



1965 - 2016

# Cine Central Calcutta

## Film Bulletin

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### Indian Cinema: In The Eyes of Students

In India Cinema has been a very important means of entertainment. Here, cinema has seen a century of growth, and it has gone very far in the heights of progress.

Originally, in India the cinema was a movie only and it was called because we could only see the stars acting, and there was no sound, no talking, no dialogue and no songs. The audiences could only see action. As time passed by, these movies got converted into talkies and, at that time dialogues got introduced in the pictures.

This made the movies more interesting and entertaining. Also, in the beginning, cinema was only in black and white, but with the passage of time colour entered cinema and black and white pictures got converted to coloured films. Thus, with dialogues and colour films entered a phase of great improvement. This was not the end of the improvements due in cinema there was a lot more to come.

In the early stages, each actor and actress had to sing his/ her songs. This curtailed the entry of stars in the movie career. However, our technical advancement soon saw to this problem and it was with the coming of background singing the restriction on entries to cinema got removed.

Soon people who could not sing also entered the career as, there was provision for another man/ woman to sing for him/her from the background. The problem of not taking in for acting people who could not sing was thus solved and Indian cinema saw another hurdle being crossed. Now with this impetus to those who could not sing, the entry of people in cinema was duly widened.

With the passage of time there has been a continuous technological advancement in Indian cinema. In the 20th Century, Indian cinema took huge strides towards growth and, today, at the turn of the 21st Century Indian cinema stands at par with Hollywood cinema.

May be we still have a lot to learn from Hollywood but this much is undoubted that, Indian cinema stands second only to Hollywood, specially in terms of its turn out of movies and movie stars. In the earlier times with the orthodox views about dancing, singing and acting, cinema was not considered to be a respectable career, not meant to be followed by the youth of good respectable families.

However, today the boys and girls who join cinema as a career are children from good wealthy and respectable families, and cultured families. This is because there has been a sea change

in the thinking processes of the modern people. Also, this change has helped in the improvement of the turn out of cinema. From the earliest times of the existence of cinema in India, it has always been the most popular and the cheapest mode of entertainment. This is why it got the impetus that brought it to this level of success, and its present size. Even today, cinema in India is very popular but, with the advent of the TV and many other avenues for entertainment, it has become a little less important in the average person's entertainment list. Besides, the VCP and VCR have further decreased the habit of going out to the cinema halls to see movies.

When a picture is available at home, why would anyone like to go to a cinema hall? Thus, though going to cinema halls has come down the popularity of the cinema is still on the upward swing. The cinema in India has, in spite of all hazards retained its unchallenged popularity. It still remains the most liked mode of entertainment both for the Indian gentry and the Indian masses.

It is a matter of pride that, Indian cinema has not only remained popular in India, but it has increased its boundaries elsewhere in world. It is very popular in most of the foreign countries, more so due to the Millions of Indians residing in foreign countries. The latest position just heard about Indian cinema is that Cannes is interested in showing Indian cinemas over there - a great achievement of the cinema industry indeed - Kudos to the Indian cinema.



Students are working at Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute



## Abbas Kiarostami (1940 - 2016)

**Abbas Kiarostami** was born in Tehran, Iran, in 1940. He graduated from university with a degree in fine arts before starting work as a graphic designer. He then joined the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, where he started a film section, and this started his career as a filmmaker at the age of 30. Since then he has made many movies and has become one of the most important figures in contemporary Iranian film. He is also a major figure in the arts world, and has had numerous gallery exhibitions of his photography, short films and poetry. He is an iconic figure for what he has done, and he has achieved it all by believing in the arts and the creativity of his mind.

Kiarostami had worked extensively as a screenwriter, film editor, art director and producer and had designed credit titles and publicity material. He was also a poet, photographer, painter, illustrator, and graphic designer. He was part of a generation of filmmakers in the Iranian New Wave, a Persian cinema movement that started in the late 1960s and includes pioneering directors such as Masoud Kimiai, Sohrab Shahid Saless, Dariush Mehrjui, Bahram Beyzai, Nasser Taghvaei and Parviz Kimiavi. These filmmakers share many common techniques including the use of poetic dialogue and allegorical storytelling dealing with political and philosophical issues.

