

# On Seeing Padmaavat By Partha Chatterjee



Rating

[ratings]

Sanjay film Padmaavat based on Malik Mohammad Jaisi's long narrative poem from the 16th century, has finally been released after much bloodshed and violence across northern and western India. Things got so out of hand in Gurugram, Haryana that a mob owing allegiance to the Rajput Karni Sena founded by Lokendra Singh Kalvi mercilessly stoned a school bus carrying small, terror-struck children cowering under the seats not wanting to get grievously injured. Mysteriously the Karni Sena has suddenly gone silent along with its leader and the film is doing roaring business. Bhansali and his financiers are laughing all the way to the bank. The BJP

Government is silent about the abominable acts of terror and mindless violence unleashed by the Karni Sena, which like the ruling party is Right Wing and blatantly Hindu.

Padmavati, according to legend was a Singhala princess whom the Rajput prince Ratan Sen (Singh) fell in love on his search for priceless pearls on the island. He brought her back to Chittor (Rajasthan) as his second wife much to the chagrin of his first spouse Nagmati. Padmin's lambent beauty has been a part of folklore since the 14th century. Her love for her brave, chivalrous, not very intelligent husband and the supposedly obsessive desire of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316), the 13th and early 14th century Sultan of Hindustan to possess her body and soul is the stuff of legend. Chittor, according to folklore fell to the better armed and numerically superior Khilji army after a fight unto death. The womenfolk-old, young and children- are said to have committed Jauhar by immolating themselves. This is the story, with suitable embellishments and digressions in the very many versions that exist which have been fed to the upper castes, meaning the Brahmins, Banias and Rajputs, who have remained at the apex of the caste hegemony of majoritarian Hindu India over the last thousand years and have enjoyed all the economic and political privileges even when living under conquerors. Status quo prevails even today in independent India.

Bhansali's film is all that it should not be – retrograde, overly sentimental and crass. There is no story really apart from the populist legend handed down over centuries. It is driven by dialogue that would befit a second rate Television serial and a lot of grand standing. The camerawork, if it can be called that, is completely dependent on special effects as is the entire production, most of all the sets, the outdoor battle scenes, the utterly revolting and inhuman long sequence of Jauhar at the climax of the film. The costumes and jewellery and weaponry and other props would do credit to any desi-chic fashion designer. It is really difficult to know how exactly royalty, both Rajput and Turki Khilji, dressed in those days or how they ate, slept, made love, fought wars. In

these matters it is best to let the imagination roam, as long as it does not resemble a fashion show, which this film does. But would it have mattered if the film had argued its case in the 21st century idiom of morality and ethics?

The historical period in which a film is set is unimportant; what however is the treatment or how the subject is treated. Surely Jauhar, in theory and practice would have been revolting to women at the time it was practised, trapped as they were by the tentacles of patriarchy. Women were regarded as custodians of the family's therefore clan's honour. There were no nations then. The truth is they were regarded as goods and chattel in India till well into the 20th century. Defeat in war and resulting conquest by the enemy always resulted in the search for scape goats, which conveniently ended with women. Jauhar was committed to save the honour of the community. The men, of course, could be co-opted by the conqueror, as they usually were, regardless of what the legends said. Bhansali's Padmaavat is set conveniently in the medieval period thus giving it a status of myth. The cardinal reason behind its runaway success is that Indians 'uncontaminated' by an occidental education who form the overwhelming majority are addicted to myths.

The alarming thing about Padmaavat is its openly communal stance. Ratan Sen (Singh) and his followers are shown as being brave, chivalrous, trusting and honourable. Alauddin Khilji and his fellow Muslims are depicted as being dishonourable, treacherous and woman-hungry. Even the penultimate scene in which Ratan Singh is killed is because he is brought down in a hail of arrows directed at his back by Khilji's army. The drawn out Jauhar sequence at the end, is shot with a neurotic love that reveals a completely retrograde mind.

