

Heeramandi: A Spectacle of Grandeur

A review by Sanjiva Sahai

NETFLIX

Presents



Heeramandi

If you're into drowning in grandeur and have a lifetime to spare, indulge in this 8-hour-and-a-half spectacle called `□□□□□□□□` where the set design gets more screen time than the plot itself.

Who needs historical accuracy when we can have a jolly good `□□□□□□` spin in all the recently released movies? Who cares about facts anyway when we've got the glitz and glamour of a Bhansali extravaganza to distract us?

Indeed, amidst the narrative, several performances shine with profound depth. Manisha Koirala, Sonakshi Sinha, Aditi Rao Hydari, Richa Chadha and the entire female ensemble deliver commendable portrayals, leaving a lasting impression. Additionally, the music, both vocal and instrumental, stands as a formidable asset.

Ah, if only Bhansali had a knack for precision! A concise 2-hour 15-minute film instead of this drawn-out series would have spared us all a lot of eye-rolling and tea breaks.

— Sanjiva Sahai

Sunil Grover, the outrageously, irrepressible match to Kapil Sharma

By Sunil Sarpal



Sunil Grover is the most versatile comedian to have graced The Kapil Sharma Show. There is a Hindi song which depicts his aura:

"TERE CHAHRE SE NAZAR NAHIN HAT TI, NAZARE HUM KYA DEKHEN..."

When he is on view, all other actors hide behind him. The eyes are glued to him till the time he departs.

He brings about such a charismatic approach that his aura becomes larger than life. On the Kapil Sharma Show, the most revered actor was Sunil Grover. In his presence, sometimes, even Kapil Sharma took a back seat.

How a meaningless spat between Kapil Sharma and Sunil Grover, on a flight back from Australia resulted in Sunil withdrawing from the show. His absence from the show was then felt by the audience. His replacement, Krushna, was nowhere near a match to his talent.

On the Kapil Sharma show, Sunil first played the character of Guthi and then Dr Mashoor Gulati. His portrayal of both the characters was unique and audience realised his comic potential. His acting brings in new flavour to the audience.

His sense of comic timing, dialogue delivery, attire and the pregnant pauses that he takes, before delivering the punch line, makes him a very special comedian. He simply tickles the funny bone of the audience. Sunil has portrayed the characters of Amitabh Bachchan, Kapil Dev, and Sidhu with distinction. He also played many a characters with a style of his own and left the audience in splits. Sunil is also capable of copying the voice patterns of a number of actors. He is simply a gifted pro.

When Amitabh Bachchan was first launched as an actor, he was tagged as an *Angry Young Man*. The writers then used to write scripts to suit his image and movies were made where Amitabh invariably played the character of the Angry Man. Amitabh's success story on big screen was possible with his image. Similarly, now scripts have to be written keeping in mind Sunil Grover as a comedy actor. His extra ordinary comedy skills could be given further boost so that Sunil's potential is harnessed fully. Watch one more of his charades below:

Indian Batsmen with a Midas Touch

By Sunil Sarpal



India has the distinction of producing batsmen with a magical touch and they conquered the most difficult of bowlers. From **Gavaskar** to **Tendulkar** and now **Virat Kohli**. They have been diamonds with a midas touch. By merely watching them play, one can learn the art of batting because they are simply a school unto themselves.

Gavaskar's technique for batting was derived from the Cricketing Text Book. His temperament and concentration was second to none. His shot selection was simply spot on. His technique was fool proof that he would not leave any room between bat and pad.

Sachin Tendulkar was more adventurous and his intent was aggressive in nature. He was considered the God of Cricket by none other than Mathew Hayden of Australia. Tendulkar was born to play cricket and touched the height which no other batsman did. Tendulkar played his game in two phases. When he came into test cricket, he was very aggressive and could hit even four boundaries in one over on a regular basis. A lot of people and even cricketers idolised him and studied his game to learn the art of batting. Sachin notched up a 100 tons in all formats of the game which is a very formidable task to accomplish.

Now Virat Kohli has picked up the gauntlet. He is beating one record after another at regular intervals. Virat's game is stylised in such a manner that he has become much more stable and assured. His cover drive is perfection personified. The longevity of a career largely depends upon how one adjusts with the given conditions and matches the situation. Perhaps Virat Kohli knows the art of adjustment more than anybody else. Virat is supremely fit and agile even at the age of 36 yrs. His running between the wickets is just like a 20 years old player. He gives a lot of time to exercise and to remain match fit. Virat is inching towards the 100 tons milestone set by Sachin and in all likelihood Virat will surpass this record in style and set new numbers for the next generation.

