followed immediately as they are by controversy. The institutions which had provided the initial impetus seem also to be drifting without a sense of purpose. Under the onslaught of video and television, they appear to have given up the struggle without a fight. A disturbing apathy has set in.



Raise the Red Lantern: Zhang Yimou (China)

Yet internationally, films are continuing to be made, festivals proliferating almost like an epidemic. Edging India aside today are films from China and Taiwan, Iran and South Korea and the Philippines, not to speak of Japan. The Korean Motion Picture Promotion Corporation has started the construction of its first mammoth studio complex on a scale as lavish as the Hollywood studios of the forties and fifties. Singapore is launching its film industry, planning ahead for the time when Hongkong will return to the Mainland; young filmmakers in Indonesia and Hongkong, the Philippines and Japan are experimenting on Super 8 and video, honing their skills before moving on to 35 mm.

If the seventies belonged to India, the eighties saw China take the lead with the astonishing work of the Fifth Generation filmmakers. Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou turned critical attention towards China where a large number of filmmakers were basing their visual compositions on Chinese brush painting, using allegory and metaphor in a manner which demonstrated a reappropriation of their rich cultural heritage, representing a confident break from the western practices of filmmaking. A sense of history and the challenge of the present were evident in their films which were nevertheless motivated artistic concerns. Despite the setback they experienced in 1989 with the tragedy of Tiananmen Square, they are still continuing along their chosen path.



The Ma-Nim: Chung Jin-Woo (South Korea)

Meanwhile from Korea and in a very different way from Iran, are coming films which also draw upon their traditions and their individual methods of story telling. Very rarely do they rely upon neo-realism as the *only* genre.

Asian cinema has come into its own over the past decade. New cinema movements are drawing on institutional and governmental support, and filmmakers committed to the cause of cinema are making their presence felt, whatever the ideological/financial odds against them. It is ironic that India, which had blazed a trail in the

parallel cinema movement (the commercial cinema is an overwhelming presence in many Asian countries too), should today stand with its energies dispersed and distracted. Not that the cinema still being produced today is second to anyone in experiment, thought, treatment. After a lull, the filmmakers of the parallel movement have in recent years, emerged as artistes of note and with the capacity to deal with the changing environment. They have gone into documentaries, into television, they have tapped other resources to make their work significant for cinema itself.

While they have adapted and transformed their situations, it is unfortunate that the problem of distribution—a problem encountered decades ago—should still be the major obstacle. It is this distribution nationally, together with a national pride in their work, that can help this cinema reassert itself once again. This is where many Asian countries have taken a lead. And this is where the intervention of the government can play a constructive role, as it has done in the past.

Wanted, a New Identity for Documentary Cinema

Suhashini Mulay

The future of documentaries and short films in India depends largely upon the history of the forms and how they have evolved over the past five decades. First, let it be said that as far as 'short films' and 'documentaries' are concerned, they should be treated as two separate categories of cinema. The only common rule of thumb being that they tend to be shorter in duration than the feature films. But there are enough exceptions in all these categories to blur the demarcation of each form and their definitions have to be based on something other than their respective length. Similarly, the 'experimental film' could be a short fiction film, documentary or a feature film and I would strongly argue that experimental cinema is more a matter of working against the traditional form, or innovation rather than simply another kind of non-feature film.

The generally accepted definition of the documentary, provided by John Grierson, is 'the creative treatment of actuality'. The dictionary meaning of a 'documentary' is a motion picture presenting an activity or occupation in real life, without fictional colouring or professional actors. Given the above definitions, I begin to have problems about what we have come to accept as a documentary in India.

The largest producers of documentaries in India for a long time have been, of course, the Films Division. The Films Division was set up as a department of the Government of India with a charter to produce propaganda films for the various departments of the government. While ostensibly, the organization was involved in giving new impetus to creativity and experimentation, it was cautious about admitting its real purpose—a totally unnecessary move, since the purpose had its own validity. Grierson had said on the subject, 'We can, by propoganda, widen the horizons of the schoolroom and give to every individual, each in his place and work, a living conception of the community which he has the privilege to serve. We can take his imagination beyond the boundaries of his community to discover the destiny of his country. We can light up his life with a sense of active citizenship.'

We can give him a sense of greater reality in the present and a vision of the future. And, so doing, we can make the life of the citizen more ardent and satisfactory to himself.'

The attitudinal problem that has dogged the medium right from the beginning is one of underrating the opportunity offered by a documentary. Although the compulsory showing of 'approved' films was criticized in independent India, it had actually been proposed as early as 1937 by the Motion Picture Society of India, on the basis that 'educational films' would not be ordinarily marketable. Newsreels and documentaries made through official sponsorship, thus became associated with the dull, the boring and the dispensable. Filmmakers, who could have taken the opportunity to 'widen the horizons of the schoolroom' or 'give to every individual, each in his place and work, a living conception of the community which he has the privilege to serve', instead assumed that their job was merely to list, in visual terms, the successes in the efforts of the government.

Meanwhile, consciously or unconsciously, the institution did produce enough exceptions to its own norms, making the ostensible the reality. Producers like Promod Pati, S. Sukhdev, Fali Billimoria, Loksen Lalwani and others produced thought-provoking and moving documentaries under the sponsorship of the Films Division. A number of them were propagandist films, but in the most relevant sense of the term. My quarrel is with the bulk of the documentaries produced, which gave more emphasis to the message to the detriment of the medium.

Obviously, the fact that the films were propagandist in nature was not as disturbing as the style of production. The bulk of the crop was completely unrelated to the actual situation on the ground because the filmmakers themselves did not fulfil their 'responsibility to the local and particular, recognizing the deeper levels of understanding and exposition into which information in a democracy must inevitably reach'—once again I find myself quoting Grierson. The hallmark of many of these essentially informational films was boring images coupled with a commentary that droned on about 'India's latest achievements in the field of—culture, agriculture, science, social upliftment—take your pick.

Yet propaganda films have been sensitively produced in India, some by individual filmmakers and some under the banner of the Films Division. *A Village Smiles* by S. Sukhdev, *Report on a*

Drought by Fali Billimoria, *They Call Me Chamar* by Loksen Lalwani, *To Light a Candle* by Shanti Choudhury and *Encounter with Faces* by Vinod Chopra, are cases in point.

Unfortunately, the audience of the last three or four decades of cinema, and therefore also future filmmakers, have been exposed to largely the run-of-the-mill documentaries. This, in fact, has been the public image of what documentaries are about. Often the exposure was outside the cinema hall, as the moment a documentary began on the screen, it was the signal for an exodus of smokers and their friends into the foyer. What the directors of bad documentaries inadvertently succeeded in doing, was to maul a film form and anaesthetize the public into believing that inevitably all documentaries have to be pedantic, unimaginative and boring, in order to be serious, informative and educative. This was indeed a wasted opportunity. Films Division had for a long time a captive audience who paid to see their production, since the screening of twenty minutes of 'approved' documentaries and newsreels was compulsory for the theatres. Not only did they have to screen the films, they also had to pay a percentage of their gate collection to the Films Division. What should have been a forum for stimulating information, often became an imposition because it was taken for granted by the filmmakers themselves. At the same time, the Films Division coverage of the Asian Games proved that a well conceived and well produced newsreel could easily be enjoyable and exciting to watch.

Many of the official films talked only about the achievements, ignoring the larger problems that the government had to struggle with daily and which directly affected the lives of the viewers. The impression inadvertently left would be one of callousness, rather than concern. The assumption that what was expected of them was not creativity but uniformity and control, limited the performance of many documentary filmmakers. Making a documentary became a job, a chore and not 'the defence of a faith and a concept of civilization'. What inevitably suffered was the form-content relationship. If the filmmakers believed that the content was not of any real concern to them, they could not get excited by the form. The first casualty was the form of the film and the second casualty was the filmmaker.

To me, this was the greatest disadvantage that the Films Division had suffered from, while all the time, the intention behind its establishment was for it to be a harbinger of hope and good

aesthetics in the country. The documentary form in the country came to be looked upon as a boring routine, rather than an exciting experience of self-expression, through which new filmmakers could test their mettle.

It is this legacy that we have carried with us from the fifties into the eighties and nineties... straight into the arms of the new medium for the masses—television.

By now the commissioning agency, the film producer, the scriptwriter and the watching public are convinced that documentaries have to be boring. Doordarshan suffers from the same disadvantage of a complete misconception of the form by its progenitors. The proof of this mind set among the filmmakers is in the quality of the run-of-the-mill documentaries seen on Doordarshan. Once again, thankfully, there are exceptions, but those only prove the rule. The attitude is constantly being reaffirmed by many public and private organizations who accept documentaries that are uninteresting as an inevitable part of the form itself. This



(Clockwise)

Meera Dewun, Sukhdev,
Loksen Lalwani, some
of the exceptions.



acceptance does not extend to feature films, or even advertisement films.

Sensitive and thought-provoking documentaries, some of which appear on late night television from time to time, are still being made today by the marginalized independent documentary filmmakers who receive little or no sponsorship. It is these filmmakers who have consistently turned out films which have been interesting and even if one does not agree with either the form or the content of any of these films, one cannot doubt their sense of purpose. Films by Anand Patwardhan, Deepa Dhanraj, Tapan Bose, Manjira Dutta, *The Media Storm*, Meera Dewan and others have found a place in the national ethos of documentary cinema. Unfortunately, not all their work have been seen widely. As they are relatively few in number, such filmmakers remain per force isolated and cannot, as yet, provide the impetus for a consolidated 'documentary movement' in the country, which can demolish some of the old assumptions about the form and create a demand for quality from the audience as also a sense of concern in those filmmakers who have, until now, taken the easy way out by not questioning the assumptions.

If by now you are wondering where this diatribe is leading, it is only to make one single point, that the tradition and aesthetics of documentary films need to be changed in this country. Documentary films have to be recognized as a different and specialized form of film making as much as feature films or advertisement films are considered to be. It has to be recognized that not all directors of feature films can make documentaries, just as not all filmmakers can produce advertisement films. They are three different disciplines, requiring different specializations. It has to be reaffirmed that making educational films or wildlife films are once again different kinds of cinema, requiring specialized conceptualization, technical skill and budgets. We have to be able to produce our own Jacques Cousteaus.

The malaise does not affect one or another government body, but it has already affected the minds of filmmakers and the audience. If the future of documentary and short films has to be something other than what it is today, the very minds of the scriptwriter, the technician and the filmmaker have to undergo a sea change. It is only then that a first step can be taken to change the identity of documentary films in India. Unless the filmmakers themselves believe that the films under production have to make some

significant statement, and unless these statements are based on genuine national aspirations, documentaries will inevitably remain insignificant. 'If there is a truly creative understanding the art will look after itself', said Grierson. 'We either belong to the creative mainstream of our society or we do not. If we do, it is for us to assert where and how we do belong and speak and act with a due sense of our role in the social leadership.'

Is there still a need for a manifesto for the documentary film, or has the grand old man of documentary cinema, John Grierson, said it all? Perhaps all we need now is to reassert our faith and provide the social leadership which is expected of us to give to our viewers 'a sense of greater reality in the present and a vision of the future'. Or is that too tall an order?

The Art of Animation

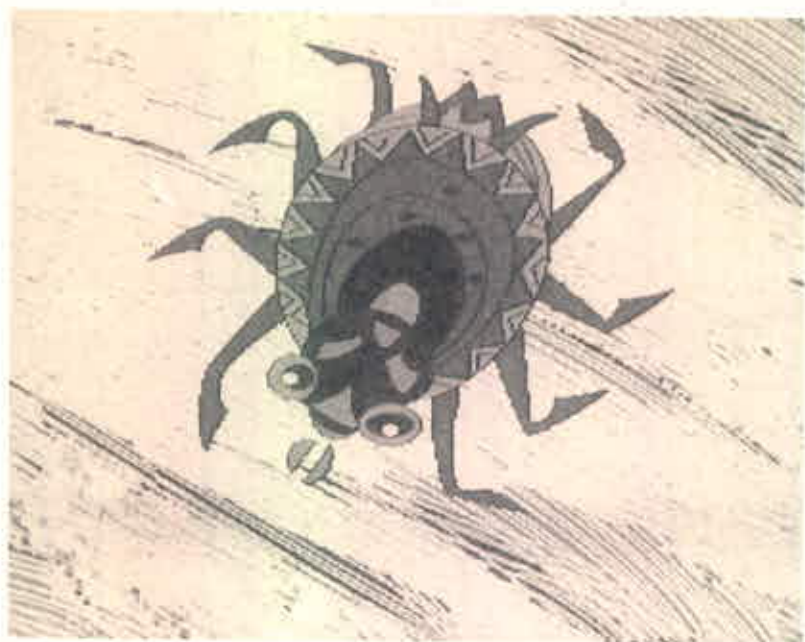
Bhimsain

Watching television, my servant asked me 'which district do these people belong to?' In a way it sums up the awareness we Indians have about the art of animation. Only the educated in the urban areas or connected to the field of communication have some idea as to what animation is. That is, the pictures are drawn and shot frame by frame, and when projected continuously, they seem to create the illusion of walking, talking and feeling. Such people are hardly a few thousand in the population of 85 crores. In other words, there has been complete absence of animation culture in India. We have, not more than a dozen of self-taught animators in this country, who can boast of doing some quality animation. And most of these animators find it difficult to survive without the help of the 'ad world'.

Ever since Winsor McCay drew the first animation cartoon portraying feelings of an animated character in 'Gertie the Dinosaur' in 1909, the art of animation has been commercialized and a never ending slap-stick humour has stayed with the animation films. To make people understand what is animation, one has to give examples of Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. But during the last two decades, the art of animation has taken new turns. Many new techniques and methods have surfaced along with a new generation of artists who use the medium primarily for self expression. Some of these artists assume direct responsibility for almost every aspect of film making—the process, the concept, drawing, shooting and some of them have erected their own camera stands. Style has become the ultimate. Animators are recognized by their graphic styles apart from their ideas. An animation renaissance is under way. These new generation of young animators have found a new voice in a medium that seemed a few years ago near exhaustion.

But the studio system is still very much alive and will continue to flourish. (Quite frankly for those who have the necessary drawing skill, it is the surest way to make a decent living.)

Full-length animation feature films are in production again, with renewed vigour. Combination of live and animation films are being



Two sulls from *Vartmaan* and *Lok Gatha*, animation films by Bhimsain.



produced. 'Who Framed Roger Rabbit' being the finest example, where live action shots have been matched perfectly with the animation with its zooms and pans.

Colleges like California School of Arts and Sheridan College, Canada are offering intensive courses for classical animation. The more traditional technique of sequence drawing has undergone modification to fit in with the individual artist's styles. There has been a re-discovery of paper with incredible variety of texture, colour and media appropriate to paper, such as water colour, pastels, crayons and charcoal, etc.

The new animators are completely dynamic in process drawing. An example is the spontaneous frame by frame ramification, of materials like clay, sand, seeds, sticks, beads and plasticine.

The new animator has progressed both in traditional custom areas as well as in the area of experimentation. Where the traditional animator has stayed with areas of comic, decorative, primitive and children's art, the new animator has developed on the experimental attitude and technique as an expression of form. These areas have even been extended to the field of post-production opticals on film and video.

I still remember an assumption which was a stated opinion at Disney studios: 'it takes at least ten years of drawing experience to become a competent animator'. This assumption is no longer relevant.

Computers have arrived and competition has sprung up in a big way. People who would have never been exposed to animation are suddenly making animation films. Today you need not be an artist to make an animation film. Technique and equipments are available to grab an image and move it on the screen with remarkable ease and effect. There are dozens of ways now to make an animation character literally come alive.

In India, with television around, offering special concessional rates for telecast, animated serials will find a reasonably safe outlet in the near future.

All this opportunity is there, but where are the animators ?

Animation will come to India only when an awareness is created

and a culture is born. In Japan and the West, animators are treated as special people, whereas in India I have heard people say that their role is that of a court jester, to make people laugh.

We must introduce animation as a subject in our art schools. The Children's Film Society, India, had been allotted an area of land by the Karnataka government to start a school of animation along with other performing arts. But for the last seven years the project has not taken off. Governments came and went, and the last I heard on the subject was that the Government of Karnataka is taking back the land it had once committed to the cause of animation in this country.

Film Criticism: Then and Now

Amita Malik

When I first started writing film critiques for *The Statesman*, Mr James Kewley-Cowley, the editor said to me: 'You will be paid Rs 3 per inch, admittedly not a very elegant way to measure literary output, but there it is.' Mr. Brook, the news editor, clarified things further: 'I shall tell you how many inches per review according to the advertisements we get from different cinemas every week. This week The Odeon has given the biggest ad., we can give them eight inches.' Add to this the fact that even up to 1991, there are no regular previews of films in the capital of India, and you will not wonder that I took up film reviewing very reluctantly.

But then, I had been dragged into it by a very discerning journalist called R.P. Nayyar, who ran the Indian *PUNCH*, *Shankar's Weekly*, practically single-handed while Mr. Shankar Pillai, the editor and the doyen of Indian cartoonists, was sending shivers through politicians and being asked for autographed originals of his cartoons by British Viceroys. As we strolled down Marine Drive one evening admiring the sun setting over the Arabian Sea, RP suddenly stopped in his tracks and said out of the blue: 'Why don't you review films for us? Here you are, right in Bombay, the home of the *desi fillum* industry, what more can you want?'

'What? Watch those stars making sheep's eyes at each other as they chase each other round a tree while someone else dubs their songs? You must be out of your mind.' 'I am not', persisted RP. 'It is a sociological phenomenon worth serious in-depth study. Why do millions of Indians go to the cinema, why is it the most popular medium of mass entertainment?' A good question, or two good questions, to be precise. So that is how it started and I have not regretted it. And to sum up my experience in one sentence, I would choose the title of that old song: 'It's foolish, but it's fun.'

But the most important questions remain: Does film criticism make any difference to the cinema in India? And who reads reviews, anyway? Well, considering the majority of Indians still cannot read and write, and considering newspapers and magazines are still largely an urban phenomenon, I feel it does not make an iota of difference to the average commercial film what elite writers

say about them in elite papers. And the wise elite writer does best when he analyses these films, just as R.P. Nayyar wisely said all those years ago, as the social phenomenon or the social index they constitute with all their trappings: The star system, the song and dance adjuncts, the small fee paid to the director as compared with the leading lady, and so on.

It is a different matter that audiences are also interested in the hair styles, the way of life, the latest scandal, the fascinating professional intrigues, of the film world. That is human nature and well looked after by say, the fan magazines of South India, the more stylishly sophisticated but equally crude stories carried in some Bombay glossies, that sometimes lead to libel suits hugely enjoyed by all. Equally important to the industry, which thrives on stories about the goings-on of their stars, are the trade journals, which provide forecasts about the fate of films about to be released or in the making, complete with their own intrigues and side shows. Some of them, of course, are highly professional and matter-of-fact publications and also have their place in the sun. But it is the gossip papers which have the largest circulations and one need not even explain why.

What, then, is the place of serious writing, or what one must label, for want of a better description, elite criticism in the elite papers? After all, we all, in one way or another, consider ourselves students of the cinema and are not necessarily either professors of the cinema or godfathers of the cinema.

Apart from that bit about the sociological assessment of the rank commercial films—and one must not imagine for a moment that there is no horse sense or merit of any sort in them—there is the fabulous technical advance made by Indian cinematographers, the at times breathtaking sweep of the photography, the elegance of the colour, the magnificence of the sound. And, yes, the sheer professionalism of the directors, the actors, the actresses, the showmanship, the unerring finger on the pulse of the audience. There is a good deal of crassness, of exploitation, of sheer waste and selfishness. But, like the folk performers of old, and the Indian cinema is still the most modern and most popular folk art in India, there must be something to it to have survived in the middle of the onslaughts of television, which it has invaded in a big way by not only providing Doordarshan with its biggest audiences but with the makers of its most popular serials, invariably made by Bombay's movie moghuls. In spite of the advent of video cassettes and video

parlours, complete with blue films, the Indian cinema is still alive and kicking.

But, most importantly, it is the serious writer on the cinema in India who has kept the film societies up-dated on what is happening abroad. In a highly literate state like Kerala, the serious film maker would not have reached today's heights if someone had not been there gently and at times fiercely pointing out just what was so good, or so different about Malayalam films local, not only in little villages where films are taken seriously but in other parts of India and the world.

There has been a pleasing internationalism in Indian film writing which has also infected the foreign film writer who visits India during film weeks and film festivals. If Indian film buffs are well up on Jancso or Olivera or Tarkovsky or Fassbinder or Truffaut, it is because they have been written about in the elite papers and quite often with individualism and maturity. Every Indian film daily and Sunday magazine worth the name has, particularly in recent years, provided steady and wide coverage of foreign films, and film writers have gone into their social, professional and at times political nuances with a high degree of discernment and sometimes even anticipation.

It was a film writer who first noticed the almost subliminal political messages creeping into Tamil films when political films *per se* were not possible to make. Canny audiences knew exactly what the rising sun or a red sofa set stood for. It was not a very far cry from that to film stars coming from the cinema to politics and providing at least three chief ministers of states, not to speak of innumerable MP's and MLA's (there is actually a film called *Aaj Ka MLA*, among others and one of the stars was to run for MP in the course of a few years). Again, it was the job of the film writer to spot these trends, of politicization of the cinema, as much as it was that of writers on politics. Right up to date, the debate about Amitabh Bachchan's brief and disastrous excursion into politics is as much the concern of the writer of films as his counterpart in political writing.

However, if the place of the Indian film writer is to be assessed at its best, it is what Indian film criticism has done in discovering talent, spotting significant new trends in regional and national terms and, above all, in building up off-beat filmmakers and films

which later went on to become internationally famous. When Satyajit Ray was pawning his wife's jewellery to raise funds for making *Pather Panchali*, there were certainly Indian film writers around who gave him sympathetic support and publicity. When actor Motilal made a modest small-budget film which hardly stood a chance at the box-office, it was discerning writers who recognized its courage, wrote it up and it went on to win the President's Gold Medal against heavy odds. Most of the off-beat film directors, actors and actresses who emerged in the seventies in India, would not have stood where they are today had they not been given something of a head-start by early talent spotters from the Indian film press.

In that sense, writers on films have more than stood by the Indian cinema as well as foreign cinemas in their writings. And that is no small contribution to what can be described as the considerable film sense and the admirable standards which, by and large, the Indian film press has observed down the years.

Sharing the Future: Musings on the Big and Small Screens

Shiv Sharma

Cinephiles very often hate the small screen and consider the television a big competitor of the cinema, a potential threat which may soon send the film industry to its doom. This view is highly pessimistic. To my mind, the destinies of cinema and television are interlinked. In the present stage of development in our country, cinema and television should have roles that are complementary to each other. The differences between the two media are not fundamental, while their similarities are—both are powerful means of mass diffusion.

It was already clear to television professionals of the early 1980s, that the two media must collaborate and adopt the route to peaceful



Sadgati: Satyajit Ray



Dandi: B. Narsingh Rao

coexistence. Revolutionary changes in the complexion of television programming were in the offing, as the country was being linked via the microwave and thereafter, the satellite. In 1982, colour was introduced, along with the linking of seven major television centres, resulting in a National Programme common to the viewers all over the country. Initially, it was only for a period of one and a half hours. Soon the transmission hours needed to be increased and the introduction of morning and afternoon transmission became a necessity.

