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# CINEMATOGRAPHY ART

*a quarterly Magazine*

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**Shyam Benegal**

on his Collaboration with

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**Gopal Shah**

Veteran

**Cinematographer**

recollects his journey

**NSD**

Graduate Show 2014

exclusive interview with Directors

Oasis, Sweetie

& Actors Sonali, Gollan

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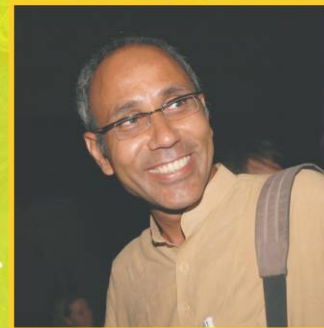
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## Editor's Desk

The tradition of honouring cinematographers with Padma Shri continues with Santosh Sivan. He is the first Indian DOP who got the prestigious membership of the ASC-- American Society of Cinematographers. He belongs to the likes of Ashok Mehta whose canon of work includes both art house and commercial cinema.

Gopal Shah was among those first ones from the non FTII background who could crack the close advertising cinematographers' network in the late 80's. Besides, he is among those few veterans who even after three decades still continue to work among a young generation of ad film makers. Gopal Shah shares various unique ideas which have been challenges from time to time.

What can be more rewarding than reading the views of a veteran like Shyam Benegal telling us about his experience of working with a variety of cinematographers-- right from Ashok Mehta to Piyush Shah.

The current issue extends the dimensions to include a section on editors and it starts with veteran Aseem Sinha. Another new section would be to include an Ad Film Maker and this starts with Subodh Potdar who talks about the visual opulence of his five favorite commercials.

It is not only cinema where lighting creates the magic. There is also theatre which is more of a live medium. Another new section devoted to theatre explores the "cinematic visual communication" where lighting plays equally important part in creating the drama. This section begins with the interviews of talented graduates from 2014 batch of NSD directors Sweetie Ruhel and Oasis and actors Sonali and Godan.

**Cheers!!**

**Naresh Sharma**  
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Master Walks Down The Memory Lane

Padma Shri  
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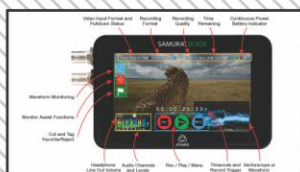
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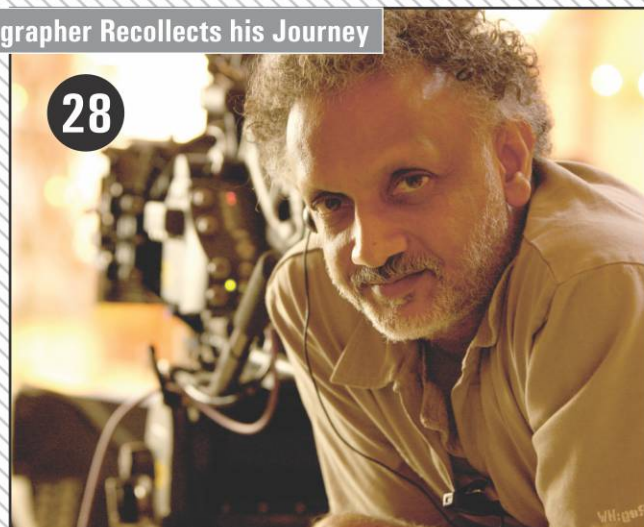
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Veteran Cinematographer Recollects his Journey



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Exclusive Interview



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Padma Shri

# ***Santosh Sivan***

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen





*Santosh Sivan may rightly be regarded as one of the most resplendent and precious gems of Indian Film Industry. His genius behind the camera catapulted him to the forefront of world stage in such a way that he became the first cinematographer of the Asia-Pacific region to be honored with the membership of ASC -- American Society of Cinematographers.*

*At home front too he -- with 11 National Awards, 5 Filmfare Awards, and score of other awards -- is the most awarded DOP in India. Mr. Sivan, a pride product of FTII Pune, is a founding member of ISC -- Indian Society of Cinematographers.*

*Having contributed his skills to more than 40 documentaries and 45 feature films, Perumthachan, Kalapani, Iruvar (Tamil), Dil Se and Ashoka (Hindi) are his famous movies.*

*His 'Halo' and 'Story of Tiblu' won him glory and recognition at home, and 'Terrorist' and 'Malli' got him not only compliments and accolades from the whole world, but also a host of prestigious prizes in different International Film Festivals -- Golden Pyramid at Cairo , Grand Jury at Cinemanila and Panorama Jury at Sarajevo.*

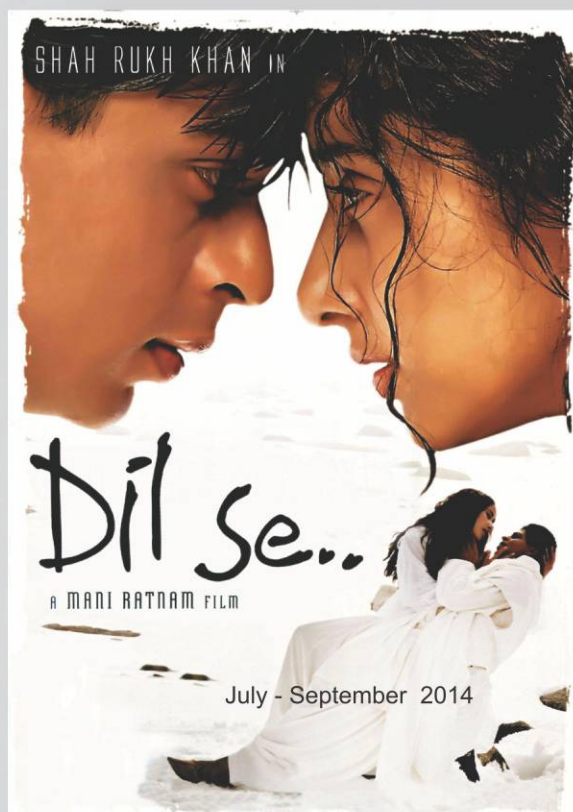
**Naresh Sharma** finds out his approach and vision about Lighting

**What was your basic approach towards work when you first started as a cinematographer?**

Since I hadn't assisted any DOP in a film, I was just looking for an opportunity to film a feature. Back then, the script, money etc. Were not a real concern. I just wanted an opportunity to work as a cinematographer, just like a writer writes every day; my idea was to film every day, however less challenging it maybe. There are always opportunities where one can do something interesting. And if you are lucky, someone is going to see the film and offer you another. Also later during film making, when you get along well with the director, you exchange ideas, recce locations and spend time talking about it. You try to figure out how the director sees the film and try to blend your ideas into the story and the source of the director's inspiration may be an incident from the past or an adaption or sometimes even a remake. Even now, whenever I start a film, it feels like my first one.

**Could you talk about some of your initial projects as a cinematographer?**

Before 'Raakh' I did a film titled 'Nidhiyude Katha' (Story of a Treasure). It was a Malayalam film for a critic turned director Vijayakrishnan. It was shot on 16mm. He asked me whom I had been assisting. This question is always put to a beginner. I had learnt a lot from my dad, and from all the movies I had seen. There are many DOPs such as Subruto Mitra, V K Murthy, Ashok Mehta, Vincent Master, KK Mahajan, Melli Irani, Marcus Bartley and a host of others from across the borders, like Nestor Almendros, Gordon Willis, Storrraro, Greg

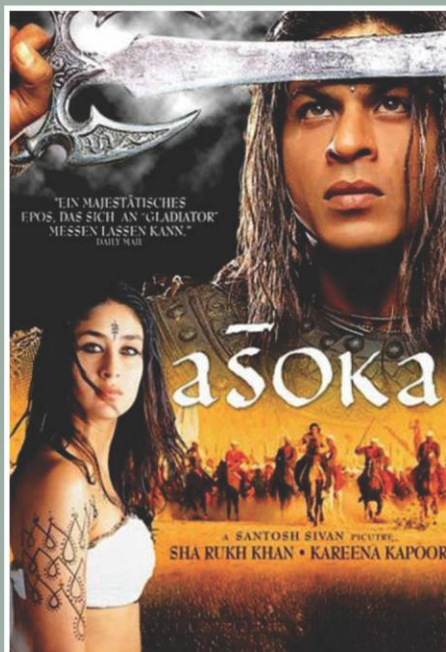






Tolland, to name a few. One always learns from masters and from the films one sees, but I had not assisted anyone, and that always leaves a question mark for the director who is almost without a budget.

My first film for the critic was slow paced and full of metaphors. We had no budget and had to shoot the movie in four days with a shooting ratio of 1:2! We shot in a very misty terrain. It was rehearsed and the hours were long, but we got caressing shots filmed with magic skies and lanterns etc. Then Chitranjali studios, had acquired a new 16 mm BL Camera. But they didn't have facilities for a Blow-up to 35. For this we had to go to Mumbai AD LABS.



The blow up print was quite good for a 16 to 35 blow-up; the process was just getting popular. And every blow up print was a revelation.

Manmohan Shetty screened the film for quite a few people in the industry. Ashok Mehta and Basu Bhattacharya were also present. I remember Ashok ji wanted to direct 'Moksh'. But thanks to all of them that I got to film 'Raakh' with Aditya. The movie turned out to be a very different experience for me. Actually we shot that film with very few lights, mostly car headlights, and a very small unit, with interesting actors like Aamir Khan, Pankaj Kapoor and Supriya Pathak. It was also Sreekar Prasad's debut as an editor. It was very interesting to be the part of a film where everything was being improvised. The whole film was shot with a Mitchell reflex and all the optical were done in camera. The film was very organic and so it was challenging to explore darkness and nights in Bombay.

**Tell us about the film 'Perumethuchan' for which you got National Award for the best cinematography.**

After 'Raakh', I got offers from Hindi films. But my dream was to shoot some black and white films and to shoot in Kerala. Shooting in Kerala was an obsession. Personally I believe that everything fleeting is very beautiful, be it a magic sky or twilight or changing seasons. Hence I made it a point to shoot very fast as I love to capture a full scene just after it rains when there is a shiver of sunlight. My mother once said that I was shooting only action movies and that I had never won any award. I promised her I will do a film exclusively dedicated to her, and then happened 'Perumthacha'. It was a folk story scripted by M.T. Vasudevan Nair and the director Ajayan's first film. Budget wise it was the same story and we had to bring a period to life.

But the writer of the film told me that it was a dialogue oriented film. However, he did get curious when I told him that I was going to treat all faces like landscapes. The story was about a master craftsman who made beautiful statues of gods, all of them set to perfect measurements. Then his son comes along and does statues with slight imperfections, but garners more

admiration! Eventually the father ends up killing the son. It's like the saying -- "No Beauty without blemish."

**I still remember that it had a very gold kind of look. How did you get it?**

In those days 85 gels were rare and expensive. We would buy glass, papers - orange, red and yellow- and try by fading them. On some occasions, dimmers were also used and normal tungsten 100 watts too. I also used to keep the lights moving.

**Give us some insight about your work with Mani Ratnam.**

I filmed 'Thalapathi' where I took a step forward with the golden look style. It was interesting as 'Thalapathi' was Mani's contemporary take on 'Karna', who is associated with the Sun God, and the central character Rajni Sir was called Surya. So the film is bathed in a golden hue, like the rising sun. I also liked the fact that Rajnikant sir's skin tone accepted this warm light nicely. It is always good to have cinematography caress a film with lights that sometimes subdue and some time reveal!

In a film like 'Roja' we started off without snow and terrace. We held back capturing the snowy hills and snow till the heroine first saw and experienced it. So it is great to plan it out and hold things back. A film is like a music piece. It should have interludes and rhythm in order to have its silences. Not that every shot has to be like that. Most of the times if one planned 100%, one might roughly get about 45-50% of what was actually planned. Though after the first five minutes, style alone cannot hold an audience. Mani Ratnam is someone who puts in a lot of hard work, and leads by example, and his passion is evident in his films. He likes to take risks and encourages innovations and ideas, in almost all the departments.

**You have shot numerous films for director Mani Ratnam. How did you prepare yourself so as not to repeat what you had already done?**

If you look at all the films I did for Mani Ratnam, you would notice that I had tried to be different with each of them. 'Thalapathi' was very stylized; 'Iruvar' was almost like a tribute to ace cinematographer Subroto Mitra. It was like a black and white political world meeting the colorful world of the



cinema industry. It also had this documentary like feel and the camera would move 360 degrees reveal in real time. So the challenges were immense choreographing, lengthy takes with 10,000 crowds, and magic skies...almost like the last over of a one day match, every day!

And 'Dil Se' was different. It was less subtle than 'Iruvar'. When I got a national award for 'Iruvar', Mani jokingly said that the next film should have a mass appeal. So whenever I used to look through the view finder, I would imagine I was sitting in a theater watching the movie unfold and go with pure wonder instinct. Even the "Chhaiya Chhaiya" song was shot as if it were the first time adventure journey of a kid.

**You directed 'Ashoka' which was also photographed by you. How did you manage to take care of these two departments simultaneously?**

I believe that a cinematographer can add scale to a film even without having the budget for it. And I also like being just next to the actors, and being in the midst of things, I guess I got used to that!

'Ashoka' was planned like a movie on the move: one schedule we did in Madhya Pradesh where we just had a kino, a small generator, a small crew, very small sets, and 4 days to film the war since I really didn't want to add fake scale with VFX which was imperfect then. 'Ashoka' was also about trying to film in different changing seasons as the character changed. It was also about a war, where you were not taking sides, as to who would win, unlike a regular war film, where you want one side desperately to win. This was about a king who gave up all







war, and he feels all the dead bodies have their hands open and the moon and the setting sun witness it. In fact we waited for the moment and filmed it at such time. People say when you die the families mourn but it's also the sun and the moon witnessing the moment.

'The Terrorist' was done with a very small but a very committed crew and a few students. We shot in real rain, and adapted a still camera macro lens to film most of it. Visually the best compliment was when it became the first Indian film at Sundance, and the American Society of Cinematographer magazine picked it up as one of most visual films, and reviewed it, and all this paved the way for John Malkovich to present the film

and release it worldwide.

**You have also acted in a few films. What has motivated you to accept acting roles?**

I acted in only one film where I played Raja Ravi Varma. My grandmother used to teach at the Palace in Trivandrum. She would bring Raja Ravi Varma Calendars and tell us stories of these largely mythological subjects, and the stories about good and evil. She would bring visuals to life, like when the full moon came out, the girl in white appeared, etc. So we would look at the moon for long times, its reflections, and it would keep coming back in our dreams as well.

So I directed a film in Malayalam called

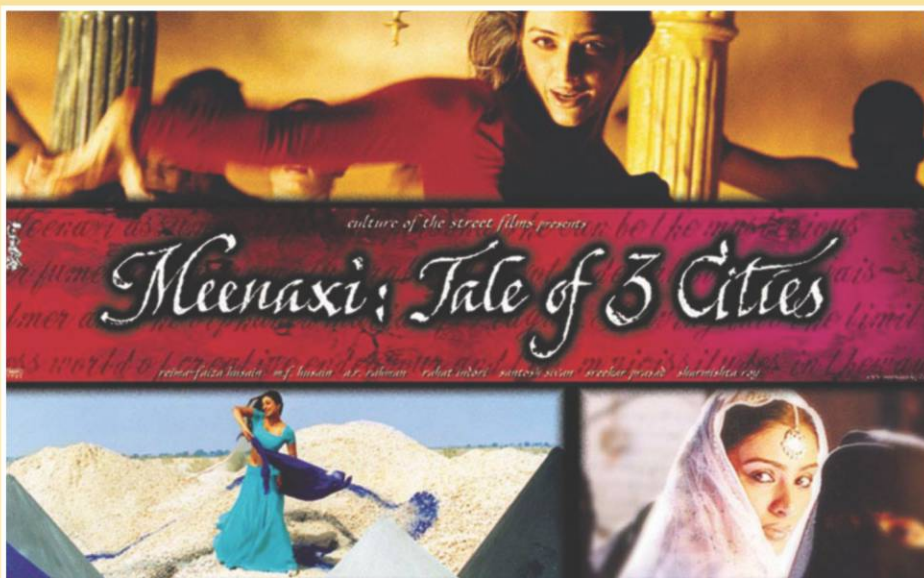
'Anandabhadram' wherein I experimented with good and evil etc, and also did a hugely popular song with the theme of a Raja Ravi Varma painting. So they thought I should play Raja Ravi Varma. Madhu Ambhat shot the film directed by Lenin Rajendran. This was when I was filming 'Ravan'. Filming it was fun and crazy enough because of them. All the actors were encouraging too. Some of them actually were pretty jealous because there were 5 heroines!

**Did your experience of observing so many actors from behind the camera come handy to you as an actor?**

Anil Zankar who saw the film commented that he couldn't believe I would play so seriously! But I think the best reaction was from Buddhadev Dasgupta who said he would actually like to cast me!

**How different it was to shoot the film "Meenakshi- a tale of three cities " for a celebrity painter M. F. Hussain?**

He was just finishing a series of paintings on Kerala. He had seen some of my tourism films on Kerala, and he had also seen most of my films. During our meeting, he showed to me a huge painting of Ashoka on a horse with 5 heads, with Ashoka mounted like a warrior in the centre. This was a painting which he had painted after seeing the film. The experience was quite interesting and his son Owais Hussain was also there to bring the film together because the film was about his experiences in 3 cities, and was a blend of memories, art and years of experience. He was never





From the Director of 'Bend It Like Beckham'

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A Gurinder Chadha Film

East meets West...  
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Bride & Prejudice  
(In Hindi)



afraid of using colors as he was truly romantic. In fact before he passed away, Owais was making a film that we were filming, and which he had scripted. And I remember talking to him in Dubai over phone, standing there in the green fields of Punjab.

**Tell us about your experience of working with Gurinder Chadha on 'Pride and Prejudice'?**

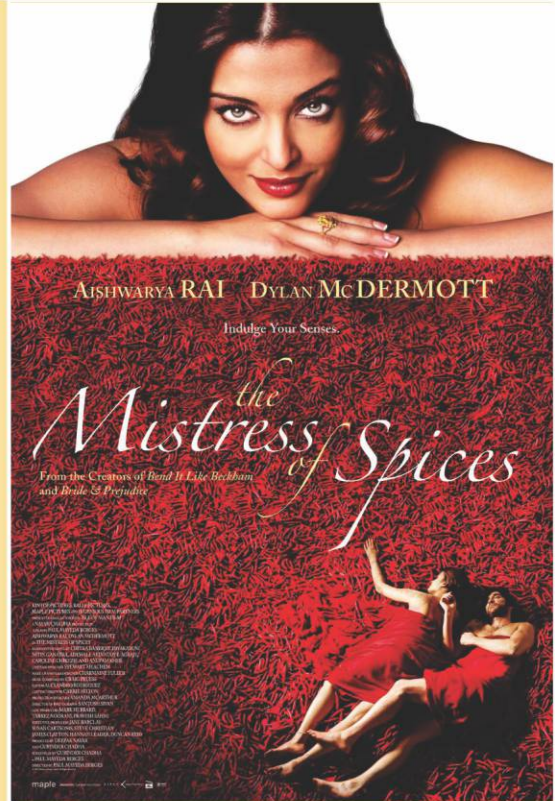
I liked working with her. Although she is Indian, she had a very western approach. As you know the film discusses how the Indians settled abroad follow Indian customs but there is also another side to it.

It is very interesting to place yourself in different types of scenarios. One of the best things about cinematography is that you get to travel and experience places. Visual language is universal!

**There are many people who look up to you as a cinematographer. What advice would you like to give them?**

I think it is traveling and seeing everything from your own sensibilities. I don't know how to put it, but in a creative space one plus one can't be two. In a relationship it can be 3 or 4, or as a farmer says-- You throw a handful of seeds, hundred saplings grow and yet every tree is uniquely different.

It is strange when someone compliments and compares one's work with a Hollywood film! One doesn't always have to imitate. There is so much in our culture that one can explore. I remember at the ASC club house meeting in Los Angeles how fascinated they were seeing the



texture, decorative art, the play of the Sun, and the colors.

It was like different degrees of darkness, all projecting moving images from Meenakshi, Dil se, Vanaprastam, and Rudali.

□□□







Interview with

# Shyam Benegal

On Collaborating With Various Cinematographers

**You've worked with various cinematographers, starting with Govind Nihalani to Ashok Mehta. What is your general brief to a DOP when you decide to work with a particular one?**

I've worked with a number of cameramen, some of whom were venerable old time cameramen from the silent era with styles very much of that period.

My normal working method is to discuss the film, its characters, the style of lighting and so on with the DOP so that the way I would like the narrative interpreted is clear. It is very important for the cameraman to know what exactly you are seeking visually. And I always prefer to discuss that in some detail before we actually start shooting. So he is quite clear about what you want and the demands being made on him.

Now there are certain kinds of films where you might want to shoot - say for instance - with an 18 mm wide angle lens. This lens does a very important thing. It gets the environment to dominate the character. When you use a lens that is less wide than that, say 35mm there is a greater balance

between the environment and the character. You can interpret relative importance of objects, places and people by the lenses you use and the angles you choose to look at them, for instance by shooting from low angles to foreshorten and create dominance.

It all depends on the results you want. You can also choose to have different points-of-view; both subjective and objective. Take the famous Japanese filmmaker, Yasujiro Ozu for example. He used only 35 and 50mm lenses and hardly moved the camera. His view point was by and large from the Japanese sitting position. Your view point determines the way you look at the world. You are made an objective observer, and not a subjective participant in the story. Ozu would use a subjective point of view very sparingly at climactic positions in the narrative.

Each filmmaker has his or her own method of working. This has to be made clear to the DOP. I personally believe this is a very important aspect of a director-cameraman relationship. For instance, you may have changed your staging of a scene

that will require the cameraman to make drastic changes in his lighting. Perhaps, he may offer an alternate plan which may still be in keeping with the narrative character of the film. The narrative character of any story cannot be arbitrary. It has to be organic and all action should seem inevitable. The Cameraman and the Director, are concerned with not only the visual expression in terms of space but also with physical action, emotional and psychological development of the characters in the narrative that need articulation with the means of light, lenses and movement. It is your DOP who articulates your vision.

Starting from the very beginning I have worked with very senior cameramen. When I was making advertising films, I had cameramen like Mr. Malhotra, a very senior cameraman whose career had started with silent cinema and worked almost exclusively with B.R. Chopra as his cameraman. Then with Dharam Chopra, who was B.R. Chopra's brother. Then the self effacing but hugely accomplished Kamat Ghanekar, who was my partner as well as my cameraman. He had started his career with the famous





Prabhat Studios. And these were people who were much more orthodox in the manner in which they used lighting and in the use of lenses and camera movement. This was because there were many more technological limitations under which they had to work. Today's cameramen don't have those limitations. They had to be much more inventive in lighting, use of lenses and camera movement.

Some cameramen don't require very detailed briefing, but they sense what is required all the same. It always helps if once the cameraman knows what it is that you are looking for and how you wish to interpret it. The important thing is for the director and the cameraman to be on the same page.

**How do you approach the shot taking? Do you say it has to be shot with this lens and height or you describe the shot to the DOP and let him decide how to go about it?**

I do both, depending on the cameraman. I have worked with very accomplished cameramen like Subrata Mitra who was Satyajit Ray's cameraman.

Subrata Mitra did not like some of the methods I employed. He would say, "Don't tell me what lens I should use. Just tell me what you want". Sometimes we would have an argument and I would tell him, "But how do you know what I have in mind unless I

tell you the mechanics of how I think it can be achieved? You'll get me an excellent result but it may not be the way I want it. If you say that this is a better thing, let me look at it and decide whether it is better." When you start shooting a film, it is always like the first film you have ever made. It's the same with the cameraman. But once the cameraman gets used to working with you, things generally work out to your satisfaction.

Let me put it this way. Whatever film you're making; two things you should never forget. Cinema has a grammar that you have to follow if you don't wish your audience to get confused. Nor can you change the idiom half way. There are certain rules that you have to follow. Either you create a new grammar and a new vocabulary as when Jean-Luc Godard or others of the French nouvelle vague did or follow the narrative conventions that have evolved over a period of time.

