

# **INDIAN CINEMA 1985**

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## **CONTENTS**

### **Foreword**

#### **Message**

by Satyajit Ray

#### **A Year of Change**

by Swapan Mullick

#### **On a Starry Trek**

by Sanjit Nanekar

#### **New Cinema: Time for Stock-taking**

by Iqbal Masud

#### **India Abroad**

by Aruna Vasudev

#### **Film Societies Play Their Part**

by Ajoy Dey

#### **Academics at Work**

by Arindam Ghosh - Dastidar

#### **Encounters with the Idiot Box**

by Hasan Suroor

#### **Revival in the East**

by Mihir Sengupta

#### **The Southern Explosion**

by Brian Laul & Lekha J. Shanker

#### **West: Rising Above the Challenge**

by V.P. Sathe

#### **To Find the Voice**

by Nasreen Kabir

#### **The Other Festivals**

#### **The Year Gone By**

#### **In Brief...**

#### **Farewell**

#### **This Time Next Year**

### **21 Panorama Feature Films**

#### **Aadmi Aur Aurat** Man and Woman (Hindi)

TAPAN SINHA

#### **Accident** (Kannada)

SHANKAR NAG

**Aghaat** Blood of Brothers (Hindi)  
GOVIND NIHALANI

**Agnisnaan** Ordeal (Assamese)  
BHIABENDRA NATH SAIKIA

**Anantyatra** The Return of Godbole (Hindi)  
JAYOO AND NACHIKET PATWARDHAN

**Bettada Hoovu** A Hill Flower (Kannada)  
N. LAKSHMINARAYAN

**Chidambaram** (Malayalam)  
G. ARAVINDAN

**Chopper** (Bengali)  
NABYENDU CHATTERJEE

**Damul** Bonded Labour (Hindi)  
PRAKASH JHA

**JANAM** Birth (Hindi)  
MAHESH BHATT

**Kilippatt** Song of the Parrot (Malayalam)  
RAGHAVAN

**Klanta Aparanha** Tired Afternoon (Oriya)  
MANMOHAN MAHAPATRA

**Mayuri** (Telugu)  
SINGITHAM SRINIVASA RAO

**Mudhal Mariyadhai** Prime Honour (Tamil)  
BHARATHI RAJAA

**New Delhi Times** (Hindi)  
RAMESH SHARMA

**Nokketha Dhoorathu Kannum Nattu**  
Looking at Infinity (Malayalam)  
FAZIL

**Parama** (Hindi)  
APARNA SEN

**Samaandaram** Parallel (Malayalam)  
JOHN C. SANKARMANGALAM

**Shart** Wager (Hindi)  
KETAN ANAND

**Thinkalazhcha Nalla Divasam**  
Monday — the Good Day (Malayalam)  
PADMARAJAN

**Trikal** Past, Present and Future (Hindi)  
SHYAM BENEGAL

**10 Panorama Short Films**



## FOREWORD

This is the ninth year of the Indian Panorama. Since its introduction as a separate section in FILMOTSAV 78, it has grown both in status and maturity. This is gratifying because the popularity it has now come to command testifies the soundness of reasoning which gave birth to it.

This book has two parts, one factual and the other critical or commentarial. The factual part provides information on the 21 feature films and 10 short films that make up the Panorama this time, and, therefore, does not need any elaboration.

The other part contains articles by distinguished and discerning analysts of the film scene in the country, and would no doubt stimulate and provoke responses of great variety in perceptive readers. It also depicts, and observes the effects of the interesting changes that Indian cinema is contending with on account of the new developments in electronics and the cross-currents that these have generated in those realms where the traditional cinema had reigned supreme for so long. Some of the films being made now give evidence that cinema is learning to adapt, and that it is still vibrant and vigorous.

The editors and the writers of articles contained in this book have done a splendid job, and, therefore, I am confident that this volume will be an important and worthy addition to literature on the subject.



**A. Viren Luther**

## SATYAJIT RAY



The Filmotsav organised by the Film Festival Directorate, Government of India, has been an important annual feature of the Indian film scene ever since the first International Competitive Festival was held in New Delhi in 1965.

This year the Filmotsav - a non-competitive festival comprising prize-winners from other festivals, along with a selection of films from all over the world - is being held in Hyderabad, which is a worthy venue being, I understand, a very film-conscious city.

As usual, an important feature of Filmotsav will be the Indian Panorama - a showcase for the most noteworthy films made during the present year by our own filmmakers from all over the country.

All in all, an occasion to look forward to. I send my cordial greetings to Filmotsav and wish it all the success it deserves.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Satyajit Ray". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Satyajit Ray

## A YEAR OF CHANGE

Some time in 1985, a widely read Indian Journal called films "the nation's most participatory activity", attracting larger audiences and employing more people than any other industry. That is a fact with which the Panorama selections may not be directly associated. But a couple of major decisions and events over the past year have brought about changes that might have been unimaginable warmly received in festivals from Moscow to Montreal, London to Locarno.

Dramatic changes of another sort might have come about with screen idols being elected to Parliament and a lot of fanfare going with their maiden speeches in the House — and outside. But the changes more relevant to the future of the Indian cinema have been equally extraordinary. Five years ago, a talented young film-maker, full of ideas and confidence in himself, could be knocking desperately on the doors of the National Film Development Corporation or, alternatively, scraping his resources to get something going, sitting idle when that would run out, borrowing a little more to sustain his enthusiasm — all in the hope that there would be an interested minority to rave about his artistic ambitions.

Artistes did emerge under those conditions — a Kasaravalli or a Syam Sharma. But it has not taken too long for the situation to change — change completely. Young talents may still be talking about hardship but only in

relative terms. Television has opened a whole new world of opportunities for recovering costs and remaining engaged. The NFDC may invite different shades of comment on its activities but is now the best place to get support — whether for ideas that are difficult to sell or for trips when one's film is in some competitions abroad. And of course there are festivals, now more conscious of the Indian film's contribution than ever before with the bonus of funds pouring in from diverse sources when distributors back home make their preferences clearly clear.

Yes, the ambitious young artist today has much less to grumble about. There could be an exception like Kumar Shahani running into extremes of opinion on **Tarang** and not being able to move quickly into his next venture. Or Budhadeb Dasgupta jumping onto the bandwagon of the Hindi film, possibly to fetch larger exposure and discovering that was just not his metier. But for every two doubtful propositions there could be ten inspiring examples. Look at Adoor Gopalakrishnan. His **Mukhamukham** runs into serious controversy in his home state, appearing to have upset political activists. But, otherwise, he travels to Calcutta to conduct a workshop and then from London to Helsinki, extending regional reality to universal significance.

Or **Damul** for that matter. There could be any number of people picking quarrels with the film's style and



Prakash Jha's *DAMUL*

distributors justifying their attitude with the response to the film received at Bombay's Akashvani theatre. But the point is different. Here were national events and organizations participating in the evolution of a film-maker. Almost the same could be said of Nirad Mahapatra's **Maya Miriga**. It was an achievement well worth supporting or rather rescuing from the prospect of an unusually sensitive Oriya film not getting the audience it deserves, the audience extended to the Directors' Fortnight at Cannes.

Or, finally, the extraordinary success story of **Paar**. Goutam Ghose notched up success with his cast at Venice but remained apprehensive about outlets in India. Came May — and a National Award, a release at Calcutta's Metro and a continuous run for 100 days. What more could the New Cinema want?

What, in fact, it wants it has been getting. Doordarshan offers tempting



Goutam Ghose

compensations for award-winners and Panorama entries which are premiered though it needs to be asked whether the idiot box ought to be bigger attraction than the normal theatrical channel. Serials are there — almost for the asking. Bigger ventures with stars of the reputation of Naseeruddin Shah, Smita Patil, Shabana Azmi and Om Puri do not appear such a daunting proposition after all — that



is, if they can get away from the Rajasthan desert and the actors can finally part with the beards they have nursed for the past three months for Mrinal Sen's **Genesis**.

This Indo-French co-production of India's old "angry man" was just one of the unique changes which had come about in 1985. One kept enquiring about Satyajit Ray's movements and the possibilities of his return to normal work but got the answers when his doctors did not allow him collect the Dadasaheb Phalke Award personally in June or preside over the international jury of



*Shyam Benegal shouting for his documentary, SATYAJIT RAY*

the children's film festival in Bangalore two months ago. But the fact is that he is busy writing and sketching and working on the scripts and music of the 13 films his son, Sandip, is making for Doordarshan

On quite another level, there is Basu Chatterjee. Time was when he was prolific on the big screen. Then, by a natural process, came the ebb. But

one small decision in 1985 — to try the small screen — resulted, at least in his case, in the big star feature losing out to the 23 minute Sunday morning slot. **Rajani** was the name of the miracle. Priya Tendulkar was the torch-bearer of the middle class conscience. And the television serial, any number of them, was to find eminent new exponents — from Sai Paranjpye to Saeed Mirza



*Mandakini in Raj Kapoor's RAM TERI GANGA MAIRI*

All of them may be quite delighted at the prospect of being able to work within a new format. That happiness is not altogether shared by leaders of the popular cinema who have been clamouring for higher rates for telecasts and shift in telecast time on holidays so as not to affect theatre audiences. But, to the commercial industry, television is a "small menace" compared with the "monster" of video. But these fears still do not seem to have much to do with the majority of failures or the extraordinary success of **Ram Teri Ganga Malli** or **Mard**. The popular response to these films may wipe out the innovativeness of video. But there are two points to be borne in mind. One, that the technical heights achieved in films from **Sholay** to **Saagar** would probably take care of theatre audiences. And, two, that the popular cinema had better keep a watch on its own position by reassessing excesses in output and its tired box-office devices.

But to come back to the new forms, one had imagined that the hour-long feature would become an interesting proposition after **Sadgati** and **Aadmi Aur Aurat**. There were short stories in a number of Indian languages which deserved to be filmed but not all of them could be stretched to the standard length of a feature film. This was an argument which perhaps prompted the 23 minute pieces for 13 part serials which have been dealt with at length elsewhere in this volume. But the interesting feature of

this interaction between cinema and television is that the more experienced film-makers are dabbling in new ideas and styles and providing new insights into their artistic personalities. On the acting side, the more well-known performers are perhaps a little relieved that, with the pressures of the box-office out of the way, their roles can at least be conceived more intelligently. The real gain, however, has been the explosion of young acting talent which will hopefully give feature film-makers many more options.

These options seem to be urgently needed when there are a lot many films (witness the Hindi contribution of nine films to the Panorama with a



Satyajit Ray's **GNARE BARE**

few more perhaps barely missing the target) but all too few actors to choose from. That may be one reason why many more films of Panorama and festival standards cannot be made though it may not be the

reason why a film-maker of Shyam Benegal's reputation takes a break with feature-length documentaries on Nehru and Satyajit Ray and M.S. Sathyu interrupts his feature film activity with a two-hour investigation of Islam in India.

But whether it is the serial or the long documentary, there is nothing quite like the excitement of looking forward to the best 21. After Hindi, Malayalam offers the biggest contribution this year and one would hope this represents the intelligence and integrity which have flowed out of works of Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Aravindan and before them, Vasudevan Nair. About Kannada, some of the apprehensions are being proved right. The main sources of inspiration — from Karanth to Karnad — have moved away. The younger talents (Kasaravalli, Nagabharana and the rest) are yet to settle down. The Kannada cinema, as a result, seems to be hovering somewhere between art and commerce, something like the trend of Bengali films after everyone seems to be keen on Hindi films for a bigger market and better actors. But from the east, a real surprise could come in the Assamese film. It could give to this year's Panorama something as new as the superb craftsmanship in one or two of the Hindi films which do not, otherwise, boast of any profound ideas or even social relevance.

The 21 represent the aims of the festival as it has come to be in the last 10 years or so — opening appropriately with the inspiring true story of the Telugu dancer who rose courageously above a physical handicap. But the Indian cinema, as detailed elsewhere in this volume, had a lot more to present to the world in 1985. If the Panorama is a mirror of contemporary India and is pursued by those fed on the legend of Satyajit Ray, there was also a lost world of exotic entertainment which audience in America and France could experience for the first time through the Festival of India packages focussing mainly on the Indian cinema's star tradition.

The response might have ranged from curiosity to confusion. At least the successfully packaged presentation of India's Hollywood was good compensation in a year when, except for Venice and the special exposure at Pesaro, most of the bigger festivals appeared to have taken 1985 to be a rather disappointing year for the Indian cinema. Impressions differ and judgements on art need not be final. All the more so at a time when standpoints and working methods are being thoroughly reassessed in the light of new technologies and individual attempts by the best of Indian film-maker are moving in exciting new directions.

— SWAPAN MULLICK



## ON A STARRY TREK

Stars are born wherever films are made and shown and that means all over the civilised world. Not just Hollywood or India but even in countries which can only boast of miniscule film industries. Stardom, as Alexander Walker observes in his excellent study of the star phenomenon in Hollywood, is a characteristic of film industries the world over. In fact, the star is the lifeblood of any commercial film industry since it is on his charisma that a film does business at the box office.

In spite of this, one would find it difficult to define what star charisma is or what actually makes a star. Good looks?

Neither Rajesh Khanna nor Amitabh Bachchan is conventionally handsome and there are dozens of leading men (lesser stars) who are far more physically attractive and yet both have occupied the top position in the Indian film industry at different times. Acting talent? Dev Anand is not a particularly good actor but he has remained a major star for over four decades. What then makes a star? What is that extra ingredient called star charisma that differentiates a star from an ordinary person?

A star is not necessarily a good actor, in fact, one could go a little further and say that a good actor will rarely make a star (Sanjeev Kumar's is a case in point) because in order to satisfy the dictates of the audience and their fans, stars must, by necessity, play the



Amitabh Bachchan

same character again and again... ad nauseum. A star cannot be too versatile, for the audience wants (in fact, desires) to see him in the role that made the star popular: witness Dilip the tragedian, Amitabh the rabble-rousing anti-Establishment hero and Dharmendra the tough man with a soft exterior.



Dilip Kumar

But then, again, the audience also tires of repetitiveness (witness Amitabh's innumerable flops in the early EIGHTIES). And so, it is the wise



star (like Dilip Kumar) who can ration himself out in small doses enough to keep the audiences happy but not enough to tire them out. Accepting roles which are familiar enough to tickle their sense of déjà vu and yet different enough to keep them in the theatres (Manmohan Desai the filmmaker has exhibited some such 'Star'-sense in his last few films, all of them super-duper hits)

**"Behind the star system there is not only the 'stupidity' of fanatics, the lack of invention of screen writers, the commercial chicanery of producers. There is the world's heart and there is love, another kind of nonsense, another profound humanity"**

- Edgar Morin in his classic study  
**THE STARS**

Often audiences demand that a star repeat his real life role on the screen, but often they demand that the star repeat his on-screen role in real life. The disappointment and rejection that are engendered can be seen in the case of Priya Tendulkar who refused to be a real life Rajani (the consumer activist character she plays on TV). And, of course, there are occasions when individual roles supercede star personas as happened in the case of Vishnupant Pagnis in Sant Tukaram and Nargis in Mother India. So closely were they identified with these roles that the shadow of the role chased them all through their acting careers.

But it is not only the actors that star images affect, they affect audiences,

too. Since star cinema (or mainstream commercial cinema) depends largely on creating a strong identification between the star and the audience, the latter begins to see things from the former's point of view and, at least for the duration of the film, begins to live his life vicariously.

### **THE EVOLVING STAR**

The salaries of top stars and those of lesser-known artistes was not as great as it would be in later years. The early years of the forties saw a tremendous spurt in industrial activity in India, accompanied by the scarcities brought on by the ongoing Second World War, all of which resulted in speculative activity. Fortunes were made in the black market. The huge profits made from underhand activity created a new kind of market situation where money had to be re-invested in profitable businesses without it showing up in the account books. And where else but in the film industry could one make a killing almost overnight?

**"The star system met with great success in the abnormally strained atmosphere of the war. It grew in size and in the huge deluge that it produced, the producer, the technicians the writer and the others were washed away".**

**Kanan Devi in Indian Talkie, 1931-'56.**

Star salaries shot up phenomenally from Rs. 20,000 a film to Rs. 75,000 a film and even Rs. 2,00,000 a film. Consequently film budgets too shot

up from the pre-War average of Rs. 90,000 to around Rs. 5,00,000. Most of these transactions were in black and, as Eric Barnouw and S. Krishnaswamy note in **Indian Film**: "To receive part of one's salary in black was a badge of distinction (which) contributed to the star's prestige and bargaining power."



Neelima

Though the film industry in India has always been male-dominated, ironically enough, the first film favourites were all actresses. Thanks to the stigma attached to appearing in films, no Indian woman from a well-to-do family would come forward to act in them. Producers perforce had to rely on Anglo-Indian girls who had no such qualms: Sita Devi (Renee Smith), Sabita Devi (Iris Gasper), Madhuri (Beryl Claessen), Manorama (Winnie Stewart) and Sulochana (Rutly Meyers), who was the highest paid star of her time, were all Anglo-Indian girls most of whom faded away with the coming of sound since none of



Uttam Kumar

them knew the local language

The talkies saw the debut of a number of Indian girls from respected families, among them Enakshi Rama Rau, Durga Khote, Leela Chitnis and Devika Rani. As far as possible, studios saw to it that stars were at least well educated, if not graduates. Ashok Kumar, Mubarak, Nayampally, Motilal, Prithviraj Kapoor and Surendra were all educated, urbane and sophisticated. Gone were the pahalwans of the earlier silent era and in their place came the University graduates. This trend, which was intentional since the industry was hell-bent on acquiring a good image for itself, continued into the forties, which saw the rise of Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and Raj Kapoor—three stars who were to reign supreme for the next 25 years.

With the coming of Nargis, Meena Kumari, Nutan, Waheeda Rehman and



Nargis

Vyjayanthimala and with the triumvirate of Hindi films (Dilip-Dev-Raj) firmly entrenched, the star system really came into its own. The fifties and the sixties were the Golden Era for Indian stars. Stories were written around them, films ran because of them, fan fever was at its peak and star prices were steadily climbing. Even the emergence of the Film Institute-trained actor and anti-star in the seventies made little difference to either the star system or the star salaries. Even the so-called anti-stars like Naseeruddin Shah and Om Puri



Naseeruddin Shah

now constitute a stardom of their own. The only difference is that because they are such good actors the overall effect of stardom is considerably muted.

## THE 'POLITICS' OF STARDOM

There was a time when a star preferred to function within the cloistered world of the film industry. At best, the star would diversify into some business aspect of the industry very much as Himansu Rai and Devika Rani did in the mid-thirties when they set up Bombay Talkies or as Rajesh Khanna, Jeetendra and many others did more recently when they set up distribution concerns. The stars of today have diversified into various diverse activities, not connected to motion picture making and this is a world-wide phenomenon.



Sonil Dutt

Surprisingly (or probably not so surprisingly) politics has proved to be a refuge for the Indian film star. Of course, there are a few like Dev Anand and Pran who, after a brief flirtation with national politics called it quits and went back to films. Many others like the veteran Malayalam film actor Prem Nazir and Shatrughan



Sinha are forever poised on the verge of taking the plunge.

Of course, very much in the limelight are the three debutant MPs—Sunil Dutt, Vyjayanthimala and Amitabh



*Vyjayanthimala*

Bachchan (listed here in order of seniority) who also are influential stars in the film industry, with the exception of Vyjayanthimala who retired from an active film career nearly a decade ago. The other two are still very active film stars with Amitabh at the top. While Amitabh's entry into politics can be explained away by his nearness to the Nehru-Gandhi family (he is a personal friend of Rajiv Gandhi), how does one explain the sudden influx of film stars into politics?

Of course, film stars taking to politics is not a new trend because both M.G. Ramachandran (in Tamil Nadu) and N. T. Rama Rao (in Andhra Pradesh) have shown that film stars, too, can be successful politicians. From the very start, M.G.R.'s rough and ready films



*N.T. Rama Rao as SRI KRISHNA*

have formed a platform for the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam philosophy. In fact, in spite of the vogue of commercialism in M.G.R.'s films, they have always been political instruments for social change. All through his career as a film star, M.G.R. has used his star charisma to reach out to the masses and propound a political message, the message of the D.M.K.



*M.G. Ramachandran*

**"You see certain people who carry the centre of the stage with them, even when they are doing nothing. Sometimes it is a physical thing. Sometimes it really is an intensity inside. Often it is the way the light hits the eyes. They are born to be creatures of the camera."**

**- George Cukor**

Of course snide whispers have also suggested that turning to politics is merely a pretext to ensure alternative careers in the face of fading star charisma. There may, of course, be a limited truth in this because the option for ageing stars may be to retire gracefully or take to character acting — noting, of course, that no star, with the exception of Ashok Kumar and Dilip Kumar, has survived this transition effectively. But then, this is not the whole truth because Indian stars-turned-politicians have proved that their star charisma are still intact, if not enhanced.

### **IN SEARCH OF NEW PASTURES**

Of late, particularly in the last couple of years, Indian stars have begun to make deep inroads into the seemingly impenetrable international film scene. Thanks for this is largely due to the large number of Western films with Indian backgrounds that were planned in the last half-a-decade soon after the critical and box-office success of Gandhi. With Indian film subjects proving to be a hit with international audiences, Western film-makers had no recourse but to shoot in India with

the help of Indian technicians and actors.

The country soon began to crawl with foreign producers wanting to make films, television serials and even short films: Octopussy, Mountbatten, The Jewel In The Crown, Staying On, A Passage To India. One film followed another and Indian actors got parts in these films — small ones at first and then the big ones later. With as many as 18 feature films and television serials shot in India in the last three years, it was inevitable that a wide range of Indian artistes be discovered.

**"...with critical and financial success of Gandhi the West has begun to recognise the Bombay movie industry."**

**- Phillip Smith, American film critic**

Of course, the battle is only half won since Indian actors are still not considered for all the Indian roles in spite of Victor Bannerjee having proved his mettle in 'A Passage to India.' In the very same film, the role of Dr. Godbole was played by the noted Alec Guinness when it could very well have been done by someone like Dr. Shreeram Lagoo. Even in 'A Jewel In The Crown' the role of Ashok is played by a Pakistani settled in the West for the last many years. Indian actors are still at a point when they are not an automatic selection for the starring roles. Of course, Indian actors in foreign films are not a recent phenomenon because quite a few of the Indian stars have played



Two younger stars - Rati Agravani and Mihir Chakraborty.

important roles in foreign film in the past.

But none of these actors, with the exception of Shashi Kapoor and to a certain extent I. S. Johar, made any great impact or lasting impression on the minds of Western audiences or, for that matter, filmmakers. Consequently, they were not cast further in other non-Indian roles. Even Kabir Bedi who has stationed himself

at a vantage point in Hollywood says that he is, at best, a major contender for the non-American roles and that he can never hope to have a film revolve around him. Ditto for Persis Khambatta though she has managed to bag quite a few non-Indian roles. What our stars now need is a Godfather to propel them further, some one who would do what David Lean did for Omar Sharif.

— SANJIT NARWEKAR



# NEW CINEMA : TIME FOR STOCK-TAKING

What Andrzej Wajda said about the New Cinema of France in **Sight and Sound** bears quotation at some length because the passages have great relevance for our own New Cinema: "We all loved what the French New Wave proposed: that films could be addressed to a limited social group, that to enjoy them you needed some intellectual and artistic background — But what seemed so promising proved very dangerous. You no longer knew for whom the film was made. And one can't think of a revival of European Cinema without feeling that a film has to have something to say, and an audience waiting for it — It's a rare film that is able to make an impact on us through the power of its acting, its production values, the money invested in it, or the inventiveness of its mise en scene or the force of its subject — The liberation of cinema in Europe brought about a breach between the cinema and its public — Film-makers have little to say — The public didn't go very far towards accepting formal inventiveness in films — And the kind of cinema we want to see is the 19th century novel on the screen."

In the last week of November 1985, Mrinal Sen, one of the father figures of our New Cinema, said much the same thing on TV: "New Cinema for me today is a sensible film."

M. Bhaktavatsala said much the same thing in **Screen** (Nov. 29, 85) in a long and vituperative piece on the

"intellectual cinema of the beards" when he concluded that "the new cinema award garnerer film is destined for instant mortality."

It is possible to dismiss Wajda, Sen and Bhaktavatsala as betrayers, defeatists or cynics. I would not do that though I have normally supported New Cinema. After watching its development in the last few years, I feel the time is ripe for stock-taking. When I see the real difficulty in getting an audience for **Tarang** or the near-empty Akashvani (Bombay) theater for **Damul** after the first few days, or watch the brilliantly evocative/invocative "trip" of Mani Kaul in **Matl Manas**, I feel the breach between an audience and the new film maker is near complete. This may not be a matter of concern for some film-makers. It is a matter of serious concern for other film-makers or film lovers.

Does the problem lie in distribution? Partly. Does the problem lie in the fact that we have not nurtured an audience for New Cinema? Yes, but again partly. Or is the problem in the style, the idiom, the whole form and content of New Cinema? Let us begin by exploring this last question.

The Indian New Cinema of the sixties was a child of many circumstances. There was the dissatisfaction with the song-dance-rhetorical-drama-oriented commercial film of the sixties. When Bhaktavatsala idealises "commercial cinema" in contrast to New Cinema, he is eulogising

something that is gone. Another element in the birth of New Cinema was the collapse of **Pax Nehruviana** and the newborn sense of introspection, doubt and self-inspection. A third element was the invasion of our cinema by the sensibility not only of European New Cinema but of the mid-century European mind. Alienation, distanciation, obliqueness, a new lyrical sensuousness, the primacy of the image, exposure, satire, reflection, ambiguity—these were some of the fairies (or witches, if you prefer) that presided over the birth of New Cinema. They left their mark on the work of Mani Kaul, Kumar Shahani, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalakrishnan and others. The question is: How does it all look in 1985?

Strangely, I get a feeling of *deja vu* when I see the films of the last few years. We have been here before. Of course, there are experiments, there's technical glossiness and variety. There are excellent expose films like Gautam Ghosh's **Paar** and Prakash Jha's **Damul**. But, barring some brilliant exceptions, there is no element of surprise, no force that overwhelms us as **Uski Roti** or **Ankur** did. And the audiences are still not coming in. Shall we blame their crassness? But then, as Clive James pointed out, there's an element of elitism here: "We eat. Others consume."

The recent work of Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Aravindan is a good point from which to start. Their



Adoor Gopalakrishnan's **MUKHAMUKHAM**

work cannot be labelled, their latest films **Mukhamukham** and **Chidambaram** are absolutely original. One film deals, among many things, with the facade of a Communist hero, the other with the theme of guilt and redemption. The approach is deeply reflective, allusive, elliptical. In fact ellipsis, the non-labouring of a point considered obvious, works in both films. I think we should give some thought to this. Film viewing, to be blunt, is becoming something of a sophisticated game these days—a test of intelligence and sensibility. Adoor and Aravindan are venturing into unexplored areas. Good for them. But can we say that their cinema is a "communal (in the sense of community shared) experience"?

I know I am raising a very debatable point. Should cinema be a "communal experience"? This question cannot be answered here. But the fact is that a hiatus is developing between the work of our best film-makers and a substantial number of intelligent and interested viewers. These remarks also





Kumar Shahani's **TARANG**

apply to the recent work of Kumar Shahani and Mani Kaul

Another trend is to explore a specific individual-social tension as in Nirad Mahapatra's **Maya Miriga**. The tragedy of change, of growing old, of growing away has never been captured better than here. A certain coldness of technique, a distancing of emotion and suffering, a certain deliberate craft in delineating the situation restricted its appeal to a specific audience.

I think the point I am trying to make has got across to some film-makers.



Nirad Mahapatra

Ketan Mehta, Saeed Mirza and Kundan Shah have tried new techniques farce, comedy, caricature to entice audiences while maintaining a Brechtian style of comment. They have succeeded, to a certain extent, in **Bhavni Bhaval, Mohan Joshi** and **Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro**. They have broken up linear structure, played hell with form. A potentially fruitful approach. But it has its limitations. There is very little interest in individual psychology, idiosyncrasy, or inter-personal love/conflict. There is



Saeed Akhtar Mirza's **MOHAN JOSHI HAZIR HO**

not much knowledge of details of power relations in society. This leads to simplistic visions - "them vs. us" - "rotten, corrupt establishment vs. vulnerable, frail impulsive youth" - as in Mehta's **Holl** and Mirza's TV serial **Nukkad**, Shah's **Jaane Bhi** degenerated into the "mindlessness" of the TV serial **Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi**.

Yet another trend has been that of Ramesh Sharma and Vinod Chopra who have in two extremely well-made films **New Delhi Times** and **Khamosh**,



Vinod Chopra's *KHAMOSH*

tried to serve social critiques with a degree of drama and suspense. They have not succeeded entirely. But the effort was worth making. Much depends on the commercial viability of these films.

Nihalani continues to drive deeper furrows in the area of social realism, liked the first part of his *Party* which tried to explore the tragi-comedy of



Govind Nihalani's *PARTY*

the Westernised middle class and the whole of his *Aghaat* which deals with the theme of the ideological left vs opportunistic populism in labour conflict. Nihalani again is not greatly interested in the "individualness" of human beings but because of his interest in interpersonal conflict, this element is not totally devalued.



Govind Nihalani's *AGHAAT*

There are other trends in New Cinema which I pass over for reasons of space. But the fact remains that given the warmth, the colour, the variety, the misery, the ever-deepening corruption, the opportunism, the popular religious sense (which is also transcendental) of life as a drama, of Indian life today, the Indian New Cinema seems strangely limited, naive (despite its knowingness) and cut off from the vitality of the people. Perhaps it should take another look at "popular" cinema - not a patronising or opportunistic look but a fraternal

look-of the past and present. Can we dismiss Kamal Hassan's performance in the popular film **Saagar** as a "Caricature"?

As the reader must have guessed by now I do not regard the problem of "distribution" as vital. But it is an important problem. The new film-makers blame the National Film Development Corporation. The National Film Development Corporation has its faults - it has to develop some kind of original thinking in this matter and also show greater drive in implementation of its promises. On the other hand, the attitude of some New Cinema film-makers in depending solely on National Film Development Corporation for distribution is, as N.V.K. Murthy of the Nehru Centre says, "anti-social". They should, he

continues, nurture an audience. The film societies by and large, have lost their initial impetus. The film-makers should approach co-operatives, institutions with 16 mm projectors and mobilise/pool resources for direct approach to rural audiences. Anand Patwardhan is trying the last approach for his anti-hutment demolition documentary **Bombay - Our City**. There are makers of other excellent documentaries— Ranjan Palit's on the Bhopal gas tragedy and C.S.Laxmi and Vishnu Mathur's on **Image of Women in the Media** - who are thinking on similar lines.

The message that most new film-makers are trying to get across is radical. Will they rest content with the extremely unradical channels of distribution?

- Iqbal Masud

## INDIA ABROAD

For the Indian cinema 1985 has been a notable year. Although in the past, individual directors have had some spectacular successes with awards and critics, this year has seen seasons of Indian cinema spread over weeks and even months, in Italy, France and the United States. Awards have continued to come in: the Special Jury award for **Ghare Baire** in Damascus; for **Saaransh** in Moscow the:



*Mahesh Bhatt's SARAANSH*

International Film Critics (FIPRESCI) prize for **Umbartha** at Varna. Acting awards for Gopi and Vijay Mehta at the Asia-Pacific Festival in Tokyo. A retrospective of Satyajit Ray in three different cities in Italy with Chidananda Das Gupta and Henri Miciolo (both of whom have written books on Ray—Das Gupta in English, Miciolo in French) to introduce it; a retrospective of Mrinal Sen's films at Kuala Lumpur. Adoor Gopalakrishnan's at Helsinki and Ritwick Ghatak's at a number of festivals. At the Hawaii Film Festival a special salute to Indian Cinema had P.K. Nair on its five-member jury for the competition section.



*Ritwick Ghatak on location*

The Festival of India in France and the United States, with the film season continuing for several months after a gala opening in Paris in September and New York in October, has obviously provided an important showcase and is serving to broaden the base and deepen the interest. But Pesaro pre-empted both these countries by concentration on Indian cinema at its 1985 Festival. With over fifty films, from the early Prabhat Talkies **Sant Tukaram** to Mani Kaul's **Mati Manas**, it provided a vast and sometimes confusing vista for the audience of five hundred or so critics, scholars, students and teachers of film who arrived in Pesaro for its annual Festival from all over the Europe. Daily live national television programmes in Italy and extensive coverage in newspapers and journals gave Indian cinema a wide, sustained European exposure. There is no doubt that the interest and understanding penetrated well below the skin—deep awareness.



born earlier through the sporadic appearance of an occasional award-winner at international festivals Ray has long been acknowledged as the master—one French critic entitled his article—'Satyajit Rex'. But now, as Jean-Loup Passek, director of the cinema section of the Pompidou Centre in Paris says, names of Indian films, directors, actors and actresses are beginning to appear regularly in film magazines. The familiarisation process, so important in feeding an appetite is what ultimately leads to commercial distribution in the theatres or on the ubiquitous, all-important television—and to co-productions.

The Gandhi film unquestionably opened the door and the Indo-USSR co-production on the three-hour documentary on Jawaharlal Nehru with Shyam Benegal as the Indian co-director, carried the idea another step forward. Now Mrinal Sen is



Sai Paranjpye's *KATHA*.

directing his latest film (working title: Genesis) with Shabana Azmi, Om Puri and Naseeruddin Shah as an—the very first—Indo-French co-production. Suresh Jindal, producer of Ray's **Shatranj Ke Khilari** and Sai Paranjpye's **Katha**, is co-producing another Indo-French film on the Ganga. France's discovery of Indian cinema has turned into a warm relationship. The festivals of Nantes and La Rochelle took the initiative that led to the commercial release in Paris of Guru Dutt's **Kaagaz Ke Phool** in 1984 and **Pyasa** in 1985 by the enterprising young agency, Cinema sans Frontieres. In 1984 Goutam Ghosh's **Paar** had carried off three awards at the Venice Film Festival. **Paar** was not included in the Pesaro package as they wished to introduce films that European audiences did not already know but, and more importantly, **Paar** is soon to be released in Italy, and in New York.



Felicitations to Mahesh Bhatt and the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Shri V N Gadgil, at the Moscow Film Festival 1985.

Books, affording a stamp of legitimacy, have appeared internationally. The Pesaro Festival brought out two volumes of original and published work by Indian writers. Full of facts, information, analysis, they form a valuable data base and source material for further work. The Pompidou Centre in 1983 had published their own book for the Indian cinema season. Edited by Jean Loup Passek it contained articles principally by French writers together with detailed synopses of the films being shown—an extended version of our own Indian Cinema books published annually. For the 1985 season it has brought out a glamorous book called **The Stars**. Edited this time by Nasreen Kabir, the pieces this time are all by Indian writers. And also in French, quite independently of any official patronage, the greatly respected Cinema Action published **Les Cinemas Indiens**. With long analytical pieces by Indian writers covering practically every aspect of India's many cinemas, it has two prefaces, one by Andre Fontaine, Director of **Le Monde**, which provides in some measure, an Introduction to India for French readers, and one by Satyajit Ray giving a perspective on Indian cinema for French film goers. Taken together, all these books serve as a take-off point for growing number of film scholars turning interested eyes towards India.

The ultimate aim of all such manifestations is commercial.



*NFDC Stall, Berlin Film Festival 1985*

distribution and today, as a result of long and patient effort in which our own International Film Festivals and the NFDC have played no small role, that possibility is no longer an impossible dream.