Everywhere in the world, television was drawing upon the talent and products of the cinema. With the biggest film industry in the world, there was no dearth of talent in our country. It only required tactful tapping. Existing technical facilities, resources and trained personnel in television found it increasingly difficult to cope with the ever increasing demands of the viewing public, who also wanted quality.

Doordarshan had tried to rope in some eminent filmmakers during

the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975-76, but not with much success. In the early part of the 1980s, however, there was a breakthrough. Satyajit Ray agreed to do a short feature for Doordarshan—*Sadgati*—based on a Premchand story carrying the same title. The film won a Special Jury Award in the National Awards in 1981. About three years later, *Aadmi Aur Aurat*, a film made for Doordarshan, by Tapan Sinha, won the National Award for the best feature film on national integration.

During the period 1989 to 1991, Doordarshan emerged as a major producer of good cinema. Some of the best filmmakers in India made films which won not only national but international acclaim. Just look at the mind boggling crop.

In 1989 alone came four important films—*Bannada Vesha* by Girish Kasaravalli, winner of the Silver Lotus as the best Kannada film of the year; *Daasi* by B. Narsingh Rao, winner of awards for the best Telugu film, best actress, best cinematography, best art direction and best costume designing; Aravindan's *Marattam*; and *In which Annie Gives it Those Ones* by Pradip Krishen, winner of the best English language film as well as the best screenplay award. The last was an innovative film, featuring characters who have not been featured on the Indian screen before—the wester-



Sandhya Ragam: Balu Mahendra

nized, elite, English speaking Indians—'an affectionate study of Indian youth touched by East and West... devastating and sharply witty,' wrote Amita Malik.

In 1990 came *Bagh Bahadur* by Buddhadeb Das Gupta, winner of the Golden Lotus as the best feature film of the year; *Daddy* by Mahesh Bhatt; *Jazee* by Govind Nihalani; *Sandhya Ragam*, by Balu Mahendra, which won a National Award for the best film on family welfare; and *Mathilukal* by Adoor Gopalakrishnan, winner of National Awards for best direction, best Malayalam film, best actor and best audiography. The film also received awards at the Amiens and Venice festivals.

In 1991, *Marupakkam*, an NFDC-Doordarshan co-production, won the Golden Lotus as the best feature film at the National Awards. The three other films in which Doordarshan was involved, were *Ishanou* by Aribam Syam Sharma, which received a Rajat Kamal at the National Awards; *Thoda Sa Roomani Ho Jaye* by Amol Palekar, and *Sarothi* by Dr Bhabendra Nath Saikia.

Doordarshan has collaborated with NFDC in more than a dozen films, with notable results. *Salaam Bombay* by Meera Nair won international acclaim. *Kasba* by Kumar Shahani, *Disha* by Sai



Thodasa Roomani Ho Jaye: Amol Palekar

Parajpye, *Marhi Da Diva* by Surinder Singh and *Diksha* by Arun Kaul, are some of the other films in this list. Meanwhile, directors such as K. Balachander, Sawan Kumar, Subroto Bose, J. Om Prakash, Nabyendu Chatterji, Girish Karnad and Girish Kasaravalli, have already completed or will be completing their films for Doordarshan. Govind Nihalani's three films based on foreign plays are meant to be telecast as a series. Among them, *Rukmavati ki Haveli* has already received much appreciation in the preview shows.

Picnic by Aparna Sen, *Hamari Shadi* by Basu Chatterjee, *Seemana* by Shekhar Chatterjee, *Yather Yudhe Antayam* by K. G. George and *Sreyobhilashi* by C.J. Reddy are a few more of the feature films made for Doordarshan. Notable feature length and short films have been also made by Doordarshan producers. Among them are P. Kumar Vasudev's *Guru*, Saba Zaidi's *Titlee* and Zewar ka *Dibba*, B.U. Giri's *Aur Dhol Bajta Raha* and Chaman Bagga's *Abhi Nahin*.

Evidently, Doordarshan is now very much in the show business—but with a difference. The focus at Doordarshan is not on the box-office, but on commissioning some of the best directors of Indian cinema to create works which will have a lasting impact on films for television. With the large screen concentrating on multi-star, multi-crore extravaganzas, Doordarshan is providing a place in the sun for the serious filmmaker. It is said that television caters to the common denominator, it is supposed to be the great leveller. However, in its attempt to draw upon good filmmakers, Doordarshan has displayed its respect for the creative, the intelligent and the unique. The tragedy of Doordarshan is that it sells everyone else's goods, but not its own.

It is true that Doordarshan, like many other television organizations is drawing more and more upon the cinema. About five or six feature films are screened in various languages every week. In the days to come, revenues from television, video, cable television and sales to television channels outside will become increasingly tempting for the film industry in India. It has already happened in many other countries of the world, where film producers are joining hands with television companies in co-producing films. It is only by abandoning the atmosphere of distrust that exists between the two media and by actively collaborating in each other's activities that television and film can give their best to the viewers in the country.

Film Societies: Past, Present and Future

Gautam Kaul

International film festivals in India now have a good representation from an active organization called the Federation of Film Societies of India (FFSI). Representatives of this Federation can easily be distinguished from the rest of the visitors to such film events wherever they are organized in India, by the extra pinch of enthusiasm they show at press conferences and discussions, as well as in their own area of exclusive activities which have recently been accepted as most constructive, involving round table discussions with members of the public.

Foreign film makers could be cautioned not to treat lightly this class of film goers to Indian international film festivals as they are quite often experts on the works of individual film directors from all over the world and can take firm stands on issues.

All this however did not happen overnight.

It was on 13 December 1959 that the isolated film societies in various parts of the country, formed into a federation at the prompting of Satyajit Ray. Satyajit Ray was chosen the President with Indira Gandhi as the Vice President, and Inder Kumar Gujral as the treasurer. Indira Gandhi left the Federation after she assumed charge as Minister for Information and Broadcasting in 1965. Beginning with seven member societies consisting of the Delhi Film Society, Roorkee Film Society, Patna Film Society, Bombay Film Society, Madras Film Society, Calcutta Film Society and South Calcutta Film Society, the FFSI today has 230 units. The Federation is also a member of the Paris based International Federation of Film Societies.

The concept of film clubs or societies took root originally in England in 1920, just after the conclusion of World War I. In India, the first film society was formed in 1942 by the late Khwaja Ahmad Abbas and B.D. Garga. The experiment, however, failed because the idea seemed too premature for popular support. In 1947, Satyajit Ray and Chidanand Das Gupta, along with recently

graduated students, established the Calcutta Film Society. This was followed in 1953 by the establishment of the Bombay Film Society, and in 1956 the Delhi Film Society and Madras Film Society were also formed.

The objective was to create opportunities for young people to be acquainted with international cinema which could not find an outlet in the commercial film theatres, as either the exhibitors were not keen to show these films or the film distributors feared losing their investment.

In India, the monopoly enjoyed by film distributors representing the various studios of the US and the J. Arthur Rank Organization representing British film interests during 1940-1955, was leading to the exclusion of other international cinema which did have an audience. This realization came in 1952, when Indian audiences were exposed to the non-Hollywood cinema during the first International Film Festival in Bombay.

It was again in 1952, that the Education Ministry sought the services of Marie Seton, a British expert, to advise the Ministry on the models most suited for adoption in adult literacy campaigns in Indian conditions. Marie Seton, after a two-year study, submitted her report to the Government in 1954, recommending, among other things, the development of film societies to provide the base for adult education using the film medium.

The Union Government accepted her recommendations, but Ms Seton did not return to England immediately. She stayed back, touring the country to lecture to teachers and students on the methodologies of adult education schemes.

It was during such tours that Ms Seton faced young audiences and she continued to sow the idea of a film society wherever she went.

Marie Seton had indeed fallen in love with the country. She had also acquired two local heroes, namely Jawaharlal Nehru, and Satyajit Ray who had just completed his first film *Pather Panchali*. Ms. Seton was to later write two authoritative books on both Nehru and Satyajit Ray.

Until video technology arrived, the film society movement progressed steadily. It found its most ardent followers in South India, and in Kerala particularly, where film clubs and societies opened even

in villages. Their number grew so large in Kerala alone, that it became possible for society operators to take film print cans from one village to another by simply walking the distance! Among the earliest promoters of these societies in South India was Adoor Gopalakrishnan who in 1961 founded the Chitralekha Film Society, which later became a film production cooperative venture. Another pioneer in South India was the late Ramu Kariat who, with his *Chemmeen*, placed Malayalam cinema on the nation's film map.

Today, the leaders of artistic Indian cinema, no matter which part of the country they hail from, have all derived their original inspiration while working in the film society movement. These include among others the late John Abraham, Manmohan Mahapatra, Chidanand Das Gupta, Mrinal Sen, Basu Bhattacharya, Mani Kaul, Kumar Shahani, Narsingh Rao, K.U. Subbanna, Girish Kasaravalli, and Girish Karnad. There are also many working for television as makers of short films or handling production work at various Doordarshan centres.

The trend of developing an understanding of good cinema through exposure to the best in international cinema continues, but the film societies are no longer as well managed as before. There is growing concern among the leaders of the film society movement about the threat to its existence and most thinking has been diverted towards analysing the factors behind this threat.

To begin with, the youth are slowly slipping away from its folds. Part of the reason can be the change in taste and the growth of the video libraries. Young people are satisfied with what these libraries have to offer and are less inquisitive about what they are likely to miss. The problem is compounded by the progressive closure of serious film journals which maintained contact with developments outside the country. The shrinking ranks of club managers have led to a decline in the number of new organizations, even though the annual film appreciation courses organized by the Film and Television Institute of India are still very well attended.

It is also possible that the falling standards of education, particularly in North India, have shrunk the number of young people who enjoy foreign language cinema. Whatever business is done by foreign films in North India at present, is based more on their permissive nature than on their artistic value. In all such films, diletticism is irrelevant if the audience is satisfied with the

visual stimulation. To some extent, membership in the film societies too has rested on the patronage of the same kind of audience. However, with changing tastes, world cinema became increasingly political and socially aware and today demands an audience more discerning in their film viewing.

There is no doubt that state governments in the south of India in particular and some other states such as West Bengal and Maharashtra have been fairly liberal in allowing the growth of film societies. There is official recognition in these states of the units affiliated with the Federation of Film Societies of India, not merely as forums for entertainment, but as organizations promoting culture and film education. Other state governments and their departments of excise and entertainment tax have not displayed the same generosity towards the film society movement and have done little to promote such organizations. It has been argued that the state revenue is drained away if film societies are exempted from the entertainment tax.

The sharp fall in the membership of film societies in the northern states is also a result of the general atmosphere of uncertainty and lawlessness which has led the state governments to impose many restrictions on the use of the theatres. The young film enthusiast has to complete many formalities before he can screen even one film. The overland movement of film prints has also become erratic in these areas and the societies and clubs have to wait for a new dawn of public peace before they can function again with full efficiency. Unfortunately, there is little hope of such a development in the next five years and film societies in many parts of the country may well have to hibernate in the mean time.

The initial development of these societies was also associated with the work of its early patrons and leaders, people of the stature of Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen. Many of them are no longer active participants in the movement and there is need for a new generation of pathfinders. Meanwhile, there is an element of uncertainty regarding the direction the movement should take.

So far the film societies have screened films in traditional formats—16 mm and 35 mm—and have not accepted the video as a means of screening feature films. It is difficult to get good quality videotapes of foreign films and a video show would involve investment in a video projector, an expensive item. It would also mean that some of the original visual quality of the film would

suffer in the projection. However, such a transition may be necessary and the first steps can be taken by having small groups watch a good film on an ordinary television set. Some of the regional language films are available on videotape and as there is little chance of seeing these films outside their own regions (and sometimes even within them), other than at the International Film Festival of India, it may be worthwhile to experiment with the video as an alternative. In areas where auditoriums are not easily available, the use of the video would help to maintain the pace of activities for the film societies.

As a supportive measure, regular lectures and discussions on cinema should be organized by the film societies, so that interest in the study of cinema can be revived. The popularity of such activities has waned today because there are few new speakers available, while many of those who used to conduct these sessions earlier have slowly dropped out of the circuit. It is vital to identify a new set of experts who would be willing to take on the responsibility of promoting film appreciation throughout the country.

The Government of India has initiated a scheme through the University Grants Commission to open film societies in some universities and start regular diploma courses in film making and film appreciation. The scheme has not registered much success, mainly because of the lack of interest among students, who do not find the courses stimulating enough. At the same time, film clubs based in the universities have not managed to expand their activities, as most of their screening have to be held in the evenings, long after the classes are over and the campus is deserted. Another factor for their lack of success is the absence of good motivators and managers who can run the clubs efficiently.

The advent of the late night film shows on Doordarshan, which are mainly classics, and the weekly afternoon film, which is a regional award winner, are providing the mass audience with greater exposure to good cinema. In the process, Doordarshan may be substantially affecting the future course of film societies in the country, by appropriating one of the major functions of the movement. If, in the future, Doordarshan decides to organize festivals of foreign films, it will further shrink the area of operation for the film societies.

To make matters worse, a new problem has emerged regarding the availability of international cinema, following the collapse of the socialist governments in Central Europe. Until 1990, the governments of Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria, had followed a tradition of offering a regular supply of their national cinema to the Federation of Film Societies of India and had created a niche for their films among the Indian audience.

With recent political upheavals, this source has more or less dried up. The possibility of reviving these activities seems remote as these governments would now first count their pennies before contemplating future cultural activities abroad. The only immediate opportunity the members of film societies will have, to see films from these countries will be at the annual international film festival in the country. This can hardly satisfy the aims and objectives of the film society movement, nor can it support its future expansion. It is time to work out new directions for a movement which had once inspired the best of Indian cinema and contributed to its global identity.

फिल्मी गीतों के बदलते सुर

असगर वजाहत

हिन्दी फिल्मों में गीतों का वही महत्व है जो किसी भी अन्य महत्वपूर्ण तत्व का हो सकता है, मतलब यह कि हीरो-हीरोइन, संवाद, निर्देशन, छायांकन जैसा ही गीतों का महत्व भी होता है। कुछ फिल्में अगर हीरो, हीरोइन पर चलती हैं तो कुछ गीतों पर भी चलती हैं। गीतों का ऐसा महत्व विदेशी फिल्मों, विशेष रूप से योरोपीय फिल्मों में नहीं होता। वहाँ के लोग फिल्म के साथ गीतों के भारतीय संयोजन को ठीक ढंग से समझ भी नहीं पाते, क्योंकि वे संस्कृत नाट्य-शास्त्र के उन तत्वों के बदलते हुए स्वरूप से परिचित नहीं हैं, जो आज हमारी फिल्मों का अविभाज्य अंग हैं।

नाटक और गीत का जो संबंध आदिकाल में था, वही संबंध आज फिल्म और गीत का है। यह शोध का रोचक विषय हो सकता है कि भारतीय नाट्य-शास्त्र ने फिल्मों पर प्रत्यक्ष तथा अप्रत्यक्ष ढंग से क्या प्रभाव डाला है? इतना तय है कि पारसी नाटक परम्परा पर संस्कृत नाट्य-शास्त्र का गहरा प्रभाव था। वह प्रभाव बहुत उथले या सतही ढंग से नहीं देखा जा सकता। इसके लिए दोनों परम्पराओं का अध्ययन करना पड़ेगा।

हिन्दी फिल्मों में गीतों का संयोजन न केवल संस्कृत नाट्य-शास्त्र से प्रभावित है, बल्कि अब फिल्मों का अटूट हिस्सा भी बन गया है। हिन्दी फिल्मों में गीतों का स्तर बदलता रहा है। कई दौर आये हैं। कभी फिल्मी गीतों का स्तर साहित्य तक जा पहुँचा था, तो कभी इतना गिर गया था, फिल्मी गीतकार होना किसी कवि के लिए अपमान सूचक शब्द हो गया था। ये तरह-तरह के दौर क्यों आते रहे, तथा इन्होंने हिन्दी सिनेमा पर क्या असर डाला?

आश्चर्य की बात है कि जब-जब समाज में साहित्यिक आन्दोलन चले हैं, काव्य में निखार आया है, समय की सच्चाई को कविता ने पकड़ने की सफल कोशिश की है, तब-तब फिल्मी गीतों में भी बदलाव आया है। फिल्मी गीतों का स्वरूप ही नहीं है उसकी संवेदना में भी पर्याप्त अंतर आया है।

फिल्मी गीतों में आया यह पहला परिवर्तन 1936 में शुरू हुए प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन के परिणामस्वरूप दिखाई देता है। भारतीय साहित्य के इतिहास में पहली बार एक ऐसा साहित्यिक आन्दोलन चलाया जा रहा था, जो कथ्य और शिल्प के संबंध में एक नया क्रान्तिकारी दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत कर रहा था। प्रेमचंद की अध्यक्षता में आयोजित अखिल भारतीय प्रगतिशील लेखक संघ का पहला अधिवेशन (1936, लखनऊ) आधुनिक भारतीय साहित्य के इतिहास में एक अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण घटना थी, जिसका प्रभाव साहित्य ही नहीं सिनेमा तथा रंगमंच पर भी पड़ा था। दिलचस्प बात यह है कि प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन के आदि पुरुष प्रेमचंद स्वयं फिल्मों लिखने बम्बई गये थे और जल्दी ही उनका मोह-भंग हो गया था। वे वापस लौट आये थे, लेकिन प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन का वह प्रभाव जो फिल्मी दुनिया तक पहुँच गया था, लौट कर नहीं आया। उसने गीत, कहानी, अभिनय, निर्देशन सभी तरह से फिल्मों को प्रभावित किया।

प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन के प्रभाव स्वरूप हिन्दी फिल्मों के गीतों पर जिन कवियों के प्रभाव पड़े हैं उनमें 'साहिर' लुधियानवी का नाम प्रमुख है। 'साहिर' की साहित्यिकता भले ही कुछ लोगों के लिए प्रशस्ति लगाने लायक हो, लेकिन इस बात से इंकार नहीं किया जा सकता कि वे अकेले शायर थे जिन्होंने फिल्मी गीतों के पूरे परिदृश्य को बदल डाला था। 'साहिर' का प्रभाव फिल्मी गीतों पर लम्बे समय तक रहा। शायद जब इतिहास लिखा जायेगा तो हिन्दी फिल्मों के गीतों के एक युग को 'साहिर युग' के नाम से याद किया जायेगा।

'साहिर' के गीतों ने हिन्दी फिल्मों को एक नया आधार दिया। गुरुदत्त की फिल्म 'प्यासा' की सफलता का यही मूलमंत्र था। 'साहिर' के गीतों की अद्वितीय सफलता के पीछे प्रगतिशील आन्दोलन की यह समझ भी काम कर रही थी कि साहित्य और जनता के बीच गहरा संबंध होना चाहिए। इसी समझ के चलते 'साहिर' ऐसे गीत लिख सके जो जनता के दिल की धड़कन बन गये। इसके अतिरिक्त 'साहिर' के पास उर्दू कविता की सशक्त परम्परा भी थी जो भावनाओं की जटिलता तथा तीव्रता को बड़ी कुशलता से सामने लाने की क्षमता रखती है।

'साहिर' के काव्य में सामाजिक चेतना तथा प्रेम का जो सम्मिश्रण दिखाई देता है वह भी उनके गीतों में आया है। उनके गीत व्यक्तिगत प्रेम या पीड़ा से शुरू होकर सामाजिक दुःख-दर्द की महान गाथा में मिल जाते हैं। उदाहरण के लिए उनकी प्रसिद्ध कविता 'ताज महल' प्रेमी के व्यक्तिगत, निजी अनुभवों से शुरू होकर सामाजिक चेतना के आयामों तक को अपने अंदर समेट लेती है। यह गुण 'साहिर' के गीतों में भी है, और यही कारण है कि 'साहिर' को अद्वितीय लोकप्रियता प्राप्त हुई।

'साहिर' ने जिस समाज सापेक्षता को गीत का आधार बनाया था, वह कोई बिल्कुल नयी चीज़ न थी। उनसे पहले के गीतकार भी अपने समय, समाज और मनुष्य की समस्याओं को अभिव्यक्ति दिया करता था। राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन का बड़ा गहरा प्रभाव हिन्दी सिनेमा ही नहीं बल्कि फिल्मी गीतों पर पड़ा था। इस युग के गीत न केवल विदेशी दासता और साम्राज्यवाद से मुक्ति के गीत हैं बल्कि नये मूल्यों और नयी जीवन दृष्टि को स्थापित करते हैं।

कहने का अभिप्राय यही है कि फिल्मों के गीतों में राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर होने वाले परिवर्तनों को ही नहीं बल्कि विकसित होते हुए राष्ट्रीय सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य को देखा जा सकता है। निश्चित रूप से गीतकारों ने अपनी ज़िम्मेदारी निभाई है।

राष्ट्रीय आन्दोलन के सुधारवादी और क्रांतिकारी दोनों स्वरूपों को हिन्दी फिल्मी गीतों ने आत्मसात किया है। एक ओर गांधीवादी चेतना फिल्मों में उभर कर सामने आती है तो दूसरी ओर भगत सिंह, चन्द्रशेखर आज़ाद और अफ़ाक़-उल्ला ख़ाँ जैसे क्रांतिकारियों की छवियाँ गीतों में उभरती रही हैं।

आज़ादी के बाद नये परिवेश में देश निर्माण की भावना हिन्दी फिल्मी गीतों में पूरे जोर-शोर से मुखरित होती है। लेकिन यह नव-निर्माण की गूँज जल्द ही ठण्डी पड़ जाती है और मोह भंग का रंग पूरे साहित्यिक सांस्कृतिक परिवेश पर छा जाता है। इस मोहभंग को भी गीतकारों ने प्रभावशाली ढंग से सामने रखा है।

‘साहिर’ के साथ गीतकारों की एक पूरी पीढ़ी थी जिसने चौथे पाँचवें दशक में अपना गहरा प्रभाव छोड़ा। शैलेन्द्र और शील के अलावा जॉनिसार अख्तर, शकील बदायूनी आदि ऐसे कवि थे जिन्हें एक ओर तो साहित्य में प्रतिष्ठा और सम्मान प्राप्त था तथा दूसरी ओर फिल्मों में भी वे सफलता के झण्डे गाड़ रहे थे।

‘साहिर’ एक ओर उर्दू परम्परा की लोकप्रियता को फिल्मों में ला रहे थे तो दूसरी ओर शैलेन्द्र लोक धुनों तथा जन संवेदना को गीतों का आधार बना रहे थे। उनके गीत निश्चित रूप से दूसरे आयाम के गीत माने जा सकते हैं। लोक संगीत और जन भाषा के साथ आधुनिक संवेदना का कलात्मक संयोजन उनके गीतों को उच्च श्रेणी प्रदान करता है।

यही युग उन अन्य प्रगतिशील और जनवादी कवियों का भी है जो साहित्य और सिनेमा में बराबरी का महत्त्व रखते हैं। शकील बदायूनी ने भी फिल्मी गीतों को नया साहित्यिक स्वरूप दिया है। उन्होंने भावना और संवेदना के नये तैवर में फिल्मी गीतों को ढाला है।

