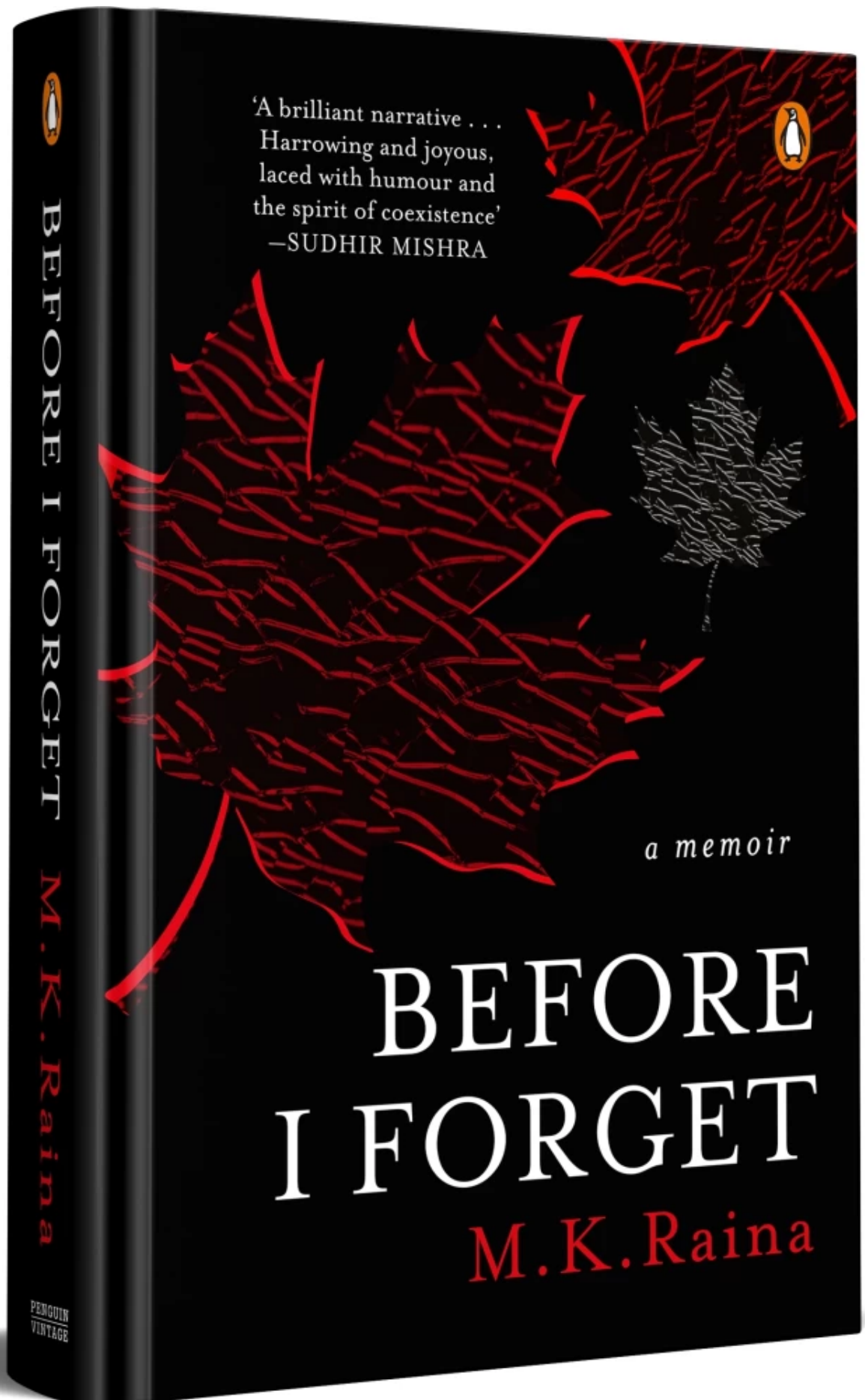


**An Unforgettable Book
Discussion Conducted by
Sujata and Oroon**

Conversations: Before I Forget

Reviewed by Manohar Khushalani



M.K. Raina's memoir, "Before I Forget," is a deeply moving chronicle of his multifaceted life as a theatre actor,

director, and cultural activist. The memoir weaves through various stages of his life, from his serene childhood in Kashmir to his influential role in Delhi's theatre scene, and his poignant experiences during the turbulent periods of Kashmir's history. At IIC,



Sujata Prasad and Oroon Das, conducted an extremely engaging and memorable conversation with the author.