—ARUNA VASUDEV

Name of Festival	Date	Names of films
San Francisco	April 11—25	Utsav, Mohan Joshi, Hazir Ho, and Nehru
New Directors/New Films The Film Society of Lincoln Centre and The Department of Film of the Museum of Modern Art, New York	March 29— April 14	Holi
Centre National Research Scientifique Festival, France	April 24—28	Utsav
PIA Festival, Tokyo, Japan	End May 1985	Paar
Tokyo Festival	May 31—June 9	Kharij
Kine International Film Festival, Harare, Zimbabwe	From May 31	Koodevide
Varna Film Festival	June 7—15	Umbartha
Melbourne Film Festival	June 20—30	Ardh Satya
Internationale Filmfest Munich	June 22—30	Bhuvan Shome, Ek Din Prati Din
Asia Pacific Film Festival, Tokyo	June 4—7	Party, Kattathe Killikoodu, Manik Raitong
Pesaro Film Festival	June 15—23	Amrit Manthan, Sant Tukaram, Devdas, Kalpana, Mr. & Mrs. 55, Jagte Raho, Mother India, Madhumati, Baishyeh Shiravana, Kanchanganga, Subarnerekha, Pakeezah, Siri Siri Muwa, Sita Kalyanam, Awaara, Shri 420, Amar, Uski Roti, Maya Darpan, Agraharathil Kazhuthal, Garam Hawa, Kaadu, Phaniyama, Coolie, Manthan, Dhrupad, Phatikchand, Nirab, Ihada, Mukhamukham, Jana Aranya, Inner Eye, Pikkoo, Bala, Music of Satyajit Ray, Sujata, Moghe Dhaka Tara, Iukti Tako Ar Gopo, Nagrik, Komal Gandhar, Kagaz Ke Phool, Sahib Bibi aur Ghulam, Holi, Tarang, Shankarabharanam, Ghare Baire, Elippathayam, Ajantrik, Bari Theke Paliye, Duvidha, Albert Pinto Ko Gussa Kyon Ata, Hal, Ankur, Khandhar, Koridura, Aarohan, Mandi
Moscow Film Festival (Information)	June 28—July 12	Aashray, Hoshiyar, Kasam, Paida, Karne Wale Ki, Do Dilon Ki Dastaan, Meri Adalat, Teri Kasam, Kalakaar, Saahib, Kamla, Akalmund, Ghare Baire, Party, Tarang, Mohan Joshi, Hazir Ho, Paar, Mandi, Utsav, 36 Chowringhee Lane, Lorie, Saaranish, Durgaa, Sanjhi, Pighalta Aasman, Hum Bachche Hindustan Ke

Awaaz, Dharam aur Oanoon, Hum Navjawan  
 Pyar Ithokta Nahin, Naya Kadam, Bandhan, Raj Tilak,  
 Kaamyab, Aaj Ki Awaaz, Oppol, Lekhayude Maranam,  
 Swathi, Ankahee, Shishe Ka Ghar, Damul, Debigarjan,  
 Mujhe Insaaf Chahiye, Vijeta

**Listed below are some of the recent International Film Festivals to which Indian Films were sent:**

**Film Festivals**

Locarno Film Festival  
 (August 8-18)

Montreal Film Festival

N.G.A., Washington  
 (August)

Edinburgh Film Festival  
 (August 10-24)

London Film Festival

Asia Society New York

Hawaii Film Festival  
 (November 24 - December 8)

**Films**

**Mukhamukham** in Competition Section  
**Maya Miriga** in Information Section  
 (Adoor Gopalakrishnan attended as Indian delegate)

**Damul** in Competition Section  
 (Prakash Iha attended the festival,  
**Nehru, Satyajit Ray**  
**Paar** in Information Section

Special screening of films  
**Goopy Gyne Baga Baine, Sonar Kella**

**Tarang**

**Mukhamukham**

Special Screening of **Nishant,**  
**Manthan, Kondura, Bhumika**

**Maya Miriga** in Competition Section



## FILM SOCIETIES PLAY THEIR PART

The silent era of the Indian cinema can perhaps be written off but for the historical interest in the thirties and forties. The Indian film then drew largely on mythology, historical events, social and later political situations for its themes, always with a clear inclination for the spectacular. But even these films were woefully inadequate in cinematic sensibilities and expression. The Indian film societies cannot, therefore, be criticised on the ground that they have looked West.

Nevertheless, Calcutta Film Society from which the movement developed, screened **Ram Shastri** (1944) and **Sant Tukaram** (1936). When Uday Shankar's **Kalpna** was released in 1948, the society purchased and distributed tickets among its members. Later it organised a Mehboob session. In 1965 and 1966, the society held a festival of old Bengali films in two sessions. In 1965 and 1966, Cine Central and Calcutta Cine Institute held Indian (or call it Regional) Film Festivals.

Around this time Film Forum, Bombay, presented films of Prabhat Studio, defunct by then, in a few retrospectives of **Master Vinayak**, **Hemen Gupta**, **Shantaram** and **Bimal Roy**. In 1970, this society brought out a special number of its journal, **Close-up**, devoted entirely to Indian Cinema and its various aspects. Earlier, one issue contained several articles on Indian Censorship Regulations. In 1966, Anandam Film

Society held a festival of Satyajit Ray films and published a special issue of its journal, **Montage**, with articles on Ray films which is still considered a reference publication.

Delhi Film Society had the distinction of showing several films, **Devi Saara**, **Akash**, **Swayamvaram** even before they were released. (An interesting sidelight: The late Defence Minister, V. Krishna Menon was allowed to see Ray's **Devi** at the pre-release show on the condition that he would come alone and not accompanied by his security men. Mr Menon obliged and saw the film). In 1965 Madras Film Society held a discussion after screening Gemini's Hindi film, **Grahasthi**.

Around this time the Film Study and Information Group (FSIG) formed by the Federation, Calcutta, held a series of discussion meetings. In one of these meetings, Satyajit Ray read an article on scenario, illustrating his point with excerpts of **Kanchenjanga**, **Postmaster** and **The World of Apu**. In another meeting on scenario, Mrinal Sen illustrated his points from his own films, **Punascha**, **Abasheshey** and **Protinidhi**. Ritwik Ghatak spoke on editing with references to his films.

In Bombay, Film Forum's own study group used to sit at least once a month and often it concentrated on the aesthetic quality of Indian films. In 1965, a fresh graduate from the Film Institute and now a famous director Adoor Gopalakrishnan,

started in Trivandrum not only a film society, Chitrallekha-Film Society, but also, with his friends in the film society, India's first film cooperative, Chitrallekha Film Cooperative for production and distribution of Indian films. And within a few years we got Adoor's first feature, **Swayamvaram** (1972), winner of four national awards.

Some film societies contributed by making documentary films. While Calcutta Film Society made three films - **Durga Puja**, **Portrait of a City** and **Todo**, Film Forum, Bombay captured the spirit of Bombay in celluloid in **A City by the Sea**.

A book on Ritwik Ghatak published in 1982 claimed "Long after Ritwik Ghatak's death, the significance of his work is finally bursting out of obscurity". Obviously, the publisher of the book did not check the facts. Ritwik's films, excepting **Megha Dhaka Tara** and **Subarnarekha** did not fare well at the box office. But the significance of his work was clear to film societies and the interest in his work was sustained by film societies through repeated screenings in the sixties. In 1967 Calcutta Cine Institute held a festival of Ritwik's films and published a special issue of their journal **Movie Montage** on Ritwik's works. After Ritwik died in 1976, the FFSI, Calcutta paid homage to him by organising a week-long retrospective of his films and this was immensely popular. Cine Central published a special issue of their journal, **Chitrabikshan**, which has by now become a reference

journal on Ritwik's works.

In the seventies, the pattern of activities underwent a change following the emergence of a number of new



*Basu Chatterjee*

talented filmmakers. New talent some times needs support from other quarters, specially in the context of the powerful commercial film industry in India. Some film societies took up this promotional venture. Basu Chatterjee's **Sara Akash** and **Rajanigandha**, Mani Kaul's **Uski Roti**, Kumar Sahaani's **Maya Darpan**, Pattabhi Rama Reddy's **Samskara**, B.V. Karanth's **Vamsha Vriksha**, Girish Karnad's **Kaadu**, Girish Kassarvalli's **Ghatasraddha**, Buddhadeb Das Gupta's **Dooratwa**, Adoor Gopalakrishnan's **Swayamvaram** and **Kodiyettam**, Aravindan's **Thampu** and **Kumatty** were screened by many film societies all over India. This inspired two producers in Calcutta to offer their Bengali films, specially Ray films, to the societies in Southern India and their expectations were not belied.



Amol Palekar's ANKAHEE

In the mid-70s, the Federation and a few societies collaborated with the FFC (now known as the N.F.D.C.) in holding festivals of FFC produced Indian films in Calcutta, Bangalore and Bombay. The FFC festival was held in Calcutta in 1974. The other feature was to hold sessions/festivals of regional films. Cine Club of Calcutta screened Assamese, Bengali, Marathi and Malayalam films in several sessions between 1977-82. The Federation circulated a package of four of Aravindan's films on rental basis and gave the entire money collected to the distributor. On the same basis, FFSI Calcutta circulated a short film **Mukti Chai** and two feature films — Mrinal Sen's **Akash Kusum** and Nabyendu Chatterji's **Aaj Kaal Parsur Galpo**.

In the mid-70s, a film society, Dristi, was formed in Bombay with the sole purpose of viewing Indian films. Two other Bombay societies took leading



Veterans of the Bengali film industry being felicitated by the Federation of Film Societies on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Bengali Cinema.

roles in promoting Indian films — Prabhat Chitra Mandal and Cine Society, the latter being mainly concerned in reviving interest in old Indian films. The societies at Nagpur, Jabalpur, Bhopal, Kolhapur, Bangalore, Trivandrum, Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Vishakhapatnam, Ludhpur, Asansol are regularly screening Indian films from time to time despite several constraints as mentioned above.

Two big festivals were held in the beginning of the eighties. Nostalgia — a festival of old Indian films, was organised in a big way by Suchitra Film Society, Bangalore. A Ray retrospective was held in Calcutta by Cine Central to commemorate 25 years of **Pather Panchali**. While Suchitra Film Society, Bangalore held a second festival of Indian films in 1983 under the title Chitrabharati, Cine Central, Calcutta screened Indian Panorama films and repeated the Ray retrospective in 1985. Seagull Film Society, a new society in Calcutta started with a session of Prithviraj,



Kapoor films. It organised a session of Amol Palekar's films and a retrospective of Adoor Gopalakrishnan in 1985 — followed by discussions with the directors.

The lively interest evinced by the film societies in regional films inspired their apex body, Federation of Film Societies of India to take up a new scheme, Regional Film Promotion Scheme. The Central Government gave a grant of Rs. 1.5 lakhs. The Federation raised an equal sum from the societies. Under the scheme, the Federation has till now purchased eleven films in different Indian languages. Some of these films have already been sub-titled in English. Also notable is the joint FFSI — NFAI programme on screening of Indian classics in Delhi, Bangalore and Calcutta.

Concern for Indian films was also reflected in other activities. Since 1979, Cine Club of Calcutta has been holding a Ritwik Memorial Lecture and the subjects dealt with include



Discussion of AAKROSH sponsored by Cine Club of Calcutta



M.S. Sathyu at work on KAHAN KAHAN SE BUJAR GAYE

caste conflict in Kannada Cinema, crisis in Indian Cinema, traditional Indian Cinema and New Indian Cinema etc. Screen Unit, Bombay has published a book on Ritwik Ghatak and his films.

Satyajit Ray started the movement. Ritwik Ghatak and Mrinal Sen drew inspiration from the film society screenings. Shyam Benegal, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, M.S. Sathyu founded film societies. Basu Chatterjee and Adoor were office-bearers of the Federation for several years. It is therefore a mistaken notion that the film societies in India take no interest in the country's own cinema.

— AJIY DEY

## ACADEMICS AT WORK

Purists may cavil at the thought of film studies being accorded the status of a serious academic discipline. Such objections may or may not be valid, but the volume of authoritative literature on the cinema that has appeared in India over the past few years bears testimony to a growing interest in the art form as an area of advanced study and research. In large part, the phenomenon can be ascribed to the patient

labours of a new generation of cineastes and enterprising publishers, with the Government and the film societies contributing their mite whenever necessary. "A film maker", wrote Satyajit Ray in **Our Films, Their Films**, "rarely writes about films... (they) have desisted from adding footnotes to their work". That void, happily enough, is now being filled by serious students of the cinema.



A priceless addition to the bibliography of Indian cinema in the year just ended was Shampa Banerjee's English translation of Ray's **The Apu Trilogy**. The original work had marked 25 years of the making of **Pather Panchali**. And now the child Durga of the masterpiece presents in elegant prose the material on which Ray based the three films, together a landmark in world cinema. Ms Banerjee's achievement lies in making the reader at once familiar with both the novel and the films. And all this between two covers that preserve the essence of the Bibhutibhusan classic and the cinematic qualities of the Trilogy.

No less important was the publication of **70 years of Indian Cinema, 1913-83**, edited by T.M. Ramchandran. Appropriately enough, this historical account begins from the year in which D.G. Phalke made Raja Harishchandra, the first major work in Indian cinema. The book takes the reader on a trip down memory lane with anecdotal recollections, vivid pen portraits, brief reviews and stills. There is much about the glorious past in this book which surveys the silent era, assesses the contributions of such pioneers as Phalke, Hiralal Sen, B.N. Sircar and Devika Rani, evaluates the styles of Ray, Raj Kapoor, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Mani Kaul and Kumar Sahani and examines the "phenomenon of NTR". One part deals exclusively with regional cinema, and another with the Government's efforts to promote the film industry with details about censorship, documentaries and festivals.

An immensely well-researched historical account of world cinema is available in Jagannath Chattopadhyay's **Chalachitree Abirbhav**, which won Silver Lotus at the last National Film Festival. The canvas is vast, and the exploration begins from 2,500 years ago, when Chinese scientists thought in terms of retaining images with the help of light, and ends with the present day 3D and wide screen. The stirring history of the celluloid world comes alive through a painstaking account of the major landmarks such as the development of "photographic chemistry"; the advent of kinoscope and the subsequent innovations in camerawork; the contributions of the Lumiere brothers, Edwin Porter, Griffith and Chaplin; the Walt Disney films; and the introduction of sound, colour, animation and 3D. Two chapters deal with the history of the cinema in India with special reference to Bengal. The author traces the major political, social, economic and cultural developments to emphasize that nowhere in the world was the development of the cinema an isolated phenomenon; the contemporary milieu always had a profound influence on the media.

Equally strong on data and analysis is **Chaplin O Tathkalin Markin Samaj** by Gautam Bhadra. The millionaire tramp has been placed in a proper historical perspective. Bhadra divides his films into clearcut phases, and the chief merit of this 140 page volume, published in 1984, lies in the detailed exploration of contemporary Holly-



wood culture and the philosophy and tradition "the great Charlie" bequeathed

Two important publications of the Directorate of Film Festivals in connection with the Festival of India in the USA provide a wealth of detail about contemporary Indian cinema, embellished with attractive stills. The production of both books bears the stamp of professionalism and should not be confused with public relations brochures. Shampa Banerjee's **Profiles: five film-makers from India** deals with life and works of V. Shantaram, Raj Kapoor, Mrinal Sen, Guru Dutt, and Ritwik Ghatak. The book reviews their careers, takes an overview of the films they have made and then analyses every production chronologically complete with filmography and information provided by the credits.

Equally impressive is **Indian cinema 1980-85** with a poignant still from **Dakhal** on the cover. It is a collection of review articles on the feature films and documentaries being screened in the Contemporary Films section of Film-Utsav USA. Notable also is the analysis of recent trends in films and filming, the potential of the "new cinema", and the challenge art faces from "commerce".

Haimanti Banerjee's "**Ritwik Kumar Ghatak: a monograph**" is an illustrated biography of a master attaining greater recognition with every birth or death anniversary. Ms Banerjee pres-

ents a biographical sketch, a synopsis of his films, what the film maker and critics thought about the productions and a detailed filmography. It is a handy reference book for any film library.

A notable development during the past few years has been the publication of screenplays, prominent among them being Adoor Gopalakrishnan's **The Rat Trap** and Jabbar Patel's **The Threshold** (screenplay by Vijay Tendulkar). Such books have served to enhance academic appreciation and promote regional cinema. They offer a fairly vivid reproduction of the sequences with a shot by shot reconstruction of the script, and the reader gets an idea of what happens on the screen. Bengali screenplays available in book form include **Shodh, Neem Annapurna, Akaler Sandhane, Oka Oorie Katha, Kanchenjanga** and **Nayak**. The Ray scripts are published by the magazine **Ekshan**.



Censorship, that controversial subject of a seemingly interminable debate, has been dealt with by Kobita Sarkar in **You Can't Please Everyone**. With the experience of serving on censorship committees, the author recalls the controversies over sex and violence, the categorization of films, the Khosla Committee's report, the views on the kiss, and the tussles between members across the table. The subject has also dealt with authoritatively by Khwaja Ahmed Abbas in **Bare breasts**

and **Bare bottoms (Anatomy of Film Censorship In India)**.

Film libraries in Bengal can boast of several books by the masters that help in the understanding of their respective works. These include Ray's **Bishoy Chalachitra** (1982) **Sen's Chalachitra**; **Bhoot Barataman O Bhabhishyat** (1977). And Ghatak's **Chalachitra, Manush Ebong Aro Kichhu** (1978) To these may be added two authoritative texts on Ray - Chidananda Dasgupta's **Cinema of**



**Satyajit Ray** (1980) and Firoze Rangoonwala's **Pictorial History of Indian Cinema** and **Satyajit Ray's Art**. Down South, a number of books on film theory and practice in Kannada point to a new awareness. Adoor Gopalakrishnan's book in Malayalam won a National Award. Among the other publications which deserve mention are Arun Khopkar's **Three Chapters** (in Marathi), an analysis of three films by Guru Dutt; the Archive monographs on *Damle* and *Fatehlal* by Bapu Watwe; **Third World Cinema** (in Kannada) by Subbanna and Girish Kasavalli, and Aruna Vasudev's **Indian Film Super Bazaar**. Another potentially interesting venture is S.N. Tiwary's study of the adaptation of Premchand's **Shatranj ke Khilari** in Satyajit Ray's film. It is part of the NFAI's research projects.

This survey is by no means exhaustive; the attempt has been to present an overview of certain major publications. But if the quality of the literary output is an index, the "new cinema" in India does have a bright future.

— ARINDAM GHOSH - DASTIDAR

# ENCOUNTERS WITH THE IDIOT BOX

Probably nothing else that Doordarshan has telecast so far in its 26 years of existence has aroused so much interest and comment as its sponsored serials. They have not only made TV viewing a lot more lively and entertaining but also brought about a healthy interaction between TV and cinema. Some of the country's best film-makers are now making serials for Doordarshan among them such giants as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal and Basu Chatterjee.

At the same time, a lot of good talent discovered by Doordarshan through its serials is going into films. In fact, a solid contribution that TV serials have made is that a very large number of talented artistes who had been knocking at the doors of film industry for years have been discovered. Serials like **Hum Log**, **Khandan** and **Rajani** have thrown up capable actors and



Basu Chatterjee's **RAJANI**

actresses who may have otherwise not got an opportunity to prove themselves.

Because of the serials, Doordarshan is now able to interact with cinema on a more equal footing. Before the serials were introduced, watching TV had become virtually synonymous with watching Hindi film-based programmes like **Chitrahaar**, the Hindi feature film on Sunday, and **Phool Khile Hain Gulshan Gulshan** an interview programme with popular film personalities. This is why when serials were introduced they were widely welcomed and seen as a bold departure from Doordarshan's heavy dependence on Hindi cinema.

**Hum Log** was the first serial and although it had a hesitant beginning it soon picked up, and today it is the longest running TV serial. Although all episodes in the serial have not been uniformly good, there is an element of seriousness in the manner in which the serial looks at the problems of a lower middle class family. Nothing of this kind had been attempted before on TV.

In sheer professionalism and longevity, the serial that comes a close second is **Khandan**, which tells the rather complicated story of an industrialist's family. While several artistes discovered by **Hum Log** have now been picked up by cinema, several well-known film artistes including Tanuja and Dr. Sriram Lagoo are working in **Khandan** which is perhaps one of the most sophisticated TV

serials. Another TV serial, which brought together film and stage artistes and successfully combined social comment with entertainment



Sar Paranjpye's **ADOS PADOS**

was **Ados Pados**, built around the lives of people living in a middle-class apartment block in Bombay.



Saikh Shah & Rakeen Bedi stars of **YEH JO HAI ZINDAGI**

Initially, it appeared that the idea behind the serials was only to entertain, and most of the serials in the beginning fell in the category of "sitcoms" and these included such popular serials as **Idhar Udhar**, **Mr. Ya Mrs.** and **Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi**. (Incidentally, the last name is the most widely viewed serial in Bombay, according to a recent survey done by a private research organisation).

However, at some stage it was decided to make the serials socially more relevant and its direct consequence was **Rajani**, directed by Basu Chatterjee, in which a highly conscientious woman takes up cudgels against corruption, inefficiency sloth and other social evils; **Paying Guest** which ran for a long time and had a benign old couple helping their (usually) wayward paying guests; Saeed Mirza's **Nukkad** which is built around the lives of slum dwellers; Bhisham Sahani's **Basanti** which again tells the story of a woman slum dweller, and **Safarnaama** sponsored by the Indian Railways.

While **Safarnaama** was withdrawn after some of its episodes were found objectionable, it is learnt that the railways are planning to sponsor a similar serial to be directed by Shyam Benegal. However all the "message-oriented" serials have not been equally good and these include **Babaji Ka Bioscope** and **Dekho Magar Pyar Se**. One serial which attempted to take a good hard look at the collapse of family structure in



upper middle class homes but did not go down very well with the people and was prematurely withdrawn was **Titliyan**.

The new trend towards serializing literary works either in the form of short stories or novels has been widely welcomed. Basu Chatterjee's **Darpan** which brings to the TV screen short stories from various Indian languages is both educative and entertaining. Then there is **Trishna** based on Jane Austin's classic **Pride and Prejudice** which is marked by some very professional acting. **Ek Kahani**, also based on short stories, has not been very successful because of indifferent selection of some stories. A surprising disappointment was Goutam Ghose's effort to handle a series of short stories in Bengali. He has done six, but the fate of the others is somewhat uncertain.



Mrinal Sen directing Aparna Sen in his TV Serial

At the time of writing, people are eagerly awaiting Mrinal Sen's proposed serial based on love stories. There are a number of other proposals — among them a serial on the short stories of Rabindranath Tagore.

Meanwhile, it is good to see that there is a serious effort to diversify the range of serials, and even as one is writing this a new do-it-yourself serial **Apne Aap** has been introduced for Sunday morning. Produced by the well-known Hindi film-maker N.C. Sippy, it gives some valuable tips on how you can attend to innumerable day-to-day problems yourself without having to call in an expert. The noted Hindi film actress Hema Malini is working in **Terah Panne**, which profiles some of the more significant women in Indian history.

The runaway success of serials has created a problem for Doordarshan which is flooded with proposals. While officials are tight-lipped, it is estimated that sponsored serial TV time is booked for at least next two years. Officials are reluctant to give the names of new serials, but they indicate that the subjects range from science fiction including Carl Sagan's **Cosmos** to wildlife, and "informative" themes.

- HASAN SUROOR



## SATYAJIT RAY PRESENTS

Six of Sandip Ray's telefilms are complete. They have a running time of about 25 minutes each, including the commercial. Four of them are based on stories by Satyajit Ray who has also written the script and scored the music for all the films. The telecast is to begin next March under the title Satyajit Ray Presents but there will be no formal introduction of the series.

The stories are all contemporary and represent a rich variety. Covering mystery thrillers, comedies and serious drama, the films cover a wide variety. "They have a straightforward universal appeal", said the director after he had completed the first six. They are basically entertainment. They are not messages."

By the time the telecast begins next March, the shooting for the other six will also have been completed. In the next phase, five of the seven stories

have been written by Satyajit Ray. The other two are based on Bengali short stories. They have been selected in such a manner as to allow mostly close treatment. That itself is a change from Sandip's first film, **Phatik Chand**. It was also an altogether new experience to work with a rich variety of stars. They included Ashok Kumar, Srceeram Lagoo, Victor Banerjee (in three films), Amol Palekar (in two), Om Puri, Mohan Agashe, Utpal Dutt, Shyaman and Iatan, Moonmoon Sen and Anuradha Patel.

Hardly have the films been concluded than Channel Four of the BBC has shown a keen interest. Sandip Ray's next venture is also for television. It will be a full-length feature film to be split possible into three parts for telecasting. The idea is to complete that film by the end of next year — by which time Satyajit Ray's doctors might allow him to go back to work.



*Sandip Ray shooting his TV film with Ashok Kumar.*

# REVIVAL IN THE EAST

Sponsorship and patronage from the State Government in various forms have considerably encouraged the growth of the regional cinema. In eastern India, a significant development has been the addition of two more states — Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh — on the feature film map.

The Bengali cinema in 1985 went off to an auspicious start with the release of Satyajit Ray's **Ghare Baire** based on the Rabindranath Tagore novel on the swadeshi movement. The film was critically acclaimed and did well at the box-office. The performance of Victor Banerjee as the husband won him high acclaim. It is a pity that despite his brilliant acting at home and abroad, he is yet to get the desired attention of the film industry.



Anjan Choudhury (writer-director) and Rajjit Mullick (actor) of **SHATRU** (Bengali).

The resounding commercial success of **Shatru** the maiden directorial venture of Anjan Choudhury, and **Lal Golap**, for which he wrote the story and the script, signalled a revival of the

Bengali film industry. Suddenly finance started pouring in and the studios were humming with activity. By the end of November, 25 films have been released notwithstanding the acute shortage of release chains. Though the commercial successes were characterised by sentimental approach to theme, simplistic treatment and stereotype acting, a few of them deserved mention. **Aamar Prithibi** by Bimal Bhounick with a subject close to life was treated in patches with competence. Ajit Ganguli's **Tagari** depicted the conflict of two personalities in relation to conflicting styles of music. **Harischandra-Shalbya** by Ardhendu Chatterjee succeeded as a well-told mythology. Tapan Sinha's **Baidurya Rahasya** did not live upto expectations as an engrossing mystery thriller. Asit Sen's **Pratigya** with Victor Banerjee was a disaster.

The blending of the popular and the aesthetic resulted in two successful films. Veteran Tarun Majumdar presented another commercial hit with **Bhalobasha Bhalobasha**, a story of young love in which comic spirit is mixed with serious events. The film is also marked by some good music from Hemanta Mukherjee. In **Nilakantha**, Dilip Roy made an admirable probe into the mind where inherited prejudices prevail over love and compassion. The discovery of a lost sister in a brothel and the attempt by the elder brother to rehabilitate her forms the crux of the story. Aparna Sen gave a very

impressive performance.

A new chapter opened with the release of **Anyay Abhichar**, an Indo-Bangladesh production by Shakti Samanta. It mixed technical excellence with the niceties of Bengali films, had breathtaking locations and had artistes from both Bengals. A number of Bengali actresses notably Moon Moon Sen, Alpana Goswami, Sandhya Roy and Debasree Roy are now acting in Bangladeshi films.



*Moon Moon Sen in PRATIDAN, a Bangladesh film*

Aparna Sen confirmed her position as one of the most sensitive young film makers with **Parama**. Critically acclaimed, it, however, generated much controversy because of its unconventional theme. To be the ultimate woman she must search for her true identity. **Parama** will, possibly, go down as the first true feminist film made in India.

An eagerly awaited film is **Atanka** by Tapan Sinha. Starring Soumitra Chatterjee, Satabdi Roy, Sumanta



*Tapan Sinha briefing artists for ATANKA (Bengali)*

Mukherjee among others, the film deals with the sense of insecurity and helplessness of the middle class caught in the vortex of a modern metropolis, who eventually cry out in protest.

Bengal's cinema has not been able to make much impact on the national and international film scene in 1985 as Mrinal Sen, Gautam Ghosh, Buddhadev Dasgupta and Utpalendu Chakraborty are all involved with Hindi films. Mrinal Sen has taken time off from making a TV serial, in Hindi, to complete **Genesis** with Naseeruddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Om Puri, K.K. Raina and others and Utpalendu is busy with **Debshishu** featuring Smita Patil, Om Puri, Sadhu Meher and others. After the impressive debut in **Phatikchand** Sandip Ray, Satyajit Ray's son, has started making a TV serial in Hindi. Arundhati Devi's TV film **Gokul** based on Subodh Ghosh's story, will mark the entry of Bengal's popular



Soumitra Chatterjee in the Hindi film arena.

The first features of two young film makers are expected to be completed very soon. Raja Mitra's **Ekti Jeeban**, based on Buddhadev Bose story,



Raja Mitra's **EKTI JEEVAN** (Bengali)

observes the milieu through its protagonist—an old scholar, whose ambitions and dreams are ultimately fulfilled as he resolutely fights against all sorts of odds. It stars Soumitra Chatterjee and Madhabi Chakraborthi with trade union rivalry and corruption as central to the theme. Sandip Ray (not to be confused with Satyajit Ray's son) is directing **Himghar** with Kumar, Sunil Mukherjee, Dilip Roy, Gopa Aich, Kumkum Bhattacharjee.

The government now gives grants to censored films made in the state on a



Sandip Ray's **HIMGHAR** (Bengali)

selective basis. The West Bengal Film Development Corporation has been entrusted with the responsibility of releasing the government productions and a number of significant films like **Dakhal**, **Grihajuddha**, **Chokh** and **Pragaithasik** are now in circulation.



Jahnu Barua's **APAROOPA** (Assamese)



On March 10, 1985 the Golden Jubilee of Assamese films was celebrated with pomp and grandeur. Though the state makes only about five or six films on the average, it has carved out a place of honour with films like **Ganga Chilenir Pakhi** by Padum Barua, **Sandhyarag** and **Anirban** by Dr. Bhabendra Nath Saikia, **Kallol** by Arul Bandolol, **Aparupa** by Johnu Barua with their artistic depiction of the



Bhabeni Saikia's **AGNISNAAN** (Assamese)

local background and realistic themes. Dr Saikia's latest **Agnisnaan** adapted from the first part of his novel **Antareep** is a very significant piece of celluloid work to come out from this region.

Braving the limited market and the influence of the Hindi films, Assamese cinema is looking forward to a bright future. The state-owned Jyoti-Chitraban studio with its studio floor, cameras, editing machine and laboratory for developing and

processing black and white films has come as a boon to the industry. Arrangements for fixing up a recording unit are being made and soon colour films could be processed and printed at Bombay or Madras through the studio. While the number of old films is slowly going up, most of them are doing relatively well at the box office.

The Oriya cinema came into the limelight with Mrinal Sen's **Matira Manisha**. But the national and international attention of **Maya Miriga** by Nirad Mahapatra invested the Oriya film industry with a new dynamism. The initiative of the Orissa Film Development Corporation and commissioning of the modern Kalinga Studio in Bhubaneswar provided the much-needed infrastructure for the industry. It now makes more than twelve films a year. The climate for film-making has changed vastly.



Nirad Mahapatra's **MAYA MIRIGA** (Oriya)

Though the sudden spurt in quantity has given rise to problems of release outlets, quantity has also improved. It can be hoped that the demand for more Oriya films coupled with the incentives given by the organisations like National Film Development Corporation to build more theatres will have happy results. Long fed with mythologicals, the audience is now looking for more social dramas and is also keen on colour, the facilities for which are expected to be added to the Kalinga Studios in the Seventh Plan.

The serious films by Nirad Mahapatra, Manmohan Mahapatra (**Sita Rati**, **Neeraba Jhada**, **Klanta Aparanha**,



Mohammed Mohsin's **JANANI** (Oriya)

Prasanta Nanda's **Jaga Badiya** and Amiya Patnaik's **Hakim Babu** have done very well at the box-office.

Another equally happy development in the eastern region has been the national recognition of Manipuri Cinema. **Imagi Ningthem** took Manipuri film across regional boundaries into national and then international arena. Made by Aribam Syam Sharma, whose previous two films had also won him national awards, the film's critical success was closely followed by M.A. Singh's **Sanaikethal**. Singh has since made **Langlen Thadoi**, the first colour film from Manipur. Made under Film Division's scheme of producing featurettes for a target audience showing various development projects undertaken by the government, Syam Sharma has made **Paokhum Ama**.



Manmohan Mahapatra's **KLANTA APARANHA** (Oriya)

Sadhu Meher (**Abhilash**) and Sagir Ahmed (**Dhare Alua**) made with courage and conviction and appreciated by critics and the audience have given new strength and prestige to the Oriya cinema. Of the commercial film-makers Mohammed Mohsin seems to be the most successful and also prolific. His **Janani** and **Joga Hater Pagha**,



*Dilip Bose's GANGA HAMAR MAI (Bhojpuri)*

The abounding enthusiasm of people like Syam Sharma, M.A. Singh, K. Binodini Devi (story and script-writer) has resulted in the generation of a healthy awareness of cinema in the state. The Manipur Film Development Council, an autonomous body, is doing a commendable job with Syam Sharma as its secretary.

**Manik Raltang** by Ardhendu Bhattacharjee, besides being critically acclaimed, had a successful commercial run. This year another film titled **I Mei Jong Nga** has been made by Prof. B.C. Iyawa in Super-8, in Khasi language which had a number of private screenings.

Film Division's scheme to produce hour-long featurettes with structures and themes that could be appreciated by a larger audience made possible

the first feature film in Adi language of Arunachal Pradesh. **Yapi**, made by Dhrubajyoti Basu, is shot on actual rural locations with non-professionals and has a rare freshness and spontaneity and effectively conveys a sense of being rooted to the particular soil.

Despite its large cinema audience Bihar remains without an indigenous film industry. Since **Kal Hamara Hai** by Clrish Ranjan, made a few years earlier, no attempt has been made to do films with local resources and themes in Bihar. However, films in Bhojpuri dialect, produced mostly from Bombay, continue to be very popular. Particularly ambitious is Dilip Bose's **Ganga Hamar Mai**. These films have a marked preference for the rural milieu, mostly glorifying women and age-old values.

—MIHIR SENGUPTA



# THE SOUTHERN EXPLOSION

Reviewing the balance sheet of Tamil cinema on the last day of the year, a colleague and I noted that the urge to celebrate good cinema was definitely out. Which was why Pratap Pothan's maiden directorial venture **Meendum Oru Kathal Kathal** lay rotting in the cans. Does this, we asked, give us a hint of the kind of Tamil cinema that will prevail in 1985? Sure as a shot, it did, proving a crystal ball for 1986-87 and possibly for 1988 at one go. If the pantheon of commercial gods and goddesses continue to have their way as they are having right now

And yet, going by numbers, 1985 has been a wonderful year for Tamil cinema: 125 films made, 31 dubbed, as against 117 straight films and 26 dubbed the previous year. Fourteen films touched the 100-day mark, while six actually crossed it.

When Pratap's **Meendum Oru Kathal Kathal** was finally released in February and won a National Award, the signs looked good. A love story with a difference, played between fantasy and reality and strongly reminiscent of **One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest**, **Meendum** was a unique exercise. But Pratap was too broke and battered by the commercial network to do another similar film and no one else dared to try. Everyone was far too caught up in their masala-sentiment-action formula films, even the big shots.

K. Balachander's **Kalyana Adhigal** was a damp squib. His fans continued to praise his latest **Sindhu Bhairavi** (with Sivkumar and Subasini), quite forgetting the key point: does this film measure up to K.B.'s older films?



Pratap Pothan's **MEENDUM ORU KAATHAL KATHAL** (Tamil)



K. Balachander's **ACHAMILLAI ACHAMILLAI** (Tamil)



Balachander is still a force to reckon with—the man whose films like **Apoorva Raagangal**, **Avargal**, **Thaneer Thaneer**, **Maro Charitra** and the recent **Achamillai Achamillai** created cinematic history, not just for their strong themes and characters, but for their perfect casting. His "discoveries" included the earthy but phenomenally talented Saritha (whose performance in **Thaneer Thaneer** nearly won her the National Award).

"Yes, my trump card is my casting," admitted Balachander. "My artistes must have an innate fire which I can kindle, because the strength of my films lay in their narrative and emotional ability. As a writer-director, I often conceive a scene only on the sets and often listen to my artistes' opinions. I never close down my shutters."



Bharathi Rajaa

Quite different in his attitudes was Bharathi Rajaa, the young director who, with his daring new 'visual' techniques in cinema, his unglamorous heroes, realistic settings in films like **16 Vayathinele**, **Puthiya Varpugal** and **Sigappu Rojakkal**, started the 'new wave' trend in Tamil cinema. "A film is purely a director's medium" he declared, "and moves exactly the way he wants it to move." For this reason he chose total newcomers (now famous names) for his films, so that "it is the director alone who gets full credit for his film and not his big stars".

"A film is a visual medium," continued Rajaa, "and is most appreciated when it soothes an audience's senses, not taxes their brains".

Balu Mahendra was another film-maker whose films, with their remarkable visual appeal (he was himself a photographer), brilliant characters and complex emotions, started many new trends in Tamil cinema. His **Azhiyatha Kolangal**, **Moondrum Pirai**, **Moodu Pani** and others were enough proof of his master craftsmanship.

The most successful among this new brand of 'naturalistic' directors in Tamil cinema was writer-actor Bhagyaraj, whose films, with their simple humanity, candour and an earthy humour, caught the very pulse of the people and became stupendous hits. Equally successful is Bharathi Rajaa in his latest film starring Sivaji



K. Bhagyaraj and Radhika in *INRU PDI NAALAI JAA* (Tamil)

Ganesan, which is in the Panorama.

Other directors continued where Bharathi Rajaa and Bhagyaraj had left off: picking up new heroes and heroines. Dozens of newcomers like Ramaya Krishnan, Jayshree and Jeevitha came in, but few were really heard of after their films. "It's not always the actor or actress taken who is to blame for this. Often the vehicle is just not right", defended Ramaya, while director Balachander said, "it's come to a stage where talent hardly counts nowadays; where the less talented one is, the more likely one is to succeed in our industry."

Many other new directors, like Netaji and K.S. Maeangan, made their debut, but none of them could hold the stage for long. Fazil was the only exception, when he remade his Malayalam hit for producer (**Kuttichathan**) Appachen. But there is still hope in young directors like Sunder Rajan and Raj Shekhar.

"Why none of these new people could succeed is because they tried to dish out old wine in new bottles that were cracked," said veteran director Bhaskar. "The key problem of Tamil cinema today, as I see it, is the lack of good story material". The social dramas of L.V. Prasad and K. Subramaniam are appearing to be overtaken by a strong leaning towards revenge dramas.

The South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce came out with the rule limiting the number of releases per week to two and, on special occasions like Deepavali, to ten. Amidst all its woes, the Tamil industry was smitten good and proper by the video bug. Despite an agreement reached by Eknath, President of the Video Libraries Association of Tamil Nadu and the SIFCC over video rights, most films are found around the city a day after their theatre release, with neither the correct letters nor censor certificates required by the law. Chamber President Muktha Srinivasan has pleaded with the Chief Minister, Mr. M.G. Ramachandran to urge a witch-hunt against these "illegal" libraries.