Since Bhansali, through his film, reveals a mindset as backward as that of his so-called adversary Lokendra Singh Singh, founder of Karni Sena, it would be only natural that he legally adopt the filmmaker as his son and heir!

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# Tumhari Sulu | Vidya Balan | Released on 17th November 2017

Tumhari Sulu (English: Your Sulu) is a 2017 Indian comedy-drama film directed by Suresh Triveni and produced under the banners of T-Series and Ellipsis Entertainment. The film stars Vidya Balan as the titular character, an ambitious housewife who becomes a radio jockey for a late-night relationship advice show.

Written by: Suresh Triveni

Produced by: Bhushan Kumar; Tanuj Garg; Atul Kasbekar; Shanti Sivaram Maini

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

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**Watch “PARMANU: The Story Of  
Pokhran | OFFICIAL TRAILER |  
John Abraham, Diana Penty,  
Boman Irani “**

<https://youtu.be/XQFb12N0Arc>

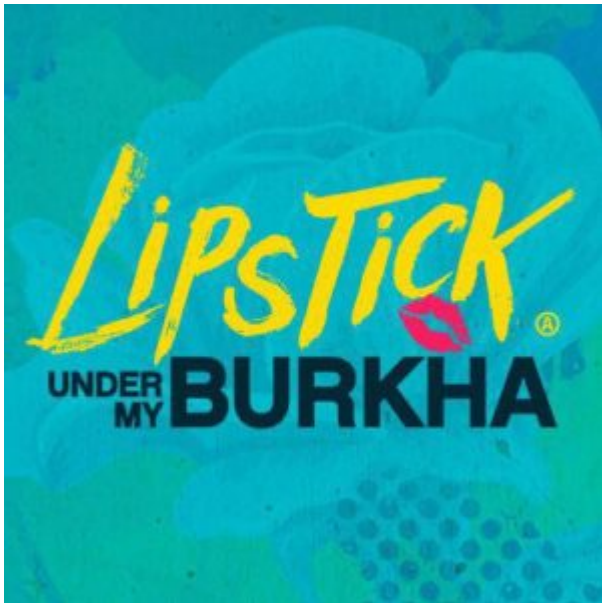
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**Watch “VEERE DI WEDDING  
Trailer [HD] (2018)**

<https://youtu.be/XlUikh2CMqk>

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**Lipstick Under My Burkha—A  
Review by Raj Ayyar**



I enjoyed watching Lipstick Under My Burkha this afternoon—the film is now in its once a day matinee phase, about to exit the big screen.

The film is a great commentary on the suppression of female sexual desire and sexualities in contemporary India. Pornography, phone sex and endless erotic fantasy are the substitutes.

The lead figure in a Hindi porn novel series—Rosie, becomes the fantasy persona of two of the women in lead roles—Ratna Pathak as the older sexy Buaji and Plabita Borthakur as Rehana Abidi, the young Muslim woman, who spends most of her spare time fantasizing about sex in the Rosie persona.

Both women are oppressed by their families; Rehana once her kleptomania is revealed, and Buaji for her erotic fantasies as an older woman. Past 40, women In India are not supposed to think of sex.

Her phone sex with a stud—a swimming life guard, plus her hidden porn stash, get her thrown out of her family and out into the streets. Bua's situation reveals the sanctimonious ageist sex prohibition (aside from a generalized sex phobia, homophobia, transphobia and more), rampant in India—older women and men are supposed to be sexless nurturers of the

young and nothing more,

Konkona Sen Sharma is disappointingly reduced to sidekick status at best in this film—a shame, given her considerable acting talent (remember Konkona in Mr. & Mrs. Iyer?).

In the end, the major characters are manifestations of the porn novel Rosie character—porn is the real hero of Lipstick.

For me, the glaring melodramatic flaw in the film: the lifeguard who flirts with Bua Usha, and enjoys phone sex with her in her camouflaged Rosie persona, exposes her publicly in her neighborhood, and turns her family and most of her friends in that ghetto against her. Topping it off with a stream of ageist abuse. Given his studly narcissism and enjoyment of the phone sex, it is out of character for him to attempt such a wholesale destruction of one of his admirers.