His narrative began with memories of his early years in Kashmir, painting a picture of harmony and cultural richness. He describes the idyllic days in the Sheetal Nath Sathu Mohalla, where Hindus and Muslims lived together in peace, and his nurturing education at Lal Ded Primary School. This nostalgic recounting provides a stark contrast to the later chapters, which detail the descent of Kashmir into violence and chaos in the 1990s.

The core of Raina's memoir focuses on his efforts to use

theatre as a tool for social change and healing. Despite the insurgency and violence in regions like Kashmir and the North-East, Raina set up theatre workshops aimed at reviving folk traditions and fostering community spirit. His work often put him in danger, yet he persisted, driven by a cause greater than activism—a belief in mending the fabric of society. One of his significant achievements was the successful theatre workshop in Kashmir in 2000, where he taught young locals not just theatre, but values of rationality and responsibility.

Raina's reflections on the political and cultural history of India are profound. He recounts witnessing turbulent times, the Emergency period, Indira Gandhi's assassination, the Delhi riots, and the death of playwright Safdar Hashmi. These events are narrated with a historian's precision and a poet's sensitivity, capturing both the joy and sorrow of living through India's tumultuous times.

The memoir delves deeply into the traumatic period of the 1990s in Kashmir. Raina's mother's illness during the violence-ridden winter. Amidst curfews and security checks, he navigated the challenges of getting medical care for his mother, only to face the heartbreak of her passing. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits during this period is another painful memory, highlighting the erosion of centuries-old communal bonds.

Raina's narrative does not shy away from the complexities and mistrust that grew among communities: How even brothers became strangers, emphasizing the profound impact of fear. His return to Kashmir in the 2000s to conduct theatre workshops marked a significant effort to rebuild trust and revive cultural practices like the traditional folk theatre, Bhand Pather.

Raina balances personal anecdotes with broader socio-political observations. His encounters with cultural luminaries in Delhi, such as Shabana Azmi, Naseeruddin Shah, and Om Puri, are interspersed with reflections on the decline of the city's

once-vibrant theatre scene

“Before I Forget” is a testament to M.K. Raina’s unwavering dedication to his craft and his cause. It is a poignant reminder of the importance of cultural heritage in fostering understanding and unity in times of conflict. His declaration, “We should never forget but always forgive”

First Published in IIC Diary April-May 2024

A Rich Tapestry of Events and Anecdotes

TALE: Before I Forget
CONVERSATION BETWEEN: M.K. Raina, Sujata Prasad, and Deepan Das
COLLABORATOR: Akhil Anand
29 May 2024

M.K. Raina's memoir *Before I Forget* is a deeply moving chronicle of his multifaceted life as a theatre actor, director and cultural activist. The memoir weaves through various stages of his life, from his serene childhood in Kashmir to his influential role in Delhi's theatre scene, and his poignant experiences during the turbulent periods of Kashmir's history.

His narrative begins with memories of his early years in Kashmir, painting a picture of harmony and cultural richness. He describes the idyllic days in the Shadal Nath Saffa Mahala, where Hindus and Muslims lived together in peace, and his formative education at Lal Dool Primary School. This nostalgic recollection provides a stark contrast to the later chapters, which detail the descent of Kashmir into violence and chaos in the 1990s.

Raina's reflections on the political and cultural history of India are profound. He recounts witnessing turbulent times, the Emergency, Indira Gandhi's assassination, the Delhi riots of 1984, and the death of playwright Sahitya Akshay. These events are narrated with a historian's precision and a poet's sensitivity, capturing both the joy and sorrow of living through India's tumultuous times.

