### Kurukshetra & After a play directed by Manohar Khushalani on Women Power



### A Boat Ride from India to Japan by Manohar Khushalani



# Kurukshetra and After, an Aftermath by Manohar Khushalani



# Four NSDs would make Karanth's come True by Manohar Khushalani



## Cops Role Quite farcical by Manohar Khushalani



### 'Britain hit by Bollywood fever': Review by Manohar Khushalani



### Seema Par — A dalliance with Death by Manohar Khushalani



#### A Festival to Remember



Manisha Koirala at the celebrations

f Kathmandu is the seat of power of the only Hindu kingdom on earth, it is also probably the only country where you don't need a passport, where your very own Indian credit cards are accepted, where a rupee has greater buying power and where Indian film stars are just as popular as in their own homeland

more.

Little wonder therefore that the Indian ambassador to Nepal, K.V. Rajan, hit upon the idea of celebrating fifty years of Indian independence with a film festival commemorating fifty years of Indian cinema. Four Indian et are were also foliated. Indian stars were also felicitated. Among them, two stalwarts, Anand and Waheeda Rehman, and two youngsters of the new generation of the two nations, Shah Rukh Khan and Manisha Koirala. If Raj Kapoor's 'Mera joota hai Japani...' made him a legend in the USSR, Dev Anand's 'Dum

#### A festival to remember

Manohar Khushalani writes about an event celebrating 50 years of Indian cinema in Nepal

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did the same for him in the mountain state.

Min in the mountain state. Kathmandu, a sleepy capital with a small-town atmosphere, protected in the womb of the tallest mountain ranges of the world, suddenly became alive and vibrant. The ten days of festivities, flagged off by Jaaved Jaaferi's guaint sope, of hymnesses. Jaaferi's quaint sense of humor, proved that laughter defies all barriers and unites all ages, sexes and nationalities. "Why are we Asians obsessed with films just as we are with our own mothers? Is it because even cinema has a maa in it? even cinema nas a maa in it: Unfortunately Oedipus could not see cinemaa during his life-time." For detective movie fans Jaaved belted out an Ajit joke. "How was Peter supposed

to respond to Michael's 'Off On Off' signal? With an 'On Off On' signal, silly!" Nobody was spared — other victims of his mimicry included Dilip Kumar, Rajendra Kumar and Amitabh Bachchan. Not to misthe formula film in which the villain is about to drink the hero's blood, Dracula style ("Main tumhara khoon pi jaunga"), but for the pendant which he discovers in his adversary's neck and realises they are brothers. And, if he would have us believe him, modern women's clothes remind him of barbed wires which protect the property without obstructing the view. Whew! Thank God for little mercies. There was also the brilliant audiovisual com-missioned by the embassy which took us down memory lane and provided nostalgic relief. There were old songs that uplift one's spirits even today Ai mere pyare watan...' 'Ye kahani hai diye ki aur toofan ki...' 'Jhanak jhanak payal baje....'
There were also excerpts from films that have immortalised Indian cinema: Mother India, Guide, Chalti Ka Nam Gaadi, Anarkali, Mughal-E-Azam, Nagin, Baiju Bawra. The list is endless.

#### Manohar Khushalani interviews the Indian ambassador to Nepal, K V Rajan

Mr Ambassador, it is known that this idea of a film festival in Kathmandu brainchild..

that people here had a lot of interest in Indian films. It seemed a pity not to recognise it as a boosting factor in Indo-Nepalese friendship.

So, this was our way of expressing our appreciation of the Indian film industry, for the friendship and goodwill they have helped build between India and Nepal.

What are the other ramifications of this festival besides goodwill?

festival besides goodwill?

Of course, once the idea matured, other suggestions began to flow in. When we decided that Tamanna would be one of the films to be premiered, Pooja Bhatt offered the film free of cost, provided there was a good charity, especially for the girl child.

When we started talking to government officials and NGOs interested in the problem of illegal trafficking of minors, particularly girls, from Nepal to India, it struck us that this could be an opportunity for the Indian film industry to support Nepalese projects aimed at preventing this flow of children.

How would you go about it?

How would you go about it?

By encouraging education, awareness and developmental activities in identified villages here. We also thought the Indian film industry could be motivated into taking up themes concerned with the Nepalese girl child.

What role do you see for the North India Films Association (NIFA) in Nepal? What you need is some institutional contact between NIFA and the Nepalese film industry.

The proximity is there, it is easy to come back and forth, easy to trade films, and so on. What other role could the Indian film

industry play?

Quite a lot. If films are made in collaboration with the Nepalese film industry, or shot in Nepal, it will create an awareness of the tremendous tourist potential in this country.

Are there still some irritants between the two countries? For example, the entire government machinery was absent from the function.