साहित्यिकता के अतिरिक्त दबाव से हिन्दी फिल्मों के गीत सन् 60-65 के आस-पास कसमसाने से लगते हैं। लगता है गीत कुछ नया तलाश कर रहा है, पर वह बहुत स्पष्ट नहीं है। इस बीच संगीत अपनी पूरी प्रयोगधर्मिता को प्रमाणित कर रहा था। आवश्यक था कि उसके साथ गीत भी बदले, विशेष रूप पाश्चात्य प्रभाव हिन्दी सिनेमा के संगीत को नया आयाम दे रहा था। ऐसी स्थिति में नये तरह के गीत का जन्म एक आवश्यकता बन गया था और हुआ भी यही, गीत ने एक ऐसा स्वरूप ग्रहण किया जो नया था— प्रयोगधर्मी था— और नये ज़माने की नयी आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करता था। इस गीत में संवेदना और विचार के वे आयाम तो न थे जिनके लिए हिन्दी फिल्मों के गीत जाने जाते थे, लेकिन नयी धुनों और लय पर आकर्षित करने की अपार क्षमता थी। नये हिन्दी फिल्म-गीत को लेकर तरह-तरह की प्रतिक्रियाएँ व्यक्त की गयीं। कुछ लोगों ने इसे गीत की मौत माना तो कुछ ने कहा कि गीत संगीत के अधीन आ गया है। अब संगीतकार कवियों को बताते हैं कि कौन से शब्द लिखे जायें। मतलब यह कि संगीतकार कवियों के मुँह में शब्द दे रहे हैं। दूसरी ओर कुछ लोगों ने इस नये संगीत का स्वागत किया और इसे नयी आवश्यकताओं का तकाजा बताया। ऐसा किसी भी कला-रूप के साथ होता है, बड़ी परम्परा में जब कुछ नया जुड़ता है, परिवर्तन आता है, तो उसकी प्रतिक्रिया तरह-तरह से होती है।

फिल्मी गीतों का अगला दौर साहित्यिक और लोक परम्पराओं के आधार पर एक नयी आधुनिक संवेदना विकसित करने का दौर है। इस युग में गुलज़ार, शहरयार, निदा फाज़ली और जावेद अख्तर ने गीत को नयी संवेदनाओं, अनुभूतियों तथा संगीत के नयी संस्कारों के अनुकूल ढालने का सफल प्रयास किया। गुलज़ार अपनी तरह अनूठे गीतकार हैं जिन्होंने छोटी-छोटी अनुभूतियों को गहनता और नवीनता से प्रस्तुत करने में अद्वितीय सफलता प्राप्त की है। उनके विषय जीवन की छोटी-छोटी सच्चाईयाँ हैं जो ऊपरी या सतही ढंग से देखने पर गीत का विषय नहीं बनती, लेकिन गुलज़ार का कलम एक चमत्कारी ढंग से उन्हें अविस्मरणीय गीत में ढाल देता है।

शहरयार ने शुरू में फिल्मी गीत नहीं लिखे हैं, बल्कि उनकी गज़लों को फिल्मी गीतों के तौर पर इस्तेमाल किया गया है। सातवें दशक की उर्दू गज़ल में परिवर्तन आ रहे थे। शहरयार की गज़ल

आधुनिक भाव बोध को व्यक्त करने का अपार क्षमता रखती है। उस समय फिल्मी गीतों में आधुनिक भाव बोध की कमी थी जिसे शहरियार की गज़लों ने पूरा किया। विशेष रूप से 'सीने में जलन...' जैसी गज़लों ने हिन्दी के फिल्मी गीतकारों को एक बार फिर चौंका दिया और शहरियार की लोकप्रियता ने उर्दू के अन्य गज़ल कवियों के रास्ता बनाया।

जावेद अख्तर उर्दू की सशक्त परम्परा के शायर और गीतकार है। जावेद वैसे तो अपनी नज़्मों के कारण साहित्य जगत में विख्यात हैं लेकिन उन्होंने फिल्मों, जैसे 'सिलसिला' और 'तेज़ाब', के लिए जो गीत और गज़लें लिखी हैं उनमें आधुनिक जीवन का अमूर्तन, भावों की जटिलता और बहुआयामी यथार्थ की कलात्मक अभिव्यक्ति हुई है। जावेद अख्तर ने फिल्मों के लिए कम ही गीत लिखे हैं लेकिन उनके गीतों ने लोकप्रियता के मानदण्ड स्थापित किये हैं।

फिल्मी गीतों ने समय-समय पर नये रास्ते खोजे हैं। फिल्मी गीतकार भी दूसरे कलाकारों की भांति बदलते हुए जीवन और उसकी आवश्यकताओं की अभिव्यक्ति को लेकर प्रयत्नशील रहे हैं। यही कारण है गीत और फिल्म का वह अटूट संबंध जो प्रारंभ में ही स्थापित हो गया था, आज भी कायम है। आज भी बिना गीतों के हिन्दी फिल्मों की परिकल्पना असंभव है। कभी-कभी ऐसे प्रयोग किये गये हैं कि पूरी फिल्म में गीत नहीं हैं। लेकिन ऐसे परम्परा नहीं बन सके हैं। परम्परा तो यही है कि गीत फिल्मों का महत्व और अविभाज्य अंग है और राष्ट्रीय सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य को अपने भीतर समेटे हैं।

भारतीय सिनेमा : साहित्यिक-सांस्कृतिक परिदृश्य

सुरेन्द्र नाथ तिवारी

भारतीय सिनेमा में विगत दो दशकों से व्यावसायिक फिल्म निर्माण से हटकर जिन फिल्मों का निर्माण हो रहा है उससे फिल्म-संस्कृति का कलात्मक रूप विकसित होकर पूर्णतः प्रतिष्ठित हो चुका है। अपनी सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक अस्मिता की खोज में यथेष्ट लम्बी यात्रा तय करते हुए उसने सिनेमा के स्वतंत्र कला-रूप को स्थापित किया है। इस प्रक्रिया में भारत का यह 'नया सिनेमा', साहित्यिक मूल्यों को भी अपने में समाहित करने में समर्थ हुआ है। इस कलात्मक सिनेमा के फिल्मकारों ने नयी आख्यानक संरचना का विकास किया है। विषय वस्तु के चुनाव से लेकर उसके प्रस्तुतिकरण तक जिस पद्धति की सृष्टि की है वह समग्र रूप से भारतीय छवि को उभारती है। परिणामतः भारतीय कला-सिनेमा की विषय वस्तु का आधार विदेशी साहित्यकारों की कृतियाँ हो सकती हैं, किंतु उनका निरूपण भारतीय सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक वातावरण के अनुरूप होता है। फिल्म में बिम्बित परिदृश्य अत्यंत जाना-पहचाना लगता है।

इस दृष्टि से कुमार शहानी की फिल्म 'कस्बा' तथा मणि कौल द्वारा निर्देशित 'नज़र' विशिष्ट नव्यतम फिल्में हैं। ये दोनों फिल्में विश्वविख्यात महान् कथाकारों की कृतियों पर आधारित हैं। 'कस्बा' एंटन चेखोव की कृति 'इन द गैली' तथा 'नज़र' दोस्तोयव्सकी की कहानी 'द जेंटल ब्रीचर' (द मीक वन) पर आधारित है। इन फिल्मों के विश्लेषण से जाना जा सकता है कि फिल्मकारों ने कृति के साहित्यिक सौंदर्य तथा उसकी मूल भावना को अक्षुण्ण रखा है, साथ ही सिने-भाषा और व्याकरण का शास्त्रीय उपयोग करके उत्कृष्ट कलाकृतियों का निर्माण किया है। 'कस्बा' तथा 'नज़र' इस बात को एक बार और प्रमाणित करती हैं कि सिनेमा अपने में साहित्य की आत्मा को समोये हुए स्क्रीन पर बिम्बित होने वाली श्रेष्ठ कृति के रूप में पुनर्सृजित हो सकता है।

'कस्बा' का घटनास्थल हिमाचल की कांगड़ा घाटी है। कांगड़ा अपनी पेंटिम्स के लिए विख्यात है। चेखोव की कहानी से प्रेरित होकर जिस विषय वस्तु के अनुकूल रंगस्थल की अपेक्षा थी वह हिमाचल का सूर्य्य प्रदेश ही प्रदान कर सकता था। 'कस्बा' की सज्जा में कांगड़ा की प्रकृति तथा ग्रामीण अंचल का जीवन महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका अदा करते हैं। हिमाचल का यह मनोरम प्रदेश पृष्ठभूमि का काम करता है जो गतिशील कैमरे के संचालन, जीवंत ध्वनियों के अभिलेखन, तथा संकलन की कलात्मकता से गहरे यथार्थ को व्यंजित करता हुआ गीतिमय हो उठा है।

एक परिवार की भीतरी-बाहरी जिंदगी की छानबीन तथा उसके बीच बढ़ती हुई दरारें, उसके ऊपर पड़ने वाले कस्बे के जीवन का प्रभाव तथा उसी से क्रियाशील 'कस्बा' एक सांगरूपक की सृष्टि करते हैं। सांगरूपक के द्वारा संप्रेष्य वस्तु, अनेक मूर्त चित्रों के माध्यम से इन्द्रियानुभूति जगाकर भावोत्तेजन तथा विचारेद्बोधन करती है। 'कस्बा' में अनेक गतिशील चाक्षुष बिम्बों के माध्यम से एड्रियबोध द्वारा 'मनुष्य' की अर्न्तवृत्तियों की अनुभूति होती है। इस प्रकार कुमार शहानी मानवीय स्थितियों का गहन बोध कराने में समर्थ हुए हैं।

'कस्बा' का यह परिवार दुकानदारी करने वाले मनीराम (मनोहर सिंह) का है। परिवार में उसके दो बेटे हैं, उनकी बहूएँ हैं तथा अपना वैधव्य तोड़कर दूसरी शादी करके लाई हुई उसकी अपनी पत्नी है। परिवार इस स्थिति तक क्रमशः पहुँचता है। कस्बे के रहने वालों से इस परिवार का शोषणयुक्त सम्बंध है। इससे व्यक्ति, परिवार तथा समाज के बीच निरंतर तनाव रहता है। परिणामतः उनमें निहित अन्तर्विरोध सामने उभरकर आते हैं। इस गाँव की पहचान एक विशिष्ट घटना से जुड़ी है। किसी मृतक भोज में एक ब्राह्मण के पांच किलो मिष्ठान्न खाने के बाद मर जाने की बात उस गाँव की परिभाषा से जुड़ गयी है तथा हास्य-परिहास का कारण बनती है। रेल पर बैठे यात्रियों के एक समूह में इस चर्चा से हैसते हुए लोगों के साथ फिल्म की शुरुआत होती है। फिर 'कस्बा' का एक दृश्य उभरता है जिसकी आकाश-रेखा में कुछेक कारखानों की चिमनियाँ दिखाई पड़ती हैं। चेखोव की कहानी का प्रारम्भ भी घाटी में बसे 'उक्लेयेवो' गाँव का, रेलवे स्टेशन तथा मुख्य सड़क से दिखाई पड़ने वाले दृश्य से होता है।

'कस्बा' का मनीराम का यह व्यवसायी परिवार हर प्रकार के भ्रष्ट कर्मों में लिप्त है। मनीराम किसी भी खाद्यान्न के साथ किसी भी चीज़ की मिलावट करके उसे ग्राहकों को बेच सकता है। कस्बे में वह अपनी स्थिति का हर प्रकार से लाभ उठाता है। दो मंजिले मकान में रहने वाले इस आदमी के लिए शोषण, तस्करी, कालाधन्धा, अफसरों को घूस देना, झूठी कसमें खाना तथा जालसाजी करना साधारण बातें हैं। इस प्रक्रिया में वह हल्ला करने की स्थिति तक पहुँचता है। यह सब उसके चरित्र के बाह्य रूप हैं। उसकी मानसिकता में चलने वाले क्रियाव्यापार और भी खतरनाक हैं। परिवार की समृद्धि के अहंकार से उदीप्त वह अपने बेटों के लिए सुन्दर पत्नियों की तलाश करता है। उसका छोटा बेटा भक्तू, जो लगभग बहरा तथा मस्तिष्क-संस्तम्भ से आक्रांत है, का विवाह सुन्दर, उग्र, उद्धत तथा महत्वाकांक्षी तेजो (मीता वशिष्ठ) से हो जाता है। तेजो धीरे-धीरे अपने ससुर के व्यापार की बागडोर संभालने लगती है। मनीराम को इससे परम संतुष्टि होती है। लड़के का काम पुत्रवधू कर रही है। बड़ा पुत्र धनी (शत्रुघ्न सिन्हा), अपने पिता के अधिक प्रिय है। उसकी बोलो-बानी, रहन-सहन एक शहरी की तरह है जो बनावटी शिष्टाचार तथा दिखावे से आक्रांत रहता है। बेटों की नयी माँ-माया (अलकनन्दा), धनी का विवाह किसी सुन्दर लड़की से करा देना चाहती है। दुल्हन की तलाश होती है। पड़ोसी गाँव की एक भोलीभाली सुन्दर लड़की जो यौवन की पूर्णता पर पहुँचने को है, अपने फटे-पुराने वस्त्रों में मनीराम के परिवार की बहू बनकर आ जाती है। धनी के विवाह की दावत घूमघाम से होती है। इस दावत में दुकानदारी परिवार की संस्कृति चरितार्थ होती है। अतिथियों में स्थानीय उद्योगपति — जिनसे व्यावसायिक ईर्ष्या-द्वेष का भाव मनीराम को उत्पन्न करता रहता है— तथा ठेकेदार शामिल हुए। नव दम्पति को आशीर्वाद दिये गये। धनी शराब में डूबा हुआ है। तेजो अपने परिधान-सज्जा में गोपी-सी दिखाई पड़ती है तथा अतिथियों के सत्कार में विशेष रूप से व्यस्त है। उसका पति भक्तू समस्त औपचारिकताओं से मुक्त आकाश में दीपित चन्द्रमा से प्रेरित होकर उलूक की तरह नृत्य में विभोर है। शराब में धुत मनीराम पंजाबी गीत की धुन में धुन मिलाता हुआ लुढ़क रहा है। समारोह समाप्त होने लगा। धनी अपने विवाह की प्रथम रात्रि की निष्पत्ति का इच्छुक नहीं मालूम पड़ता। सुन्दर युवा दुल्हन तारा भय और विरक्ति से संतप्त उसके पास से वापस चली जाती है।

फिल्म की आगामी घटनाएँ स्पष्ट होनी लगती हैं। धनी शहर लौट जाता है तथा जाते समय नयी माँ को अपने धंधे और उसमें फँसाव का संकेत भी दे जाता है। धनी के जाने के बाद तारा तज़गी,

तारुण्य तथा स्मृति का अनुभव करती है तथा अपनी माँ— जो प्रायः उसके पास आती रहती है— के सानिध्य में प्रसन्नता का अनुभव करती है। वह एक पुत्र की भी जन्म देती है, जो तेजो की ईर्ष्या को और भी उत्तेजित करता है। शहर में धनी के, जाली नोट बनाने के अपराध में गिरफ्तार होने की सूचना मिलती है। मनीराम अपने बेटे को बचाने के लिए गाँव से शहर दौड़-धूप करता है। तेजो को अपने मनसूबे पूरे करने का अच्छा अवसर मिल जाता है। वह उस जमीन पर ईंटों का भट्टा लगवाती है जिसे नयी माँ ने मनीराम से तारा के पुत्र के नाम करने को कहा था। तारा के बेटे की मृत्यु के बाद वह तारा को भी उसकी अपनी माँ के पास जाने को बाध्य करती है।

फिल्म में तेजो से घटित होने वाली इन घटनाओं से तेजो का चरित्र उजागर होने लगता है जिससे परिवार तथा उसके सदस्यों के अन्तः सम्बंधों में व्याप्त छल-नीति की बारीकियाँ भी स्पष्ट होती हैं। तेजो अपने अनुकूल स्थितियों का भरपूर लाभ उठाती है। वह स्वयं हर तरह के छल-कपट के द्वारा परिवार में एकमात्र शक्तिशाली व्यक्तित्व के रूप में उभरती है। अब वह परिवार की स्वामिनी ही नहीं है वरन् सारे कस्बे के भाग्य का निर्णय करने वाली बन गयी है। भट्टे के व्यवसाय में वह शीघ्र ही समृद्धि प्राप्त करती है और साँठ-गाँठ करके कस्बे के उद्योगपति को भी अपने शिकंजे में ले लेती है। दरअसल तेजो का यह रूप उसकी अतृप्त भावनाओं तथा दमित यौन आकांक्षाओं का परिणाम है। वह असाधारण जोड़-तोड़, तिकड़म, लालच और अधिकार लिप्सा से आक्रांत हो चुकी है।

'कस्बा' क्लासिकी शैली में निर्मित फिल्म है। फिल्म में रूप तथा वस्तु का धनिष्ठ सम्बंध है। सामाजिक दृष्टि से सजग तथा उत्कृष्ट कला-विधान से युक्त फिल्म 'कस्बा' जीवन की निर्दय यथार्थता को निर्ममता से प्रकट करती है। व्यक्ति किस प्रकार अदृश्य सामाजिक तथा मनोवैज्ञानिक शक्तियों से संचालित, जीवन की जटिलताओं का शिकार हो रहा है, 'कस्बा' के चाक्षुष विवरणों की आंतरिक संगति में विद्यमान है। फिल्म में अमूर्तन क्रियाव्यापार इतना सशक्त है कि चरित्रों की मानसिक स्थितियाँ तथा उनका सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण परिवेश की द्वंद्वत्मकता को उद्घाटित करता हुआ विकसित होता है। एक व्यक्ति किस प्रकार अपने ही कर्मों के कारण संप्राप्ति की स्थिति में पहुँच जाता है, मनीराम उसका साक्षात् स्वरूप है। उसका अपना जीवन तो त्रासदी बनता ही है साथ ही सम्पूर्ण परिवार को गड़बड़े में पहुँचा देता है। चेखोव ने अपनी कहानी में 'अक्सीन्या' (फिल्म में जिसका प्रतिरूप तेजो है) के चरित्र में साँप की विशेषताओं का होना वर्णित किया है। कुमार शहानी ने तेजो का चरित्र उसी के अनुरूप विकसित किया है। 'अक्सीन्या' 'जैसे साँप सिर निकालता है वैसे गर्दन ऊँची कर अपनी रहस्यमय भोली मुस्कान बिखेर देती।' तेजो के सम्पूर्ण आचरण तथा मानसिकता में साँप की बुनावट विद्यमान है। धोखेबाजी तथा छल-कपट में माहिर तेजो अपने ससुर मनीराम को हर दृष्टि से पक्षित करती है। इस प्रकार 'कस्बा' की संरचना बहुत प्रभावशाली बन पड़ी है। उपहास्यास्पद स्थितियों के बीच 'मनुष्य' की पीड़ा की गहन अनुभूति होती है।

व्यक्ति स्तर पर चेतना की जो अनुभूति दोस्तोयव्सुकी को हुई थी, उसकी अभिव्यक्ति उनकी मर्मस्पर्शी कहानी 'द जेंटल क्रीचर' (द मीक वन) में हुई है। आज जीवन की संकुलता में व्यक्ति की चेतना, उसकी मानसिकता में बहुत गहराई से उतर चुकी है। सुदीर्घ अंतराल के होते हुए भी पाणि कौल का



कस्बा : कुमार शाहानी

इस विलक्षण कृति से प्रभावित होना अप्रासंगिक नहीं है। दोस्तोयव्सकी की प्रस्तुत कहानी एक श्रेष्ठ कृति है। मणि कौल ने 'नज़र' में रूपांतरित कर कहानी से आगे बढ़कर उसे सिने-कलाकृति का रूप प्रदान किया है।

'नज़र' मूलकथा की संवेदना का गम्भीरता से अनुगमन करती है। दाम्पत्य जीवन में 'व्यक्ति' का 'व्यक्ति' से अपरिचित रह जाना, उसकी भौतिक तथा मानसिक पीड़ा की तीव्र प्रतीति, व्यक्ति जीवन को इस हद तक अवसादमय तथा दारुण बना देने वाली स्थितियाँ उत्पन्न कर देती हैं कि 'वह' आत्महत्या के लिए उद्धत हो जाता है। मणि कौल मानते हैं कि 'केवल सामाजिक संहिताएं व्यक्ति के आंतरिक दमन की प्रकृति को व्याख्यायित नहीं कर सकतीं, जो विवाहित दम्पतियों की मैत्री को पंगु बना देती है। मित्रता, जिसके आधार पर सम्बन्ध की शुरुआत होती है, बाद में सबसे पहले उसी की आहुति देनी पड़ती है।'

'नज़र' का प्रारम्भ उस पति (शेखर कपूर) के एकालाप से होता है जिसकी पत्नी (सम्मवी) ने खिड़की से बाहर कूदकर तत्काल आत्महत्या कर ली है। स्मृतियों की कौंध में उसे वह पहली मुलाकात याद आती है जब वह उसकी पुरावस्तु की दुकान पर कुछ वस्तुएँ बेचने आई थी और फिर प्रायः आती रहती थी। प्रारम्भ में वह उसकी ओर कम ध्यान देता था किंतु बाद में स्त्री के गर्विले तथा स्वतंत्र आचरण को देखकर कुचक्र करता है। शीघ्र ही वह जान पाता है कि वह एक अनाथ लड़की है और अपनी किन्हीं चाचियों के साथ रह रही है। वह हताश होकर कई काम पाने के लिए एक विज्ञापन देना चाहती है जिससे कि वह अपने को उस शादी से बचा सके जो उसकी चाचियाँ करने को सोच रही हैं। पुरावस्तुएँ बेचकर विज्ञापन के लिए वह पैसा संग्रह कर रही है।

वह अपने विवाह का प्रस्ताव अपने एक गरीब रिश्तेदार से भेजता है। विवाह के बाद उसका सम्बंध लगभग सभी से समाप्त हो जाता है। वह स्त्री जो अब उसकी पत्नी है पुरातत्त्व की दुकान में मदद करती है। एक दिन दुकान पर ही आपस में कुछ कहासुनी हो जाती है जिससे वह छोड़कर चली जाती है। पुरुष को पता चलता है कि वह उसके एक सैनिक साथी से नियमित रूप से मिलती है।

उस रात सोने के पहले वह अपनी पुरानी फौज वाली बन्दूक को मेज पर छोड़ देता है। प्रातः अर्द्धसुप्तावस्था में वह देखता है कि उसकी पत्नी बन्दूक हाथ में लिए हुए है और उसकी कनपटी के पास लगा रखा है। वह सोते हुए होने का बहाना करता है। वह बन्दूक हटा लेती है और चली जाती है।

कुछ दिनों से वह बीमार है। एक डाक्टर उसे देखने आता है। गम्भीर बीमारी के कारण वह बहुत कृश दिखाई पड़ती है। पुरुष उसे बताने की कोशिश करता है कि वह उससे कितना प्यार करता रहा है लेकिन अब वह क्यों बदलने लगा है। यह सब जानकर वह किसी दूसरी दुनिया में खो जाती है।