The memoir delves deeply into the traumatic period of the 1990s in Kashmir and Raina's mother's illness during the violence-ridden winter. Amidst curfews and security checks, he navigated the challenges of getting medical care for his mother, only to face the heartbreak of her passing. The recollection of Kashmiri Pandits during this period is another painful memory, highlighting the erosion of centuries-old communal bonds.

Raina's narrative does not shy away from the complexities and tensions that arise among communities. His return to

Kashmir in the 2000s to conduct theatre workshops marked a significant effort to rebuild trust and revive cultural practices like the traditional folk theatre, Bhand Pather.

Before I Forget is a testament to Raina's dedication to his craft and cause. It is a poignant reminder of the importance of cultural heritage in fostering understanding and unity in times of conflict.

■ RANCHOAB KHUSHABLANI



Jaya Bacchan- The snob is inevitably ok

They may say as they please. Call u a snob, a stoic, a conventional but u are the best Jayaji. People's memories are so shallow and so shortlived. Little do they remember how

arduous it has had been to be a BACCHAN'S WIFE. Sacrificing is not the word. A willing suspension of the yearning for the glam industry at the peak of your career, raising two children with an unparalleled wisdom of INDIAN SOLACE boldly facing every media gossip about the husband and standing true to all wifely responsibilities through the thick and thin of the BACCHAN PARIVAAR is indeed praiseworthy.. Everlastingly supporting a husband when he is a victim of both; public acclaim and accuse is not an easy achievement at all. PROUD of you. You have been the most dignified INDIAN actress ever. One can watch all your films with family is the best compliment that I think exemplifies your artless and immaculate persona as an INDIAN WOMAN ACTOR. Let them talk. They are of least importance. Indeed, a woman of your stature definitely has a reason to feel.proud of herself. And...it is NOT always important to put a fake smile in front of the media and walk the red carpet. I perfectly understand the irritation it causes. So, JAYAJI is avoiding media intervention and so justifiably indeed. If u want her to be kind, let her privacy be hers.

Those that intend to comment may use the comment box given below:

'Seema resonates deeply with me' – says Sandhya Hazarika

Sandhya Hazarika is a 28-year-old Assamese actress, dancer and presenter. With seven years of experience in the Assamese film and entertainment industry, she has made a significant impact, winning the 7th Assam State Award for Best Debut Actor for her role in "Nodi mathu boi." Sandhya holds a Bachelor's in Acting

(B.VOC) from Guwahati University, showcasing her commitment to honing her craft. Her versatile career spans Assamese films, television series, short movies, stage plays, and music videos, demonstrating her range as a performer. She has worked on various channels, including DD Kisaan, Doordarshan, DD Arun Prabha, Jonak, and Rang, participating in numerous television serials and programs. Sandhya is expanding her horizons by working as a dance cover producer on the national platform SAREGAMAMUSIC. Looking ahead, Sandhya plans to leverage her diverse experience and continue pushing boundaries in the Assamese entertainment industry while exploring opportunities on national platforms.



How did you first discover your passion for dancing, and how has it influenced your acting career?

Discovering my passion for dancing was like stumbling upon a hidden treasure. It all began when my mother first took me to my Guru Doli Thakuria, where I learned the classical form of Assam. Also, during a school talent show, I reluctantly joined a dance group at my mother's insistence. To my surprise, the rush of performing, the rhythm of the music, and the freedom of expression captivated me instantly. In those moments on stage, I felt truly alive, discovering a form of self-

expression that words couldn't capture.

As I delved deeper into dancing, I realised its transformative power. It taught me discipline, patience, and the importance of perseverance. Hours spent perfecting a routine translated into a stronger work ethic and a keener sense of dedication. These qualities became invaluable when I later pursued acting.

Dancing not only honed my physical coordination but also enhanced my emotional range. I learned to convey stories and emotions through movement, which seamlessly translated into my acting career. The ability to inhabit different characters authentically and grace stemmed directly from my dance background. Whether portraying joy or sorrow, the rhythmic understanding and body awareness I gained from dancing added depth to my performances.