No, this is Ekta Kapoor channeling thru the director of the film, back to the weepy, the overdone, the implausible melodramatic excesses of Ekta's soaps. Tsk, tsk.

<https://www.facebook.com/LipstickUnderMyBurkha/>

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# **Dancing Away the Big Bad Wolf**

**Dancing Away the Big Bad Wolf:  
Culture as a Site of Resistance to Big Capital**

**Joya John**





I recently saw Madhuri Dixit's comeback film *Aaja Nachle*. However before you tell me that it is a little too late for a film review, I must clarify this not a film review. For those of you who have not seen the film a quick overview of the plot is necessary to see where my argument will lead.

Madhuri Dixit, or Diya as her character is called, returns from New York to the town of Shamli to revive a dance theatre called Ajanta, embodied in a performance space, that is to be mowed down to build a mall. Diya, strikes a deal with the rather flamboyant M.P. of the town played by Akshay Khanna, that in two months if she is able to stage a successful performance enacted by performers from Shamli itself, the M.P. will have to reconsider the proposal of building a mall. It is an uphill task, for Diya as she struggles with local goons and a motley crew of actors with no experience of performance or dance. The local businessman, played by Irfan Khan who has a vested interest in seeing the mall built tries to jeopardize the performance by buying off the local magnate, who was initially supporting the project, and also spreading vicious rumors about Diya's past (Diya had eloped with an American journalist leaving her parents to bear the social stigma). Needless to say the project is a success, the performance of *Laila Majnu* by the group is a roaring success and the destruction of Ajanta is temporarily halted.

Art and Culture is often the site where this conflict between public resources and private interest, or small enterprise versus big capital is fought out. There are equivalents of it in Hollywood. The film, *Sister Act*, starring Whoopi Goldberg, portrays a state school the



only hope for black children from the ghettos, on the brink of closure. A 'successful' performance by the school choir helps to stall attempts to close down the school. What nobody notices in the bargain is the pressure on schools to show themselves as performing assets to continue getting funds from the government. The film *When Harry met Sally*, portrays a small community based bookstore threatened by the opening up of a multimillion chain of bookstores. The USP of the small bookstore owned, by Meg Ryan, is its personalized customer care as opposed to the impersonality of the big chain. It however cannot compete with the magnitude of books and choices the big chain can provide at a less price. Here the romantic entanglement of Meg Ryan who runs the small bookstore and Tom Hanks the CEO of the chain provides a resolution to the conflict between small enterprise and big business capital. Big Capital (Tom Hanks) learns that it has to have a *heart* while doing business and it has much to learn from the expertise of the small bookstore. Meg Ryan's bookstore however does close down, while the values it epitomizes get transferred to that of that the big chain. So the big chain wins out in the end anyway.

While these attempts reflect a certain subliminal awareness of a conflict between the public and private interests the resolutions that these films suggest remain inadequate. Often enough the critique of private, commercial interest seems to spring from assumptions of its crassness. Ajanta theatre is art for art's sake, the *sanskriti* of Shamli, while the mall is only grimy commerce. Pitting a rarefied field of culture versus commerce is a risk. These oppositions are one that commerce and private interest would only be too comfortable with because this opposition de-links art from the processes of survival and livelihood. After all, an employee in a mall doesn't need to be an accomplished dancer and performer to make a living. What stakes does a potential, uncultured, employee of a mall have in the preservation of an Ajanta?

**The problem with *Aaja Nachle* lies in the circumscribed role it gives to art. While Shamli risks losing a public space because of the vested interests of business and local politicians the troupe struggles to stage a performance of *Laila Majnu*. The distance of Ajanta, from the**

hub of the city, is replayed in the remoteness of its theme, deliberately shorn of any topicality. The alienation and decrepitude that Ajanta faces, and which becomes a rationale for its destruction, perhaps springs from its deliberate eschewing of a more politically sharpened content. While Laila and Majnu meet their tragic fates a teary eyed Shamli, is temporarily united by art. However romance cannot take away the fact that someday someone in Shamli will still want to use public land to build a plush mall.