The '3D' came and was mopped out of sight like a rotten egg, though **My Dear Kuttichathan**, dubbed into Tamil (and Telugu) ran 266 days. The 3D films like Devar's **Annal Bhoomi** and Kranthi Kumar's **Chootpayan** that followed, fizzled out. Where there were 18 3D productions on the Tamil and Telugu floors at one time, with every big producer and director

threatening to participate in the mela, few of them ever saw the light of day, being discounted half-way (like Royappa Raju's **Choomantrakalli** and Prabhakar Reddy's **Mrugaju**) thus causing an enormous financial dent, especially in the Telugu industry.

It was a wicked punch to the Telugu studio; Filmistan, just then recovering from the money-block caused by huge one-crore-and-above projects like **Maha Sangramam** falling flat on their faces. And then, there was the slab system, kissing the chances of the small or experimental crews goodbye and encouraging the masala brigade to jog on. The 'superstars' like Shobhan Babu, Krishna, Krishnamraju and Chiranjivi escalated their prices, knowing that their names and antics sell.



P.L. Narayana (as Babu), and Suman  
in **DESAMLO DONGALU PADIDARU**

Producers soon turned towards a second line of youngsters to cast in their formula films. But unfortunately for them, their main hope here, the tall and debonair Suman, was put away behind bars on a blue film charge. NTR's son Balakrishna proved extremely successful, especially after his recent release **Kathula Kondalah** ran in continuous shows through day and night, even a week after its release – a feat accomplished only by his father's movies years ago – putting him undoubtedly in the top strata.

So, once more, the Telugu field lay wide open for every Tom, Dick and Harry who had failed in the other southern languages to have a final desperate dash: Arjun, Ramakrishna Hegde, Kapil Dev... "The problem in the Telugu industry is its obsession with Bruce Lee and Michael Jackson," said senior cameraman P. Devraj. "These two changed the entire style of films, dialogues, fights and dances. And, what's worse, producers and audiences now expect the younger heroes to be in this mould. No wonder we are having so many fiascos."

The press baron-turned-producer, Ramoji Rao, obviously did not wish to add his name to the fiasco list. He decided to continue away from the muck-baggers, making in the bargain one of 1985's most talked-about Telugu films – **Mayuri** – based on the real-life brave struggle of its heroine, Sudha Chandran, to conquer the handicap of an amputated leg after a road accident and resume her career.



as a dancer with an artificial limb. This film is a prime example of how a realistic human film can score above the sex-dishoom club.

With the increasing popularity of 'superstition' and 'terror' literature, Telugu producers are drawing from here for what they hope will be a goldmine. Mysticism is the latest fad after mythology. The crop of mythologicals that came up mid-year had actually become no more than a platform for having the sex bombs Silk Smitha, Anuradha, Jayamalini and Jyothilakshmi together.



K. Vishwanath's SANKARABHARANAM

Raghavendra Rao, the Padmalaya films and Rama Naidu are bombing up north. Even K. Vishwanath's remake of his Telugu all-time hit **Shankarabharanam** with Girish Karnad and Jaya Prada isn't doing too well. One of last year's blue-eyed boys, B. Narasinga Rao, who made the award-winner **Rangula Kala**, isn't often accepted as a director because he did an 'art film' while Prasad, P. Narasimha Rao and Rama Rao, with their flopping commercials, are being steadily booked. The other blue-eyed boy, Kranthi Kumar, has, after the humiliation of a miserable 3D venture, settled down to make money and bleed his golden goose.

BRIAN LAUL

LEKHA | SHANKAR

• • •

The Malayalam cinema can boast of at least two film-makers who have put it on the world map. Adoor Gopalakrishnan and G. Aravindan. Working for the past ten years or so, they tried to evolve a new film culture and free cinema from the dependence on literature. Adoor's **Swayamvaram** had a style of its own quite different from all other Malayalam films. Produced by the Chitralakha Film Co-operative, the first of its kind in the country, it won a national award.

He went on to make more award-winning films **Kodiyettam**, **Elipathayam** and **Mukhamukham**. The first of these fetched Gopi the Bharat award. The second got Adoor



the prestigious British Film Institute award and the third ran into a host of awards this year. But **Mukhamukham** also ran into a seething controversy and was attacked by both the Left and anti-Left forces in the State. So much so that everyone is waiting eagerly to see what he does next.

No less significant were the contributions made by G. Aravindan, referred to as the 'mystic poet' of the Malayalam cinema. His films are poems and have won him consistent recognition. But the real surprise last year was when he flew Smita Patil down to Trivandrum to act in the Malayalam film **Chidambaram**, which has already been highly acclaimed and has been included in the Panorama.

Around the same time as these two made their mark, there were others in Kerala who tried what came to be known as the 'middle cinema'. Among those engaged in this style were K.G. George, Bharatan, P.A. Backer,



K.G. George

Padmarajan, John Abraham and Panicker.

Among these, many are regular participants in the Indian Panorama. Indeed, skill is nowhere in short supply in the Malayalam cinema. Among those who do popular films rather well are Hariharan, I.V. Sasi and



I.V. Sasi

Shashi Kumar. But the 'popular' does not discourage often bold experiments like **Nokkukuthi** and the production of the first Malayalam film in 70mm: **Padayottam**. The State also could boast of giving the country its first 3D film, **My Dear Kuttichathan** which was a runaway success. A huge dose of sex was also a successful device in the Malayalam cinema for some years but the trend appears to have subsided.

Along with the new directors came a crop of new actors. Among them Gopi, who won the national award for **Kodiyettam** has been the most outspoken and has recently been



*A scene from India's first 3D film MY DEAR KUTTICHATHAN (Malayalam)*

taken more notice of after his participation in Govind Nihalani's **Aghaat**. Among the other actors who are both talented and have struck it rich are Balan Nair and Nedumuddi Venu. But the Malayalam cinema also has two big stars in the shape of Mammutty and Mohanlal who have appeared to have outstripped the popularity of the old stalwart Prem Nazir. Attempts have been made to offer more full-length satires and comedies after the gradual disappearance of crude sex. Technical standards are remarkable and film-makers have begun to realise that "clean" entertainment has the biggest market.



*Balachandri Menon and Prem Nazir in KAARYAM NISSARAM (Malayalam)*

The structure of the market remains the same with the distributors maintaining most of the control. The efforts by the Kerala State Film Development Corporation to instal facilities in Trivandrum for the prolific industry, which produces more than 100 films a year have not borne the fruit they deserved. There is excellent equipment at the Chitranjali studio but much of it is not fully utilised.

As in the case of the Malayalam cinema, the reputation of the Kannada cinema rested on the achievements of a few individuals like Girish Karnad and B.V. Karanth – not to speak of the father-figure G.V. Iyer who left a resounding impression in **Adi Shankaracharya** (Sanskrit). But the



*G.V. Iyer's ADI SHANKARACHARYA (Sanskrit)*

trouble was that neither these film-makers nor the industry in general could maintain the pace. Occasional efforts like **Samskara** and the lesser known **Naandi** and **Mukti** did not leave any major impression, but for the fact that in the late seventies there was a young batch of film-makers like Girish Kasaravalli and T.S. Nagabharana who began to chart new courses.



*Girish Karnad in ANAND BHAIRAVI (Telugu and Kannada)*

But it was indeed unfortunate when people like Karnad, Karanth and M.S. Sathyu moved on to other pastures and the inspiration they might have provided to the younger generation fell through. Equally unfortunate was Prema Karanth's inability to follow up the promise she showed in **Phaniyamma**.

The industry is in a not-too-happy position with a total of 60 to 65 films made a year. Only a handful of these make it to the box-office and there does seem to be a need for some



*M.S. Sathyu*

more middle-of-the-road films. Unfortunately, the 'middle' line is soon blurred and film-makers like Nagabharana have taken on ventures with purely commercial motives.



*Prema Karanth and crew shooting for PHANIYAMMA (Kannada)*





In recent times, films like **Accident** have shown that a young breed of directors like Kashinath Shankar Nag and others can make good films by banking on contemporary themes. They can generate punch, but the industry in Karnataka is dependent on the State government only to the extent of Rs. 2.5 to Rs. 3 lakhs. While this a big help to the small producers, for others the grant is a bonus and invariably alleged to be wasted. The infrastructural facilities in the State

are reasonable. But it is said that it is not worthwhile to develop these further since most of the work is done more cheaply in Madras. The Nag brothers - Anant and Shankar - provide the new hope for the popular cinema apart from the sustained appeal enjoyed by Raj Kumar. At the more serious level, we could expect a film from Kasaravalli, But Nagabharana seems to have wandered off into the popular cinema - not to everyone's delight.

## WEST: RISING ABOVE THE CHALLENGE

1985 began on a happy note with three popular artistes of Hindi films being elected on the ruling party ticket to the Lok Sabha. That was the first major event in the film industry plagued by the threat of television and video piracy. The first film to defy video piracy was **Pyar Jhukta Nahin**, an escapist romance starring Mithun Chakravorty and Padmini Kolhapure. Though, on the whole, more films continued to flop at the box-office than ever before, the success of Raj Kapoor's **Ram Teri Ganga Maili** revived the faith of filmfolk.



Today, in the Western region the theatres are flooded not only with Hindi films but Gujarati and Marathi films as well. They offer stiff competition since they have an additional advantage of entertainment tax exemption in Gujarat and tax refund scheme in Maharashtra. True, the production of films in both Gujarati and Marathi is still restricted to just twenty and odd films. But thanks to the exhibitor's preference for Hindi films, it is difficult to release all the films in the year.

This apart, the anti-reservation agitation made it almost impossible for a producer to release his new film in Gujarat for almost six months. The uncertain conditions in the State affected both production and release of Gujarati films. Yet among the films released most of them were action-oriented folk stories or musicals or devotionals. The most successful film of the year was **Meru Malan**, a musical romance, directed by Mehul Kumar. As the audience of Gujarati films is mostly rural, it prefers escapist folk tales to even family or social dramas. The only exception to this rule was Aroon Bhatt's **Poojama Phool**, a family devotional drama which won the Gujarat State award as the best picture. The only off-beat film made in Gujarat recently was Ketan Mehta's **Bhavni Bhavai** made five years ago. Since then even Ketan Mehta has migrated to Hindi films.

Raj Kapoor's **RAM TERI GANGA MAILI** (Hindi)

and made **Holi** last year and is now also busy making a Hindi film in Saurashtra

Till about the early seventies Gujarat did not produce more than two films a year and really hit the mark with Kantilal Rathod's **Kanku** getting a National award. Interest picked up but then the formula set in. The formula consisted primarily of the folk lore background. "The rich farmers," says Rathod, "were the main patrons and they loved to see films based on folklore and enriched with their own type of music." Magic and morals, sweetness and sentiment were all woven into the standard structure. But then they seemed to have too much of it—and the quality never seemed to improve.



Kantilal Rathod

The State Government came to the aid of the technicians and the producers, provided subsidies and tax exemptions and helped start a studio in Baroda. This boosted production to about 25 a year but the quality remained the same. The only exception in the recent past was Ketan Mehta's **Bhavni Bhavai**, a brilliant work which won several laurels. It ran well in Ahmedabad but did not meet with as much success in the rest of the State.

During the past one year problems of the film industry have been accentuated by the political unrest. Folk lore had been exhausted and film-makers seemed to be caught in some kind of dilemma. Some of them changed to social dramas but the total output showed a slight decrease. Nevertheless, some Bombay-based producers seem to be still quite active; more studios have come up and stars like Upendra Trivedi and Snehalatha are doing well on the local circuit. A film in a slightly different vein was **Kashino Dikro**. But the real question is whether film-makers like Ketan Mehta and Kantilal Rathod will be able to make Gujarati films any more. Both have been working on the Hindi circuit—Rathod with **Parinay**, a few films for the CFSI and the last film **Ramnagri**. Mehta was heaped with praise for the innovative style of **Holi** and is now on the way to completing **Mirch Masala**. Both are in Hindi. Rathod is planning a feature film in Hindi for Doordarshan.





Jabbar Patel

Like Ketan Mehta in Gujarati films, Jabbar Patel and Amol Palekar had brought realistic as well as artistic flair to Marathi cinema through their films **Sinhasan, Umbartha** and **Akriet**. But since both these film-makers have migrated to Hindi films, the Marathi films have lost their



DHOOM DHADAKA (Marathi)

off-beat appeal. Yet, this has been a very prosperous year for Marathi films. This prosperity began last year with the success of **Lek Chalali Sasarla**, which had a topical theme of bride-burning and was consolidated by the thundering success of **Navri Milali Navryala** and **Dhoom Dhadaka**.

Both these films were directed by the heroes of the films—Sachin and Mahesh Kothari and both have been designed as comedies revolving round three romantic pairs. Their phenomenal success all over Maharashtra, especially in urban areas marks a welcome departure from rural tamasha films of the past. Apart from comedies, family dramas like



Anant Mane's KULSWAMINI AMBABAI (Marathi)

**Kulswamini** and **Ardhangi** based on a popular novel by Jyotsna Deodhar were notable successes.

While one welcomes the prosperity of Marathi films one regrets that the films do not come up to the standards of art or social purpose. The 'real' Marathi films dealing with the life of Marathi middle class and working class or even rich upper class are being made in Hindi. Govind Nihalani's **Party** as well as **Aghaat** based on scripts by Mahesh Elkunchwar and Vijay Tendulkar respectively, have the typical Maharashtra atmosphere and character. The same is true of Ketan

Mehta's **Holi**. Thus, while Marathi films confined themselves to family dramas like **Hech Maze Maher**, which won the Maharashtra State award and slapstick comedies like **Dhoom Dhadaka**, the Marathi stories dealing with vital social problems were made in Hindi right from **Ardh Satya** to **Aghaat**.

Thus Hindi films dominate the parallel as well as commercial cinemas. In the commercial cinema, the most important event was the return of Amitabh Bachchan. Last year owing to illness he had almost stopped working. Now he is back and his two films released recently—



*Amitabh Bachchan and a co-star in GERAF TAAR (Hindi)*

Manmohan Desai's **Mard** and Ramnathan's **Geraftaar** have proved that he is the strongest box-office draw. Some of the older heroes are still in the fray—Dilip Kumar having again teamed up with Subhas Chai in **Karma**. This year also marked the debut of several new artistes including Mandakini who played the role of Ganga in Raj Kapoor's **Ram Teri**

**Ganga Mailli** and Farah in Yash Chopra's **Faasle** which also introduced Rohan Kapoor. Earlier, in **Jawani**, Ramesh Behl introduced Karan Shah and Neelam. With all these newcomers in the fray, production shows a steady rise



*Sanjeev Kumar in his last film HAATHON KI LAKEEREN (Hindi)*

While welcoming all the new entrants one must also record the great loss caused by the untimely death of Sanjeev Kumar, the most versatile actor of the Hindi film world. Apart from Hindi he has also been occasionally appearing in Gujarati films with equal success. After he returned from the United States, where he had undergone an operation, it appeared that he had a new lease of life. But within a few months during which he completed number of films, he died of a sudden heart attack. His last two films were Chetan Anand's **Haathon Ki Lakeeren**

and R.K. Nayar's **Oati**. Twice winner of the National award for his performances in **Koshish** and **Dastak** he had the distinction of playing the principal role in Satyajit Ray's first Hindi film **Shatranj Ke Khilari**.



Gyan Kumar's **MAYEE KE ANCHARA** (Bhojpuri)

In addition to Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati, a few films in Bhojpuri and Punjabi were also made during the year. One of the Bhojpuri films **Bansuriya Baje Ganga Teer** directed



Newcomers Hoshang and Rama in **TUM PAR HUM QURBAN** (Hindi)



Dilip Kumar and co-star in Subhash Ghai's **KARMA** (Hindi)

by Rakesh Pandey was better than the average standard of Bhojpuri films. The performance otherwise in both Bhojpuri and Punjabi films was disappointing. Similarly, the advent of 3D films proved disastrous. Only the first 3D film **Chhota Chetan** paid good dividends. The others lacking intrinsic appeal flopped and though at one time several projects were announced for 3D films, the idea was given up. The discerning filmgoers are looking forward to the release of Shyam Benegal's **Trikal** which covers the history of Goa of the last five decades and Muzaffar Ali's **Anjuman**.

—V. P. Sathé



## TO FIND THE VOICE

The selection of films for the Festival of India entailed the making of new prints and of subtitling them. This provides a framework through which a number of long-term goals can be achieved. In the case of the film programme, one of the long-term goals is that of adding a number of subtitled films to the library of the Directorate of Film Festivals, allowing it to present an even wider choice of Indian Cinema. The necessity of subtitling these new additions (some in French and others in English) presented an ideal opportunity for creating a training programme.

Once candidates, ranging from complete newcomers to some who had previous experience, were selected we began with a two-day introduction to the practice of "spotting" the films ("spotting" means to mark up where each subtitle will begin and end) and discussing the technique of translation that is appropriate to subtitles. This was done by discussing examples on video of films that has subtitles of varying quality.

An objective truth is that no two translators will necessarily come to an identical interpretation of a given text. The limitations of the actual length that a subtitle can be in order for it to be read imposes certain definite restrictions. In the preparation of the films, we tried to achieve the best possible results bearing in mind that subtitles can never communicate in the same way that original spoken

dialogue does but neither must they distort the flow of the film nor ridicule the essential meaning of the text.

A problem specific to the subtitling of Indian films is the frequent use of metaphors and the often intricate imagery used in the film songs. Whenever a metaphor could be translated without detracting from the original we tried it. The same thing applied to the songs. The subtitling team attempted to maintain the narrative structure of the songs and when impossible, often for reasons of limited time, a straight-forward translation was made. We found that it was impossible to communicate the meaning "simple" without being "simplistic". As a rule whenever it was feasible the subtitle lists or specifically the translation of the songs were shown to the filmmaker or to his immediate family.

Perfection is an ideal in all fields that should be one's goal. Imperfections, too, are a reality that allow us to assess and to perfect one's skills. The dedication with which the entire team worked for months subtitling three films a week achieved outstanding results in raising the overall quality. The technical achievements of the N.F.D.C.'s subtitling lab at Vashi is the most obvious example.

In the area of "spotting" a tremendous difference is visible. Previously a subtitle might appear over two and sometimes three shots. A practice to be avoided because of the way of the rhythm of the film

through editing is disrupted. The raising of standards in the translation and grammatic structure of subtitles is also clearly discernible. An example of this are the comic scenes. When the films were shown between September and December 1985 in Paris, the audience could be heard laughing **with** and rarely **at** the screen characters

The reaction to the Indian films in France has been overwhelming. Long queues formed for all the shows and the weekend projections ran to a

packed house with many people being turned away despite the fact that the cinema theatre has 350 seats. Many people have commented on the high quality of the subtitles both in English and French critics in Francee have in their articles quoted certain subtitles or translations of the songs to punctuate their appreciation of the films. It is a small yet important contribution to the appreciation of Indian cinema as a whole

— NASREEN KABIR



The NFDC Subtling unit at work.

# THE OTHER FESTIVALS

Film-Utsav India, the largest and most diverse programme of Indian films ever to appear in the United States, is touring 12 cities across the country as part of the 1985-86 Festival of India. The two-part programme, a compilation of 47 films spanning a 50 year period, opened on October 25 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, with West Coast openings at the Pacific Film Archives in Berkeley on November 1, and the UCLA Film Archives on November 2. The series will be highlighted by the appearance of several major Indian directors and stars.

India is the world's most prolific producer of films, turning out some 800 films a year. Yet, because of the strong national character of Indian films, which feature songs, dances, and themes specifically related to Indian culture, they have remained largely unknown outside their country of origin. Film-Utsav India provides an opportunity to acquaint a Western audience with this rich and fascinating body of work.

The programme comprises two sections — "Profiles" and "Panorama" — which together offer a representative sample of Indian cinema from the 1930's up to the present. "Profiles" spotlight the work of five important directors: V. Shantaram, a classic studio filmmaker of the '30's, whose films exhibit the often exotic qualities of that period; Raj Kapoor and Guru Dutt, representing the Golden Age of the musical in the late 1940's and 1950's



V. Shantaram

after India's independence, and Ritwick Ghatak and Mrinal Sen, who, like their better-known contemporary Satyajit Ray, brought political and social concerns to Indian films of the 1960's and 1970's.



Raj Kapoor, present when his films opened the festival in New York and Los Angeles, is one of India's most popular cinematic figures. An actor-director in the mould of Charlie Chaplin or Gene Kelly, Kapoor personifies the traditional Indian





Raj Kapoor in New York

musical, usually playing a romantic character trying to rise above his class. His films, like others of the genre, are spectacular, sentimental and highlighted by songs.

Like the films in "Profiles", the 18 contemporary features of Part II ("Panorama") exhibit a remarkable range and diversity. The selection includes films characterized by the most commercial and popular melodramatic excesses, as well as those portraying the stark realities of village life. Recent features by such directors as Kumar Shahani, Saeed Mirza and Ketan Mehta are evidence of the emergence of Indian films from a specifically national cinema to an important international one.

This growing sophistication and universality can be seen, for example, in Shahani's **Tarang**, a story of class politics and interpersonal relationships, which has a distinctive style reminiscent of French director Robert Bresson. **Ardha Satya**,

directed by Govind Nihalani, on the other hand, is a cop picture which examines corruption in the Indian political system, while Ketan Mehta's **Holi** is the story of a rebellion in a boys' school. In addition, "Panorama" includes two films by women directors: **Phanlyamma** by Prema Karanth and **36 Chowringhee Lane**, the first feature by popular actress Aparna Sen.

"Panorama" also features four notable documentaries: **Nehru** and **Satyajit Ray** by Shyam Benegal, one of the India's most prominent directors; a 5½ hour compilation of footage on the life of India's most revered figure, Mahatma Gandhi, and **Mati Manas** Mani Kaul's extraordinary study of terracotta art and its relation to Indian culture and mythology.

Film-Utsav India will introduce not only some of the great Indian directors and films, but several of India's major stars as well. The magnitude and influence of India's star system exceeds even that of Hollywood, and Indian movie stars are known and idolized throughout the country.

Film-Utsav India is being organized in the United States by Geoffrey Gilmore, Director of Programming at the UCLA Film, Television & Radio Archives with the special assistance of Adrienne Mancini, Curator of Exhibitions in the Department of Film of the Museum of Modern Art. The festival was programmed in coordination with the National Film Development

Corporation, Bombay, the Directorate of Film Festivals, New Delhi, and the National Film Archive of India, Pune

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For Raj Kapoor, the Festival of India in the USA was a particularly memorable event — and something like a "dream come true". A trip to the "Mecca of cinema" took his mind back 33 years when he was a member of the Indian film delegation invited by the American Motion Picture Producers Association to visit the USA. They included, among others, Dev Anand, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Bimal Roy, B.N. Sircar, Nirupa Roy, Kamini Kaushal and Arundhati Devi.

At a dinner reception in Los Angeles then, he had appeared as just a young actor, director, producer and studio owner who had imbibed much of his craft from his American peers. Frank Capra, during a trip to India during the 1952 international film festival, had taken the initiative to organise the trip by the Indian delegation. Raj Kapoor paid his compliments but had said he would look forward to the day when he would be able to bring his work.

That day arrived in New York on October 25 and on November 2, 1985 at the Melnitz Theatre of the University of California, Los Angeles, when he attended the opening of a retrospective of eight of his films — **Aag, Awara, Shree 420, Barsaat, Boot Polish, Jagte Raho, Satyam**



Raj Kapoor's *SHREE 420*

**Shivam Sundaram** and **Mera Naam Joker**. It was also an opportunity to renew long standing friendships with Gregory Peck, Robert Wise, and Danny Kaye. He rang up Frank Capra too. But he was too ill to come to the telephone.

• • •

The film component of the Festival of India in France was a bigger affair with more than 100 films covering mainly five sections. In the first section there were Shabana Azmi, Soumitra Chatterjee, Shashi Kapoor, Smita Patil, Om Puri, Gopi and Suhasingi. The traditional and popular stars included Amitabh Bachchan, Prithviraj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, Uttam Kumar, Meena Kumari, Nargis, Waheeda Rehman and Balraj Sahni.

Second, the festival has a selection of recent and new films. This included the works of K.N. Sasidharan, Girish



*Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi at the Pompidou Centre, Paris*

Kasaravalli, Dilip Chitre, Ketan Mehta, Nirad Mahapatra, Saeed Mirza, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Padmarajan and Kumar Shahni.

Third, there is a selection of work of women directors like Aparna Sen, Sai Paranjpye and Prema Karanth. Fourth,

there is a presentation of the phenomenon of the one-man industry, represented by Dev Anand, Guru Dutt, Raj Kapoor, Mehboob Khan, Sohrab Modi, Bimal Roy, V. Shantaram, B.N. Sircar, S.S. Vasan and I.B.H. Wadia.



Nasreen Kabir, who did most of the spadework for the festival in France said the festival intended to widen the scope through the presentation of stars. There had been successful revivals last year in France of **Pyasa** and **Kagaz ke Phool**. But knowledge of the Indian Cinema was largely confined to Satyajit Ray. Besides, there had been a major exposition in 1983 which had had an academic emphasis on Ray and on the history of the Indian cinema. This festival did not want to repeat the components of



Dilip Chitre's **GODAM**



Soumitra Chatterjee

that event.

The opening at the Pompidou Centre on September 25 was attended by Naseeruddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Soumitra Chatterjee and Goutam Ghose whose **Paar** was the inaugural film. There were also a couple of seminars, in which Amitabh Bachchan and Adoor Gopalakrishnan were among those who participated. It was also a major event in terms of links which the NFDC forged with French distributors for the marketing of Indian films.

# THE YEAR GONE BY

## PANORMA FESTIVALS:

Regional film festivals comprising mainly Panorama films, organised by the NFDC in collaboration with the various State Film Development Corporations, proved to be one of the most successful activities in 1985. It all began in Lucknow soon after the 10 IFFI — an event which brought not only the cream of Indian cinema with English subtitles to general audiences in the State, but also afforded an opportunity to meet many film-makers. The NFDC has spent almost Rs. 8 lakhs to take out subtitled prints of the Panorama films for circulation.



*Festival of Panorama Films at Bhopal*

At Bhopal, the festival was organised by the Madhya Pradesh Film Development Corporation in collaboration with the NFDC. Inaugurated by Jaya Bachchan, the festival included **Achamillal Achamillal, Andhi Gall, Holi, Mukhamukham, Paar, Party, Tarang, Ankahee** and **Hip Hip Hurray**. In

addition **Ghare Baire** and **Adi Shankaracharya** were included. The MPFDC repeated the festival at Gwalior, Indore and Jabalpur.

Largely the same collection of films went to Rourkela from June 21 to July 4 and was shown almost simultaneously in Cuttack. NFDC Chairman Hrishikesh Mukherjee presided over the closing ceremony. About 10 films were shown, opening with **Adi Shankaracharya** at the film week in Hyderabad from August 16. It set the pace for Filmotsav 86. The festival also went to Warangal and Vijayawada. A theatre in a public garden belonging to the State Government, where children's films were shown normally, was used for the festival. It was felt that the theatre could be converted into a regular art theatre. The festival was organised primarily for promotional purposes.

In September, the festival of Panorama films went to Trivandrum. Organised by the Kerala State Film Development Corporation, it was inaugurated by Chief Minister K. Karunakaran at the KSFDC's own theatre. Basu Bhattacharya presided.



*Panorama Films at Trivandrum*

Also present were the KSFC Chairman P. Bhaskaran, Adoor Gopalakrishnan and G. Aravindan.

In Imphal, the festival generated keen enthusiasm with the participation of the NFDC Chairman Hrishikesh Mukherjee and the Children's Film Society Chairman Amol Palekar, with whose **Ankahee** the festival began.



Amol Palekar

Chief Minister Rishang Keishing, held extensive talks with the NFDC Chairman and the Manipur Film Development Council Secretary Aribam Syam Sharma on the prospects of setting up a complex at Imphal with the financial assistance of the NFDC. Soon after, the festival went to Gauhati and other places in the eastern region, as well as to other parts of the country.

#### NATIONAL AWARDS:

The National Film Festival in June was highlighted by the series of awards to Prakash Jha's **Damul** and Adoor Gopalakrishnan's **Mukhamukham**. It was also quite unusual that the acting



Prakash Jha's **DAMUL**

award went to Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi for their work in the same film — Goutam Ghose's **Paar**, which was also the best Hindi film. The awards were also highlighted by the honours given to Satyajit Ray. **Ghare Baire** was the best Bengali film. Ray was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. Since he had to stay away from the function on medical advice, Tapan Sinha collected the prizes on his behalf.

#### CHILDREN'S FEST:

The Fourth International Children's Film Festival of India ended successfully in Bangalore on November 23, 1985, with the top prize going to the Chinese film **Moonlight Cottage**. It was a rare occasion when the international jury headed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee and the children's jury headed by Miss Bharati of Pondicherry awarded the top prizes.





*Kids face the press at the Bangalore Festival*

— the Golden Elephant and the Golden Plaque, respectively — to the same film. The only other entry to win two awards was the Indian entry,

**Karuna Ki Vijay**, an animation film depicting an episode from Lord Buddha's childhood. It received the main prize of the Paris-based International Centre of Films for Children and Young People and the Silver Elephant as the best animation film. CFSI Chairman Amol Palekar said that this was the third time running that China had won top prizes at the festival.

The festival opened with the premiere show of **Dhoomketu** (A Comet), the first Indian science-based feature film. The festival also included the country's first children's film: **Hatey Khari** (Bengali), made by the Aurora Film Corporation and directed by Niranjan Pal, back in 1939.

Before inaugurating the festival, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi laid the foundation of the Rs. 6 crore Children's Film Complex in the Sankey Tank area of the city. Nearly 300 child delegates, including 20 handicapped

children, took part in the festival. The Fifth International Children's Film Festival is scheduled to be held in Bhopal in 1987.

#### **NANDAN:**



*Nandan - The West Bengal film centre*

The inauguration of the West Bengal Film Centre — dubbed Nandan by Satyajit Ray — was undoubtedly an outstanding achievement. The project with all its facilities and possibilities, compares favourably with the National Film Theatre in London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Cinematheque Francaise in Paris. It opened up a whole new world of festivals, commercial outlets for quality films, retrospectives.



*Minist Sen and Satyajit Ray at the opening of Nandan*

workshops and research. The plush 950-seater auditorium is the main attraction. The upper floors have two more auditoriums. One of these has accommodation for about 300 and is considered ideal for seminars and illustrated lectures. The mini theatre has about 100 seats. With its wide-ranging facilities for seminars, projection, study and preservation, Ray considers it a unique achievement. "Nowhere else in India are so many activities relating to film housed under one roof," he said.

#### A NOSTALGIC MOMENT:

There was another historic occasion. Who knew that the three Apu films which went on to make the memorable trilogy would one day generate as much interest when they would come out in the form of a published screenplay? Who knew that the three films seen on separate occasions and for any number of times would mean something different when seen together in one sitting? Who knew that all the performers who played Apu and Durga could come together along with their celluloid creator some 30 years later?

All this happened one Sunday morning in September, when the handsomely produced **Apu Trilogy**, containing the original screenplays of the three Satyajit Ray films, was released at a function organised by Seagull Books. Karuna Banerjee, the unforgettable Sarbojaya of **Pather Panchali** and **Aparajito**, presented the first copy of the book to Satyajit



*Subir Dasgupta / The Apu of Pather Panchali with Satyajit Ray and Mrs. Ray*

Ray. The maker of the trilogy, in turn, presented a copy to the screen Sarbojaya, to Subir Dasgupta, Pinaki Dasgupta and Smaran Ghoshal, who played Apu at different stages, and to Uma Dasgupta, who played the sister Durga, who gets rapturously wet in the enchanting rain scene and dies before her father, Harihar, can return from his wanderings.

Talking of Harihar reminded one of the actors missing at the function. Harihar was played by Kanu Bandopadhyay, who was no more. So were Chunitala Devi, who played Indira Thakurin, Aparna Devi, Tulsi Chakravorty and others. Reba Devi was in no position to attend since she was seriously ill. But there were two others who were still very much active, but who could not attend because they were both out of the country. They were Soumitra Chatterjee, who played the oldest Apu in **Apur Sansar** and Shampa Banerjee, who played the youngest Durga in **Pather Panchali**.

## IN BRIEF . . .



Opportunities in films are limited. Television has opened new possibilities and I believe it's going to throw up a lot of talent. The dimension of relations with the television audience is different. It is in your home. The stars are more approachable and familiar. Cinema is larger than life and often intimidating. - **SHYAM BENE-GAL** whose **Aarohan** got a belated release in 1985, by which time he had made films on Nehru and Satyajit Ray. His **Trikal** is in the Panorama of the current festival and he has just completed **Karman** financed, as in **Manthan**, by a cooperative

I'm no autobiographical film-maker. How can I be? I've been brought up in a liberal home and so **Parama's** problem of suffering repression can't be mine. And I have been earning money ever since my childhood. So that bit about economic independence is also the character's problem, not the director's. I'm not autobiographical but I've always made the



best use in my films of people and situations that I myself have known. **APARNA SEN** in the midst of the storm raised by her latest bilingual film, **Parama**.

A film should run. Emphasis is given to romance and music in my films. A touch of romance should always be



there. Romance is important. Life is romance. Nothing moves without romance. My achievement is that I am still functioning. I started in films in 1945. In 1985, I am still making



motion pictures. And, believe me, I am yet to make some great, wonderful movies. **DEV ANAND**, who has completed **Hum Naujawan** and is planning three more, one of which will be a blockbuster directed by himself.

**G. ARAVINDAN** has made waves with his latest Malayalam film **Chidambaram** having an unusual cast comprising Smita Patil, Malayalam actor Gopi



and Bombay art student Nadia Moyudu. After seven features over the past decade or so, he has made a documentary on the internationally acclaimed philosopher I. Krishnamurti and is planning his next feature film



**SHASHI KAPOOR** is keen on a production company which will have room for both lavish big-budget productions — like **Utsav** — as well as low-cost serious cinema, and will try to make different films to suit different sections of society. 'I want to concentrate on the box-office without undermining the artistic element', says the actor-producer.

No role's too difficult. Unless you're put in a physically difficult situation like you're asked to hang from the edge of a cliff, hold a snake in your



hand or fight with a tiger, there's nothing challenging. In **Kodiyettam**, there was supposed to be a scene with an elephant. Frankly, I'm scared of huge animals. I refused to do it and said if it was absolutely essential, I'd quit and they could get a jungleman instead. - **GOPI**.

I shall cherish Nikhilesh's role (in **Ghare Baire**) as probably one of the most intense parts I will ever do in an Indian cinema. And I shall cherish



Aziz's role (in **Passage to India**) as one of the most enjoyable parts I will ever play in my life. I might get an opportunity to play intense roles like Nikhilesh's at one point or another in a foreign film. But Aziz is a once-in-a-lifetime role — **VICTOR BANERJEE**.

Now I realise that the long periods of struggle I have gone through to make each of my films has also left me a very responsible artiste. I had no right to waste an opportunity and so I put in my best every time I got it. And



then, I have also come to acquire the habit of working from my own idea and script every time. This allows me a lot of creative freedom. But to settle on an idea that is really satisfying also takes time. And while I am working on one film I do not think about the next. Sheer availability of finance does not really accelerate my process of creativity — **ADOOR GOPALAKRISHNAN** who won a tremendous round of applause for **Mukhamukham** but also raised quite a bit of controversy in Kerala.

"For a good artiste, the fear lies in being applauded for mediocre shots." This applies very much to an artiste of **SMITA PATIL'S** calibre — perhaps



the first Indian actress whose retrospective has been held at the Cinematheque Francais in Paris. Back home, there are not many good films going for her. "There are a hundred commercial films made every year and only about 10 art films. So, considering the ratio, I have been doing quite a lot of small films." The reference is to films like **Mirch Masala**, **Chidambaram** and **Debshishu**.



For me, success is not only important in what I'm achieving today, but that for what I'll be remembered in the years to come. **SHABANA AZMI** has had a lot to be remembered by in 1985. She won the National award for her performance in **Paar**. It made it three in a row. She also won the Filmfare award — for the second year running — for her portrayal of the exploited woman in **Bhavna**.

To be an independent film-maker seems almost impossible in India. We



are dependent either on the government or on the commercial set-up for finance. My attempt is to become free of this. One, by cutting costs. Two, by reaching out to the people. - **KETAN MEHTA**, who is working on **Mirch Masala**.

Every film can entertain and stimulate your mind. But what kind of entertainment films are made? Are they good for the people? Folk art is entertaining



too. It's absolutely beautiful and so rooted in the soil. It is not vulgar. Cinema is an art but not like painting and music, which are respected. I think it's about time cinema was also respected as an art form. - **GOUTAM GHOSHE**, who scored a major success in 1985 with **Paar** and was then engaged in a television serial.

Film-makers do seem to be looking at themselves and their ideological positions with a kind of objectivity. These films, by questioning the very pillars on which their aspirations and visions are pitched, try to kindle the analytical process from within. This had not





happened in the Indian cinema before. The epic form of Kumar Shahani, the imaginative structural devices of Adoor Gopalakrishnan all confirm that the new cinema is attempting to find a new form of expression. The cinema of '86 should further strengthen these attempts. **GIRISH KASARAVALLI**, who is about to launch **Thabarana Katha** (Kannada), about the ordeal of an old man in the face of bureaucratic power.

Only a fool would derail a speeding train. I'll start another service only when I can't get passengers. I'm



comfortable, the other film-makers imitate me. Occasionally a **Kranti** or a **Laawaris** clicks, but most of the time the imitations flop. Anyway, I didn't discover the lost-and-found formula. Way back in the 40s, there was **Kismet** with Ashok Kumar and Leela Chitnis. It ran for 50 weeks in Calcutta or some place, didn't it? All I have done is to add a lot of spice, colour and flavour to an old recipe - **MANMOHAN DESAI**.