Moreover, dancing provided a unique perspective on stage presence and audience engagement. The confidence I gained from performing in front of diverse audiences strengthened my stage presence as an actor. It taught me to connect with viewers on a deeper level, to convey narratives through words and the subtleties of movement and expression.

My journey from discovering a passion for dancing to leveraging it in my acting career has been transformative. It's not just about mastering steps or routines; it's about embracing a form of art that enriches every aspect of my life. Dancing continues to be my muse, guiding me through challenges and fueling my passion for storytelling on and off the stage.

Can you tell us about your experience transitioning from dance to acting? What challenges did you face?

Transitioning from dance to acting presented unique challenges that tested my skills and perseverance. One of the initial hurdles was adapting from physical expression to verbal communication. Additionally, there was a learning curve in understanding the technical aspects of acting, such as camera

angles, blocking, and working with directors and fellow actors. These elements were unfamiliar territory from a primarily performance-focused dance background, with different stage dynamics.

However, each challenge presented an opportunity for growth. Through dedicated training, workshops, and learning from mentors, I gradually honed my acting skills and expanded my understanding of storytelling. I was drawing on the discipline and passion for storytelling, tested my resilience, and fuelled my determination to pursue a career that allows me to connect with audiences and make a meaningful impact through acting.

Which film role from a film has been the most memorable for you, and why?

One of my favourite characters I have portrayed is Seema, from a movie named HERO, a young woman navigating the complexities of life in a journey while grappling with her identity and ambitions. Seema resonates deeply with me because her journey mirrors my experiences and aspirations. Seema's character is multifaceted and undergoes significant growth throughout the storyline. She starts as a somewhat naive and idealistic individual, eager to make her mark in the world but unsure how to navigate her challenges. As the story progresses, Seema confronts setbacks and disappointments, which force her to dig deep and discover her resilience. This evolution resonates with me because it reflects my personal growth in my life and career. What I particularly appreciate about Seema is her authenticity and vulnerability. She's not a perfect character; she makes mistakes and faces moments of doubt. Yet, through these moments, she learns valuable lessons about herself and the world around her. Playing this character allowed me to explore these layers of humanity and to connect with audiences on a deeper emotional level. Moreover, I thank my director and team for helping me introduce myself to the lovely character.

How do you balance your dance training with your acting commitments?

I establish a weekly schedule that allocates specific blocks of time for acting rehearsals, auditions, and dance training sessions. This structured approach helps me prioritise tasks effectively and ensures I dedicate sufficient time to both acting and dancing without neglecting either. I also identify and prioritise essential commitments in acting and dance. This involves understanding the importance of each rehearsal, class, or performance and planning accordingly. Effective communication is one key. I keep open lines of communication with my acting agents, directors, dance instructors, and coaches. They are informed about my availability, schedule constraints, and upcoming commitments, allowing them to support and accommodate my dual pursuits.

Please have a look > <https://cutt.ly/TehtZIaJ>

The Urban tale of caste discrimination



The Kanada film 'Handinelenutu', a masterful creation by the talented Prithvi Konanur, unfolds with the closing situation of an elite higher school in the city. Students Hari and Deepa share an intimate moment in a classroom. During that time, Hari gives her a locket engraved with the words 'I love you'. The scene ends with Hari recording a video of their intimate moment on his cell phone. Throughout the film, sporadic title cards are displayed. After this scene, the last title card appears, marking the beginning of the main story.

There is a sports event happening on the school playground. Hari, a student from a privileged background, is among the spectators, showing a video on his mobile to some boys nearby. From their gestures, it seems the video is about the female body. The next scene occurs the following day, with school in session and boys and girls arriving. Hari enters college, and his friend informs him that the Principal has summoned him. Hari goes to the Principal's room, where he is scolded and asked to call his parents. This moment marks the beginning of the central dramatic tension of the film: the school begins discussing the possibility of expelling the boy and the girl. The boy comes from a wealthy family, so the school management body is lenient towards him. The girl, on the other hand,

comes from a low-income family and belongs to a lower caste, so there is no one to show sympathy for her. The discussions start in this manner but gradually intensify, highlighting the personal struggles of the characters and the harsh realities they face.