Joya John is a lecturer in the English department, Gargi College

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# Paul Leonard Newman – in Memoriam

*Paul Leonard Newman – in Memoriam*

by

**Naveen K. Gupta**



Paul Newman from Exodus Trailer

Paul Leonard Newman was more than an American actor, film director, entrepreneur, humanitarian and race car driver, he

was as my kid brother lamented,"a part of our childhood". As a philanthropist , his donations had exceeded US\$220 million, by 2007.

On September 26, 2008, Newman died as per his wish at home in Westport, Connecticut, of complications arising from lung cancer. He was born in Shaker Heights, Ohio, the son of Theresa and Arthur Samuel Newman, owner of a sporting goods store. His father was Jewish and his mother practiced Christian Science. Newman showed an early interest in the theater, which his mother encouraged. At the age of seven, he made his acting debut, playing the court jester in a school production of Robin Hood. Graduating from Shaker Heights High School in 1943, he briefly attended Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Newman served in the Navy in World War II and hoped to be accepted for pilot training, but this failed when it was discovered he was color blind. He was sent instead to boot camp and then on to further training as a radioman and gunner. After the war, he completed his degree at Kenyon College, graduating in 1949. Newman later studied acting at Yale University and under Lee Strasberg at the Actors' Studio in New York City. Newman made his Broadway theater debut in the original production of William Inge's Picnic, with Kim Stanley. His first movie was 'The Silver Chalice,' (1954), followed by acclaimed roles in 'Somebody Up There Likes Me,' (1956), as boxer Rocky Graziano; 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,' (1958), opposite Elizabeth Taylor.

Newman successfully made the transition from 1950s cinema to that of the 1960s and 1970s. His was a rebel that translated well to a subsequent generation. Newman starred in 'Exodus' (1960), 'The Hustler' (1961), 'Hud' (1963), 'Harper' (1966), 'Hombre' (1967), 'Cool Hand Luke' (1967), 'The Towering Inferno' (1974), 'Slap Shot' (1977) and 'The Verdict' (1982). He teamed with fellow actor Robert Redford and director George Roy Hill for 'Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid' (1969) and 'The Sting' (1973).

He appeared with his wife, Joanne Woodward, in 10 feature films from 'The Long, Hot Summer,' (1958) to 'Mr. and Mrs. Bridge.' (1990). In addition to starring in and directing 'Harry & Son,' Newman also directed four feature films in which he did not act starring Woodward.

His last screen appearance was as a flawed mob boss in the 2002 film 'Road to Perdition,' opposite Tom Hanks, although he continued to provide voice in Disney/Pixar's 'Cars'. He won the prestigious Le Mans in 1979 himself, an year after he had lost his only 28year old son Scott to drug overdose.



**Paul Newman at an announcement for a new 'Hole in the Wall Camp', in Carnation, Washington in 2007.**

With writer A.E. Hotchner, Newman founded Newman's Own, a line of food products, in 1982. The brand started with salad dressing, and has expanded to include pasta sauce, lemonade, popcorn, salsa, and wine, among other things. Newman established a policy that all proceeds from the sale of Newman's Own products, after taxes, would be donated to charity, the franchise has been a source of \$200 million in donations

He founded 'Hole in the Wall Gang Camp,' a residential summer camp for seriously ill children, first time in Connecticut. There are now several such camps in USA, Ireland, France and Israel. The camp serves 13,000 children every year, free of charge. Paul Newman was nominated nine times from 1958 to

2002, for Academy Award in a leading role or supporting role and yet the Academy gave him the clear nod in 1986 for his role in 'The color of Money' only! He was awarded the Oscar as an honorary award in 1985 for his many compelling performances, and then as Jean Hersholt Humanitarian award in 1994 for his charity work. Maybe because Paul Newman was always there year after year keeping us enchanted, by those sparkling blue eyes. But then as his best friend for decades, the other half of the legendary duo, Robert Redford probably sums up the kind of man that Paul Newman was; "This was a man who lived a life that really meant something and will for some time to come," Robert Redford said about his late friend and co-star, Paul Newman.