With most film-makers getting involve in television and being compelled to use the video format and the rigid commercial distribution system forcing their widescreen creations to get premiered on television, I feel we need another culture shock like



**Pather Panchali**. We have to wipe out the static Indian cinema which is (i) self-satisfying, (ii) crudely anti-establishment and (iii) sensational glossy and reformist - **JABBAR PATEL**, who has completed a documentary on "Maharashtra - culture and traditions" and will begin his new film **Kurukshetra** in March.

The Indian cinema has done nothing to build the taste of the audience. Is



it wise to make a film that goes above the heads of the audience? India is a big country where this powerful medium is being misused. - **T.S.**

**NAGABHARANA**, who is making one film, **Vyshaka**, on suppressed women and another **Yakshagana**, on the folk art of Karnataka

I do think these films are absolutely viable. People would respond to the

epic form but it is taken from the depth. Supposing we look at it this way, instead of approaching people as basically an audience at which to target the film, if you think of people as community and your film as an expression of their preoccupation and their lives and their forms, will they not accept it? - **KUMAR SHAHANI.**



I do make my films with a specific group in mind and that is the educated middle-class, the students and the professionals. Since I myself come from that class I believe that I



understand it well enough to portray it through my characters. Besides, it is also the class which has the maximum access to cinema as well as the time and inclination. And yes, this target audience does influence the making of my films to the extent of my cinematic vocabulary and handling of the film. After all, if I were making a film for children, the cinematic vocabulary I would use would be very much different. Since I myself come from that class, I consider myself as the prototype of the audience and see what appeals to me - **GOVIND NILHIANI** whose **Aghaat** is in the Panorama.

Indian cinema is standing at the crossroads. It is struggling to express itself though surrounded by contradictory influences. The new experiments are not in tune with its growing needs. But some film-makers with a



new approach are entering the field and this gives us some hope. - **B. NARSING RAO**, who has completed a documentary on Sri Sri, the Telugu poet, and has started a feature film, **Man And Nature**.



# FAREWELL

**Sanjeev Kumar** one of the most versatile actors of the Indian cinema, died in Bombay on November 6 after a massive heart attack. One of the most respected actors, he was considered more an actor than a star and was unequalled in emoting serious roles.



Sanjeev Kumar

A product of the theatre, Sanjeev Kumar initially captivated the Gujarati theatre audience with his vivid interpretation of various characters. He later joined the Indian People's Theatre Association—the group through which he got a break in Hindi film industry.

During his eventful career spanning over two decades, he acted in over 80 Hindi and Gujarati films. He also made a guest appearance in the Marathi film, **Dorhi Garcha Pahuna**.

Sanjeev Kumar got his break as a hero in Hindi films in Homi Wadia's **Nishan** in 1964. He also acted in **Alibaba Chalis Chor**, proving his mettle as a stunt hero

His portrayal in **Khilona** and **Shikar** won him many laurels and fetched him instant stardom. He won the National Film Award for best acting twice for his roles in **Dastak** and **Koshish**.

He was acclaimed for his sensitive acting by the masses and critics alike in **Aandhi**, **Mausam**, **Trishul**, **Sangharsh** and **Sholay**.

He portrayed nine different characters in **Naya Din Nayi Raat** and was also at ease in humorous roles. After a long stint as a hero, Sanjeev Kumar switched over to character roles.

After his role in **Shatranj Ke Khilari**, directed by Satyajit Ray, he was considered on par with Dilip Kumar. **Aao Pyar Karen** and **Oatil** were among his well-known films. The picture **Love and God**, which was held up for several years, was taken up only three weeks back after his return from the USA.

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Just last year, **Puttanna Kanagal** was in Delhi for a Restrospective of his films—and talking at length on his contribution to the Kannada cinema. But a few months later—on June 5—the end came rather suddenly.

Like many others in the film medium, he came from the theatre, where for four years he absorbed the essence of drama under the influence of the best-known talents of the time. Later, he came to Madras and started his career in films as an Assistant Director under the veteran B.R. Panthulu.



Puttanna Kanagal

Puttanna Kanagal was the first Kannada film-maker to approach themes till then not handled. His films like **Belli Moda**, **Upasane**, **Gejje Pooje**, **Nagara Haavu**, **Kappu Bilupu** gave evidence of his pioneering role as a thinker-craftsman

Kanagal had been known to have a discerning eye for making successful discoveries and also moving away from the most "selling" name once the artiste acquired star status. He denounced the current trend in Kannada cinema of making films from stories which were already like film scripts and had "all the flaws of assembly-line films". In contrast to the films of the sixties and seventies which were derived from strong themes and already published works of eminent novelists.

His films gave testimony to his faithfulness to regional nuances. He

maintained that unless a regional film featured a strong local milieu it would be a mere replica of a Hindi commercial film. After making **Ranganayaki**, Kanagal had to go from distributor to distributor trying to sell it.

Kanagal clearly distinguished between form and content in cinema. According to him, both had equal prominence in cinema but the content must be tailored to the form. About serious cinema he said, "I love serious cinema, but feel that cinema only for the intellectuals is a disastrous financial proposition".

To Kanagal, "woman" in the Indian context had a very special place, as could be seen in his heroine-oriented films like **Sharapanjara**, **Upasane**, **Runa Mukталu**, and **Ranganayaki**. Kanagal's films prepared the audience for a vital message. His symbolism was straight and obvious.

Kanagal was always innovative in his films. For the first time in **Katha Sangama** he combined three stories in one film and was successful. In his own words, cinema to him was a "fantastic medium" and yet "much remains to be done—we have miles to go". His new film awaiting release is **Masanada Hoovu** (Flower of the Graveyard).

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Ironically, it required a tragedy of almost fatal proportions to prove not only that **Mahua Roy Chowdhury** was one of the Bengali film industry's most popular and sought-after stars,



*Mahua Roy Choudhary*

Till about two years ago, the general impression was that a talented and beautiful young actress, who had been around for more than a decade, was being wasted. Then came a film called **Lal Golap** which seemed to change all that. Suddenly she was the focus of attention. It was a strong character, visualised with clearly commercial motives. But very few actresses, if any, could have handled it so effectively. It was a roaring success; it was also, for Mahua, the starting point of a fresh flood of offers.

Flood was indeed the word. In an industry which produced about 30 films a year, the beautiful actress, at the time of her premature death, was acting in more than 20 films at the same time, her girl-next-door image could adapt to any situation. She could be the well-dressed, smooth-tongued glamour doll, the cheerful lover and child-bride, glum introvert and the bleary-eyed, soft-spoken

tragic figure. She could be any of these with ease and effectiveness.

Tarun Majumdar played a vital part in shaping Mahua's career. But equally memorable was her first opportunity to work with Tapan Sinha in his TV film, **Aadmi aur Aurat**. It was also the first chance to appear in a Hindi film, and to act with Amol Palekar. This film left a deep impression on television audiences all over the country.

**Mangesh Desai**, one of the best sound recordists in the Indian cinema and virtually a legend in the film industry, passed away on October 15. He had a brilliant ear for sound effects and contributed his experience in embellishing the value of every film. He joined the profession in 1950 as an assistant at the Rajkamal studio. In about 10 years, he rose to become the chief recordist at the studio. He reached his peak in the seventies. Film-makers of all hues came to him—among them V. Shantaram, Raj Kapoor, Manmohan Desai, Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Shyam Benegal. Handling nearly 60 films a year, Desai's reputation rested on the fact that he never allowed a bad sound to pass.





**Gulshan Nanda**, well-known film writer and popular author in Hindi passed away in Bombay on November 16. He was 57 years old.



*Gulshan Nanda*

Nanda, who had undergone a kidney transplant operation in New York four years ago, had not been keeping well for a long time and was admitted to the hospital six weeks ago.

Most affable and amiable by nature, Nanda was a popular personality in the film industry in Bombay. He had written 51 books, mostly fiction, of which many have long been on the bestseller list. A number of films in Hindi have been based on his novels, including **Kaajal**, **Aradhana**, **Kati Patang**, **Amar Prem**, **Daag**, **Meh-booba** and **Salma**. **Nazarana**, currently under production, is based on his fiftieth novel, **Lakshman Rekha**.

At the time of his death he was working on his fifty-second novel.

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**J.D. Irani** who died in November, was one of the veterans in the field of

sound recording in this country. **J.D. Irani** bagged the Best Audiographer's Award for his work in **Ashani Sanket**. He had previously won this Award in 1970 for **Pratidwandi**.



*J.D. Irani*

Born in 1909 at Bombay he did his Senior Cambridge from there. Completing his education he took up sound recording as his vocation. His schooling in this field began under the guidance of Elmore Lyford at Madras Theatres. For a number of films he worked as assistant sound recordist till **Pati Bhakti** (1932) gave him the opportunity to assume full-fledged responsibility of independently recording sound for a talkie. In the following year he recorded the sound for the first Bengali film **Nala Damayanti**. Since then he grew steadily. He was associated with Indrapuri Studios as its Chief Sound Recordist. **J.D. Irani** has his schooling and graduation at this very studio which was originally known as Madan Theatres.

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**S.P. Pillai** (Died on 12 June 1985 at 71)

Veteran comedian of Malayalam Cinema, acted in nearly 300 Malayalam and Tamil films. Won the State Government Award for the best supporting actor in 1978, and was the founder president of the Literary Association and the Kerala Kala Union

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**P.N. Arora** (3rd December, 1985 at 73)

Veteran Film Producer-Director, produced his first picture 'Doli' in 1947 his first film as director was 'Rail Ka Dibba' Films include—'Pugree', 'Paras', 'Pardes', 'Nazneen', 'Gunhar', 'Laila Majnu', 'Char Bazar', 'Poonam', 'Sitara', 'Ekadashi', 'Anjaan', and 'Halaku'. His last film was 'Dil Daulat Duniya', a remake of his earlier 'Pugree' which itself was based on an early work.

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**Nitin Sethi** (Died on 1 June 1985 at 60)

Veteran Film Society activist and Former General Manager of Film Finance Corporation and a popular stage and cine artiste. Started his career with IPTA (Indian Peoples Theatre Association) and was its active member till end. 'Badnam Basti', 'Koshish', 'Dak Bangla', 'Kasturi', 'Bara Sookha' and 'Mashal' are some of the eighty films in which he acted. Film, which are yet to be released are 'Surkhiyaan', 'Kahan Kahan Se Guzar Gaya' and 'Trikon Ka Chautha Kon'.

\* \* \*

**Madan Puri** (Died on 13th January, 1985 at 69)

Veteran character actor, started his career as an extra with Pancholi Studios, Lahore. 'Omar Khayyam' in 1946, in the fifties and sixties made his mark as the perfect faced



*Madan Puri*

villain in films like 'Howrah Bridge', 'China Town', 'Kala Bazar', 'Phool aur Patthar' etc. Switched over to playing sympathetic character roles with Rajshri's 'Dulhan Wah! to Piya Man Bhaye' which was a great screen success and his role was highly acclaimed. Was also one of the Founder-Members of the Cine Artist's Association

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**Mubarak** (Died on 26 July 1985, at 76)

Veteran character actor, started his career on the stage by taking part in Shakespearean plays, with Prithviraj Kapoor. Started his film career in 1929, with Ranjit's 'Pati Patni'. Still

remembered for his role of Akbar in Filmstars 'Anarkali'. Other notable films are 'Sathi' in Hindi and Marathi, 'Renuka' (1947 Jayant Desai), 'Kangan', 'Naya Sansar', 'Kismet', 'Tansen', 'Samadhi', 'Sheesh Mahal' and 'Nagin'. Acted in 100 films spread over almost decades.

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**A.K. Dutt** (Died on 13th October 1985 at the age of 60)

Former Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, was a well-known theatre personality, was keenly interested in art, culture, theatre and films. During his successful tenure as Secretary, he not only took personal interest in solving the problems of the film industry, but also in maintaining a regular dialogue with a cross section of the industry and the media.

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**Harin Mehta** (Died on 1st November 1985 at the age of 60)

Starting his career as film journalist in 'Janashakti', he wrote stories for 52 Gujarati films and won the Gujarat State award for best writer in 'Tana Riri'. Among other films for which he wrote the story were 'Maa Baap', 'Mota Gharni Vahu', 'Retina Ratan', 'Dol', 'Meru Mulande' and 'Navrang Chundadi' which were hits. He also wrote five dramas.

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**Benoy Chatterjee** (Died on 19th May 1985 at the age of 75)

Veteran story, screen play and dialogue writer of Bengali and Hindi films. Started his career at New Theatres, Calcutta and had written a number of memorable films for them—like 'Pratishruti', 'Dhoop Chaon', 'President', 'My Sister', 'Sangard', 'Lagan', 'Dushman', 'Naya Safar', 'Wapas' etc. Wrote for about 100 films during his career spanning four decades. Was a guest lecturer for screenplay writing at FTCI for during its initial years.

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**Goharbai** (Died on 28th September 1985 at the age of 75)



Goharbai

Veteran silent and talkie film actress, producer and studio owner. Born in Lahore on November 19, 1910. Gohar made her debut at the tender age of fifteen years as a leading lady in 'Fortune' and 'Fools' or 'Baap Kamal', a silent movie directed by K. Rathod in 1925, was a box-office hit and created a record. Among her popular films are 'Wild Flower', 'Miss 1933', 'Nadiya Ke



Paar, 'Divine Lady' and 'Barristers Wife'. With Chandulal Shah she formed 'Ranjit Films' in 1929. Soon to be followed by Shree Ranjit Movietone Company and Ranjit Studios at Dadar. Her first silent film under Ranjit was 'Pati Patni', directed by Chandulal Shah. Under the same banner, she also acted in the first talkie, 'Devi Devyani' and also first Gujarati film 'Sati Savitri'. Her last film was 'Ahhut' 1940 in which she starred opposite Motilal.

Until Chandulal Shah's death in 1975 she continued to look after the studio. Ranjit Movietone survived for 23 years from 1929 to 1952, during the course of which over 160 films were produced. Gohars' contribution to the Indian Film Industry is too immense to be forgotten.

**Ajay Kar** (Died in Calcutta on January 28, 1985 at the age of 71)

Cameraman-turned-director. Ajay Kar hailed from Dhaka and started his cameraman's career under Jatm Dass, a noted cinematographer of his time. Kar's first film was 'Pathik' directed by the late Charu Roy. Devaki Bose's 'Chandrashekhar', Heman Gupta's 'Bhuli Nai', Shailajanandas' 'Sahar Thake Durey', Niren Lahiri's 'Garmit' are some of the notable films for which Ajay Kar did the camera work. He was awarded by the Bengal Film Journalists Association for his work in 'Chandrashekhar' made in the mid forties.

Ajay Kar soon ventured into directing films, first under an assumed name of Sabyasachi films: 'Ananya', 'Bamuner Meye', 'Mejdidi' and later under his own name (films) 'Ighansa', 'Grihaprowesh', 'Paresh', 'Suno Baranari', 'Harano Sur', 'Saptapadi', 'Shyamali', 'Pakey Bandha', 'Atal Jaler Aghban', 'Kach Katey Heeray', 'Malyadan', 'Parineeta', 'Datta' and 'Nandadubi'. He directed more than 20 films. 'Haramo Sur' and 'Malyadan' got the President's Silver Medal for the best Bengali film.

**Marie Seton** (Died in February 1985 in London)

Marie Seton was a woman of many facets. She was a biographer, historian, film critic and producer. Above all she was a great friend of India. Miss Seton first came to India in the mid fifties on a 10 month of lecture tour on an invitation from the Union Government. She later lived in India for several years.

Seton had done much for the development of the film societies in India since 1955. She was a guest lecturer at the Pune (then Poona) Film Institute during 1962-63 and adviser to the Federation of Film Societies of India (FFSI) since 1959. Seton had a strong gift for friendship and she knew an extraordinary number of people. She wrote several famous books, including biographies on Sergei Eisenstein, Satyajit Ray and Pt Jawaharlal Nehru. She also wrote

extensively on the arts—cinema, painting, dancing and sculpture in various publications, including 'Sight and Sound', 'Revue de Cinema' and the 'The Times of India'.

In January 1984, Marie Seton was awarded the Padma Bhushan.

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# THIS TIME NEXT YEAR

Just as the tickers brought the news that **Music** of Satyajit Ray had won the Golden Lotus as the year's best short film in the National Awards, its director was in the last stages of completing his feature film **Debshishu** which seeks to tear apart social hypocrisy as furiously as in his earlier films. Utpalendu Chakraborty's involvement in these was as conspicuous as the fact that both the ventures had received the support of the National Film Development Corporation.



Utpalendu Chakraborty's **DEBSHISHU**

The rough-hewn features of the 37-year-old filmmaker blends effortlessly with the image of a stormy petrel. The voice grows louder with every effort. That has not affected the craft, which has matured since the days of **Mukti Chai**, his first independent work as director, or from the rationality of his themes.

In seven or eight years, Utpalendu's cinema of protest has assumed exciting forms putting together

improvised footage under difficult conditions to denounce the oppression of political prisoners, **Mukti Chai**; probing the inner sanctum of the medical world to chance upon alarming proportions of treachery and corruption, **Chokh**; taking up the cause of an individual singer against mightier powers for which he lived and suffered, **Debabrata Biswas**; and now, in **Debshishu** observing the crass distortion of worthy objectives against the sinister backdrop of an uprooted community, illiteracy and a frantic search for salvation.

Utpalendu began shooting in early February in a sleepy village on the Bengal-Bihar border after negotiations with NFDC on 100% sponsorships. The location was an excellent discovery where a shallow winding river dividing the two states, the beautiful forest and the stark portrait of ignorance among the few thousand adivasi inhabitants provide an arresting backdrop. The film seeks to administer the shocks which have become an integral part of Chakraborty's work and will hopefully spur a simple audience to a new level of social awareness.

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Ketan Mehta has just completed **Mirch Masala** a story set in pre-Independent India a 100% production by N.F.D.C. In Ketan's words, "The film is a recollection of happenings which reveal our attitude to women in particular and towards





Ketan Mehta's *MIRCH MASALA*

oppression in general. The film shows oppression, submission to oppression and liberation from oppression. These have always constituted the undercurrent in my films." His first film **Bhavni Bhaval** was a folk tale on untouchability, **Holi** featured youth, and now **Mirch Masala** concerns itself with women.

To an isolated village in Gujarat, comes the subedar of the region with his soldiers on his annual visit to collect the revenue. It happens to be the first day of the nine-day festival of the goddess, and his visit obviously dampens the spirit of the people. While the celebrations are going on, the subedar spots an attractive woman who works at the local spice factory and desires her.

A chase follows. The woman takes shelter in the factory to escape from the subedar and his soldiers. The headman of the village, the watchman and other factory workers, and the entire village get involved.

"The film in short, is about how the villagers tackle the occurrence of an explosive event in their passive, or rather stagnant, social order. There is a society in transition, still holding on to traditional ways," says Ketan.

Based on a Gujarati short story by novelist Chuni Lal Madia, the screenplay is written by Ketan Mehta and Shaji Hakim. Ketan has used very simple Hindi. Costumes designed by Archana Shah are derived from the dress of the region where the actual shooting took place. The art direction is by Meera Iakhia and the music is by Rajat Dholakia.

The film has a very impressive cast. Naseeruddin Shah plays the subedar, Smita Patil the woman chased by him, Om Puri the old watchman of the masala factory, Suresh Oberoi the headman or mukhi of the village, Deepti Naval his wife and Mohan Gokhale the step-brother of the mukhi. Raj Babbar makes a guest appearance.

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**Genesis**, Mrinal Sen's new film, will be a multi-national film with India, France, Belgium and Switzerland taking part in production. And it is quite possible that in course of production, other European countries will come forward to pre-buy the film for their respective territories.

Based on story by Samaresh Bose, scripted by Sen himself, the dialogue is written by Surendra Pratap Singh. The film has started shooting in an



*Naseeruddin and Om in Mrinal Sen's latest GENESIS*

abandoned village nearaisalmer with the cast headed by Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri and M.K. Raina and a large crowd. The main technicians except the art director Nitish Roy are Europeans. There is a talk about Ravi Shankar scoring music for the film. While shooting is being done entirely in India and Hindi, the post-shooting operations will be done in Europe. The shooting was complete in December, and it will be ready for its world premiere in May 1986.

The story is a parable, a kind of fable, the locale being undefined and the time eternity. A defiant farmer (Naseeruddin) and an aggrieved weaver (Om Puri) leave the world of the meek and the poor and walk into no man's land, to the end of the world or, may be, out of the world. Standing between sanity and madness, the two men decide to settle in the sprawling ruins of a long-lost village. There one day riding on a camel appears an intruder, carrying his merchandise and also a gun. After that a woman appears from nowhere, helplessness writ large on her face.

Out of pity, the two men offer the woman food and shelter just for a night. Following pity comes sympathy and human compassion. The world of two turns into a world of three. Thus, a new world of two turns into a world of three. Thus, a new world built by the two men and the woman breeds both virtue and vice. Virtue enriches the world and vice weakens its foundation.



*Shyam Benegal's KARMAN*

Shyam Benegal's **Karman** deals with the life of a handloom weaver in the present day. It examines the problems of the handloom industry in India which employs the second largest trained work-force of the country, roughly 10 million people. They cannot be ignored even in the context of a rapidly industrialising country such as India. In the cast are Om Puri, Shabana Azmi, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, Neena Gupta, Annu Kapoor, Jayant, Kripalani, Pallavi Joshi, Ila Arun, Pankaj Kapoor, Anita Kanwar, K.K. Raina and Mohan Agashe. The Photography is by Ashok Mehta. Music by Varraj Bhatia and script by Shama Zaidi.

**TWENTY-ONE  
PANORAMA  
FEATURE FILMS**



# AADMI AUR AURAT

## MAN AND WOMAN



A young village girl waits on the highway for a bus into town. She looks tired and ill, and carries a shapeless bundle in her arms. There are others waiting with her, but she seems to know none of her companions. When a bus finally comes, it is overflowing with passengers. There are even people on the roof of the bus. Giving it up as a futile exercise, the men waiting at the bus stop decide to walk the distance into town. If they leave the highway, and follow the track through the hills, it is not such a long walk. The men walk away in a group, keeping up a lively conversation as they find their way through the forested undulating land. The girl slowly rises and helplessly, goes after them. Bansi, a poacher and a shikari who earns a livelihood by helping the landlords

hunt game, follows the group, swinging his bag on his shoulder. He is a tough young man, and the difficulties of the route hold no fears for him. Thumping his staff on the ground, he leaps over the boulders, and casts a sharp eye around for possible game on the way.

The group of men have gone ahead of Bansi. He turns back curiously to look at the girl struggling slowly up the hill path. At this rate she will be left behind. He calls to the men but they say that the woman is not with them at all. So she is alone. Bansi has half a mind to try his luck with her. But every time he slows down, the woman shies off like a nervous filly. Bansi is amused.

A slow drizzle begins to fall. The girl moves even more slowly than before.

She stops every now and then to find her breath. When she finally sits down near a boulder, clutching her bundle to her bosom, Banshi decides to approach her. Who knows, maybe she is playing a little game with him. But she looks genuinely scared when he comes close to her, and he realizes that she is pregnant. In his simple, harsh existence, there are some things that Banshi has learnt to respect. When he learns that her destination is the hospital at Vakilganj, he decides to help her get there. He talks to the woman as he walks ahead of her, showing the way. Why is she going to the hospital alone? Where is her man? The girl explains haltingly, that her husband had to take a loan of forty rupees to send her to the hospital. He himself has had to stay back and work in the moneylender's fields to pay back the loan.

Slowly making her way with Banshi, the woman remembers her home. Her first child had miscarried and she was ill for so very long afterwards. This time if things do not work out all right, she would die of sorrow. Yet the road becomes more and more difficult for her, and the weight in her stomach seems unbearable. To keep her spirit up, Banshi talks to her of his life in the forests, of his going on a tiger hunt with a landlord. When she falters and nearly collapses, Banshi's determination to see her through her ordeal is strengthened. He carries her in his arms over the hill path.

The rain has increased, and the

woman is heavy in his arms. His feet falter and he has to put her down. In a rage at his own helplessness, he rushes to a clump of bamboo, and cuts it down with his knife. Then, with the rope from his bag, he ties the bamboo into a stretcher, places the woman on it, and drags her half-conscious body along. He talks to her all the time to keep her awake. He tells her of his experiences with a film company, where the director said that he was making a film for the people. Banshi had put his heart and soul in the little role he had in a crowd scene. When the film was released, he went to see it. It was boring, no songs, no dances. And those hours of shouting that he had done, had been reduced to only a minute. The girl responds faintly when Banshi calls her, lapsing into a semi-conscious condition every once in a while.

In a panic now, for the road is long, Banshi frantically shouts for help. But no human sound is heard in the forest. When he almost despairs, he suddenly finds a forest guard emerging out of the gloom. Between them, they carry the makeshift stretcher faster down the hill road. They reach the foot of the hill, but the shallow stream that flows there has turned into a mighty rivulet, swollen with the rain. The forest guard can go no further. And Banshi is once more left alone with the fainting girl.

Determined to save her, he drags her out of her stupor. He implores her to keep awake and help him to take her

across. He drags her across through the swirling current of the mountain stream, only half alive, then, holding her inert form close to him, he smiles with relief. 'You have a lot of courage, woman,' he says. 'How could I have brought you across otherwise?'

The going is easier now, for a bullock cart races down the country road carrying Bansi and the woman to the hospital. In the small district hospital a long queue of patients await the pleasure of the compounder. Bansi shoves some patients off a bench to make place for the woman. When he appeals to the man at the desk, he is casually told that there is no place for a patient in the hospital. Angered by his callousness, Bansi lifts him up by the scruff of his neck and threatens him. In the middle of the row the doctor arrives and agrees to take charge of the woman.

Bansi goes to meet the landlord with whom he was supposed to go on a hunt. But he has reached too late, and the landlord says that he can stay the night and go back. He only needs Bansi now for next week. Next morning, on his way home, Bansi stops at the hospital. The doctor says that the woman has given birth to a baby boy. 'But you must enter your name in the register,' he says. 'We need the father's name for our records.' 'She was only someone I met on the road,' says Bansi.

When he goes inside to have a look at the baby, he asks the woman the name of her husband. 'Anwar

Hossain,' says the girl. Bansi frowns. So it is a Muslim girl whose life he has saved, and he is a good Hindu. Then he smiles again. 'I'll go and tell him about the baby,' he tells her. 'I'll be passing your village on my way back.' The girl smiles back gratefully. As he turns to leave, she calls him back. With tears in her eyes, she raises her frail arms. 'I shall always pray to Allah for you,' she says.



## THE DIRECTOR

Tapan Sinha began his career in film as a sound recordist at The New Theatres Studios in Calcutta. Subsequently he worked as an audio engineer in Pinewood Studios, London. Tapan Sinha's first film was **Ankush**, made in 1953. Since then he has directed about thirty films, and has been twice a recipient of the President's Gold Medal in India. His films have won numerous awards in India and abroad. The most well-known among them are **Kabuliwala** (1956) which won an award for its music in the Berlin Film Festival, **Lauhakapat** (1957), **Kshudhita Pashan** (1960), **Hansuli Banker Upakatha** (1962), **Atithi** (1966) which was awarded a Certificate of Merit at the Venice Film Festival, **Hatey Bazarey** (1968) which won the Royal Cup in the Asian Film Festival in Cambodia, **Sagina Mahato** (1973) which received the Afro-Asian award in the Moscow Film Festival, **Harmonium** (1975) which was given awards for the best music and acting in the 22nd Asian Film Festival, Seoul, Korea, and **Safed Hathi** (1978) which won the National Award for being the best children's film. **Aadmi Aur Aurat** was originally made for television, and has been given an award for being the best film on national integration in the National Awards this year.



1984/Colour/56 mins/Hindi  
Production: Doordarshan  
Direction/Screenplay: Tapan Sinha  
Story: Prafulla Roy  
Camera: Kamal Nayek  
Editing: Subodh Roy  
Music: Ashish Khan  
Art Direction: Kartick Bose  
Sound: Satyan Chatterjee  
Lead Players: Amol Palekar, Mahua Roy Chowdhury  
Enquiries: Director General, Doordarshan, Mandi House, New Delhi 110001.

# ACCIDENT



Deepak and Rahul are sons of rich parents. Deepak's father is a local political boss who is aspiring to win a by-election in the city. Rahul lives with his mother, a hard-headed business woman who runs an advertising agency. Both the boys are neglected at home, and cope with life in their own way, by mixing with a crowd of youngsters who all come from affluent homes and find their pleasures in drugs, drinks and promiscuity. One evening at a party, Deepak and Rahul are high on drugs and drinks. Deepak, who is more ruthless of the two boys, goes and makes love to his girl-friend, while Rahul, the unsuccessful one, sits brooding in a corner. Late in the night, the two start from their homes in Deepak's father's spacious foreign car. When they reach Rahul's home, Rahul sees a light in his mother's bedroom. He also sees the car of his

mother's lover in the drive, and in a burst of anger and frustration, decides to speed away from home. Driving down the wide, empty roads of the city, they come across a lone motorcycle rider, and decide to race against him. The motorcycle rider finally draws up near their car, and offers them some pills that work as artificial stimulants. In an act of bravado, both the boys take the pills. But soon, Deepak, who is driving the big car, starts feeling unsure of himself. The drugs and drinks take their toll, and Deepak starts hallucinating. Racing madly down the road, Deepak is confronted with strange barriers that only he can see, and in an attempt to avoid them, he finally ploughs through a group of immigrant labourers sleeping on the pavement of the city. While the victims lie writhing in agony and in the throes of death, one old labourer, Ramanna, the only one

to avoid the murdering wheels of the car, jumps onto the bonnet of the moving car. Deepak sees his face distorted in anger and agony through the windshield and swerves desperately till he is thrown off onto the road.

The enormous impact of the accident clears Deepak's brains, and he determinedly drives away from the scene of the carnage to his father's country house. The old watchman, a loyal servant of many years, looks on with surprise and curiosity as Deepak in a frenzy, tries to wash the blood stains away from the body of the car. Deepak knows that the old man can be trusted to keep his mouth shut and ask no questions. The next morning, he takes the car to a garage where he is a valued customer. He tells Pinto, the proprietor, that he has had a brush with a bull, and requests him to straighten out the car in a day's time, for his father will be back in a day and must not know anything about the accident to his favourite car.

In the meanwhile, the bodies of the labourers have been discovered. The crowds gather round as the police start their investigations, and the reporters from the city's newspapers rush around trying to pick up more information. One of them is Ravi, a young reporter from a local daily who corners the investigating officer and extracts from him a promise of more information later on. The officer, Inspector Rao, diligently follows each clue, and they all lead him to Dharmadhikari, Deepak's father. At

least the pieces of broken glass, the broken windshield wiper, all indicate that it was Dharmadhikari's car that was involved in the accident. But Dharmadhikari was not in the city when the accident took place. He shares his knowledge with Ravi who decides to do a bit of independent sleuthing.

But before he can get very far, Rahul, in his weakness, confesses to his mother about being an accessory to the horrible act. Maya Rani, herself an influential social figure, comes and confronts Deepak and his father. As far as she is concerned, it is a problem that needs sorting out and it is as much her problem as Dharmadhikari's. Dharmadhikari cannot afford to let a family scandal ruin his political ambitions. So, Inspector Rao, who was expecting a promotion for being so near the solution of the crime, is asked to withdraw from the case.

Ravi's sleuthing brings him to Dharmadhikari's country house in the dark of the night. He smears ink on a-piece of paper and cleverly takes the impression of a car wheel that was lying concealed there. But before he can escape, Dharmadhikari's men are alerted and he leaves in a hurry, leaving behind his camera and the piece of paper. The camera has his name on it. Dharmadhikari now sets about systematically destroying all evidence against his son. His men accost Ravi on the road and beat him up mercilessly. Ravi is taken unconscious to the hospital. Dharmadhikari himself goes to meet the old retainer



in the country house, and tells him that as he was a driver in the household once upon a time, he must take the rap for his son. Dharmadhikari will look after the old man's family while he is in jail for manslaughter. Helpless and loyal, the old man agrees.

A farce is enacted in the court, where the sole survivor, Ramanna, still in a state of shock, gives evidence against the innocent old man along with other false witnesses. Ravi, who is now convinced that the culprit is Dharmadhikari's son, Deepak, finds himself totally isolated. Only Ramanna who he had befriended earlier, comes to give him solace. His editor, who actually belongs to a rival party, is no longer eager to pin down Dharmadhikari with the crime. Inspector Rao, taken off the case has taken to drink and is too scared to help Ravi. Consumed by an agonizing hate for Dharmadhikari and his manipulative powers, Ravi goes to a public gathering where the politician is to appear. Ravi carries with him his pistol. If no one will dare to pass judgement on Dharmadhikari, he will. But, at the last minute, a sense of shame assails him, and the shades of his Gandhian upbringing will not allow him to raise a hand against another human being.

Deepak is being sent abroad by his father, and goes to bid good-bye to his friends. Back on the road, Ramanna moves listlessly along, past Deepak as he stands talking to friends at the gate of a house. Suddenly the walls of oblivion collapse and Ramanna now

knows that he has found the real killer. He tries to stop Deepak's car as he rushes away, but fails. Deepak, however, has also remembered Ramanna — the anguished face near the windscreen on the fatal night. The memory unnerves him completely, and he crashes against a way side tree.

Dharmadhikari stands near the funeral pyre of his son. Ravi dredges up the last dregs of human kindness from his heart and comes to offer his sympathy to the broken old man.

## THE DIRECTOR

A commerce graduate from Bombay University, Shankar Nag was born in Udipi in 1954. After schooling in Honavar and Bombay, Nag joined the Bank of India, while simultaneously studying for the university examination. Encouraged by the activities of his brother, actor Anant Nag, Shankar Nag became an active participant on the Kannada, Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and English stage in Bombay. He was the first Assistant of the famous filmmaker, Sai Paranjpye, for two years before Girish Karnad introduced him as a screen actor in **Ondanoundu Kaladalli**, a performance that fetched Nag the best actor award in the International Film Festival of India that year. By now Shankar Nag has acted in more than forty films, including Shashi Kapoor's **Utsav**. One of the partners of Sanket, a film production company, Nag has produced four films under its banner: **Minchina Oata**, his first directorial venture, **Januma Janumada Anubandha**, **Geetha** and **Accident**. **Minchina Oata** fetched him a record haul of seven State Awards, and **Accident** has received a national Award for the best film on prohibition this year. He has also directed Ranjit's **Laalach**.



1984/Colour/125 mins/Kannada  
Production: Sanket  
Direction: Shankar Nag  
Story/Screenplay: Vasant Mokashe  
Camera: S.D. Deodhar  
Editing: P. Bhaktavatsalam  
Music: Ilaya Raja  
Sound: Pandurangan  
Lead Players: Anant Nag, Shankar Nag,  
Ashok Mandanna, Srinivasa Prabhu, Ramesh  
Bhat, Arundhati Rao  
Enquiries: Sanket, Post Box 6877, Mandivala,  
Bangalore 560 068.

# AGHAAT



Madhav Varma, a Communist Party worker, and former lecturer, heads the recognized trade union at the Shivalik Engineering Industries. Under him the movement is committed to the politicization of the workers, so that the struggle is focused on realizing their just demands. For some workers, Madhav's stand is not militant enough. They are weaned away from the recognized union by the extraordinary promises of the politically ambitious Rustam Patel and his lieutenant, muscle-man Krishnan Raju. The tensions between the two trade unions have been simmering for some time. But it erupts, ironically enough, during the May Day celebrations, when the union members and their friends stage a masked play on the victory of the workers over exploitation. The slogans of workers' solidarity have hardly died down when a small band of Rustam Patel loyalists disrupt the

proceedings on the pretext of being dissatisfied with the present bonus.

Soon after, Krishnan Raju and his men incite some of the members of the recognized union to refuse to pay their subscription. A scuffle ensues in front of the gates of the factory, but it comes to an abrupt end when one of Krishnan's men whips out a knife.

The excitement over the incident would have died a natural death had not Krishnan followed it up with more drastic action. One night, clothed in his immaculate white trousers and shirt, Krishnan marches into a worker's settlement, enters the house of the worker who had defied his men over the union subscriptions, and injures him deliberately with his knife.

If Madhav is disturbed by the increasing trend of violence among the workers, his comrades in the factory



and the Party feel even more strongly about it. To save the union from Rustam Patel's men, they propose that violence should be met with violence: a show of power is the only way to keep the workers on your side. Also Madhav must match the extraordinary demands of the unofficial union, or his reasonable stand will be looked upon as weakness. Madhav is not convinced, and still hopes to win over the errant workers by talking to them and showing them that Madhav's is the just and honest approach. In the meanwhile, one of the workers of Madhav's union, Chhotelal, falls from a high ladder and injures his spine in the factory.

The young personnel officer of Shivalik is an idealist. He admires Madhav's honesty and dedication, and genuinely desires to understand the worker's problems. When Chhotelal is injured, he takes the responsibility of accompanying him to the hospital and arranging for medical care till the factory's hired social worker can take his place. But from the vantage point of a secure middle-class existence, whatever efforts he may make, he cannot come close to either the workers or Madhav, all of whom treat him with the utmost politeness and formality.