Deepa, a member of the oppressed Dalit community from an economically disadvantaged background, and Hari, from an upper-middle-class Brahmin family, are the central figures in this societal drama. The film's critique is explicit: the different social statuses and the discriminatory attitudes towards the accused, based on their caste and economic background, paint a grim picture of society.

Some deliberately try to destroy Deepa's bright prospects as a player. On the contrary, the upper-caste family plans to send Hari to study abroad. The biased attitude expressed by the school principal exposes another facade of caste discrimination. The composition of the committee formed to decide the punishment for the accused, with four upper-caste

and only one lower-caste teacher, reveals the administration's casteist mindset in the educational institution.

The film is primarily school-centric. As the story unfolds, the families of the two accused also come into the picture. The entry of various characters at different stages has made the film's narrative pacy. The technique of unravelling the story is akin to that of a thriller genre film. The director, Prithvi Konanur, has skillfully created and sustained the curiosity of 'What next?' His portrayal of how caste and economic discrimination permeates different levels of society, getting expressed sometimes overtly and sometimes covertly when opportunities arise, is a testament to his skill in depicting societal issues. He does not advocate for any one side nor show excessive sympathy towards anyone. This self-restrained neutrality and epic detachment lends him the dignity of an unbiased, sensitive artist of society. Earlier, works propagating specific political ideologies under the garb of social awareness were termed progressive by certain quarters. Times have changed now. Artists like Prithvi Konanur prove that a sensitive filmmaker can make a socially aware film without propagating political ideologies. His earlier film 'Pinki Eeli' also depicted the life and struggles of marginalised people.

The film moves thrillingly but doesn't rely on surprising camera angles to create excitement, even though the story provides opportunities. The director's artistic ideology is to depict a picture of society impartially. Arjun Raja's cinematography also aligns with this ideology. Many outdoor school scenes show the verandah, with parallel and perpendicular lines of grills and railings against pale, clean backgrounds, adding complexity to the shots in line with the film's narrative. The cinematographer uses a handheld camera for some parts of the film, and the resulting slight jerkiness adds another dimension to conveying the mental unrest in the characters and the story. The physical intimacy video is the

film's driving force, but the director did not show it to the audience. However, viewers can easily guess its contents. This restraint and decency have enhanced the film's and the director's dignity.

Editor Sivakumar Swamy skillfully weaved shots of different moods into a seamless flow, keeping pace with the story's progressively increasing momentum and adding to the film's appeal. Sherlyn Bhosle delivered a lively and authentic portrayal of Deepa's inner turmoil, remorse, and despair, while Rekha Kudligi convincingly portrayed the role of the school's Vice-principal. Through their authentic embodiment of their characters, all the actors have successfully elicited a strong emotional response from the audience. It is challenging to elicit consistent acting from various actors, and the director has succeeded admirably in this aspect.

The standout feature of 'Hadinelenthu' is its ability to provoke thought and discussion on the harsh reality of caste discrimination, touching upon various aspects of society through a contemporary issue. The film contains a lot of dialogue; reducing this and giving more prominence to visual images in some scenes could have made the aesthetic aspects more meaningful. The film's thought-provoking narrative and ability to spark discussions on such a sensitive issue testify to its impact on the audience.

'This is a dream come true.'

Actor **AUROSIKHA DEY** participated in the Cannes Film Festival, representing the film *The Shameless*, in which she played the character Durwa. I talked to her and wanted to know about the experiences she had gained. Here are the excerpts of that

conversation.



Congratulations on representing your film “The Shameless” at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival. Could you share your experience and your movie’s reception at the festival?

When I first heard the news from my director and producer, I was numb for a fraction of a second, searching for the perfect expression. This is a dream come true; I feel ecstatic. It is an honour to represent my film on such a prestigious platform and present it to a global audience. I am both happy and humbled by this opportunity. I had a great time in Cannes. It was a privilege to meet many professionals worldwide, learn about new cultures and passions, and discuss ideas and filmmaking. The film was received extremely well at Cannes.

The audience's reaction was incredible. They appreciated both the story and my performance in the movie. I am very humbled and honoured by the response.