Robert Redford and Paul Newman in the 1969 film "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," directed by George Roy Hill.

You will be missed Mr. Newman by everyone, whose part of childhood you were! – Naveen K. Gupta.

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**Singh is King – A review by**

# Manohar Khushalani

No Jokinng!

Singh is Singinng All The Way to The Bank!!

A review by Manohar Khushalani



(L)Kinng tomfolling with the Mummies in Egypt

(R) Katrina Kaif sizzling in Kinng

Don't be fooled by the voices of protest from some of the elders of the Sikh community. If reactions of the younger audiences (even amongst the Sikhs) is anything to go by the Kids seem to love it. On the first day of the show the hall was packed with Sikhs. Initially the elders were trying to suppress their reactions because they did not know whether they should enjoy the film or look at it disapprovingly. But when they saw the young ones jumping like jelly beans in their seats they soon joined in. Yes the film has points of discomfort for the conservative lot but the intent of the producers does not appear to be vicious and therefore they ultimately tend to look the other way.

Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif starrer *Singh is Kinng* had a record opening in theatres across the country on Friday. The collections totalled to Rs 8 crores on day one and the weekend collections are

projected to be anywhere between Rs28 to Rs 30 crores. Modest projections for the first week collections of Singh is Kinng is put at Rs 45 crores, which could be a new box office record. The highest first week collections for a Hindi film till date is for the Shah Rukh Khan Deepika Padukone starrer ***Om Shanti Om*** which earned Rs 37 crores.

Before the movie was released, it was reported that the Sikh community in Khar, Mumbai was very pleased with the portrayal of the Sikhs in the film. Vipul Shah, the producer of the film, was felicitated at the Khar Gurdwara on June 18, 2008. He said, "Our intention was to portray the community in the right way and I am glad that we have managed to achieve it" However, some members of the Sikh community had expressed their displeasure over the portrayal of Sikhs in the movie. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), announced that it was up to the audience to decide whether they want to watch the film or not

On August 1, 2008, the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) sought a ban on the movie, saying that it 'ridiculed' the Sikh community. It wrote a letter to Sheila Dikshit, the chief minister of Delhi, asking her to ban the movie The main objection raised was that the film promos showed Akshay Kumar's character sporting a trimmed beard, which some orthodox Sikhs found offensive. Akshay Kumar and Vipul Shah had a 50-minute discussion with the DSGMC authorities, in which they explained the positive message behind the film. The DSGMC members requested twelve changes, which the filmmakers complied with. Akshay Kumar also said that the film was aimed at portraying "how strong and brave Sikh community is." As a result of the discussion, DSGMC gave a clean chit to the movie on August 7, 2008. However, on the same day (August 7), the radical Sikh organization Damdami Taksal asked its followers to protest against the movie. The first show of the movie in NM Cinema Hall of Amritsar on August 8, 2008 was disrupted by some sikh protesters, who vandalized the hall and damaged property

There were some voices of support for the film, as well, when a former member of the minority commission (a sikh) came on a television



channel and advised the community not to nit pick since the film is not about religion and only about entertainment.