Chhotelal's spinal injury paralyzes him from waist downwards. The medicines are expensive, and his brothers, who also have families of their own, find it difficult to make ends meet. Madhav helps as much as he can. He also negotiates with the management for a

compensation as Chhotelal was hurt in the course of duty. The normal compensation offered by the factory management is ten thousand rupees. Madhav decides to ask for three times that sum and a permanent job in the factory for Chhotelal at his former wages. As the discussions begin, Krishnan decides to cash in on the situation and promises an outrageous sum of seventy-five thousand rupees as compensation. Chhotelal's brothers talk it over with Madhav who refuses to match Krishnan's unrealistic demands.

Chhotelal is discharged from the hospital and is taken home with much fanfare by the factory's social worker who gets a photograph taken of her handing Chhotelal a bedpan and a chamber pot on behalf of the management. The photograph is printed in the factory newsletter as a symbol of the management's generosity. The whole incident revolts Madhav who expresses his disgust and his lack of faith in the management's interest in the welfare of the workers in a union meeting. Meanwhile, one of Chhotelal's brothers is almost ready to leave Madhav's union when Chhotelal's condition suddenly deteriorates and he has to be sent back to the hospital. At the hospital, after hours of waiting, Chhotelal is given attention. The social worker arrives after Madhav has himself dragged the doctor from his quarters to Chhotelal's bedside. Madhav, who has always found her suspect, sends her away rudely, and complains to the management. The management in the meanwhile have

had enough of the negotiations for compensation and decide to take a tough stand. They force the social worker to sign a statement saying that Chhotelal is on the way to relatively normal health, and on its basis announce that his brothers must get back to work at once. When Madhav complains about the social worker's callousness, they finally agree to extend the leave of the brothers by another two weeks only.

His Party comrades insist that Madhav must behave realistically, and now that Chhotelal has had a setback, a higher demand for compensation has to be made. While Krishnan flaunts his outrageous demands, workers flock to him. Madhav reluctantly agrees, and holds a meeting with the workers where he announces that their demand will now be jacked up to one lakh as Chhotelal is no longer able to continue with a job in the factory. The young personnel officer watches the rally with misgivings. He is able to guess that Madhav, a man of strict principles, is being pressurized to come to a confrontation with Rustam Patel's union which is now powerful enough to demand recognition from the management.

The social worker is made a scapegoat by the management and threatened with dismissal. The young officer, who knows that the day she arrived late at the hospital, the woman was facing the personal tragedy of desertion by her husband, comes to Madhav to ask him to withdraw his complaint. Even if she was coerced into signing the false

document, for Madhav she is a part of the exploitative system that works for personal gain and against the welfare of the workers. The young man leaves bewildered, for he had come to Madhav on his own, the management having ordered him to stop any dealings with Madhav.

At the height of the tussle between the two unions, Chhotelal dies. Madhav's men do not allow Krishnan's followers in the truck carrying the body. For till the end, Chhotelal belonged to the established union. At the crematorium, while the body lies on the unit pyre, Krishnan and Madhav face each other on a make-shift dias with malevolence. Krishnan's people who try to disturb the solemn proceedings, are outnumbered for the time being. But soon after, Krishnan announces a meeting at the factory gates, where the great Rustam Patel will himself address the workers.

Madhav's comrades and the union workers are all set for a confrontation. Only Madhav himself is doubtful about the outcome of such a violent clash. It will be workers slaying their brother workers. But the Party pragmatists overrule Madhav's point of view, and he is forced to issue instructions for the disruption of Rustam Patel's meeting.

Madhav's men, armed with an assortment of crude weapons, await Patel's arrival at the meeting. Patel's oratory holds the workers enthralled. His words, carefully chosen to inflame populist sentiments, find their target.

Then he spies Madhav's men, and pointing a dramatic finger at them, makes caustic comments on their lack of militancy. A stone sails towards the dias and the battle begins. Madhav, overcome with horror and guilt, watches the gruesome spectacle. When he attempts to go and stop the pointless bloodshed, his comrades physically hold him back.

Shaken to the core of his being, Madhav confronts his mentor and Party ideologue, Chakradev. Is senseless violence the proper course of the revolution? Chakradev had asked himself this very question forty years ago. Now he speaks to Madhav of a wider truth, where the course of history must answer Madhav's question. And therein lies the crucial decision: Wait indefinitely for the answer, or act. Continue the struggle, whatever form it takes, or quit. Madhav chooses to stand by the revolution.



## THE DIRECTOR

Born in the early forties, Govind Nihalani came to Udaipur as a refugee in 1947, from Karachi in Pakistan. He began his career as a cinematographer after graduating from the SI Polytechnic in Bangalore in 1962. For ten years he had worked as an assistant cameraman for V.K. Murthy, the man behind some of Guru Dutt's best works. He then became assistant cameraman to director Promode Chakravarty. Nihalani's entry into feature films was in 1970, when he photographed and coproduced Satyadev Dubey's Marathi film **Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe**. Then followed the highly rewarding association with director Shyam Benegal for whom he photographed several documentaries (including a feature length documentary on Satyajit Ray) and ten feature films including *Junoon*, for which Nihalani received the National Award for Best Colour Cinematography in 1979. **Aakrosh**, the first feature film he directed and photographed, won him the Golden Peacock at the 8th International Film Festival of India, held in Delhi in 1981. The same year, director Richard Attenborough signed Nihalani on as the second unit director-cinematographer for **Gandhi, Vijeta**, set against the backdrop of the Indian Air Force, was completed in late 1982. **Ardh Satya** followed in 1983 and won him the National Award for the Best Hindi Film of the year. **Party**, Nihalani's fourth film, was the official Indian entry to the 10th International Film Festival of India.



### AGHAAT

1985/Colour/147 mins/Hindi

Production: Neo Films Associates

Direction/Camera: Govind Nihalani

Story/Screenplay: Vijay Tendulkar

Music: Vanraj Bhatia, Ajit Varman

Art Direction: Nitish Roy

Editing: Sutanu Guha

Sound: Indrajit Neogi

Lead Players: Om Puri, Gopi, Deepa Sati,

Amrith Puri, Sadashiv Amrapurkar, Rohini

Hattangadi, K.K. Raina, Pankaj Kapoor, M.K.

Raina, Achyut Potdar, Harish Patel,

Naseeruddin Shah

Enquiries: Neo Films Associates, G2 Everest,  
Tardeo Road, Bombay 400 034.

# AGNISNAAN

## ORDEAL



The time, the late thirties. The place, a village in Assam. Ghanakanta, an old and respected landowner has handed over the charge of his ancestral property to his two elder sons, Ratnakanta and Mohikanta, who are both householders with families of their own. The youngest son Bhadrakanta is still unmarried and without a livelihood. Mohikanta, the younger of the first two sons, turns out to be a good businessman, though he is consumed by feudal vanity. With the help of the British Deputy Commissioner of the district, he establishes a rice mill which mints money and makes Mohikanta richer every day. Though his father is a pious and simple man, Mohikanta develops all the dissolute traits of the aristocracy, and is feared by all. His wife Menoka, however, is a charming and quiet woman from a cultured family. She

suffers patiently Mohikanta's bad habits and his incessant drinking. A mother of four young children, Menoka looks after her old in-laws, and keeps the family together with her love and tolerance.

Mohikanta often goes to nearby villages to arrange for paddy for his rice mill. During one such visit to a village, he comes across Kiran, a pretty young girl from a poor family. Suddenly there is gossip in the village that Mohikanta is going to marry again. Deeply shocked by the news, Menoka remembers the early days of her marriage. Mohikanta's attempts to reconcile her to his second marriage serves only to disgust her. But she can do nothing to stop her husband from marrying again, and the wedding takes place against the wishes of the entire family who watch the ceremony

in helpless anguish.

Menoka, who has never believed in expressing her emotions, takes the whole situation with outward calm. She arranges her bedroom to accommodate her four children, while Mohikanta decorates another room for his new bride. Menoka even accepts Kiran with stoical affection.

The youngest son, Bhadrakanta, is deeply distressed by the turn of events. His friend, Madan, the handsome young village thief who has been bailed out many a time because of Menoka's intervention, is equally upset by Mohikanta's behaviour. Menoka's eldest son, Indra, who is old enough to understand some of her mother's pain, becomes resentful towards his father and his stepmother, and moves closer to Bhadrakanta and Madan. Menoka has to summon Madan and ask him not to encourage Indra to be friendly with him.

Mohikanta, who is too insensitive to understand Menoka's mental state, takes her silence to mean acceptance. He comes to her again one night while Kiran lies asleep in her room. Menoka, in a quiet rage, determinedly sends him away, saying that she can accept anything from him, but will not allow him to touch her any more. Though she keeps Mohikanta at bay, the sounds of laughter and endearment coming from Kiran's room in the night keep her awake. She remembers her husband's earlier dependence on her, and silently subdues the aching desire in her body.

One night, as she lies awake in her bed, she sees Indra rise and unlock the door leading to the back of the house. When Indra is back in bed again, she rises and cautiously opens the door, only to find Madan standing outside, frozen with fear. Monika takes him to a secluded spot in the bamboo grove in the back of the house and asks him his reason for coming to the house in stealth. Madan haltingly explains that he cannot bear to see her unhappy, and convinced that it is money that makes Mohikanta such a brute, decided to rob Mohikanta with the help of Indra. Menoka is touched by Madan's concern, but implores him not to spoil Indra by involving him in these plans. Then, on an impulse, she asks him to come back and wait for her in the same spot the next night. She tells him that she will keep her window open to indicate that she will come. Back in her bed, she wonders why she has asked Madan to meet her. But the next night there is a storm, and though she knows he will be waiting, she shuts the window and stays in her room.

Mohikanta's mother, who has gone to spend a few days in Ratnakanta's home, falls ill and dies soon after. Kiran leaves to stay with her mother for a few months, for she is carrying Mohikanta's child. With an uncontrollable sense of resentment, Menoka keeps her tryst with Madan who submits to the relationship without really understanding Menoka's motivation. Mohikanta who is aware of Madan's hostility, tries to win him



over by making him an overseer in the rice mill. With his innate loyalty towards the family, Madan proves to be a trustworthy and devoted worker. His thieving days are over. But with Kiran away, Menoka finds it increasingly difficult to control Mohikanta's brutal behaviour towards her. Her only solace is Madan, her loyal and silent admirer, and now her lover, in the darkness of the bamboo grove.

Then one night, she comes to Madan and tells him not to come back any more. For Madan the end of the affair is as bewildering as the beginning. But he accepts it with mute understanding. Kiran comes back with a baby girl, and Menoka takes over the responsibility of rearing the child. Till one day, when she is discovered to be pregnant, Mohikanta is shocked. He knows that Menoka has not let him come near her ever since he married Kiran. And has not Menoka always been the ideal wife and mother? Unable to express his suspicions to anyone, Mohikanta is consumed by jealousy. He starts seeking out his children whom he has always neglected. He drinks alone in the mill at night and sorrowfully ponders on what he considers his own betrayal by Menoka. Bhadrakanta and Madan try to help him, but are unable to understand the reason for his grief.

Mohikanta calls Menoka to the rice mill, where amidst the noise of the machines, he asks her for an explanation. Menoka refuses to tell him who is the father of her child. Dignified, yet

rebellious, she talks for the first time of her own humiliation by Mohikanta, of her deprivation, of her disillusionment with the role of a loyal wife that she is expected to play while Mohikanta indulges himself with Kiran. From now on, she says, Mohikanta will have to live with the fact of her infidelity, for, to condemn her publicly, he will have to admit his own humiliation and his own defeat. Menoka can face the world without shame. She has had her revenge.

## THE DIRECTOR

While still a student of Presidency College, Calcutta, Dr Bhabendra Nath Saikia had already established himself as a short story writer of repute in Assam. Among the major creative writers of Assam in the post independence period, Dr Saikia also has a most distinctive record of activities in various fields of art, culture and education. The first recipient of the Publication Board Award of Assam, he was considered the best Assamese writer of 1970-72, on the basis of a collection of his short stories, called **Sendoor**. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1976 for his book, **Shringkhal**. Dr Saikia's first film, **Sandhyarag**, was given the Rajat Kamal in 1977, and has been since shown at festivals in India and abroad. **Anirbaan**, his second film, won the Rajat Kamal in 1981. Dr Saikia has a doctoral degree in physics from London University, and a diploma from Imperial College of Science and Technology in 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. At present he is the chief editor of **Prantik** and the editor of **Sofura**.



1985/ Colour/ 172 mins/ Assamese  
Production/Direction/Story/Screenplay: Dr  
Bhabendra Nath Saikia  
Camera: Kamal Nayak  
Music: Tarun Goswami  
Editing: Nikunja Bhattacharyya  
Sound: Pijush Kanti Roy  
Lead Players: Malaya Goswami, Biju Phukan,  
Arun Nath, Kashmiri Barua, Sanjib Hazarika,  
Anandamohan Bhagawati, Arun Guha  
Thakurta, Nilu Chakravarty, Indra Bania,  
Ashok Deka.  
Enquiries: Dr Bhabendra Nath Saikia,  
Basisthapur 2, Near Wireless Centre,  
Guwahati 781 028

# ANANTYATRA

## THE RETURN OF GODBOLE



Godbole is a portly, balding, commonplace looking man in his middle age, who has been lately feeling unaccountably restless. He has achieved a fair amount of success at work, but finds himself being continuously upstaged by a slightly younger and brash colleague. At home his wife and children lead their separate lives. His wife enjoys going to the office parties, and takes great interest in the gossip circulated there. Godbole is tired of the same routine in his life. Little imaginary illnesses keep cropping up as a result, and he visits his doctor in a futile effort to sort out his intangible unhappiness.

Godbole's restlessness and his need for a doctor all the time makes his wife feel that he is becoming a hypochondriac. She also cannot understand his complete lack of

interest in the lively social life that arises out of his job as a senior executive. Even the problems of the home, with the children who are growing teenagers, have to be tackled by Mrs Godbole alone. Her husband seems to have lost all interest in the home as well. At one time he used to play the harmonium. Now he does not bother to even look at it. Neither Godbole, nor his wife, have the imagination to understand his real predicament.

Then one day, a mysterious telephone call changes the course of Godbole's life. A scruffy old Parsi voice over the telephone announces that he is *laduwalla*, who needs nothing from Godbole, but it is Godbole who needs him! *laduwalla* is just the kind of name a Parsi might have, but literally it means, the magic man. And



Godbole has never known anyone called *laduwalla*. Why should he need him? Godbole takes a long time to make up his mind. This call from the unknown has disturbed the monotonous equilibrium of his life. It worries him and makes him even more restless. Finally, unable to contain his curiosity, Godbole sneaks out of the office one day, carrying his inevitable briefcase, and makes his way to *laduwalla's* mysterious abode. He goes through a maze of crowded and dirty lanes where his portly, upper class figure draws curious glances from everyone, then up a set of rickety old stairs in an ancient building that is crumbling to pieces slowly, to an old-fashioned ornamental glass door, from behind which comes *laduwalla's* scruffy voice, welcoming him gleefully.

It is a musty old room, the walls of which are piled high with books. *laduwalla*, a decrepit old Parsi with a drooping moustache, hovers in the gloaming, turning the pages of the books, handling them with pride and care, and talking all the time. He offers Godbole a solution to all his problems, though how he knows about them he does not care to explain. Pick up any book you like, says *laduwalla*, then enter my magic cupboard. Godbole looks with disbelief at the large old-fashioned almirah with a mirror on the door. Finally, driven by some unknown, inexplicable urge, Godbole picks up a book. It is a book on the Peshwas, a history of the most successful period of Maratha dominance in the Western

Ghats. *laduwalla* smiles knowingly, pushes Godbole into the dark empty interior of the cupboard, and shuts the door from outside. In a flash, Godbole is transported to the time of the Peshwas, among a group of beautiful Maratha women whose only desire in life seems to be to give him pleasure. He relaxes on the grass, sips the wine offered to him, and listens to their music — until a man with a drawn sword rushes into the idyllic scene. Godbole, frightened out of his wits, starts running, and falls into *laduwalla's* musty room, through the open door of the cupboard. He promises never to come back.

But he does come back and this time he chooses his book carefully. It is Kalidas's **Shakuntala**, the immortal tale of love between an innocent young girl brought up by an ascetic, and the king of the land. The ascetic's home is in the heart of a green grove where peace dwells. The king has not yet made his appearance. So Godbole basks in the attention paid to him by a flock of beautiful maidens, and *Shakuntala*, the most beautiful of them all. *Shakuntala* frolics with Godbole day after day, while her friends listen to taped music on Godbole's taperecorder. Once, on his way back to reality, Godbole picks up a peacock's feather which his wife discovers and is extremely puzzled about. Another time he unknowingly picks up a snake which creates an uproar in his office when he opens the briefcase. But real trouble begins when *Shakuntala* starts getting

ambitious; and insists on coming and visiting Godbole's wonderful world.

Apprehensive of the outcome of such an adventure, Godbole pretends to go on a business tour and checks in at a hotel. Shakuntala steps into Iaduwalla's room one fine day, and Godbole's dream comes to an untimely end. The frisky young maiden in her archaic clothes draws attention wherever she goes. Godbole decides to keep her locked up in the hotel room to keep her away from two young talent scouts from an advertising agency. If Godbole gets increasingly tense, Shakuntala turns more and more restless, unable to understand the human duplicity and hypocrisy that the great metropolis abounds in. She wants to go home. Secretly released, Godbole takes her back to Iaduwalla, only to find the old man lying in his room in a stupor, with a bleeding cut on his head, and the mirror on the cupboard shattered.

Iaduwalla recovers fast enough, but the cupboard will take longer, he says. The wait becomes more and more intolerable for both Godbole and Shakuntala. Godbole has to resort to innumerable subterfuges and Shakuntala is up to some mischief or other the moment his back is turned. Eventually, however, Iaduwalla manages to mend his cupboard, and Shakuntala goes back to her own idyllic world, the adventure over. Godbole finds that he is no longer restless. His life has gone back to its smooth and peaceful course. The

monotony of his life and his own mediocrity no longer perturb him. In the evenings after work, he starts practising on his harmonium once more, contentedly.

But what about Godbole's wife? She too has reached an age when that feeling hits you for the first time — nothing happens any more beyond a repetition of the same orderly routine day after day. Then one day the telephone rings and a strange rasping voice over the phone says, 'Iaduwalla speaking. —'

## THE DIRECTOR

Nachiket and Jayoo Patwardhan graduated in architecture together from M.S. University, Baroda in 1971. Since then they have been working as architects in Pune. Their involvement in films began with art direction and costume designs for **Ghasiram Kotwal** in 1977. They have since produced, directed and provided art direction for two feature films, **22 June 1897** and **Anantyaatra**. They have also worked as Art Directors for Saeed Mirza's **Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho** and Girish Karnad's **Ondonondu kaladalli**. **22 June 1897**, which was declared the Best Feature Film on National Integration at the 27th National Film Awards, also brought for Jayoo Patwardhan an award for her art direction in the film. In 1984 this husband-wife team received the award for the Best Art Direction for their work in Shashi Kapoor's **Utsav**, where their recreation of a bygone era was imaginative and intricately detailed. The Patwardhan are currently working on the principal visual designs for **Ramayana**, an Indo-Japanese feature-length animation film project.



*1985/Colour/118 mins/Hindi  
Production: Sanket  
Direction/Story/Screenplay: Nachiket and Jayoo  
Camera: Ko Hung Chiang, Krishna Kant Wadhwa  
Music: Haridaynath Mangeshkar  
Sound: Dilip and Satish Sawant  
Lead Players: Sudhir Joshi, Rohini Hattangady, Naseeruddin Shah, Anooradha Patel  
Enquiries: Nachiket Patwardhan, 55/14 Erandwana, Pune 411 044*



# BETTADA HOOVU

## A HILL FLOWER



Chinnappa is a wood-cutter in a remote village in a picturesque hilly area. His wife Parvathi sells vegetables in the tourist season. They have three children, and the joint earnings of Parvathi and Chinnappa are never enough to keep the home fires burning.

Nine year old Ramu, the eldest child, has a passionate desire for knowledge and education. Ramu goes to the village school, and the family is much criticized for it by Chinnappa's brother, who feels it to be a wasteful effort. The boy should be earning a living. Yet, when he gets a letter from his own son who lives away from home, he brings it to little Ramu to read.

Ramu's teacher, Mutthanna, instils in his mind a burning desire to read the

Ramayana. Mutthanna's small shop, which also sells a few books, is a favourite haunt of Ramu. He stops by every day and browses over the titles of the books and periodicals kept outside.

Once the tourist season is over, Ramu's parents find it more difficult to make ends meet. With starvation staring them in the face, Chinnappa decides to go to town in search of a job. This means that Ramu must leave school and look after the family while his father is away. Ramu is heart-broken, but his father gives him one ray of hope. He tells the boy that he can save ten paise from every rupee he earns and buy a book with the money. But Ramu soon realizes that his earnings are so meagre that it would take him a long time to save enough to buy a book.

With no land of their own, Ramu finds it very difficult to get a job that a little boy can do. In desperation, he starts doing odd jobs, carrying the passengers' luggage at the village bus stop, or cutting grass in somebody's field. At night the village boys gather to listen to the tall tales of Doddajja, a glib old bluffer, whose hold over the imagination of the children never wanes. He projects himself as a creature from a bygone age and tells wild, apocryphal stories in the fire-light. One of his tales is about a yellow-eyed tiger who roams the neighbouring forests in quest of revenge.

During one of his visits to Mutthanna's shop, Ramu notices a new arrival – a copy of Ramayana, it costs ten rupees, a sum that is quite beyond Ramu's means. But Ramu is an incorrigible optimist, and vows to buy the book any how. He also starts learning English from Sheela, a village health assistant who comes to the village for a brief stint, and leaves behind a book for him to read.

To earn some quick money, Ramu thinks of selling flowers to the tourists who come to the hill resort. But by now most of them have gone. Only one foreign lady is left behind in the guest house. Ramu manages to meet her through Somu, the cook in the guest house. But Shirley, who is a painter, only wants strange local flowers so that she can paint them. Shirley, who is nursing a fractured leg, can speak Ramu's tongue, and tells the boy that he, like the flowers of the

hills, is a privileged possession of his land. There is a lot that he owes to the world around him. Ramu is inspired to start teaching the other less fortunate children of the village.

With Shirley paying 25 paise for every flower he brings from the hills, Ramu starts looking forward to buying the Ramayana one day. Shirley also tells him that she will mention his name in a book that she is writing on Indian flowers. But the flower she most wants to paint is the orchid, and she promises Ramu that she will pay him five rupees for an orchid.

Elated, Ramu goes asking everybody about where to find an orchid in the forests. His teacher and his uncle can tell him nothing about the strange flower, but Ramu does not lose heart. He goes to sleep that night and dreams of possessing his favourite book. Early next morning, before any one is up, Ramu goes looking for the orchid in the forest which is familiar to him only through Doddajji's fantastic tales. Though he is scared of the yellow-eyed tiger, all he meets in the forest are birds and deer. Finally a deer moving through the undergrowth frightens him enough to climb a tall tree, and that is when he spots the orchids whose picture Shirley had shown him. Ramu comes back to Shirley triumphantly holding the rare flowers.

Now that there is enough money saved away in the niche behind the



loose brick in the wall of Ramu's home, Ramu is all prepared to buy the Ramayana waiting for him on the shelf of Mutthanna's shop. But on the way, Ramu bumps into an old man trying to cover himself with a tattered blanket to keep him warm, and he remembers the torn blanket in his home which must cover all of them in the night. How will his little brother and sister survive the winter? Ramu stops to think, then slowly and sadly moves away from Mutthanna's shop. He buys a new blanket for the family with his savings, and that night they all sleep well under its warmth. In the morning Ramu goes and sits on the hills with a faraway look in his eyes, there is a world to win in front of him and somehow he will make it.



are **Bhoo Vikas** and **Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee**. He received his early training in cinema under R. Nagendra Rao, the doyen of Kannada cinema, and his own maternal uncle and veteran film director, B.R. Krishna Murthy.

## THE DIRECTOR

N. Lakshminarayan's first directorial effort was an experimental film, **Bliss** (1961), which won an award at the San Francisco International Film Festival in the category, 'Film as a medium of artistic expression'. He made his first feature film, **Naandi** in 1964, followed by **Uyyale** in 1969, **Mukti** in 1970, and **Abachurna Post-office** in 1973, which won him the President's Silver Medal in the National Awards. His films have been shown in film festivals and events in many countries, and brought him several awards. In 1978 he made **Muyyi** which was an entry in the International Third World Film Festival in Paris in 1982. Lakshminarayan has also directed several short and documentary films, among which

*1985/Colour/120 mins/Kannada  
Production: Vaishnavi Movies  
Direction/Screenplay: N. Lakshminarayan  
Story: Based on the story, 'What then, Raman?' by Shirley L. Arora  
Camera: Gowri Shankar  
Editing: P. Bhaktavatsalam  
Music: Rajan - Nagendra  
Art Direction: Peketi Ranga  
Sound: Govindswamy  
Lead Players: Master Lohit, Padma Vasanthi, Mohan Kumar, Marcia, T.N. Balakrishna, Roopa Devi, Anandathirtha, Sadashiv Brahmavar, Arvind, Shiva Prakash, Baby Savitha, Master Prabhu, Sharadathaneya, Honnavalli Krishna  
Enquiries: Vaishnavi Movies, 10th 'A' Cross, 3rd Main Road, West of Chord Road, Rajajinagar, Bangalore 560 010*



## CHIDAMBARAM



Shankaran works as the Office Superintendent in a vast Government farm situated in the hilly areas on the border of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. His colleague Jacob is the Field Supervisor and a work addict. The two men are poles apart in their characters. Jacob is a down-to-earth and rather commonplace sort of person, whose social pride does not conflict with his easy-going attitude to morality. Shankaran, on the other hand, is a mild-mannered loner. He has an easy, friendly relationship with the workers. Muniyandi, a worker in the farm, is a timid, god-fearing man. His job is to look after the cattle. One day he confesses to Shankaran that he is going to his village to get married. When he asks Jacob for leave, Jacob brusquely tells him that he must be back immediately after the wedding.

But Shankaran invites him to have a drink with him in his room. Hoping that God will not notice this minor aberration, Muniyandi says a quick prayer before taking a few swigs of rum equally quickly. Then he settles down on the floor and starts singing in the praise of the Lord. The embarrassed Shankaran has to help him to his quarters.

Shankaran who is an amateur photographer, goes to attend Muniyandi's marriage in a Tamil village. On the way he focuses his camera on the clay horses standing in a row, neglected in the village green. At the wedding he photographs the bride and the groom. Soon after the wedding, Muniyandi brings his wife, Shivkani, from the brown, barren landscape of Tamil Nadu to the green, undulating meadows of the farm. Shankaran watches

them from his office window, as they walk towards their quarters, Shivkami stopping on the way to wonder at the colourful surroundings.

Shivkami reacts at first like a frightened deer to every new sound, every new scene. The massive, well fed cows, the sound of the motorbike, a new face, everything makes her withdraw into herself. It takes time, but slowly and timidly, she starts taking her first sure steps on this new lovely world. She walks around aimlessly when Muniyandi is away at work and wanders into the gardens, touching each flower with supreme wonder. While Muniyandi offers her a timid adoration, Shankaran approaches her with gentle concern. She is no longer afraid of him. She goes to him when an address has to be written on a letter she writes home, and does not shy away from his camera. For Shankaran, she is something gentle and beautiful, like the lush green landscape of the farm.

One day a car stops on the road below Shankaran's house. Two younger colleagues bring a couple of minor film stars with them to meet Shankaran. They are on their way to a function where the actors will be their guests. Out on the sprawling lawns, Shankaran and his visitors sit down for a casual drink. On the road below, Jacob appears and is hailed by Shankaran. He comes and joins them, and the conversation turns to the newcomer in the farm, the lovely Shivkami. Jacob teases Shankaran about his interest in her. And sud-

denly Shankaran is furiously angry, he physically assaults Jacob, and they all leave him, embarrassed and upset. In the gathering darkness, Shankaran lies on the grass, pondering on his strange reaction to a casual joke. What does he want from Shivkami?

Meanwhile, Jacob has been trying to arrange a job for Shivkami on the farm. Muniyandi is not happy about it at all. But Shivkami herself, now bored with her lonely life, would not mind working on the farm. Seeing Muniyandi with the cattle, Jacob stops by to tell him that he has found some work for Muniyandi's wife. Muniyandi, who is suspicious of Jacob's intentions, politely refuses the job. Jacob, who would not normally associate with what he calls 'mentals', is angry, and orders Muniyandi to start doing night duty from now on.

At night, in the cattle shed, Muniyandi listens to every sound. A motorbike rushes past, and he is instantly alert. Is that Jacob going to his Shivkami? He comes out of the shed, and goes running all the way home. His house is quiet and dark. But Muniyandi, in a frantic fear, bangs his fist on the door. And a figure goes past swiftly from the back of the house and disappears into the darkness. It was not Jacob, but Shankaran, the man Muniyandi had trusted.

Early next morning a crowd gathers outside the cattleshed. Through the half open shutters of the windows placed high on the wall, the workers of the farm peer into the inner gloom.

where in a shaft of light, the dark, portly figure of Muniyandi hangs from the wooden beam. His lifeless body sways gently to and fro, the beam making a creaking noise. Shankaran lifts one of the shutters from outside, and Muniyandi's dead face confronts him with his own shame.

Shankaran runs away. He runs through the forest, pursued by the devil within, till the night gathers, and he falls down exhausted on the cushioned floor of the forest. At night, his two younger colleagues are making ready for bed in their quarters, when there is a frantic knock on the door. It is Shankaran, come back for penance. The men do not understand his state of mental and physical exhaustion. They put him to bed in one of their rooms, and he sleeps like the dead, escaping the horrors of the day for a few hours.

Guilt changes Shankaran's life. For a while he leaves his job and wanders in the city, rootless and alone. He becomes an alcoholic, going listlessly from one liquor den to another. His friends find him a job in a printing press in the city, where he sits dreaming over the proof sheets. But his life has stopped with Muniyandi. The swinging body and the creaking beam have kept him company ever since. The doctor he visits once in a while, never stops talking of religion. 'Read the Geeta', he says. But the devil within will not be subdued. 'Take a holiday', says the doctor. 'Go to a religious place, you'll find peace of mind.'

Shankaran goes wandering again. He goes to the Chidambaram temple, built on the spot where Lord Shiva was supposed to have been, transformed from the primordial phallus to the Nataraja, the cosmic dancer who liberates the human soul from its earthly shell. Coming out of the inner precincts of the temple, Shankaran stops to wear his shoes and pay the woman who sits looking after them at the entrance. She is a poor creature, huddled in a dark corner. Yet, when she lifts her face, Shankaran sees Shivkami. Old, worn out, with a horrible gash on her face, where Muniyandi had lashed out at her before killing himself.

Shankaran's life has come full circle. He has reached his journey's end.



## THE DIRECTOR

G. Aravindan is a painter and cartoonist. His paintings have been exhibited widely, and he has run the cartoon page of the Malayalam weekly **Mathrubhumi**, for thirteen years. In 1974 Aravindan made his first film, **Uttarayanam**, which received two National and six State Awards. For **Kanchana Sita**, made in 1977, and **Thamp**, made in 1978, Aravindan received the National and State Awards for excellence in direction. **Thamp** was also given a National Award for the Best Regional Film as well as the All India and State Critics Awards. **Esthappan**, made in 1979, was given the State Awards for the Best Film and excellence in direction, along with four other awards. **Kummatty**, also made in 1979, was judged the best children's film of the year. **Pokku Veyil**, which came in 1981, also brought Aravindan a State Award for excellence in direction, and a National Award. Aravindan's wide interests have led him to provide the background music for an experimental feature film in Malayalam, **Yaro Oral**. He has also been making documentaries for various national and international organizations. A long association with the stage has resulted in his producing plays for Thiruvarang, a group of drama enthusiasts, who concentrate on classical and folk dramatic forms. Aravindan has been an active member of the film society movement in Kerala from its very inception. He has also served as a member of the jury

for the VIII International Film Festival of India.



### **CHIDAMBARAM.**

1985/Colour/103 mins/Malayalam

Production: Suryakanithi Film Makers

Direction/Screenplay: G. Aravindan

Story: C.U. Sreeraman

Camera: Shaji

Music: Devarajan

Sound: Harikumar

Lead Players: Gopi, Smita Patil, Sreenivas,  
Mohan Das

Enquiries: G. Aravindan, 9/1733

Vellayambalam, Trivandrum 10, Kerala

# CHOPPER



Rajat is the younger son of a lower middle-class family in Calcutta. His father has retired and now lives on his monthly pension. His unmarried younger sister helps his mother at home. Rajat's elder brother, Shubhra, is a trade union leader. Though Rajat belongs to no political party, he admires his elder brother's leftist ideals and his moral superiority in this corrupt world. Rajat himself is, however, more concerned with getting a job. He has sent forty-nine applications for different jobs, and appeared for thirteen interviews. But a job still eludes him.

Reena comes from a similar background as Rajat's. She too is not political, and is essentially interested in having a life of her own - a home with Rajat, a job. She does not make a secret of her feelings for Rajat. It is Rajat who has doubts. He has to find

a job and look after his family. He has to arrange a marriage for his sister. And Shubhra has said that no relationship is meaningful without a shared ideology. Rajat is not sure if he has an ideology. But he admires his elder brother. He knows he will never make a revolutionary. He faints at the sight of the butcher killing a chicken.

But Shubhra, the backbone of the family, dies young. Speaking at union meeting, he is shot by unknown assassins during a police raid. Rajat suddenly finds that the burden of his family is now entirely on his shoulders. The only job that had come his way was on the basis of bribery. He did not take it. His family was disappointed, but Shubhra had stood by him then. Now he walks alone in his perennial search for employment. An interviewer asks him, what is the

most significant event in recent years? For him, the answer would be poverty, famine, exploitation, casteism. For his family it is the death of Shubhra. Except for his father, for whom nothing holds any significance any more.

Rajat goes to the Party office after Shubhra's death, to ask his comrades what they are going to do about his assassination. Nothing, they reply. They cannot go seeking revenge. Individual retribution was not what Shubhra stood for. The struggle is for the entire working class. The revolution will only be diffused through individual confrontation. Rajat comes away deeply disillusioned. He picks up his ambiguous relationship with Reena again. Reena has found a job. Rajat refuses her help when she offers to find a job for him through the boss of a rival union. He criticizes her middle-class aspirations, her modern clothes. But he is not able to provide her with any alternative.

The situation at home goes from bad to worse. They are surviving on Rajat's father's pension. Rajat's sister decides to take matters in her own hands. Rajat discovers that she has taken a 'job' with a girl he knew before, who has taken to respectable prostitution since then. He goes in a rage to meet the girl and accuses her of drawing Rajat's sister into her net. But the girl is defiant. Rajat's sister had approached her herself, she says, and what is wrong with earning a livelihood in these bad times? Rajat comes

home and forbids his sister from taking up the 'job'. Her sister reluctantly agrees, but not before registering her protest. It is better than dying from hunger, she says.

Rajat's family can no longer pay the electricity bills. The power is cut off. But life goes on, and the regression to lanterns is soon adjusted to with a sense of inevitability. Roaming the streets of the city, the quiet, sensitive Rajat finds his anger mounting daily. The suicide of a farmer's family due to starvation contrast rudely with the half-clad actresses smiling from the hoardings in the city. Corruption and disintegrating values stir him deeply. He faces a growing sense of helplessness.

His personal frustrations become unbearable when he hears that Reena has agreed to go and meet local political boss who may have been implicated in Shubhra's murder. The meeting in a hotel room would result in a better job for Reena. Rajat goes to meet Reena, who innocently tells him that there may be some good news soon. Rajat is revolted by this confirmation of his suspicions. He goes back home to pick up some of his treasured books, classics that his brother had gifted to him long ago, and sells them to the owner of a secondhand book stall. With the money, he buys a chopper. Tense with fear and nervousness, he takes the chopper home, locks himself in his room, and simulates his murderous intentions by chopping open a water-



melon. The red flesh of the fruit spatters on the wall of the room. To Rajat it looks like a trail of blood on the wall, with a piece of human brain sliding down slowly. That is the way he must kill Kamal Banerjee, who is waiting to take Reena in the hotel room. It will be his final act of protest against the injustice of his existence.

Grimly, Rajat goes to the hotel, up the lift to the room where Kamal Banerjee waits for Reena. Sweating with fear, the man keeps asking Rajat, 'Which Party do you belong to? Who has sent you?' He reasons desperately with Rajat once he knows that the boy is Shubhra's brother. 'Is this what he would have wanted of you? There are worse men than me in the system. How can you eliminate evil by killing one man?' As Rajat closes in on him, his chopper lifted menacingly, the telephone rings. Rajat instructs the man to pick it up. Then he snatches the receiver from his hands and listens to Reena's voice with a growing sense of relief. 'I cannot come to the hotel, she says. I'm sorry, but I cannot take a job on those terms.'

The words mean freedom for Rajat. Freedom from fear, and horror, from compromise and humiliation, from the hideous, irreversible act of murder. He lifts the chopper high in the air and gives a shout of joy. 'I'm no longer alone!' he says.

## THE DIRECTOR

Born in 1937, Nabyendu Chatterjee joined the film industry as an actor. But he gave up his acting career after a few years, and in 1962, became an assistant director, working with director Aurobindo Mukherjee. His first feature film was **Naya Rasta** in 1965. Made in Hindi, the film was not released for public exhibition. In 1968 he made **Adwitiya**, followed by **Chithi** in 1974, and **Ranur Pratham Bhaag** in 1974. In 1981 he made **Aaj-Kal-parshur Galpa**, following the disintegration of a Bengal village through the pre-war and post-war year.