Please tell me about your character in "The Shameless" and how you felt working with Anusuya.

I am thrilled to contribute to this exceptional project. My director, Konstantin Bojanov, crafted a brilliant script and meticulously outlined the character 'Durwa', which provided invaluable clarity for my preparation. As a primary cast member, Durwa introduces shades of grey and compels the audience to confront the conflict between conventional norms and individual will. She is aggressive and fiercely focused on securing her daily livelihood above all.

I had a great time working with Anusuya. I am thrilled and proud of the global adulation and appreciation the film and the entire team have received.

The Cannes Film Festival is known for its glamour and star-studded red-carpet events. Can you describe any memorable moments or interactions with fellow artists or industry professionals during the festival?

I was extremely excited to be on the Cannes red carpet and present my film. I was wearing a beautiful saree designed by Priyanka Raajiv. Right before walking on the red carpet, I was a bit nervous and jittery but also thrilled. There were so many photographers ready to take our pictures. I chatted with my co-actors, and they all shared the same feelings. It was my day.

As an artist, how do you view the importance of platforms like Cannes in promoting diverse and thought-provoking cinema worldwide, and what impact do you hope your film will have on audiences globally?

It's an honour to represent my film on such a prestigious

platform and present it to a global audience. I am both happy and humbled by this opportunity.

It's a significant achievement to showcase my work on such a grand stage. As an actor, you always aspire to reach a broader audience, allowing your work to be visible and appreciated. Being able to do so on a platform like Cannes, one of the biggest film festivals in the world, not only marks a proud moment for me as an actor but also reaffirms faith and confidence in myself.

With the success of "The Shameless" at Cannes, what are your future aspirations and goals as an actor? Are there any dream roles or collaborations you'd like to pursue in the coming years?

Both the role and the story are integral parts of any project. The role has to be significant enough that one cannot imagine the story without it. It's about the weight of the role. There are so many roles to choose from for my dream role that it is tough to select. I want to do as much work as possible with as many versatile directors in as many complex roles as possible.

'I went through so many rejections that I can't remember.'

Mumbai, the city of dreams, beckons ambitious young people, including women, who aspire to conquer the Hindi film industry. These women, like Fermin, face a myriad of challenges: competition, financial struggles, gender stereotypes, and the uphill battle of a male-dominated field.

Yet, they persist, honing their skills and fighting for recognition in roles traditionally reserved for men. Like Fermin's, their journey paves the way for future generations, inspiring others with their stories of resilience and success and proving that dreams can come true.



Fermin

One such girl is Fermin. She is from Goalpara, a small town in Assam. At a very young age, she left Assam, went to Bangalore with her brother, and graduated from Bangalore University. After graduation, she enrolled in the Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography to become a choreographer, as I had been into dance since childhood. While pursuing this, she realised that acquiring knowledge of cameras and frames would help her improve her skills as a choreographer. So, after completing the course, she left for Mumbai to learn cinematography. There, she joined ZIMA – Zee Institute of Media and Arts under the guidance of DOP Nadeem Khan. Now, she is working in the Bollywood industry not as a choreographer but as a cinematographer.

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when you

first moved to Mumbai to pursue a career in cinematography? How did you overcome those obstacles?

Mumbai is the epicentre of India's film industry, and moving there was both thrilling and daunting. When I arrived, I didn't know anyone, neither in the city nor in the industry. It was tough to build a network or get a break. I still remember calling the DOPs and production houses, not for days or weeks but for months, and going to the meetings whenever called upon. I must tell you that navigating in Mumbai is neither cheap nor living; the financial crunches I went through in my starting days were too much. It's not like you go for some meetings, and you'll get a break; I went through so many rejections that I can't remember. But I didn't quit and just went on. So, I started working on some small projects like ads, music videos, short films, and events to make ends meet and create a portfolio. One day, all the planets were aligned. I got my first official project as an assistant Cinematographer in "Gulaab Gang".

Mumbai, the heart of India's film industry, is renowned for its cutthroat competition. As an outsider from Assam, how did you break into this fiercely competitive field?