No. This happened only because the entire No. This happened only because the entire function had to be postponed by one day. Because of the crippling air traffic controllers' strike in India the stars arrived a day late. There was a lot of interest in this function. Among the stars Dev Anand was called on stage first. He struck such an instant rapport with the audience that it kept him on stage for half an hour. The performance was so brilliant that Waheeda Rehman decided to lose her voice to an allergy and Manisha Koirala had to resort to her native tongue. Shah Rukh Khan of course could not hold a candle to Jaaved despite his Ka-Ka-Kath-mondy in his rear course. mandu in his now famous stam-mer. But it was all in good fun mer. But it was all in good run and if the stars did not partake of the cocktails for long, one could not blame them, they were after all being mobbed in desi style. If the milling crowds outside the Birendra International Convention Control Cont outside the Birendra Interna-tional Convention Centre were any indication to go by, the festival was a grand success — so what if none of the governnent officials were present due to "other engagements"? The people were there in full strength to again prove that a people to people relationship is far strong-er than ties between politicians.

#### Manohar Khushalani in Come Back Little Sheba

#### There's a Room at the Top

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# here's room

HO will be the next director of the Nati-onal School of Drama when the tenure of when the tenure of the present director Kirti Jain expires in November? This is a matter of much conjecture and discussion among the theatre buffs.

Unlike popular belief the NSD is not purely a government department, but an autonomous, registered society funded by the government. The appointment of its director falls under the jurisdiction of the society, but, due to financial dependence, gradually the society has got into the habit of referring everything to the government.

The most important decision that the society has to take, in concurrence with the government, is the one relating to the appointment of a new director every few years. The list of ex-directors of the NSD reads like a who's who of theatre like a who's who of theatre giants; B. V. Karanth, Rattan Thaiyyam, B. M. Shah, Mohan Maharishi and, of course, the inimitable Ebrahim Alkazi, who has had the longest tenure of 13 years. Most often directors stayed barely for two years and departed post haste, either due to student politics or their own professional preoccupa-

Surprisingly, Kirti Jain has had the second longest tenure

Come November, and the tenure of the present director of New Delhi's prestigious National School of Drama will expire. Who will fill the coveted post, asks MANOHAR KHUSHALANI

of seven years. This, of course, happened due to a change of rules. The teaching faculty at the NSD voted for a minimum tenure of five years, instead of two years, because they felt that two years are not enough to implement any programme. Thus, when Kirtl was renominated after two years she had along stretch of seven years to implement her ideas about what the students at school should do: While the NSD has had a chequered history of strikes and student unrest, there haven't been any signs of student restlessness during her tenure.

Obviously, having spent many years in the faculty; Jain's approach appears to be: 'Hard work and no politics makes students a disciplined lot'. Certainly the approach is working because the students are doing what they should he doing what they should be doing, ie, learning.

Although Jain has not been as prolific as her predecessors, she appears to have a better record of administration and because she does not have a theatre group of her own, she is spending more time in school spending more time in school

and responding to the student's problems. For example, during Rattan Thaiyyam's tenure there was a major student strike — their grouse: Thaiyyam was spending less time in school.

Usually the society has been selecting a single director and putting up his or her name for approval. However, this time, a search committee comprising of Rajendra Nath, Vijay Tendulkar, Chandrashekhar Kambar and Sai Paraniape was apport kar, Chandrashekhar Kambar and Sai Paranjape was appointed to create a panel of three people. While opinion has been divided between continuity and change, the committee also approved the names of Satish Alekar and Satyadev Dube. It was learnt from reliable sources that by a majority of five to two Kirti's name was kept on top of the panel. If Kirti Jain is re-appointed then her tenure will be nearly equal to Alkazi's.

There are a number of pro-blems that the new director (whoever he or she is) will have to address. The faculty mem-bers have for long been demanding better scales of pay. The P. N. Haksar Committee suggested that their scales should be better than the UGC scales, but



BETTER ADMINISTRATOR: Kirti Jain director of the National School of Drama

so far their scales are not even equal to that of UGC.

The NSD repertory committee The NSD repertory committee needs to be strengthened as it has been over a decade since Manohar Singh, their chief, resigned. Since then the company continues to have an acting chief. Although, we all know that the repertory has to deal with actors, but always adding the prefix 'acting' to the post of the chief is a little too much, isn't it? But then the all mighty bureaucrats who deal with the NSD have their own qualms. The Haksar Committee also suggested making the repertory chief's job a contractual one. chief's job a contractual one.

There have been other Inere have been other suggestions about upgrading this position to that of a full-fledged professor in place of the present assistant. professor, so that the tough task is given its due weightage.

The NSD has contributed

The NSD has contributed some of the best stage, cinema and television talent in the country. While teaching standards and the quality of student productions have gone up in the last few years, the impoverished school has an uphill task in consolidating these achievements. The incumbent to the top post thus has a challenging task to fulfil.