एक दिन पुरुष उसे गाता हुआ सुनता है। वह उसके गाने की अक्षमता किंतु गाने की इच्छा से प्रभावित होता है। वह उसके सामने फूट पड़ता है और वायदा करता है कि वह दुकान बेच देगा तथा उसे बाहर ले चलेगा जहाँ एक नया जीवन शुरू करेगा। वह चुप है और कोई उत्तर नहीं देती।

उसके कुछ दिन बाद वह जब घर में अकेली है केवल गरीब रिश्तेदार है, सोच में डूबी हुई खिड़की के पास आ खड़ी होती है। अचानक वह खिड़की पर चढ़ती है और बाहर कूद पड़ती है। गरीब रिश्तेदार उस क्षण की याद करती है जब वह घर वापस आता है और उस पर जो बीतती है।

दोस्तोयव्सकी ने अपनी इस कहानी के सम्बंध में एक टिप्पणी लिखी है, जिसमें व्यक्ति की मानसिक प्रतिच्छवियों को जानने के लिए एक परिकल्पित स्टेनोग्राफर के माध्यम की रचना की सार्थकता को स्वीकार किया है जिससे इस अनोखी कृति का निर्माण होता है। साहित्य में इस प्रकार के माध्यम प्रयुक्त किये जाते रहे हैं। विक्टर ह्यूगो ने भी अपनी कुछ उत्कृष्ट कृतियों में यह तरीका अपनाया है। वस्तुतः जटिल मानसिक प्रक्रिया को जानने के लिए इस प्रकार के माध्यम सशक्त युक्ति का काम करते हैं।

जटिल मानसिक क्रियाव्यापार केवल चरित्र के माध्यम से पकड़ में नहीं आते हैं। कृति की संरचना भी उन्हें अधिक स्पष्ट करने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान करती है। 'नज़र' का रूप-विधान इसे पुष्ट करता है। 'नज़र' की आन्तरिक बुनावट से संलग्न पात्रों की मानसिक क्रियाएँ फिल्म के रूप-विधान में बिम्बित हुई हैं। यह कोई आसान काम नहीं है। उसके लिए जो प्रतिभा तथा तकनीकी कौशल चाहिए, उसकी अपेक्षा मणि कौल से ही की जा सकती है।

'नज़र' के मूर्त बिम्बों, भांगिमाओं, वस्तुओं के संयोजन, अभिनय-कला तथा यंत्रविधि के उपकरणों के कलात्मक प्रयोग से फिल्म की आंतरिक संगति निर्मित हुई है। रूप-विधान के इन विविध उपायों में रूपायित जीवन-स्थितियाँ तथा मानसिक जटिलताएँ कहानी की अर्थवत्ता को मानवीय संदर्भ में मुखर करती हुई कालातीत बनती हैं। 'नज़र' दृष्टिगत नहीं है वरन् अपलक और टकटकी लगाकर देखते रहना उसकी नियति है। यह एक ऐसी स्थिति है जब आँखें तो खुली होती हैं किंतु सामने कुछ दिखाई नहीं पड़ता वरन् वह भीतर, अर्धतर में देखने की कोशिश करता रहता है। इस 'देखने' (नज़र) की यह वेदना है। सम्भवी के श्रेष्ठ अभिनय ने इसे सम्भव किया है।

स्त्री और पुरुष के सन्निधान से प्रेम की सृष्टि होती है। लेकिन एक ऐसी स्थिति भी आती है जब एक-दूसरे को प्यार करना तो असम्भव ही हो जाता है, उससे भी अधिक जीवन जीना व्यर्थ लगने लगता है। स्त्री-पुरुष के सहज मानवीय सम्बंधों की दिशा कब कैसे बदल जाती है कि जीवन का अंत एक दुःखद आत्महत्या में होता है, नहीं कहा जा सकता। सम्बंधों के गहराने या क्षीण होने या समाप्त होने के प्रति कौन जिम्मेदार है? कौन सही है, और कौन गलत है, ये प्रश्न प्रत्येक काल और प्रत्येक युग में 'मनुष्य' के साथ जुड़े हुए हैं। 'नज़र' में यह सब निर्व्यक्तिकता के धरातल पर है जो संज्ञाविहीन भी है। पुरुष 'वह' है और स्त्री भी 'वह' है। दोनों तृतीय पुरुष हैं। उनका कोई नाम नहीं है। वे अमूर्त भी नहीं हैं। सामान्य मनुष्य की तरह हाड़-मांस के पुतले हैं जिनमें मानवीय जीवन की समस्त भावनाएँ तथा वृत्तियाँ धनीभूत हैं। फिल्म में संवाद का कम से कम प्रयोग विषयवस्तु को और भी गंभीर तथा अर्थवान बना देता है। निश्चित ही 'नज़र' के निर्देशक ने सृजन की प्रेरणा से प्रेरित होकर एक कलाकृति का निर्माण किया है।

उत्कृष्ट सिनेमा किसी साहित्यिक कृति पर ही आधारित हो, आवश्यक नहीं है। आलेख तथा एक परिपूर्ण फिल्म के सघन सम्बंध से एक कलाकृति का निर्माण किया जा सकता है। इस संदर्भ फिल्म 'दृष्टि' का महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है।

'दृष्टि' शिक्षित तथा प्रबुद्ध मध्यवर्गीय व्यक्ति की कहानी है। निखिल (शेखर कपूर) और संध्या (डिम्पल) दोनों भिन्न प्रतिष्ठानों में काम करते हैं। उनके एक बच्ची भी है। विवाह की आठवीं सालगिरह के अवसर पर उनके घर पर कुछ मित्र आए हुए हैं। खाते-पीते वे सभी वैवाहिक जीवन के खट्टे-मीठी अनुभवों को एक-दूसरे के सामने खोल रहे हैं। संध्या उसके एक मित्र के साथ आए उनके भतीजे राहुल से अचानक आकर्षित होती है। राहुल शास्त्रीय संगीत का गायक है। संध्या राहुल में 'नये जन्मे बछड़े की नीली-नीली आँखें' देखकर विभोर हो जाती है। वह अपने प्रेम सम्बंध को शेखर से गुप्त रखती है। संध्या की धनिष्ठ दोस्त प्रभा (मीता वशिष्ठ) इस सम्बंध को तोड़ देने की गम्भीर सलाह देती है।

फिल्म के विकास के साथ दाम्पत्य जीवन के अनेक सूत्र क्रमशः उभरने लगते हैं। संध्या गर्भवती होती है। निखिल अभी दूसरे बच्चे के लिए तैयार नहीं है। तनावपूर्ण स्थिति के बीच संध्या को गर्भपात करना पड़ता है। दोनों के बीच आठ वर्ष की अवधि तक अपरिवर्तित वैवाहिक जीवन की बोरियत और घुटन एकदम साफ झलकने लगती है। निखिल शादी के प्रति इस खोज को व्यक्त करता है — 'एक आदमी को लो, एक औरत को लो और कमरे में बन्द कर दो — इसे कहते हैं शादी।' वस्तुतः निखिल और संध्या के बीच रचनात्मक क्रियाशीलता का अभाव उन्हें एक-दूसरे से दूर करने लगता है। दाम्पत्य जीवन की अन्यमनस्कता तथा उदासीनता की परिणति नये सम्पर्कों की सहज स्वीकृति में होती है, जहाँ व्यक्ति पुनः स्फूर्ति का अनुभव करता है। एक दिन निखिल अपने और वृन्दा के बीच प्रेम-सम्बंध को संध्या के सामने व्यक्त कर देता है। अन्ततः निखिल संध्या को छोड़कर चला जाता है और उससे तलाक देने को कहता है। निखिल और वृन्दा का प्रेम सम्बंध एक वर्ष में ही छिन्न-भिन्न हो जाता है। कुछ अन्तराल के बाद निखिल, संध्या से मिलने आता है। संध्या और निखिल सागर के किनारे रेत पर दिखाई पड़ते हैं। विद्युत्तमय आकाश, पृथ्वी और सागर। फिर सघन वर्षा। उसी के साथ किशोरी अमोनकर का द्रवित कर देने वाला स्वर — 'एकहि संग हते जो, लो हम काहे बिछुड़ावे'। वर्षा का जल दोनों को स्नात कर रहा है।

किससे कहाँ गलती हुई? इस प्रश्न का कोई उत्तर है? यदि है तो कौन सही है — निखिल या संध्या। इसका उत्तर 'दृष्टि' में निहित है?

फिल्म-संरचना तथा शैली में साहित्य का रूप देने वाला गोविन्द निहलानी ने फिल्म-कला को गहराई से अपनाया है। उनके लिए 'प्रत्येक अनुभव को रूपांतर की प्रक्रिया से गुजरना होता है जिससे एक नयी कलाकृति निर्मित होती है।' इसलिए 'दृष्टि' समग्र रूप से भारतीय परिवेश को बिम्बित करने वाली गोविन्द निहलानी की अपनी और उल्लेखनीय कृति है।

'दृष्टि' में वैयक्तिक अनुभवों का विस्तार कई स्तरों पर घटित होता है — दाम्पत्य जीवन में पति और पत्नी के भिन्न धरातल पर, स्त्री और पुरुष में सामाजिक जीवन में मैत्री के धरातल पर तथा परिवार में

माँ और बाप के संदर्भ में। इसी से फिल्म में प्रेम सम्बंधों को लेकर दो त्रिकोण उभरते हैं। एक, निखिल-वृन्दा और संध्या का है तथा दूसरा संध्या-राहुल और निखिल का है। दोनों स्थितियों में निखिल, संध्या से दूर है या संध्या निखिल से दूर है। त्रिकोण के टूटते ही वे एक दूसरे के निकट आ जाते हैं। पारस्परिक सम्बंधों के इस अन्तराल में संध्या अपने प्रेम सम्बंध को छिपाती है लेकिन निखिल उद्घाटित कर देता है। उनके अपने अनुभव ही पुनः जोड़ने में सहायक हो सकते हैं। यह एक सम्भावना है।

'दृष्टि' में निर्देशक ने बिम्ब-विधान तथा मोंताज के उत्तम प्रयोग से व्यक्तिमन की संवेदनाओं को मूर्तमान कर दिया है। इस प्रकार समय को प्रलंबित करके दिशा और काल का अद्भुत संयोग उपस्थित किया है। फिल्म का यह कला रूप 'दृष्टि' को ऐसी उच्च स्तर की कृति बना देता है जिसमें कवित्व और यथार्थ प्रस्फुटित हो उठे हैं।

वर्तमान अवधि में रचित यह कला-सिनेमा एक मानवीय दस्तावेज़ के रूप में उभरकर सामने आता है। भारतीय सिनेमा में इस प्रकार की फिल्मों के निर्माण का सिलसिला निरंतर गतिमान है। 'माथिलुकल', 'दिशा', 'अन्तर्जली यात्रा', 'एक डाक्टर की मौत', तथा 'मने' का निर्माण सिने-कला की सार्थकता को सिद्ध करता है।

सिनेमा, समय और इतिहास

विनोद भारद्वाज

पश्चिम के एक प्रसिद्ध मानवशास्त्री ने शायद कहीं कहा था— कुछ समय के पहले के इतिहास के मुकाबले में दूर का इतिहास अधिक सुविधाजनक होता है। कोई विशेष काल खंड जब हमसे बहुत दूर होता है, तो अनेक तथ्यों की बारीकियों में हम नहीं जा पाते। लेकिन कुछ ही साल पहले का इतिहास कहीं अधिक बड़ी चुनौती साबित होता है।

हिंदी सिनेमा के संदर्भ में देखें, तो हमारे अधिकांश फिल्मकार अतीत, इतिहास, स्मृति, समय आदि के सवालों से जुझने की बहुत कम कोशिश करते रहे हैं। इतिहास से जुझना या इतिहास में जाना एक फिल्मकार को अनेक कारणों से आकृष्ट करता है। फिल्मकार श्याम बेनेगल ने अपनी फिल्म 'जुनून' के संदर्भ में एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण बात कही है, 'मैं आपको बताता हूँ कि जुनून या भूमिका बनाते हुए क्यों मुझे बहुत मजा आया। यह अनुभव स्वयं को अपने इतिहास के एक समय विशेष में रख कर उस इतिहास को ठोस या वास्तविक रूप देने जैसा था— इतना अधिक वास्तविक कि वह आपको अपने वातारण का हिस्सा लगने लगे। इतिहास की वे सभी चीजें आपके सामने आ जायें जो बहुत महत्वपूर्ण तो हैं, पर जो हमें इतिहास की पुस्तकों में कमी दिखती नहीं है। व्यक्तियों के जीवन के वे हिस्से उभरें जो अधिकांश इतिहास पुस्तकों में बहुत कम चर्चा पाते हैं। और जब ये चीजें आपके सामने आती हैं, तो वे आपके लिए यथार्थ का एक विस्तार बन जाती हैं। जुनून, भूमिका या त्रिकाल में मैंने सिर्फ एक कालखंड को ही नहीं प्रस्तुत किया है बल्कि उस अतीत का वर्तमान से रिश्ता बनाना चाहा है।'

इस समय तथाकथित हिंदी सिनेमा में श्याम बेनेगल संभवतः सबसे अधिक इतिहास संपन्न दृष्टि रखने वाले फिल्मकार हैं। वे बराबर अतीत में जाना चाहते हैं और फिर उस अतीत की रोशनी में अपने वर्तमान और भविष्य को जानना और जाँचना चाहते हैं। वे मानते हैं कि जो चीजें पहले हो चुकी हैं वे बराबर अपने को दोहराती रहती हैं। प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अपने अतीत से ही बना है। इसीलिए एक रचनाकार के लिए अतीत मोह वर्तमान को उजागर करने का एक महत्वपूर्ण औजार है।

आम तौर पर हिंदी फिल्मों में हमें इतिहास शून्य दृष्टि मिलती है। इतिहास का सतही आकर्षण तो हमें मिलता है— एक काल खंड विशेष में जाने के तामझाम तो हमें खूब मिलते हैं पर फिल्मकार जब तक कैमरे का कलम की तरह इस्तेमाल करने की शक्ति नहीं रखता तो तब तक वह इतिहास के पन्ने पलट कर भी एक उजाड़ में धूमता और भटकता रहेगा। दरअसल सिनेमा में इतिहास प्रवेश देखने में काफी आसान है पर वास्तव में वह बहुत मुश्किल काम है।

मिसाल के लिए सामंतवाद और उपनिवेशवाद को ही लिया जाये। इन दोनों से घुणा करके भी दोनों की गहरी जांच पड़ताल बहुत जरूरी है। ब्रितानी उपनिवेशवाद का विश्लेषण हमारे समाज के अनेक वर्तमान रोगों को बता सकता है।

एक प्रसिद्ध लातीनी अमेरिकी लेखक बोखेंस ने चेक लेखक काफ़्का के संदर्भ में लिखा है— हर लेखक अपने पूर्ववर्तियों की रचना खुद करता है। मिसाल के लिए अगर हम काफ़्का के रचना जगत से साक्षात्कार के बाद किसी अठारहवीं शताब्दी के लेखक को पढ़ें, तो हमें उसमें कुछ ऐसे गुण और प्रवृत्तियाँ नजर आयेंगी जो सिर्फ़ काफ़्का को पढ़ने के बाद ही समझ में आ सकती हैं।

इसीलिए एक फिल्मकार जब इतिहास में जाता है, तो व्यक्तियों, घटनाओं आदि को वह वर्तमान की तमाम जानकारीयों से लैस होकर देखता है। सत्यजित राय 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' और बेनेगल 'जुनून' में लगभग एक ही दौर में जाते हैं पर वाजिद अली शाह या 1857 की क्रांति को समझने के लिए दोनों फिल्मकारों के पास जानकारीयों का विशाल भंडार है। किसी व्यक्ति विशेष में जो गुण-अवगुण हमें दिखते हैं उसके पीछे पर्याप्त ऐतिहासिक प्रमाण हैं। 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' के मीर और मिरजा, वाजिद अली शाह के समय में ही नहीं अपनी शतरंज में कैद थे। गौर से देखें, तो वे आज भी कहीं वीरान में शतरंज खेल रहे हैं।

फिल्मकार के लिए अतीत में जाने के कई रास्ते हैं। वह चाहे तो एक कालखंड विशेष का मिजाज लेकर पात्रों और घटनाओं की शतरंज बिछा सकता है। अनेक फिल्मकारों ने ऐसा किया है। अतीत के सतही आकर्षण— बारीकियों आदि को छोड़कर वे चरित्रों और घटनाओं के माध्यम से एक समय का बोध कराते हैं।

लेकिन जैसा कि बेनेगल ने इशारा किया है— सिनेमा माध्यम में इतिहास का एक पूरा वातावरण सामने आ जाता है। और यह वातावरण एक पुस्तक के माध्यम से इतना मूर्त या वास्तविक नहीं हो सकता है।

मिसाल के लिए सत्यजित राय ने 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' बनाने के लिए जिन अनेक स्रोतों का इस्तेमाल किया है उसमें अब्दुल हलीम शरर की किताब 'पुराना लखनऊ' एक प्रमुख स्रोत है। इस किताब में पुराने लखनऊ की बारीकियों का अद्भुत साहित्यिक कौशल से चित्रण किया गया है। उन बारीकियों में जा कर अचानक नवाबी लखनऊ हमारे सामने वास्तविक सा नजर आने लगता है।

लेकिन सिनेमा माध्यम मुख्य रूप से एक चाक्षुष (विजुअल) माध्यम होने के कारण दर्शक की कल्पनाशक्ति को लगभग दबोच लेता है। एक अभिनेता जब इतिहास के किसी जाने-माने नाम के रूप में प्रभावशाली ढंग से हमारे सामने आता है, तो उस छवि को हम आसानी से भुला नहीं सकते हैं। खास तौर पर यदि कालखंड नजदीक के इतिहास का न हो।

रिचर्ड एटनब्रो की फिल्म 'गांधी' में अधिकांश ऐसे भारतीय राजनेता पर्दे पर आते हैं जिन्हें हमने देखा है, जिनके बारे में हम बहुत कुछ जानते हैं, डाक्यूमेंटरी फिल्में उन पर उपलब्ध हैं। संक्षेप में उन राजनेताओं के बारे में हमारे पास प्रामाणिक जानकारीयाँ बहुत हैं। इसलिए कोई अच्छे से अच्छा अभिनेता उम्दा अभिनय, मेकअप आदि के बल पर भी किसी राजनेता विशेष की छवि को नहीं बदल सकता है। बेन किंस्ले ने गांधी की छवि का असाधारण अनुकरण किया— वे सफल भी हुए। पर हमारे मन से महात्मा गांधी की वास्तविक छवि हट नहीं सकती है।

पंडित नेहरू की छवि को रौशन सेठ और प्रताप शर्मा (कुमार किरण की नयी फिल्म 'जवाहर' में) दोनों ने ही पर्याप्त ईमानदारी, निष्ठा और प्रामाणिकता से पर्दे पर उभारा है। पर पंडित नेहरू की वास्तविक छवि हमारे इतने निकट है कि उसे आसानी से कोई अभिनेता मिटा नहीं पाता है।

लेकिन 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' में वाजिद अली शाह के रूप में अमजद खान को देखकर दर्शक अपने में वाजिद अली की 'अमजद छवि' को ही कहीं न कहीं किसी कोने में बैठा लेगा। यह सिनेमा की अपनी शक्ति है। उसका अपना एक खास जादू है।

एक फिल्मकार जब इतिहास में जाता है, तो उसकी जानकारीयां बहुत पक्की होनी चाहिए। सत्यजित राय या श्याम बेनेगल इसीलिए अपनी फिल्मों में सफल हुए हैं (भले ही 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' और 'जुनून' उनके कैरियर की बहुत महत्वपूर्ण फिल्में न हों) क्योंकि वे तैयारी के साथ खूब रिसर्च करने के बाद इतिहास को पर्दे पर एक अधिक ठोस रूप देने की सोच पाये।

श्याम बेनेगल ने एक घंटे में कहा था कि रस्किन बांड के उपन्यास पर आधारित फिल्म 'जुनून' के लिए उन्होंने गदर के जमाने की मनगिनत जानकारीयां इकट्ठा कीं। उन्होंने उस जमाने की ढेरों कितानें पढ़ी। यहां तक कि मंगल पांडे के कागजात तक पढ़ डाले।

इस तरह की जानकारीयां पर्दे की प्रस्तुति को निश्चय ही समृद्ध करती हैं। एक साधारण फिल्मकार और महान फिल्मकार में यहाँ फर्क नज़र आयेगा। कुमार किरण की फिल्म 'जवाहर' में गाड़ियों के नंबर तक उस दौर के साथ 'मैच' नहीं करते हैं। इस तरह की बारीकियों में जाना फिल्मकार के बजट से जुड़ी बात नहीं है। सवाल लगाव का है। अगर सत्यजित राय किसी 'पीरियड' फिल्म में उस वक्त के सिग्रेट या माचिस की डिब्बी का प्रामाणिक 'ब्रांड' खोजने में काफी वक्त लगाते हैं, तो यह सतही दिलचस्पी नहीं है। अब्दुल हलीम शरर की कालजयी कृति अगर उनके लिए वाजिद अली शाह के पतन को समझने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है, तो उस दौर की शतरंज और हुक़े आदि की प्रामाणिकता भी कम महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है।

इतिहास में जाने का अर्थ है कि फिल्मकार खुद को 'काल दोष' से अलग नहीं कर सकता है। 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' फिल्म में लखनऊ शहर की सड़कें, रास्ते, गलियां सूनी हैं। जाहिर है कि वे सहज नहीं नज़र आती हैं। दरअसल बिजली के खंभों आदि के कारण राय को पुराने लखनऊ को फिल्माने में काफी सावधानी बरतनी पड़ी। पोस्टर, मोटर, साइकिल आदि आसानी से हटाये नहीं जा सकते थे।

आम तौर पर पश्चिम की महंगे बजट वाली फिल्मों में इन दिक्कों से बचने के लिए महंगे सेट लगाये जाते हैं। लेकिन सीमित बजट का यह अर्थ नहीं है कि फिल्मकार अतीत में वर्तमान को दिखा दे।

समकालीन सिनेमा में डाक्यूमेंटरी और कथाफिल्म का पुराना भेद कम होता जा रहा है। कथाफिल्मों में डाक्यूमेंटरी की शैली का काफी इस्तेमाल होता है। डाक्यूमेंटरी में भी कथाफिल्म के तत्व प्रवेश पा

लेते हैं। संभवतः यह आधुनिक समय की जरूरत है। समकालीन यथार्थ से रिश्ता बनाने का यह एक रास्ता है। 'शतरंज के खिलाड़ी' में एनीमेशन, कमेंट्री आदि की मदद से लॉर्ड डलहौजी द्वारा खेली जा रही शतरंज को संक्षेप में डाक्यूमेंटरी शैली में दिखाया गया है।

अतीत में जाने और वर्तमान का सामना न कर पाने का एक और सिनेमाई पहलू है। आधुनिक सिनेमा के इतिहास में इस पहलू का विशेष महत्व हो गया है। द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के बाद पूर्व यूरोपीय सिनेमा ने अंतर्राष्ट्रीय सिनेमा को बहुत प्रभावित किया। पोलैंड, चेकोस्लोवाकिया, हंगरी आदि के सिनेमा का सौंदर्यशास्त्र अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।

लेकिन गौर करने की बात है कि इन देशों के फिल्मकारों ने अतीत में जाकर लगभग शरण ली। वर्तमान को वे बता नहीं सकते थे। अतीत का भी एक खास तरह की व्याख्या करनी पड़ती थी। अनगिनत फिल्में द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध, नात्सी अत्याचारों, फाशीवाद के विरुद्ध लड़ाई दिखाती रहीं। फिल्मकार उससे भी पहले के इतिहास में गये ताकि सामंती या बुर्जुआ समाज की विकृतियों को दिखाया जा सके।

फिल्म की असाधारण शक्ति को इन समाजों ने समझा था। लेकिन फिल्मकारों ने इतिहास की पुनर्व्याख्या में ही अपनी अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता को पहचाना। लंबे समय तक समकालीन समाज की विकृतियों और समस्याओं की उपेक्षा की गयी। और आज पूर्व यूरोपीय सिनेमा द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के बाद के इतिहास के सारे गड़े मुँदें उखाड़ रहा है। अट्टी वायदा, मार्ता मेसरोज आदि की फिल्में उस इतिहास की भूलभुलैया को तोड़ना चाहती हैं जो विशाल मूर्तियों, सपनों और वायदों में दबी पड़ी हैं।

भारतीय फिल्मकार की यह समस्या नहीं है। यहां अभिव्यक्ति पर व्यावसायिक दबाव जरूर है पर अधिक बड़ी समस्या यह है कि हिंदी सिनेमा के दिग्गज अतीत से रिश्ता बनाने के लिए सही औजारों से कभी लैस नहीं रहे। जबकि एक महत्वपूर्ण फिल्मकार त्रिकाल में जीता है— अतीत, वर्तमान और भविष्य में। यह आवाजाही बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है।

The Directorate of Film Festivals

Institutional News

The Directorate of Film Festivals, set up by the Government of India, with the avowed objective of promoting good cinema within the country and abroad, has come a long way. With each passing year, it has established itself not only as a platform for promoting the best in Indian cinema but also as a cultural vehicle, promoting greater international understanding and a sense of fraternity among the vast family of filmmakers and film viewers. Towards this end, the Directorate stands committed, firmly.