When I graduated, I had yet to learn where to work, whom to assist, and how to move forward. But one thing was crystal clear in my mind without a shadow of a doubt: for me, there was no other option. No matter the problems, I had to face them and move forward, as filmmaking was the only thing I knew and wanted to do. So I did everything: working as an intern, as an assistant for a much longer time, working 12-15 hours per day in extreme weather, or lifting the lights. After a long time, I got my first independent project. It's just because I never quit; I went through all the hoops to get where I am.

Can you describe your journey and some essential projects/films that helped establish you as a respected

cinematographer in Mumbai?

My journey as a cinematographer in Mumbai has been slow but fulfilling. One of my earliest milestones was working as an intern for the movie "Anjaan" alongside the visionary Santosh Sivan, whose guidance and expertise shaped my understanding of visual storytelling.

Following that, "Gulaab Gang" "Hero," "Arranged Love," and "Katti Batti" provided another significant platform for me. Assisting on "Zid" with the esteemed Yash Bhatt elevated my mindset further. In addition to mainstream cinema, I've also delved into regional films, contributing to Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, and Marathi films.

Recently, I had the privilege of working on a documentary with Emmy Award-winning director Erika Cohn.

Currently, I'm immersed in my second documentary endeavour, collaborating with director Svati Chakraborty Bhatkal, known for her work on the ground-breaking "Satyamev Jayate" TV series. This new project promises to be another milestone in my journey.

What advice would you give aspiring cinematographers, especially those from smaller cities/towns, who dream of making it big in the Indian film industry?

I don't think that I have achieved my goal or I am the right person to give advice, but I'll share some small things that can help if anyone wants to pursue anything, not just this. Formal education and training are the foundation for anything, without which it would be very hard to achieve anything. Secondly, if you want to be a cinematographer, make small short films as it's something you can learn by doing. Most importantly, you cannot be lazy if you want to work in this industry.

Always stay true to your vision while adapting to industry

demands and maintain your unique perspective and style; authenticity can set you apart in any field.

Would you love to work in your state, Assam, in a regional film with a budget comparatively low to Bollywood's?

I would love to work in Assam. In my home state, the budget will not be a constraint for good creative work.

“The 1st Issue: Innovative Storytelling Journey”



Biswajit Das, a filmmaker who has not only revolutionised storytelling in the film industry, mostly documentary films, but also continues to make a profound impact on the creative community. His film ‘March’ a testament to his innovative style, captivated audiences and earned him the prestigious Best Director award at the Chalachitram National Film Festival. This recognition is not just a testament to the power of his unique approach, but also a source of inspiration for all of us in the creative community.



Biswajit Das's latest venture, 'The First Issue, March 24,' is not just a monthly publication, but a groundbreaking platform that breaks new ground in storytelling. This innovative magazine is a treasure trove of one-page graphic stories, with the first issue boasting twenty-seven tales that span a diverse spectrum of themes and tones. From heartwarming to thought-provoking, there's something unique and intriguing to pique the interest of every reader.

Within graphic fiction, visual designs play a pivotal role in shaping the narrative experience. The illustrations' content, design elements, placement, and skilful use of various tones all contribute to developing and enhancing the central theme and narrative pattern. Biswajit Das curated a selection of one-page stories for the magazine, allowing readers to immerse themselves in a dynamic interplay of words and visuals. This unique approach to storytelling promises to take the reader on a journey like no other.



While most of the stories seamlessly blend graphics and narratives, creating a harmonious synergy, some stories in the magazine embrace a more poetic form, transcending traditional storytelling conventions. Additionally, the publication features an Assamese tale, adding a touch of linguistic diversity to its pages.

However, there are a few areas that could benefit from further refinement. The typography could be more prominent and visually appealing in specific stories, enhancing the reading experience. Moreover, the author's names could be displayed more prominently, ensuring due recognition for their contributions.