An active film-maker from 1970, Kiarostami had been involved in over forty films, including shorts and documentaries. Kiarostami attained critical acclaim for directing the Koker trilogy (1987-94), *Close-Up* (1990), *Taste of Cherry* (1997) which was awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival that year and *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999). In his later works, *Certified Copy* (2010) and *Like Someone in Love* (2012), he filmed for the first time outside Iran: in Italy and Japan, respectively.

Kiarostami had a reputation for using child protagonists, for documentary-style narrative films, for stories that take place in rural villages, and for conversations that unfold inside cars, using stationary mounted cameras. He is also known for his use of Persian poetry in the dialogue, titles, and themes of his films. Kiarostami's films contain a notable degree of ambiguity, an unusual mixture of simplicity and complexity, and often a mix of fictional and documentary elements. The concepts of change and continuity, in addition to the themes of life and death, play a major role in Kiarostami's works.



*Certified Copy/Iran/2010/Directed by: Abbas Kiarostami*

Filmography of renowned Iranian Director Abbas Kiarostami are as follows: *The Traveller* (1974), *The Report* (1977), *Where Is the Friend's Home?* (1987), *Homework* (1989), *Close-Up* (1990), *Life, and Nothing More...* (1991), *Through The Olive Trees* (1994), *Taste of Cherry* (1997), *The wild will carry us* (1999), *Tickets* (2005), *Shirin* (2008), *Certified Copy* (2010), *Like someone in life* (2012).

## Kanan Devi - A centenary that deserves notice



**Kanan Devi in our programme Cinepex**

If other high points in the history of Indian cinema go unnoticed, there is no reason why the memory of Kanan Devi should suffer the same fate. July 2016 marks her birth centenary, a good enough time to put together a retrospective along with events that would bring the extraordinary rags-to-riches story to the present generation. The conditions under which she grew from a child artiste in a 1926 silent film driven by dire necessity into what was regarded as the shady world of the bioscope to a superstar who was the epitome of grace and self-assurance were vastly different from the fiercely competitive climate today. But there are lessons to be learnt in courage and persistence, in natural skills groomed by masters from RC Boral to Viswadev Chatterjee so as to overcome the social and personal handicaps. It is a story that has few equals.

This is why it needs to be told from a contemporary perspective. Several real-life stories are being filmed today from the tragic experience of an airhostess who died trying to save passengers from a terrorist to the proud achievements of a woman in a remote corner of the country who overcomes a humble background to become a world boxing champion. Other stories have been told where truth has looked stranger than fiction. But a screenplay inspired by a life steeped in deprivation, despair, drama and daring initiatives that led to a dignified presence in a male-dominated world may become something more than a routine document. She confronts adversity, carves out a place of her own as a singing star like Saigal, Noor Jehan and Suraiyya, is variously described as nightingale and glamour queen, and producer but then retires when she cannot adapt to the changing scenario. The complexity is a challenging a prospect for any filmmaker. A brave attempt would have been rewarding all the same.

The basic ingredients are promising enough. A virtually abandoned child is compelled to play a small part in a silent film for what she may have considered a princely sum of five rupees and then does a few more silent films for Madan

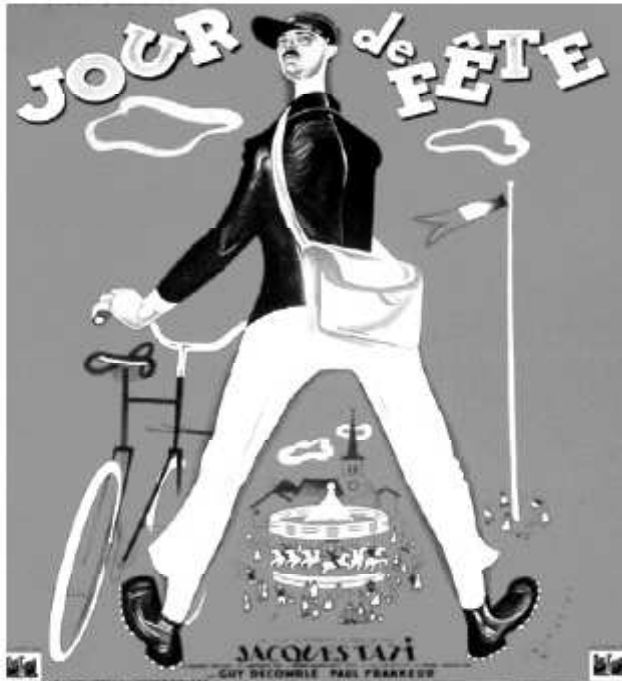
Theatres before a star is born in the talkie Jorebarat in 1931. Both the film and music industries were thriving on the possibilities of the new medium. While Kanan Devi had acquired the stature to move from one production house to another, there was the darker side to which she had no answer. At one point, it prevented her from accepting Pramathesh Barua's offer to act in Devdas something she regretted all her life. It was a different story when she joined New Theatres in 1937 on a four-figure monthly salary and ran into thundering success in the company of Barua, Saigal, Pankaj Mullick, RC Boral and Devaki Bose. What she cherished was the power to take her own decisions like quitting New Theatres in 1941 and then starting her own production house, Sreemati Pictures, in 1949. It not only resulted in enormous hits based on the stories of Sarat Chandra but also groomed directorial talent like Tarun Majumdar and Arabinda Mukherjee, who later made significant