1985/ Colour / 105 mins / Bengali  
Production: Zoom Enterprise  
Direction/ Screenplay: Nabyendu Chatterjee  
Story: Ajay Bhattacharya  
Camera: Pantoo Nag  
Music: Nikhil Chatterjee  
Sound: Durga Mitra  
Lead Players: Jay Banerjee, Shreela Mazumdar, Shobha Sen, Karunakanta Bhattacharya, Pradip Mukherjee  
Enquiries: Zoom Enterprise, 87 Indra Biswas Road, Calcutta 700 037

# DAMUL

## BONDED UNTIL DEATH



In the Ganges belt of Bihar there exists the system of panha, which literally means 'shelter and protection', but in actual terms is a manipulative process by which poor farmers and labourers are made into bonded slaves. The mechanism is simple and diabolical. When a labourer dies, his son is made to sign a piece of paper acknowledging the debts of his forefathers to the rich landlord. The illiterate labourer puts the imprint of his thumb on the paper and is bonded for life, for he must pay to the landlord the interest on the perhaps fictitious loan, the amount of which far exceeds the original loan. To strengthen his grip on the labourer, the landlord then involves him in some petty crime which is a plant. When the police come, the landlord gives him shelter and promises to protect him, on condition that he agrees to take

part in criminal acts on behalf of the landlord. The helpless labourer is forced to accept the landlord's terms, for the ruthlessness of the police and the horrors of a jail sentence frighten him into submission. For the rest of his life he must steal cattle for the landlord to pay back his debts. The stolen cattle are deposited with an agent who informs the owner to come and release the cattle by paying a certain arbitrarily fixed sum of money. If the owner cannot produce the money, the cattle are sold in the open market. If he disputes the amount, influential men of the locality sit in the panchayat. As the men who sit on judgement are most often the men who have instigated the theft, the verdict is invariably unjust.

This is the backdrop against which the story of **Damul** unfolds. It is the story of a poor labourer, Sanjeevana, and his

wife Rajuli, victims by birth of an inescapable cycle of oppression, and their tragic attempts to free themselves from it.

Bachcha Singh, a local politician who aspires to becoming the village chief, soon realizes that the only way to fight the influence of the present Mukhiya, Madho, is to talk the untouchables into setting up their own candidate against Madho in the elections. He chooses an old Harijan, Gokhul, as the sacrificial lamb. In a panic, Madho, who heads the Brahmin camp, sends Sanjeevana's father, Punai, to Bilaspur to collect country-made firearms to intimidate the Harijans. But Madho's younger brother, Radho, discovers that Punai has betrayed them, and arranges to murder him as he is returning to his village.

The election is a one-sided affair. Radho's men hold up the entire Harijan community, while the Brahmins openly indulge in false voting in their names. The Rajputs who were willing to stand by Bachcha Singh, lose heart and refuse to get involved in a confrontation with Radho's gang of hooligans. Madho wins the election. As they celebrate the victory, Punai's body is discovered in the fields. Bachcha Singh uses the opportunity to incite the Harijans once more, but they are too scared to go to the police. As far as they are concerned, the police have never been on their side anyway.

As the dust of the elections settle Madho's manager, Runnu, begins his intrigue against Punai's son, Sanjee-

vana. Madho's men cut down his crops and take away his oxen. In desperation, Sanjeevana appeals to Madho. That is when he first hears of his father's debts. Pretending to be a benign and understanding master, Madho produces the paper on which Sanjeevana must sign as a promise to pay back his father's debts. Soon after, Runnu arranges for a theft to be committed in Keshav Pandey's home. The local policeman arrives on the scene, and, as part of the plan, Keshav implicates Sanjeevana. One of Madho's men now advise Sanjeevana to ask Madho for shelter before the police get to him.

Sanjeevana is kept hidden in Madho's granary while the policeman is taken care of. But Sanjeevana's gratitude gives way to fear and resentment when Madho comes and proposes that Sanjeevana must take to stealing cattle for the landlord to pay for his protection. When Sanjeevana refuses, Madho points out that in that case he will have to sell off his land and cattle to pay back the loan, as well as be on the run from the police. The trap closes in, and Sanjeevana has no alternative but to agree to Madho's terms.

Sanjeevana starts stealing cattle for Madho's agents. For every head of cattle, the manager writes off fifty rupees from his loan. At this juncture, Mahatmaeen returns to the village. Mahatmaeen is a still young but a faded Brahmin widow who has been used by Madho who also unofficially looks after her land. Illness has brought her



back from a self-imposed exile in Varanasi. The villagers are happy to see her back. But Madho, sensing that she may cause trouble for him, comes to remind her of his hold on her, and his claims on her body.

Two labourers from the village who had gone away to work in Punjab, come back with a lot of money. Among the Harijans there is much talk about leaving for Punjab where there is more work and a better chance of survival. Bachcha Singh quietly incites them to move out of the village, for then Radho, who has been working as a contractor for a canal site, will be short of hands, and consequently in trouble. With possible escape in sight, the labourers are restless. At the canal site Radho's manager refuses to employ a poor pregnant woman, and accidentally hurts her as he swings his stick to threaten her. For once, the Harijans lose their submissiveness and gather together angrily. Radho manages to save the situation, but in the process becomes aware of their seething unrest.

In the meanwhile cattle thieves steal the oxen of Nageena. Sanjeevana's brother-in-law Nageena comes to Sanjeevana for help, and together they make an appeal to Madho. At the meeting of the panchayat where the amount of money Nageena must pay to release the oxen is negotiated, Madho puts the blame squarely on Nageena by implying that it is through Nageena's own carelessness that the oxen were lost, and so it is only right that he pays for their release. Nageena

is five hundred rupees short of the required amount. Madho generously offers to pay the difference, and Nageena too becomes his bonded slave, stealing cattle to pay him back.

The situation in the village worsens as Mahatmaen refuses to accept the paltry bag of rice given by Madho and threatens to take back her land. Meanwhile Bachcha Singh promises to loan the labourers the train fare to go to Punjab. Madho meets his brother and discusses the mounting restlessness in the villages. Radho is impatient to force a confrontation with the Harijans. Madho tries vainly to dissuade him.

Nageena and Sanjeevana go to steal cattle. The villagers wake up and give them chase. While fleeing, Nageena is shot, and Sanjeevana carries him to Madho's home. Unhappy with the turn of events, Madho washes his hands of the incident, and tells his manager to get rid of the body. He turns a deaf ear to Sanjeevana's pleas for help, and his claim that Nageena has died in order to pay his debts to the landlord. Sanjeevana returns home a shattered man.

The Harijans going to Punjab are intercepted by Radho's men. When they resist, they are shot at. The fleeing Harijans are chased by the hired hooligans who ransack their settlement in the village. Bachcha Singh quietly watches the developments, and advises the Rajputs against any involvement. He also forbids the Harijans to touch any of the corpses

till the police come. Furious and cornered, Madho asks his brother to go into hiding, and concentrates on silencing Bachcha Singh. They meet at the village temple at night, and Bachcha Singh is bought over with political carrots. When the police arrive, the carnage is blamed on bandits, and the Harijans, misled by Bachcha Singh, give conflicting evidence. Sanjeevana protests, but Madho manages to remove him from the scene before he is heard. The minister arrives and concludes that it is all the result of a conspiracy by the opposition parties. Outraged by the course of events, Mahatmaeen threatens to go to the court and stand witness against the Brahmins. Sanjeevana gets a message that Mahatmaeen wants to see him. When he arrives at her lonely home, he finds her lying dead — raped and murdered by Madho and his men. As he stands staring at Mahatmaeen's lifeless body, Madho's men make a timely appearance. Sanjeevana is arrested, and a long, dreary trial finds him guilty of the charges.

Sanjeevana is sentenced to death. The Harijans dare not raise their voice in his support, for Madho has produced eye-witnesses for the event. Sanjeevana's wife Rajuli, a silent witness to the continuing cycle of oppression, returns from the court to her dark and empty home. The gathering night sharpens her hopelessness into passionate protest, till she carries her anger in her hands to Madho's house. The sharp blade of Rajuli's knife descends on Madho in a final act of retribution.

## THE DIRECTOR

Prakash Jha came to Bombay to learn painting, but found himself in the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune, where he completed a course in film editing in 1976. Since then he has independently produced and directed several films for international television networks as well as for distribution in India. Before he made **Pas de Deux** in 1981, a one-hour biographical account of a ballerina in England, which was telecast abroad, Prakash Jha made **Rhythms of a Land and Its People** in 1976 on Goa; **Darpok ki Dosti**; a children's film, in 1977; **Friends Together** for Films Division in 1978, and **Ode to the Child** in 1979. Back in India he made **Faces after the Storm** in 1982, which won him a National Award that year. **Sri Vatsa** and **May I Think Sir** followed, the last film an interpretation of intellectual slavery in our country. In 1984 Jha made his first feature film, **Hip Hip Hurray**, which won him the Lions Club Best Director Award. His second feature film, **Damul**, was awarded the Swarna Kamal as the best Feature Film of the year. It also won the Filmfare Critics' Award for 1985. Prakash Jha was also chosen the Best Director of 1984 by the All India Film Awards Association.



1984/Colour/125 mins/Hindi  
Production/Direction/Screenplay: Prakash Jha  
Story: Shaiwal  
Camera: Rajen Kothari  
Editing: Apurwa Yagnik  
Music: Raghunath Seth  
Sound: A.M. Padmanabhan  
Art Direction: Gautam Sen, Prabhat Jha  
Lead Players: Manohar Singh, Shreela Mazumdar, Annu Kapoor, Deepti Naval  
Enquiries: Prakash Jha Productions, 603 Oceanic 1, Seven Bungalow Road, Versova, Bombay 400 061



# JANAM

## BIRTH



Rahul is the son of Virendra Desai, an erstwhile highly successful film director, who is now virtually forgotten in the industry, and carries on his frail shoulders a huge burden of debts. Rahul knows that his father has another wife who stays in his old home with Rahul's grandmother and his step-brothers and sisters. Rahul has never been able to accept that for some reason, his status is dubious in the family. His mother seems to suffer all hardships with great patience and an undying loyalty towards his father. But Rahul has grown to dislike his father, even if his attitude hurts his mother deeply. In the flat where Rahul stays, the telephone bills remain unpaid till the line is disconnected. The same day, at the studio, Virendra is harassed by a debtor and gives his car away as payment of the loan.

Soon afterwards, Virendra falls off a ladder while shooting, and fractures his leg. Rahul and his mother hear of the accident and learn that Virendra has been taken to his other home to convalesce. Rahul's mother insists that he must go and give his father an amulet that will hasten the healing process. When Rahul goes to his stepmother's home, he is met with unstinted scorn from his stepmother and his grandmother. The step brother ignores him. Only his father is glad to see him. But before he can put the amulet under his pillow, Virendra's mother and his other wife create a scene, accusing Rahul's mother of casting an evil spell on Virendra.

Shocked and angry, Rahul comes back to his flat only to discover that another humiliation awaits him there. Virendra has not paid the tax for the

flat for six months, and the other householders in the apartment house shower sarcasm on the young boy. These film people are not to be trusted, they say. Rahul storms out of the meeting, but where will he find the money? He goes to his stepmother's home, where his father is still convalescing. The stepmother produces the money, but her sharp tongue hurts Rahul and he leaves without accepting the money. He goes and takes a loan from his dear friend, Ashgar. When he gets back home, he finds his father there, on a fleeting visit on his way home from the doctor. He has heard of his son's plight, he says. He has even brought the required money. Haltingly he tries to explain his predicament to his son, and promises that the telephone bills too will now get paid. When he rises to go, his physical weakness strikes a chord of sympathy in Rahul's heart.

When he demands an explanation from his mother for her long suffering attitude, she only tells him that Virendra married her against the wishes of his mother, who insisted on his marrying a girl of her choice afterwards.

In spite of all his resentment towards his father, Rahul's one ambition in life is to be a successful film director. His father has consistently tried to dissuade him from a path which has affected his own life so adversely. But Rahul tells him categorically that his mind is made up on the subject. His friend, Ashgar, is keen to help him, and tries to raise money from all sorts

of sources. One day Ashgar takes him to a party where Rahul meets Rohini, a shy, young girl, with an innocent freshness about her. Rahul takes her back to the hostel where she lives, and in a mad impulse, says that he will wait outside till she opens her window and waves good-bye. Rohini, who cannot believe that he is serious, goes to bed without opening the window. In the morning, waking up from sleep, she swings open the glass panes and spies Rahul sitting patiently on the grass in the park outside. Rahul waves at her cheerfully, and walks away. She waves back, with a hesitant smile dawning on her face.

Through his days of despair and unhappiness, Rahul keeps coming back to Rohini. He climbs up to her window and they steal into the terrace to talk. For Rohini has a roommate sleeping in her room. Rohini, who is herself an orphan, can understand Rahul's loneliness. But as she gets to know him better, and their love for each other grows stronger, Rohini slowly drags Rahul away from the mire of self-pity, and acquaints him with his own inner strength.

Rahul's grandmother dies, and his mother insists that he should be present during the cremation. Reluctantly Rahul goes to his stepmother's house where he is treated like an outcast. His father watches in helpless silence, as his stepbrother pulls Rahul away from the room where the old woman's body lies, and abuses him. Unable to bear his dubious position in society, Rahul

bitterly complains against the unfairness of the treatment meted out to him in his father's other house. For the first time, his mother turns to Rahul and tells him the unpalatable truth. Rahul's mother, Nalini, and Virendra, had never had a formal marriage. "But once he took me by his side," says Nalini "he never left me." Virendra has been all that a husband and father should be, says Rahul's mother. But Rahul is not satisfied. In a stormy interview with his father he insists that Virendra should legally marry Nalini, and give him the status of a legal heir. But Virendra, weakened by years of struggle, cannot flout the norms of society. And Rahul promises himself that he will not accept a single paisa from his father any more. But he will show the world that he too can live a worthwhile life, can be a fulfilled human being who is part of the society that has made him an outcaste.

Rahul starts living with Rohini in Ashgar's garage. He also throws himself heart and soul into making his first film. And finally, rejecting the formula-ridden contrived imitations of reality, decides to make a film based on his own life. Fortune smiles upon him at last, and a financier comes forward to help him. Rahul's film is completed and exhibited in the local cinemas. The audience is moved by the emotional authenticity of the story and its inherent realism. The film is highly successful in the box office, and Rahul wins the best director's award for the year. It is indeed a

golden moment in Rahul's life. At the awards ceremony, Virendra, as a veteran and respected director, is asked to hand over the award to Rahul. For Virendra it is a moment of great pride. Acknowledging his son's great talent, he publicly announces that he will be happy and honoured to be remembered as Rahul's father from now on.



## THE DIRECTOR

Son of a well-known filmmaker, Nanabhai Bhatt, Mahesh Bhatt was born in 1948 in Bombay. His directorial career started with **Manzilein Aur Bhi Hai** in 1974. In later years he made **Vishwasghaat**, **Naya Daur** and **Lahoo Ke Do Rang** all of which were films in the conventionally-accepted style of the commercial Hindi cinema. His career changed course with **Arth**, based on the dilemma of an ambitious man torn between two women, one his wife, the other his mistress. **Arth**, where the female characters were stronger than the male protagonist, was hailed as a realistic study of male hypocrisy. It was followed by **Saaransh**, a sensitive portrayal of the loneliness of old age, a dawning sense of fulfilment through freedom from the prison of personal grief, and an acceptance of a wider, humanistic view of life. **Janam**, his latest film, was originally made for television, and has an autobiographical slant.



1985/ Colour/ 143 mins/ Hindi  
Production: Mudra Videotec Productions  
Direction/ Story: Mahesh Bhatt  
Screenplay: Suraj Sanim Camer  
Camera: Pravin Bhatt  
Editing: Renu Saluja  
Music: Ajit Verma  
Art Direction: M.S. Shinde  
Sound: Niyogi

Lead Players: Kumar Gaurav, Shernaz Patel,  
Anita Kanwar, Akash Khurana, Anupam Kher,  
Madan Jain, Deepak Qazir, Avtar Gill, Ha  
Aroon

# KILIPPATT

## SONG OF THE PARROT



In a village in North Kerala, known for its ancient temples and folk arts, the annual festival is in progress. The Komaram, the keeper of the village temple, is dressed up in a colourful costume and ornaments for the occasion. The main attraction of the festival is the Theyyam, a folk dance in which men wear masks and massive, colourful costumes depicting different characters. The Komaram, who will join the dance at its last phases, now sits waiting for the dancers to approach the temple. Following an ancient custom, the dancers move towards the temple well, and stop at its edge. And then the unexpected happens. The mutilated body of a young woman is seen floating in the well. It is an ill omen, and the festival comes to an abrupt end. In the confusion, the villagers recognize the body as that of the Komaram's daughter, who has

been missing for some days. Kannan, the village gossip, runs to the Komaram to give him the bad news before spreading it in the entire village.

No one knows if it is an accident, a suicide or a murder. Somehow the story gains ground that it is actually a murder. The next stage is to identify the murderer. Pappan, a Union leader and an employee in the beedi factory in the village is absent during the event. The factory owner, Valla Nambiar, takes this as a blessing in disguise. Between Nambiar and the corrupt representative of the village in the panchayat, they spread the rumour that it is Pappan who has murdered the girl and run away. They have no difficulty in convincing the Komaram about Pappan's guilt, because of some recent events.

The Komaram's daughter, Devu, was

quite close to Pappan. Her dancing, to the accompaniment of Pappan's songs, had charmed the villagers many a time. But Devu was ambitious. When Nambiar's young son had come from Bombay he had promised to make her a film star. He had even promised to marry the girl. Innocent of the way of the world, Devu had been drawn to this smooth talking, handsome character from the city. Pappan was furious when he learnt about the goings on. He even threatened Nambiar's son with physical harm, till the Komaram intervened. Subsequently, when Pappan came home, he quarrelled with Devu who was in no mood to listen to him. In a sudden rage, Pappan almost strangled the girl in front of her father.

The whole village starts believing in Pappan's guilt. One day, early in the morning, Pappan returns to the village. Unaware of all the drama that has been surrounding his absence, he is surprised to find that the villagers refuse to talk to him, and throw him unfriendly glances. He finally learns the truth when he stops at the tea shop. But when he protests his innocence no one believes him. Pappan rushes to the Komaram's house, but the old man beats him up and locks him in a room. He goes to fetch the villagers, but Pappan manages to escape with the help of a neighbour. Pappan goes to all his old friends for help, but finds that everyone of them believes him to be the murderer. Even his mother refuses to listen to him, for did not the police find the dead girl's earrings among his things? Pappan alone knows that those were the

earrings he had given Devu one day, which she returned to him after their quarrel. Pappan cannot prove his innocence, and is arrested by the police.

Pappan has only a few friends left, a young boy who works in the factory, the village school master and Moidu, the good-hearted old Muslim who survives by buying old tins, bottles and papers and selling them elsewhere. The three of them get together and arrange for a lawyer to defend Pappan, but Pappan dies in the police lock-up, and it is announced as a suicide.

In the village, the factory owner and the member of the panchayat launch a fund collection drive for the Komaram. The Komaram, who was living off his daughter's occasional dance performances in neighbouring villages, is now starving. In a public function arranged by the factory owner, the Komaram is given twenty-five thousand rupees. Suddenly he is a rich man, and therefore, socially much sought after. The money goes to his head, and he starts feeling important. He even gives away to the panchayat member a thousand rupees. To please Nambiar who got him all the money, the Komaram decides to arrange a feast in his honour. By now almost a year has passed and the Komaram has blissfully forgotten his tragic past.

The day of the annual festival draws near. The night before the festival begins, the whole village has already started celebrating with folk dances



and dramatic performances. The Komaram has invited Nambiar and the panchayat member to his home for a feast. In the light of the dim electric lamp-for the Komaram has even electrified his house-the three men sit and drink together. The Komaram is being teased about his interest in Kunhipparu, a middle-aged spinster who lives nearby, when the electricity goes off suddenly. The Komaram lights an oil lamp which throws huge shadows on the walls of the room. Just then there is a knock on the door. Must be Kunhipparu, one of them comments. Holding the lamp in his hand, the Komaram opens the door with a wide grin on his face. Devu is standing outside.

At first the Komaram cannot believe his eyes. Is it a result of all that drinking? But it is Devu all right. As she pleads with her father to allow her to come inside, Nambiar and his friends escape from the house. Both of them are aware that the return of the girl would mean that they would get into trouble over Pappan's conviction and death.

Devu explains to her father that she had run away with Nambiar's son in the hope of a career as a dancer, and a better life. But finally she was thrown into a brothel from where she has now escaped.

Now the Komaram too is in a fix. His daughter was believed to be dead. Her alleged killer died in the lock-up. The public donated a substantial amount of money for his survival and well-being. Now, if they find Devu alive, they

will stone to death both father and daughter. The Komaram meets the panchayat member and Nambiar secretly. The Theyyam is being performed in front of the temple, watched by the villagers. Devu lies asleep in her father's house. Two hands holding a pillow move towards Devu's face. As the beat of the dance escalates in the temple, the pillow is pressed down on Devu's face.

The next day a huge crowd collects around the temple. The ritual dancing is about to reach its final stage. The Komaram, who should have been present, is not to be found, and finally a substitute takes his place in the dance. Suddenly, the Komaram rushes in and snatches the sword from his substitute. He starts a frenzied dance which becomes a wild shaking to the beat of the music. The crowd watch enthralled. They are convinced that the spirit of the goddess has taken over the Komaram's body. The Komaram runs towards the temple well, scattering the villagers. He looks into the well and starts shaking faster, beating his sword against his own forehead, till the blood wells out, and his lifeless body falls into the well. When the villagers rush to take him out of the well, they discover another body in it — that of Devu's.

The villagers will never know the truth behind the tragedy. But there is one who knows the truth — the little green parrot who has a nest on top of the tree overlooking the sacred well.

## THE DIRECTOR

After completing his academic education in "Gandhigram", Madurai, Raghavan studied under Ebrahim Alkazi in the National School of Drama and Asian Theatre Institute, New Delhi.

In 1968, he joined the well-known director, G.V. Iyer in Madras and worked with him in his production **Chowkadee Deepa**. He later started acting in Malayalam films, of which he has completed more than a hundred. Among these, **Abhayam, Chembarathy, Hridayam Oru Kshethram** and **Vadakkai Oru Hridayam** received critical acclaim. He makes his directorial debut with **Kilippatt**.

Raghavan is 44 and he lives in Madras with his wife and two children.



1985/Colour/121 mins/Malayalam

Production: Revathy Chitra

Direction/Screenplay: Raghavan

Story: K.M. Raghavan Nambiar

Camera: Vipin Das

Music: M.B. Srinivasan

Sound: Moosa

Lead Players: Bharat, Nedumudy Venu,

Sukumaran, K.P. Ummer, Sabitha Anand,

Balan K. Nair, Adoor Bhasi, Philomina,

Chandran Nair

Enquires: Raghavan, 138 7th Street, I Sector,

K.K. Nagar, Madras 600 078

# KLANTA APARANHA

## TIRED AFTERNOON



Adikanda leads a retired life in a small village in Orissa. His home is an old brick structure with peeling walls and a large inner courtyard. His octogenerian mother sits all day huddled on the verandah facing the inner courtyard. She takes childlike pleasure in the comings and goings, and waits for the day when her granddaughter will be married.

Adikanda frequents the small railway station of the village, where he sits and gossips with Vinod Babu, the Station Master. His childhood friend Judu, one day comes back from the city after visiting his son and getting a medical check-up done, with a proposal of marriage for Adikanda's daughter, Niru. Niru teaches in the village school along with two other young girls, Sandhya and Veena. Sandhya and Veena stay together in a rented house in the village, where the three

friends meet often and exchange notes. Sandhya, whose parents stay in another village, waits for the letters of Ashok who wants to marry her.

Adikanda's son brings a pair of glasses from the city where he works, for his grandmother. The old woman is delighted. She puts on the glasses and shows her toothless gums as she laughs heartily. The family prepare to entertain people from the city who will come to see Niru prior to deciding on the marriage. Adikanda arranges for a loan by mortgaging a plot of land that he owns. After all there will be a dowry to think of.

Walking down the village road with his friend Adikanda, Judu collapses in a fit of coughing. Next day he is dead. The villagers wipe their tears and go back to their daily struggle for survival. Adikanda goes to the village



astrologer and checks up his daughter's horoscope, so that this time there is no hitch in Niru's marriage. After all, other proposals have come before.

The family affair where Niru is to be inspected for eligibility, is shared by her friend Sandhya who comes to give her moral support. The guests are entertained with food. Niru's praises are sung, and the two families part in an amicable mood. Yet, the problem of the dowry will have to be sorted out. The whole family wait for a letter from the city; they also plan for the wedding. But the groom's family are not happy with what Adikanda can offer as dowry, and finally the marriage has to be called off. For Niru and the family it is all part of a rather sad routine. But the old grandmother bursts into tears. Now she will never live to see Niru married, she wails in childish disappointment. 'Why do you cry?' says her son. 'There will be other marriage proposals.'

Ashok comes to visit Sandhya. They stand talking on a lonely village road, far apart from each other, with a growing wall of disappointment between them. Ashok's family are pressurizing him to get married to a girl of their choice. Ashok still wants to marry Sandhya, but how long can he wait? For years now, Sandhya has been avoiding making up her mind about their relationship, for, back in her village, her entire family depend on her income alone for survival. How can she get married and leave them to their fate so heartlessly? Sandhya

cannot go away with Ashok and start a life of her own as long as she is inextricably tied to her own past. Ashok must leave, and this time it will not be a temporary parting.

In the closed-in atmosphere of the village, it does not take long for gossip to spread. Sandhya's association with Ashok gets blown out of proportion, and she is accused by the school authorities of immoral behaviour. For Sandhya, humiliation is added to the pain of losing Ashok. Pressurized by the school authorities, Sandhya resigns from her job. She packs her bags and decides to leave for her own village, where she hopes to get a job in the newly built lower primary school. Niru comes to see her and is sad to hear of her departure. She herself tells Sandhya that her marriage is off. For both the girls it is only a repetition of a familiar tale whose sadness has become bearable because it is part of a lifelong struggle against odds.

Sandhya leaves, Niru goes back to her work. The old grandmother sits dreaming of the day her granddaughter will marry. Life goes on in the village, and once more the village astrologer comes looking for Adikanda with a new proposal of marriage for Niru.

## THE DIRECTOR

Manmohan Mahapatra graduated from Utkal University in Orissa, and went on to study film direction at the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune. He completed his course at Pune in 1975, and made his first feature film, **Seeta Raati** in 1976

**Seeta Raat** won a National Award in 1982, and has been screened in the Indian Film Fete in Paris at the Pompidou Centre, and at Montreal in Canada. His second film, **Neeraba**

**Jhada**, made in 1984, won two National Awards the same year. The film has been shown in the Pesaro Festival, the Cork Film Festival, and been selected for the Festival Of India

in the United States. **Klanta Aparanha** has received the National Award for the Best Oriya Film of the year. Manmohan Mahapatra is currently busy completing his fourth feature film, **Kuhudi**. He has also made two documentary films, **Voices of Silence** and **Konarak — The Sun Temple**.



1985/Colour/95 mins/Oriya  
Production: Dynamic Studios Private Limited  
Direction/Screenplay: Manmohan Mahapatra  
Story: Nandalal Mahapatra  
Camera: Ranajit Ray  
Editing: Satyendra Mohanty  
Music: Shantanu Mahapatra  
Art Direction: Banchhanidhi Patnaik  
Sound: Sibasundar Rath  
Lead Players: Satchidananda Rath, Kanak Panigrahi, Madhu Kar, Kishori Devi, Master Sushil  
Enquiries: Sudhansu Sekhar Rath, Managing Director, Dynamic Studios Private Limited, 788 Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar 751 007.

# MAYURI

## MAYURI



Mayuri was the eldest daughter of Venkateswarulu. Her mother, who was a dancer, had died tragically when the auditorium where she was giving a performance, caught fire accidentally. Before she died, Mayuri's mother had herself been consumed by a sense of guilt about her dancing, for her father had died while she was away from home during another such performance. Mayuri, however, grew up nursing an intense desire to be a dancer. But in the meanwhile, her father had married again, and Mayuri's stepmother, having learnt of the tragic association of the family with dance, refused to allow Mayuri to learn dancing, or even to see a performance.

But dancing was in Mayuri's blood. Her father who sympathised with her

could do nothing to help her because he was a weak man, and afraid of his wife's wrath. Mayuri's step brother and sister were too young to give her any active support. Her grandmother kept herself aloof from the family quarrels as far as possible, and though her sympathies were with Mayuri, she knew no way to help the girl pursue her ambitions.

Persuaded by her friends, Mayuri participated in a dance drama in her college. Her talent drew the attention of Mohan who studied in the same college, and whose mother ran a dancing school. Encouraged by Mohan and his mother, Mayuri started taking formal training in the school, but kept it a secret from her family. Quite by accident, Mayuri's father learnt her secret. But he maintained his silence,



not wishing to unleash a storm on his daughter's head.

As her training progressed, Mayuri's interest in Mohan underwent transformation. Friendship grew into love. Mohan promised to marry her and arrange public performance for her. Secure in her love, Mayuri could face her stepmother's anger with a new strength. Only, Mohan's mother seemed uncomfortable about the growing relationship between Mayuri and her son. She knew her son well, and tried to warn Mayuri about Mohan. But Mayuri was floating on a cloud of happiness. Mohan arranged a programme for her and Mayuri created a sensation. At home she faced the wrath of her stepmother with the tacit support of her father and grandmother. Then tragedy struck. One day on a drive, with Mohan's reckless hands on the wheel, Mayuri was involved in an accident. When she gained consciousness in the hospital, she discovered that the doctors had had to amputate her right leg from the knee.

Her dancing career was over forever. As she convalesced at home, Mayuri became increasingly aware of her stepmother's hostility. It would be impossible to arrange a marriage for Mayuri now. And till she is married, how can the younger daughter marry? Even if the younger daughter is married, will Mayuri remain forever a useless burden on the family? To make matters worse, Mayuri realized that Mohan was avoiding seeing her. Sensing her unhappiness, Venkates-

warlu went to see Mohan, only to discover that Mohan was no longer interested in the crippled Mayuri. Dissatisfied with the vague excuses that her father was making on Mohan's behalf, Mayuri decided to go and see Mohan herself. In Mohan's home desperately clutching her crutches, Mayuri watched as Mohan flirted with an unknown girl in the lawn. Faced by Mayuri, Mohan had no compunctions about telling her that nothing could be the same between them now that she had become a cripple.

The shock that could have killed her, gave Mayuri a new determination to survive. With the help of the old retainer, Subbaraju, Mayuri left home to seek her fortunes. Help came in the shape of Vasantha, a college friend, and her husband. And then, one day in the park she met Dr Thambu, who told her about the 'Jaipur foot', an artificial limb that the doctor himself wore. But it would cost money, and without telling Mayuri, Subbaraju wrote to Mayuri's grandmother. The astute old woman threatened to sell the house and go on a pilgrimage, thus coercing her daughter-in-law to part with the money that Mayuri needed. Without saying a word to Venkateswarulu or his wife, the old woman started off for Mayuri's new home, with the money.

Fitted with an artificial limb at Jaipur, Mayuri begins her long and painful journey towards a normal existence. But the limb only allows her to walk, and Mayuri must dance again. Frustrated

## THE DIRECTOR

Singitham Srinivasa Rao is a Physics graduate from Madras University. He started his career in films as an associate director to the late K.V.Reddy. His first feature film was **Neethi Nilayiti**. He was also the Executive director of Pattabi Rama Reddy's **Samskara** in Kannada. Rao has directed several films since then and received awards for many of his films. Among his more well-known films are, **America Ammayi**, **Sommo-kadi Sokokadidhi**, **Amavasya Chandrudu**, **Panthulamma**, and **Taram Marindi**, all in Telugu; **Dikkatra Parvathi** and **Raja Parvai** in Tamil; **Haalu Jenu**, and **Chelusura Modajalu** in Kannada; and **Nira Parayum Milavilakkum** in Malayam **Taram Marindi** was given the Nandi Award for the Best Telugu Film **Panthulamma** also received four Nandi Awards. **Haalu Jenu** was the recipient of a State Award for the Best Kannada Film, and **Dikkatra Parvathi** received a National Award as well as a Filmfare Award.



1985/Colour/135 mins/Telugu  
Production: Bamoji Rao  
Direction: Singitham Srinivasa Rao  
Screenplay: Ganesh Patro  
Camera: A. Hari  
Music: S.P. Balasubrahmanyam  
Sound: Jeeva  
Lead Players: Sudha Chandran, Subhakar,  
P.L. Narayana, Y. Vijaya, Nirmala  
Enquiries: M/s. Ushakiron Movies, Eenadu  
Compound, Somajiguda, Hyderabad 500 004

trated and unhappy, she goes back to the hospital once again. 'If you have the will, we shall find the way,' says Dr Sethi, and he designs a new leg that will answer to the rigorous needs of dancing.

The process of adjustment is even longer this time, and Mayuri must transcend her physical pain to fulfil her ambition of dancing again. When Mayuri appears on stage, she is as fleet-footed as ever, and her extraordinary achievement is witnessed by the now repentant Mohan, and Mayuri's father. Filled with pride at her daughter's courage and determination, Venkateswarulu is yet not able to face her in public. Ashamed of his own inability to stand by her in her days of needs, he walks away from the performance silently. When Mayuri runs up to him, he acknowledges her right to independence, and giving her his blessings, leaves.

At Mayuri's new home, Mohan comes to ask for forgiveness, Mayuri rejects him, and is freed at last from the ghosts of her past. Alone in her room she dances with abandon, while the bewildered Mohan stands helplessly watching outside.

The film was inspired by the real-life story of Sudha, a young dancer, who met with a bus accident in 1981 and lost her right leg. Undeterred, she went to Jaipur and was fitted with an artificial limb by the Magsaysay Award winner, Dr P.C.Sethi. For months she struggled and finally succeeded in

giving a dance performance wearing her artificial limb. In the film, the role of Mayuri is played by Sudha herself.



ers. His daughter was married to a man who treated her badly. So she stayed with her father everytime things got too unbearable. And there was his nephew, who looked after the cattle, a dreamy-eyed boy who was in love with the local cobbler's daughter. But Chellakannu's love for the pretty Sevili was a secret. They met in the lonely fields or at the river's edge at night, where Chellakannu would play his flute and Sevili would tease him with childish pranks.

One day a fisherman and his young daughter, Kuyil, came to stay in the village. Malaichamy generously allowed them to build a little hut near the river on his land. Kuyil was a pretty young thing with a sharp tongue. In the day she sold fish in the village, and occasionally, hiding among the tall grass, would pick up a tune that Malaichamy had been singing. Between them they kept up a merry banter, and their friendship grew. Malaichamy was much older than her, and refused to think of her as anything but a child. But Kuyil was a grown up young woman, and what she felt for Malaichamy was not the simple affection of friendship. She watched Ponnatha treating her husband badly, humiliating him in public by saying that Malaichamy was a penniless lad when he married her for money. Kuyil was a good cook, and aware of how deprived Malaichamy was, would tempt him to come and eat with her. She did not ask for anything except the opportunity to give Malaichamy some happiness.

It all started as a joke. Kuyil dared

Malaichamy to lift a huge stone near her home, and said that if he succeeded, she would marry him. He joined in her laughter, but every once in a while gave the stone a try, secretly, just to prove to himself that he was still young. One day, Kuyil saw him actually lift the stone. He did not come to tell her about it, but for Kuyil, from then on, there could be no other man in her life. There was no point in her telling the man how she felt. Malaichamy was no longer young, and he had a family. He would not even admit to himself his own feelings for the girl.

Meanwhile one day Sevili's father arranged the marriage of her daughter to a boy from another village. With Kuyil's help, the young lovers prepared to run away from the village. Discovering that his nephew was involved in the affair, Malaichamy came to the river to catch them. It was Kuyil who reasoned and argued with him till his rage had left him, and he had allowed his nephew to marry the low-caste cobbler's daughter.

Chellakannu and Sevili were very happy together. They spent their days together in the fields and forests and the sandy banks of the river. It had always been Sevili's dream to stand at the edge of the horizon. One day, as Chellakannu played the flute, Sevili started running towards the horizon. But the horizon kept moving further and further away, and her tired feet finally stopped at the water's edge. Hot with all the exercise, Sevili

## MUDHAL MARIYADHAI PRIME HONOUR



Worn out with old age and illness, Malaichamy awaits death in a small hut at the edge of the river. Back in his spacious ancestral home, the villagers gather sorrowfully. His wife, Ponnatha, the village shrew, raves and rants at the villagers. Malaichamy should be dying in his own home, she says, not in that slut Kuyil's hut near the river. But the villagers know that Malaichamy will not come away from that hut. He will even stave away death as long as he can, in the hope of meeting Kuyil again. They finally manage to coax Ponnatha and her daughter to go to the hut with them. The daughter stands crying near Malaichamy's rope cot, but the old man will not stir. His wife sits down to continue with her complaints against her dying husband. Malaichamy does not open his eyes.

Once, many years ago, Malaichamy

was a robust and merry man, a benign landowner, who knew how to look after his own workers. He was loved and respected by the villagers, many of whom worked in his fields. They would all join him when he went singing along the village path, a strong, yet humble man, with a simple, uncomplicated view of life.