Well that is what this racy blockbuster is all about – entertainment. One is amused about some of the reviews from the highbrow critics. Some of them criticize the film for lack of logic in the story line. In an out and out comedy one has to leave ones brains behind and participate in the ludicrousness of the events. The film is slick and all the three main characters portrayed by Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif and Neha Dhupia look very hep and stylish. The editing is neat and musical numbers a plenty. Look at the breathtaking list of song numbers : *Singh Is Kinng, Jee Karda Labh Janjua, Bas Ek Kinng Mika Singh, Bhootni ke, Teri Ore Rahat, Fateh Ali Khan, Talli Hua Neeraj Shridhar, Bas Ek Kinng, Bhootni Ke, Talli Hua, Jee Karda, Teri Ore, Bhootni Ke*. The music was composed by Pritam. The song “Singh Is Kinng” was composed by U.K Bhangra band RDB. The soundtrack was launched officially at the IIFA Awards in Bangkok on June 8, 2008. Akshay Kumar and RDB performed two songs, Singh Is Kinng at the IIFA Awards.

About 75% of the movie was shot in Australia, around the Gold Coast region and Brisbane using an Australian production team. The film released on August 8, 2008. with Akshay Kumar as Happy Singh, Katrina Kaif as Sonia, Ranvir Shorey as Puneet, Javed Jaffrey as Mika Singh & Puneet’s Father, Kiron Kher as Rose Lady, Neha Dhupia as Julie, Kamal Chopra as Guruji, Yashpal Sharma (actor) as Pankaj Udaas, Om Puri as Rangeela, Kirsten Parent as herself, Sonu Sood as Lucky Singh, Eli Bernstein as Disco Dancer, Peter Coates as the pilot, James Foster as another pilot, Sudhanshu Pandey as Raftaar and Ashish Singh in a cameo role. The Film is Directed by Anees Bazmee and Produced by Vipul Amrutlal Shah.

The opening scene sets the film on to a racy pace with the clumsy Happy Singh chasing a chicken all over the village setting up a chain of destructive events and setting the small community into a state of total chaos. The amazing stunts were choreographed by Allan Amin who also stage managed numerous other such catastrophic events with well synchronized chain reactions. Perhaps the most hilarious scene was

the one in which the former, now paralysed king, is buffeted around on a wheel chair.

The verbal humour has the typical earthy Punjabi touch to it. Bollywood now has the highest number of floating population of Punjabi actors and the directors had no difficulty in tracing out the actors with an authentic Punj accent. In any case the Punjabi community is one of the most happy go lucky variety and the script writer drew heavily from the *Punj* sense of humour.

Everything about the film is geared to make it a commercial success. The locations in Australia and Egypt gave it the touristy look as well, including a full fledged song sequence amongst the pyramids (How did they get permission to shoot there?) The costumes are also have the most modern styling. How come one is not talking about the flaws – if you look at it logically, yes there were many. The film was slightly disjointed at places as well, however the breakneck pace doesn't let you ponder on the flaws. In any case – no – I am not ashamed to admit that I enjoyed the film because I saw it with a young audience and (remember?) I HAD LEFT MY BRAINS BEHIND – so I couldn't pick them!

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# **Desire and Repetition: The miniaturisation of the Hindi film song (Shikha Jhingan)**

**Desire and Repetition: The miniaturisation of the Hindi film song**

Fourth Asian Women's Film Festival 2008 "Insights and Aspirations"

**By Shikha Jhingan**



Scene from Shikha Jhingan's '*Born to Sing*'

Let us examine the contemporary popular Hindi film songs and their circulation through the convergence of new media technologies. How has the emergence of global television and digital music changed the aesthetics, the cultural codes and the formal structure of the Hindi film song by mobilizing new circuits for the consumption of popular music? In fact, the use of repetition and heightened codes of visibility have perhaps given new forms of identity to a large number of young girls on 'reality shows' based on popular film music.

In recent times, one big change in the structure of the song has been the use of a 'hook line' as a repetitive structure. This clever use of the hook line allows the song as a musical category to evoke a discernible response from the body. Popular songs like Nach Baliye (*Bunty Aur Babli*), Dhoom Machale Dhoom (*Dhoom*), Mauja hi Mauja (*Jab We Met*) rely on the repetition of words or cluster of words and rhythmic patterns that is described as the hook line of the song. This metonymical formulation completely undermines the conventional structure of the film song thus opening up the song for an 'afterlife' for its circulation in the global circuits of value and exchange. The repetitive use of the hook line through television promos and trailers, reality shows, award nights, ring tones and advertisements of mobile phones and telecom service providers, leads to obfuscation of the original song and its emotional appeal. In this new formulation the film song not only gets unhinged from the narrative of the film but is primarily meant to evoke a response from a dancing body.