India's legacy of producing one batsman after another to conquer the world is unique. Who is going to be the next class act is a million dollar question ?

Curtain Raiser: Based on Ramcharitmanas Aayam will present VAIDEHI this week



Shruti Verma

Aayam presents “Vaidehi,” offering a new voice to Sita. Aayam, a dedicated institute promoting the age-old tradition of Bharatanatyam, based in Delhi, will showcase a unique presentation of the magnum opus of Saint Tulsidas – Ramcharitmanas.



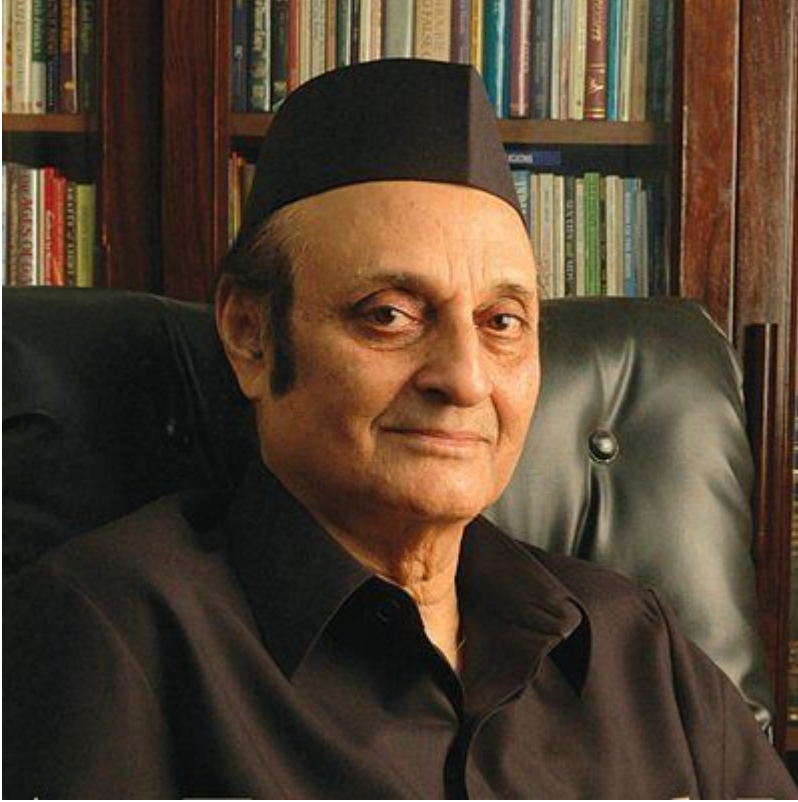
File Photo of Guru Sindhu Mishra as a dancer
Conceived and choreographed by Guru Smt. Sindhu Mishra, the aim is to bring out a creative spin on the Ramayana and explore the love and virtue of Sita. Shruti Verma, a senior disciple of Guru Sindhu Mishra, will present this unique storytelling through her honed skills within the vocabulary of Bharatanatyam. The performance, scheduled for 6 pm on April 20th at LTG Auditorium in New Delhi, will mark Shruti's debut solo performance. It promises to be a fine blend of talent, tradition, and artistic innovation.

The performance will include a distinguished live orchestra, with Shri G Elangovan on Carnatic vocals and flute, Shri Nitin Sharma on Hindustani vocals, Shri Sachin Sharma on the tabla, and Dr. Ramamurthy Kesavan on the mridangam. Nattuvangam will be by Guru Smt. Sindhu Mishra. Shruti Verma, a committed dancer and an undergraduate in computer science, has been

performing with her troupe at major festivals and stages, promising to be a passionate and bright dancer. She will portray the myriad perspectives and emotions of Sita, all culminating in her undying, steadfast love for Lord Rama, bringing out colors from the Ramcharitmanas that were previously unknown.

Guru Smt. Mishra distinguished herself as a performer in the classical milieu under the guidance of eminent Gurus Shri KN Dakshinamoorthy, Shri KJ Govindarajan, and Smt. Kamalini Dutt. She emerged as a choreographer with a unique and compelling style and played a vital role in conceiving, organizing, and choreographing high-profile events and festivals across the country. The recipient of awards and fellowships from the central and state governments, she is also the founder of Aayam, a cultural society that has nurtured a new generation of not just dancers but artists.