At home, however, he had very little cause to be happy. His wife was a shrew who had never tried to be a good housewife. She was a vulgar creature who could not even cook a good meal, and was extremely mean to the men and women who worked for Malaichamy. If Malaichamy gave an excess grain away, she would see that they were returned to the family stock. But Malaichamy would never say one rude word to her. He suffered in silence, and forgot his sorrows in his warm relationship with the villag-



stepped into the river to cool herself, and strange hands seized her from behind. She screamed and scratched and fought. But the man snatched her few ornaments from her body, then held her rebellious head in the water till she stopped battling and slid in to the river limply. By the time Chellakannu had come looking for her, the man had gone. Sevili was pregnant when she died, so the villagers buried her and Malaichamy put up a rough stone memorial over her grave. Everyday Chellakannu would sit near the grave and look around stupidly, even forgetting to play his flute. And then one day, haunted by his beloved Sevili, he walked into the river after her.

Soon afterwards, Malaichamy's son-in-law came to take his wife back with him. But before he could do so, the cobbler, who had gone half mad with grief for his daughter, showed Malaichamy the part of a toe that had been found bitten off in Sevili's mouth. Malaichamy returned home and noticed that his son-in-law had a toe missing. He sent for the police with a heavy heart, for he could not bear to see his daughter unhappy.

Ponnatha, whose complaints against her husband multiplied every day, now started taking notice of his relationship with Kuyil. She talked to the villagers about it, and even gave them a feast in an effort to urge them to bring up the matter in the panchayat. The feast ended abruptly when Malaichamy arrived there. For the first time he allowed his anger to get the

better of him and gave Poonatha a talking to. His daughter listened with growing horror as Malaichamy denied that he ever married for money. It was Poonatha who was carrying an illegitimate child, when her saintly father had begged Malaichamy to save the family honour by marrying her. It was the same child who had grown up as Malaichamy's daughter, and he had kept the secret for twenty years.

At the panchayat Malaichamy was accused of keeping Kuyil as his mistress. In a fit of anger, he willingly accepted the lie. When he went to explain to Kuyil, Kuyil told him about her feelings. But Malaichamy could not accept it and walked away from her. Depressed and unhappy, Kuyil decided to leave the village. Once across the river, she met a stranger who thought she was the ferry-girl. There was something about his brashness and his talk about Ponnatha that aroused Kuyil's suspicions. As she ferried him across to the village she had just left behind, the man told her brazenly about how he had seduced Ponnatha twenty years ago, and was now coming to claim her after being released from prison. Kuyil, her fierce sense of loyalty towards Malaichamy rising to the surface, hit out at the man with the oar.

Fed up with the sham that his life had become, Malaichamy finally saw the truth of his feelings towards Kuyil. But when he reached her hut it lay empty. Further down the river bank a crowd had gathered. Kuyil stood silently facing the police, and Ponnatha.



stared in horror at the familiar dead face lying on the sand.

Kuyil went to prison without saying a word. When Malaichamy went to beg her to tell him why she had murdered a stranger in cold blood, she made him promise that he would not try to get released if she told him the whole story. Malaichamy kept to his promise though the girl's sacrifice filled his heart with sorrow. 'I will wait for you to come to me,' he told her.

Now after years of waiting, Malaichamy refuses to die till Kuyil comes. When the villagers arrange to bring her, she comes under police escort to his bedside in her old hut. The poignant memories crowd around as Malaichamy opens his eyes and looks at Kuyil. No word comes to his dying lips. But he smiles faintly as Kuyil sits holding his hand. Now he can die in peace.

## THE DIRECTOR

Bharathi Rajaa was born in 1942 in Allinagaram, a village in Madurai district. He came to Madras in the early sixties with the ambition of joining the world of the cinema, but soon realized that it was not going to be an easy task. After years of struggle, when he took on odd jobs for sheer survival, Bharathi Rajaa managed to enter the highly competitive industry as an assistant director in 1968. He worked under well-known directors of the South, and developed a style of his own which was first displayed in his **Pathinaru Vayathiniley**. With his poetic touch and his penchant for realism, overnight he became a popular director in the region. The film, made in 1977, brought him National and State Awards. In 1978 came **Sigappu Rojakkal**, to be followed by **Puthla Varpu-**

**gal** the same year, **Nizhalgal** in 1980, **Alalgal Oolvathilal** in Tamil and Telugu in 1982, **Kathal Ovium** the same year, **Man Vasanal** and **Pudumal pen** in 1983. Bharathi Rajaa is known for launching many a new face in the field of regional cinema, and his films have received many awards at the national and state levels.



1985/Colour/160 mins/Tamil  
Production: Manoj Creations  
Direction/Screenplay: Bharathi Rajaa  
Story: R. Selvaraj  
Camera: B. Kannan  
Music: Ilaya Raja  
Sound: S.P. Ramanathan  
Lead Players: Shivaji Ganesan, Radha,  
Vadivukkarasi, Ranjani, Janaka Raj  
Enquiries: Bharathi Rajaa, 76 Ellaiamman  
Colony, Madras 86

# NEW DELHI TIMES



Vikas Pande is the Executive Editor of a Delhi-based English language daily, **New Delhi Times**. The newspaper is owned by Jagannath Poddar, an idealist press baron and industrial tycoon. His son, Jugal Kishore, does not share his father's concern with truth, and believes that a newspaper is a powerful instrument that should be used to manipulate those in power. An old friend of Jagannath Poddar, Mr D' Mello, a retired Civil Servant, who has served as the Chief Secretary in Delhi, and been a former Ambassador, is also on the Board of Directors of the company that runs the newspaper.

The most important news of the day is the power struggle in neighbouring state between the Chief Minister, D.N. Trivedi and a rising new politician, Ajay Singh. Bhale Ram, leader of the scheduled caste MLAs, is supporting

the Chief Minister, and is virtually responsible for keeping him in power. Vikas has been following Singh's career with great interest, for his rise to power was meteoric, and his following strong enough to take on the Chief Minister as an opponent. But before the latest news about the power struggle can take a prominent place on the front page of next day's paper, information comes of a ghastly illicit liquor tragedy in Ghaziabad, where thirty-five migrant labourers have died and over a hundred are seriously ill. Kedar, a young reporter who brings the information, is asked to follow up the story.

Vikas is married to a young lawyer, Nisha, who is deeply involved in women's causes and human rights problems. An old man from Ghazipur, Vikas's hometown, whose daughter has been reported missing from her



in-law's home. There is a history of harassment over dowry behind her, and the old man is now afraid for her daughter's life. Nisha promises to help him find the girl.

Following the trail of the liquor deaths, Kedar talks to local liquor manufacturers, and comes up with one name that seems to instil fear in everyone: Moghul. He is also warned that his life is in danger. Kedar rings up Vikas one night at home, and asks him to come and meet him outside. But before Vikas can reach him, Kedar dies in an accident on the road. Though the police describe it as a hit and run case, Vikas is convinced that Kedar has been murdered.

Soon after this, news comes through, that Bhale Ram has been shot dead in his home in Ghazipur. The police have arrested Iqbal Qureshi who is a businessman from Ghazipur and was known to have met Bhale Ram in the Circuit House in Ghazipur the night of the murder. A few days later, Vikas leaves for Ghazipur to attend a memorial ceremony for his mother. He finds that the town is under curfew because Bhale Ram's murder has stirred up the rival political elements in the city. In his ancestral home, Vikas's father, Mukul Pande, a retired college principal and a former freedom fighter, expresses his deep bitterness about the political mafia that victimize the innocent electorate for their own ends.

During the trial for Bhale Ram's murder, Iqbal, who is known to be

Ajay Singh's man, comes out with the surprising statement that it was Ajay Singh who had arranged the killing. When the news reaches the public, Ajay Singh's supporters go on a rampage in Ghazipur. Events soon take an ugly turn, and a bloody communal riot claims forty-five lives in the town. Moving through the riot-torn city in a jeep, Vikas rescues an old friend, Anwar Siddiqui, from being beaten up by the police. Anwar is a photo journalist whose camera depicts in sharp light and shade the horror and tragedy of the riot.

Vikas's story on the murder trial is printed as the lead news in his paper. Ajay Singh, who had met Vikas socially through D'Mello in Poddar's house, was aware of Vikas's interest in him and his bias against him. He is furious that a news item that tarnished his political image should be used as the lead article in **New Delhi Times**.

While in Ghazipur, Vikas's own investigations reveal that Iqbal is none other than Moghul, a well-known smuggler and a boss of the underworld. He is also told that Ajay Singh's men were trying to buy off Bhale Ram and that Iqbal was instrumental in the effort. But when he returns to Delhi, another surprise awaits him. Iqbal Qureshi has given a statement retracting his confession, and claimed that he was forced to accuse Ajay Singh by the police.

But Vikas is firmly convinced that Iqbal and Ajay Singh are partners in

crime, and that it is they who are behind the Ghaziabad liquor tragedy as well. He has also learnt that the chowkidar of the Circuit House in Ghazipur has disappeared since the night of the murder. Vikas is sure that the disappearance is linked with the murder. Vikas's stories in the newspaper clearly indicate his suspicions about Ajay Singh. Worried about their impact on his electorate, Ajay Singh arranges to meet Vikas personally, and convince the journalist of his innocence. But Vikas's obviously hostile stand enrages the politician and he ends up abusing Vikas and threatening him. Subsequently, when Vikas and Nisha are waylaid on the highway and beaten up by unknown assailants, Vikas assumes that Ajay Singh must be behind the incident. The threat and the attack following it only help to strengthen his determination to expose Ajay Singh and his corrupt followers.

The next day Jagannath Poddar has a heart attack and is admitted to the intensive care unit of a hospital. His son, Jugal Kishore, takes over as Acting Chairman of the Board. Vikas has known Jugal Kishore for a long time, and is aware of his differences with his father on the question of the role that a newspaper must play. But he is still unprepared for the tough stand the new management takes over publishing an article by him, openly accusing Ajay Singh of Bhale Ram's murder. When his Editor seems hesitant about the article, and calls his attitude towards Ajay Singh obsessive,

Vikas strongly defends his stand. But when Jugal Kishore, who has already tried to remove Vikas from the daily and put him on a new magazine, refuses to allow the article to be published, Vikas turns rebellious. 'If **New Delhi Times** won't use it, there are other newspapers that will,' says Vikas, and threatens to resign if the article does not appear in the paper the next day.

In the meanwhile, the attack on Vikas's personal life has intensified, with anonymous callers threatening him over the telephone. Vikas's stubborn reaction to Jugal Kishore's behaviour finally brings D'Mello to his home. He suggests that Vikas should see Jagannath Poddar in the hospital before resigning from his post. Vikas does go to see Poddar, though reluctantly, for the grand old advocate for a free and honest press is very ill indeed. Poddar's intervention from his sickbed leads to the disputed article being published in **New Delhi Times**. The same day, the old man whose daughter Nisha had helped to find, comes to visit them to give her his thanks. His daughter had been placed in a lunatic asylum by the in-laws. If all the torture by her husband had not turned her insane, her stay in the asylum has done so, she is still not back to normal, but at least her life has been saved, says the old man. There were strange people in the asylum, he says people who were not really mad at all. He had met the chowkidar of the Ghazipur Circuit House there.



Vikas arranges through his professional contacts to meet the old chowkidar in his cell in the asylum. The old chowkidar who is kept in solitary confinement, is half out of his mind with fear. Slowly and patiently Vikas wins over his confidence and hears his version of the story. What he learns, horrifies him. The chowkidar had witnessed part of the interview between Bhale Ram and Ajay Singh that night in the Circuit House. Bhale Ram had allowed himself to be bought by Ajay Singh. Iqbal had sat in another room throughout. When the deal was through, they left the Circuit House in two separate jeeps. That night the chowkidar's son had come to visit him. How was he to know that the young man had actually come to spy on the two politicians on behalf of the Chief Minister? How was he to know that his son was Trivedi's man, appointed to murder Bhale Ram once he sells himself?

Vikas comes home shattered by the revelations. He knows now, that all along he has been manipulated by Trivedi and his men. The information implicating Ajay Singh was fed to him. The attack and the phone calls were timed to convince him of Ajay Singh's guilt. And while Vikas has been pursuing Ajay Singh, Trivedi has finally come to a compromise with the younger politician. The evening's news flash on the television announces that Chief Minister Trivedi has accepted Ajay Singh in his Cabinet. Ajay Singh appears on the screen to express his respect for and loyalty towards Trivedi. And a telephone call provides the

information that the chowkidar has committed suicide in his cell in the asylum.

Anwar, who sympathizes with Vikas and understands his sense of horror, has only one thing to say about the matter. What is the difference who was the killer, and who the killed? Ajay Singh, Bhale Ram and Trivedi are all men in the same mould.

Vikas continues with his investigations. He often writes through the night. But even if his stories eventually compel the government to set up a commission of enquiry, will the report ever be made public?



## THE DIRECTOR

Ramesh Sharma was born in Kalimpong, and graduated from Darjeeling before going to Montreal for post-graduate studies in communications. On his return to India in 1974, he started working for a media organization in Calcutta, followed by a stint in advertising and freelance publicity work for the Government of Sikkim. His first independent documentary,

**Rumtek — A Monastery Wreathed in a Thousand Rainbows** (1979), brought him instant recognition. It won him the National Award for the Best Information Film, and a Special Jury Award at the Commonwealth Film Festival. **Rumtek**, a result of Sharma's deep interest in Buddhism and Himalayan studies, was followed by an hour-long documentary on Ladakh, **Drilung: A Faith in Exile** (1981), and a pictorial book on Sikkim, **Images of Sikkim**, published by his own publishing firm, Rigsum Productions. Sharma's interests range from the print medium to the performing arts, and audio-visual mass media. **New Delhi Times** is his first feature film.



*1985/Colour/123 mins/Hindi*  
*Production: P.K. Communications Private Limited*  
*Direction: Ramesh Sharma*  
*Story: Ramesh Sharma, Gulzar, K. Bikram Singh*  
*Screenplay/Dialogue: Gulzar*  
*Camera: Subrata Mitra*  
*Editing: Renu Safuja*  
*Music: Louis Banks*  
*Art Direction: Nitish Roy, Samir Chanda*  
*Sound: Robin Sengupta*  
*Lead Players: Shashi Kapoor, Sharmila Tagore, Om Puri, Kulbhushan Kharbanda, A.K. Hangal, Manohar Singh, M.K. Raina, Farookh Mehta, B.L. Chopra, Panchanan Pathak, Ram Gopal Bajaj, B. Kapur, Vijay Kashyap, Ramlal*  
*Enquiries: P.K. Communications Private Limited, C33 Kalindi Colony, New Delhi*

# NOKKETHA DHOORATHU KANNUM NATTU

LOOKING AT INFINITY



Kunjooamma Thomas is a rich old widow who has been living alone in a large house for seventeen years. She is a bitter, unhappy person and her unfriendliness is notorious. She is so fussy, that the noise of a sneeze irritates her beyond measure. As a result, she is made the target of many a practical joke by her neighbour's children. Even grown-ups do not miss a chance to tease her. Sreekumar, her nextdoor neighbour's grown-up son, turns up the volume of his tape recorder and plays the noisiest of Western music on it just to annoy the old lady.

One day a young girl comes to Kunjooamma's home. She tugs at the rope hanging from the bell, but nobody opens the door. Actually, the naughty children of the Headmaster who live nearby are always pulling at

the bell. So it takes a long time for Kunjooamma to realize that she has a genuine caller at her door. After all, no one ever comes to visit her any way. When the old woman opens the door, the girl introduces herself as Girly, Kunjooamma's granddaughter! At first the disbelieving Kunjooamma refuses to let her in. When she finally does manage to enter the house, Kunjooamma is reluctant to have anything to do with her. It takes her a long time to even accept normal human contact with another person in her house. But Girly knows how to break barriers. Her liveliness, her incessant chatter, her determined efforts to worm her way into the old lady's heart, all have their desired effect. She even manages to score a point off Sreekumar, by teasing and annoying him, and playing classical Indian music very loudly, just when

Sreekumar wants to listen to his tapes. She also manages to win over the Headmaster's naughty children, and they start following her around like lambs.

Kunjooamma finally accepts her when she tells her the reason behind her bitterness. Kunjooamma's daughter, Monykutty, was an only child, and the apple of her mother's eye. But once she was married to Matthews, problems began. Kunjooamma could not get along with her son-in-law who took away his wife and the newborn baby from Kunjooamma's house immediately after Girly was born. Monykutty died within a year. Kunjooamma felt that her daughter would have been alive if she had been allowed to look after her after the baby was born. When she pleaded with Matthews for the child, Matthews refused to listen to her. In frustration and anger, she went to court over the custody of her dead daughter's child. But after four years, she lost the case to Matthews. With no hope of ever meeting her grandchild again, Kunjooamma withdrew into herself, and refused to have any normal relationship with her neighbours. But that was when she had attached that calling bell outside her door. She has lived in the hope that one day, instead of the children playing pranks, she will find her granddaughter waiting for her on the doorstep. Now that Girly is here, she has been holding back from showing any affection to her grandchild because she is afraid that Matthews will come and snatch

her away again.

Girly promises never to leave her, and tells her that she does not love her father at all. It changes Kunjooamma's life. Now the neighbour's children come and go, but they no longer tease her. She laughs when people deliberately sneeze as she passes by. She removes the bell from the door, for she has her granddaughter with her now. She even goes with Girly for holidays, and enjoys every bit of her company. The vicar of the local parish and the Headmaster, are all pleased to see the change in her. Only Sreekumar remains aloof, though Girly tries her best to befriend him with her natural generosity and high spirits.

Girly plans a noisy Christmas with the children of the area, jealous of Girly's popularity. Sreekumar presents her with a box of fireworks which he knows are unsafe. When she burns her hand, Sreekumar dances in glee alone in his room.

Soon after this, his friend, Alex, arrives from Delhi. He looks out of Sreekumar's window, and sees Girly sitting on the lawn nextdoor. Alex recognizes her as Matthew's daughter from Delhi. He tells Sreekumar that Girly is dying from an incurable disease. Her father was preparing to take her for an operation which had some chance of success, but Girly ran away from home. Though the operation may not cure her, without it she has absolutely no chances of survival, and can die any day. Sreekumar is shocked to the core and now feels genuinely sorry for having given her those fireworks.



Matthews comes from Delhi in search of her daughter. But Kunjooamma sends him away from the gate. Girly, who had only pretended to dislike her father for her grandmother's sake, arranges to meet him in the church. She tells him that it will kill her grandmother to know the truth, so she will go on staying with the old woman till she dies.

The vicar, the Headmaster, and others know through Matthews about the girl's condition. But they cannot say the truth to the old woman for Girly has forbidden it. But one day the old woman discovers Girly weeping over her father's photograph in secret. Realizing that she had lied to her, Kunjooamma gets very angry. To defend herself, Girly must come out with the truth. Girly knows that the operation has little chance of success, and she would rather live here with her grandmother and die in her home. That is why she came to the old woman after so many years. Horrified and pained by Girly's revelations, Kunjooamma quietly decides that whether Girly wants it or not, she must be given that last chance to survive. She goes to the vicar and finds Matthews with him. She tells them that they must bring the ambulance around at night, and she herself will see that Girly is removed to the hospital.

That night, suppressing her heartache and the tears that come unbidden to her eyes, Kunjooamma prepares for her granddaughter's departure. She puts some sleeping pills in a bowl of

soup, and sits on Girly's bed and watches her go to sleep peacefully. The ambulance arrives, and Sreekumar, The children, the vicar and the Headmaster silently watch the girl being taken away.

Kunjooamma goes back to her lonely house with a heavy heart. But she remembers to put back the callbell in its place before the door. Once again she will wait for her granddaughter to come back to her.

## THE DIRECTOR

Fazil, who comes from Alleppey in Kerala, had already displayed his talents as a director and actor on the stage during his college years. After his university education was complete, Fazil joined the stage and worked for distinguished drama groups, such as the ones led by the poet Kavalam Narayana Panicker and film director Aravindan. Fazil's career in films began with his association with directors like A. Vincent. In 1980 he made his first film which he wrote and directed, **Manjil Virinja Pookkal**, a musical, made with fresh faces and even unknown technicians. The film was an instant success, and was followed by **Dhanya** in 1981, **Ettillam** in 1982, **Marakkillorikkalum** in 1983 and **Mamattukkuttiyammaikku** the same year.



*1984/Colour/130 mins/Malayalam  
Production: Bodhichithra  
Direction/Screenplay/Story: Fazil  
Camera: Ashok Kumar  
Music: Jerry Amuldev  
Sound: Devadas  
Lead Players: Padmini, Nadia Moidu,  
Sukumari, Mohanlal, Nedumudy Venu, Thilakan  
Enquires: Bodhichithra, Neelima, Jetty Road,  
Alleppey, Kerala.*

## PARAMA



Parama is a very beautiful woman at the end of her youth. Married early into a large, old-fashioned, upper class family, she has lived a sheltered life in her spacious home. Through the years she has unconsciously moulded herself into the various roles of mother, wife, sister-in-law, aunt, surrendering herself totally to the expectations of the family. Parama has long forgotten what it is like to be an individual.

During a family festival, where she is much in demand, for she looks after every detail of the ceremony, Parama meets a friend of her husband's nephew. Rahul is a young man who lives and works abroad as a successful photographer. Travelling through India, his interest in traditional rituals brings him to his friend's home, where, camera on the ready, his

watchful eye picks up the nuances of Parama's beautiful, quiescent face.

In Parama's married life, no stranger has ever called her by name. As an Indian woman, she is always fitted into a relationship of respect. Rahul is much younger than her, and her husband's nephew's friend. But he refuses to call her aunt. At a family gathering, he brings his transparencies along, and Parama is acutely embarrassed to find herself the centre of attention in many of the photographs. She is even more disturbed when the nephew rings up to say that Rahul wants to take some more photographs of her. She refuses, but has to relent when her family, and especially her mother-in-law, feel that it would be ungracious to refuse such an innocent proposal.



Rahul arrives with his camera when she is in the middle of her household chores one morning. Self-conscious, and vaguely worried, she allows him to photograph her. But she is relieved when he leaves, and goes and rings up the nephew to say that she has had enough and will not be photographed again. But Rahul does come back and this time he says that he only wants her to show him around the old city. Parama goes out with him reluctantly, with her mother-in-law's permission, for her husband, Bhaskar, is away on a business tour. She is surprised to find him pleasant company, and slowly, unconsciously, starts enjoying herself. It is a novel experience to be away from what has been her home for so many years; to remember herself the many roles she must play in relation to her family. Rahul is childishly pleased by the crowded market places and temples of the old part of the city. And Parama — standing high up on a unfinished bridge, Parama watches her city with Rahul's eyes, and remembers her childhood. They go to visit Parama's mother's home, a home that was once full of the laughter and noise of a large family, but has now subsided into the silence of loneliness and decay. She takes him up on the terrace up a winding iron staircase, where once long ago, she used to sit and play her sitar. On the terrace there is an empty room, where, when she was a child, she had seen her mad aunt locked in, peering out from behind the open window. Parama cannot remember her story clearly.

But she was a widow, and had done something unpardonable. The family had ostracized her and kept her locked in the terrace room. There she stayed, half out of her mind, in her white widow's weeds and her head shorn hair, looking out of her window at the world outside. She opens the door of the room, and out of dark, deserted interiors, pigeons rush past her with a loud flutter of their wings. In a sudden panic, Parama clutches Rahul's arms. Her defences crumble as Rahul takes her in his arms and kisses her.

Parama, the wife, mother and daughter-in-law of a highly respected upper class family, is shocked to discover that she is a woman as well. It is true that her relationship with Bhaskar has settled into a secure groove, where physically and mentally she has been providing for his needs for years. She has growing children to look after, and a happy home. She has never felt any need for herself. She has been happy to give. But now, suddenly, she needs Rahul, she needs his sympathy, his gentle, easy concern for her. It is a deeply disturbing experience, and a sense of fear pervades her mind. She tries ringing up her husband from home, pleading with him to come back to her at once. Bhaskar cannot understand her odd request. He has been away on tour often enough, and everything is all right at home. So why should he come back before his work is over?

While Parama sits in her room distraught with worry and fear, Bhaskar

looks forward to an evening of relaxation after a hard day's work. The fact that he is away from home, encourages him to invite his pretty young secretary to have dinner with him in his hotel room. The girl, aware of the implications, politely but firmly turns him down. It annoys Bhaskar immensely, but he hides it though not very successfully, under a curtain of politeness.

Parama in the meanwhile has decided that the best course of action would be to avoid temptation and not see Rahul again. Yet, their brief friendship has given her something quite intangible and wonderful, something that she has never even expected from her life in Bhaskar Choudhury's home. When she finds Rahul's purse and lenses in her hand-bag, left there by mistake during their day's journey, she rings up Rahul in his hotel, and asks him to pick up his belonging from her friend Shiela's home. Shiela is an old college friend who is a working woman and a divorcee, and lives alone in a flat.

Shiela is away at work when Parama goes to her flat to leave Rahul's things. While she is still there, the bell rings and the maid opens the door to Rahul. He silently takes his possessions from Parama, and starts walking away. Parama, her heart emptied off all emotions, stands watching him go out of her life. At the door, Rahul turns back and finds Parama in tears, surrounded by her silent despair. He goes to her again, and Parama's surrender is complete.

With quiet abandon, Parama gives in to this strange, new relationship, where she is only expected to be herself. She goes out of her home making all sorts of excuses to her mother-in-law every day, and spends her time with Rahul, loving him and sharing a new sense of companionship. When her husband returns from his tour, Rahul is about to leave for abroad. The day Bhaskar returns, she cannot go and see Rahul, but she goes secretly the next day and finds him waiting patiently for her with a potted plant, that magical plant that she had loved and tried to remember when they had visited her mother's home.

Rahul goes away. Parama returns to her daily routine, but the household that she had run with so much efficiency no longer holds any charms for her. She is unable to respond physically to her husband, and often stands dreaming over the little plant which she has placed on her verandah. Rahul's first letter arrives at Shiela's. She writes back, saying that he can safely send his letters to her home, for no one would open and read them. He writes back to set a date for coming back to India. Parama waits blindly for Rahul's return. And then Rahul sends her a magazine, where he has published some of her photographs, including one which shows her in dishabille, on which he has scrawled with a pen a message of love. It is just one more crazy, impulsive act in Rahul's life. But it takes a heavy toll of Parama. For once,



seeing that it is so obviously a magazine, Bhaskar opens the packet. Shock waves run through the entire family. Parama's mother-in-law takes to her bed and refuses to see Parama. The children are kept away from her. Bhaskar moves to another room. The household runs without her help. Parama is denuded of all the roles in which she was so indispensable before. Sitting alone in her room with the curtains drawn, she turns the pages of the magazine sent by Rahul and mourns in silence. For a while she even tries to talk, to explain, but no one will listen. Her husband calls her a whore, snapping harshly his years of dependence on her. She goes to Sheila one day, to ask her friend to find her a job, any job. At least till Rahul gets back. But Rahul is lost in some strife-torn country far away in another part of the globe. Sheila shows her a news item about it. Her last hope disappears. Parama tries to kill herself.

They find her lying bleeding in the bath, and she is removed to a nursing home. Like her mad aunt, they cut her lovely hair off, for a surgery is necessary to ascertain if there is brain damage. She recovers, but remains silent, numbed. Her favourite plant has been placed in her room. The family gather around, vaguely guilty, trying to bring her back to their own reality. Sheila comes to tell that she has found a job of a salesgirl for her. And there is news of Rahul who has been found and is in good shape. The news no longer affects her. Parama faces her family with stoic patience.

She will take the job, she says. Her family cannot understand at all. The kind family doctor tries to tell her that she now needs psychiatric care, to recover from shock, and her deep sense of guilt. 'But I have no sense of guilt,' Parama says with dawning self-assurance. As they sit in shocked silence, Parama suddenly finds that her plant is flowering at last. Will she too come to her own at last? Her teenaged daughter who had condemned her along with the rest of the family, comes and sits with her on the bed. Together the two women watch with wonder the blossoming plant.



## THE DIRECTOR

Aparna Sen is one of the leading actresses of West Bengal, and the daughter of the well-known film critic Chidananda Dasgupta. Her long association with the stage began in her childhood, and her debut in films was in Satyajit Ray's **Samapti**, one of the three short films shown under the name **Teen Kanya**, in 1961. Since then she has acted in innumerable films, her more challenging roles being in Mrinal Sen's **Akash Kusum**, Tapan Sinha's **Ekhonee**, James Ivory's **Guru**, **Bombay Talkies**, **Hullabaloo Over George and Bonnie's Pictures**, Satyajit Ray's **Jana Aranya**, **Pikoo**, and in her father's **Bilet Pherat**, in the episode called **Rakta**. Twenty years after her first appearance on the screen, Aparna Sen's first directorial venture, **36 Chowringhee Lane**, immediately established her as a director of considerable talent. A story of the loneliness and courage of an old Anglo-Indian woman from Calcutta, the film received National Awards for Best Direction and the Best English Film, and a Grand Prix at the Manila International Film Festival.



1985/Colour/139 mins/Hindi  
Production: Usha Enterprises  
Direction/Story/Screenplay: Aparna Sen  
Camera: Ashoke Mehta  
Music: Bhaskar Chandavarkar  
Sound: Bejoy Bhoge  
Lead Players: Raakhee Gulzar, Sandhya Rani  
Chatterjee, Aparna Sen, Mukul Sharma,  
Dipankar De  
Enquires: Usha Enterprises, 3 Saklat Place,  
3rd floor, Calcutta 700 072

# SAMANDARAM

## PARALLEL



Susan and Jose are students of the post-graduate course in the university. Susan, who is a sensitive and quite person, is drawn to Jose's brash vitality. They fall in love, and decide to get married.

The political scene in the university is turbulent. The more progressive of the students have for their mentor a lecturer in the college, Mohan. There are violent clashes between two factions of the students, and one day Susan and Jose are witnesses to the death of one of the students in the hands of a group of boys. The experience is traumatic for both of them, but each reacts differently to the situation. When the police enquiries begin, Jose, in an attempt to wash his hands of the whole thing, denies having known anything about the murder. Susan cannot lie to the police, and admits to having known and recognized the culprits. Jose's

attempt to save his skin implants doubts in Susan's mind. There is also the problem of Jose's attitude to Mohan and his relationship with Susan. Susan admires Mohan and his progressive political viewpoints. Jose looks upon their friendship with suspicion. His jealousy disturbs Susan, and she starts thinking of breaking off her relationship with Jose.

But eventually they do get married, in spite of the opposition they have to face from their two families. Her father-in-law is extremely unhappy when the unemployed Jose brings his wife home to their village, and Jose has quarrels with his father. Finally he manages to get a job in the factory of Varkey, a friend of his father, and the couple move to Trivandrum. Slowly and inevitably, Jose takes to the life of the executive in the factory. Meanwhile, Mohan, who has been thrown out of his job in the university,

becomes a union leader in Trivandrum. His work brings him in contact with the workers in the factory where Iose works, and Iose watches his association with the workers with distrust and disdain.

Initially, Susan is happy in her new home in Trivandrum where life seems to hold many promises for her. But very soon things start changing. One day Iose and Susan are invited to Varkey's home. There they meet Varkey's daughter Bindu, a doctor in a local hospital. After a few drinks, Iose starts paying a great deal of attention to Bindu, and to Susan's great discomfiture, behaves stupidly. But Susan starts getting really worried when Iose is late from work every evening. It does not take her long to find out that every day after office hours Iose goes to the hospital to visit Bindu, from where they go to her home. Most days he even eats there, and stays the night. Susan is helpless. If she complains, Iose is rude to her. Some evenings she rings up Bindu to check out if Iose is indeed there. But he is there all the time, and Susan's unhappiness increases.

Mohan's activities among the workers in Varkey's factory leads to a stronger link between the proprietor and Iose, both of whom are bent on destroying Mohan. They call the police to disrupt a meeting of the workers, and soon Mohan is on the run.

One day, as Susan is coming back home in a scooter, she sees Mohan, who is being pursued by some people. Mohan throws a cloth bag into the scooter and rushes past. Later, he

comes to Susan's home to take the bag back. Susan, who has always been friendly with him, invites him to stay and have a meal. But Iose comes back home and makes it quite clear that he does not approve of Mohan's visit. Mohan does come back another day, and Iose rudely sends him away. Susan must watch Iose's misbehaviour in helpless silence.

Aware of Iose's malice, and Varkey's and Iose's attempts to destroy Mohan, Susan goes to meet Mohan outside her home. Varkey, who gets to know of Susan's renewed friendship with her erstwhile teacher, provides Iose with the opportunity he has been looking for. While Susan waits for Iose to join her for the Christmas eve dinner, Iose rushes home, beats her up and orders her to get out of the house. Susan, completely shattered, cannot bear the situation any more. All her youthful apprehensions about Iose have proved correct. There is no way left for her to extricate herself from the sordid relationship except death. Susan contemplates suicide.

At this moment, Mohan runs into the house, wounded in an encounter with the police. Susan appeals to Bindu for help. While a policeman stands guard on her door, Susan manages to get Bindu to dress up Mohan's wound. The strange confrontation between the two women leads to a change of heart in Bindu. She becomes aware of her own selfishness, and is ashamed by her previous ruthless behaviour, in continuing her affair with Iose in defiance of Susan and her feelings. Bindu goes back home a changed woman. With



Susan's help, Mohan vanishes into the night, escaping his relentless pursuers.

Mohan's dramatic appearance, and Susan's encounter with Bindu, leaves her completely exhausted. Even death seems far away now. If life must continue, Susan will have to find other means of survival. There is nothing now that can be salvaged out of her relationship with Jose. She puts her belongings in a small suitcase. And as the carol singers move down the road singing their joyous hymns in the praise of the Lord, Susan steps out of her home to walk towards an unknown destination.

## THE DIRECTOR

An alumnus of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, John G. Sankarmangalam is at present holding the post of Dean (Film) in the same Institute. Before joining the Institute as a student in 1962, Sankarmangalam worked as a lecturer in the Madras Christian College. After receiving his diplomas in screenplay writing and advanced film direction in 1965, G. Sankarmangalam made a large number of short films for the Government of Tamil Nadu, the Institute of Film Technology, Madras, the Kerala State Film Development Corporation, UNDP, Films Division and the Film and Television Institute, as well as for some private producers. His first feature film in Malayalam, **Janmabhoomi**, won him national and state awards. In 1977 his short film **Samadhi**, won the President's Award for the Best Experimental Film. He scripted and co-directed **Jayasree** in Tamil, and later directed **Aval Alpum Valkipoyee** in Malayalam. **Samaandaram** is G. Sankarmangalam's fourth feature film.



*1985/Colour/110 mins/Malayalam  
Production: Sudarshan International  
Direction/Screenplay: John G. Sankarmangalam  
Story: Ms M. Sankarmangalam  
Camera: Prabhat Parida  
Music: Jerry Amaldev  
Sound: Krishnan Unni  
Lead Players: Surya, Babu Namboodiri, Sai Das, Balan  
Enquires: John G. Sankarmangalam, Dean (Films), Film and Television Institute of India, Law College Road, Pune 411 004*

## SHART WAGER



A psychopath killer roams the streets of the city. On fullmoon nights he strangles women who are either prostitutes by profession or of dubious character. On each occasion he leaves behind a strange clue, a cut out piece of photograph which has nothing recognizable on it. The police are totally bewildered, and finally decide to call in Arjun Dutt, an officer known for his unorthodox methods which do not find favour with his superiors, but invariably get the desired result. Following the trail of the murderer, Arjun comes upon a piece of photograph which, though it shows nothing significant, has two lines of poetry scrawled behind it. Arjun's mind goes back to his past

Vikram and Arjun were friends in college together. High spirited and fun loving, the two boys used to play an unusual game with each other. It was

Vikram's idea to lay a bet at the beginning of the game, and the winner got the spoils. A frayed ten rupee note used to move back and forth between them, for they were equal in their capacity to outdo each other. Once Vikram hid pieces of a picture in various odd places in the college. Arjun had to find all of them, piece them together and recognize the face in the picture. Another time it was a poetry contest. One would sing out two lines, the other had to recite two lines from another poem, the first letter of which matched with the last letter of the previous poem. Vikram won his wager once by walking on a tightrope with no protection below to break his fall. The game might turn risky, but nothing would deter the two friends from playing it.

When Kiran arrived from another city, she found the two madcaps excellent



company in college. The three became inseparable and spent most of their time together in and out of college. Both the boys fell in love with her, but for Vikram it became a lifeline. Vikram had never talked of his antecedents. His two close friends did not know that he was ashamed of his home. His mother, the only relative he had, lived in a dirty little house in a red light area. The house itself had a brothel run by an aging beauty called Laxmi. Vikram hated Laxmi, and could not understand why his mother refused to move out of the place. Vikram hated all things impure, all things unhealthy. And the atmosphere of his home revolted him.

It was only when his mother was on her death bed that he learnt the truth. The dying Jankibai confessed that she was not Vikram's mother after all. She had only adopted him, and that it was Laxmi who was actually his mother. Before Vikram could recover from his shock, Laxmi came into the room, and confirmed Jankibai's story. She also said that it was Jankibai who had taken her son away and pushed her into prostitution. It was Jankibai who ran the business.

Horrified by the revelation, Vikram leaves home and goes to Kiran. Only Kiran's love can wash away the ugly stains of his past, can bring back some sanity into his life, find him a place in the world of normal affection and care. But at Kiran's home Vikram hears Kiran talking to Arjun in the garden. Kiran loves Arjun. Arjun wants to marry her. Something snaps inside

Vikram's head. Somehow he finds his way back to his room in the hostel, and there, alone in the night, he gives vent to his anger against the unfairness of the world. His anguish is transformed into physical pain, at what he perceives as Kiran's betrayal. That Kiran can be in love with Arjun and yet be quite genuinely fond of Vikram, is something that does not occur to him. His world has turned topsy turvy in one moment. Vikram smashes the mirror of the wall and cuts his vein with one of the pieces of shattered glass.