contributions to Bengali cinema. What was considered a success during the three decades that Kanan Devi dominated the scene with films like Vidyapati, Mukti, Abhinetri and Street Singer, songs like "Yeh duniya Toofan Mail" in Jawab (1942) and the Sarat Chandra stories Rajlakshmi O Srikanta and Mejdidi, which she produced may not match the expectations of filmgoers today. But Kanan Devi projected a screen personality that kicked off a debate on whether she or Devika Rani was Indian cinema's first superstar. She got the Dadasaheb Phalke Award seven years after Devika Rani but that may not be accepted as the final yardstick. What can be said without fear of dissent is that Suchitra Sen is the only star in Bengal who matches the charisma that Kanan Devi held as actress and producer.

She and Sen belonged to different generations but what brings them together is the projection of a powerful identity that often rose above the presence of their male partners. But, in the final analysis, Suchitra may have had a lesson or two to learn from her predecessor who fought her way through prejudice and hardship into a male bastion when she turned producer and made the best use of stars like Uttam Kumar, Suchitra Sen, Mala Sinha, Basanta Chowdhury and Bikash Roy. The stories may look dated now but what the films did was to create a climate for story telling that was the strongest element of mainstream Bengali cinema. She had learnt enough Hindi to do films in Bombay but the attachment to an environment she considered her own was too strong to lure her into lucrative offers. More important, the mind had put aside an unfortunate past to become a symbol of strength sticking to a home that suffered bomb attacks during the '70s or talking candidly about declining standards in the studio that compelled her to retire long before she died in 1992.

*Courtesy: Swapan Mallick  
The Statesman*

# PROGRAMME



Members of Cine Central, Calcutta are invited to Special Screening in Morning Session

Date	Time	Venue
21-08-2016	11.00 a.m.	BASUSREE CINEMA

Name of Film: *Jour de Fete* (1999) /France  
Dir: Jacques Tati

For programme and other information, please visit our website :  
[www.cinecentralcalcutta.org](http://www.cinecentralcalcutta.org)  
and Club Office from 4 pm to 8 pm.

CINE CENTRAL CALCUTTA  
Tribute to Eminent Iranian Director  
*Abbas Kiarostami*

Date	Time	Film
23-08-2016	4.30 p.m.	Close Up
6.00 p.m. Renowned film critic Shri Nirmal Dhar will speak on the Director <i>Abbas Kiarostami</i> & his film.		
23-08-2016	6.30 p.m.	Under the Olive Tree
Venue : NANDAN-III Film Courtesy: Iran Culture House, New Delhi.		

Tribute to *Paul Cox*

Date	Time	Film
05-09-2016	4.30 p.m. & 6.30 p.m.	Title to be announced
Venue : NANDAN-III		

PROGRAMMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2016-17 IS GOING ON. RENEWAL CHARGES RS.450/- FOR ORDINARY MEMBER & RS.600/- FOR COUPLE MEMBER PER ANNUM. OFFICE HOURS FOR RENEWAL IS 4.00 P.M. TO 7.00 P.M. FOR PROGRAMME UPDATES VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

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**CINE CENTRAL, CALCUTTA**  
**FILM BULLETIN**

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