To begin with, you must know what your cameraman's capabilities are. There are different kinds of cameramen. Subrata Mitra was very original in the manner in which he used lighting. His lighting was designed to get a naturalistic quality. He hated arbitrariness in lighting. He was very particular about the sources of light. Some cameramen are concerned largely with giving you the effect that you want. Then there are other cameramen who are combination of these two. V.K. Murthy, who shot a couple of films and the mammoth serial 'Bharat Ek Khoj' for me, blended both these techniques. He also concerned himself with source of light but he was not above giving little highlights and touches just to enhance a certain quality that you wanted, to heighten the emotional quality of the scene. He was also a great innovator (much like Subrata Mitra) in lighting and knew how to get certain kinds of light effects that were quite magical.

**Could you elaborate the term "innovative" in the case of Subrata Mitra and V. K. Murthy?**

Subrata Mitra was probably a pioneer of bounce lighting. So much of his interior







work was shadow-less as you see in real life. You don't notice shadows. The techniques he used were both economical and quite innovative.

Subrata Mitra used white sheets of cloth while V.K. Murthy preferred to use silver paper, or reflective silver foil, depending on the kind of result he wanted. Both used bounce lighting in different ways.

A lot depends on how the DOP has been trained. For instance, Govind Nihalani has been influenced quite a lot by V. K. Murthy as he had assisted him for a long time before he became an independent cameraman. His technique is a combination of what V.K. Murthy might do plus his own considerable contribution.

**You had consistently worked with Govind Nihalani for more than 10 films. What did you find unique about him?**

Empathy. With Govind Nihalani I did not have to discuss everything in great detail. On the sets we hardly discussed because he could read my mind just as much as I could understand the technique that he was employing. There never was a

problem. Once you find a comfort level of that kind you don't want to change your cameraman. It was only when he became a filmmaker in his own right, did I need to go looking for another cameraman.

In between I also worked with K. K. Mahajan and we got along extremely well because he and I were similar, very restless in the manner in which we would function. And he was also very interested in getting certain kind of results as he was very fond of shadow less lighting.

I worked with Ashok Mehta on some of my most satisfying films. Ashok was constantly wanting to experiment, attempting to do new things. And because of his tireless nature I wanted to shoot 'Trikal' with him. I discussed the visual character of the film in great detail. The film was set in Pre-liberation Goa when there was no electricity, and homes were lit with oil lamps or petromax lanterns or candles. Ashok and I discussed the best way to get the result we wanted.

I introduced a film called 'Barry Lyndon' by Stanley Kubrick to Ashok and some of it

was shot like that. In European art, you find that Renaissance painters always used light and shade (chiaroscuro) that gave their work a kind of depth and character that did not exist before in paintings either in Europe or India. That is the kind of result Stanley Kubrick got in Barry Lyndon. He even used lenses that were specially ground and crafted for his cameraman to allow working in low light. Ashok Mehta mastered this technique in 'Trikal'. Ashok came up with idea of actually shooting in candle light and kerosene lamps, as sources of light for nights. This was at a time when the fastest





colour negative available was only 200 ASA. To reduce the grain and yet get enough light for exposure, Ashok contacted different candle-makers and they made candles of different shapes and sizes. Constant experimentation allowed Ashok to light all the interior shots in this kind of lighting.

Ashok got the National Award for Cinematography in that film. Ashok Mehta was a very adventurous cameraman. He had first worked with me way back in 1967, when he was not yet a cameraman. He was 18 years old and had come on board as a camera hand, not even an assistant cameraman. He would carry the equipment around and set up the camera, fix lenses, change film rolls and so on. He was totally self-taught. We had gone to Bastar to shoot a documentary on the tribal communities there. By the time we reached Bastar, my cameraman fell ill with malaria. I was stuck. I had no budget provision for another cameraman. I was in a quandary. Necessity forced me to operate the camera. But I did not know enough about exposures. Ashok knew how to read an exposure meter and set the exposures. He also functioned as a focus puller. Eventually he took over as cameraman. He used car head lights, petromax lamps and so on to light night scenes. The results we got were fabulous. Ashok had a great sense of adventure. His exposures were absolutely perfect. So when 'Trikal' happened at the beginning of 1985 he seemed the right person to shoot the film. By that time, of course, Govind was very much an independent filmmaker. After that Ashok remained with me. We shot 'Kalyug', 'Mandi', 'Making of the Mahatma' and several other short and long documentaries.

In 'Mandi' I wanted a certain kind of color palette. Also I was shooting on actual locations, but I wanted to shoot with the ease and facility of shooting in a studio. So Ashok created a catwalk on the first floor level of the house which went round the entire structure, about 25-30 ft above the ground. He had done that for me when he shot 'Junoon' for some of the battle scenes we had shot from such a trolley, high up. Those days we didn't have huge cranes and, therefore, all of this was specially created for the film. This was used both for use as a camera trolley as well as for lights when needed. This allowed the camera to move around the house, into the rooms on the first floor and so on. It was very inventive and ingenious. This is what made Ashok very special.



**Do you remember any other situation which still makes you remember Ashok Mehta?**

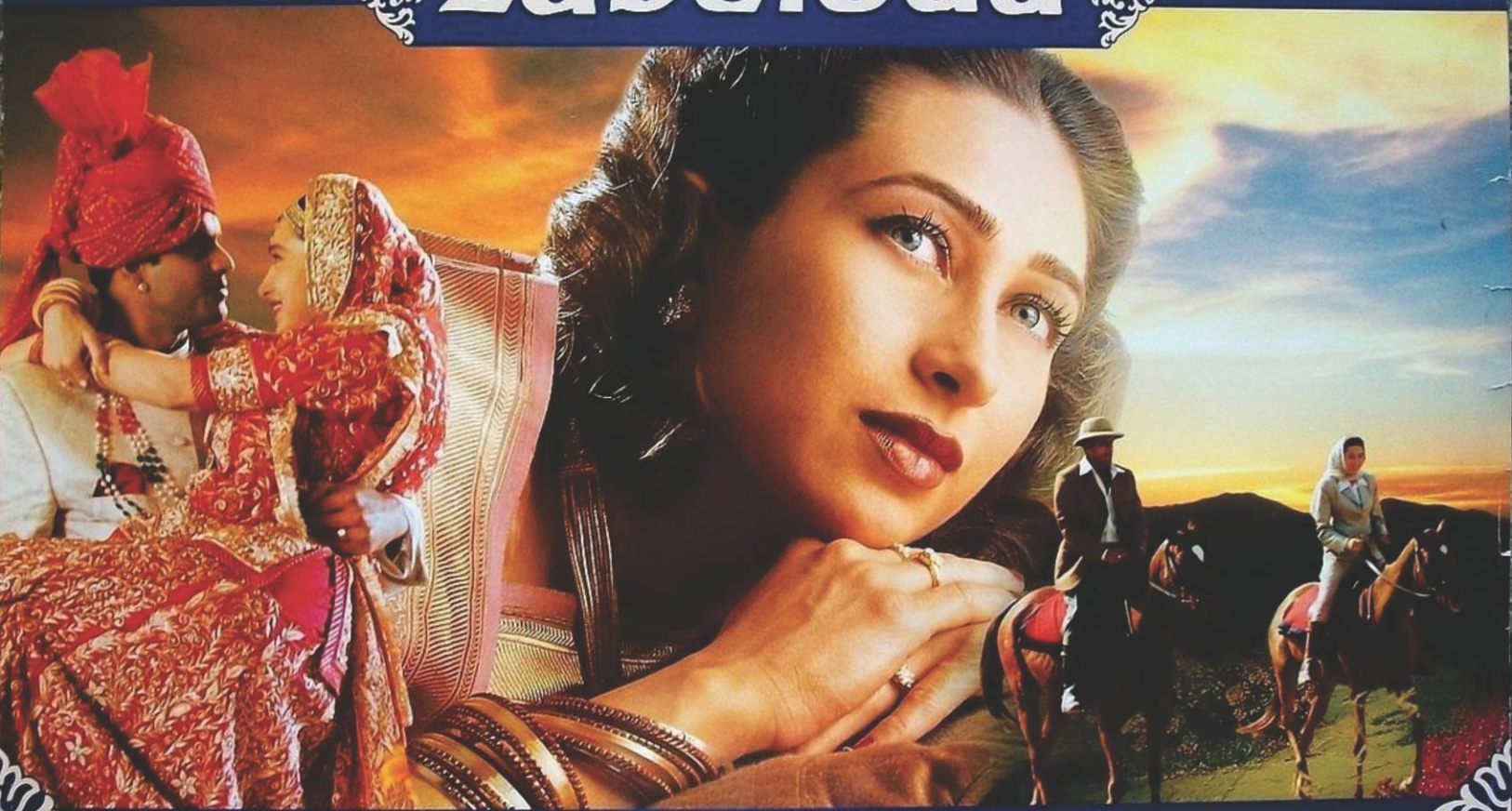
Another quality which I appreciated greatly in him was the fact that he did not like direct lighting on characters. He always preferred diffused light, particularly in interiors where the light was in any case diffuse. As a result, the characters came alive in a marvelous way. It was not simply for cosmetic reasons. It always helped in creating the right atmosphere for the narrative.

During "Making of the Mahatma", we had to shoot in the old Parliament House in Pretoria. It was a large hall and was quite a challenge. The gaffer saw it and said, "We will require a large number of lights, much more than we have. What is more, it will take a couple of days to light up the entire hall. We will need an additional generator." I told Ashok that we could not afford that. He said, "Leave it to me." He decided to use both natural light and some selective artificial lighting. He surprised everybody as we finished the shooting in half a day. He started lighting from 6 to 9 am and by lunch





# zubeidaa



A SHYAM BENEGAL FILM

PRODUCER FAROUQ RATTONSEY MUSIC A R RAHMAN STORY &amp; SCREENPLAY KHALID MOHEMAD LYRICS JAVED AKHTAR

time we had finished shooting the scene. We had only been given the location for a single day.

For "Making of the Mahatma", we had worked out an 85 days shooting schedule. We finished shooting the film in 38 days! His lighting style was to make the best use of whatever natural light he'd get and augmenting it with artificial lights to get the results we wanted. He was an absolute master at that sort of thing.

**Another DOP you have worked with for many films is Rajan Kothari. What do you find in Rajan Kothari so unique about his way of working?**

Rajan and I had excellent understanding. And we shot films primarily outdoors, like 'Samar', 'Hari Bhari' and 'Welcome to Sajjanpur'.

Rajan Kothari was always very cool, very quiet. No shouting, no screaming. Ashok Mehta was quite the opposite. So there never was any kind of tension on the sets. I haven't found any other cameraman

to match that quality. Although now I think I have found another cameraman who in some ways has a similar kind of personality; Akashdeep Pandey, who shot 'Samvidhaan'.

I believe it is important for a director to understand basic principles of lighting and also the use of space, lenses, camera movement, etc. If he knows these basics, it is a great help to the cameraman.

**In between you've also switched to 2-3 people like Piyush Shah and Prasann Jain. What was your experience with them?**

Piyush is another very gifted cameraman. Again, he's a great innovator. He reminds me a lot of Ashok because of his ability to innovate. I had seen his excellent work for Mani Kaul, particularly his aerial shooting. I took him as a second unit cameraman when I made 'Bharat Ek Khoj'. He had to shoot from a helicopter all over the country. We filmed all the major rivers of India, all the major forts, historical monuments and so on. We couldn't afford expensive equipment needed for this and he had to do all this with a handheld

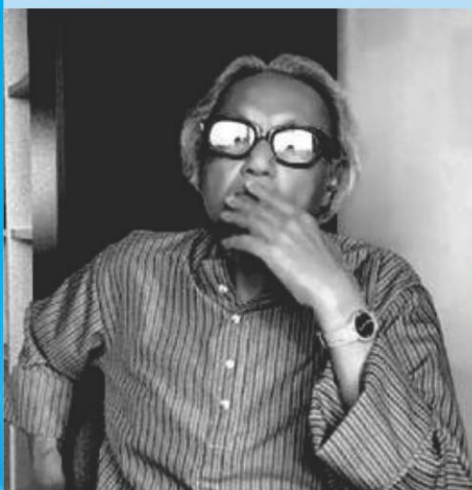
camera. You will not notice any of the vibrations of the aircraft or the camera shaking due to those vibrations. This he managed by shooting at high speed, just enough to eliminate the vibrations and other small jerks and shakes. He did a brilliant job. After 'Bharat Ek Khoj', Piyush shot 'Suraj Ka Satvan Ghoda.' And that was also some kind of a record because his lighting style was very simple and very effective. We had created a set, both indoor and outdoor and he shot the film at such speed that we finished the entire film with a







“



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whole week to spare. The time taken was much shorter than what we had scheduled for the film. Piyush is very quick, and very confident of his work. That's what I like in him and he's very intellectually attuned to the film being shot. He's not just a craftsman. He is imaginative, creative and wants to be intellectually and emotionally part of the complete film. An excellent cameraman!

Considering that I've been a filmmaker now for over 50 years, I can't say that I have had a difficult time with any cameraman I have worked with. All the cameramen I have worked with have been exceptional craftsman and extremely creative people. Their contribution to my films has been immense.

□□□







# ASEEM SINHA

## Editor

After having graduated from FTII Pune, Aseem Sinha started to work with directors both old and young alike namely Kundan Shah, Ketan Mehta, Shaym Benegal, Tigmanshu Dhulia, Pankaj Parashar and Rajat Kapoor. For a person who is qualified as a perfectionist. It is this quality which has somewhat enabled him to work with other crews on feature films in various Indian languages like Hindi, Marathi, Bhojpuri and Chatisgari. He has also shown his talent for international films too with films made in English and French. Aseem Sinha has edited more 70 feature films, 25 documentaries and numerous corporate and ad films. Among his important works, one can cite names of films such as Bose, Hasil and Well done Abba. Aseem is also active as a guest faculty to various institutes to share his knowledge with young generation. Film Critic **Lalit Rao** (FIPRESCI) discusses his approach and vision about Editing.

**It is said that films, particularly documentary films, are made on the editing table. Do you also believe in that?**

Yes, it is true a film is made on the editing table. Whatever you design does not exactly happen in a documentary. You cannot shoot everything as you imagine it. You can't determine the form and structure beforehand. A lot is discovered as you go along. You cannot know what the person whom you are going to interview will say. You may not get permission to shoot in places you may have liked. That's why it is said that a documentary film is made by God and a feature film is made by the director.

When editing a documentary, you begin by seeing the rushes again and again, and then you decide the structure. You select pieces that are required and join them together. Once again, you see the rushes, pick up the pieces and put them together. This goes on for a while. In this way, a film begins to emerge from the material. Gradually you come to a point when you think that the edit is correct and you are ready to show it. And you show that to the director and seek his approval. It may happen that the director would not agree with you and say that his vision is not that. Then you'll have to work towards his vision. Basically I call this "process editing".

**What do you mean by "process editing"? Please elaborate.**

It is like churning milk. In Hindu philosophy, the eternal soul (Amrit) came into being by the act of churning of the oceans. So what I call the process has a resonance with the primordial act of distillation of the essence. It's a process where nothing is fixed. You may say you are guided by instinct. You have to believe in your instinct, whatever comes to your mind, you just have to go with that. Documentary editing is really intuitive.



Another thing which I personally feel is that a documentary should not be provocative. Documentary is about showing things as they are. There are a number of points of view to any reality and you'll have keep that in mind-- a list of different points of view.

Suppose two person are saying something and you keep only one person's point of view and do not present another person's point of view in the film, then that is not correct. If you are making a documentary, it is first of all a documentation of reality. It should present the complete picture and not be a reflection of what the director believes. It should be wider than that. In a feature film you can do it but not in a documentary.

If we talk about creativity, then the kind of satisfaction you get from a documentary is different from working on a feature film. It's a very open form. You have to make it happen and that is the best thing.

In a feature film, you are working with a different set of aesthetics. The story is there, you have to bring it out most effectively. The emotions are important here. There are all the nine rasas of Natya Shastra written by Bharat Muni-- love, joy, wonder, peace, anger, courage, sadness, fear and disgust. One has to evoke these states correctly.

**Do you think that the rhythm and pace of film editing is changing these days?**

Nowadays, viewers don't have that much patience... They are easily distracted... There are so many things competing for our attention... That's why there needs to be a faster pace in contemporary work. That can only be achieved by determining the "rhythm and pace" in editing.

The rhythm and pace depend on many elements... For instance, the selection of shots, the duration of a shot, the arrangement of the shots-- these are the elements that are very important. But you cannot lose focus of the main content- you'll have to think about the story. You'll have to think about the narrative-style. You will have to be convincing about the pace you have chosen. A faster pace may not always be the right approach. If the story demands a slower pace, you will have to do justice to that.

So the choice of rhythm and pace depends upon the story and treatment, as an editor one should be able to create what is needed.

**When you're editing a song in a feature film or you're editing a music video, then both is song and both have music and lyrics. Is there, then, any difference in terms of song to be edited in a film and a music video?**

Lately, the music video industry has grown tremendously in India. Editing music video calls for a completely different technique than editing a film song. When you are editing a film song, you have to narrate a story. It is very important that the song should lead the story from one scene to another. One has to justify the song in the narrative- it is not an isolated part.

But in a music video, it's not like that. The song can be seen in isolation. It is complete in itself. Recently I edited one film in which I had to edit a particular song in two different ways. For the video release on television, a completely different version was needed from the one I had cut for the film, as I had to show the singer also. I also had to pull many other elements from the film into that song.

Also music videos are generally very fast. Sometimes you have 10 frames or 5 frames or even 2 frames of a shot. In films this is not the case. Audience cannot adjust to such brief flashes. They have to comprehend what's happening in the shot.

**What is the importance of the presence of choreographers in editing room?**

I remember one incident when I had to edit the song of a film and the choreographer was not present, he was out of the country. By the time he would be back, it would be too late. So the director said lets edit it anyway, it can't be helped. I said that I would do that, but added that I didn't know the movements the choreographer had in mind. The director said that he was there on the shoot and he would guide me. For lyrics section it worked fine, but whenever there was an interlude, we had problems. Neither he nor I was sure about how to sync the dancers' legs, hands or hips with the chest movements. It was really tough. I somehow matched the legs, hands and hips to the music, and we found it to be correct. We thought that it's all working out and so we edited the whole song in that manner. It was looking nice.

But when the choreographer came, he did not like it. He said that certain shots were misplaced. For

instance, a shot of the hand movement had been used where he had meant to use a hip movement shot. According to him, we had done it completely wrong.

Those days we were working with celluloid prints on the Steinbeck and not with digital media on Avid or FCP. So we had to dismantle the whole sequence and join the rushes and start all over again. It took us 10 to 15 days to re-edit that song. After seeing his version, we realized that his version was better! Whatever we had done was okay but what he did was looking better.

After that experience, whoever may be the director, I suggest him to let the choreographer work on it first or at least let him interact with the editor so that one may understand what is there in the choreographer's mind. After that, one can sit with the director and work if required. I am not saying that you will necessarily go wrong, but then you can.

**What are some of the common mistakes that you have encountered while editing? And how do you manage to salvage the situation in such cases?**

Whatever may have been shot by the director, as an editor I do my best to make the most effective use of that footage. I cannot complain that this shot is not there or that shot is not there, why he has taken the close shot, why he has taken the long shot. I don't consider all these things. I just take it as his vision. I don't know the







situation at the time of shooting, under what circumstances he may have taken the shot, who was the camera person, who was the actor and so on... And maybe it was a very difficult situation. So when the rushes come to me, all I thought was that now this is my material, this is my clay, and with that I have to create the most beautiful work possible.

A number of times it happens that continuity is not there, and you can see that the scene is also not working out, but I can't blame anybody for it. I am not there to blame. I just have to make it work. An editor is just like a psychologist: he has to read what the director has in his mind and has to portray that thing.

An editor is just like the third eye. He can show the director what he may not have thought of. He can suggest to the director another way to narrate the same story, but it is up to the director to accept it or not. He can try to convince him or get convinced by the director.

Once I was doing a film, "Rui ka Bojh", directed by Subhash Aggarwal and we first edited the film in a linear structure, going by the script. At the end of the film, there was a shot of the protagonist going to the ashram in a bullock cart. Then I thought of doing something else with it.

I took this last shot and placed it in the

beginning and also in-between, in a number of places, so that it now took the form of a circular structure. Earlier it was completely linear. Now it was looking much better in the circular way. It worked like a flashback. These are the kind of things one can do in editing.

**In the past 6-7 years a new trend has come about-- editing promos. Some editors have made it into a specialized kind of niche for themselves. Do you really feel that there indeed is that kind of a specialization, or is it just the mindset of some people?**

I think it is the mindset. As an editor, you watch the film again and again and you know the story, you know the structure and you have seen all the rushes. You know the material better than any new person can know. So I don't know why people don't ask the editor to make the promo. Why do they want someone else to do it? It's bizarre and I don't know why it happens.

I think the director and the editor should sit together and make the promos. You form the structure and all and then you can go to studio for the special effects. The specialist technicians are there to do them. It's as simple as that.

**Do you remember any technical Goof -Ups due to footage getting corrupt or not opening in a compatible version during your editing because now everything is**

**digital?**

Once I was working with Dev Benegal on a documentary for channel 4 at his office. It was a very big project. It was shot on digi-beta, which was in those days a new medium. The material had to be first transferred to low-resolution for editing on Avid. Unfortunately, after the transfer, the digi-beta tape was by mistake left in the recorder and the attendant took it back to the studio.

After 2-3 days we realized what had happened. I told Dev about it. Then we tried to find out and we went to the studio and we saw that the attendant had erased everything! There was a market for once-used tapes and he was supplying to them.

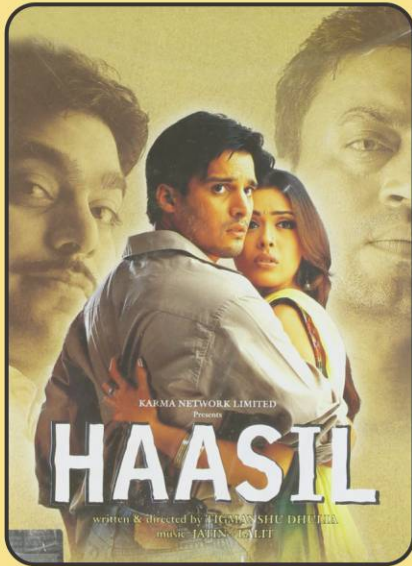
There was no way out for us, and it was a channel 4 film. Dev had to take the film to London to get it digitally enhanced. That was a major goof up that had happened.

**I have heard stories that sometimes the rough cut is 4 hours and final cut is 2 ½ hours. How does it happen? What is the difference between a rough cut and the final cut?**

I believe a film is made in three stages – first is the scripting stage, second is the shooting stage and third is the editing stage.

So when you reach the editing stage,





you have just created about 70% of the film. The rest 30% has to be created at the editing stage. But already in the shooting of the film, the length of the film has often not been thought out thoroughly. Sometimes the problem begins even earlier-- the script itself is longer than necessary. Also, the business devised by actors and directors may prolong a scene beyond what is needed. Extra dialogues may be improvised by actors, and the director often gets carried away. Getting additional footage is not in itself such a bad thing. We may discover interesting material in the process. And we get to condense it. We have more choices before us in editing. So there are both sides to it.

In the process of editing a film, first of all you edit the individual scenes and they may turn out to be nice in themselves. But when you join all the scenes together, you find out – oh, this scene is not working, that scene is not good. Dialogue is repetitive. Or the emotion is repetitive. Why use 5 sentences when you can say it in 3 sentences. You cannot realize it while writing or shooting but while viewing it, you realize immediately that there is repetition. Often you notice repetition of thought also. Sometimes what happens is that the pace and rhythm of the individual scene is completely different from the pace and rhythm of the entire film. So you have to edit the scene again in order that it matches the pace and rhythm of the whole film. You may have to re-order some scenes. Or even delete some scenes.

In this way you reach the final cut. In every film, you discover a new way to

narrate a story.

### **What kind of a relation should exist between a director and editor?**

I'll tell you an example. I was editing a film for Shyam Benegal and it was my first feature film. He asked me, "Aseem, how do you find the film?" It was difficult for me to answer that question from a director of his stature. Still, I said what I honestly felt- "For me it is not working" then he asked me why it was not working. I gave him the reason-- that certain scenes are a problem. They are not going with the rest of the film. He said, "Aseem, give me 3-4 days." And he came on the 4th day and asked me to just delete those scenes. This is the kind of openness you need.

You must have a good rapport with the director. There has to be a very good tuning with the director -it's like a relationship between a husband and a wife. You are working with him all the time. Sometimes it will be fine sometimes not. But even then either you convince the director, or the director should convince you. It's not that you will be right all the time. And both will have to be very open. If you are not open, you can't work.