Arjun remembers going to the hospital with Kiran, and anxiously waiting for his friend to speak to him. He could not understand then, he does not understand even now, the real trauma behind Vikram's tragic attempt to kill himself. Vikram refused to speak to them. He heard about their imminent marriage in silence, then turned his face away as Kiran tried to talk to him. Arjun decides to go in search of Vikram with whom he has not been in touch for years. He remembers that Vikram was a keen amateur photographer, and goes to visit Jaffar who, as a professional photographer, had taught Vikram the ropes in his youth. Vikram has now become a well-known photographer in the advertising world. He has grown a moustache and calls himself D.I. He is much in demand and highly respected as a photographer, but everyone is aware of the fact that he is eccentric, and a loner. It is difficult to get close to him, especially for women. Ruhi, a young

model, has been half in love with D.I. for a long time. The fact that he refuses to respond to her charm, makes him doubly attractive to her. She has been trying to go out with him, and is forward enough to suggest many a rendezvous but to no avail.

One full moon night D.I. comes to Ruhi's home. Ruhi is delighted. They go boating on the lake, where, in the middle of the lake, there is a small, green island. They land there, and Ruhi, thinking that D.I. is finally willing, offers herself to him. In response, D.I. strangles her.

Arjun, who has been stalking his old friend, is waiting for him in his flat. He knows that the murderer is Vikram, or D.I. as he calls himself. But D.I. appears quite unruffled when he finds Arjun in his room. He laughs at Arjun's accusations and willingly goes with him to the police station. At the police station, D.I. produces an alibi that is impossible to break. Arjun is accused by his superior of holding an innocent man without evidence and displaying a personal bias against him. As D.I. walks out of the police station, Arjun goes up to him and offers him a ten rupee note. D.I. accepts the wager with a smile. Arjun knows in his bones that D.I. is guilty. The cut out photographs, the lines of poetry, the acceptance of the wager, everything points to D.I. being the murderer. But for his superior officer, none of it is evidence. D.I.'s alibi is perfect too. Arjun finds himself in the embarrassing position of being taken off the case. Yet he knows that

only he can catch D.I. for no one knows him better than Arjun.

Arjun decides to follow the case on his own. With the help of a fellow officer, he keeps a vigil at the home of an advertising executive, where D.I. is supposed to spend the night, developing photographs in a private dark room. It is this executive that had provided him with an alibi for the night of the last murder. While Arjun and the other officer wait outside, D.I., who does not underestimate his old friend, finds a secret way out of the house. It is a full moon night again, and Kiran will be alone at home. D.I. will win his wager, and take his final revenge on all women for every act of betrayal that he has had to suffer in his life.

As the night wears on, Arjun gets more and more anxious, for there is no sign of D.I. Is he really working through the night in the dark room? Arjun climbs up the back wall and finds the room empty. In a panic, he rushes to D.I.'s home with his colleague. They go through every room, every cupboard, till Arjun finds a whole bunch of old photographs. Suddenly he recognized the photograph whose pieces D.I. has been leaving near corpse. He finds the remaining portion of the photograph where Arjun, Kiran and Vikram stand side by side, enveloped by the warmth of their youthful affections. Arjun knows now who will be the next victim. He knows now his old friend's torturous motivations for the many murders. He knows of his last betrayal.



Kiran opens the door to his old friend Vikram. What a lovely surprise. She welcomes him in, and chatters gaily as she makes coffee for both of them. She comes out of the kitchen to find Vikram in white gloves, holding a thin wire with which he will strangle her. She moves away from him, shrinking against the wall in her fear. She tries to explain that she never deserted him. There was no betrayal. But Vikram will not understand. He will not forgive. As the wire goes round her neck, Arjun appears in the skylight, poised with his pistol. The game is no longer a game. A shot rings out, and Vikram falls to the ground, wounded. Arjun comes into the room and holds Kiran close, as Vikram's bloodied hand reaches out to him, holding a ten rupee note. It is Arjun who has won this wager after all.

## THE DIRECTOR

Ketan Anand is the son of Chetan Anand, the first Indian filmmaker to win a Grand Prix at Cannes, for his film **Neecha Nagar** in 1946. Ketan Anand took an active interest in dramatics while he was still in college. Graduating from St Stephens college with Honours in History, he joined films in 1969 as an assistant director to Chetan Anand for **Heer Ranjha**. He also worked as an assistant director with his uncle Vijay Anand for **Tere Mere Sapne** in 1971, and appeared as an actor in his other uncle Dev Anand's film, **Hare Rama Hare Krishna** in 1972. After working with his father for a while, he made his first film, **Toote Khilone**, in 1978. He made his second film in 1984, **Hum Rahe Na Hum**, before providing the story and direction for **Shart**.

1985/Colour/130 mins/Hindi  
Production: Mahajan Films Private Limited  
Direction/Story: Ketan Anand  
Screenplay: Ranjit Kapoor  
Camera: Ishan Arya Music: Bappi Lahiri  
Edition: David Dhawan  
Art Direction: Bijon Das Gupta  
Sound: Manohar Ambrekar  
Lead Players: Naseeruddin Shah, Shabana Azmi, Kanwaljeet Singh, Sarika, Dina Pathak, Trilok Kapoor, Mac Mohan, Tom Alter, Amrapali  
Enquiries: Mahajan Films Private Limited, 41 Pali Hill, Bandra, Bombay 400 050





# THINKALAZCHA NALLA DIVASAM

## MONDAY-THE GOOD DAY



Ianakiamma is an old woman who lives in a Kerala village. In her spacious home, surrounded by the memories of her past, in the orchard around her house, the ashes of her husband and her daughter are buried under her most favourite trees. Ianakiamma has no time to feel lonely. Her days pass quickly, peacefully, running the home the way it has always been run, looking after the cows and the other animals on the farm, caring for the trees in the orchard. Her life is a reflection of the lives of other women in other times who have lived and died in the same home. Each object in the house carries a memory of its own. Even the old bed on which she sleeps, reminds her of the birth of each of her children. Now they are all far away. The two surviving children, Narayanan Kutty and Gopan, have left the village long ago. Narayanan Kutty,

the older of the two sons, lives in Bombay with his wife and two daughters; and Gopan, the younger son, works in the Gulf. He too has two daughters.

Ianakiamma is going to be sixty years old very soon. It is an auspicious age, and the family are gathering together after years to celebrate her birthday. They arrive one by one, and the lonely house is suddenly filled with the laughter and noise of the children. Venu, the young son of Ianakiamma's dead daughter, is half in love with one of his cousins, Narayanan Kutty's elder daughter. They tease each other constantly, quarrel and make up every hour of the day. The younger children are enchanted by the open atmosphere of the village home. Ianakiamma takes them with her and proudly introduces them to the many wonders of the farm. The whole family

gather to watch a calf being born, and share in its joy when it takes its first unsteady steps on the firm earth.

But the family get-together is not as idyllic as it seems on the surface. Narayanan Kutty is envious of his younger brother's material success in a foreign country. Gopan, on the other hand has come home with certain plans for his future, plans which his elder brother heartily disapproves of. The village home with its spacious compound falls in the share of the younger son of the family. Gopan and his wife Bindhu are pragmatists and feel that the property is of no use to them unless they can sell it for a good price. Once Janakiamma dies, who will come back to live in the village? Instead the money can be put to good use. Gopan can buy a decent flat in Bangalore. Things have not been going so well in the Gulf, and they may have to come back to India. He had even written to Narayanan Kutty about it, but had received no reply. Now he corners his brother and demands that they should discuss the matter while they are all in the village.

Narayanan Kutty obviously disapproves of Gopan's plans. How can Janakiamma leave the house that she is so deeply attached to? She would not agree to go and live with either of her sons. And Gopan wants to sell their ancestral home to Kunju, an upstart, who was once a servant in Janakiamma's household! But Kunju has the money, explains Gopan. His son has made a fortune in the Gulf. Who else will be ready to buy a village home?

And as for their mother, it is no longer safe for her at her age to live alone. Gopan and his wife have already fixed up with a good geriatric centre where she will have company, and be well cared for. Narayanan Kutty is horrified, but he is helpless. The house and the grounds belong to Gopan. All he can do is insist that Gopan should keep quiet about his plans till the birthday celebrations are over.

Narayanan Kutty's resentment towards his brother spills over every time he sees Gopan talking to Kunju, who is also a neighbour. He interrupts them one evening when they are sitting and drinking together in the garden. Gopan invites his brother to join them. It hurts Narayanan Kutty's social pride to sit and share a drink with an erstwhile servant. His sense of helplessness and his frustrations come to the surface and he drinks desperately till he has enough courage to face the two of them with his wrath. He physically assaults Kunju and slaps his younger brother when he intervenes.

Janakiamma's birthday is celebrated with great enthusiasm nevertheless. Her son-in-law, a pompous little man who dabbles in politics, makes time to come and attend the festivities. Underlying hostilities are momentarily shelved, though not for long. Bindhu keeps trying to convince her sister-in-law about the merits of her plans for the old woman. Janakiamma overhears her, and in a state of shock, walks into the garden, and sits under the tree.



where her husband's ashes are buried. The children find her there, lying in an odd position hours later. She is obviously unwell, and has to be helped up. Lying in bed, she thinks of her life and her home, and comes to the conclusions that it will be better for her to accept Gopan's proposition. She will not be a burden to her sons. And she will not come back to that house again till she is dead. Narayanan Kutty's wife, Ambika, who is fond of her mother-in-law, is as distressed as her husband. She tries her best to coax Janakiamma to come and live with them, but the old woman will not listen to anyone once her mind is made up.

With the help of the local astrologer, Janakiamma decides to leave her home of a lifetime on a Monday. Escorted by her sons and their wives, the old woman reaches the large old building where the geriatric centre is situated. Blank old faces greet her entry. She must sleep in a dormitory, and attend prayer meetings, have her meals, following a fixed routine. The prayers are held on different days of the week for different religions. But everyone attends all of them. Janakiamma finds the routine of the centre claustrophobic. Her mind and body revolt against the idea of being herded together among strangers, locked up within the environs of a concrete house. Next morning, as Narayanan Kutty prepares to go back to Bombay with his family, news comes that Janakiamma is dead.

In death, Janakiamma comes back to

her home once more with dignity. Days pass. Narayanan Kutty leaves for Bombay. Venu goes back to his father. Only Gopan remains with his family, waiting for the house to be sold. At the last minute, Kunju lets him down, and confesses his inability to buy the house. He cannot live with Janakiamma's ghost, he says. Gopan is furious. He drives Kunju out of the house, then gives in to his grief and his sense of guilt about his mother's death. In his anger and shame, he reacts violently towards his wife, and breaks the foreign gifts he had initially brought for his mother. At night, after much soul-searching, Gopan tells Bindhu of his decision to stay back in India, and live in the village home. He wants his children to grow up here, in the company of Nature, blessed by the souls of his forefathers. Gopan is at peace at last. And his children, who did not want to ever leave their grandmother's wonderful home, are overjoyed.



## THE DIRECTOR

A prolific writer of short stories and novels in Malayalam, Padmarajan won a Kerala Sahitya Academy award in 1971. He made his first film, **Peruvazhlyambalam**, in 1979, and won a number of national and state awards, including the Silver Lotus. In 1981 he made **Kallan Pavithran**, followed by **Ordathoru Phayalvaan** in 1981, **Novemberinte Nashtam** in 1982, **Koodevide** in 1983, **Parannu Parannu Parannu** in 1984, and **Arapatta Kettiya Graamathil** in 1985. Padmarajan has also written screenplays for sixteen films by other directors, all of which were based on his stories. Padmarajan has won many awards, national and international, for his films and screenplays.



1985/ Colour/ 130 mins/ Malayalam  
Production: Sunitha Productions  
Direction/ Story/ Screenplay: Padmarajan  
Camera: Vasant Kumar  
Music: Shyam  
Editing: B. Lenin  
Art Direction: Makkada Devadas  
Sound: Chitranjali Studios  
Lead Players: Kaviyoor Ponnamma,  
Mammully, Karamana, Sasangan, Srividya,  
Unni Mary, Ashokan, Kukku Parameswaran,  
Madhavikutty, Baby Anumapama, Baby  
Smitha, Achankunju, Nanappan, Vaikkam  
Mani  
Enquiries: Sunitha Productions, M.G. Road,  
Trivandrum, Kerala.

## TRIKAL

### PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



Ruiz Pereira, a man in his early forties, is on a visit to Goa after twenty four years. Curiosity takes him back to a village where he had spent a part of his youth, whose memories have still not lost their colour. Things have changed now. Gulf money has brought some prosperity, and with it ugly concrete blocks of houses, breaking the landscape of paddy fields. The Souza Soares mansion still stands, but empty and lifeless, its gardens an uncontrolled wilderness. A decrepit old caretaker opens the door, and Pereira is transported to the past alive with the sound of tears and laughter, voices now lost in oblivion, faces whose hidden nuances were once familiar, all part of a way of life long left behind.

A peasant stands with a coffin at the door of the house. Upstairs, in a

spacious bedroom, men and women dressed in black stand sombrely near the large four-poster bed on which old Soares lies dead. Young Ruiz, a handsome young lad of nineteen, stands hovering near Anna, old Soares's granddaughter, with whom he is madly in love. With Anna stand Aurora, her elder sister, and her two younger brothers. Her parents are there too, Sylvia, and Lucio—Sylvia with her constant tears and Lucio with the belligerence of the weak. The house guests are there as well, Senhor Renato and Amalia with their son Erasmo. They have come all the way from Portugal to arrange a marriage between Erasmo and Anna, and now Amalia is worried that the mourning period will come in the way of the happy event. Ruiz's uncle is there too, as a friend of the family, with the priest, Father Sequeira. Neighbours

and friends stand whispering near the bed. Everyone is there, except Maria Soares, the old man's widow.

Maria Soares sits silently in her ornate rocking chair in the next room, bathed in a rosy light reflecting from the pink walls. She is listening absently to a fado by Amelia on an old, hand-wound gramophone. When the song ends, she gestures with her hand and a young maid, Milagrenia, winds the gramophone before putting on the same side again. People say that Milagrenia is the illegitimate daughter of old Soares, now attached to Maria as her personal maid. Milagrenia is not pretty like Anna. But she is shapely like a deer, and young Ruiz lusts after her.

Sylvia comes wringing her hands. She implores her mother to stop listening to music on such a day. The funeral has to take place. Lucio, his false teeth popping out every time he speaks, tries his luck with his mother-in-law, but Maria does not want to accept her husband's death. She finally consents to go to the funeral where Father Sequeira is conducting the funeral service. A sharp wind blows at the cemetery. Anna's skirt flies up, Erasmo's hat blows off and Lucio's teeth pop out of his mouth. But Maria's eyes are on the coffin.

Back home, Sylvia tackles her mother on the subject of Anna's engagement, but Maria is adamant. She must consult her dead husband before she can cut short the mourning period. While Ruiz serenades Anna from the

garden, and Erasmo pursues her with doglike devotion, Maria sits with Milagrenia and holds a seance each night, in the hope of rousing her husband from the sleep of the dead. But old Soares persistently refuses to appear, and Maria gets visitations from spirits who seemingly come only to punish her for the misdeeds of her ancestors who had willingly accepted their foreign masters and their religion.

In the meanwhile, times are changing in Goa. The Indian government is ready to take over the little Portuguese colony on the west coast of the huge subcontinent. Half of upper class Goan society want to flee to Portugal. The other half take the march of events as the inevitable movement of history. Erasmo's parents, who have long ago settled in Portugal, are worried about not being able to get back once the Indian army moves in. Ruiz is stranded with his uncle till the Indians lift their blockade of Goa. Sylvia is at the point of collapse, her high strung nature being unable to cope with the suspense and wait for Anna's engagement.

At this point, Maria's nephew, Leon, a Goan freedom fighter, comes secretly to Maria, asking for her protection. She hides him in the cellar, and appoints Milagrenia to look after him. No one else in the household knows that Leon is there. But Anna, who has been in love with Leon for a long time, follows Milagrenia one day and finds out the secret. Leon and Anna meet in the garden in the night when



the house is asleep. In another part of the garden Ruiz chases Milagrenia. One morning the police come, looking for Leon. The family honestly claim that they know nothing about the young man. Under Maria's instructions, Milagrenia removes Leon from the cellar in the nick of time. The police withdraw, but remain suspicious. Maria asks Leon to leave, and agrees to Anna's engagement with Erasmo.

That is when it is discovered that Anna is pregnant. Ruiz's uncle, who is the family doctor, assumes that it is Erasmo who is the culprit. But it is soon obvious that Anna has not allowed Erasmo near her. Ruiz's uncle starts suspecting his nephew, remembering all those serenades. He takes the boy to Father Sequiera, and forces a confession out of him. But Ruiz's confession has nothing to do with Anna. It is true that he has sinned, but with Milagrenia. Senhor Renato and Amalia leave in a huff, taking with them their heartbroken son, who is still prepared to marry Anna. But Anna will not have him. Ruiz's uncle offers to marry Anna to his nephew to save face. But Maria cannot agree to the proposal. The Soares family may be Catholics, but they come from Brahmin stock. Their daughter cannot marry into a lower caste family.

Maria is distraught, and Sylvia hysterical. Ruiz's uncle packs him off home. And Anna runs away with Leon. Angry and shamed, Sylvia and Lucio decide to leave Maria's home where they have spent all their married life so far.

Maria, secretly happy that Anna has found Leon again, allows them to leave without protest. Suddenly, after many years, the house is empty but for Maria and Milagrenia, who is pregnant with Ruiz's child. Goa is liberated. Maria gets news of Anna and Leon, happily married. New and strange visions assail her in the lonely house. She accepts them as intimations of her own mortality. The old way of life is about to come to an end. The winds of change will blow away the last remnants of a cultural heritage that already belongs to the past and to another country.

Time has left its mark on the Souza Soares mansion. Ruiz Pereira walks away down the overgrown garden path, past the ornate iron gates, into the new world that waits beyond the silence of the ruins of the past. He carries away with him, like a homeless child, the colour and the charm of a lost era.

*1985/ Colour/ 137 mins/ Hindi*

*Production: Blaze Film Enterprises Pvt. Ltd*

*Direction/Story Screenplay: Shyam Benegal*

*Camera: Ashok Mehta*

*Music: Vanraj Bhatia*

*Editing: Bhanudas Divkar*

*Art Direction: Nitish Roy*

*Sound: Hitendra Ghosh*

*Lead Players: Leela Naidu, Neena Gupta, Anita Kanwar, Soni Razdan, Dalip Tahil, K.K. Raina, Keith Stevenson, Ila Arun, Sushma Prakash, Naseeruddin Shah, Nikhil Bhagat, Kulbhushan Kharbanda.*

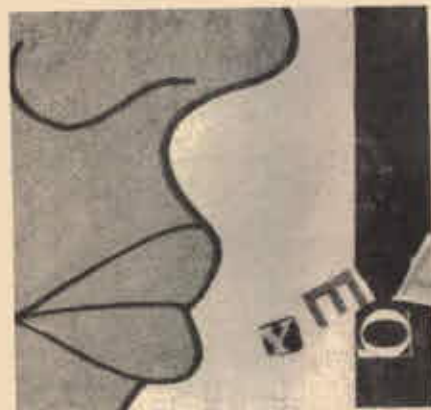
## THE DIRECTOR

Shyam Benegal received a Masters degree in Economics from Osmania University in Hyderabad. From 1959 to 1963, Benegal worked as Films Assistant and Copywriter in Lintas Advertising Ltd. The next ten years were spent in Advertising and Sales Promotion Company, as Films and Radio Executive and Accounts Group Head. He received the Homi Bhabha fellowship from 1970 to 1972, during which time he worked as Associate Producer, TV, at WGBH TV, Boston, USA, and studied children's television at the Children's Television workshop in New York. In 1976, Benegal was awarded the Padma Shree, by which time he was already an established feature film director. **Ankur**, his first feature film in Hindi, was made in 1974, and received three national awards and forty-three other prizes in India and abroad. **Charandas Chor** came in 1975, followed by **Nishant** the same year which received many awards including the National Award for the Best Hindi Film, and the Golden Plaque at the Chicago Film Festival in 1977. **Manthan**, made in 1976, participated in many festivals abroad, and won the National Award for the Best Hindi Film in 1978. **Bhumika**, made in 1977, won the Best Screenplay and Best Actress awards at the National Awards. The same year Benegal made **Kondura** in Hindi and its Telugu version, **Anugraham**. In 1978 came **Junoon** which became the inaugural film at the 7th International Film Festival of India. It also received three awards at the National Awards.

In 1979 **Kalyug** was made in 1981, followed by **Arohan** the next year which once again won for Benegal the National Award for the Best Hindi Film, the Best Actress and the Best Editing. After **Mandi**, made in 1983, Benegal went on to make two feature length documentaries, one on Jawaharlal Nehru, the other on Satyajit Ray, before making **Trikal** in 1985. Benegal occasionally lectures on film in the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune, and was an Honorary Lecturer in Mass Communications at Bhavan's College of Mass Communications from 1966 to 1973. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Film Development Corporation, and a member of the Wildlife Committee, Government of Madhya Pradesh. In his long career in advertising, Benegal has produced about 1,000 commercials for various products and services, and about 38 documentaries.



# THE BALLOON



Two children take a balloon home. While playing with it, it bursts with a loud bang. A passer-by hears the noise and, taking it to be the sound of a gun, runs to tell his neighbours that a murder has taken place. As the story spreads by word of mouth, it grows in magnitude, till the police are told of it as a horrendous massacre. They eventually come to the house and find that it was only a balloon that had burst. The film develops the theme of the destructive force of rumour.

## THE DIRECTOR

B.R. Shendge is the Officer-in-Charge of the Cartoon Film Unit of Films Division, Bombay. Born in Maharashtra in 1936, Shendge has a Master's degree in Fine Art and Applied Art. He first exhibited his paintings in 1959, and has also worked as a professor in the Bandra School of Art for two years. After joining Films Division in 1961, Shendge has written scripts and animated and directed several short animation films. He participated in the International Symposium on Animation Films in the USSR in 1976, and in the Fourth World Animation Film Festival in Bulgaria in 1985. His films have received several national and international awards.

### THE BALLOON

1985/Colour/6 mins/English

Production: Films Division

Direction/Story: B.R. Shendge

Camera: B. Khosla

Animation and design: Jagadish Pulekar, M.V.

Phadke, Arun Gongade

Music: Raghunath Seth

Sound: T.A. Jagannathan

Enquiries: Public Relations Officer, Films Division, 24 Dr. G. Deshmukh Marg, Bombay

400 026



# BUDDHIJEEVI

## THE INTELLECTUAL



A student of a Film Institute wants to make a documentary on the struggle and exploitation of the coolies at a railway station. When he tries to meet and interview the coolies, he meets with hostility. The coolies do not see why they should provide the student with an opportunity for fame when they stand to gain nothing from the exercise. They know that the film will not change their lives, the struggle and the exploitation will continue. The student, still bent on being the committed filmmaker, decides to disguise himself as a poor unemployed man and try to live the life of a coolie to understand their predicament. His perseverance yields no result. The coolies remain suspicious, and one day discover his real identity. They get together and ask him to leave the station and leave them alone with their problems. The student gives up:

the project in disgust. Back in his room, he sees the image of the committed filmmaker slowly fading out in the mirror.

### THE DIRECTOR

Rajendra L. Jangley took an Apprentice Training Course in Photography in I.I. Institute of Applied Arts, Bombay, in 1977. He received his diploma in Cinema with specialization in motion picture photography in 1984, from the Film and Television Institute of India in Pune. Subsequently Jangley completed a one-year post diploma course in film direction. Jangley is at present working for the Madhya Pradesh Film Development Corporation in Bhopal.

#### **BUDDHIJEEVI**

1985/Black and White/30 mins/Hindi

Production: Film and Television Institute of India, Pune

Direction/Screenplay: Rajendra Jangley

Story: Hari Prakash

Camera: Sanjeev Sood

Sound: Hashmat Mulla

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

# GLIMPSES OF OLD CALCUTTA



The city of Calcutta is nearly three hundred years old. Job Charnock arrived at Sutanuti Chat on the 24th of August 1690 with a royal mandate from Emperor Aurangzeb and leased three villages on behalf of the East India Company—Sutanuti, Gobinadapur and Dihi Kalikata. In 1698, the three villages were bought over by the Company from Azim, son of Aurangzeb. And through the years, a transformation took place, merging the villages into a busy centre of trade and commerce, the city of Calcutta. Time has left its mark on the old city, and many of the old monuments stand neglected in forgotten corners. The film lovingly portrays the lost architectural glories of old Calcutta, tracing their links with the historical and social evolution of the city. It ends with an appeal for the preserva-

tion of the monuments, for the destruction of beautiful structures is hardly an effective way to banish the memories of imperial rule. Beauty, grandeur and charm have their own historical value, and Calcutta is only the richer for it.

## THE DIRECTOR

Born in 1948, Swapan Saha completed his Doctorate in Bengali literature, and has been working as a lecturer in Bangabasi College, Calcutta. Though he has grown up with an interest in the Cinema, he has never received any training in cinematography. His initiation into the world of film making was through the production of some advertising shorts. **Glimpses of Old Calcutta** is his first documentary, a result of almost two years of research and a year's shooting. Saha is now engaged in preparing a second documentary on life in 19th century Calcutta, a period of history known both for its cultural renaissance and its social decadence.



**GLIMPSES OF OLD CALCUTTA**  
1985/Colour/26 mins/English  
Production: Sas Cine Art International  
Direction/Screenplay: Swapan Saha  
Camera: Kamal Ghosh  
Music: Swapan Saha  
Sound: Sajal Saha  
Editing: Dinesh Thamane  
Narration: N. Viswanathan  
Enquiries: Swapan Saha, 97, K.K. Mazumdar  
Road, Calcutta 700075.



# KALAMKARI



Kalamkari, a style of painting murals on cloth, conforms in style to the traditions of paintings on walls. There are two techniques of this art — one originating at Srikalahasthi and consisting of hand drawn and painted designs, and the other with its roots in Machilipatnam where block-printing is in vogue.

The film discusses the history of Kalamkari. It begins with the visuals of Srikalahasthi which is the bedrock of the hand painting technique. Srikalahasthi is a temple town of Andhra Pradesh where this traditional technique was born in the sixteenth century. The various facets of the art, such as how the artists make a charcoal drawing and how they fill the areas with various colours like indigo, burnt amber, cadmium yellow, Indian red etc., are shown. The living conditions of the artists are also portrayed

The film also shows a workshop at Machilipatnam where various activities are underway, including the making of blocks, the preparation of indigenous vegetable colours and the seasoning and making ready of cloth for block printing.

This is followed by an exposition of the various styles and themes employed in Kalamkari such as the Ramayanam, the Bhagavatham, the Mahabharatham, etc. The film draws to a close showing some present-day usages of Kalamkari — as decorative painting or as dress material for instance.

## THE DIRECTOR

A post graduate in fine arts from the College of Fine Arts, Madras, Man Mohan Dutt also has a degree in fine arts from the College of Fine Arts and Architecture in Hyderabad. He has had five one-man shows and participated in major painting exhibitions all over the country. He has worked as an Art Director in several films and been associated with G. Aravindan's production of **Kanchana Sita**. Dutt has made a biographical film on the life of the painter, P.T. Reddy, and another film on the life and work of the Kalamkari painters. He is now working on a documentary on the puppeteers of Andhra Pradesh, and a biographical film on Acharya Nagarjuna, the celebrated exponent of Madhyamika philosophy of the Mahayana Buddhist school. He has also completed the shooting of a feature film, **Aakanksha**, on the theme of migration. Dutt is also involved in the film society movement in the region.



### **KALAMKARI**

*1985/Colour/18 mins/English*

*Producers: Sripathi and Man Mohan Dutt*

*Direction/Screenplay: Man Mohan Dutt*

*Camera: Sunny Joseph*

*Music: G. Aravindan*

*Sound: P. Devdass*

*Enquiries: Lepakshi Chitra, Mig Block III, Flat 16, Bagh Lingampally, Hyderabad - 500044.*

## KALA PANI A PILGRIMAGE



The Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal are a group of islands where the British sent nearly four thousand revolutionary sepoys as punishment during the first war of independence in 1857. The freedom fighters were compelled to clear the land so that a prison may be built to house them. The conditions were **savage**, and many of them died from malaria or snake-bite. On Ross Island they had to build and maintain the British officer's quarters—a little England set in the midst of primitive grandeur. The construction of the notorious Cellular Jail was begun in 1893, so named because it consisted of individual cells where prisoners were kept in solitary confinement for years. The prisoners had to undergo brutal treatment in the hands of the British and many of them committed

suicide to escape a living hell. Generations of freedom fighters have scratched their memoirs on the walls of the jail. These were white washed, but those who survived, remembered each word they had written. With independence, the islands ceased to be a penal colony. But the old name, Kala Pani, is still remembered with a sense of horror. Kala Pani, the black waters, across which human souls travelled to a living hell.



## THE DIRECTOR

A student of history and a member of the British Kinematograph Sound and Television Society, Prem Vaidya joined Films Division in 1954. Through the years he has covered many important national and international events which have been shown as part of the Indian Newsreel. He later went on to make many documentary films, among which are **Report on Drought** (1966), **East-Pakistan in Turmoil** (1971), **Man In Search of Man** (1974), **From the Ocean to the Sky** (1977), **Asiad 82** (1982) and **Veer Savarkar** (1984). Many of his films have represented India in international festivals, and won a number of prestigious awards at home and abroad.



### *KALA PANI*

*Production: Films Division*

*Direction/Screenplay: Prem Vaidya*

*Camera: M.S. Gangadhar*

*Music: K. Narayanan*

*Sound: O.P. Sharma*

*Narration: Zul Vellani*

*Enquiries: Public Relations Officer, Films  
Division, 24 Dr. G. Deshmukh Marg, Bombay  
400 026.*

# PADMASREE KALAMANDALAM KRISHNAN NAIR

## THE DIRECTOR



Through hard work and dedication, Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair has indeed imbibed the spirit of Kathakali, the traditional dance form of Kerala. His association with the dance form began at an early age. He had the good fortune of performing before the great poet, Valathol, who invited him to join the Kerala Kalamandalam, an institution where young students of dance go through a rigorous training in the art of Kathakali. Among Krishnan Nair's teachers were the greatest exponents of Kathakali, like Pattikkamthodi, Kavalappara and Kunjikkurup. The film traces the development of Nair as a dancer amidst the simple asceticism of his personal life, and emphasizes his command over the most subtle gestures that the dance requires.

Born in 1954, Mathew Paul graduated in Zoology, before joining Navodaya Film Studios in 1980, where he worked as an Assistant Director for various films including the first 70mm film in Malayalam, **Padayottam** and the first 3D film in India, **My Dear Kuttichathan**. Paul made his first documentary in 1983, **Rivers of Kerala**, which won the State and Film Critics Award for the best documentary of the year. **Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair**, is second documentary, has also been the recipient of the Kerala State and Film Critics Award for the best documentary of 1984. Paul is now engaged in a short film about the folk dances of Kerala.



**PADMASREE KALAMANDALAM  
KRISHNAN NAIR**  
1984/Colour/20 mins/Malayalam  
Production: James Paul  
Direction/Screenplay: Mathew Paul  
Camera: P.C. Cherian  
Sound: P. Devadas  
Enquiries: James Paul, Sight & Sound Ads,  
P.B.No. 307, Alleppey 688 001

# PRISONERS OF CIRCUMSTANCES

## THE DIRECTOR

Ramesh Kumar Handoo graduated in Science from Kashmir University in 1976. In his college days he was actively associated with the theatre movement in Kashmir. After receiving his diploma from the Film and Television Institute of India in 1983, where he specialized in motion picture photography, he took a post diploma course in film direction.

Based on a study conducted by a group of journalists in Bombay, the film describes the life of children who end up in remand homes and reformatory schools, doomed to become 'prisoners of circumstances' for the rest of their lives. It questions the validity of the outmoded Bombay Children's Act in the context of present socio-economic realities. It also emphasizes the fact that the system of justice for young offenders should be restructured and separate methods adopted to deal with juvenile delinquents and children in distress.

*PRISONERS OF CIRCUMSTANCE*  
1985/Colour/22 mins/English/16mm  
Production: Film and Television Institute of India, Pune  
Direction/Story: Ramesh Handoo  
Screenplay: Rajendra Jangley  
Camera: S.P. Raghunathan  
Sound: Sanjeev Punj  
Enquiries: Director, Film and Television Institute of India, Law College Road, Pune 411 440.



## SARD HAWAEN COLD WINDS



An educated young man from the lower middle-class is desperately looking for a job. A call for an interview comes from a town far away, where his sister happens to be living. A friend who has been trying to draw the young man out of his diffident and defeatist attitude towards life, encourages him to go for the interview, and even gives him his own special sweater which he only wears on rare occasions. The young man lands up at his sister's home and is alarmed and embarrassed by the poverty he sees there. His sister is very happy to see him, but unwilling to cause them further problems, he only spends the day in the town. He spends what little spare money he has on buying gifts for the family, and leaves for the station. On the way there, he remembers having left behind his friend's sweater. When he

comes back for it, he overhears his sister who has assumed that he has left the sweater behind for his brother-in-law. He slips away from the house, unable to face his sister with the truth, and goes back to the railway station.

### THE DIRECTOR

Anil Kumar Sriwastava did his B.Sc. in 1972 and completed his Masters in Sociology in 1975 from Lucknow University. He also read Law in 1976 in the same university. At the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, Sriwastava received his diploma in Cinema, with specialization in motion picture photography in 1984. The next year he completed the post diploma course in film direction.

### SARD HAWAEN

1985/Black and White/30 mins/Hindi  
Production: Film and Television Institute of India, Pune  
Direction/Screenplay: Anil Sriwastava  
Story/Sound: Srinath  
Camera: A.S. Kanal  
Lead Players: Anita Kanwar, Vimal Varma, Mohan Joshi, Gulrez Ali, Smita Beke, Yogesh  
Enquiries: Director, Film and Television Institute of India, Law College Road, Pune 411 004.

# SOJOURN

## THE DIRECTOR

Before joining the Film and Television Institute of India for a course in motion picture photography, Vikas Shivraman worked with R.M. Rao as Assistant Cameraman, as well as with Genesis Film Productions on their documentary and advertisement films. He received his diploma from the Institute in 1984.

An executive, working for a private firm, gets bored with his routine life. In the office, one day follows another with supreme monotony. At home he feels neglected and unwanted by his wife and children who have drawn away from him imperceptibly, and now have lives of their own to lead. The man suddenly runs away from home and hides in a hotel in a hill resort. Life once more regains its many hues, and he starts enjoying his solitary holiday. He even writes a letter to his wife explaining why he has left home. But a chance encounter with an acquaintance in the hotel leads to the whole family descending on him, with a doctor. They are convinced that he has lost his mind and drag him back to his old milieu for medical care. His paradise lost, the man remains mentally disturbed.

### **SOJOURN**

*1984/Black and White/23 mins/English  
Production: Film and Television Institute of India, Pune*

*Direction/Story/Screenplay: Vikas Shivraman  
Camera: A.V. Thomas*

*Lead Players: Deepak Kejriwal, Shobha Patki,  
Mohan Joshi, Pradeep Hooda, Shamoli  
Paranjape*

*Enquiries: Director, Film and Television  
Institute of India, Law College Road, Pune  
411 004.*

## THE WHISPERING WIND



cultural identity. Their life is punctuated by songs and dances, and despite their poverty, the act of living remains a celebration.

One of the most primitive tribes of India are the Dongria Kondhs who live in the densely wooded slopes of the Niyamgiri hills, in Southern Orissa. The Dongrias are well-known in history for their Meriah Puja, where human sacrifice used to form a part of a ritual invocation to Mother Earth for plentiful crops and peace and prosperity for the community. Today, human sacrifice has given way to animal sacrifice, along with other changes that are affecting the social and economic life of the tribals. With the State Government's involvement in tribal welfare, a few of the villages have been electrified, the tribals have been taught the advantages of having plantations of permanent fruit trees instead of the traditional, wasteful method of shifting cultivation. In spite of all the changes, the Dongria community still retain their unique



## THE DIRECTOR

Biplab Roy Chowdhury, 42, left his medical studies to join films. From 1962 onwards he has worked as a film editor for many feature films and documentaries. In 1970 he made **Latent**, a documentary that won the National Award for the Best Social Documentation film of the year. This was followed by **Barna Bibarna**, a feature film in Bengali. **Chilika Teerye** came in 1976, and was the recipient of a National Award for the Best Oriya Feature Film of the year. **Shodh**, made in Hindi in 1979, won the Golden Lotus that year. **Mahaprithivi**, in Bengali once again, was made in 1981, followed by **Spandan** in Hindi which received the National Award for the Best Social Welfare Film in 1982. **Ashray** (1983) and **Yeh Kahani Nahin** (1984), were both feature films in Hindi.



### **THE WHISPERING WIND**

1985/Colour/33 mins/English

Production: Harijan and Tribal Welfare  
Department, Government of Orissa

Direction: Biplab Roy Chowdhury

Screenplay: Dr. Sitakanta Mahapatra

Enquiries: Director, Information and Public  
Relations and Joint Secretary to the  
Government, I & PR Deptt. Government of  
Orissa, Bhubaneswar 751 001.