A Multilingual Recitation by Dr. Karan Singh



Dr. Karan Singh

Poetry is to be Heard

A review by **Mandira Ghosh**

READINGS: Sounds of Poetry:

CHAIR: Muzaffar Ali

COLLABORATION: The Poetry Society, India

12 December 2023

The recitations in five languages by Dr. Karan Singh brought alive the linguistic diversity of India. He shared some of his favourite poems in English, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit and Dogri, and said that prose is to be read and poetry is to be heard; life without music and poetry is dull. Muzaffar Ali, who chaired this unique session, urged the celebration of poetry and said that all his works, especially his unreleased film Zooni, were driven by poetry.

Karan Singh began reciting his favoured poems in a mellifluous voice and sonorous tone. He started with Wordsworth's famous

poem titled 'Daffodils', and went on to read more outstanding poems by poets like W. B. Yeats and Robert Frost. While reading Frost's 'The Road Not Taken', he mentioned that he himself took the road less travelled and that made all the difference in his life. He explained Frost's famous words: 'The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep' from the poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening'. He also read Frost's 'Fire and Ice' and said that the world will either end in fire or ice. In this context, he also quoted, 'Nothing beside remains' from P.B. Shelley's 'Ozymandias'

. He also read the creations of Urdu and Hindi poets like Ghalib, Shakeel Badayuni and Kabir. He chose to recite Kabir's 'Ghoonghat Ke Pat Khol' and excerpts from Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas. Going back to his Kashmiri roots, he sang a song in Dogri quite beautifully and concluded the evening with the recitation of 'Shanti Mantra' in Sanskrit, uttering Om!

MANDIRA GHOSH

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Poetry is to be Heard

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■ MANDIRA GHOSH

India needs more of Sonu Sood and Gautam Gambhir

By Sunil Sarpal

Their names should be revered with a lot of respect and gratitude as they are the Role Models in our society.

Both resurrect the society where Administration fails in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities towards mankind, particularly down-trodden strata of society.

During Covid time, when migrant workers were rendered homeless and hapless, Sonu Sood came to their rescue and provided them with suitable transport so that they could reach their homes safely. In doing so, he had to deal with a high level of dignitaries to get permission to transport them from one state to another. He turned out the messiah for the down-trodden then.

Sonu, by profession, is an actor and plays generally the role of a villain in South movies. But for the above cause, he turned out to be a real hero in the public eye.

Gautam Gambhir, an ex Indian Cricketer is another live example whose heart beats for the poor and down-trodden. He is running 4-5 outlets where free food is supplied to the poor of society. He claims to have no such means to provide food but earn this money by playing competitive cricket.

Society these days has turned selfish and self-centered. They hardly think in terms of less privileged.

Me and mine are the buzzwords. .

Human being sans humanity is in the blood of today's man. As a result, people keep fighting for petty issues.

God provides money to fulfill our basic necessities i.e. ROTI, KAPRA, AND MAKAN.

What is the difference between a human being and animal if the latter consumes animal food We are human beings and humanity should be reflective in our persona i.e. in thought, action and reaction. If not, we need to still improve upon otherwise we remain animals in human form. If we remain animals in human form, what kind of society we are building. What kind of heritage we are leaving behind for our next generation to step into.

When will we improve upon even if people like Sonu Sood and Gautam Gambhir set unprecedented examples in front of us. If we still do not improve upon, we are cowards and 'C' class citizens of society.

Even if we are rich and people just gather around us, of what use. One of them will stab us on our back and run away with our false pride

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World's largest literature festival concludes

Einstein World Records gives certificate of achievement

The last day was dedicated to the differently abled writers

More than 850 children of Delhi NCR More took part in the programme 'Aao Kahani Bune'

New Delhi, 16 March 2024: The Festival of Letters 2024, which is being organized by Sahitya Akademi as the world's largest literature festival, concluded today. The last day of this six-day festival was dedicated to differently abled writers. To provide national platform to differently abled writers All India Differently Abled Writers' Meet was organized. To awaken interest in literature among children many competitions were organized for more than 850 children at the programme 'Aao Kahani Bune'. Today's other important programmes included "Symposium on the Life and Works of Gopi Chand Narang", "Translation in a Multilingual, Multicultural Society", "Preservation of Indian Languages", "Translation as Rewriting/re-creation in the Indian Context", "Indian English Writing and Translation". Apart from this, the ongoing national seminars on "Indian Oral Epics" and "Post-Independence Indian Literature" also concluded.