**In editing many a times now, particularly since some software has come, people think that if you cannot use that software, you are not a good editor because you cannot give the techno kind of effects and all that. What is your definition of a good editor?**

I think it's a completely wrong notion. You should know how to narrate the story properly and that is it. I am not against

effects or anything, but you should use it only when required. And not knowing some technology does not mean that you don't know the aesthetics. Aesthetics and technology are different things. If your sense of aesthetics is good, you can edit it. And if your sense of aesthetics is not good, no technology can help you. The main thing is aesthetics. You have to develop your aesthetics. How to create drama, how to create suspense -- this is important and not technology. If people think that technology can make up for it, then they are living in a completely different world.

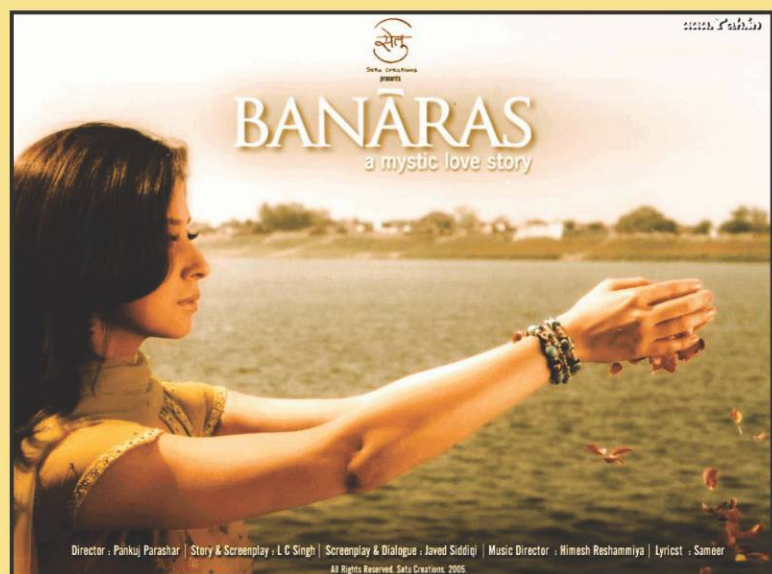
The process of editing is like the blossoming of a flower. From the bud, it transforms into full bloom. It is an invisible process, but it is there, though hidden. That is why editing is called an invisible art. You are not expected to realize when it happened, how it happened, where it happened-- but it happened. The beauty of editing lies there.

People remark a film's editing is good or bad. But for me, the moment you say this, you have misunderstood the nature of editing. Because editing should not be noticed. It is an intrinsic part of the film.

**You have worked with the late Renu Saluja. Why is she considered a great editor?**

She was like a Zen master. Thorough and a perfectionist. She was a thinking editor, systematic and methodological. She had amazing patience.

She would read the script, analyze it and discuss with the director. Her involvement began from the scripting stage itself. During shooting stage also, she would







give suggestions, Take this additional shot. You are missing abridging scene here. She used to give the logic. She knew the pulse of the audience. She was very good in detailing and made keen observations. She was open to suggestions from other people also.

That drive was there in her, to explore, to play with the material. After graduating from the film institute everyone's wish was to join Renu. We all who have assisted her say that we are from the Renu School of film editing. She was an institute in herself.

#### **How important is the presence of an editor on the sets when the film is being shot?**

I think it's good to be on the sets. I will tell you about my first hand experience. I have been on the sets with Shyam Benegal. Whenever he shoots, I go with him on location. You come to know exactly what he is going to shoot, the camera angles, dialogues and continuity. You get to know the treatment of the scene. Often I ask him why he is taking a particular shot in one way and why not from another angle. He always replies and explains to me. We have a discussion then and there.

Not just me, but the writer and everybody else who is there in the team with Shyam Benegal- we discuss everything on the sets. For an editor, it is especially helpful to be there. Also you need to get out from your cubicle and see the real world now and then and be in touch with the

process of filmmaking. It helps a lot.

#### **What is your feeling about the way multiple editors are sometimes brought in to edit a film?**

It is a very important question you have asked. Because it is happening in the industry often nowadays. There are many instances when a film is being edited by one editor and all of a sudden the director and producer decide to engage another editor, supposedly to get another point of view. Now this is not the right way to go about it. You must have faith and trust in the editor. Hiring other editors is not going to solve the problem. 'Too many cooks spoil the broth'.

You have to sit together-- the director, the writer and the editor-- and find a solution. But if the base is not correct then no amount of tweaking is going to help. There is a saying in Hindi, 'Boya pedh babool ka, to aam kahan te hoye'. Which means, if you plant a thorn tree, how will you get mangoes from it? It's the same with editing. If it's not working, it's not working. So I think that these things should not happen.

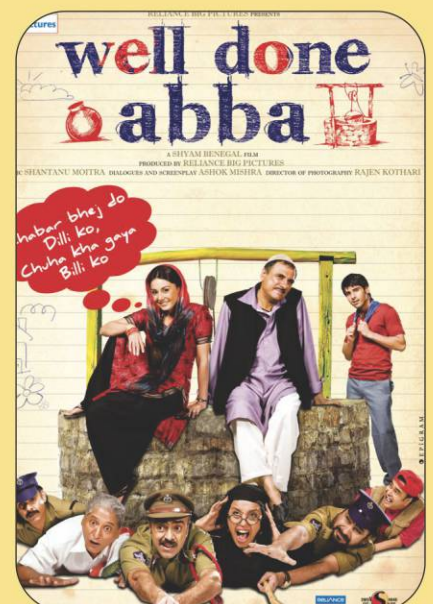
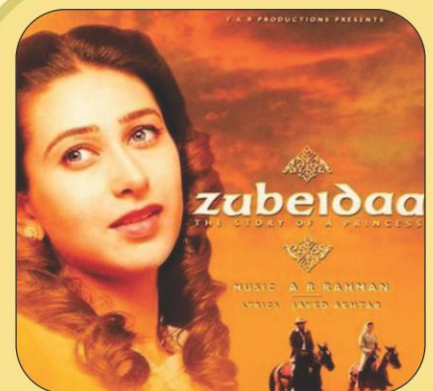
One more thing I would like to add. This has happened with me too-- when I was about to do a foreign film, someone suggested to the director that it will be better to get it edited by a Hollywood editor. The director said-- and I admire the

director for saying this-- "I am an Indian and my cameraman is an Indian- why should the editor be from Hollywood?" He had to say this because that kind of thinking is bull shit. Everywhere emotions are the same. It is about sensitivity to the emotions and that does not change with place.

**You have edited more than 70 feature films and many serials, documentaries, ads and corporate films. Anything you would like to say to the new generation or to the fresh graduates from various film schools who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry.**

The most important qualities for me are patience and hard work. You have to understand the director's point of view and not to pander to your ego. He has already conceived the idea and you are there to help him manifest that idea. There are many instances where I have seen people get impatient and think about their craft only. They must get connected to the material and think over it again and again. Once they understand the material in its entirety, only then they can start the work.

Do justice to the material. And of course, the most important thing is that you must enjoy your work. □□□





A Complete Film & TV Directory  
EDITOR – RAMESH MALHOTRA



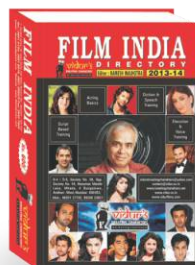
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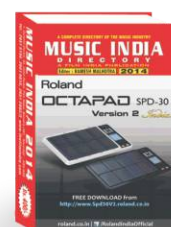
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# Nakul Kamte

## Sound Designer Par Excellence

*'Lagaan', 'Dil Chahta Hai', 'Om Shanti Om', 'Bhaag Milkha Bhaag', Lakshya', 'Krrish', 'Don-2'-- you name any big movie, you are likely to find Nakul Kamte's name associated with as sound designer. The technique of sound recording took a new turn with Kamte who started the trend of recording sound on location with 'Lagaan'. His effort got appreciated with National Film Award for best audiography.*

*Since then Mr. Kamte is proud recipient of many national and international awards, including Filmfare Awards, for his films like 'Don-2', 'Rang de Basanti', 'Bhaag Milkha Bhaag', 'Krrish' and 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham'.*

*However, he is busy creating waves and oscillations in the field of sound recording technology and where he is likely to take many more strides on the way to name, fame and glory.*

### How did you get started in the industry?

I began my recording career at Music Room studios where the primary focus was on advertising. Looking back, I think I owe a lot to advertising because my attention to detail came from that school as you have only 30 seconds to tell a story so every frame was important. My discipline came from that experience. The first film I worked on as a Sound Recordist was a film called "Dus" with the late Mukul Anand, which unfortunately never got completed. A little after that one of the people who I used to do a lot of advertising with, Mahesh Mathai said he was doing a film and asked me to do it. He mentioned that he wanted to do location sound, and while I had worked on some advertisements with him, the prospect of a full-length feature film was quite daunting. At that point of time, not too many people in India were doing location sound. There was little or no equipment available for it in India, so everything had to be rented. Since the producer was from Los Angeles, that is where we got it from. The equipment arrived the day before the shoot and it was my first experience with Murphy's Law—what can go wrong, will go wrong. In the process of getting the gear, the chargers for the radio microphone package got left behind. I started freaking out at that point as I realized that I had no option but to rely on only two boom mics. Luckily Mahesh was the operative cameraman as well, and he gave me space for my boom. There was also a wonderful gaffer named Mulchand Dedhia, who has worked with just about every foreign production which has happened in the country, so he was very clued into the requirements of location sound from a lighting point of view. There was also a quick realization that on wide shots you could not see the sync, so we could do a wild track and get away with it. Not the most ideal of situations, but I feel that one of the hallmarks of being a Location



Sound Recordist/Production Mixer is being able to deal with situations which arise without causing too much grief or waste of time to production.

I was also lucky in that I had two excellent boom operators in Ghulam Sheikh and Ashraf Khan, who were my eyes and ears on set, so to speak. They were a quick lesson about how invaluable a good boom op is. Think about it—without them, I'd be sunk.

#### How did you prepare for on-location sound for "Lagaan"?

I had shown a reel of "Bhopal Express" to Aamir Khan (Actor/Producer) and Ashutosh Gowariker (Director). Aamir's reaction was: "As far as I'm concerned, you're on", whereas Ashutosh had his reservations. I now realize that this was the first large commercial Bollywood film to be done with location sound. However, at that point in time, two weeks of no news was bad news! When I finally did speak to Ashtuosh, he said he was used to seeing English films with location sound, but not very many Hindi films, and that the reality made him ponder the wisdom of this decision. He wanted a 'fairy tale feel' for the film. That's when I had the thought that this notion has to be defeated since the rest of the world has it that way. And as the largest producer of films, why wasn't India doing it? The rest, as they say, is history.

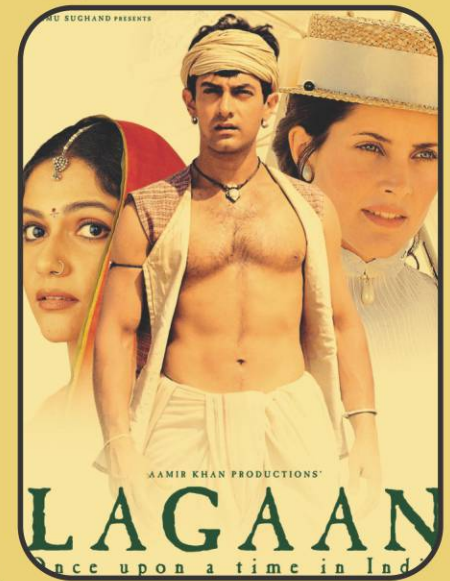
Once I was on board for the film and had the script in hand, I insisted on going to

the location recce. This was the first tech recce and had all the Heads of Department (HOD's) and the challenge became apparent. We were shooting in Bhuj, where it's extremely windy, and relatively quiet except for Air Force Sorties which happened every 5-10 minutes. There were two primary locations, the village and the cricket ground. I say only two, because the third, which was the Palace, was a godsend in comparison to the other two. (The only problem, which we later discovered, were extremely large beehives in all the wrong places.) I was lucky in having Nitin Desai as the production designer, as he was willing to take that extra step for sound. He aided me in laying down pipes under the cricket ground which had about 5 km of microphone cable in them. This proved to be a godsend in the wide shots. He also made the village walls slightly thicker in the houses in which there were dialogue.

Given the absence of gear available in this country and knowing I was going to be doing another film in 6 months, "Dil Chahta Hai", Mahesh and I floated a company which imported the equipment. This included two DAT machines, the Fostex PD-4, and the HHP. This was the standard equipment that the rest of the world was using at the time. Murphy's Law struck again three weeks before the shoot, as the morning before I was to go to Singapore to audition some acquired equipment; I was rushed into ICU for an appendix operation. The very cool, calm, and collected, Mr. Anil Mehta (DOP) had selected the Arri 535 camera. This was Arri's new blimped camera, and though it was supposed to be the last word in silent cameras, in a closed room on a long lens, it made a racket. The other concern was noisy "silent" generators, not helped by the fact that we were shooting in the desert, where sound carries phenomenal distances.

Once again, radio microphones were going to be very difficult on this shoot, but for other reasons, the male actors were all, for the most part, bare-chested. And while normally the rest of the world would use a hair mount for a Lavallier mic, try touching an Indian actor's hair and you'll have a very short career. What we didn't know but subsequently came to learn was, there were large deposits of iron ore in the ground which made the radio microphones get hit with RF interference from slight deviations of an actor's walking path when they came near the deposits. It drove me insane & gave me white hair until I finally figured it out.

A couple of days into shoot, Anil turns to me and says, "Chalo, let's hear what this

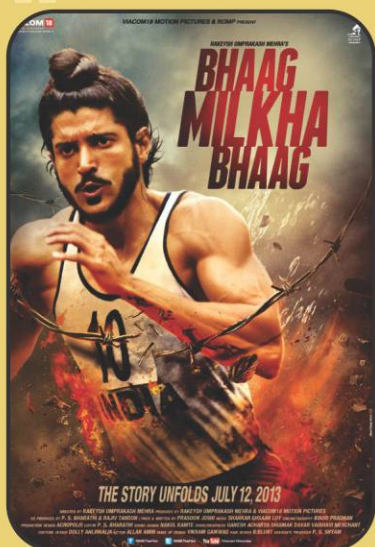


sync sound is all about." We had just shot the scene where the horses were approaching and a rider is reading out the new Lagaan. Anil put on the headphones, I started playback, and as is common with people who are wearing headphones, he started speaking louder than what was required, yells: "No No! Do playback!" The third time he said this, after I had rewind the tape machine, I took the headphones off his head and said, "Why are you shouting at me to do playback?" He then realized that it was playback, because the horses were no longer in the vicinity and said, "Oh my god, I'm used to hiss from the Nagra." I would like to believe that was the moment when he became a convert.

There was an occasion when he had lit up for a scene, pre-dinner. At dinner, Murphy kicked in again. The wind started blowing, and Anil said he needed an hour more for lighting. I was wondering, as all sound-guys do, why he needed more time for lighting. I walked across to set from base, which was on the other side of a hill, and asked him, "What's going on? Sound's ready". To which he replied, "There's dialogue in this scene, and the paper gels are going to make a sound in this wind no matter what we do, so I'm changing it to plastic gels which will hopefully make less noise for you." The dialogue was at the end of a long track and the difference between the gels that I had seen on the monitor made me get him to put back the paper-gels, because it looked so much better. I couldn't have him make that compromise for sound. To me that was a







huge moment of understanding the collaboration needed between a DOP and the Sound Department to co-exist to tell a story. And hey, sound is 50% of the film, right? I mean there is a reason why it's called an "Audio-Visual" experience, and not "Visual-Audio." Camera-guys, -? That's the trade-off that you need to do with one-another. Unfortunately there is still many a DOP who say "Ye mera kaam nahi hai, woh tum baad mein dubbing mein dekhlo."

"Mooli," a.k.a. the aforementioned legendary Mulchand Dedhia taught me that no matter what the lighting is, there is always one spot for a boom. Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye! I'm serious guys, there has always been a place for my boom swinger to put his mic if you've lit it thinking with sound in mind. Hats off to you, Mooli kaka. Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye! Of late, I've worked on a few Hollywood projects; with Chris Nolan on "Dark Knight Rises," "The Way Back" with Peter Weir, and "The Second-Best Marigold Hotel" with John Madden. Actors such as Christian Bale, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, and Richard Gere come up to you after a shot to ask whether their levels were ok, because they don't want to do ADR(Dubbing). In contrast, some of our actors still say, "Dubbing mein dekh lenge," and then accuse me of being a task-master at the time of dubbing. Invariably it's not even close to the performance they gave on set. I believe the reason for this is that they are in a dubbing studio many months after they've shot the scenes, and magic of bouncing off another actor is lost. It's been a fight to get actors to realize that well-recorded dialogue is as much a tool for them

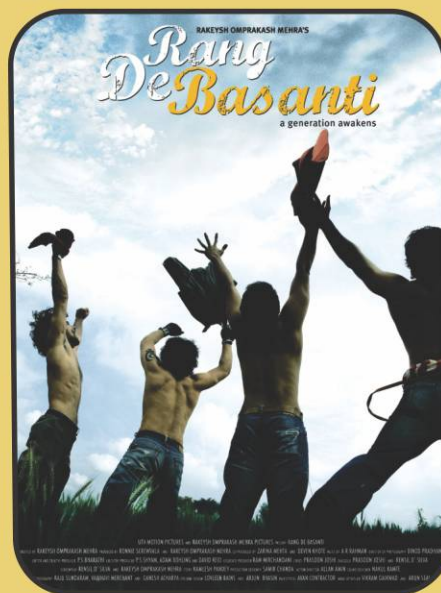
as good lighting. I think half of the job of being a Location Engineer is about your human resources skills in interacting with actors and directors.

#### Is there any difference between the equipment used in Bollywood and Hollywood?

Not really. We pretty much use the same tools. Be it hard disk recorders, the same microphones, the same radio microphones, and cameras. It's the small things which we don't use. With the advent of digital cameras now being the norm, I have yet to see time code locket boxes being used in India on multi-camera setups. While there is software available to deal with this, it tends to erase the meta-data, which makes life hell for post-production. Many a time I'm asked, "Isn't it a sound problem?" Not really. Are your cameras locked to each other? For a small piece of equipment which is deemed inconsequential, the saving of time in post is invaluable. Imagine the scenario of six cameras on set and being able to cut between all of them using the same time code as sound has, and Bingo! It would just make everything so much easier to line up. Why don't we have it as part of a camera package? It should be part of it. The other noticeable factor in the digital age is the DIT. On "Marigold," the DIT person used a 4k high-resolution monitor. He was a one-man operation. Besides copying the data cards from the cameras, he was also cabled to live feeds from both cameras, including audio. He was in a position to tell the camera department if they were soft or if there were any other anomalies. He also did a basic level of color-correction as per the DOP's

requirement. His recording capacity was 3800 TB and he synced the audio to the dailies at lunch break and on wrap, so there was never a question of missing sound to picture, ever. I feel this is a huge advantage, and something which we need to incorporate into our work.

The other two systems to be missing from our arsenal are Cine tape for measuring the focal distance, and the Remote Focus System, Preston being the preferred choice. Not having actors upset by being sharp for the better part of it, is an advantage anyone

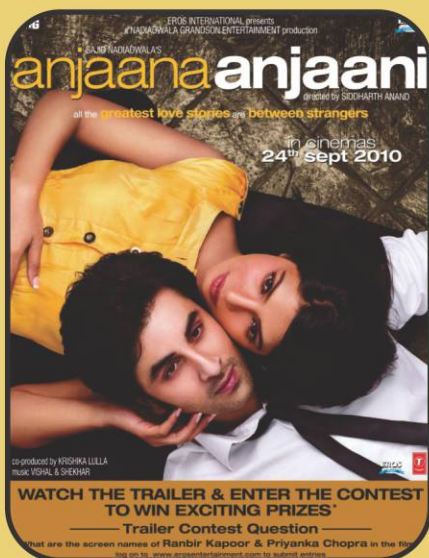




who has seen irate actors would appreciate.

**When deciding on a headphone, is it tech specs or price what makes your decision?**

Price is not a factor, reference in headphones is. Location sound does not need audiophile headphones. What you need is a headphone which you can trust to hear what you are capturing. Europeans use the Sennheiser HD 25's and Americans tend to gravitate towards the Sony MDR 7506, which is also my preference as I have gotten used to it. A lot of people use the Beyer's. Headphones are about listening as a reference to what you are recording. Essentially it's about using your ears as well as what's in-between them. How is it going to sound on playback in a theatre? Training your ears to judge that is not the easiest of jobs, which is what separates the men from the boys. Various factors have to be taken into consideration while recording. Jumps in ambiances in the same location are unacceptable. If you have actors who change their delivery in-between different camera angles, part of your job is to ask them to project more or less so that edit gets an even dialogue delivery. To reiterate what I said earlier, get the actors on your side, so they have a trust and belief in you. I do say to some of them, "I'm not asking you to be louder, because I'm going to go home and listen to your dialogue on my headphones. I'm just trying to make your performance better in spite of there being a loud background score." Sound guys love loud actors. Jai Ram Ji ki.

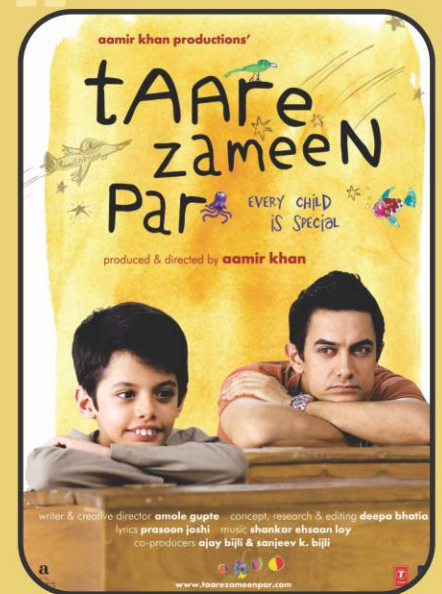


**Many times two different credits "Supervising Sound Editor" and "Sound Designer" are noted. What is the difference in Indian context?**

Quite honestly, the term "Sound Designer" was used for the first time by Walter Murch, an editor and sound designer who I have a huge amount of respect for based on the body of his work. When I was asked for my credit on "Lagaan", I chose "Sound Designer" over "Supervising Sound Editor" as I had gotten involved with the script, and designed the sound for the film from that level. To me that was part of the process; designing the sound from scratch, and also my tribute to my "Godfather", Walter Murch. Nowadays in India, "Sound Designer" has become a de-facto credit. I am the culprit of that, but I don't think there are too many sound designers here who really get involved on that level. I think I would categorize them as Supervising Sound Editors, or Sound Editors. A Supervising Sound Editor is someone who will have different Editors working under him to achieve what he wants. A Sound Designer in a way is someone who will draw the audience into his world of make-believe through the use of sound, much like the DOP will through his use of light and camera angles, and the director through the performances. In "Taare Zameen Par" I guess my role as a Sound Designer was to: a.) not to intrude on the audience and take them into the film and b.) bring back the sense of nostalgia from my school days and re-create that world for the audience. I recorded classrooms of different schools to get that feeling. I think that was the Sound Design part of it. The Supervising Sound Editor part in me executed that. And the fact that the sound was never spoken about means I did my job properly.

**Since you have been working with variety of directors, how much liberty do you get to say, "Let's go for a re-take"?**

Completely, always. From Mahesh to John, being the first and last directors I have worked with, most of them have asked; "Is that good for sound?" Unless they knew beforehand that it was a dub scenario based on location or other situations beyond productions' means to control the sound. If it's a noisy location where I know I am not going to be able to get anything I won't ask for one more take. If it's an emotional scene where I don't think they are going to be able to dub it quite the same, I will ask for one more. Again, it depends. There is a school of editing which is not taught or utilized here. If you've got five takes, you can take out or pick up bits. In Rang de Basanti, during



Sharman Joshi's emotional breakdown scene on the hill, there were over 5000 unruly fans shouting abuses and singing Aamir's Coca-Cola jingle. Sharman couldn't re-create the same emotion in the dub, so I spent 10 days on that one scene and edited it syllable by syllable. It is essential to keep the dynamics of the scene intact. The hug that I received from Sharman when we screened the film made it all worth it.