In analysing Reality Television and talent shows based on music, one would like to draw attention to the democratisation where it is possible to have greater access to these technologies not just as consumers but in recreation of the musical mode. What is interesting here is that the accent here is not just on being a good singer but a great performer. The mobilization of a unique voice along with a great performance, an energetic dancing body, go into this new form of dispersal. The creation of a certain persona, with the help of props, dress, hats, belts, gestures and other visual signs create the uniqueness of each singer. So music is providing a basis for the creation of an identity. The emphasis is on showcasing 'your own voice' in sharp contrast to the earlier phase of remixes and cover versions which relied entirely on imitation or the recreation of an 'affect'. What is even more interesting is that there is a blurring of boundaries between music and dance, between the singer and the listener, between rehearsal and performance between sound and music and between voice and sound.

**Shikha Jhingan**, an IAWRT member, is a Professor in Media at Lady Sri Ram College , New Delhi

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**Interpreting Myth and  
Recreating New Myths – 4th  
IAWRT Asian Women's Film  
Festival 2008 – A Documentary**

# film review by Divya Raina



The Perfect Match by  
Dhwani Desai

The wonderful world of tales from the Panchatantra is open to numerous tellings and retellings. The extraordinary elasticity of these tales mean that one can enjoy seeing in them current, contemporary concerns embedded in their structure.

The animation documentary 'Man Pasand – The Perfect Match' by Dhvani Desai about the “journey of a father in search of a suitable groom for his daughter, which was screened at the 4<sup>th</sup> IAWRT Asian Women’s Film Festival at the India International Centre, provoked some heated discussion.

Some of the questions raised were whether the selection of the Panchatantra tale itself as a subject of the film was a bit regressive. Did it imply that the ‘she-mouse’ could never have ‘lofty ambitions’ and ideals; unable to aspire to marrying a ‘god’ instead of the implications of marrying only a ‘mouse’ – as this would restrict her to her lowly status.

Some in the audience wondered if the film maker had thought this through and whether its repercussions had occurred to her. Moreover the answers provided by the defensive film-maker present on the occasion were not considered very satisfactory either. Later, in an informal session, outside the screening venue, someone in the audience asserted that the woman/mouse

had been allowed to freely choose her future husband by the father, and wasn't this a progressive step?

Some others wondered why the Children's Film Society had decided to use this particular fable and sponsor it. Was there any ominous connection, or ulterior motive in doing so?

However, a closer reading of the film would suggest that the agency the 'she-mouse' enjoys in willfully rejecting suitor after suitor and finally settling to her own choice – the 'he-mouse' is in fact, radically subversive and extremely liberating in a different level.

This reading is in fact consistent with the moral allegory of the film's structure – the false bravado of the fiery sun, the coldness of the 'puffed up' god of 'wind', the blackness of the god of thunder, the hard rigidity of the so-called 'solid' mountain god – all in contrast to the deceptively insignificant mouse that can actually terrify the mountain god by merely boring a hole in its side.

The entire parable actually serves to function as a tremendously subversive way of looking power, and what we perceive as strength and where true strength *actually* lies.

The entire parable makes us re-examine our own notions of strength as well as gender roles (such as the typically 'masculine' desirable qualities in a suitor of 'strength', 'solid' character, etc).

Why is it that we aren't able to effectively read and analyse allegory and animation, and are unable to see parables from a multiplicity of viewpoints and instead get weighed down by our attitudes and readings?

The exposure to many diverse films and the analysis that follows the screenings is vital if we are to progress not only in our cine-literacy but also in the new reworking of myth and fable in our lives.