IFFI'91

The 22nd 'International Film Festival of India' or IFFI'91 was held in Madras with the active co-operation of the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Indian Film Industry. The duration of the festival was 10 days, from the 10th to 20th January, 1991. In all, 159 films from 38 countries (including India) were screened during the festival. While tributes were paid to Robert Altman (USA) through the screening of his films, retrospectives of the films of Im Kwon Taek (South Korea) and the 'early David Lean' (UK) were also held. A focus on South Korea brought to us 10 films while the main cinema of the world section had 80 films. About 462 film shows were held at various festival theatres during IFFI'91 and an estimated 4 lakh people saw the films in the various official and public theatres.

The Indian Panorama had a total of 31 films with 19 features and 12 non-feature films. Through the screening of their films, homages were paid to V. Shantaram, S. Mukherjee, Manmohan Krishna, Shankar Nag and Arundhati Devi. The mainstream section featured 11 films.

National Film Festival

The 38th National Film Festival commenced its screenings in March. It saw Ashok Kumar as Chairperson of the Feature Film Jury, S. Krishnaswamy, as Chairperson of the non-feature film jury and Amita Malik as Chairperson for the books jury. About 117 feature films, 86 non-feature films, 13 books and 26 articles competed for the awards. At an impressive ceremony, President

Shri R. Venkataraman gave away the awards to the various recipients. The Golden Lotus for the best feature film was bagged by K.S. Sethumadhavan's *Marupakkam* and the best non-feature film award went to Abhijit Chattopadhyay's *Graven Image*.

For the Award of the best book on cinema, *Hindi Cinema Ka Itihas* by Manmohan Chaddha was selected. Shoma. A. Chatterjee won the best film critic award of 1990.

The prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke Award was conferred upon Akkineni Nageswara Rao.

Cultural Exchange Programmes

A number of film weeks were organized by the Directorate in India, under the Cultural Exchange Programme. Egyptian and Chinese Film Weeks were held separately at New Delhi and Bombay with 7 feature films respectively. A French Film Week was organized in Bhopal, while a Turkish Film Week was organized in New Delhi and Calcutta with 6 films and a 3-member delegation. A Hungarian Film Week was also organized in which 5 films participated with a 3-member delegation.

Under the same Cultural Exchange Programme, packages of Indian films were sent abroad to Spain, Ghana, France, Algeria and Burkino Faso. In Hungary, a package of 10 films was also accompanied by a 3-member delegation. Additionally, Indian Film Weeks, not covered under the Cultural Exchange Programme, were held in Lugano, Switzerland and Mongolia.

A special festival of Swiss films, consisting of 8 feature films and 3 documentary films was organized successfully in New Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore and Bombay. These films were also accompanied by a 2-member delegation.

Participation in International Film Festivals

The year 1991 heralded the entry of a number of new film festivals in which the Directorate participated. These included the Asian Pacific Film Show in the Republic of Korea, Focus on Asia in Fukuoka International Film Festival, Japan, and the Asian Human Rights Film Festival in Hongkong. The Directorate also participated in the Cannes Film Festival, Moscow Film Festival, Locarno, Mannheim and Venice Film Festivals. Besides, a number of films and filmmakers made their presence felt on the international film scene by winning awards. Shaji's *Piravi* won the Best Film Award

in the 9th Fajr International Film Festival in Iran, while Sukumaran Nair's *Aparahanam* won the Inter Film Jury Award at Mannheim Film Festival. Victor Banerjee's film *Where No Journeys End* won the Worldfest Gold Award at the Houston Film Festival, and Ketan Mehta's *Mirch Masala* won an award at the Historic Films/Rueil Malmaison in Paris. In all, this year saw participations in more than 50 international film festivals.

Indian Retrospectives Abroad

A number of successful retrospectives of Indian films were held this year, at foreign film festivals. A retrospective of Aravindan's films was held in Fukuoka, Japan, a retrospective of Buddhadeb Dasgupta's films in La Rochelle Paris and another retrospective of Indian films in Troia, Portugal. Switzerland also held a retrospective of Ritwik Ghatak's films.

In Remembrance

1991 has been a year of major losses for Indian cinema. Both the industry and lovers of cinema in the country will remember the unforgettable film personalities who passed away during the year.



Padmarajan

A prolific Malayalam writer and a film director with a difference, Padmarajan died on 23 January 1991. Padmarajan had published his first story as a student in Trivandrum. Although he began his career as an announcer for All India Radio, he soon built a reputation for himself as a writer of short stories and novels in Malayalam, and in 1971 won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi award. He wrote his first film script for Bharathan's *Prayanam* and in the following years wrote scripts for another 35 films—the directors for the films included Bharathan, I.V. Sasi, K.G. George, Sankaran Nair and Sethumadhavan.

His first directorial venture was *Peruvazhiyambalam*, made in 1979 and based on his own novel. The film won a number of

national and state awards, including the Silver Lotus. Among his other films are *Kallan Pavithran* (1981), *Oridathoru Phayalvaan* (1981), *Novemberinte Nashtam* (1982), *Koodevide* (1983), *Parannu Parannu Parannu* (1984), *Arappatha Kettiya Graamathil* (1985), *Thinkalazcha Nalla Divasam* (1985) and *Juan Gandharvan* (1991). All his films were marked by his insight into contemporary society and reflected the writer's curiosity for psychological motivations that lie at the root of a dramatic event.



Nutan

A consummate actress, whose performances have charmed the audience for over three decades, Nutan died on 21 February 1991 after a three-year-long battle with illness. Her first film was *Hamari Beti*, produced and directed in 1950 by her mother Shobhna Samarth, herself an established actress. While a teenager, Nutan got her first major break in *Nagina*, a thriller directed by Ravindra Dave, but had to wait till Amiya Chakravarty's *Seema* in 1955, to prove her remarkable talents. Among other landmarks were Bimal Roy's *Sujata* and *Bandini*, Tarachand Barjatya's *Saudagar* and Raj Khosla's *Main Tulsi Tere Angan Ki*—all memorable portrayals.

Her ability to present with perfection diverse roles, gave her the opportunity to run through the gamut of human emotions. She was

equally at home in a serious drama of the scale of *Saraswathichandra* and in lighthearted musicals such as *Paying Guest* or *Anari*. Realism and fantasy—Nutan had carved her niche in both worlds. Her relatively recent appearance in the television serial *Mujrim Haazir Hai*, in the role of an exploited widow, would stay in the memory of thousands of viewers for years to come.



Aravindan

A dedicated filmmaker who created worldwide interest in Malayalam cinema, Aravindan died on 16 March 1991 in Trivandrum. While working for the Rubber Board of Kerala, he began his popular cartoon serial, 'The Small Man and the Big World', which was published in the well-known Malayalam weekly *Mathrubhumi* for 13 years at a stretch. In 1974, *Uttarayanam*, his first feature film, fetched him the National Award for the best film on national integration and many state awards. *Kanchana Seetha* brought him the National Award for best direction in 1977. *Chidambaram* was judged the best feature film at the National Awards in 1986. His last film, *Vasthuhara*, received a National Award for the best Malayalam film in 1991. Among his other feature films are *Thampu* (1978), *Kummatti* (1979), *Esthappan* (1979), *Pokkuveyil* (1981), *Oridathu* (1986), *Marattam* and *Unni* (1989).

Aravindan found artistic expression in the cinema, in painting and cartooning, and also in the theatre and music. He was one of the pioneers of the theatre movement in Kerala and was actively associated with Thiravarung, a leading theatre group, producing plays with emphasis on folk and classical traditions. With his deep understanding of Karnatik and Hindustani classical music, Aravindan scored the music for films such as *Yaro Oral*, directed by Pavitran and *Piravi*, directed by Shaji. He was honoured with a Padmashri in 1990.



Raj Khosla

Born in undivided Punjab in 1929, Raj Khosla's long career in the Bombay film industry ended on 9 June 1991. Beginning his career as an announcer in All India Radio in 1949, Khosla joined Guru Dutt as an assistant in 1950, when Guru Dutt was shooting his first film, *Baazi*. He assisted Guru Dutt in three more films, *Jaan*, *Baaz* and *Aar Paar*, before setting out as an independent director with Film Arts' *Milap* in 1955. His first major breakthrough as a director came with *CID* in 1956. His popularity increased with his later films, *Kaala Pani* (1958), *Bombai Ka Babu* (1960), *Ek Musafir Ek Hasina* (1962), *Do Badan* (1966) and *Mera Saaya* (1966).

In 1967 he established his own production company, Raj Khosla Films and continued to direct films which earned him a great deal

of popular acclaim. *Woh Kaun Thi* (1968), *Do Raaste* (1970), *Mera Gaon Mera Desh* (1972), *Kachche Dhaage* (1974) and *Main Tulse Tere Angan Ki* (1978), are among the many films of Raj Khosla that will stay alive in popular memory.



Durga Khote

A highly regarded actress, whose career spanned the entire history of Indian talkies, Durga Khote died on 21 September 1991. Born in 1905, Durga Khote was one of the first actresses to bring respectability to her profession in an age when women entering the cinema were socially unacceptable. She came from a highly cultured and educated family, with a love for literature and the arts, especially the Marathi musical drama. Her first film was *Farehi Jaal*, directed by Mohan Bhavnani and released in 1931. Although the film was a disaster, V. Shantaram saw her in it and her early roles in the productions of the legendary Prabhat Film Company began with Shantaram's *Ayodheya Raja* in 1932.

Soon she was acting in films of equally famous producers in Calcutta—Devaki Bose's *Rajranee Meera*, produced by New Theatres in 1933 and *Seeta*, produced by the East India Film Company in 1934. *Seeta* was shown in the International Film Festival at Venice. In 1936 Durga Khote went back to Prabhat to act in *Amar Jyoti*, one of the landmarks of Indian cinema. Her presence in the Marathi cinema of the times was equally charismatic. She appeared in lead roles in Baburao Painter's *Pratibha* in 1937, *Soungadi* in 1936 and Acharya Atre's *Payachi Dasi* in 1941. While still at the height of her career on the screen, Durga Khote began acting on the Marathi stage, and gave

memorable performances in plays such as *Bechalische Andolan*, *Shobhecha Pankha* and *Patangachi Dori*.

She continued to act on the Hindi screen throughout the next few decades, in character roles which best displayed her versatile talent. One of her last films was Subhash Ghai's *Karz* in 1981. Meanwhile, her Durga Khote Productions was actively involved in advertisement and documentary film making, many of which won awards. Durga Khote was honoured with a Padmashri and the Sangeet Natak Akademi award. She was also the recipient of the prestigious Dada Sahib Phalke award for a lifetime's outstanding contribution to Indian cinema.

**INDIAN PANORAMA
FEATURE FILMS**

ABHAYAM

Shelter

Malayalam/Colour/93 minutes/1991

Direction, story:	Sivan
Screenplay:	Shiba Chakravarthi
Camera:	Santosh Sivan
Art Direction:	Rajiv Anchal
Music:	M.G. Radhakrishnan
Editing:	Sreekar Prasad
Sound:	Unni, Rajendran, Thampi
Production:	Children's Film Society, India
Cast:	Madhu, Parvathi, Bigesh
Enquiries:	Production Officer Children's Film Society, India 24 Peddar Road Bombay 400 026 India



Eight-year-old Vinu is an imaginative child, who is locked within the pressures of the urban education system by his ambitious parents. Tied to his daily routine, Vinu keeps seeing his small table

clock in a nightmare, where he is little and the clock is colossal, where he is eternally trying to hold back the hands from striking 6 in the morning and always failing. Eager to play truant from his school books, Vinu's mind repeatedly goes back to the placid, friendly life in his village and to his grandfather, a benevolent old giant who is the image of love, security, wisdom and fun for the little boy. He remembers floating down the river in a boat, the village temple in its solemn grandeur, his early lessons in prayers from his grandfather, the simplicity of human relationships and the slow, steady pace of life.

Tired of battling with the daily routine, Vinu runs away from home one day. He roams the city in the hope of reaching the bus stop where he can find a bus to take him to his village. He encounters many adventures, and finally takes a bus ride where his ticket is paid for by a kindly man. But the bus stops far from the village, and in his wanderings in the little town, he befriends a ragged street urchin who temporarily lives in an abandoned van. Seeing life through the eyes of the deprived child, Vinu discovers a new morality. Finally he manages to reach his village as a stowaway in a boat.

Running into the courtyard of his grandfather's old house, he sees the old man sitting at his prayers as usual on the front verandah. Vinu has come home, but his anxious parents have reached before him, having suspected his destination from what his closest friend told them.

Sivan

Born in a family known for their love of classical music and art, Sivan displayed a talent for music, painting and drama early in his life. Beginning his career as a photojournalist, Sivan won many awards for his photographs. In 1959 he set up his own film studio, and soon after that an art gallery for new artists and photographers. Through the years, Sivan has produced, directed and photographed over twenty documentaries and short films for the Films Division and other institutions. *Swapnam* (1972) was the first



feature film to be produced by him, which won four state awards. *Yagom* (1982), his second feature film, won several national and state awards.

ADI MIMANSA

A Rare Solution

Oriya/Colour/109 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay
and camera:

A.K. Bir

Art Direction:

Chel-Paresh

Music:

Bhavdeep Jaipurwale

Editing:

Dilip Panda

Sound:

Jitendra Chaudhury

Production:

A.K. Bir

Cast:

Lalatendu Rath, Mohan Gokhale,
Neena Gupta, Bijainee Misra, Gloria
Mahanty

Enquiries:

A.K. Bir

B-9, Flat No. 32/33, Third Floor

Khira Nagar, Santa Cruz (W)

Bombay 400 054

India

Telephone: 6129243



Aarakhit and Kshetrapal live nextdoor to each other. The wall that divides their homes was built across a single courtyard by the warring sons of the previous owner. As a result, the well stands in

Kshetrapal's side of the house and the drain is common to both households. Aarakhit is a Hindi-speaking brahmin who has settled down in Orissa and Kshetrapal is a non-brahmin who belongs to Orissa. Despite the differences in their backgrounds, the two men are close friends and their wives and children too feel as if they belong to one large happy family.

A demented old brahmin widow visits the two families from time to time. The women feel sorry for her, but the men feel uncomfortable and suspicious, for she has a terrible temper and often showers curses on people when in a rage. On one such occasion, when standing in front of Kshetrapal's home, she is screaming in anger. Kshetrapal asks her to leave his home.

The cunning old woman takes her revenge by visiting Aarakhit's wife and pointing out that as a brahmin woman, she has been cleaning the filth that flows down the drain from Kshetrapal's side of the house and Kshetrapal belongs to a lower caste. Aarakhit's wife who, in her passion for cleanliness, has been daily grumbling to herself about the drain, now begins to find the situation intolerable. The warmth and the compassion they shared are forgotten and the two families soon find it impossible to live any longer as neighbours. The day Aarakhit is leaving the house forever, Kshetrapal sits outside, sadly watching their preparations for departure. However, when one of his children begs him to call them back, Kshetrapal finds that that is exactly what he must do; that human relationships matter to him more than his petty pride.

A.K. Bir

After receiving his diploma in cinematography from the Film and Television Institute of India, Bir has been working as a cinematographer for advertisement shorts, documentaries and feature films made by many reputed directors like Bhimsain, Basu Chatterji, Girish Karnad and Narsingh Rao, and has won several awards for his work. He has also worked as a cinematographer for teleplays and serials and directed an episode, *Thakur ki Kuan*, in the serial *Ek Kahani. Adi Mimansa*



is his first directorial venture in the area of feature films.

AGANTUK

The Stranger

Bengali/Colour/120 minutes/1991

Direction, story, screenplay and music:	Satyajit Ray
Camera:	Barun Raha
Art Direction:	Ashoke Bose
Editing:	Dulal Dutt
Sound:	Sujit Sarkar
Production:	National Film Development Corporation
Cast:	Dipankar De, Mamata Shankar, Bikram Bhattacharya, Utpal Dutt, Dhritiman Chatterji
Enquiries:	National Film Development Corporation Ltd. 6/7th Floors, Discovery of India Nehru Centre Dr Annie Besant Road Bombay 400 018 India Telephones: 4947856/7/8 Telex: 011-73489 NFDC IN Fax: 022-4949751



Anila, wife of Sudhindra, suddenly receives a letter from her uncle, Manomohan, who had gone abroad 35 years ago and completely lost touch with the family. Now, on his way to Australia, having learnt that Anila is his sole surviving relative, he wishes to spend a week in Calcutta as her guest.

Anila and Sudhindra are suspicious of this stranger in their midst. Is he really Manomohan? Why has he surfaced after all these years? What was he doing all this time? The only one who is excited by his arrival is Anila's 11-year-old son, Satyaki. Just when Anila is almost convinced of Manomohan's genuineness, she remembers her grandfather's will. Sudhindra immediately seizes on the idea. He must have come to demand his share of the property and all this show of affection is mere eyewash.

Enquiries reveal that the money is still with Sital Sarkar who lives in Bolpur and was the executor of the will. Subsequently, Sudhindra's friend Sen Gupta, is called in to check out Manomohan. In the encounter with Sen Gupta, Manomohan reveals that he is an anthropologist and has spent most of the 35 years among the tribal communities of the American continent. Fully aware of the inquisition he faces, Manomohan argues for the savage society he loves and expresses his scorn for civilization as it is understood by the younger man. Sensing his own failure, Gupta in a rage accuses Manomohan of extorting hospitality from his friends.

When Manomohan vanishes next morning, Anila and Sudhindra, guessing that he has gone to collect his money, drive down to Bolpur. They find him in a Santhal village and make their peace with him. Back in Calcutta, before his departure for the East, Monomohan hands an envelope to Sudhindra—a small token of gratitude. The gift turns out to be a cheque made out to Anila, transferring to her the entire amount of Manomohan's share in the family property.

Satyajit Ray

Having studied painting at Shantiniketan, Ray began his career as a visualizer in a British advertising firm in Calcutta, but was soon drawn to film making. While initiating the film society movement in Calcutta, his ex-

posure to European cinema and the neo-realist directors helped him to develop a fresh perspective on the possibilities of the medium in the Indian context. *Pather Panchali*, his first film, was also one of the first small

budget Bengali films to present a well-known story of rural Bengal at the turn of the century without the false trappings of the popular cinema of the time. The film caught the imagination of the viewing public and Ray was hailed as a great director both at home and abroad. His later films have only increased his international prestige as a director. Throughout his career, Ray has received many awards and repeated official recognition of his talent and contribution to world cinema. His first book in English, *Our Films, Their Films*, a collection of essays, was published in 1976. Ray has written extensively on the cinema and is a prolific writer in Bengali of short



stories, many of them for children.

ASHWINI

Telugu/Colour/140 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay:	B.C. Mouli
Camera:	P.S. Prakash
Art Direction:	Srinivasa Raju
Music:	M.M. Keeravaani
Editing:	Shyam Mukherjee
Sound:	Ravi
Production:	Ushakiron Movies
Cast:	Ashwini Nachappa, Bhanu Chander, Saranya, Melkote, Y. Vijaya
Enquiries:	Ushakiron Movies 1-10-76 Fair Field Begumpet Hyderabad 500 016 Andhra Pradesh India



Prabhakar, once a National Champion, is debarred for using drugs and works as the Attender in a gymnasium attached to a stadium.

The man who had cunningly put the drug in Prabhakar's water bottle, is another runner, Joseph, who is now the state champion.

Ashwini, a young girl from the slums nearby, is in the habit of raiding the lunch boxes of girls coming to the stadium for running practice. Once Prabhakar watches her running with her booty and realizes her potential. He patiently pursues her and, when her mother dies, brings her and her two little siblings to his own home, determined to train the reluctant Ashwini as a runner. To provide for her special diet, he takes on extra manual work. Once she realizes the effort Prabhakar is making for her, Ashwini puts her heart into running. However, her success draws on her the wrath of Joseph, who tries his best to sabotage Ashwini's achievements.

To everyone's surprise, Ashwini beats P.T. Usha in two races. Now Prabhakar wants her to attend the qualifying meet at Delhi for the Asian Games. In a last ditch effort to deter Ashwini from going to Delhi, Joseph gets Prabhakar drunk and runs over his legs with his car. Ashwini starts for Delhi alone, and discovering her on the train, Joseph gets her stranded at a small station on the way. But Ashwini is now a different person, and determined to reach Delhi, she gets into the stadium finally after many hurdles and wins her race.

Back home with her medal, she is shocked to find that Prabhakar's legs have been amputated. Prabhakar, elated at her victory, consoles Ashwini and inspires her to reach out for greater triumphs. Finally, Ashwini receives the Arjuna Award, the highest honour for a sportsperson in India.

B.C. Mouli

B.C. Mouli joined the film industry in 1980 and has written and directed 14 Tamil and 8 Telugu films. His film *Oru Varisu Uruvagiradhu* won the best film award of 1983 from the Tamil Nadu government. In 1985 he received the Kalimaamani award from the Tamil Nadu State Sangeetha Nataka Academy. Among his most successful films in Telugu are *Patnam Vachina Pativrathalu*, *Patnampilla*, *Chandamama Rave* and *Pyla Pacheesu*.