**Sometimes you need to clean the sound in the post. Do you do it yourself or does someone else do it?**

There will be always generators on the set. Which DOP doesn't use lights? And there will always be ballast noises from the HMI's, besides the whine, unless it's on flicker-free mode. Yes, I do have to remove all of that. Part and parcel. I do it myself for the most part, and fortunately I think I'm on the right track because I've been told that in "Bhaag Milka Bhaag" many people assumed that certain scenes were dubbed which were not. It's an art form to remove sparrows, crows, and traffic noise from dialogue. I seriously believe this, because to the audience it's 2 1/2 hours of entertainment which is my honor to bring to them, as much as it is the DOP's to give them a fantastic visual.

With the progress in computer sciences, there are amazing tools to help resuscitate dialogue and overall mixes. I have been privileged to be involved with the clean-up of 88 films for the re-release of NFDC's "100 Years of Indian Cinema." It's only going to get better, folks. As computers become faster



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*Legendary  
Mulchand Dedhia  
taught me that no  
matter what the  
lighting is, there is  
always one spot for  
a boom. Hear ye,  
hear ye, hear ye!  
Hats off to you,  
Mooli kaka.*

”



and software becomes more potent. Still...help me get it on location. Guys?

**What are your special instructions to the Costume Designers and Production Designers?**

We plead with Costume Designers not to use silk and any material which would create rustle. We ask them to tape down bangles, necklaces, earrings, and any other jewelry on the actors which would make noise, to put mole skin or rubber on the soles of their shoes & caps on stilettos. If it's a close shot and there is background action,

we get the actors in the background to wear socks. We ask the Costume Department to make pouches within the wardrobe or little waist belts in which to place a transmitter. With Production Designers I try and get them to fill the wooden floor with sand if it's a huge set otherwise they sound hollow and then that's a huge problem. Otherwise I try and use rubber carpeting so that you don't get the sound of the footsteps. There are a million and one things which you could do. Therein lies the constant learning, problem solving, coming up with new ideas, and the experience of getting what you need for dialogues. I inevitably grow on each shoot because I always learn something new and every day is a new challenge. Bring it on.

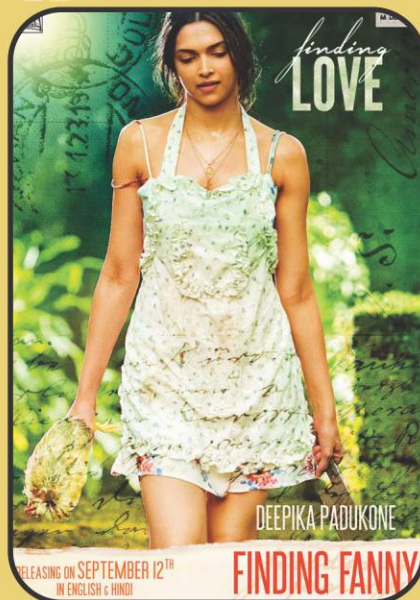
**With the available sound effect libraries, do you find the need to record your own sound effects?**

All the time. I've built up my library over the years. I carry a handheld recorder wherever I go. Recently on a flight back to Bombay, I recorded the ambience of the aircraft which I used in "Bhaag Milkha Bhaag." As far as I'm concerned it made the scene believable. In "Finding Fanny", I went into the countryside and recorded without the crew, because try as hard as you can and as dedicated as crew is, they'll always inadvertently make some noise. I owe a lot to advertising, because advertising was 30secs & 25fps. I think from advertising came my attention to detail where you look in every frame and hit it. Now with experience I do it a lot, but that discipline came from advertising.

**I remember a Sound Designer saying "after a point you sell your taste". Is that true or more of a philosophy?**

I think it's more of a philosophy. If it's just one style, then you are not re-inventing yourself. To me, every job has a different requirement. Each film needs a different approach. You have to be constantly evolving. Each film requires a philosophy which is individually suited to it. There are no rules. It is what is required for the film. It's important to create a cadence of highs and lows, in that I love to use silence. And 'silent'

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July - September 2014

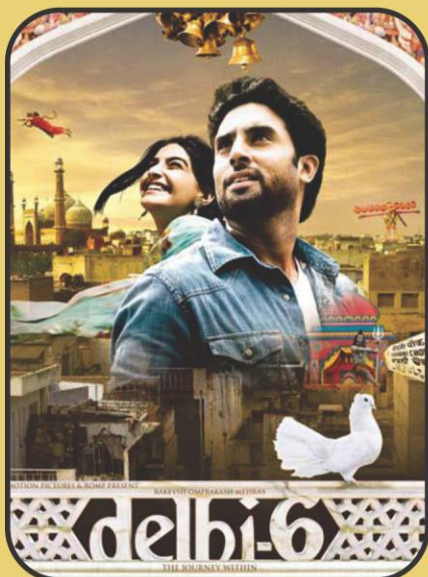
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is an anagram of 'listen'. Every story deserves that. It's important to tell the story through the edit. But to tell the story, you are only limited by your imagination and edit. It's got to be an amalgamation to convince your audience of what you want to say. Having said that, I am still learning every day. I am not thinking techniques, I'm way past that, I mean, if I am thinking technically in the middle of the shoot or during post-production, then I've lost the plot. However, it is the director's vision that ultimately matters.

**You do a final mix and finally when you hear it in the cinema hall, it is not the same. Has this happened to you?**

All the time. Today with DCP, I feel we are mixing too loud. We still mix in mix theaters for the approved Dolby level of 7. Given the construction of multiplexes, where bleed is extremely possible, they don't even play it beyond 5.5 on a Dolby CP 650 Processor. With DCP, there is no limit. So instead of mixing at the Dolby approved 85 dB, we are now mixing anywhere between 95-102 dB. Obviously it's not going to sound the same. We need to start looking after the audience's ears, because if we blow them, they ain't coming back. This is more apparent in home theater releases. Most producers release the DVD on the same dynamic levels as the film. Hence, while I am watching a film on Blu-Ray or DVD, I reach for the remote control. We don't want our audiences to be distracted by constantly having to control the volume levels while trying to enjoy the film in their home

listening environment. A movie theatre is far removed from a home theatre. It's like a throwback to the old days when theatres used to suddenly bump Hindi film songs into surround. Today, audiences are much more aware. And I do offer this service at a fee. (Laughs)

When we did "Lagaan", I first mixed it in mono because I believed that's where my primary audience was. Aamir insisted on making the mix sharper than what I wanted, and I had a problem with that. Because, as far back as I remember, to me, Hindi films sounded like crap. To prove his point, Aamir drove me to a small village two hours out of Chennai at 2 am. He played back a reel with 70 overhead fans on, and said, "Now we'll see why I'm right about wanting the highs boosted." Lo and behold, he said, "Aachaa, sab kuch sunayi de raha hai, mono mein." After that, whenever we argued, my response was; "take my name off the credits if you want it that way". And being my first film, he'd look at Ash, look back at me and say; "Aachaa? Hmmm... We'll go with how you want it."

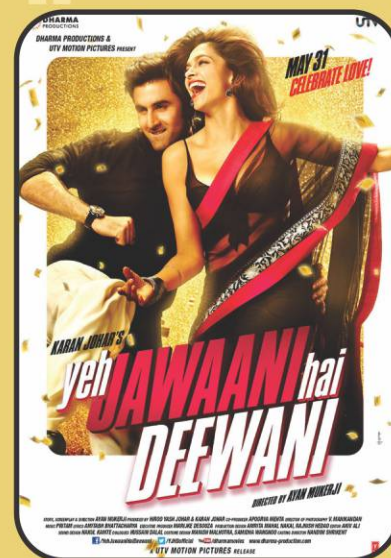
**Did you encounter any mess up for not having backup?**

Yes. Once and only once. Now it's 3 backups always, end of story.

**Anything you would like to say about the new generation of sound recordists, graduating from film Schools and getting into the industry.**

I get phone calls from a lot of guys who

have just graduated. They come out of school with unrealistic expectations. For the money they want, I'd work for them. Learn the equipment, understand microphone gain structure, learn your microphones. The flip side is that they also do jobs for unrealistic money. Get real, guys. By accepting less than industry-standard minimum wages, you are hurting the industry and ultimately shooting yourself in the foot. You are not my friend. Don't call me if you are ever going undercut me on a job, and don't expect me to clean up your mess. □□□







## An Interview with *Gopal Shah*

Gopal Shah can vouch safe that when one is determined to learn something, economic conditions and lack of formal training are no stumbling blocks. He could not make it to the FTII – an institute of repute, but his grit made him earn so much of reputation that he himself became an institution in ad Cinematography of 'hair', 'diamonds' and 'ice cream' commercials.

In total he has done a staggering number of more than 2500 ad commercials – more than 400 on 'hair' alone. Robin Blue', 'Vadilal' and 'Kwality' are some of his other famous ads. Today Gopal Shah is counted among top ten ad cinematographers in Bollywood. With movies like 'Mujh Se Dosti Karoge', 'Dil Jo Bhi Kahey', 'Chamku', 'Heroes', 'Victory' and 'Veer' to his credit, he is a name to reckon with even in feature film Cinematography. Film Critic **Lalit Rao** (FIPRESCI) Discusses his approach and vision about Lighting.

**You have been working in this industry for almost 37 years by now. How did you decide to start your career as a cinematographer rather than going for MBA, BBA or something else after graduating in commerce?**

Yes, I am a commerce graduate and I worked in Bank of Baroda. Then I took a course to become a company secretary. But right from the childhood I used to do painting and was involved in doing black and white photography. I used to print my own pictures in the dark room though I was just a school going kid. When I graduated and I learnt that cinematography is the ultimate where you can express a lot on the big screen. But I had no idea of how to begin. So I came to Bombay and had to undergo what is called a typical film-struggle. Actually I wanted to join FTII. As I was poor, so I could not afford to go to the institute. But I really wanted to go there and learn cinema and all those things. I met a Maharashtra cinematographer Mr. M.N. Kulkarni, and he guided me simply because I had tears in my eyes. He said, "It's not necessary to do the institute. If you can do it, it's fine. But if your circumstances are not allowing you then you do your own

institute." That one sentence changed my life. "One can do one's own institute."

I started doing whatever students do in the institute -- started watching so many films, read lots of literature. I had no money to buy books, so he gave me all the tips like going to WICA. There are so many books donated by old veteran cinematographers. You can sit there and read those books. He also told me about American centre, a library near Marine lines. Days and days I sat there and studied and educated myself. While working with Kulkarni, I focused more on practical exposure. We were doing lots of documentaries and I started working with him as an assistant. There I got the practical knowledge of operating 16mm cameras.

**But did you also assist some advertising cinematographers?**

Co-incidentally I met one veteran cinematographer named Chiang Kohung. We just happened to meet through somebody. We were just talking and he said, "Gopal, I am doing some commercials, can you come and help me out?" I was going through a bad phase of my life in financial terms. So I too said, "Why not?" And that is how



because of Chiang I came into advertising. I was with him for about two years. This was the time when the whole industry was looking up.

Suddenly in 1982-83 all the TV sponsored programs started. Naturally all the companies and the products came for advertising. Chiang was already there, like a big boss. I started working with him. He gave me confidence and asked me, "Why don't you focus on advertising work? And that's how it all started. During this tenure I must have shot independently more than two thousand ad films.

**Why in India there are marked differences between ad cinematographers and feature film cinematographers though the grammar remains the same?**

Yes, the grammar remains the same but understanding is different. In ad films you are shooting for a product. You have got a product and you are committed to somebody. These products belonging to a company which are worth 500 crore, 800 crore or may be more. In advertising you not only have to show your talent as a cinematographer, but also have to care for

the product and understand fully well the requirements of the product. You know all about lighting like high contrast and low lighting, but there are so many products that don't allow you to use that--like food products or while shooting skin products.

**Do you think advertising is all about gloss?**

Yes. Advertising is all about smile. You will hardly see people crying in an ad film. Everything is about happiness. Sometimes, when xyz has been working with you for so many years as a director, you cannot ask for a script and then decide whether you want to work on that script or not. You have to say "yes" when they book you for the dates. Sometimes the scripts are not good and then you also have to become manager and not just remain a cinematographer. That understanding is very important.

**Coming to special understanding about certain kind of products for which you need special skills, can you elaborate how you became "an expert on hair commercial" cinematography?**

Right from the beginning I used to read

a lot about advertising literature, but at the end of it, it is all about common sense. So many things I have done which are never mentioned in the books. For example, I did India's first hair commercial with Jennifer Pinto 30 years back. It was about two mothers and two daughters. And that commercial ran for more than 15 years.

Now I got a month advance date for this commercial. So I did a little R&D. I took my still camera for trying to figure out how to light up hair because I had no idea about this. With couple of lights in my house, I experimented on how to reflect light from something which is black because black actually absorbs the light. I couldn't reflect for a couple of days. I struggled a lot before the final shoot.

Ultimately I landed up using mirror. I thought -- suppose in front of a camera you have a mirror in which you see your own image.

What camera sees about you now is a reflection. So what I did was that the kind of movements my director wanted from the hair, I held the mirror at the same angle with my camera as I was holding in the







angle of the hair. Then I reflected the light. I saw that light through the mirror in a way that the hair became mirror. This was the logic I figured out. So I started getting a very good shine. Those days we had no CG and no computer graphics as we were shooting straight on negative.

There is also the difference of your face color scheme which may be wheatish like little brown, not that dark and not too fair.

So the understanding about the lighting ratio between skin and hair was 3-4 stop. As per the client's requirement, I had to over expose the hair by 2-3 stops than the face. Had I given the same exposure as to the face, then there would not have been any shine because black absorbs a lot of light. Those days, sometimes the whole day you used to struggle to get one hair-shot correctly. When a model is standing and moving the hair the way you want the movements to be, but you are not getting the requisite shine, then everything has to be adjusted again and again, for example, the angle of the hair, exact angle at the way the hair is falling, finally where you want the

light and to keep the mirror in that angle. I started using slit mirror just to see the effect. I used mirror and my assistant was holding and whatever be my angle, I tried to see the light source through my mirror. As you remove the mirror, your hair becomes mirror. Position of the mirror would be replaced by the hair. But now with experience I don't use mirror because now I know exactly what angle light is going to reflect on hair. And, of course, the hair dresser is also doing a lot, like dressing up the hair, giving the hair some kind of treatment, like protein treatment just before the shoot. I took interest in all those things like how they dried them and not just in cinematography.

Today I can do ten hair shots in a day because now I know the whole process and grammar. Later I started doing more and more hair commercials and I think I shot more than 400 hair-commercials!

**Could you narrate some incident where you innovated things as a cinematographer?**

During my earlier days, I was shooting

a documentary for Imtiaz Dharkar, for which I received award as DOP. They wanted to compare their banking facilities of State Bank of India with Kaleidoscope. Now you know that there are different shapes of kaleidoscopes and colors. We got a couple of kaleidoscopes. I opened them to understand what it is all about -- how the mirror reflects and how they use the broken bangles. So with my art director, I made one kaleidoscope the diameter of which is exactly 90 mm, and I started experimenting by looking through the lens. I literally inserted kaleidoscope into the lens. Another challenge was to understand the distance, the milky glass and the way the mirrors are angled inside.

**But was there no problem of the exposure because inside there is no light?**

Inside, of course, there's no light but I was giving the light from outside of the screen -- from the back side. Understanding the exposure and all is again common sense. Nevertheless, how to shoot a kaleidoscope was a problem. I figured that out in the studio. My producer and director



helped me a lot doing little bit of R&D and we landed up shooting kaleidoscope. If you see those images even today they are better than CG because today it looks like CG. That was a memorable experience that I learnt myself, out of experimenting, out of deep concern. It was not about work of just 1 or 2 days and then you're done. I took everything on my shoulders since I knew what I wanted to do.

**You are also awell known DOP for shooting diamonds. Kindly tell us how you achieved that expertise.**

There also I experimented a lot with different kinds of lighting, different kinds of backgrounds and different kinds of lenses, macro 90 to macro 100. But how to reflect the shine on the diamond was the challenge.

I tried regular white skimmer but it was looking flat to me. I tried food silver wrappers to get the shine . That worked a little bit. Still I wasn't happy. In so many films I had used the silver wrapper of different densities like thin, matte and glossy. All these different kinds of wrappers give different kinds of reflections on the diamond. I used heavy intensity lights so as to get f-stop like 11, 16, 22 f-stop because I





AN EPIC  
LOVE STORY OF  
A WARRIOR

EROS INTERNATIONAL  
PRESENTS  
**VEER**  
VIJAY GALANI MOVIEZ  
PRODUCTION

was using macro lenses so as to get more depth of field for the sharpness on the diamond.

I was very desperate to get better and better shine than what I was getting every time. I again started using mirror and I used small mirrors. We made them of round sizes -- 1 inch to 4 inch or even 6 inch mirror after the basic body light of the diamond. I would keep all the diamond ornaments on the round table so that as they are turned, they glitter more. And around the camera like 45 degree to 90 degree I started experimenting with mirrors and I used to hit a big light on the mirror. And my assistant will reflect that mirror on the diamond. And that little round shape on the mirror started giving me the star like shine on the diamond.

So I understood the diamond and the jewellery at a very early stage and I shot couple of commercials with Ashwerya Rai. I directed one ad film where Ashwerya Rai is dancing and looking at the sky.

**Could you also talk about some other commercials where some specialized skills were required to shoot -- say some food items like an ice cream which melts very quickly?**

I did a lot of ice cream films like from Vadilal, Kwality or Walls.

I remember the way production will initially design a fake ice-cream by smashing potatoes and adding a little bit of food color and create the colored tinge of Ice creams. So this was the routine way of shooting ice creams so that it didn't melt. But I was not happy since everything looked artificial. So I always argued with my food stylist and so many of my directors and production houses -- why don't we shoot with real ice cream. If you want to feel like mouth watering then how it is just at the beginning of the melt kind of a look. My food stylists also understood and started scooping ice cream and getting it frozen in dry ice.

And just at the last moment they would put that on the turning table and immediately roll the camera. In about 10-15 seconds, the ice cream was finished; it melted because the intensity of light I used was very heavy.

Sometimes the production houses called me saying that this food is very contrasting and is not looking good. So the client bounced it.

It was very natural as it was not looking appetizing. Food is all about how you present it and not to show your lighting talent. Definitely, this is where you need understanding. So I normally shoot food where there are no shadows.

The food has to look appetizing and, therefore, we started using smoke. At so many places we started using dry ice. Then finally we figured out some kind of chemical combination that would produce smoke as close as natural. In many commercial of pizzas I wanted hot pizzas. So we would pour the chemical and roll the camera. So many times I haven't used any chemical and it is real smoke. To enhance that smoke I used proportionate back light to keep the background behind smoke a little deeper. If it is equally bright, the smoke won't be seen.

I always keep some accessories around and use them behind the smoke which is slightly deeper.

In the pre production meeting itself I mention that these are the props, maybe the surface of the dinner table or whatever. But it has to be deeper and I will select the shade myself. I never leave it to anybody.





Before the shooting, I really go and interact with the production, and see everything myself so that there are no shocks while shooting and no wastage of time.

**Can you talk about robin liquid commercial which was completely reshot by you and which has a very high key lighting feel of predominating white?**

Shooting white against white was another challenging thing. I remember the shoot for Robin liquid. They showed me the film shot earlier which was bounced by the client. I was told, "See how everybody is looking so ugly and not proportionate; everything was white, background was white, props were white, and people were wearing white."

So the problem was creating separation between white foreground and background. The former DOP used the same intensity for the background and for the back light. As a result, all the back light on the shoulder merged with the background. The shoulder became thin, the head became chopped, and the whole white figure merged with the background. Personally I don't like shooting back light on white subject with white background. There are so many other ways to separate them. It's a lighting technique basically. I could not use gel as it would give you a tinge which is wrong for the product like Robin blue liquid. It has to be just white.

For me there were two options -- either to keep the back light strong or to have the background a little deeper or the other way round. I used both the options. Now suppose that the background was shining white, and therefore I kept the

people slightly deeper since if the background is flaring, they stand out. But, then, they are white, not grey. Within the latitude value of white, you have to understand how much you can flare and how much you can't. So those techniques I adopted. And sometimes, I kept background little deeper and people little brighter. But that deeper background doesn't mean grey; it's still white. Nevertheless, white on white between 1 to 2 stop over exposure difference helped me.

**Is it a myth or a fact that some DOP's shoot liquor commercial better and others sari commercial better?**

I shot so many commercials of liquor where the challenge was how to present the liquor the way it is in a bottle.

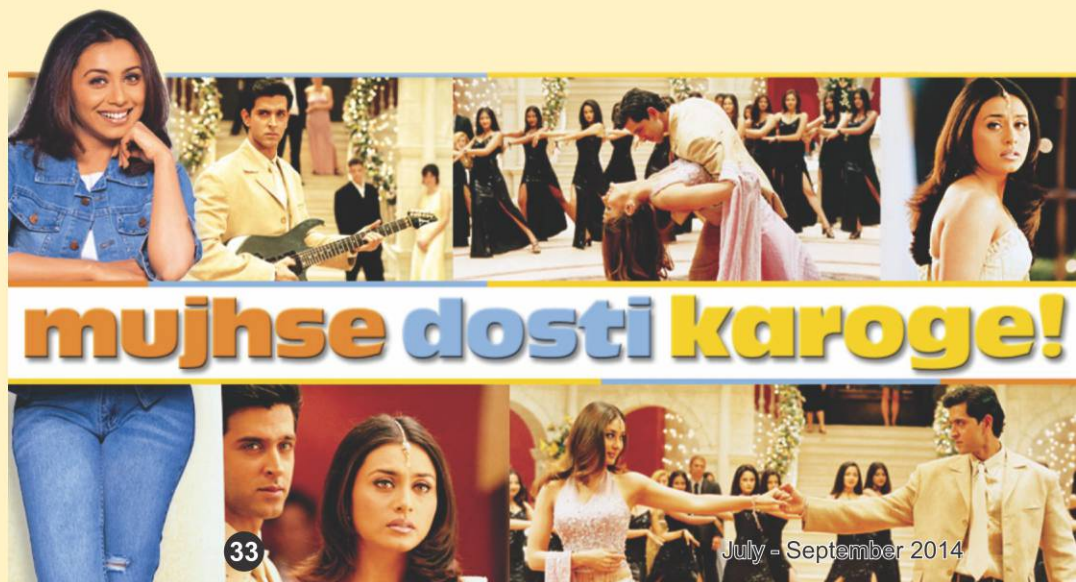
The technique I used very often was that I cut a cardboard in a bottle shape and fixed up soft silver foil on it. Then I used to keep that at an angle behind the bottle few

mm slightly smaller than bottle so that it did not run out. Once the camera angle got fixed on this silver foil, I would use sometimes the soft light and at other times a hard light. I used it like a mirror in such a way that if you remove the bottle, it becomes the mirror. So with the thick density of the liquor and the dark bottles, it would shine like gold.

**What is more challenging as a DOP -- shooting an ad film or a feature film?**

When I was doing 'Veer', it was such a big project that instead of 10 light boys on the set, I had 80 light boys and instead of 5 lights on the set, I had 200 lights. So the whole thing had to be taken on your chest and feel the pressure. You have to hug it.

I light up the set in general way the scene is written, whether day or night, evening or morning or whatever. Then from shot to shot, we change only face light. In 'Veer', a very important incident happened.







We light up the whole scene which will have 3-4 cuts. Now the director calls the actor. The actor comes and rehearses and says that he doesn't want any cut and it is to be done in one shot.

So we came up with a joint decision amongst the actor Salman Khan, the director, and me. Let us say that Salman is talking to a girl and he is moving around her 360 degree, again 360 degree clockwise. So after 2 rounds of 360 degree clockwise, he goes back 360 degree and that becomes 3 times of 360 degree. 3rd time he goes back anti-clockwise and so we decided to have it all in a round trolley. Camera moves 3 times round, twice clockwise, twice anti-clockwise, but I wasn't prepared because my lights were on the ground. This is literally 360 degree 3 times. But it was done differently -- 1st take and then 2nd take. I said I had to prepare. I liked this idea, and I was very open. I wasn't stubborn because if somebody improves my work, I have to welcome it. That is my approach. So I requested my director and actor to go and come back after 2-3 hours. They all supported me and I changed my lighting pattern with the same mode; nothing on the floor, my face light was just above my frame and that is how I hang my lights from top.