'The First Issue, March 24' is not just a milestone for

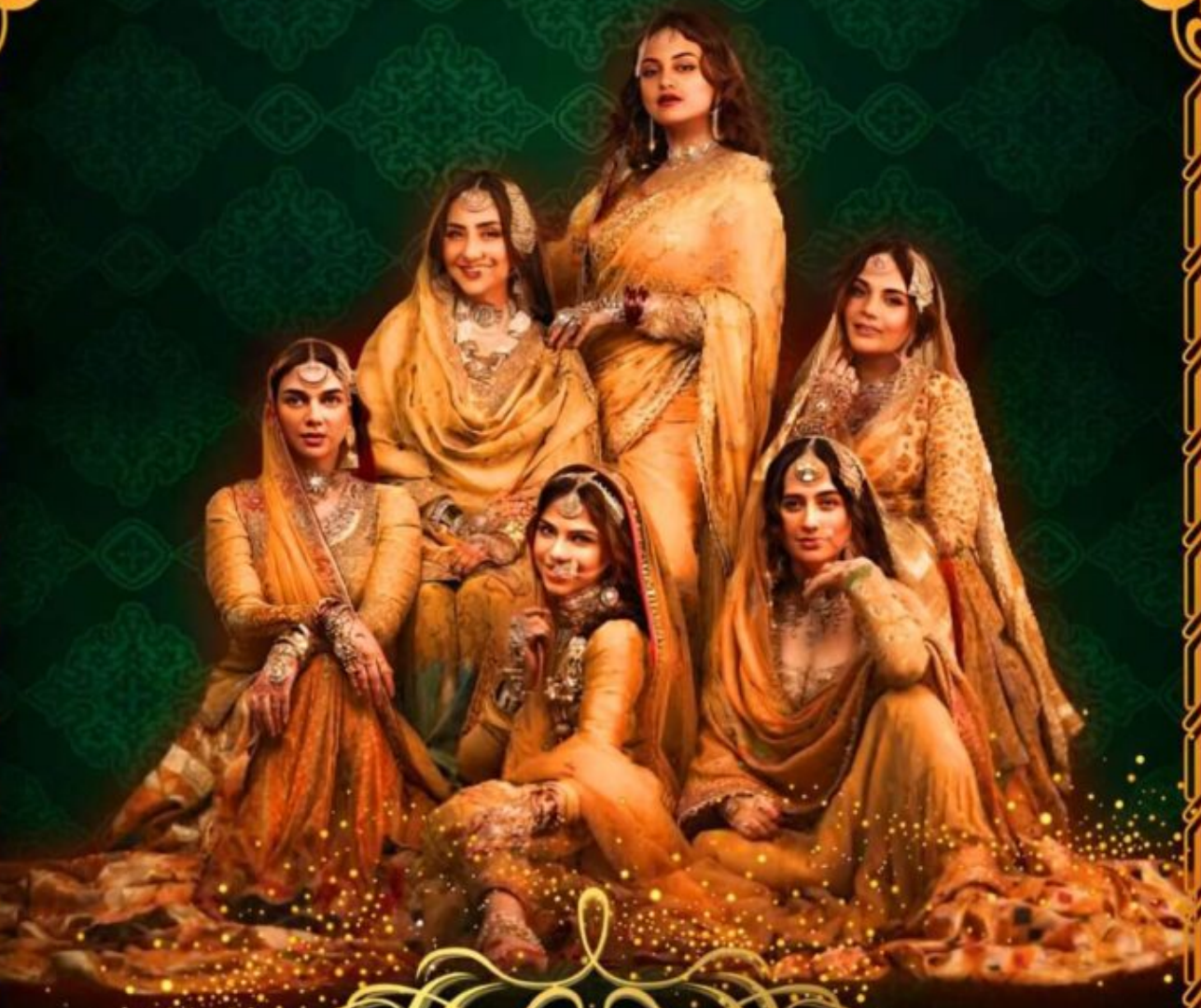
Biswajit Das but also a testament to the collaborative spirit and unity of the creative community. This groundbreaking project has brought together the talents of Hrishitonooy Dutta, Bulbul Das, Raghu Sinha, and Biswadeep, each contributing their unique artistic and creative expertise to the magazine's diverse content. Their collective efforts have truly made this magazine a masterpiece, reflecting the strength and unity of our creative community.

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:

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