ATMAJA

Born Within

Bengali/Colour/83 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay:	Nabyendu Chatterjee
Story:	Sebabroto Chaudhuri
Camera:	Gaur Karmakar
Art Direction:	Prasad Mitra
Music:	Khokon Chaudhary
Editing:	Nikunja Bhattacharya
Sound:	Sanjay
Production:	Shilpa International
Cast:	Gauri Ghosh, Arjun Chakraborty, Sanghamitra, Partha Sarathi Dey, Ratna Das Mandal

Enquiries: Shilpa International
45 Kali Krishna Tagore Street
Calcutta 700 007
India



Sujata, a middle-aged school teacher, goes to Calcutta at the invitation of her younger son. She carries with her memories of her

struggle to bring up Ajay and Bijay, her two sons, while her husband lay ill and unemployed. Ajay, a political activist, had to go underground, while Bijay escaped from home and responsibility. Sujata's husband died after a long illness, during which time, Ajay secretly came to her aid. Eventually Ajay died in a police encounter and Sujata was left with his memory and a blood-stained shirt.

Now, years later, Bijay greets his mother in his spacious flat. His wife Jolly and daughter Mou are equally welcoming, but Sujata feels a stranger in this environment of cocktail parties, false sense of status and greed for material possessions. To escape, she walks in a park and meets Bidyut, who reminds her of Ajay with his zest for life in the midst of acute poverty.

Meanwhile, Ratna, who had loved Ajay and is now unhappily married to a coarse and unfeeling man, asks Sujata to stay with her. Before Ratna can fetch her, Bidyut, a trade-unionist with leftist leanings, is battered by a factory-owner's men. Sujata rushes to look after him. Later, to her son's surprise, she lovingly puts away her blood-stained sari. In her mind, Bidyut and Ajay are now one, through a bond of blood.

That night Sujata dreams of a green forest where she lies in labour. Suddenly there is a white cradle. In it lies Bidyut. Or is it Ajay? She swings the cradle as a mother would. She is the mother of the revolution. Sujata wakes with the family knocking on the door, for Ratna has come to fetch her. Refusing Bijay's offer to drive her down, Sujata walks to the bus stop. Back home, he finds that she has left behind the expensive sari he had gifted her. It is Sujata's final rejection of the life Bijay has chosen to lead.

Nabyendu Chatterjee

Making his debut as a director with *Naya Raasta* (1967) in Hindi, Chatterjee went on experimenting with content and form in his later films, *Adwitiya* (1969) and *Chithi* (1973), both in Bengali. In 1974 he made *Ranur Pratham Bhag* and won his first National Award. His films have been critically acclaimed and shown in festivals in India and abroad. His *Parashuramer Kuthar* won the



Silver Lotus at the National Awards in 1990 and brought the best actress award for the year to the film's heroine.

BHARATHAM

Symphony

Malayalam/Colour/135 minutes/1991

Direction:	Sibi Malayil
Story and Screenplay:	Lohitha Das
Camera:	Ananda Kuttan
Art Direction:	Krishnankutty
Music:	Raveendran
Editing:	L. Bhoominathan
Sound:	Sampath
Production:	Pranavam Arts
Cast:	Mohanlal, Nedumudi Venu, Lakshmi, Urvashi, Suchitra
Enquiries:	Seven Arts Films B-9 Brownstone Apartments Mahalingapuram Madras 600 034 India



Gopinathan has grown into a very good singer under the tutelage of his elder brother, Ramanathan, who is himself a celebrated singer,

much in demand by the public. They live in the family house with their mother, grandfather, Ramanathan's wife Rema and his son Appu and their only cause for unhappiness is that their sister, Radha, is dumb. Gopinathan is engaged to Devi, the younger daughter of his uncle, a well-known mridangam player. When a widower, Vijayan, a newcomer in the neighbourhood, falls in love with Radha, the family is overjoyed and a date is fixed for their marriage.

Ramanathan, an occasional drinker, becomes addicted to alcohol and nearly ruins a public performance. Gopinathan, who has never sung in public and respects his brother as his guru in music, saves the concert by singing in Ramanathan's place. The public applause and the recognition Gopinathan receives, however, depresses Ramanathan and gives him an excuse to drink even more. Ramanathan's alcoholism begins to weigh heavy on the family as Radha's wedding day approaches.

To make matters worse, Ramanathan disappears. A letter from him, saying that he is on a pilgrimage, temporarily allays the family's fears, but Gopinathan and Devi know that Ramanathan is actually dead. To save Radha's marriage, they keep the news from the family. Once the ceremony is over, Gopinathan takes Appu with him to perform the death rites of his father. Little Appu realizes the truth and comes home and reveals the bad news. In a state of shock, all the members of the family blame Gopinathan for Ramanathan's death. Only Rema understands the motivation behind Gopinathan's silence and consoles him. Gopinathan is free to mourn his brother at last.

Sibi Malayil

A trail blazer among the younger Malayalam directors, Sibi Malayil has directed films on a large variety of subjects and established himself as a popular filmmaker. Among his films are *August 1*, *Kireedom*, *Dasaratham* and *His Highness Abdullah*. All his films, apart from the novelty of their subject matter, give unprecedented opportunities to the actors and actresses to display their abilities. Mohanlal won a special mention in 1989 for his per-



formance in *Kireedom* and Rekha, the heroine of *Dasaratham*, was the recipient of many awards, including the state award for the best actress.

CHAUKAT RAJA

King of Diamonds

Marathi/Colour/140 minutes/1991

Direction:	Sanjay Surkar
Story and Screenplay:	Ashok Patole
Camera:	Harish Joshi
Art Direction:	Ajeet Dandekar
Music:	Anand Modak
Editing:	Vishwas-Anil
Sound:	Pradeep Deshpande
Production:	Asmita Chitra
Cast:	Dilip Prabhawalkar, Smita Talwalkar, Dilip Kulkarni, Ashok Saraf, Sulabha Deshpande
Enquiries:	Asmita Chitra Kukade House Patil Maruti Wadi Off N.C. Kelkar Road Dadar Bombay 400 028 India



Rajan, who works in a bank, is transferred to Bombay and comes with his wife Minal and daughter Rani to live in the bank's own block of flats. Hearing Rani's scream one morning, Minal rushes

out to find Rani sitting terrified on a small merry-go-round, while a rough looking man turns the wheel faster and faster. She rescues Rani and slaps the man who shies away from her. Minal soon discovers that the man, Nandu, is mentally retarded and lives with his mother in a tenement house close by.

Searching for Rani's missing doll, Minal goes to Nandu's empty room, where the childish drawings on the wall stir a memory and she realizes that Nandu is her childhood friend, who had received a bad head injury in an attempt to pluck raw mangoes from a tree for her. Minal's sense of guilt, as well as her affection for her old friend, make her befriend Nandu, who eventually recognizes her. But his constant presence in the house irritates Rajan, who finds Nandu embarrassing and cannot accept that he is mentally still a child.

Tired of the conflict, Minal asks Nandu to leave her alone. To console him, a friend attempts to teach him how to behave like an adult. Nandu sees a couple sitting intimately on the beach and decides to copy them. The frightened Minal seeks out the sympathetic principal of a school for the mentally retarded and places Nandu in their care.

Nandu's mother pines for him and falls seriously ill. Nandu runs away from the school and by the time he finds her, she is dead. He runs to Minal, but the enraged Rajan gets into a scuffle with Nandu and when he retaliates, Minal is furious and asks Nandu to leave. Finally understanding the relationship, Rajan follows Nandu to the tenement and consoles him.

Years later, at the rehabilitation centre, Nandu receives an international award for one of his paintings. With the eternal innocence of a child, he proudly demands that Minal should hand him the prize.

Sanjay Surkar

Born in 1959, Surkar is a gold medallist and has a Master's degree in Fine Arts (Drama) from Nagpur University. He has been actively involved with the Marathi stage and has made three television serials—*Eka Hatachi Tali* (1990), *No Problem* (1990) and *Raao* (1991). *Chaukat Raja* is his first feature film.



DIKSHA

The Initiation

Hindi/Colour/120 minutes/1991

Direction:	Arun Kaul
Story:	Based on story by Anantha Murthy
Screenplay:	Umesh Kalbag, Arun Kaul, J.P. Dixit
Camera:	A.K. Bir
Art Direction:	Umesh Kalbag
Music:	Mohinderjit Singh
Editing:	Adesh Verma
Sound:	Anuj Mathur
Production:	National Film Development Corporation and Doordarshan
Cast:	Manohar Singh, K.K. Raina, Rajashri Sawant, Nana Patekar, Vijay Kashyap, Ashish Mishra
Enquiries:	National Film Development Corporation Ltd. 6/7th Floors, Discovery of India, Nehru Centre, Dr Annie Besant Road Bombay 400 018, India Telephone: 4947856/7/8 Telex: 011-73489 NFDC IN Fax: 022-4949751



Seshagiri Udupa, a Vedic scholar with a school for brahmin children, is feared and disliked by the local brahmins for his unconventional views, but commands deep respect from others for his integrity and courage. When the untouchable Koga begs him to bless his dead aunt so that she can go directly to heaven, Udupa goes to the hutments of the untouchables and offers benediction. The horrified brahmins complain to Udupa's favourite disciple, an enlightened and liberal brahmin, to whom Udupa explains how he thought not of the dead, but of the living and undertook a meaningless ritual to bring peace to Koga.

Yamuna, the young widowed daughter of Udupa, feels warm affection for Nani, a lonely, homesick child mercilessly teased by the two older boarders. The village school teacher secretly courts Yamuna and when Udupa is away from home, seduces her. Yamuna soon discovers that she is pregnant. Attempts to hide her condition from the community fail and the scandal spreads. Yamuna's lover forces her to go to the untouchables' settlements for an abortion and then runs away from the village. By then the whole village is agog with the news, the fathers start removing the boys from the school and the hostile brahmins await Udupa's return. They anticipate a further violation of the brahmin code in his effort to save his daughter from excommunication.

Koga, the untouchable, who first appeals to Udupa to save Yamuna, is provoked into scorn by his strict application of brahmin principles against the helpless young widow who is also his daughter. Udupa's disciple, who could not forgive Yamuna's conduct, is shocked when Udupa not only publicly condemns Yamuna, but also decides to perform *Ghatashraddha*—a ritual akin to a funeral ceremony, by which 'immoral' brahmin widows were excommunicated. The disciple leaves the village in disgust. Koga watches helplessly as Nani is dragged away by his father. Yamuna sits alone in the untouchables' settlements, sentenced to a living death.

Arun Kaul

Arun Kaul has worked as assistant director for many films, was associated with the films of Sukhdev and K.A. Abbas, produced *Ek Adhuri Kahani* by Mrinal Sen, and was associate producer of Sen's



Bhuvan Shome and *Interview*. He was executive producer of Buddhadeb Das Gupta's *Andhi Gali* and has worked on many screenplays, including those for *Ijaazai* and *Lekin* by Gulzar.

One of the leaders of the film society movement, Kaul edited *Close-up*, a serious film magazine, and served on the National Executive of the FFSI from 1964 to 1972.

FIRINGOTI

The Spark

Assamese/Colour/116 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay:	Jahnu Barua
Camera:	Anoop Jotwani
Art Direction:	Phatik Baruah
Music:	Satya Baruah
Editing:	Heu-en Barua, Ranjit Das
Sound:	Jatin Sarmah
Production:	Patkai Pictures
Cast:	Moloya Goswami, Bishnu Kharghoria, Hemen Choudhury, Inu Baruah, Badal Das
Enquiries:	Patkai Pictures 315 Famous Cine Building 20 Dr E. Moses Road Mahalaxmi Bombay 400 011 India Telephone: 4934133



It is 1962, on the eve of the Sino-Indian war. Ritu, a young widow, comes to Koronga, a remote village of Assam, as a school teacher appointed by the state government. Once she reaches the virtually inaccessible village, she is told that there has been no school there for the last eleven years. Eleven years ago, the school house was burnt down, but Ritu has been informed by the authorities that the school teacher has just retired and started drawing his pension!

Ritu chose her vocation soon after her husband's death, mainly to get over her acute depression. Now she takes on the challenge of rebuilding the school. When she starts campaigning among the villagers, she first meets with suspicion, then interest and finally enthusiasm. The school begins to function under a large village tree, while the villagers contribute two bamboo poles each, some dry thatch and a few hours of labour and finally build the new school house.

The tree of knowledge grows. Ritu's efforts affect many lives. When going to the town hall one day, she hears of the war, she comes back and gets the local radio working. News and information about the outside world flow into the village. But the process of enlightenment now has to contend with the loss of innocence. In the wake of this comes a 'son of the soil' from the city, who, having lost his job there, wants to take over the school. When Ritu fights back against the threats and even physical assault, the man brings his ruffian friends and sets fire to the school house. One by one the villagers gather around the pyre. The shocked silence of Ritu is finally broken by their promise that they will build the school house once again. No fire will be allowed to extinguish the spark of knowledge any more.

Jahnu Barua

A graduate in direction from the Film and Television Institute of India, Barua worked on various film projects till he joined the Indian Space Research Organization, where he made more than a 100 educational television programmes for the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment. His first feature film was *Aparopa*, which won a National Award in 1983.



Barua's later films include *Papori*, *Halodhia Choraye Baodhan Khai* and *Banani*. *Halodhia Choraye Baodhan Khai* won him the Golden Lotus at the National Film Festival in 1988 and the Silver Leopard at

the Locarno International Film Festival the same year. It was also in the Best of Asia section of the Tokyo International Film Festival, 1988. *Banani* received the National Award for the best film on environment in 1990.

GONDI

The Enclosure

Bengali/Colour/100 minutes/1990

Direction:	Ujjal Chatterjee
Story and screenplay:	Samiran Dutta
Camera:	Pradip Chakraborty
Art Direction:	Buddhadev Ghosh
Music:	Ananda Shankar
Editing:	Amoy Laha
Sound:	Anup Mukhopadhyaya (NFDC)
Production:	A.J. Production
Cast:	Anjan Dutta, Sreela Majumdar, Haradhan Banerjee, Sunil Mukherjee, Soma Mukherjee
Enquiries:	A.J. Production 20 Krittibas Dhar Lane Howrah 1 West Bengal India



Sadhana Rehman Mandal works in a mercantile firm in Calcutta as a stenographer. Her husband, Azizur Rehman, an erstwhile

political detainee, has been advised complete rest for a while within the confines of their single-room flat, where he teaches Russian to a group of students for a living. When the doctor says that a month's stay in Puri, by the sea, will hasten the process of Azizur's recovery, Sadhana decides to apply for a month's earned leave—for the first time in six years. The company's Board Meeting is scheduled from the 14th of next month and the General Manager, who is pleased with her hard work, promises her a promotion and sanctions her leave from the 19th, on condition that she will fully cover the proceedings of the meeting before her departure.

Sadhana begins her preparations. There are innumerable little things to do. She applies for her leave travel allowance and an advance from her provident fund account. She books their room in a holiday home where she can save on buying food by using the kitchen. She buys the railway tickets through a tout when they tell her there are no seats at all at the counter. She works overtime for some extra money. She arranges to deposit the ration card for a month and applies to the Milk Commissioner to discontinue the supply for that time. She gets Azizur checked up medically and is very happy to hear that he is indeed on the mend.

A new Deputy General Manager joins the firm. At the last minute, the news comes that the Board Meeting has to be postponed to the 19th. The superintendent, who knows how much Sadhana deserves her leave, proposes to manage the show by hiring stenographers from outside. In the absence of the General Manager, his new Deputy disagrees. The letter cancelling her leave arrives at Sadhana's home just when they are about to leave for the station. The walls of her life close in on Sadhana once again.

Ujjal Chatterjee

Born in 1962, Chatterjee graduated from Calcutta University. His involvement with the film society movement in Calcutta dates from his college days. He has also participated in stage productions. *Gondi* is his first directorial venture.



GOOPY BAGHA PHIRAY ELO

The Return of Goopy and Bagha

Bengali/Colour/127 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay:	Sandip Ray
Story and music:	Satyajit Ray
Camera:	Barun Raha
Art Direction:	Ashoke Bose
Editing:	Dulal Dutt
Sound:	Sujit Sarkar
Production:	Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal
Cast:	Tapen Chatterjee, Rabi Ghosh, Ajit Banerjee, Haradhan Banerjee, Khoka Mukherjee
Enquiries:	Department of Information and Cultural Affairs Government of West Bengal Calcutta India



Goopy and Bagha, two rustics endowed with magical powers by the King of the Ghosts, are now the Kings of Shundi. Happy in their life of abundance, they only regret the loss of their youth.

Invited by the King of Anandapur to attend a contest of magicians, Goopy and Bagha meet Brahmananda Acharya, a recent arrival in Anandapur, who lives in an abandoned castle. The Acharya is, in reality, a disciple of a tantric wizard who has given him many powers, but withheld the secret of immortality because of his greed for precious stones. The wizard has also told him that he will die the day his gems vanish and because of a 12-year-old boy called Bikram, who lives in Anandapur.

Intrigued by Goopy and Bagha's powers, the Acharya reveals to them his own powers and promises to make them younger by 20 years if they fetch for him three precious jewels from three crowned heads in three different countries. While the two think it over, all 12-year-old boys called Bikram vanish from Anandapur.

Approached by the distraught parents, Goopy and Bagha discover the boys under a spell in the castle and decide to do the Acharya's bidding while they work out a rescue plan. They even steal two of the precious gems, but the thefts bother their conscience although the promised reward is something to look forward to. The King of the Ghosts appears to them in a dream and brings them back to the straight and narrow path.

Soon after, the two friends discover that Kamu, another 12-year-old in Anandapur, was called Bikram at birth; but the name was abandoned as his father died in an accident minutes after. Marching to the castle with Bikram and the fathers of the captive children, Goopy and Bagha find the Acharya in a panic—all his gems are vanishing! Confronted by Bikram, whose face is bathed in a sublime light, the evil Acharya perishes, while Goopy sings in joy.

Sandip Ray

With the success of his first feature film, *Phatikchand* in 1983, Sandip Ray became recognized as a director on his own merit. Son of the famous director Satyajit Ray, Sandip Ray was associated with the cinema early in his life. He joined his father's unit as a still photographer in 1971 and became his assistant director in 1976. His first independent assignment was a special trailer for his



father's *Shatranj ke Khilari*, made for the domestic market. He has also written articles, designed and illustrated posters, book covers and record

jackets, written and directed plays in Bengali for All India Radio and directed a series for Doordarshan, based on short stories written by his father.

KADAVU

The Ferry

Malayalam/Colour/104 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay:	M.T. Vasudevan Nair
Story:	S.K. Pottekkat
Camera:	Venu
Art Direction:	Bhasan
Music:	Rajiv Taranath
Editing:	B. Lenin
Sound:	Sampath (A.V.M. RR)
Production:	Novel Films
Cast:	Balan K. Nair, Santhosh, Thilakan, Bhagyaroopa, Nedumudi Venu, Murali, Monisha
Enquiries:	Novel Films 'Sithara' Kottaram Road Caticut 673 006 Kerala India



The old boatman, Beeran, meets Raju, a young boy who has run away from an unhappy home life and engages him as his assistant. Raju's attachment to the ancient boat grows as strong as Beeran's. He also invests the routine job of ferrying people across a nearly dry river with the same humane attitude that makes Beeran a butt of family jokes. Soon Raju befriends many people—the bullock cart driver who nightly drinks himself into a stupor, because his bullocks stop automatically at the arrack shop on his way home; the schoolmaster who courts a working girl, but is ousted by a bridegroom chosen by the family; the hawkers and vendors who pass through the ferry; and a girl, her little brother and ailing mother who is taken to the hospital in the town and returns in a bier.

He escorts the girl and her brother to the railway tracks, when they leave for Calicut to live with an uncle working in a tile factory. On his return, he discovers her silver anklet on the river bed. For days Raju broods silently, then he leaves the village for Calicut, to the disappointment of old Beeran.

In the bustling town, Raju seeks the girl in vain. Days pass as he visits tile factories, stops in front of schools and does odd jobs to survive. And then he finds her entirely by accident. Raju rushes to her home, but the girl refuses to recognize him or even acknowledge the anklet he has treasured so long. In despair and anger, he runs away and returns to the ferry one moonlit night.

A new boatman sleeps in the hut and a new boy lies outside on the ledge. Raju turns to the river. In the magical moonlight, the boat tosses on the water and moves up to him, nudging him gently. Raju curls up in it, and the boat drifts down the river and into the sea as the night passes.

M.T. Vasudevan Nair

A leading writer from Kerala, M.T. Vasudevan Nair has authored at least seven novels and fourteen volumes of short stories. He is the recipient of three Sahitya Akademi awards and his works have been widely translated into regional languages as well as English. He has also written screenplays for more than thirty films in the



course of his long association with the film industry in Kerala. Prior to *Kadavu*, Nair has written and directed four films. *Nirmalyam*, his first film, won the President's Gold Medal in 1973. His second film *Bandhanam* won the best film award from the Kerala state government. He has also been the

recipient of three best story awards, one best director award and nine best screenplay awards from the Kerala state government. In 1989, he won the best screenplay award in the National Awards. Nair also edits three periodicals of the *Mathrubhumi* group of publications.

LIBAAS

Attire

Hindi/Colour/135 minutes/1991

Direction, story:	Gulzar
Screenplay:	Ashok Gajal
Camera:	M. Sampat, Yusuf Kondajee
Art Direction:	Ajit Banerjee
Music:	Rahul Dev Burman
Editing:	Waman Bhosle, Guru Dutt Shiralay
Sound:	Essa M. Suratwala
Production:	Sneh Shakti Pictures
Cast:	Shabana Azmi, Nasiruddin Shah, Raj Babbar, Utpal Dutt, A.K. Hangal, Sushma Seth
Enquiries:	Sneh Shakti Pictures First Office, Roof Tara Studios D.P. Road Dadar Bombay 400 014 India



As an eminent director, Sudhir considers his family life secondary to the stage. But his actress wife Seema feels an emptiness within. At this point, the rich and charming TK enters their lives. An old friend of Sudhir, he is the only man Seema knows, who does not look upon her husband with reverence. With TK's attentions showered upon her, Seema becomes increasingly aware of her subordinate position in relation to Sudhir. Although the friendship is not clandestine, she lies to Sudhir about where she spends her time and Sudhir finally confronts them both and asks them to leave him alone.

Left with no choice, Seema begins a new life with TK, but she often remembers the life she shared with Sudhir. Through common theatre friends, she learns that Sudhir is a broken man, that his work is suffering as is his health. They meet when a friend dies, but the encounter has violent overtones and Seema withdraws once more.

Seema's mother, an independent working woman who had refused to marry again after her husband's death so that Seema never felt neglected, is shocked to learn about the break up of the marriage. She tells Seema that a marriage is not an apparel that can be discarded when it tears or grows old.

TK leaves for a business tour. Impelled by guilt, Seema goes to Sudhir's flat. She opens the door with her keys and the darkness is broken by a woman's laughter. For a while she stands listening; then, unable to bear it, she leaves. The sound of the door brings Sudhir out and the key in the lock tells him who had come.

Back home, Seema is surprised to find TK, who has cut short his tour to celebrate their first anniversary together. A whole year has gone by, but for Seema this is the first day of their marriage. Today the past is left behind finally and she knows at last where she belongs.