We did rehearsals with dummies before I called my directors. The whole shot was 90 seconds and I liked the idea of no cut. The whole scene was so intense that the lead actor was talking to a girl. It was a pre-climax scene.

We were shooting for 'Veer' in London in a heritage building. There was an

approximately 200 x 60 feet long Hall having all the windows almost 20-30 ft long. They wanted to shoot the pre-climax scene there where the people who were dancing. It was almost impossible for any DOP to light it up even if he gets one month's time.

So what I did was that before the shooting day I stood in the hall the whole day. I went in the morning to check how the sunlight was reaching through the window, and then what happened to the same light in the afternoon, in the evening and at the time of sunset. So I studied the available light pattern in that hall.

Then I talked to my director and the choreographer that these were the long shots and I wanted to do them at this and this time during the day and it would take 3-

4 days. I told them that they had to support me and only then I was going to take the responsibility. And they all helped me. All my long shots were shot with the available light though at so many small places I also used trick lights. And occasionally I used artificial lights to light up in order to simulate the natural light pattern but you cannot make out the difference.

Outside is the main central London road. There is no way you can give any light. So the evening that was facing west and kind of 20 minutes sun hits the whole window and you can see that in the film. So exactly within those 20 minutes I did the long shot. And I talked to my actors, Salman and Zarine Khan that they all must help me do this and they did. We shot almost for 4-5 days. It's a song climax scene. Since it was heritage property, so the British security people would not allow you to even touch the window. They are 100 years old. Again I figured out the lighting technique of my household china bulbs. At 50 feet height between 2 windows I created the grills and took the cable and hung all those bulbs to have a little warmth on the set. That's how I managed it!

**But since it is kind of a period drama film, did you employ any of this technique to give it a feel of costume period drama?**

I interacted with my director and costume director in sync because so many things I wanted for 'VEER'. For example, I wanted not too bright an outfit because at the end of it it's a love story. At a few places I wanted olive green and at some places pink, but everything I wanted deep because I wanted to see the glamour and glowing skin of Zarine Khan. So at many places I used a couple of filters on the light because







I liked to do everything on negative than DI.

#### What kind of filters did you use?

I used CTO -85, quarter to half. CTO is basically an orange filter. And on camera I used, Schneider's classic warm diffuser. More than softness it enhances the skin. That is why you see it's too much of glamour and glowing skin. If I am using telephoto, it will give you a little softer image. So I reduced the grade of diffuser. Whenever I go to Europe or Hollywood, I keep buying filters. I don't give any pressure to producer that I need this filter or that filter.

**'Veer' was a high budget film. How do you manage the quality work with low budget films?**

For low budget films my lighting pattern changes. I hardly use big lights. In one of the films I used China bulbs that we hang in the house. I made 80 of them -- different sizes, and they were mobile and time saving. And so many times I used it for face light also and within 10 minutes I was ready to shoot.

At times I light up with tube lights, electronic tube lights, normally which costs Rs. 230. But it all depends on the way the scene is written. I am very fond of shooting in available lights. I remember shooting in Ooty where I shot the whole project in available lights with 2 skimmers and 2 thermocol. You know it was a massive project, they never had a budget problem

but even then the kind of look I and the director wanted was very pre-determined and I didn't want to light up.

#### What is your advice to the new generation that wants to make career in cinematography?

Many youngsters have been coming to me, sometimes with their parents, to be guided properly. I ask everybody one question, "Why do you want to become a cinematographer?" And out of 100 people 90% come because of name and money. My standard answer is -- "If something is really touching your heart then and then only you should come. If you really want to work seriously, then do come. Later on everything follows you." Most of these youngsters

don't have any patience which they need the most because cinematography is not simply exposing. That way even a house wife can click pictures because the technology is so advanced. But it's not about clicking. It's about understanding. So more than cinematography they have to be very much knowledgeable as an editor. Then had to understand music; they have to understand so many things from the perspective of outfit designer, art director, and so on. They have to be a combination. Any cinematographer has to be a combination of entire film making process. If you be prepared for this, then you decide to be a cinematographer.

It's not about taking 1 shot or 2 shots. While shooting you have to edit every scene in your mind. It is in your home work only that you have to edit the whole script. So you must have an editor's sensibility also. If you have a sense of other things like music and all, it adds to your flavor.

So it is very important to have patience as nothing happens overnight; progress comes with years of process. And never talk about your work; let it talk by itself. If same people call you again for your work, it means your work is being appreciated.

#### What would you like to share with the young cinematographers of Digital Age?

During my journey of 37 years as a cinematographer I have realized that it's not only about how brilliant a DOP you are -- though it is very important -- but so many other things too work around you. Definitely you are brilliant DOP and that's why people call you, but it's not only that. It is a very small part of it. But to handle people, to make comfortable all your actors, light boys, all the production people, and the setting people working for you. Make them all so comfortable that they give you their best. And the 'mantra' is-- how you handle your people! □□□







With International Production Houses Mulchand is perhaps much better known a name than many of our so called stars. For over three decades he has been the most sought after man here, there and everywhere. Mulchand is the first name that comes to mind when you need a well trained light man and best lighting equipment in India. No wonder, then, if he has done more than 100 films as gaffer. Starting his career from lighting assignments in marriages, he was shaped into a gaffer of renown by many DOP's and directors including Mira Nair, Shekhar Kapur and Deepa Mehta at home and Ismail Merchant, Tony Emmi, Walter Lassally, Oliver Wood, Anthony Dodmantle, Robert Richardson and many more from abroad.

# Master Gaffer

## An Interview with Mulchand Dedhia

### How did you begin Your Journey in to the film industry?

I had never thought that one day I would be working in the film industry. During my adolescent years, I had few friends who used to professionally handle decorations for small wedding functions. In those days, along with my friends would play music on record, handle the lighting and other decorations. In those days we had small generators that would run on wheels, which we would manually drag to the venue. Then we thought why not take these generators on a tempo so that our manual labor is reduced.

It was during 1977-1978, a foreign film 'Sea wolves' was about to be made. The film had a British gaffer and British generator operator. As it was a sync sound film, they required silent generators & I got the opportunity to operate those generators. We worked in the Rajkamal Kalamandir Studios for about 3 months to build that generator which was the first silent generator made in India. We were three people operating the generator and handling the hardware. My job on the generator was to govern and manually reset the generator in cases of over loading and set it back again when there is less load as it didn't have auto voltage regulator. While working for this film, I learnt that if we're using HMIs, the camera's shutter angle has to be set at a certain degree and generator's frequency also has to be set accordingly, otherwise, the image may have flicker. As we did not have Flicker Free ballasts for HMIs, the generator operator had quite a big job to do.

When we started shooting that film in Goa, we had few HMI lights, which were

not available in India then and had been imported; apart from few tungsten- 2k Blonde & 2 kW Fresnals (Multi 20 & solar - as we call them in Bollywood) which were made in India.

'XACA' – An Indian cine light manufacturing company took the contract for this film and made all the multi-20 lights. Unlike Indian Films, where we usually use to hear the voices " Lights On" & "Lights Off " during the entire shooting day, whenever a foreign film was shot, they used to keep the lights on through the beginning of the day till lunch-time and then till end of the day post lunch. This was quite an unprecedented usage of the lights which was not factored in the manufacturing of the lights that XACA had made and the lights would suffer a physical wear off and they had to bring in a lot of extra one so that, by the time the previous lights got repaired we could continue shooting. During my free time I also repaired the multi 20 lights. When the production saw that, they got angry and asked me not to repair the lights. Hiding from them, I would also continue doing meager production work during the shoot. The passion for becoming a gaffer was building up in me by then.

### What exactly was a gaffer's work in a foreign film at that time?

Gaffer's work then and now in foreign films is the same. All technical heads of department involved in principal shoot of the film do pre production meetings and then do a technical scout of the location or a set to discuss various aspects. The cameraman is responsible for turning the director's vision into reality and in co-

ordination with the gaffer he makes it possible by entrusting the responsibility to handle the lighting required for various scenes. It's the job of the gaffer to execute the lighting setup up for the shoot and supervise mostly all electrical requirements of the shoot. It's not just the technical part but many times it requires creativity to be applied when the cameraman may ask to suggest the kind of lights and color gels to use. Even now, everything is pre-decided – the placement of the lights, exposure required, kind of lighting - soft light or direct light or any particular diffuser or color is required etc. By now I had made up my mind to become a Gaffer and decided that in the next film I'll either work as a best boy (assistant of the gaffer) or a gaffer.

In 1980 during James Ivory's film 'Heat and Dust' produced by Merchant Ivory Productions & shot by cameraman Walter Lassally, I got the opportunity to work as a gaffer. This was the first film of my life as a gaffer and in the first week only, Walter Lassally told me he had not seen a gaffer like me. That was a proud moment for me as it was a big compliment from such a seasoned cameraman. In fact, I was scared that things may go wrong. After that, without a second thought, I started my career as a gaffer.

After 'Heat and Dust' in 1980, up till now I have done around 70-80 international films as a gaffer and sometimes as best boy. After working with renowned cameraman like Giles Nutgens, Declan Quinn, Tony Kay, Jurgen Jurgens & Oscar winner DoPs like Walter Lassally, Dion Beebe, Guillermo Navarro, Russel Boyd, Anthony Dodmantle, Robert Richardson & Emmanuel Lubezki, I feel that if one really wants to work, nothing is impossible. Every cameraman has his way of working; you can figure out what he



wants by what he explains during the pre production meetings, location scouts etc. and if we pay attention to that, working with them becomes easier.

#### **when did you decide to have your own equipment Rental House?**

From 1980 to 1990, we didn't had enough gripping or rigging equipment nor did we had grips or riggers. During 1986 when we were shooting for Mira Nair's 'Salaam Bombay', we had to light the 2nd storey of a building outside the Grant Road station. From the road we had to somehow make the streetlight reach inside the building. So, we parked the generator below, put a stand above it and took the long extension cable till second floor, to get the right light angle. And at that time 2.5 kw were big HMI lights in India and for its safety, we had to put bamboo sticks around so that they don't fall. To shelter the lights was even more difficult because there were no stairs. Then we realized that, for efficiency in rigging, a lot of hardware, different kinds of clamps are required. So, we bought Matthews' grip equipment for the making of the film. This was my first investment for lighting equipment.

After that, when small documentary crews for commercials used to come for 2 to 4 days shoot and they used to demand good equipments else they had to bring it from their own Country. The size of lighting crew used to be large (30-40 light boys) when we would hire lights from various small rentals across India while only 10-12 people would be required. Therefore, I decided to have my own equipment and still for big films for which shooting lasted for 2-3 months, we would hire equipment from various other rentals.

#### **Can you tell us about some specific incidents or situations, which have been challenging for you throughout your career as a gaffer because a lot of technical equipment was not available in India?**

When we were shooting Pradip Krishen's film 'Electric moon' in Panchmarhi, the generator failed and during chilly winters, under 0 degrees temperature we were repairing generators. Somehow I had organized my own crew comprising of 10-12 people, so that we had an easy understanding to work effectively even during tough times.

In 1993, when we were shooting 'Bandit Queen' in Dholpur; I had already reached Dholpur for the prep and the truck that was loaded with all the equipment in the evening had to leave from Mumbai next morning at 5 am while the boys had to travel to Dholpur via train. That was the day

when the riots had started in Mumbai following the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya. The truck was completely looted at night and there was nothing left in it and the truck didn't leave for the shoot. We didn't get this information until 4 days due to bad communication because of the riots. Mr. Shekhar Kapoor and Bobby Bedi, the producers wanted the shooting to begin on time, so I thought 'how will I do it?' After discussing the matter with everybody we decided that we'll first begin with the interior studio shoot in Delhi which we had to do for the rape scene, later and by the time the Mumbai shoot begins, we'll arrange the equipment from somewhere else. So we decided we'll bring the equipment from Hong Kong which would reach us within a week.

We required 4K, 6K HMIs with flicker free ballast, various grip and rigging material which we had to use in small villages of Chambal, which was difficult to source out anywhere in Mumbai and even if we had to buy it, crew size would increase. Initially Giles Nutgens started the shoot of the film and after 3 weeks of shooting, he left and Ashok jee (Late Ashok Mehta) continued the shoot. By the end of the film, I was left with nothing and didn't knew what to do from there on. After I returned from the shoot, I borrowed money & took community loan to organize a full-fledged set-up comprising mostly all the lighting and rigging equipment required during shooting of a film. During all this time from 1980 to 1997 I didn't work in Bollywood, maybe for a few odd ones but not regularly, except for Kundan Shah's Kim, Aziz Mirza's 'Circus' starring Shakrukh Khan and Ashutosh Gowariker, which I did because of personal relationship.

My intention was not to mix the system of learning and practice, otherwise, I would be stuck halfway. So again I reinstated my entire set-up and began doing those international documentaries or commercials or 1-2 films in a year. During 1997 I got two opportunities- one was Dev Benegal's 'Split wide open' which he wanted to do with me because he could relate with my style of working as he had also worked in many foreign films and second film was Sunhil Sippy's 'Snip'. After these I did Mahesh Mathai's 'Bhopal express' whose producer Deepak Nayar, now in L.A., said that he wants to do the film with me only, because he felt it's a little challenging movie. We wanted to shoot the Bhopal Gas tragedy in Hyderabad that involved quite challenging night exteriors.

#### **What specifically was challenging for you in Bhopal express ?**

The tragedy which happened in the factory and gas spreading all over Bhopal consequently leading to stampede, all this we had to depict in Hyderabad and with such skill so that the audience cannot make out it's not Bhopal. And doing this during night, lighting few places/portions only to disguise the location, so that it looks like it's Bhopal whilst lighting up the rampantly running characters to make them prominent and add that element of darkness, fear, grief, helplessness etc.. We scouted a lot of locations and then decided that it's not appropriate for the scene because even then we didn't have all the required equipment like Cherry pickers, scissor lifts etc. to rig the lights at a considerable height. Even today, we hire industrial cranes to rig the lights at height. After doing this film Mahesh ji told me that I should do Hindi films and commercials. I told him I don't want to split my focus; I want to do things in a definite manner, one step at a time. I even operated the second camera in Bhopal Express. I did focus pulling for 8 years. I have tried almost every aspect of filmmaking. But my ultimate aim was to become a gaffer and I didn't want to digress from it. Meanwhile, I started working in commercials with a leading production house called "Highlight". The Highlight used to work with renowned Indian as well as foreign cameraman and me and my team soon started getting appreciation for our work. Now I had most of the lighting and rigging equipment required by the foreign production and was fluent with their technical terminology.

After 1998, I re-entered Bollywood and till then I hadn't thought of establishing here. While we were shooting Deepa Mehta's "Earth", Aamir Khan and I used to talk that whenever he starts his own production, I would work with him. I told him I would need the script of the film well in advance before the shooting starts so that I can study it well. People think that a light supplier doesn't need the script, when sometimes even artists haven't even received it. However, I'm of the habit of working with the script and a defined schedule of the movie. If sometimes I feel the schedule is a little amiss, I discuss it with the first AD and make it work in a way that is beneficial for the production of the film while keeping in mind, the ease of turnarounds from a night shoot into day and vice versa.

Months before the shoot of 'Lagaan', Aamir told me that a draft of the script is ready and there'll be a few changes later on but not drastic and a copy of the same will be sent to me. They even invited me to the sets, where make-up and dialogue rehearsals



were going on. They were well organized, the same as any foreign production would work and I now knew that I can work on the film without any hesitation. The film was set to be shot in a village in Kutch, Gujarat and I went there to organize the power distribution prior to the shoot as I thought that we will need to lay underground cables so that they are not visible in wide shots. During the technical scout with Director Ashutosh Govarikar, DoP Anil Mehta and other HODs, the issue of underground cabling was sorted as we discovered that it was not necessary to do that and it would be fine if the cables were laid over the ground as we do it normally. But there was another issue to be solved; The location in Kutch, where we had to shoot was a rocky terrain in the midst of a desert with little or no wet soil around, so we couldn't get proper earthing and there could be a danger of being electrocuted without proper earthing. We made an earth plate to be dug and put into the ground, as its done in permanent installations for a building or a factory but even that didn't work. So, I did some R&D, and it would sound quite funny but I came up with an idea that the earthing will work if the crew urinated at the place where we had put the earth plate and we will get proper earthing after that.

#### **What was the reason behind urination? There should be urea or nitrogen?**

Urine has some salts as well and also if the ground is wet, which has earth plate, it gets additional durability for proper grounding. Although, it wasn't too dangerous, but still there was a risk of getting a shock without earthing, when touching the lights. Also, the set being completely made of wooden planks, there were a lot of restrictions, like there was a separate room for smoking

In the "Kaaley megha" song in the film, the clouds had to come during starting stanza (antara) and then disappear before the song finishes and for that I made a 100 x 150 skimmer (Overhead Cloth used for diffusing sunlight) which we thought we'd use for showing the coming and going of clouds in the song. Before starting the song, there was no wind and the choreographer came and we discussed that we'd begin with the first stanza (antara) only, because it'll be easier to shoot that sequence during the no-wind days. But Raju Khan and Aamir suggested we should start with the chorus (mukhada) so that there's a rhythm. I was more concerned about the weather and wind as this was the first time that such a big skimmer was being used in India. So we spent 3 days for the chorus and after that weather became really windy which made it impossible for us to shoot the first stanza.

#### **What cloth did you use as skimmer?**

It was neither silk nor satin, but a fabric called "taffeta". It wasn't available in India then, but now it is. So, when I refused, they thought I'm being arrogant. But then I spoke to Aamir and told him it's not possible because of the weather, he asked me to try and I told him that I won't be responsible if things go haywire and we have to rebuild the set. We had to build towers (Rostrums) and construct a mechanism with ropes and pulleys, which would drag the skimmer back and forth on the top of the area and would look like the coming and going of the clouds in the frame. I asked my team to climb one of the towers and initially use one part of the cloth to check if it would work in such windy weather. But as we did that, because of the sheer intensity of the wind, the cloth rolled up into a tunnel like shape and I had to instruct my boys to drop the cloth, so the tower doesn't fall. So finally we realized we can't shoot with that fabric. This got us to thinking because Kutch is the kind of place where even during monsoon you don't get to see clouds. So we decided we'd shoot the first stanza, during dusk or dawn, line by line each day after finishing what we had scheduled to shoot for the day. So, in the end we made 12ft x 24ft skimmer which we operated manually involving about 14-15 people. While watching the film no one can make out it has been done by people pulling the clouds through the wind, while remaining inside the camera frame. Initially when we tried moving the clouds with the skimmer, it failed; so to make it happen we had no other way except making a compact frame and shifting the clouds in and out with the skimmer. Because the clouds have to be in the frame for at least half the song-they should come in the shot when the song starts and disappear before the song ends. Incoming and outgoing of the clouds had to be done in a compact frame, while the portion in between had to be shot either during dusk or dawn.

After this a lot of production houses were amazed at different techniques used in shooting of this film. Even today I design many lights or rigs for lighting required for any particular location or situation. That is the reason I ask for a script 2-3 months before the shooting of the film begins so that I can design any equipments if required. I was thinking of an alternative lighting solution apart from the conventional lights for lighting up huge Green/Blue screens and after some R&D, I managed to design a light specifically for lighting up the same. It looks like the shape of a horizontal strip of light and has a diffusion fabric around it which looks like a shape of a drum (Almost like a

space light) but horizontal. I was thinking for an appropriate name for the light and meanwhile on one of the shoots where we initially used the light, DoP Jason West asked what is that light called so I said that it can be called either a Strip Light or a Drum Light but he was fascinated with the shape and said that he would call it Pappu Light (There is a fat light boy – Pappu as we call him) and till date Jason calls it a Pappu light. Many rentals have now made those lights after many DoPs demanded that for their shoots and I regret that I do not have a patent for it but feel proud that my R&D has got appreciation from not only the DoPs with whom we work with, but even by the people with whom we do not get an opportunity to work.

#### **Tell us something about any sequence you remember while working in "Bandit Queen" project?**

There was this sequence in 'Bandit Queen' where Daku Maan Singh falls while running and the train passes by and both Phoolan Devi and Daaku Maan Singh fall near the train. I realized that the sand and the dust nearby rises while the train is moving in speed and I suddenly started throwing sand with the speed of the train while the camera was still rolling, which would fall like a dust storm on the characters. When you look at that scene you'll feel like it is sand falling because of the speeding train or car. After we stopped rolling, Shekhar sir asked Ashok Jee if he had done it, he said he didn't. So, both of them came to me and I thought maybe I shouldn't have done it without asking them. But they were really happy and impressed with it and asked me how I got the idea to do it. I told them it was just instinctive.

We also did this in 'Lagaan'. During the 'chaley chalo' song, we thought we'd get the fan to blow sand up. I told them it wouldn't work for such a big area and suggested we should work with the natural speed of the wind. We thought we'd shoot when the wind blows and when it stops we'll change the frame. When you look at the song it seems there's a dust storm going on at the back. All the junior artists, the villagers were asked to blow up the sand from the ground, being out of frame so the wind picks it up with its own speed and involves the dust in the frame. This is what a little bit creativity and discussion with the team can bring. Like any other art or profession, lighting is also a continuous learning process and the more you explore the more better you can perform.

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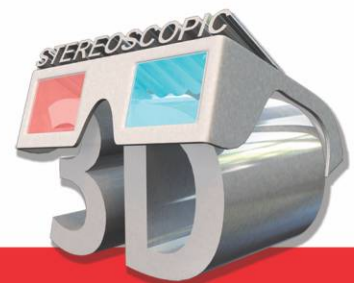
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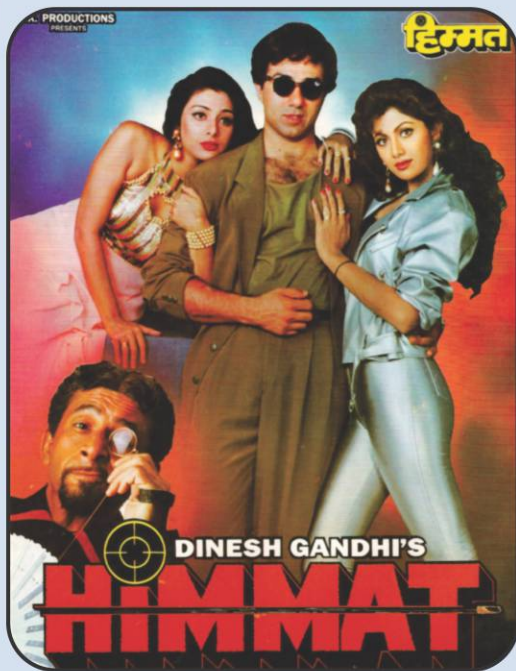
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DOP Sunil Sharma, an FTII graduate, has been working in the Bollywood film industry for the last forty years and has to his credit an association with about 40 Feature Films, 250 Advertising Commercials, 500 Episodes of TV, and 50 Documentaries in various capacities. Films like 'Saath-Saath', 'Raahee', 'Insaniyat', 'Abodh', 'Nadiya ke Paar' and 'Jalwa' are some of his prominent feature films wherein he exhibited his talent as DOP. His expertise as cinematographer was pressed into service in mega serials like 'Chandra Kanta' and 'Karam Chand'. He also directed & photographed a Telefilm 'Chakshu' for Door-Darshan. 'Himmat', starring Sunny Deol, Tabu, Shilpa Shetty and Nasiruddin Shah, was his directorial venture.



## Sunil Sharma Recollects his journey

### INITIAL JOURNEY

After passing out from FTII Pune, in 1976, I started working with ABC (ABC American broadcasting corporation) in Delhi. There was a film which was being made by Sippy Films with Manmohan Singh as the camera person and Surinder Suri as Director and it was their first film. They persuaded me to come to Bombay and do that film with them. I was then working in Delhi & was drawing a very handsome salary. However, I quit the job, left Delhi and went to Mumbai with a contract of Rs. 5 thousand for this film to be made in 3 months. That's how I landed up in Bombay. Immediately after that I came in touch with Mr. K.K. Mahajan (four times National Award Winner for best cinematography). I did one film with him as an assistant. There was a film called "Ram Nagri" which he was doing independently. Kantilal Rathore was the Director of the film starring Amol Palekar and Suhasini Muley. For a day or two there was a kind of confusion. Mr. Mahajan asked me to go to Mr. Kantilal Rathore. However, when I met Mr. Kantilal Rathore, He did not recognize me and asked me who I was. I told him that I was there on behalf of Mr. K.K. Mahajan. He asked me if I was from FTII. I answered with

a Yes. He further asked me when I passed out. I answered that it was in 1976. He then told me that he was the examiner of diploma films for that year. He again asked me about my diploma film which I told him was "Proposal". I had done that with Ashok Ahuja. After that he did not ask me anything. Instead he just said, "Sunil, this is the shot." This was very encouraging for me. I shared the credits with Mr. Mahajan for that film. Mr. Mahajan at that time was doing eight or nine other films also and as such he was extremely busy and, therefore, Mr. Kantilal had let me complete the film on his behalf. Mahajan Saheb was extremely firm and very quick at deciding the things. He knew at once what kind of source light it was going to be for a particular shot. Once the source was decided, it did not affect his speed of work. Now if a wrong source is taken, you are caught in the web. It takes just half an hour to light up, but if something goes wrong, it would take next two hours to rectify it. So how to decide to put lights for the very first shot was the most important thing and that I had learned from Mr. Mahajan. When we are lighting up for the night, then a direct light is used for the day and we could manage with the bounce light.