Considering this six-day festival as the world's biggest literary festival, today the team of Einstein World Records, Dubai, presented the certificate of a world record in ceremoniously to Sri Madhav Kaushik, Prof. Kumud Sharma and Dr. K. Sreenivasarao, respectively President, Vice President and Secretary, Sahitya Akademi. The certificate mentions the participation of more than 1100 writers in 190 sessions in this world's largest literature festival that lasted six days and over 175 languages were represented. Delivering the inaugural address at the inaugural session of the All India Differently Abled Writers' Meet, renowned English scholar Prof. G.J.V. Prasad said that we have to work with awareness and affection in connection with the differently abled. Disability is not congenital but many times we acquire it due to our own ignorance and carelessness. He requested all the differently abled writers to identify their special abilities

and work on them, they must achieve their destination. In her presidential address, Vice President of Sahitya Akademi, Prof. Kumud Sharma, while discussing the achievements of the differently abled people in various fields, said that the differently abled people will have to move forward with the energy and courage, only then they will be able to achieve their desired destination.

At the beginning of the inaugural session, Sahitya Akademi Secretary Dr. K. Sreenivasarao while giving the welcome address said that Sahitya Akademi is feeling proud to have differently abled writers from 24 Indian languages present here today. Remembering the great writer and critic Gopichand Narang, a symposium was organized on his literary contribution. The chief guests of which were Sri Gulzar and Narang ji's wife Manorama Narang. Sri Gulzar in his inaugural address said that the personality and work of Gopi Chand Narang is a beautiful combination of his talent and greatness. The key-note was given by the eminent Urdu scholar Nizam Siddiqui. Sadiqur Rahman Kidwai delivered his speech as the special guest. Sahitya Akademi President Madhav Kaushik presided over. Introductory remarks were made by Sri Chandra Bhan Khayal, Convener of the Urdu Advisory Board. Important writers and scholars who participated in these programmes were – Harish Narang, Damodar Khadse, Anvita Abbi, Rita Kothari, K. Enoch, Debashish Chatterjee, Udaya Narayana Singh, Mamang Dai, Sukrita Paul Kumar, Shafe Kidwai, Shamim Tariq.

(K. Sreenivasarao)

INDIAN CRICKET ON A HIGH'



By **Sunil Sarpal**

Cricket is basically a game of young legs. The best age for a cricketer is between 20 – 30 yrs. During this time, the legs are untiring, reflexes razor sharp, and enthusiasm of very high level. The moment a mind starts giving a second thought or becomes pessimistic, it is better to throw the towel.

Different pitches present different skill set to batsman. On pacy and bouncy wickets, the ball should be played with soft hands.

India has produced many a talented and crafty batsmen – from Gavaskar to Tendulkar and now Kohli. They are known for their all-weather skills. Their records speak volume of their unflinching approach to game and adaptability to different conditions.

There are two ways to play the game – one calls for feet movement and reaching out to the pitch of the ball before it starts its variations and the other way is hand : eye coordination. Our own Virender Sehwag was the live example of a hand-eye coordination player.

Generally, the game was played along with the ground but with the advent of shorter version of the game, one dayer and T-20, the shots often sails over the heads of fielders. Innovation is the new age cricket. Paddel shots, reverse sweep, scoop etc. and played over wicket keeper are very common these days. Gavaskar used to play along the ground, Tendulkar along the ground and over the top, so also Kohli. The shorter version has made all this possible.

India at the moment is thriving on the talent of Jaiswal and Gill. Both are very talented and take the game of cricket to altogether different level, closing the doors for people like Pujara and Rahane.

India, at the moment has talent in abundance, as a result, people like Ishaan Kishan has no room in the Indian side even though he is young, talented and in-form wicket keeper batsman. Unfortunately, politics too plays its crucial role in making or marring of a career.

India also boasts of world class bowlers, both in pace and spin. Bumrah, Siraj and Shami have all show-cased their impeccable impression on world stage with swing and pace, leaving no room for Bhuvi – one time front line wreaker-in-chief. Arshdeep and Mukesh Kr also making in-roads in the side from time to time.

Among spinners, Jadeja, Ashween and Kuldeep are the front runners, leaving no room for Chahal and Axar Patel for consideration.

The above set of players are all young, except for Ashween, and they are guided and goaded from time to time by the experienced pros like Kohli and Rohit. Indian side shall be further bolstered with the return of recuperating Rishab Pant.

Being a cricket crazy country and with IPL providing astronomical money to players, the game will reach the level of West Indies team which was led by Clive Lloyd

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