Gulzar

Poet, writer and filmmaker, Gulzar has been closely associated with the progressive writers' movement. He started his career in the cinema as lyricist and assistant director to Bimal

Roy and has worked as lyricist or writer for many other eminent directors. Among the films he has directed are *Mere Apne*, *Koshish* (which got him a National Award for the best

screenplay in 1973), *Achanak*, *Parichay*, *Andhi*, *Mausam* (the second best feature film for 1976), *Meera*, *Khushboo*, *Kinara*, *Namkeen*, *Angoor*, *Ijaazat* (for which he received a National Award for the best lyrics in 1988) and *Lekin*. Gulzar is also well-known for his short stories and has written a number of children's books.



MAHAPRITHIBI

World within, World without

Bengali/Colour/105 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Mrinal Sen
Story: Anjan Dutta
Camera: Shashi Anand
Art Direction: Goutam Bose
Music: B.V. Karanth, Chandan Roy Chowdhury
Editing: Mrinmoy Chakraborty
Sound: Sanjay Mukherjee, Sudipta Bose, Chinmoy Nath
Production: G.G. Films, Pvt. Ltd.
Cast: Victor Banerjee, Soumitra Chatterjee, Anjan Dutta, Gita Sen, Aparna Sen, Anasuya Majumdar
Enquiries: G.G. Films Pvt. Ltd.
Flat 55, 2nd Floor
209 Acharya J.C. Bose Road
Calcutta 700 017
India
Telephone: 479444



Four days before the historic unification of Germany, an elderly woman is found hanging in a locked room. Her family is typically

middle-class, her home one of many in the back lanes of Calcutta. Left behind are her husband, her youngest son, a mentally disturbed daughter, a widowed daughter-in-law with her child and a diary which none of them have had the courage to read.

Four days later, the day the two Germany's come together at last, the older of her two surviving sons returns home after six years abroad. Unaware of the tragedy that has overtaken the family, he is suddenly faced with the brutal fact of his mother's suicide. Impelled by a need to know and understand why she killed herself, he questions his father, his brother, his sister-in-law and himself. Through the agonizing search for an answer, the family face many hidden truths about themselves.

Outside, the world is going through tremendous upheavals. The values, ideals, beliefs and faiths of a generation are being swiftly overturned, negating the sacrifice of thousands of people all over the world. A son died for a conviction and now the conviction is dead. Is it this realization that killed the mother? Or is it the disappointment with the son who escaped, who was afraid of life? Or is it after all an expression of her resentment towards her husband who had sent out his son to die from a police bullet, perhaps for nothing?

The questions remain, as do the suppressed anger, frustration, confusion and pain. The diary is never read. The daughter, in silent resentment, makes a bonfire of the pages, as if that will lay the ghost of her mother for ever.

Mrital Sen

Born in Faridpur district, now in Bangladesh, Sen came to Calcutta to study physics. His interest in sound recording grew into a long involvement with the medium of the cinema, in which the city of Calcutta often seems to dominate his cinematic vision. Thirty-five years of film making has brought Sen much recognition and many awards within the country and abroad. His films bear witness to his continuing concern for political, economic



and social poverty, as well as poverty of the human spirit. Although most of his films are in the Bengali language, Sen has also made films in Oriya, Hindi and Telugu. His first film in Hindi, *Bhuvan Shome*

(1969), ushered in the new cinema movement in the country and found a special place for itself in Indian film history. Sen has also written a number of critical essays on Indian and world cinema.

MARUPAKKAM

The Other Side

Tamil/Colour/88 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay: K.S. Sethumadhavan
Camera: D. Vasanta Kumar
Art Direction: B. Chelam
Music: L. Vaidyanathan
Editing: G. Venkitaraman
Sound: A. Swaminathan
Production: National Film Development Corporation
and Doordarshan
Cast: Siva Kumar, Jaya Bharathi, Radha,
Sekar
Enquiries: National Film Development Corporation
Ltd.
6/7th Floors, Discovery of India,
Nehru Centre
Dr Annie Besant Road
Bombay 400 018
India
Telephone: 4947856/7/8
Telex: 011-73489 NFDC IN
Fax: 022-4949751



Ambi arrives in Kumbakonam from Delhi, to visit his ailing father, Vembu Iyer, an uncompromising man known for his scholarship and dogmatism. He is shocked to find a drastic change in his father, who is mentally deeply disturbed and wasting away silently. Apparently he lapsed into this state when the news came that Ambi was separated from his wife.

Ambi had married Sweetie, a Christian girl from a different background, against the wishes of his father who had violent resistance to the marriage and made no bones about expressing it. Sweetie had insisted on meeting Ambi's parents, but had felt deeply insulted by their behaviour. Although Ambi was against cutting off relations with his family, Sweetie no longer wanted to have anything to do with them. The conflict had reached a point of no return, with Sweetie complicating matters by refusing to divorce him.

Now, unable to explain his father's reaction to the break-up of his marriage, Ambi overhears the old man mumbling the name of his first wife who had been forced to leave him because of her love for music. Is the old man suffering from a sense of guilt for his own past mistakes? He had wrongly accused his first wife of infidelity when she had filed a suit against him for maintenance. Is there now a curse on the family, or why should Ambi too have a broken marriage?

Finally, it is only with the help of his friend Murthy, that Ambi finds a solution to the problems facing him.

K.S. Sethumadhavan

One of the stalwarts of Malayalam cinema, Sethumadhavan has been consistently exploring human values in his films. Two of his best known films are *Adimakal* and *Oppol*. *Oppol* was the recipient of the National Award for the second best feature film in 1981. A prolific filmmaker and a man of progressive ideas, Sethumadhavan has directed over 60 films in many lan-



guages, including Tamil, Kannada and Sinhalese. He has also won for three consecutive years (1970-72) the best director award from the Kerala state

government. Among his other films are *Kera Kana Kadai*, *Pani Theeratha Veedu* and *Achanum Rappayum*.

MRIGATRISHNA

The Mirage

Telugu/Colour/93 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay:	P. Sambasiva Rao
Story:	Vasireddy Seetha Devi
Camera:	Madhu Ambat
Art Direction:	B. Chelam
Music:	Raj-Koti
Editing:	N. Sreenivas
Sound:	Ramakrishna
Production:	National Pictures
Cast:	Revathy, Sarath Babu, Ravindra, Rajitha
Enquiries:	National Pictures 7C Rajaram Directors' Colony Madras 600 024 India



Sunanda lives in a working girls' hostel, where her room-mate Sujatha is also her closest friend. She works as a stenographer in a private firm. Krishnaprasad, the proprietor of the firm, is a

handsome widower with two small children. He suddenly proposes to Sunanda one day and she promises to think it over.

Sunanda comes from a very poor home and a tragic background of violent family quarrels which led to her mother's suicide. She went through school and college through the generosity of a poor, unlettered, kind-hearted woman in the same village. When the woman died, Sunanda was about to sit for her final college examinations. Her classmate Ravindra, an equally good student, who worked as a private tutor for a living, paid her examination fees. It was inevitable that she should fall in love with him. Ravindra, however, was reluctant to marry till he too found a job. Now, Krishnaprasad's proposal unsettles Sunanda completely. The spectre of poverty haunts her and she knows that her life with Ravindra will be one long struggle.

She decides to marry Krishnaprasad and requests him to appoint Ravindra in her place in the office. Sujatha, her friend, is outraged by the decision and tries her best to dissuade Sunanda from going to Thirupathi for the wedding. On the way to Thirupathi, Sunanda remembers her past and is tormented by her betrayal of Ravindra. Krishnaprasad, normally a gentle and kind man, is disturbed to realize that Sunanda is in love with Ravindra and accuses her of double-crossing him. Left alone, Sunanda's acute mental tension culminates in high fever. Krishnaprasad looks after her with his usual gentleness and deciding against the marriage, firmly takes her back to the hostel. About to enter the hostel, Sunanda watches in a daze as Sujatha and Ravindra, garlanded and surrounded by their friends, come down the stairs. Sujatha wears the Mangalyam round her throat—the mark of marriage.

P. Sambasiva Rao

P. Sambasiva Rao has directed more than thirty films in Telugu. Notable among them are *Artha Rathri*, *Intinti Ramayanam*, *Pelli Choopulu* and *Kumara Raja*. He has also directed two films in Hindi, *Swayamvar* and *Kalakar*.



MYSOORA MALLIGE

The Jasmine of Mysore

Kannada/Colour/140 minutes/1991

Direction:	T.S. Nagabharana
Story and screenplay:	S. Basavaraj, T.S. Nagabharana, C. Aswath
Camera:	Gowri Shankar
Art Direction:	Shashidhar Adap
Music:	C. Aswath
Editing:	Suresh Urs
Sound:	K.S. Krishnamurthy
Production:	Yajaman Enterprises
Cast:	Anand, Sunder Raj, Girish Karnad, Venkatesh, Sudharani, Sripathi Ballal, Kishori Ballal
Enquiries:	Yajaman Enterprises No. 12, 6th Main, 2nd Cross Gandhinagar Bangalore 9 Karnataka India



Padma, the restless, naughty young daughter of Shanbhog, the village accountant, begins by making fun of Manjunath, the new school teacher in the village who is also a poet, and ends up falling in love with him. She also shares his ideals. Against her father's wishes, she helps an injured freedom fighter to escape. Their love blossoms, but Shanbhog is against marrying his daughter to a penniless school teacher. With the mediation of Channaiah, the sympathetic village bangle seller, the two are finally united.

Manjunath is drawn into the freedom movement through the influence of Shanker Patil, a Gandhian leader in the area. Immediately after his marriage, participating in a demonstration, Manjunath is arrested and imprisoned along with other freedom fighters. Released after a few days, he faces Shanbhog's scorn and anger. Working among the poor, Manjunath organizes them in revolt against Shanbhog who has been unfairly extracting taxes from the peasants. Enraged, Shanbhog insults Manjunath, who leaves home.

Manjunath is in and of jail, while the 1942 movement spreads. With Patil's death, his responsibilities increase, but having gone underground, he cannot even meet his wife, who is now pregnant. Once again, with Channaiah's intervention, he hears of Padma's condition and manages to see her briefly in secret. Channaiah is taken into police custody for helping the freedom fighters. Manjunath and his friends go to rescue him. In the encounter, Channaiah dies and Manjunath is hit by a bullet and left for dead.

The country attains freedom and Manjunath is released from captivity. Back home, he hears that Shanbhog is dead and Padma has left the town with the baby. In a tea shop, looking at a newspaper, Manjunath discovers that a collection of his poems is being released in a nearby town. Arriving at the function, Manjunath is finally united with his wife and daughter.

T.S. Nagabharana

A well-known actor and director of the Kannada stage and screen, Nagabharana began his stage career in Karnataka with B.V. Karanth's theatre group, Benaka. His interest in the cinema began with Karanth's first film, *Chomana Dudi*



(1975), for which he worked as an assistant director. He also assisted Girish Karnad for his films *Kaadu* (1973) and *Onda-nundu Kaladalli* (1978). His first directorial effort for the screen, *Grahana* (1978), won several awards. When not involved in feature film making, he makes documentaries for the state government and private

educational bodies and is a busy stage director. Among his other films are *Anveshane* (1980), which won the state award for the best director and *Banker Margayya* (1983), which won the National Award for the best Kannada film of the year. His other award winning films are *Aasphota* and *Santha Shishunala Sharifa*.

PERUMTHACHAN

The Master Carpenter

Malayalam/Colour/140 minutes/1990

Direction:	Ajayan
Story and screenplay:	M.T. Vasudevan Nair
Camera:	Santosh Sivan
Art Direction:	Krishnamurthy
Music:	Johnson
Editing:	M.S. Money
Sound:	Sampath
Production:	Bhavachitra
Cast:	Thilakan, Nedumudi Venu, Prasanth, Monisha, Vinaya Prasad
Enquiries:	Bhavachitra Convent Road Ernakulam Cochin 35 Kerala India



Perumthachan is a legendary figure from Kerala. His name literally means 'the great carpenter', but he was much more than that. Unsurpassed as a wood-carver, sculptor and architect, his creations were so exquisite that he was considered a reincarnation of the architect of the gods.

Born of a brahmin father and a low-caste mother, Perumthachan was supposed to have been abandoned in his childhood and not accepted among the brahmins as an equal, even though he had read the religious texts and was a learned man. His close association with a rich brahmin family led to his carving an image of a goddess for them. The beauty of the brahmin householder's wife caught his imagination and he carved the face of the goddess in her mould. A man of very upright moral values, Perumthachan felt drawn to the woman, but remembered his place and moved away.

Years later, when his son has grown into a young man of great beauty and talent, Perumthachan feels threatened by his growing reputation. Moreover, he is disturbed by his son's capacity to manipulate his clients and the strain of unscrupulousness in him which is a mark of the new, more materialistic and self-centred generation. Going back to the house of the same rich brahmin for whom Perumthachan had carved the image of the goddess years ago, the young man designs and supervises the building of a temple. In a repetition of his father's experience, he falls in love with the daughter of the house, but unlike his father, he has no scruples about being of a lower caste. Seeing that the scandal is slowly destroying his old patron, the father of the girl, Perumthachan comes to oversee the building of the temple. He finds he cannot control his son and while giving the final touches to the dome of the temple, drops his chisel deliberately on his son's neck and kills him.

Ajayan

Son of one of the foremost playwrights in Kerala, Ajayan has a diploma in film technology from the Film Institute, Madras (Adyar). He started his career as a camera assistant and worked as an associate director with Thoppil Bhasi, Bharathan and Padmarajan. He has also worked as a cinematographer for some Tamil films and directed



and photographed many documentaries. Ajayan has received many awards for *Perumthachan*, his first feature film as

a director, including a National Award for the best first film, a state award and a Kerala Film Critics Association award.

SAROTHI

The Shelter

Assamese/Colour/96 minutes/1991

Direction, story and
screenplay:

Camera:

Art Direction:

Music:

Editing:

Sound:

Production:

Cast:

Enquiries:

Bhabendra Nath Saikia

Kamal Nayak

Nuruddin Ahmed, Sangeeta Saikia

Prabhat Sharma

Nikunja Bhattacharjee

Jyoti Chattopadhyay, Anup Mukho-
padhyay, Hirendra Prasad Bhattacharya

Bhabendra Nath Saikia

Arun Nath, Mridula Barua, Bidya Rao
Nayar, Hemen Barman, Jayanta Das

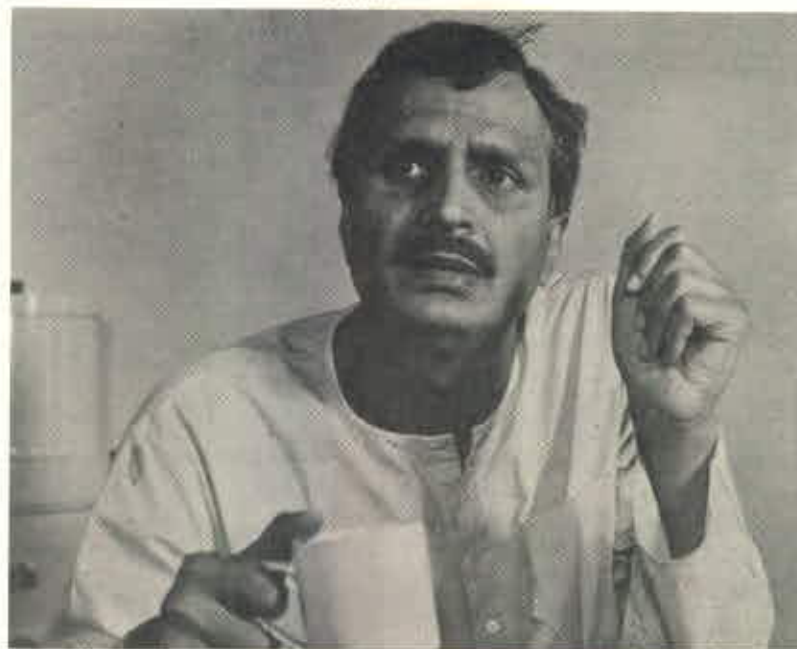
Dr Bhabendra Nath Saikia

Basisthapur-2

Guwahati 781 028

Assam

India



During Niranjana's years as a teacher in the village school, his colleague Nirmali often told him to look for something better in the city. It was she who insisted that he applied for work in a government office. When the moment of parting came, both knew that if their circumstances were different, Nirmali would have gone with Niranjana, as his wife.

Many years have passed. Niranjana, now Superintendent in his office, is nearly old enough to retire. His wife Mahamaya is a social worker, his older son Atul plays cricket and runs a small business, his younger son Anjan is interested in cinematography and his daughter Kanchan is in college. Niranjana's one aim in life now is to build a house for his family.

Today is the day for casting the roof, a job needing careful supervision. None of the family have time, so Niranjana goes alone to the site. But before that, he digs out a tiffin carrier and a flask and tells his wife to send him his lunch. At the site, Niranjana watches the work, goads the workmen along, reminisces with the contractor and sometimes just day dreams. It occurs to him that the house he is building may not make a good home. His family is only concerned with what interests each one of them. He imagines how it would be if Nirmali was his wife—they would build the house together. She would try to save his labour and expenses. Maybe the children would be more understanding as well.

By the evening, the work is done and Niranjana feels elated. Back home, he describes how well the work had progressed. There was no problem at all, except one little thing—where was his lunch? Mahamaya is amazed. A heated argument follows, where each passes the blame onto the other. While the quarrel rages, Niranjana, still feeling happy, skips into the kitchen to heat some water for his bath.

Bhabendra Nath Saikia

A physicist by discipline, Saikia has a PhD from London University and a diploma from Imperial College, London. He was Reader in the post-graduate department of physics at Guwahati University till 1968, and an academic officer of the same university till 1978. Even as a student, Saikia had established



himself as a writer of repute and through the years, has received innumerable awards. His stories have been translated into many regional languages. He has also been actively associated with the stage both as playwright and director. The first recipient of the Publication Board Award of Assam, he was chosen the best Assamese writer of 1970-72 for *Sendoor*, a

collection of his short stories. He also received a Sahitya Akademi award in 1976 for his book *Shrinkhal*. As a filmmaker, Saikia's earlier films, *Sandhyaraag* (1978), *Anirbaan* (1981), *Agnisnaan* (1985) and *Kolahal* (1988), have all received the Rajat Kamal at the National Awards. *Agnisnaan* also received the best screenplay award for the year.

SEETHARAMAYYAGARI MANAVARALU

Seetharamayya's Granddaughter

Telugu/Colour/143 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay:	T. Kranthi Kumar
Camera:	K.S. Hari
Music:	M.M. Keeravani
Art Direction:	V. Bhaskar Raju
Editing:	A. Sreekar Prasad
Sound:	Swaminathan
Production:	VMC Pictures
Cast:	Akkineni Nageswara Rao, D. Meena, Rohini Hattangadi, Kota Srinivasa Rao, Master Amith
Enquiries:	VMC Pictures 14 Gopalakrishna Road T Nagar Madras 600 017 India



When Seetharamayya's son Vasu returns to the village as a doctor, the rich old man finds a bride for him. But Vasu marries his colleague, Sumathi and his father declares he will never speak to Vasu again. In despair, Vasu and Sumathi leave for America.

Twenty years later, while celebrating the marriage of a granddaughter, Seetharamayya is confronted by a strange girl who turns out to be Vasu's daughter Seetha. No one knows who sent Vasu an invitation, but she wins over everybody, even the recalcitrant old man, and tells them that her parents could not come because they were involved in some important research.

Seetha becomes a universal favourite, solving family quarrels and sorting out misunderstandings. When a friend of Vasu's comes to offer his condolences for the untimely death of Vasu and Sumathi in a car accident, Seetha manages to stop him from revealing the horrible truth. She explains to him in private, that it was her father's dying wish that she should come to India and wait for the right time to tell her grandparents the truth, and it has not been an easy task.

Seetharamayya now admits that he desperately wants to see Vasu again. When the family decide to celebrate his 60th birthday, he wants Vasu to come. Seetha has to come up with another explanation for her parents' absence. After the celebrations, Seetharamayya tells his wife Janaki it was he who had sent the wedding invitation to Vasu.

Janaki has a heart attack and dies in her husband's arms. When Vasu does not come even for his mother's funeral, the heartbroken Seetharamayya asks Seetha to go back to America. Seetha leaves, unhappy and tormented. Alone in her room, Seetharamayya finds her diary and the truth is revealed. Vasu and Sumathi's ashes have arrived and Seetha goes to the airport to receive the urn. Seetharamayya manages to reach the airport in time to console his grief-stricken granddaughter.

T. Kranthi Kumar

With a post graduate degree in law from Nagpur University, Kranthi Kumar entered the film industry in 1970 and has since then produced more than 20

films in at least three regional languages. He has been associated with directors like K Viswanath, K. Raghavendra Rao and Dasari Narayana Rao.

Among his films are *Sarada*, *Jyothi*, *Aamekatha*, *Kalpana*, *Swathi* and *Sravanthi*. His first directorial venture was *Swathi* (1984), which received the state award for best direction and best story the same year. In 1986 *Sravanthi* received a National Award. In 1987, Kranthi Kumar received the state's best screenplay award for the film *Sravana Meghalu*. *Seetharamayyagari Manavaralu* was given the state government award for best direction in 1990.



VASTHUHARA

The Dispossessed

Malayalam/Colour/103 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay:	Aravindan
Story:	C.V. Sreeraman
Camera:	Sunny Joseph
Art Direction:	Padma Kumar
Music:	Salil Chaudhary
Editing:	K.R. Bose
Sound:	Unni
Production:	Paragon Movie Makers
Cast:	Mohanlal, Neelanjana Mitra, Neena Gupta, Padmini

Enquiries: Paragon Movie Makers
2/3173 Padma Nagar
Pattom
Trivandrum
Kerala
India

Venu, an officer working for the Rehabilitation Ministry in the Andaman islands, comes to Calcutta from time to time to select prospective settlers in the Andamans and arrange for their travel. The eligible candidates are families of refugees in the city, from peasant stock, who are given plots of land and some financial aid to settle down in the islands. During one such visit to Calcutta, Venu is approached by a middle-aged widow, obviously from an educated middle-class family, but now living in poverty. Venu explains to her that he cannot help her as the families chosen for resettlement are supposed to have at least one able-bodied male member and she only has a daughter at home.

During another chance encounter with the woman and her daughter, Venu learns that her name is Arati Panicker. He realizes that Mrs Panicker is the Bengali wife of his dead uncle, who was abandoned by her husband's family. As one of the dispossessed, she too is a refugee. Venu makes an effort to get to know them, the first person from his uncle's side of the family to do so. Instead of recrimination and demands, he receives warmth and friendship.



even from his initially suspicious cousin, and finally meets Mrs Panicker's young son, hidden behind iron doors in an attic, a political refugee.

It is time for Venu to get back to the islands with his shipload of starving, hollow-eyed, vacant-faced, rootless population in search of a new home. Mrs Panicker and her daughter come to the docks to see him off. It is as if this new parting is leaving them even more alone. Being dispossessed of material belongings is perhaps less painful to them, compared to the emotional rootlessness this family has had to contend with. In these few days of their acquaintance, Venu has become their new identity, offering them a new sense of belonging. Venu watches them from the ship as they recede in the distance, two lonely people locked in shared grief.