Mr. Mahajan also shot "TARANG" for Kumar Sahani. I worked as an assistant and learnt big lessons. Once four days Shooting of TARANG was washed because of faulty equipment. I did not notice while changing the lenses that they did not get locked properly.

### ON LIGHTING APPROACH:

It all starts from what kind of a film it is going to be -- What is the script all about? Is it an action, thriller or a romantic film? What are the backdrops going to be? How many indoor and outdoor scenes are to be there? What kind of film and emulsion speed you are going to use? Whether the film is going to have contrast scenes or soft scenes? Also what kind of budget the film holds? It is extremely important to choose the emulsion of the film since the emulsion has to be chosen according to the script. To me, emulsion speed makes a difference in your working style as well as time taken to light up. You see, feature film, is as important as an advertisement film. Now an advertisement would appear 25 times a day where as the film would be shown only four times a day. In a day people are going to watch the commercials much more often



than a feature film. It is why a little more importance is given to an ad film. Every minutest detail has to be taken care of, and that is the only difference. The benefit in the feature film is that even if you are short of something, the actors will somehow carry you through. There the focus is on the actor and not on the environment whereas in an ad film a lot of importance has to be given to the environment or background.

There was a film named "JALWA" which I did with Pankaj Parashar. In that film a scene was to be shot with Archana Puran Singh and A.K. Hungal. There was a very strong light of the sun which was falling in the room. I was not able to figure it out how to remove that patch of light. I didn't wanted to use the sun light directly because of high contrast. Even the room was very small and there was no space to put the artificial light. Finally I decided to use the fog filter on the lens instead of putting ND filter on the window. In that scene, A.K. Hungal had to exit and Naseeruddin Shah was to enter and, as it happened, it became a wonderfully romantic scene between Naseer and Archana. After the first screening of the film, the question which struck almost everybody from FTII was how I did it. The fact was that one particular source with one particular filter could change the whole feel in the scene. I still remember a film named "Chehre Pe Chehra" with Sanjeev Kumar. There was a very big church in old Goa which was to be lit at night. About 400 k w of lights was placed one by one very strategically so that the whole church could be lit up well. Now it

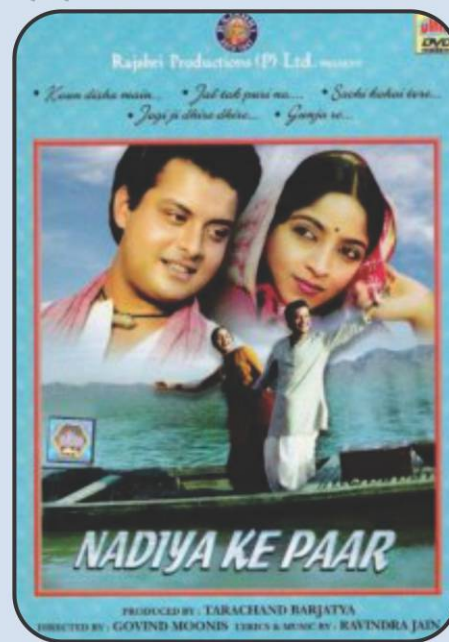
was a track shoot wherein all the engravings inside had to be enhanced. It was a very challenging task.

Among the various directors I had worked with one is Satyen Bose who was the director of "Jagriti" and "Boot polish" and it is he who needs a special mention here. He was making a thriller film in which about 11 or 12 camera persons were changed. It was because their work was not up to his expectations. Finally when I was called, the very first question I asked him was -- "Dada, there's so much difference of age between you and me that I wonder how we are going to communicate. Either I should be older or I think it is easier for you to be younger because you have already passed through that age. Then I hope it will be a healthy communication. He just looked at me, broadened his eyes and said, "Okay, Let's see." And when camera was called in, the very first thing that he asked me to explain was what was close-up and to show that to him. So I did. Then he asked me about mid-close, long shot and everything else before we started the actual shooting.

I was aware of the fact of eleven-twelve people already being sent back. Still before we set up the lighting for the first scene in a den, I politely asked him to tell me the source of light coming into that den. Since as per the scene around three hundred mice would enter with the light, so I asked him if adequate precautions have been taken to catch them. He immediately realized the problem and worked it out quickly. Working with him was indeed a great inspiration in terms of learning. Whenever I used to put the camera, he would come and ask to put it three inches up or four inches down. Frankly speaking, after doing nine or ten films, placing the camera and judging the height of the camera at an accurate position are the things that I had learnt from him. He had some wonderful books which he used to give me for reading purpose in the morning, and in the evening he would come to my home and take those books back. They were all technical books, about cinema, about filters and so on, so forth. These books were not available in any normal market. I don't know for how many years he had been collecting all those books.

If we talk about lenses, 50 mm is one such good lens with which you can shoot an entire film. It gives you a wide and a close enough range to shoot. I used to be very-very comfortable with this lens because sometimes the location is not the concern and the characters are more important than the background. But with 50 mm you can get

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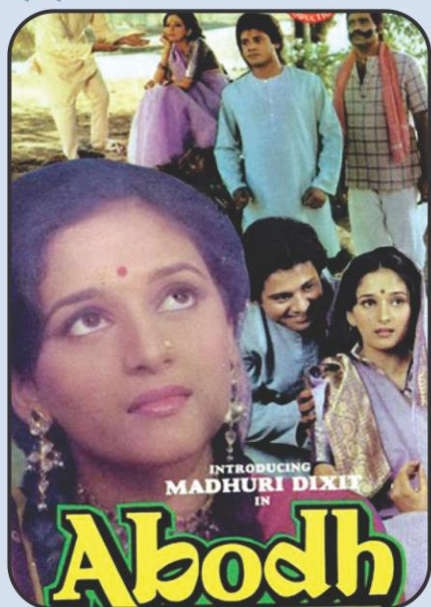
good depth of field. I don't like zoom lens and use it very rarely. "Atishbaz" with Shatrughan Sinha, Prem Chopra, Gulshan Grover, Anita Raj and Aditya Pancholi was a film which was shot entirely on zoom lens. Shatrughan Sinha had to leave for the flight to Bombay and his shots had to be completed. The dancers and the junior artists came from Bombay. We were given two and half hour to shoot the entire song with all the stars, six other characters, twenty dancers and fifty junior artists. The full song of five and half minutes was shot within two and half hours.

It was because anything which needed to be done in the next shot, you zoom that and the shot continued. So for the whole scene, the shots were divided in such a way that the zoom was the dominant factor. I don't remember the song. It was inside the studio in Goa. It was not a very drastic zooming but, then you knew you were using the zoom to move forward to go ahead with the song. It was not pre-planned but was decided on the set.

I also remember a particular situation in "Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja."

Initially Boney Kapoor was keen to do the titling in Hong-Kong. The entire thing was supposed to be done by Peter Ferrera. I was called in because I did a film called Sur-Asur in which I had done all the camera tricks. It was television's one of the first

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feature films. In Filmistan Studio they had set up the screen. Many a times whenever I used a hand held camera and if there was no sync sound, I would always shoot it on a slightly higher frame, say twenty-six, twenty-eight frames per second in order to get everything smooth. For instance, "Jalwa" was shot with 90% hand held camera, and it was a cinema scope film. Nobody had ever imagined that a cinema scope film could be shot thus with a hand-held camera, but I did that. Today, as an artist, cinematographer sits on a very easy seat because if something goes wrong it can be corrected later. Earlier before you finalized the shot you would think ten times but today somebody else is there to finalize the shots for you and that's how we monitor. A lot of things have been eased up and burden has been taken off the shoulders of the cinematographer.

Now it's no more about cinematography; it's only a camera operation because the rest of things are being done by the support system. As far as the exposure, color correction and the other things are concerned, you can change them in DI. The only thing a camera person has been left with is framing and camera movements. These two things are still very important for any good work. Otherwise the rest, they all can be adjusted the way you wish to do in post production.

#### ON KARAMACHAND :

"Karamchand" is a different story altogether. In the very first shoot which we

took, the camera was supposed to be on a track. It was a fast track towards a particular character and every time when the tracking was done faster, the camera would tumble along with me and the assistant who was focusing. We tried this ten to twelve times and finally I asked him to hand over the camera to me. Though the tracking speed again was as fast as the last time but the difference was that now the camera was in my hands and I was sitting on a stool. When the track would stop, it would give a jerk and the camera would slide further and could fall with that jerk. However, since it was hand-held, I would hold that tightly in my hands and would stop at the head of that character. Immediately after the shot Pankaj Parashar came and asked how I did it. He even complimented me saying that it was a wonderful shot. It was all of a sudden and happened spontaneously.

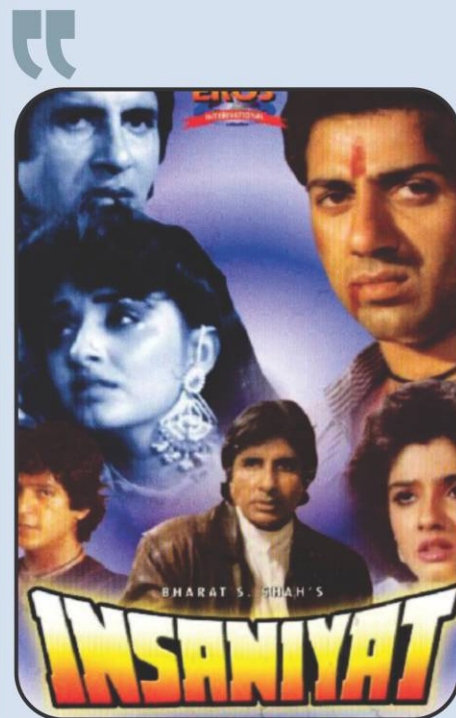
Then practically all the thirty nine episodes were shot with hand-handled camera. Now the actor was not confined to a particular territory or an area and Pankaj Kapoor had the liberty to move around in any way he wished. But camera was supposed to catch him. In this process the angle of the lens changed so dramatically that it gave the feeling of inquisitiveness among the audience regarding what was going on. Earlier the camera would be steady and the character used to do all the tricks. Now for the first time the camera was doing the jugglery. That's how for the first time entire performance of an actor was enhanced by the technique of the camera.

#### HIMMAT (DIRECTOR, DOP, SCREENPLAY)

After the release of "Jalwa" with Rajshree production, I shot "Nadiya Ke Paar" in thirty days and later "Abodh" (Madhuri Dixit's first film). Rajkumar Barjatya called me and asked me what I was doing those days. He was asking me for the subject of a feature film.

I was both surprised and shocked at his words, but at the same time I was thrilled also and asked him for a day's time. I had one short story which I thought could be made into a 90 minute film. Then I narrated that entire script to him. It took me almost two hours to narrate. He was impressed and asked me to meet Shri Charandas Ashok, a very fantastic writer, with almost 12 golden hits. I met Shri Charandas Ashok.

He looked at me and asked me whether I wanted to make a film. He asked me about the subject and about my past works. I told him about my projects "Nadiya ke Paar" for Rajshree and "Jalwa". He became

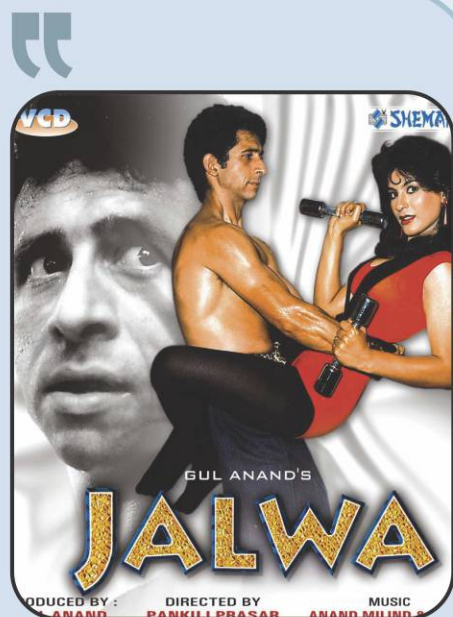


enthusiastic, immediately stood up and said, "Let us meet in the Rajshree office." We went there and within six months the subject was ready. At the same time, Suraj Barjatya was also working on his script. He finished with his script and started the execution. His film was a big hit. I was told that they were exploring the film in a different language and therefore they would not be able to work on my film for the next two years.

One fine day I was shooting for "Insaaniyat". I was narrating a scene and as per chance Sunny was there. He was also listening to what I was saying and then suddenly he told me that he really liked the scene and was very keen to know about the script. I asked him to meet when we both had some leisure time so that everything could be explained in a better way. He agreed and said that Deepak would get in touch with me within a week's time. His secretary called me up and fixed the meeting.

I wanted an absolutely peaceful environment to narrate my story. Then the other day by 6 a.m. in the morning we met and I explained to him the whole thing. He stood up and agreed to do my film.

He further told me that we would start from the coming January and asked me to prepare myself for the same. Mr. Dinesh Gandhi, a financier also agreed to fund our film.







# Sanjeev Sood

## Mentor Remembered

My cinematic sojourn with Sunil Sharma in 1986 came at a time when K.K. Mahajan asked me to join him, as his chief assistant Ajay Tandon got busy with some independent work. Joined him on the shoot of hit detective TV serial 'Karamchand' directed by Punkaj Parashar. U-matic low band was industry norm and for a hardcore cinematographer like Sunil it was just a toy of plastic to play around with.

So far, the video camera language was 'mid long, mid and close shots interspersed with few dolly shots'. Hand held camera movements in fiction was unheard of in Indian Television i.e. only Doordarshan at that time. It was Sunil Sharma who introduced a new style of hand held takings with continuous shots, sometimes more than ten minutes long... equivalent to one reel in cinema! It was not a documentary kind of hand held but a weird way of using it. Why I say weird because it was not traditional hand held but an unique way of rewriting grammar of cinematic takings. Talking of hand held camera techniques work in many ways, at times holding it from the handle or keeping it at ground level and then tracking in which it ultimately becomes top angle in the same shot (there were no Louma Cranes or Jimmy Zibs around at that time).

We were using the camera like hand ball. In some running shots camera was literally chucked at me to catch and continue with the shot, this was to get a shot with a feel as if it was a POV of character or moving object. Among many, I remember once

Karamchand was running down the stairs and camera always used to be ahead of him, at each flight, in a continuous shot. There were no camcorders available at that time. Camera and VTR used to be connected with a remote cable. In the history of television or cinema in India, no one could think of this kind of shot taking. I think this was the only TV serial in which all possibilities of hand held camera were explored including at times artists themselves doubling up as camera operators. This taking style became a hit to an extent of becoming a "LANDMARK". This made the team of 'Sunil Sharma and Punkaj Parashar' popular. Following the same style feature film 'Jalwa' was shot on cinemascope. It was very difficult to shoot as the camera becomes very heavy with cinemascope lenses and also keeping the format in mind compositions had to be done carefully.

Among many things, I learnt working with Sunil was to create respect for oneself as cinematographer. How to be firm in many situations. I remember shooting a dance number where a very well established choreographer wanted to operate the camera as he used to do all the time but Sunil Sharma put his foot down and simply refused by suggesting him to rather concentrate on the work assigned to him. Equally important thing is to get your dues. I remember while shooting for 'Insaniyat' we came back after two week long schedule from Bangkok. Went to collect payment from the producer who while chewing Zarda raised his head and just refused to recognize

me and asked "Aapun kaun" !!

When I told this to Sunil, he kept quiet. Few days later... There was an expensive set erected at Filmistan studio for the climax of the same film. On the 1st day of shoot, he yanked light meter from me and decided to be gaffer himself, asking me and another assistant Garry (Virendra Singh Grewal) to be on the camera. At 4:00 pm Amitabh Bachchan arrived on the set and Sunil was still lighting background of the set. Shift was about to get over. Amitabh and full star cast that included Jaya Prada, Sunny Deol, Nootan among others, fight and dance masters... all sat on their chairs patiently waiting for lighting to get over. Extremely unusual for an Amitabh Bachchan starrer in those days, guess even today. Sensing trouble the producer summoned brief case full of cash and tapped on Sunil's shoulder. He turned around took three steps back, scanned him toe to head and asked "Aapun kaun...!!" Every one on the set rolled in laughter. Later Sunil narrated the incident to Amitabh how producer behaved with me when I went to collect the payment. Even Amitabh loved his style and asked him to keep it up.

It is important to learn from such incidents in the film and television industry or wherever we work where technicians are not paid and left alone without being respected. I personally think that a true disciple of Late K. K. Mahajan, Sunil Sharma is one among few cinematographers who has played his inning with dignity. ■■■





## Interview with *Trusha Patel* Publicity Designer

**Poster designing for films is not very popular and is a rare priority among the graphic designers. So, how did u land into this profession?**

Actually, I got into graphic design by chance. I really didn't know much about films. Just like every other kid, I wanted to be a doctor but plans changed after I got in junior collage. I had problem dissecting a frog even. So I completed my graduation in B.Sc. Botany. After that the plan was to pursue M.Sc. in Landscape Architect. But because of personal circumstances could not make it further. One day I found a little advertisement in the newspaper by "EDIT INSTITUTE" which said if you want to learn designing on computers, come and join us. I had interest in drawing and sketching so I went for it. It was their first batch and probably first few in India to learn graphic design. After that life wasn't the same. As course was very new in the market, it kick started my career. I got a job in fashion export house called NRK (Father of Aditya Roy Kapoor), they had very high-end computers and tailor made softwares for garment, fabric, textile design. I was head hunted by my next boss in JASRA GRAPHICS who ran the best process house and from there Mr. Himanshu Nanda found me. Himanshu and Rahul Nanda were the first one to start designing the bollywood posters digitally. I was assigned to work with them for a month but then the relationship grew stronger and we worked together for 13- 14 years. Ever since then, I've worked from Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge, (which was the the first movie account for them as well as for me) to Guru. In 2007 I started

working on my own. Apart from designing Hindi films I have also designed for Punjabi, Marathi and Hollywood films as well.

**Working with Mr. Nanda, was it a collective effort or just you by yourself?**

It was a team work. In the beginning it just three of us, one brother would visualize and other was good at technical stuff. I assisted both brothers. One in creative department and other in production. we started recruiting other associate designers and I was the senior most in the team for as long as I worked.

**Coming to you working individually, how do you decide the content and style of the poster? And what is the brief you get from the director for the poster?**

Brief, generally, comes from one who is handling the creative aspects, be it producer or the director. Earlier, they would just call us to get the work done. But, now

since, there is competition, they call for the pitch. It's like they will call for two or three agencies and ask them for the creative pitch. They would just give us basic storyline of the film and details like genre etc. Then we present them with strategics design campaign. The content and styling, everything has to come from us.

Sometimes, the maker is very specific about something. For instance, we did one film in which the director said that the name of film started with "R" but he didn't want the English alphabet for logo. He wanted the Hindi alphabet just like the Rupee symbol. Rest is all up to us. The creative strategy, look and feel, tagline, copy, the teaser treatment, , captions etc. Also, sometimes we have to give the marketing strategy we have in our mind.

**How difficult is to choose the master image that would depict the entire film? How do you go for it after watching the film?**





This used to be the earlier scenario, that we would watch the film and then decide the master image. These days, posters are designed even before they start the film shoot. We need to understand the brief and then think and create the posters in our head. Create designs from there and the director or producer will choose one or two from our concepts as the master images.

Choosing Image from the film works only when the director like Sanjay Leela Bhansali are making films. Every frame of his film is like poster. For eg. Devdas and Black, every frame is larger than life portrait. He is the one I see has that kind of eye to give the master image for the poster.

**Genre of any film is very important. Do you also work on the relevance of the film genre to the poster? Say, If it is comedy film, do you work up on the comic element? Or, you just work on the storyline only?**

When we are working on the concept, we do shoot the conceptual image. If it is a comedy film, we would shoot a comic image (which is approved by the producers) for instance, somebody is breaking egg on head, somebody with weird face or clothes. These are the styling elements for the poster. Then we play with the typography. The fonts too should have a comic feel, the color, the styling etc. We work on them as well to make it look and feel like a comedy. We will add other comic elements too like background, props, cartoons etc. All these things are added to achieve a comic poster. Same works for other genres as well. Nowadays, colour tone of the poster is as important as concept. Today, poster designing has become very complex and it goes much beyond the logo, pose and background.

**How do you balance the canvas in terms of image size of the bigger star cast in the film? If there are 3-4 big stars, how do you go about it?**

Generally, when they are all big stars, they have to have the same image size. You cannot have small and big. It is on how we are able to present. If there is something conceptual, out of the world, then we might get an approval. Nowadays, it is not much of an issue with the film actors. But as designers we have to take care as to how big and small they should be there in the poster.

**Coming back to the conceptual posters from which some concept could be abstracted mostly found in European films, why that symbolism has never been used in Indian poster designing?**

Indian cinema is mostly entertainment driven and, Indian audience is not so much aware about creativity. So if we put anything conceptual to abstract, the people here could not make out anything with that. The black & white theme does not work in the theatres. Forget the audience the theatre guys will call and ask the producers. "Documentary banai hai kya?" We have studied in all these years that audiences do not take that as a commercial film. And above all the producers and the directors put lot of money on the project and they obviously do not want to risk it.

**Are the reference of images are shot for all the posters or is extracted from the raw footage or production stills?**

I have worked for over 300-500 films design work in past but except for one or two instances there was no case like that. Mostly we go for the shot for image reference in the poster design.

**Do you use photo shop or any other such type of software or combination of all?**

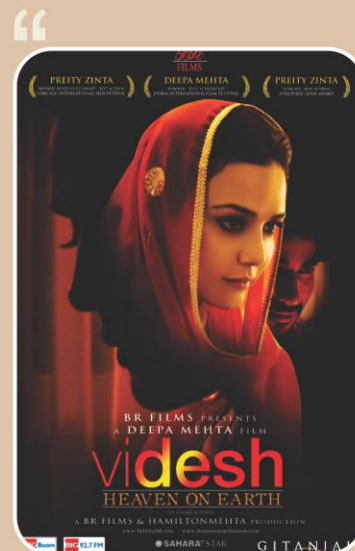
When we are working on the posters then we are talking largely on the image part. As far as image editing is concerned, we mostly use photoshop and many other filters in the photoshop to add the effects and toning. The photoshop is also used to edit master Images for eg. Change in garment colours to match with the tone, clean the faces, do body restructure etc. We use illustrator for making logos. But now a days, even logos are very complex and created in 3D MAX and other 3D software. So depending on the requirement we use the software. Earlier there were only printed posters but now we create animated posters so it is again one step forward. Animated posters are one referred as motion posters too.

**So, where all these posters are used?**

Yes, it is actually launched on "youtube" or "facebook" or any other social website for engaging young audience. It is just one step forward. Mostly it is all created and then animated. Nowadays there are special softwares to make that too.

**Which of your 4-5 posters which you actually adored and could say best work of yours?**

There are some posters which I like just for the feel for eg. poster of movie "Awaara" with actors holding umbrella in rain. The posters with feeling. Just one pose that stays for ever in our heart. Then there was that "Deewar" poster. It was much before my time in the industry.



We need to know computers to design. But those days one needed to be a real artist to draw it and paint it himself. So I call them better designers than us. They were real artists. We are more of technical people. In Hollywood posters I like "Godzilla", "lord of the rings" which must have taken hell lot of time and effort in production. My personal taste is either very classy or very modern.

## KRUTI DESIGN STUDIO

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## Interview with Rajiv Puri

**Rajiv ,give us insight about the unique features of DMNG models which your company AVTECH DIGITAL is distributing in india ?**

There are two model most popular product is call DMNG pro 180 and another one is DMNG 110 The AVIWEST DMNG PRO series is the world's most advanced pocket sized 3G/4G-LTE video uplink system product line designed for news gathering professionals. DMNG PRO systems are deployed worldwide and used by number of international, national and local TV channels and news agencies on a daily basis.

DMNG PRO110 Has up to 10 cellular connections (10 USB ports into which 10 x 3G, 4G-LTE or Wifi USB modems can be plugged) and integrating the best-in-class H.264 video encoder, the unit is able to stream a high definition live video down to the receiver with a delay that's short enough to allow seamless interviews.

Weighing about 1Kg with its long life internal battery, the portable DMNG PRO110 can be easily connected to any professional camera (SD/HD SDI, analog (BNC) and HDMI in) and mounted on with

its V-Mount, Gold Mount or PAG lock plates. Designed for video professionals, the unit is automatically set-up according to the real time networks capabilities.

The friendly and intuitive touch screen interface allows any media professionals on the move to easily configure and operate the system using the Live and the Store & Forward functions, talk to its studio with the IFB return channel. The units can also be controlled by the receiver (DMNG Studio) or any device connected to the unit though the network.

DMNG PRO180 has up to 10 cellular connections (8 x 3G and/or 4G internal modems with high efficiency custom antenna array and 2 USB interfaces for additional USB modems) plus a Wifi connection (built-in Wifi modem) and integrating the best-in-class H.264 video encoder, the unit is able to stream a high definition live video down to the receiver with a delay that's short enough to allow seamless interviews.

Weighing about 1Kg, the portable DMNG PRO180 can be easily connected to any professional camera (SD/HD SDI, analog



(BNC) and HDMI in) and mounted on with its V-Mount, Gold Mount or PAG lok plates.

Designed for video professionals, the unit is automatically set-up according to the real time networks capabilities. The friendly and intuitive touch screen interface allows any media professionals on the move to easily configure and operate the system using the Live and the Store & Forward functions, talk to its studio with the IFB return channel. The units can also be controlled by the receiver (DMNG Studio) or any device connected to the unit though the network.

**Avtech Digital Equipments Pvt. Ltd.**  
**RAJIV PURI**

(Managing Director)

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Tel: 40813333/ 4374 3333

e-mail: rajiv.puri@playbox.tv



## Interview with Will Thomson On Samurai Blade Field Recorder

**Kindly tell us why Samurai Blade Portable Recorder is popular while there are many other field recorders in the market.**

The Atomos Samurai Blade is the world's most advanced smart production recorder, monitor and playback deck. Every part of its physical and operational design has been carefully crafted to deliver the ultimate in simple operation, mission critical reliability and the converging of separate devices – Monitors, Capture Cards, Playback decks and cut edit suites – these are all in one and are affordable to boot! It's lightweight, tough and robust for in the field operation. We record direct to edit codecs Apple ProRes and Avid DNxHD for free onto commodity 2.5" hard discs at the camera, saving you media cost, time for capturing and of course giving higher quality from any MPEG based camera.

At 325 dpi and 1 million pixels (1280x720) this 5" SuperAtom IPS Panel delivers amazing resolution, super accurate colours and super deep blacks, with an image representation that oozes atmosphere. When you see this screen you will not believe your eyes. OLED seems lifeless and dull by comparison at normal brightness levels - In-Plane Switching technology really brings your images to life! The capacitive touch panel gives lightning-quick response times and gesture capability.

Controlling AtomOS 5.0 on Samurai Blade is silky smooth. Fully adjustable gamma, brightness, contrast and a built in waveform monitor make this the must have video tool for professionals.

We don't believe in jigsaw-puzzling a best of breed product, we have designed every circuit, coded every function and invested thousands of hours in testing, quality control, design and manufacturing. We do not buy standard IP cores like CODEC's, we do not lease HDMI/SDI interfaces – we write everything from scratch to deliver you a finely tuned thoroughbred video machine! The 2.5" hard disks are the most affordable digital storage on the planet.

They outperform SSDs, SD card, SxS and P2 cards in cost and reliability for video use. In normal video shooting environments the 2.5" HDD is your new tape. Extremely low running costs, long record times (up to 30 hours) and endless supply. For those vibration sensitive shoots, around the race track or in the helicopter, we of course support modern SSDs. Bang for buck you can't beat hard disk for 90% of video shooting. Also Triggering record and capturing timecode in sync with your camera is essential to smooth production with external devices.

We have teamed up with all the great camera manufacturers you love, Canon, Sony, Panasonic, Nikon, JVC, RED and Arri to give you frame accurate timecode and start stop triggers over both SDI and HDMI from almost all cameras. We also added a tally lights so everyone knows when its show time. We even include Lanc and rolling time code trigger for those older cameras that don't have start stop flag protocols on board – we watch the time code and trigger record when the camera starts rolling! Why record 10bit from the sensor of a camera? Even if its 8 bit.

If you want to edit, use CG or 3D effects, green screen or add titles and transitions, these will all be 12 bit or more. If you record 8 bit like most cameras, when the 12 bit or higher graphic is inserted on the time line, the colours are "CRUSHED" down to 8-bit, making the result extremely poor quality! Not very Professional at all. We bypass the 8 bit and record 10 bit colour registries to ensure your video plays nicely with all computer effects.

Authorized Distributor in India.



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Anna Salai , Chennai- 600002  
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## PANASONIC Varicam - 4K Camera

Panasonic has announced its new Varicam 35 is a 4K camera/recorder that incorporates a newly-developed super 35mm MOS image sensor and Panasonic's popular AVC-ULTRA family of video codecs. The camera's superb image handling in multiple formats including 4K, UHD, 2K and HD make it an unparalleled tool for high-end filmmaking, and commercials and episodic production as well as live 4K events.

With its innovative design, the 4K camera module unit (AU-V35C1) is separate but dockable to the recording module unit (AU-VREC1), which is also interchangeable with Panasonic's new 2/3" camera module unit (AU-V23HS1). This system flexibility can be expanded with an umbilical cable between the S35mm 4K camera and the AVC-ULTRA recorder, providing "box" camera functionality for jibs, cranes and other remote camera needs. This common recorder module is also interchangeable with Panasonic's new 2/3" 1080p camera, enabling professionals to switch between s35mm and 2/3" camera heads to best suit their creative needs.

The Varicam 35 utilizes a new Panasonic super 35mm MOS sensor for 4096 x 2160 (17:9) 4K image capture; this imager when combined with the AVC-ULTRA codecs for 4K enables very manageable and practical 4K production file sizes. The new imager boasts an impressive

14+ stops of latitude, and faithfully captures high-contrast, wide dynamic range imagery without compromise. Powerful color management capabilities provide a much extended color gamut for impeccable image fidelity, and permit support for an Academy Color Encoding System (ACES) workflow for full fidelity mastering of original source material.

Among the camera/recorder's top-level production features are real-time, high frame rate, variable speed 4K recording up to 120fps, proving the capability for master level 2K/FHD recording; and advanced workflows with parallel simultaneous 4K/UHD, reference 2K/HD and proxy recordings for in-camera on-set color grading and monitoring / editing ease. The camera also features a newly-developed OLED electronic viewfinder (EVF) with optical zoom functionality. Lastly, 24-bit LPCM audio is added for in-camera audio master recording.

The Varicam 35 will deliver an unprecedented breadth of recording formats, including 4K and UHD in AVC-ULTRA 4K, and 2K and FHD in AVC-Intra 100/200 (AVC-Intra200 is available only for FHD recording). Addressing the need for high-speed file exchange, the camera encodes high-resolution proxy files in parallel with 4K and 2K production formats, enabling fast, efficient offline editing, at bit rates from 6 Mbps down to 1.5Mbps.

Wireless workflows for proxy streaming and metadata management will also be available.

The Varicam 35 will use Panasonic's new expressP2 card for high frame rate and 4K recording. The camera is equipped with a total of four memory card slots, two for ExpressP2 cards and two for MicroP2 cards. The new ExpressP2 card can record up to 130 minutes of 4K/24p content. The MicroP2 card is designed for recording HD or 2K at more typical production frame rates.

Professional interfaces include: 3G-HD-SDI x4 for 4K QUAD output; 3G-HD-SDI x2 for RAW output; an HD-SDI out for monitoring (down-converting from 4K); and two XLR inputs to record four channels of 24-bit, 48KHz audio. A multi-connector facilitates docking the camera head to the recording module. In another striking design innovation, the Varicam 35 boasts a removable control panel to facilitate real-time control and easy access when the camera is in a fixed position. The Varicam 35 features a standard 35mm PL mount.

### PANASONIC CAMERAS ARE AVAILABLE WITH:

**VTIPL (Visual Technologies India Pvt. Ltd.)**

D-35, Sector-63, Noida-201307

Ph.: +91-120-2471 000, [www.vtipl.com](http://www.vtipl.com)

Mob.: 97112 10852 / 97112 00581 /

99992 76777





# CION - 4K CAMERA

CION is the new lightweight and ergonomic 4K/UHD and 2K/HD production camera from AJA. CION captures vivid detail and vibrant color at any resolution. Creative choices abound with easy to implement in-camera color settings. The image recorded by CION can be defined as cinematic; technically modern but classic in look. On camera control is intuitive and fast and LAN remote control functionality brings every feature as well as live video feedback to any web browser. CION is the union of great design and functionality, an engineered aesthetic that we are proud to describe as the Science of the Beautiful.

CION was designed to be comfortable, convenient and totally flexible for any shooting environment. A contoured shoulder pad fits comfortably to your shoulder for hand held use. An included top handle made of high grade aluminum and wood features an integrated LANC start/stop button. The handle base itself uses a standard 15mm rod and through hole to allow the additional mounting of third party accessories.

Optical Low Pass Filter and IR Cut Filter An integrated OLPF (Optical Low-Pass Filter) reduces unwanted moiré effects while still retaining vital image detail. The Infra-red cut filter produces high quality colors within the image by blocking unwanted light wavelengths.

PL Lens Mount PL mount lenses are the industry standard for cinema and professional production cameras, and are widely available the world-over. In addition, CION's lens mount has been designed to be removable so third parties may develop mounts for other lens types.

Sensor CION features a 4K APS-C sized CMOS sensor with an electronic global shutter and 12 stops of dynamic range. Lenses designed for Super 35mm cover the sensor imaging area and the global shutter eliminates the undesirable qualities associated with rolling shutter-based sensors.

Recording formats CION can record at 4K (4096x2160), UltraHD (3840x2160), 2K (2048x1080) and HD (1920x1080). 2K and HD are hardware scaled from the full 4K sensor, resulting in beautiful over-sampled images, which also retain your lens' focal length at any desired resolution. Frame rates up to 50 and 60p are supported - even at full 4K resolution. AJA Pak Media

CION uses AJA's proven SSD-based Pak storage. The robust high speed compact storage mounts directly in-camera and allows recording of 4K/UHD and 2K/HD as ProRes 4444, ProRes 422 (HQ), ProRes 422, ProRes 422 (LT) and ProRes (Proxy). Choose from generous 256GB or 512GB capacities and by utilizing the AJA Pak Dock (sold

separately) you can transfer your footage over high-speed Thunderbolt™ or USB3.

Mounting Aluminum cheese plates are fitted to both the top and the bottom of the chassis to provide easy mounting of accessories from both AJA and third parties, with standard thread sizes to offer the widest range of compatibility.

Conveniently Connected CION's considered design brings ease of operation to both field and studio based productions. For single users, set up and operation is intuitive and straightforward. For more complex productions camera operators, camera assistants and digital imaging technicians may all interact with CION without conflict. In such a scenario, the camera operator can use one monitor output for framing, the camera assistant another monitor output for judging focus and the digital imaging technician can use yet another monitor output as well as the web UI to configure the unit.

## Authorised Distributor:

**NEOERIC INFORMATIQUE LTD.**



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**BASKET OF DOLLS**

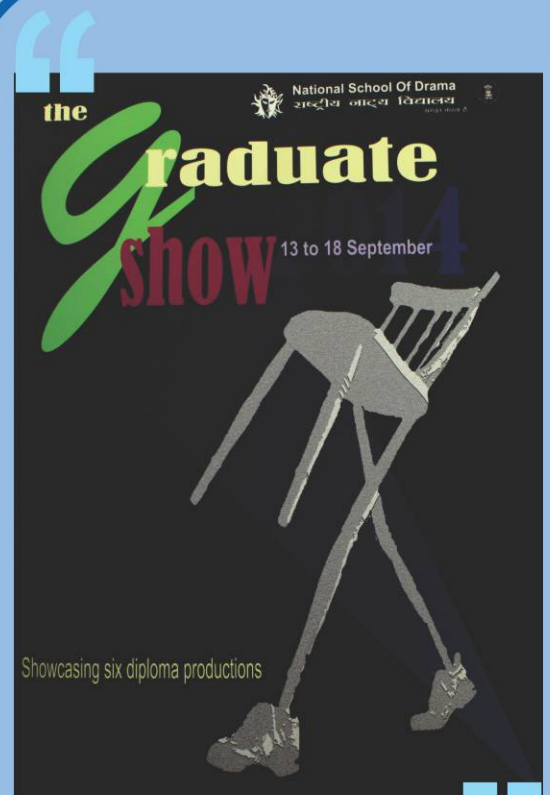
# Googly Masters

It was Akira Kurosawa who said in his "Something like an Autobiography" that cinema is an ensemble of so many arts. If cinema has many literary characteristics, it also has so many theatrical qualities. I would like to extend this statement and say that reverse can also be equally true for theater also has "cinematic qualities". This feeling comes through mind more strongly while watching diploma productions of recently concluded "The Graduate Show" of the NSD 2014 batch. Two most impressive diploma productions were "Basket of Dolls" directed by **Oasis Sougaijam** and "Civilization on Trail" by **Sweetey Ruhel**. Had Rathan Thiyam been watching "Basket Of Dolls", he would have been delighted to see that the tradition of "Visual Theater" which he pioneered in India is being carried forward by the young generation. Here narrative moves forward not due to "The Dialogue" but through a blend of appropriate music, choreography and martial arts with "Understandable" symbols, metaphors and connotative imagery. The play is deeply rooted in the "Manipuri Culture" but at the same time it has a universal appeal which is uncommon in Indian theater.

Equally mesmerizing was the play "Civilization on Trial" directed by talented Sweetey Ruhel. It was constructed in a unique way with its basis on contemporary issues related to economy and corporate culture and its impact on masses. The director integrates the medium of cartoon and caricature by stylizing various objects, and is able to create powerful images through versatile actors like **Chirag Garg**.

Other productions like "Dot Dash Dream Delusion" directed by Vishala Ramchandra Mahale, "Kuch To Karo Yaron" directed by Amanpreet Kaur, "Inna ki Aawaz" directed by Shyam Kumar Sahani and "Gam Sereng" directed by Sourav Poddar were equally appealing.

**Naresh Sharma** explores the process of making these enthralling plays through directors and actors - Oasis, Sweetey, Sonali & Ravinder.





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#### Interview with Director Oasis Sougaijam

**When one reads the synopsis of the play "Basket of Dolls", one doesn't get the impression of grandeur of images one gets to see in your production. What was your process of evolving the visual for various sequences in "Basket of Dolls"?**

I took a simple script and I thought I will do my production without any dialogues. It will be narrated through live paintings, images and visuals only. Due to some process needed, I had to add some facts as dialogue, which acted as spine. I feel overall production belongs to every actor and musician. They contributed lot of things in visualization. They improvised many things and then we edited it and placed it in context. Some visuals came from actors. We discussed whether we should make the scene first or compose the music first. So in some scenes we composed music first and then developed the scene. Like boat coming scene, we thought that we should create the music first and then what the music is saying, from that we created visuals. Our musicians have a very strong sense of theatre. They contributed a lot in making of this play. They used to play some music and everybody listened to that and the images that were coming through the music, we discussed it with actors. For example my batch mate Ravendra Kushwaha, an actor has background of Chhau Dance and Kalari and I have learned Manipuri Martial Arts, folk dance and all learned some folk music. So we all collaborated and decided to narrate the story through physical and musical elements. Music was the spine of my production.

**One of the remarkable things in your production was that it was not depending upon the set design. What were the reasons for not choosing any backdrop?**

We first decided that there will be no set. It's only 24x36 feet area. This empty area is your canvas and you have to paint on this canvas through your body's action and acting. This is an empty space which can be made in to anything through physical movement, acting with the help of music and creates visuals. So this was challenging. Had we put up a static stage, it would have been monotones because there would be no changes in the visuals and physical movements need space. So we tried to create an atmosphere into this empty space through actors body and props.

**As music was a very important part of your production to enhance the visuals, how did you go about choosing the instruments to play with?**

Percussions, string instruments and wind instruments were the base of the whole play. Drums which has been made from bamboo was used, through violin, folk tune has been played. Some Manipuri folk instruments have been selected mainly and also used different instruments from different states. And we tried to make







fusion music from those instruments. Some instruments were developed from folk instruments e.g. penao. We divided the instruments according to demands of the scenes and harmonized the tune to get the flavor which we like.

**You come from Manipuri Tradition, which has pioneer like Rathan Thiyam. Were you worried that people would say that you are trying to reinterpret most of the elements which Rathan Thiyam uses in his production?**

Ratan Thiyam sir is a world figure in theatre that you are comparing me with but unfortunately I saw only one production of Ratan Thiyam sir called “King of Dark Chamber” during Bharat Rang Mahotsav opening. I have heard a lot about him and I have seen some of his photographs in newspapers. So can't say reinterpreting or inspiring from him. But surely I want to mention one name Ovlyakuli Khodjakuli, who is from Uzbekistan. We did one production called “Persian”. So as director he inspired me a lot. For example the way of putting music, speech and actions harmonically, how to develop visuals in a stylized way, in a bit loud form and how to handle the actors is something I learnt from him. I decided I will do my production in a loud form and have to come out from the proscenium and break the realistic way of approach.

**Talking about handling the actors, when**

**you narrate a character to the actor, he would look at it from his perspective and you have your perspective, so where do you meet in between?**

First day when we read script of “Basket of Dolls”, some of my actors said that there is nothing in the script, it's very simple and folk type story with a historical facts. Some actors felt bored about it! When I saw their faces, I tried to convince them that please don't depend upon the script. I described them we will do visuals and musical things and try to find our own language. I described to them about the designs of the scenes and some visuals, images and actions that this is the way we have to approach. I placed all the main characters into chorus and we choreographed the scenes. So in this performance there are no individual characters, everything remains in chorus. I am very proud that I got an opportunity to work with my batch mates and want to say thanks to my team for their belief and contribution to production.

**Since it was a musical production, how did you manage to give your actors same atmosphere which one gets when you are actually performing because it was live music?**

We got only 20 days for this production. So from the first day musicians were with us. We were together for 20 days. Most of the theatre production introduces

music 5 or 6 days before. Since I was doing a musical play, I needed the music from the beginning. It helped my actors as well as me. I had decided that we have to work with musicians from the beginning so that they can also understand the story and the process and explore with us. We even sometimes changed the music, when it was not working. Finally a concrete structure was evolved.

**Having a “form” in any art is very important part. Do you think that you have evolved a language of your own?**

In this production I was trying to develop my own language. I tried to communicate everything through physical movements and music which is inspired from the ritualistic performances and presented in contemporary manner. And I also tried to collaborate with fine arts and theater. Some scenes tried to convey through images and visuals. In the rape scene, the artists were expressing their feelings of rape through their brush strokes with the colours on the canvas. I tried to place every action into larger than life and loud way. Finding a new language is not an easy task but I tried my best in those given 20 days with my team. Still eager to explore more on this way of expression in my future productions also. Theatre as a collective art we need to work in collaboration with any respective fields. But I really enjoyed doing the play “Basket of Dolls” with my NSD batchmate actors in that short period of time.



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#### Interview with Sonali Bharadwaj

**As you have performed an important Character in “Civilization on trial”, how did you go about preparing your role when the director briefed you about the character ?**

When I was narrated the script, I was confused about my character. The character was defined to me as a 'Corporate Bahu' and at the same time as if you are the company. It is like a very attractive MNC. Hence, you are a character as well as an object at the same time. This term was new for me. She

told me that we were working on cartoon caricatures. The first homework was to create my own caricature. For this purpose, I compared the character of 'Corporate Bahu' to Scissors who is sharp and at the same time sexy like Scissors' two legs. Then, I researched about static as well as on animated cartoons to know how to maintain the body language, the style of walking or even their small movements.

Static cartoons helped us to get an idea of how could we create a scene. Animated cartoons helped to understand the body

language. There is a difference between cartoon and a robot. Robot cannot give you the desired elasticity. As a human body, I was unable to do that. The struggle for me was to figure out how I could manage with my character and at the same time the caricature that I have adopted myself. And it has turned out to be a good journey.

**Once the basic understanding of the character is done, the next step is the rehearsals. What kinds of improvisation were done by you for this play during the rehearsal?**





The first improvisation I did was with my voice. As, I was playing the character of a sexy girl but my voice was made very heavy. This was improvised. We were thinking that if a beautiful girl would speak in a heavy voice, how would the audience react to it? The next improvisation was in the walk. Though it was very clichéd but what new can be done in this? When she is excited, she moves in certain manner. Then, I wear heels to show the pretentiousness and that was intentionally done. It was up to me to decide what kind of heels I want to wear. The whole play was made on improvisation and it was a team work. Since we have limited time to portray on the stage, we want to show everything, the complete journey of the character.

Also “BABA –Kalu Mil Gaya” while Baba is sleeping. I thought that I should not say it in one pitch. Since it was satire and we have learned about timber and voice modulation, I shouted at the same pitch but with the variation in voice. The second thing is that we carry sophistication and attitude when we talk about corporate and it doesn't continue for long if we don't have enough practice. For this reason, voice cracking was also deliberate. I got this idea from the animated cartoon 'Uncle Scrooge' from “Duck Tales” animated series.

**You have played the role of Queen in “Inna Ki Awaz”. Did you feel the absence of royal costumes was any hindrance to your performance?**

Yes. There wasn't much royalty in the costumes. When I first saw my costumes, I was very much depressed as the dancers' costumes were much more glamorous than those which were crafted for me. I didn't take much time to adopt to my costumes because sometimes we change according to the costumes. Though the costumes weren't glamorous, they were subtle and reflected calmness. The character was also not chirpy. The colors of the king's costume were black



in the scene where he is showering his anger on Inna. The colors in my costumes complement with those of king's costume throughout the play. This really helped in playing the character in a subtle way.

**In actual performance on the stage there is music and lights that could give you the high to carry on the character during the rehearsal though that part is missing?**

That is the reason why it is said that the energy levels of the show are completely different when there are light and sound effects. The directors come and surprise us with video, music, sound, props at eleventh hour and expect us to perform up to the mark and not to fumble. Hence, we argue with them on this point. The energy levels are different during rehearsals where there is no actual light and background sound. We feel disturbed when we get them suddenly on actual stage.

Generally we find problems with the sound but not as much as with light because we know about our space. During rehearsals, when we don't have background sound, we practice with a certain pitch level. Suddenly, if we have that background sound during

actual performance we are unable to understand what is going on. It is also due to the presence of the audience and deletion of echo. Finally, we end up with problem of low volume levels during the actual performance. Hence, if possible we request for the sound at earlier stages.

**As an actress, sometime you feel like performing subtle in theater. When you are trying to do that, are you worried that will it reach the audience?**

The subtle you perform the better it feels in front of the camera. But in plays the audiences are at a certain distance from the stage. We need to show the character to the audience in such a way that it should reach them. We should be little loud in front of the audience. Here we face problem on judging our performance levels. This is where the directors would help us.

**As an actor in theater, what are the two characters which you would look forward to perform someday ?**

I would love to perform characters of Nora Helmer, from Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen and Lady Macbeth.







## CIVILISATION ON TRIAL

Interview with Director Sweety Ruhel

**Instead of going with a pre-written script, you decided to evolve the script which was more of episodic nature. Can you talk about process of evolving the script?**

I have been working on political issues. So there was danger of entering into the genre of street play. So, I didn't want to cross that line. When I discussed it with my colleagues, we decided to go beyond the line. I read some books about neo-colonialism which helped my concept a lot. It was quite clear to me that I am going to work on this concept of neo-colonialism. Eventually, the policies which had been made by a superpower only affect the under developing countries like ours. I wanted to connect it to every being of those third world countries. When I was struggling for the medium what should I do, I just entered the genre of cartoons. I watched various cartoons of R.K. Laxman, Kutti, Irfaan, Tanmay etc. Suddenly I realized that this could be the medium. And in cartoons, there is only one frame, and the effectively the metaphor and context lies beyond it, which was the beginning point for me.