Aravindan

Born in Kottayam, in Kerala, Aravindan graduated in science from Trivandrum and started painting and drawing cartoons. For thirteen years, he enlivened the pages of the Malayalam weekly, *Mathrubhumi*, with his cartoons, a selection of which has been published as a book. He also studied classical music, was himself a musician of renown and was actively involved in promoting folk and classical theatre. He began his career as a feature filmmaker in 1974, with *Uttarayanam*, and was immediately established as one of the foremost filmmakers of India, winning awards and critical acclaim in the country and abroad. *Vastuhara*, his last



film before his death in 1991, was given a National Award for being the best film in Malayalam of 1990.

**INDIAN PANORAMA
NON-FEATURE FILMS**

AADHI HAQEEQAT AADHA FASANA

Children of Silver Screen

Hindi/Colour/60 minutes/1991

Direction:	Dilip Ghosh
Story and screenplay:	Jill Misquitta
Camera:	M.V. Mohanan
Editing:	Shibani Gangooli Ghosh
Sound:	Vijay Bhope
Production:	National Film Development Corporation

Enquiries:	National Film Development Corporation Ltd 6/7th Floors, Discovery of India Nehru Centre Dr Annie Besant Road Bombay 400 018 India Telephone: 4947856/7/8 Telex: 011-73489 NFDC IN Fax: 022-4949751
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A documentary based on extensive interviews with three generations of child stars. The child artistes of former years speak with amazing frankness about their lives, at home and in the studios. With the wisdom of hindsight, they speak of their lost childhood, their ruined education, the absence of peer group friendship, the exploitative relationship with their parents. The tragic irony is that the little stars of today are going through the same experiences, goaded on by their parents. They express with enthusiasm their obviously borrowed ambitions and values, and continue to be lured by the same pitfalls that the older generation of child artistes warn against.

Dilip Ghosh

Dilip Ghosh graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India. He has made several television commercials and promotional documentaries, including the award winning *Niky Tash-Mona Lisa*. His graduation film, *In Paradise Man is Born Dead*, won a special mention at the Oberhausen film festival.



ACHIN MANUSH

The Unknown

Bengali/Colour/40 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Sivananda Mukherjee

Camera: Subhashis Banerjee

Editing: Sudipta Bhowmik, Sumit Ghosh

Sound: Ranjan Pandey

Production: Sayantani Production

Enquiries: Sayantani Production
Block-B, P 85
Lake Town
Calcutta 700 089
India



The Baul cult developed as a protest against caste-ridden society and against all social institutions in the brahminical tradition. Their music was a search for the Eternal Unknown, away from the ties of the home and the family and their little gods in the niches. Things have changed through the years and the present confusion in the Baul vision is explored through interviews with women Baul singers of the older generation. The confusion is further aggravated by the promoters who sell culture abroad and who are now vulgarizing the cult by making the Bauls saleable commodities in the culture market.

Sivananda Mukherjee

Born in Calcutta in 1963, Mukherjee graduated from Calcutta University and was initially more interested in the *sitar* than in the cinema. His first film, *Pakhira*, a documentary on Badal Sircar's Free Theatre movement in and around Calcutta, received much critical acclaim.



BHAGIRATHI KI PUKAAR

Call of the Bhagirathi

Hindi/Colour/44 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Anwar Jamal
Camera: Zoobi Amir
Editing: Mani
Sound: Salim Sheikh, Pankaj Rakesh
Production: Indian National Trust for Culture

Enquiries: Indian National Trust for Culture
D-3173 Vasant Kunj
New Delhi 110 037
India
Telephone: 6890604



The film explores both the claimed benefits and the huge environmental and financial costs involved in the Tehri Dam being built on the Ganga. Apart from uprooting thousands of people, submerging their homes, fertile lands and thousands of acres of forests, the project also involves the risk of massive earthquakes in the sensitive regions of the Himalayas. A strong lobby of contractors and politicians, the growing demands for electricity from the cities and an ideology of development borrowed from the West are all threatening to wipe Tehri Garhwal from the face of the earth.

Anwar Jamal

Born in 1961, Jamal has a Master's degree in Hindi literature and has trained in film making at the MCRC, Jamia Milia Islamia. He has produced a number of video documentaries and shorts for television, on subjects of contemporary social concern, published articles, stories and poems and has been actively involved with the theatre as well as voluntary organizations working for civil liberties and against child labour and communalism.



BHAVANTARANA

Immanence

Oriya/Colour/65 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Kumar Shahani
Camera: Alok Upadhyay
Editing: Paresh Kamdar
Sound: Manita Nayak
Production: Bombay Cinematograph Pvt. Ltd.

Enquiries: Bombay Cinematograph Pvt. Ltd.
37 Shankar Mahal
Sophia College Road
Bombay 400 026
India



A film on the dance of Kelucharan Mohapatra, one of the greatest living exponents of the Odissi. Glimpses of his childhood, his apprenticeship with his guru Shri Goswami, his marriage to Charuji, herself a famous artiste, his shishyas learning from him, are interspersed with his dance, which draws its inspiration from nature and the traditional arts.

Kumar Shahani

Born in 1940, Shahani had a brilliant academic career in the Film and Television Institute of India and received diplomas in screenplay writing and advanced direction. His graduation film, *The Glass Pane*, was the official entry in several international student festivals. In 1972 he made his first feature film, *Maya Darpan*, which established him immediately as one of the most critically acclaimed filmmakers of India and brought him the best Hindi film award of the year as well as a special mention at the Locarno International Film Festival. He has written extensively on the cinema and, along with feature films, has made several



documentaries and short films, including *Fire in the Belly* (1973), *A Memoir of the Future* (1987), *A Ship Aground* (1988) and *Khayal Gatha* (1989).

CHHAYA

Shadows

Malayalam/Colour/22 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay:	M.R. Rajan
Camera:	R.V. Ramani
Editing:	Sarathchandran
Sound:	Elankovan, Prasanth, Francis
Production:	24 Frames
Enquiries:	24 Frames
	Chettupuzha
	Trichur
	Kerala
	India



The film investigates the various relationships of the image and its organic growth in different media and times. Taking the Tholpavakuthu (shadow puppet theatre using leather puppets) as its central focus, the film travels back to other visual media of the past—the mural paintings, palm leaf drawings and primitive cave drawings, all part of the history of the image in Kerala. Coming back to the present, it links the Tholpavakuthu with the modern image as it is presented on the screen, in the form of cinema.

M.R. Rajan

Born in 1962, Rajan graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India in 1988, with specialization in film direction. His graduation film, *Doorum*, was shown in the Indian International Film Festival in 1989 and screened at Oberhausen and Karlovy Vary the same year. *Chhaya* is his first independent venture.



GRAVEN IMAGE

English/Colour/30 minutes/1990

Direction: Abhijit Chattopadhyay
Camera: Soumendu Roy
Music: Dhyanesh Khan
Editing: Arun Dutta
Sound: Balaram
Production: Shyamasree Tagore Production

Enquiries: Shyamasree Tagore Production
P 305 CIT Road
Calcutta 700 024
India



A film based on the life and achievements of the renowned Indian sculptor, Chintamani Kar. Kar began his career as an apprentice to a traditional temple carver of Orissa and worked for a year at the institution established by Abanindranath Tagore. Subsequently,

he went to Europe and worked with sculptors at L'Academie de la Grande Chaumiere in France and at the studio of Victor Giovanelli, who traced his ancestry from a line of Italian artistes going back to the Renaissance. Returning to India for a short spell at the outbreak of World War II, Kar went back to England in 1946 to spend 12 years as a sculptor in London. Back home, despite his long association with and experience in Western techniques, his work has remained deeply rooted in Indian tradition.

Abhijit Chattopadhyay

A man of varied interests, Abhijit Chattopadhyay is the maker of the award winning documentary, *Chhapakhanar Bangla Haraf*, which traces the beginnings of the printing industry in Bengal. He has also written the script of the Bengali television serial, *Gora* and worked as the Art Director for another serial, *Pratham Pratishruti*.



INDIGENOUS GAMES OF MANIPUR

English/Colour/28 minutes/1990

Direction: Aribam Syam Sharma
Camera: Girish Padhiar
Editing: Ujjal Nandy
Sound: Aribam Santimo
Production: Aribam Syam Sharma

Enquiries: Aribam Syam Sharma
Thangmeiband
Imphal 995 001
Manipur
India



The martial tradition of Manipur led to the development of various forms of games and sports in the state. The important ones among them include Cheibi, a game of swordsmanship; Mukna, wrestling Manipuri style; Mukna Kangjei, a combination of elements of

modern hockey and Mukna; Hiyang, a spectacular boat race; Yubi Lakpi, or snatching the coconut; Kang, an indoor game; and Sangol Kangjei, an ancient community game of Manipur, the precursor of polo.

Aribam Syam Sharma

Having completed his Master's in philosophy and classical music at Viswabharati University, Sharma became closely associated with the theatre as an actor, director and vocalist. His first film was *Lamja Prashuram* (1974), followed by *Imagi Ningthem* (1981), which received the Rajat Kamal in the Indian National Awards and the Grand Prix at the Festival of Three Continents at Nantes in 1982. Two of his documentaries have won international awards—*Sangi*, a ballet and *The Deer on the Lake*, which



won the National Award for the best non-feature film on the environment in 1990.

KABITAR ANANTA JATRAPATHE

Jibanananda Das:

An Endless Journey of a Poet

Bengali/B&W/27 minutes/1991

Direction:	Sanat K. Das Gupta
Screenplay:	Sanat K. Das Gupta, Dhiman Das Gupta
Camera:	Tapan Bagchi
Music:	Samaresh Banerjee
Art Direction:	Parbati Das
Editing:	Prosanto Dey
Sound:	Durgadas Mitra, Sajal Das
Production:	Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal
Enquiries:	Deputy Director (Films) Department of Information and Cultural Affairs Government of West Bengal Writers' Building Calcutta 700 001 India



A film based on the life of a charismatic Bengali poet, Jibanananda Das. Born in Barisal, now in Bangladesh, in a middle-class family at the turn of the century, Das completed his education and worked as a professor of English in Calcutta. His works published during his lifetime established him as one of the greatest poets of his times. His memories of the bountiful nature of East Bengal, its rivers, its green horizons, its cloudy skies, crystallized in a collection of his poems, *Rupasi Bangla*, published three years after his death in an accident in 1954. Das's poems, along with those of Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam, were a source of inspiration during the liberation struggle that led to the creation of Bangladesh.

Sanat K. Das Gupta

Sanat K. Das Gupta has made a number of documentaries, short films and educational films, including *Handloom Industries of West Bengal*, *Golden Grain* and *Our Village*. He co-produced and was the Associate Director for the award winning documentary, *Hungry Autumn* and produced and directed *The Duo*, which won a Rajat Kamal as the best industrial film of the year in the 1989 National Awards. He has also worked as Associate Director with Goutam Ghose on his feature films, *Maa Bhoomi* and *Dakhal*



and directed a television serial, *Bangla Galpo Bichitra*.

LIVING ON THE JUNK

English/Colour/26 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Debal Bose
Camera: Ranajit Sarkar
Music: Binoy Chakraborty
Editing: Rathin Bose
Sound: Robin Adhikary
Production: Cineman

Enquiries: Cineman
30/43 Nayapatty Road
Dum Dum
Calcutta 700 055
India



The consumer society hides behind its affluent facade the unglamorous view of a population that survives on urban waste. The film focuses on the grim life of the ragpickers who live on the

fringes of society without hope and in a state of miserable poverty. Yet they are the people who help to recycle huge quantities of waste material that would otherwise increase the already high level of pollution in the city's environment. They too have a right to live with dignity, which they are deprived of within the value system of a harsh consumer society.

Debal Bose

Born in 1950, Debal Bose received the Master's degree in English literature and works as a lecturer in Mahatma Gandhi College, Lalpur, Purulia, in West Bengal.



LOLAAB

English/Colour/56 minutes/1990

Direction, screenplay: Mohi-Ud-Din Mirza
Camera: Ashok Gunjal, Ravikant Reddy
Music: Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma
Editing: Om Prakash Makkar
Sound: Subhash Agarwal
Production: Hillman Film Pvt. Ltd.

Enquiries: Hillman Film Pvt. Ltd.
4 Gift House
940 New Prabhadevi Road
Bombay 400 025
India
Telephone: 4300196



Lolaab is a remote valley in the Kashmir Himalayas, bordering on Central Asia, which has been the corridor into India through history for travellers and invaders from Europe, Iran, Afghanistan,

Tibet and China. With the passage of time, people of different ethnic origins have settled in the valley. Its isolation has fostered the old culture and tribal medicine and the barter system in trade still exist in Lolaab. What is significant is that past distinctions exist only in memory. The isolation of the last two centuries has welded the people into a harmonious community.

Mohi-Ud-Din Mirza

Born in 1956, Mirza received a diploma in film direction and screenplay writing from the Institute of Film Technology, Madras. He has directed over 40 documentaries and short films on subjects of social relevance and received national and international awards. His *Oval Crop* (1984) received the National Award for the best educational film. *Kamdhenu Redeemed* (1987) received the National award for the best scientific film and an international



award at Berlin in 1990. *Lolaab* received the National Award for the best anthropological film of the year.

MOHOR

Bengali/Colour/50 minutes/1990

Direction, camera:	Goutam Ghose
Screenplay:	Goutam Ghose, Alaknanda Dutta
Editing:	Malay Banerjee
Sound:	Sujit Sarkar
Production:	Film Makers Consortium

Enquiries:	Film Makers Consortium
	3-D Nandy Street
	Calcutta 700 029
	India



Kanika Banerjee, known to her mentors, friends and pupils as Mohor, is one of the greatest living exponents of Rabindrasangeet. The film explores her life and philosophy as a singer, her training and devotion to her art, her attachment to Shantiniketan where she grew up and still lives, her memories of Tagore that still inspire

her, her closeness to nature in all its beauty and finally, her rendition of Tagore's songs.

Goutam Ghose

Born in 1950, Ghose graduated from Calcutta University and took up theatre and photo journalism. He had already established himself as a director of documentaries and advertisement films, when his *Hungry Autumn*, a documentary made in 1976, won an award at Oberhausen and received a Diploma of Merit at Leipzig. His first feature film, *Ma Bhoomi* (1980), based on the Naxalite movement in Andhra Pradesh, was made in Telugu and received the National Award for



the best Telugu film of the year. Among his other feature films are *Dakhal*, *Paar* and *Antaryali Yatra*, all of which have received prestigious awards at home and abroad.

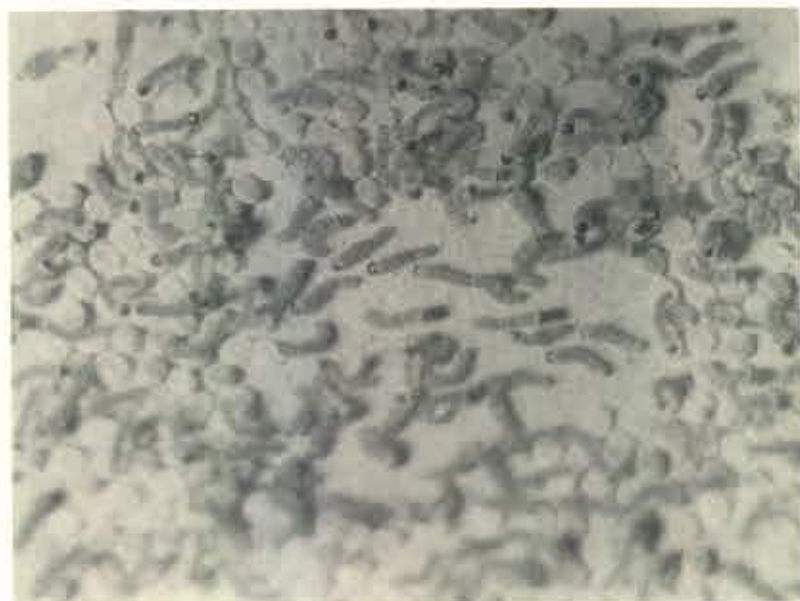
MULBERRIYUM PATTUNOOLUM

Mulberry and Silk Yarn

Malayalam/Colour/20 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: P.P. Govindan
Camera: Ramesh Kumar
Music: Ramesh Narayan
Editing: G. Bhaskaran
Production: Kerala State Film Development Corporation

Enquiries: Kerala State Film Development Corporation Ltd.
Trivandrum 14
Kerala
India



A motivational film about the success of mulberry plantation and sericulture in Kerala. For years it was believed that the climatic conditions of Kerala would not allow the cultivation of mulberry

and the development of sericulture. However, recent experiences have proved that the mulberry plant flourishes in the state, irrespective of any geographic constraint.

P.P. Govindan

After graduating in Botany from Kerala University, Govindan went on to receive a diploma in film direction from the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune. He has directed four Malayalam and two Tamil feature films and three documentaries. Among his films are *Saritha*, *Seetha*, *Sandhya Ragam*, *Paasakkaanal*—all feature films and *Mahakavi Ulloor* and *Mathru Sisu Samrakshanam*—documentaries.



SANCHARI

One that Goes Together

English/Colour/32 minutes/1991

Direction, screenplay: Arun Khopkar
Camera: Piyush Shah
Editing: Rajesh Parmar
Sound: Vikram Joglekar, Shreedhar (Media Artists)
Production: Arun Khopkar Production

Enquiries: Arun Khopkar Production
No. 5 Lalit Estate
S.H. Paralkar Marg
Shivaji Park
Bombay 400 028
India



The film centres on the work of Leela Samson, a well-known exponent of Bharatnatyam. It imaginatively recreates her training at Kalakshetra in Madras and attempts to relate other art forms such as sculpture, painting and architecture with the classical dance form. The main items of a Bharatnatyam repertoire by Samson are depicted against the background of the Rock Garden in Chandigarh, where the camera and the lighting attempt to create a dynamic relationship between the dance style and cinematography.

Arun Khopkar

A diploma holder from the Film and Television Institute of India, Khopkar won the first prize for his film *Figures of Thought*, at the Athens International Film and Video Festival, Ohio, USA in 1990. Two of his films as well as his book, *Guru Dutt: A Tragedy in Three Acts*, have won National Awards. Khopkar was the recipient of a Homi Bhabha Fellowship, has lectured on cinema at national and international forums and contributed research articles to various journals.



SILENT VALLEY— AN INDIAN RAIN FOREST

English/Colour/53 minutes/1991

Direction: Shekhar Dattatri and Revati Mukherjee
Screenplay and camera: Shekhar Dattatri
Music: Joel Almeda
Editing: Revati Mukherjee, Shekhar Dattatri
Sound: Shekhar Dattatri, Revati Mukherjee
Production: Eco Media Pvt. Ltd.

Enquiries: Eco Media Pvt. Ltd.
Post Box 8594
Thiruvannmiyur PO
Madras 600 041
India



A film about one of the last remaining rain forests of India. In the uniquely picturesque surroundings of Silent Valley, some of the endangered species still roam in safety—the Lion-tailed Macaque, a primate found only in the Western Ghats and nowhere else in the world, the King Cobra, the Hornbill and many other animals and birds that are rarely seen. The film also describes the significant

role of the rain forest in conserving and producing water and the disastrous effects on the environment that will follow its destruction.

**Shekhar Dattatri and
Revati Mukherjee**

Currently on an assignment with Oxford, Scientific Films, UK, on an Inlaks fellowship, Dattatri, director, cinematographer and film editor by profession, is deeply involved with environmental education. He has made six documentaries since 1986 on various environmental themes and won two National Awards. He is also a keen herpetologist and a wild life photographer and illustrator.

Revati Mukherjee is equally interested in wild life and is the President of the Irula Snake Catchers' Cooperative and the Director of Irula Women's Tribal Society. She works as direc-



tor and film editor and has edited five films on environmental subjects since 1986.

VAASTU MARABU

The Living Tradition, a Shilpi Speaks...

Tamil/Colour/52 minutes/1990

Direction, editing: Bala Kailasam
Camera: Ramji Damodaran
Music: G.S. Mani (Madurai)
Sound: Ilango
Production: Min Bimbangal

Enquiries: Min Bimbangal
II-D Mookambika Complex
4 Desika Road
Madras 600 004
India



In India, the temple has been the home of the arts, whether it is dance, music, poetry, sculpture or architecture and the designer-builder of the temple, the Shilpi, has within the scope of his own

art, created space for other arts to flower. The film investigates the mind and the world of the Shilpi, his skill in shaping stone and metal, his sensitivity and his search for the divine within the self, through the person of V. Ganapati Sthapati, sculptor, designer and builder from Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu.

Bala Kailasam

A graduate in electronics engineering, Bala Kailasam trained in film and television production at the University of Iowa, USA. his first short film was on an artists' commune called Chola Mandal, near Madras. His thesis project at Iowa was a documentary on untouchable converts to Christianity in Tamil Nadu, *The Twice Discriminated*. His other works include *Migration to the Gulf*, *Kerala: the Return Phase* and industrial and training films.



WITH LITTLE RHYME AND NO REASON

Hindi/Colour/34 minutes

Direction, screenplay: Saurabh Vanzara
Camera: M.A. Mathiazhagan, Mrinal, Attar,
Rath, Medhu
Music: Kedar Awati
Editing: S. Subramaniam
Sound: Milind Bapat, Chandidas
Production: Film and Television Institute of India
Cast: Girish Deshmukh, Neena Gupta,
Rajashree, Zarine Malik

Enquiries: The Director
Film and Television Institute of India
Law College Road
Pune 411 004
India



A teenager tries to break a glass window, but by accident breaks a man. He jumps into a room, meets a woman, locks her policeman

husband in the wardrobe and promises to take her away. During a school excursion, he finds that a girl is in love with him. He dances with an old lady in a restaurant and goes to her cottage. He kisses her, watched by the girl from outside. At a meeting of revolutionaries, he volunteers to take custody of an important list. He witnesses a cremation and wakes up in the woman's room to find that the revolution has begun. Unwilling to help or take along the woman, he leaves for another destination.

Saurabh Vanzara

Vanzara is a commerce graduate from Gujarat University. Before joining the Film and Television Institute of India to do a course in film direction, he was associated with the production of the Hindi commercial film, *Shandar*. Vanzara completed the course in film direction in 1990.



Selection Panels

Indian Panorama

Feature Films

ALL INDIA 4th to 15th October 1991

Bimal De—*Chairman*
Saeed Mirza
Basanta Chowdhury
E. Nageshwar Rao
B. Saroja Debi
Ramesh Deo
Prema Karanth
Asha Parekh
Bhimsain

WEST 18th to 29th September 1991

Saeed Mirza—*Chairman*
Nabendu Ghose
Girish Kasaravalli
Honey Irani
Virender Saini
K.R. Mohanan
Rohini Hattangadi

EAST 18th to 29th September 1991

Basanta Chowdhury—*Chairman*
Dilip Roy
Tarun Kumar Chatterjee
K.G. George
Vinod Pandey
Biplab Roy Chowdhary
R.K. Munir

SOUTH 18th to 29th September 1991

E. Nageshwar Rao—*Chairman*

M.M. Ramchandran

Madhu Sudan

R. Laxman

J. Mahendran

Mrinmoy Chakraborty

Sadhu Meher

Non-feature Films

Buddhadeb Dasgupta—*Chairman*

Tapan Bose

V.R. Gopinath

G.S. Garewal

Rahat Yusufi