**In cartoon we have the static image but here the image is moving. How did you visualize the motion into still image ?**

There is an exercise I was doing with my actors "pre image and post image". There is an image, what will be the pre incident to that image and post incident. When I was working with cartoons, I developed a narrative with the cartoons. I just took some single pictures about the topic - say, if it is about oil, then this is the cartoon. Now what

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will happen after it and what will happen before it? The time you decide pre and post image, in between will follow and there will be a narrative, which is different from animation but very close to the story telling which I did in the form of episodes.

**In static cartoon you don't see the body movement of the character but various characters like "Merica Baba", "Corporate Bahu" were very stylized. How did you evolve their body language?**

Every time I asked the actor who played Merica Baba, to search for different

interpretations of diplomacy of America. I remember very nice cartoon on Obama (which was brought in by the actor itself) in which Obama was portrayed as an anchor, which you fix in front of the boat or ship. The moment you are bringing an anchor to the human body, what will the body become? How will the body react? Merica Baba's character was a long process. Not only Merika Baba's but all the characters were evolved through a long process. The actors kept on looking for the cartoons of different genre, style, caricatures, of different body



languages for ten days. Every day actors showed me 3-4 improvisations. I kept on discussing that this is not working, I don't want this. Because somehow when I was reading about the topic it was quite clear to me what type of characters I wanted.

**It is demoralizing for an actor, when he prepares and comes out with suggestions and you keep rejecting them. So how did you maintain the morale of your actors even when you are rejecting their ideas?**

It is not always rejecting. Sometimes you correct. Most of the cases you don't say it is not working. You say Chirag its working but what I want is this character. You cannot have a lose body, because your character is dominating. You cannot be suppressed or compact. You have to develop a body which has a broad stature with broad gestures, everything broad. Like for Merica's character it was specially said to him that lines have to be very clear. What is your bodyline depicting? Whatever you are doing walking, sitting or moving must be in the cartoon format. The moment you speak, you start working with dialogues and you lose your body. The caricatured movement in the body gets disturbed. I kept on telling him that in that dialogue you were losing your body. You need to bring the line in the dialogue, for this you need to speak like this, speak like that. So apart from the caricatured body, the voice, the dialogues, the spoken language was equally worked on as cartoon.

**What was the reason to choreograph all the actions of Merica Baba around "The Tank"?**

It was a comment on superpowers, how they are misusing their power to control other countries like Iraq. They have been doing it for oil, the whole world knows about

it but nobody is doing anything. That single object placed in the back of the Merica, just says what I wanted to communicate. Dialogues, the gestures might not be necessary. The moment he is blasting out of the tank, actually conveys everything for me. In the very beginning "Teri to jai ho, jai ho, Merica Baba, teri daya se chalta Kallu ki chai ka dhaba" and then he enters from the tank with blast, the tank which was facing a city, a complete civilization. This is the actual situation. Every day, every time, every moment, we all are in a battle ground. A battle ground which is prepared by super power. We are not aware of it or if we are aware, we are just living our own life.

He is seen eating, drinking oil. I think idea was quite clear. To depict a story there should be a surprise element, for a cartoon there should be a bubble, which comes only after the action. The moment he lifts up, you see the petrol or diesel being written below that. It was basically coming from the cartoons, revealing a story in a enthralling manner.

**Also the language occasionally is kind of gibberish. What was the idea behind it rather than having proper dialogue?**

I wanted to do more of the visuals rather than coming and saying "Look, this is the thing". I wanted to place it into people's mind by putting a visual in front of them. The moment you present a frame in front of them, you might not require a dialogue. That was the point where the gibberish is entering. If one action is being repeated twice, thrice, four times, only after a point of time it will make a sense. So that was the idea behind the use of gibberish.

**Talking about repeating things, how did the idea like "more tissues" evolved.**

Through tissue papers I am trying to communicate the authority of superpower which is somehow legal now. We cannot claim our own rights. We are bound in agreements. The power have answers for all our questions, 'answers' which can never result into a being good. We are fully in debt or we are sold completely so we can understand how our questions, our lives are actually important for them.

**Do you think that actor becomes secondary when the property becomes so dominant, like in case of tissue paper scene?**

No. I don't think so. The action of making a property more visible than actors is only possible with actors. Actors use property and property is being used by the actor. In the beginning, Tissue paper does not dominate. When actors start bringing it in lots of quantity, they became noticeable. Similarly it happen with the bombs, it ought to be of big size. So when people are playing with those



bombs, that also have its own significance. In the play "Civilization on Trial" actors play with many properties, that property got more value and became significant.

**Do you remember anything else in your production that you underlined which otherwise would not have been noticed?**

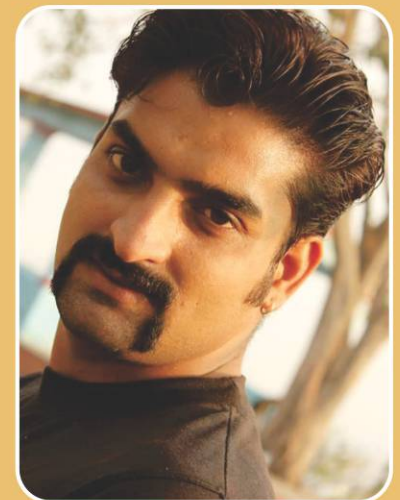
It is a recording by "Daadi". That was also something used like that. In the very beginning, in the exam show, I used it only once. Then I thought that it is not being underlined. So to underline it, I used it thrice. Here "Daadi" represents the Indian politics which can be heard but is never there. With the help of playback voice which is being played thrice. People were laughing at it. As they do not understand the context but they were enjoying it. In the end when it comes again then the audience get it and my purpose got served.

“



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**You have acted as a lead in two productions of a recently concluded graduate-show. How did you prepare yourself for your roles?**

The director has been working on the script for a long time but for an actor there is comparatively very less time between his plays. During this gap an actor keeps on collecting gestures, body language, actions of various people around him, and keeps thinking about various characters in his imaginary world.

But the moment an actor gets a director's script he starts comparing the character of the director's script with the characters he has in his memory. That's what happens with me and then slowly I start matching the mannerism of the character with what the director is looking for. I look for the characteristics described to me by the director whether they are physical or psychophysical. That's how the actor chooses his characteristics.

During the lighting scene work in school, whenever light is switched on, we say light has spread. Similarly when an actor cannot control his performance, we also say in the same way for him. So an actor should be like an intelligent light. Actor is a link between the audience and the director. Through the actor a director conveys his thought to the audience. To convey that message an actor must be intelligent and physically equipped so that he can deliver whatever he is asked to. How to feel the character or be the part of that which is being described by the director depends on how much connectivity exists between an actor and the director. I got this insight during our training with mime artist Moin ul Haq sir in SNA workshop that to understand the walking style of anyone one has to know how the various points in body, so that can we can change our walk.

I remember watching an interview of Kamal Hassan on you-tube. He says that he has many kinds of laughter and many kinds of walk. That is what I am always saving and from that I keep taking out one by one and keep adding to my characters.

As Adil Hussain sir also said that if you know the count of your breathing-in and breathing-out, and if you can break it, you can change your voice and pattern of your dialogue. Harish Khanna sir told us that in our body we have three major parts and then sub parts and if one can break them, one can imagine and play as many characters as one wants.

I had a big Influence of Deeapk Tiwari, from Habib Tanvir's group. During a theater festival, he played the lead in seven plays of Habib Tanvir and in each play, he was different. He was an epitome of acting for me. Hence I always try to be different in each role while satisfying the director as well myself as an actor.

**How did you improvise as an actor in 'Kuchh to karo yaro' and 'Inna Ki Awaaz'?**

In 'Inna ki Awaaz' it was difficult to understand and create the character. So the director told me to do that my own way. First thing I worked upon was a look which every actor has - an animal inside him. So for this aspect, I found it to be a snake. My first idea was to go with the drawing of snake from half of my head to my hand but later on I thought it might be just overdoing and won't even be visible to the audience as it was a stage play. Later I added element like sudden jerk of snake in my character.

Also if you remember the lines "ba adab, ba mulahiza, hoshiyaar..." and particularly in this dialogue, I thought that no king would speak something like this to himself. Somehow I thought that this thing could add some kind of psychic part to the character. Only through this dialogue which was not there exactly in the script, I added psycho element to the character.

**In "Inna ki Awaaz" there is a particular scene enacted beautifully without dialogue through visual and symbols with dramatic light and music. The scene is regarding the conflict within Inna himself. How did you evolve that scene?**

The actual idea was to put three Innas in that scene and all three Inna's are different from one another. There is one who is good, a pure soul and adorable singer of the masses. The other one is confused inside about what to do- whether to accept the royal post or not. The third one was the changed Inna and somehow similar to the king.

So the soft one and confused Inna are being trapped by the king in his game.

The idea of 'Mask' came from Shyam, the director of the play which was choreographed by me. It was easy for me to choreograph as I was also playing the king in the play. Now it was up to me how I would play with two masks- whether I would rotate them keeping one face behind the other or would merge them into one. When they are turning, they are alike and when they separate, you see the king, which was me. So you see two Innas merging into one another and the third Inna is coming out of

them but not having the qualities of these two Innas. Third Inna is corrupted due to poison of power added by the King.

Long back I enacted in a ballet-directed by Prabhat Da- called 'Abhimanyu'. There in the end of the war, three eagles come and do their movement and sit down and eat the flesh. Since I had the eagle quality and was depicting the image of an eagle in the character I was playing, I embraced all the 3 different Innas within my wings and they all are trying to come out of me and I am conducting the third Inna who is my "Pawn" and was poisoned with my thoughts. So the master image of an eagle remained in my memory from that ballet and I integrated that into this production.

**The character you played in "Kuchh To Karo Yaaro" was totally different from what you played in "Inna Ki Awaaz". How did you explore its dimensions?**

The director of the play, Amanpreet, took it as a challenge and went for opposite casting as she thought that though I looked elder than both the brothers, still I would get the character of younger one! It was a kind of challenge for me as an actor to look younger than both of them.

I had never played the type of character which I had to portray in this play, but I knew by reading various artists, books and interviews and from theater practice how to put that character in you. I picked up certain mannerism from Rajan, our hip hop teacher, like the cap, the headphone, and his way of walking in swing.

So there was brief that this character is a kind of youngster, fan follower of pop singer, and also is a bit undecided as he never sticks to one side, etc. So there was an image about my character and later on I kept adding small things.

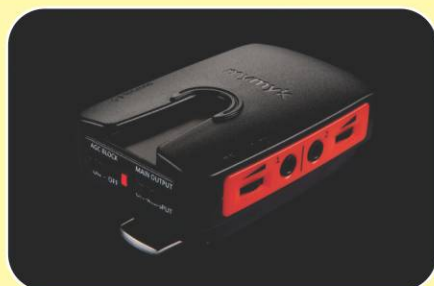
**As an actor what was your contribution in "Basket Of Dolls" which was more of a group production rather than an individual actor oriented production?**

I had two responsibilities in this Oasis's production, one as an actor and the other as a choreographer. Since I have a basic training in Chhau and Kalari, and had been working in a group in various dance dramas for the past 10 years, for me there was no problem regarding working in sync or bringing other co-actors in sync with me. I always remembered the mantra of Alok Chatterjee that you should make yourself such a strong actor that other co-actors may take your support to deliver their performance. □□□





## Interview with David Green, CEO My myK



**David, tell us about your company and Smart Myk and other Accessories you are marketing in India.**

MyMyk is an Australian company dedicated to the design and manufacture of high-quality audio systems for DSLR cameras, which have become the choice of filmmakers, photographers and journalists the world around. Our All electronics are manufactured in Australia using the finest components sourced from premium manufacturers worldwide. The finest input and output sockets manufactured in Germany ensure optimal connection at all times. High quality audio industry standard switches allow many years of trouble free operational use. MyMyk is run by a consortium of industry professionals from the sound, film and broadcast industries. A team of highly skilled industrial and electronic designers have contributed their expertise, as have many of Australia's leading location sound recordists and cameramen. MyMyk products are designed to be lightweight and complement the ergonomics of DSLR cameras. The products feature the highest quality robust casings built from polycarbon ABS moldings for extra rigidity and the ability to withstand extreme temperatures. After all, HD movie deserves HD audio.

### ABOUT SMARTMYK

SmartMyk is a directional microphone which works by localising the sound to the image, rejecting background noise to concentrate on the sound from the subject of the camera's focus. It easily attaches to any DSLR or video camera, making it perfect for professional recording, home videos, internet broadcasting, journalism, sporting events and much more.

### ABOUT SMARTLYNK

SmartLink is a compact, portable/on-camera, two-channel mixer and monitoring device, giving you the results of a professional audio production rig at a fraction of the price. The perfect companion to the SmartMyk microphone and the MyMyk Camera Audio iPhone app, SmartLink allows you to monitor your sound input prior to and during recording; block unwanted AGC noise from the camera by overriding the camera's built-in Automatic Gain Control (AGC); or record external audio without needing to be attached to your DSLR or video camera. What's more, it has two microphone inputs so you can capture multiple audio channels at once.

### MyMyk Camera Audio Master your audio

MyMyk Camera Audio Station is a standalone audio recorder and file organisation system which allows you to record audio projects using SmartLink or an external microphone when used with a MyMyk Connector Cable. Monitor your levels as you record, listen back to the results immediately, geotag your recordings, assign recording notes, then at the touch of a button export the files to your edit suite or another



application for sound processing, editing or archiving.

### MyMyk Audio Reporter Designed for journalists

MyMyk Audio Reporter is a standalone audio recorder and file organisation system, designed especially for reporters and journalists. Promote your organisation by uploading your station logo which shows up on your iOS device when it is in record mode. Record reports and interviews straight to your device for future editing. Monitor your levels as you record, listen back to the results immediately, geotag your recordings, assign recording notes, then at the touch of a button export the files to your news desk or master control for sound processing, editing or archiving.

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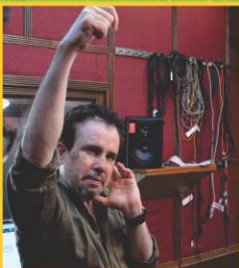
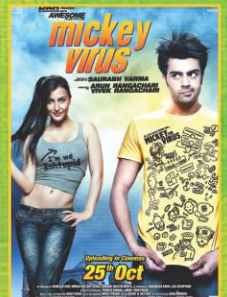
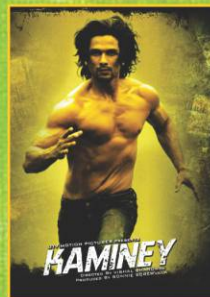
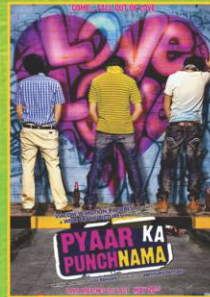
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National Award+ Filmfare Awardee Sound Recordist, Subash Sahoo visited CRAFT as a Guest Faculty for Conducting 2-days workshop.



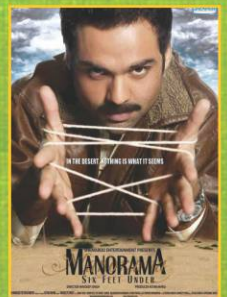
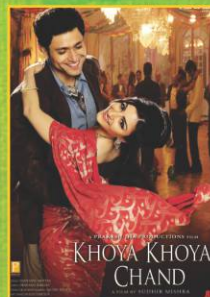
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Important Films of Subash Sahoo as Sound Recordist



# SUBODH PODDAR

Recollects Five Commercials From  
Cinematography Point of View.



Mug Designed By  
Subodh Poddar



I am from art background and have done my graduation from J.J.School of Arts. I know how to use art to communicate but was amazed through my journey that how cinematographer adds value to communication and they just go unnoticed. The way they put so much effort to make the Advertisement look beautiful and natural .

### **"GODREJ STOREWELL "**

There was a commercial I did of "Godrej Storewell" which are actually steel cupboards shot by Ajit Bhatt. The story was about a boy and a girl to be married and the boy had booked a flat and took the girl to show the flat. The flat was under construction where only the walls and the pillars could be seen and cement all over the place and the guy telling the girl about the bedroom, hall, kitchen and where to put the paintings and interiors where he tells the girl regarding cupboard position that "here will be the cupboard" and inside the cupboard he kept something very carefully.

So this was the theme and we actually found an unfinished building in Lohkhandwala. So few of the shots were taken there. The idea was to show the building in a beautiful location but we could not get that and usually unfinished building have a very unpleasant sight of exteriors when seen from inside of the building. So we had to shoot the inside of the building somewhere and the outside view from inside was done somewhere else.

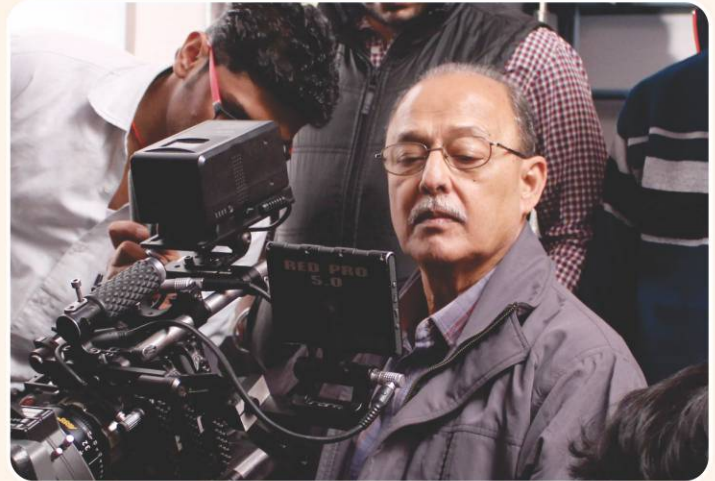
Lohkhandwala was one location and another at film city where we used the lake and forest as the background and constructed little bit of the condition which was closer and was like the unfinished building of Lohkhandwala. The way the

lighting, camera work, lens adjustments were matched so beautifully .

The planning was great and the time when cinematographer took the shot, there was no light and he used the daylight and the same at film city building also, there was only little settings done over there like texture of the walls etc. I feel that it was one of the most beautiful add I have done as it is memorable in terms of overall communication but in terms of filming it was feeling like a hot knife through butter, as you couldn't point out any flaws.

### **AMUL INDIA**

And there was a ad of Amul taste of India, if u remember that "Jaraa Si Hansi, Dulaar Jaraa si" Amul the taste of India shot by "Barun Mukherjee". The challenge for me was to make the film look like real life in spite of using light, camera and colors. The images had to come out candid because as per the client's brief the Amul will be facing a lot of competition in the future in the international market. Amul in terms of taste may not compete with them but in terms of feeling we had to show that Amul is ours, Amul is Indian and that feel had to be there so that no other foreign company could wipe out Amul. That's why it should put impact of "it's my Amul". So everybody there had to look like my neighbors, my nephew, my sister, my childhood so nothing



was supposed to look foreign or kind of outsider or borrowed from other company or country.

So we took models who were not experienced and that was a problem for Barun da as he was very particular about lighting faces even if they were non performers. But still the way he handled the lighting for the outdoor and indoor was just the same. It was amazing technique of using soft light in spite of using hard sun light kind of feel. His contribution was great.

There is a colony in Bombay where Nepali people stay like watchmen and all, so they were taken along with their wives and children because they had a look of north east Indian residents and we had to take a shot of those people and it was shot in Maharashtra somewhere close to Bombay.

I remember it was supposed to be a road side shot where vehicles are passing by which were Amul delivery van and the Nepali children who were on the side of the road they had to run behind the vehicle. This was the shot and the place was supposed to depict north east view and we had time to spare so we thought of two things that either we kill the time somehow or make the available location look like north east part of India because where only hills and cloudy weather around.

Barun da came up with the idea of flag so we started tearing "malmal" in to shreds of type which find as a pray flag in temples or Buddhist temple and everyone in the unit was tearing the cloth pieces. Then we stitched those pieces in the form of flags and as we were on the top of mountain where there was slope so we fixed a pole and attached those prayer flags to the pole. So from faraway place it was looking like a Buddhist temple in the background as in the foreground there were children dancing and





jumping when the van passes by and the children had to follow the van and it turned out so much beautiful scene

But eventually the film looked so natural and real that anyone could make out that the film was not shot all over India. The things we used like elephants from Kerala, children sitting on the elephant and Assam and Meghalaya and everything was so natural in the film that I have to give complete credit to Barun Mukherjee for making the film look so real and natural.

#### NEROLAC PAINTS

We were doing Nerolac paints and we had to show luxurious living, beautiful homes and it was about 4 or 5 different women who lived in those beautiful huge houses. Ashok Mehta was supposed to do the lighting for that and he did it in way that each one of those houses were enlightened which looked one better than the other.

One house was supposed to be more bigger house where the staircase was at end of it and the camera had to pass through the window and set was about 40x30 which was a small set but he had a great idea of using sunbeams which would give the set a feel of huge house. The lights coming from behind the camera in to the window and then on to the floor and then onto the wall opposite where there was the staircase from which a woman was coming down.

She had to look very fashionable, beautiful and there was no furniture in the house, only huge walls and lovely floor and the tree. The way "Ashok Mehta" created the space as he used lights with mirror opposite and there was another mirror opposite to the first mirror which made the light beam enlarged by three times. By the time light came on the floor it had traveled three times its distance and the light beams almost became parallel beams, they were not divergent light beams.

In that small space you could get the



feel of parallel sun lights that's why he took almost 8 hours to light up the whole place and only half an hour to shoot!!

There was one shot where the windows were opening and the trees outside were to be reflected on the window glass and all this had to happen on 40x30 feet set. He did put some trees on Skimmer on a tracing paper which was reflecting on the window glass and look as if there were trees outside the window and the window was opening with the camera going in to the house without stop and the woman was walking towards us.

In the similar film there was a time when camera was travelling from inside towards the window and then outside the house where there were lots of palm trees and it was raining, but the way palm trees were arranged and the rain drops falling over them was all amazing, it's just that I can't forget the film.

#### SANTOOR SOAP.

There was another commercial which was "Santoor Soap" where there was Priya Kakkar walking in to a music shop. The DOP was again Ashok Mehta lighting of that music room was very artistic adding value to the music instruments.

#### NEROLAC:

Another commercial which I still remember is "Nerolac" shot by Rajiv Jain. Though the set director and designers created the set very well

but in my experience there are some cinematographers who really use the shadows to cover-up the flaws because the set is not real and we have to make it looks real. If you light up the whole place then you light up the flaws also, and then you have to hide the flaws using shadows smartly, so that you could make the set look real.

It was "jab ghar ki raunak badhaani ho, deewaron ko jab sajaana ho, nerolac". The set was made in the small studio of film city and there was a group of boys who were supposed to be painters who came to paint the house and that day was the finishing touch to house. Just after finishing the painting work they are taking off their empty cans, dirty rags and uncovering the covered furniture and living the house.

It was a simple thing to show but the way he moved his camera from room to room along with those dancing choreographed boys was just amazing. The light source was coming from one side although we moved from one room to the corridor then the third room which was all on the same floor with beams of light and shadows of light so you can just imagine the rest of the house.

If there are pillars behind the camera and the light is back of those pillars which is sun light so, the light from behind will cast the shadows which are over the shoulder of the camera and falls on the floor and for these kind of things what he created was amazing. Being artist myself, I used to sit behind the camera and watch what was happening which was such treasure of experience as non real sets become real.





## Interview With Klaus Weber.

Director Imaging Technology. Grass Valley. Germany



### What are the latest camera models offered by the Grass valley?

The LDX Series of cameras consists of four models offering varying levels of operational flexibility to match every production need, with the ability to upgrade as production and business needs change.

LDX Flex is our entry level model for single format 1080i or 720p acquisition, where limited artistic tweaking is required. LDX Première can switch between 1080i and 720p, and features the Contour Equalizer which allows for tweaking the crispness in the shadows, mid-tones and highlights independently.

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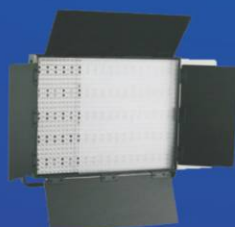
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