



July 26, 2020

Espresso

Magazine

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In Nepotism*

Dr. Blossom Kochhar

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**Budapest - The City
Of Palinka And Ruin Bars**



IZHAAR®

Saroj Khan: A Brilliance & Exceptional choreographer

At the starting week of this month, Bollywood lost its legendary ace choreographer Saroj Khan due to a cardiac arrest at the age of 71. Any expression is less to describe our darling 'Masterji' who not only pioneered the exact meaning of the word 'good choreographer' but every dancer like me also surely fall in love with her most remarkable dance moves. Saroj Khan was an inspiration to many including myself.

Masterji started her career in this industry as a child artist in the 1950s. At the age of 10, she joined a dance troupe. She had given us numerous dance moves and I have been blessed to have got the chance to work with her in some dance projects. I had every pleasure to share that her every movement looks as easy as pie as anyone can dance. She was one of the most caring, kind-hearted, and loving personas. Her journey as a child actor, dancer, and choreographer is incredible and unbelievable enough. She began to learn dancing and took training under another remarkable dance guru B Sohanlal. She got her first break as an individual choreographer in 'Geeta Mera Naam' (1974) and became famous later with the song 'Hawa Hawai' from "Mr. India" (1987). Her collaboration with Madhuri Dixit Nene and late Sridevi will always be remembered.

Over the years she redefined Bollywood's choreography, she was so precise about the expression in the dance moves. The legacy Masterji left behind is one of the industry's phenomena that can never be dissolved with time. But in my opinion as per dance to be part of the Bollywood, our beloved "masterji" will always be considered to be the paramount one.

Rituparna Sengupta Basu



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TRIBUTE TO SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT DIL BECHARA

Men and Fashion finds a quirky mix at Kolkata's most inspiring and sensational boutique by designer Surbhi Pansari who specializes in menswear. The aesthetics that gave life to the concept, roots in a simple belief - to explore the new age style that can encourage men to change their fashion outlook from mundane and monotonous to spirited and bold, allowing them to create their style statement. Futuristic – Unusual – Exclusive; the brand brings forth an atypical range of smart apparels for men which concocts lot of theatrics as dramatic cuts, bold silhouettes, and unique experiments create garments which for sure creates a lasting impression. Being a designer Surbhi was always fascinated and attracted to colours, cuts and silhouettes. She soon realized her expertise and decided to hone her skills thereafter and got enrolled herself into a professional course in designing at NIFD, Kolkata.

She has spent two years at Raymond, honing and sharpening her skills at men's wear. At Raymond, she received a lot of appreciations which drove her to launch her label for men's wear.

In a candid conversation with us designer *Surbhi Pansari* shares about her collection and journey into this fashion world.

*I have noticed that
Prosenjit Chatterjee
is fond of beige*

An Exclusive Interview of **Surbhi Pansari**

*Fashion Designer
Specialize in Menswear*

By Rituparna Sengupta Basu



Expresso: How do you spend most of the time during this lockdown?

Surbhi Pansari: Lockdown has definitely brought a lot of changes in our daily lifestyle. I got a lot of time to spend with my family, and also, I am a creative person so had a lot of things in mind. Being a creative person, I always have new things coming up in my mind. But, before lockdown due to daily schedule, everyone couldn't have self-time. So, during this quarantine period, I invested a lot of time in creativity. I was eagerly waiting to open my studio so that I can sit down with my karigars and decide about what we can come up with by the next season. You see, it is important to be positive during this lockdown and be optimistic, and I believe that the fashion industry will unfold after this phase. So, I started sketching and working on new designs, and all these things kept me busy.

Expresso: COVID-19 had a massive impact on the fashion industry, so what is your take on it?

Surbhi Pansari: I believe that nothing is permanent, and although this is undoubtedly difficult for the fashion industry throughout the world. But, there are good as well as bad times and stay motivated at all times. After all, this situation will certainly go away one day, and things will come back to its normal state. Once again the celebrations will begin, and the phase in which we all are right now is just a matter of some time, and it will end soon.

Expresso: Tell us something about your Spring-Summer 2020 collection?

Surbhi Pansari: My spring-summer collection is about equiceles, which are isosceles and equilateral triangles that are embroidered ensemble on kurtas, jackets. I have chosen some outstanding and unique colours such as Midnight Blue, Pistachio, Ebony, Almond and Charcoal Grey. Over them, the intricate work of embroidery has been done. The designs have been inspired by Japanese patterns Seigaiho as well as Uroko. I believe that it will get a good response after the lockdown, but when the collection was launched by the end of February, I received an outstanding response.

Expresso: Share with us something about your journey as a fashion designer?

Surbhi Pansari: When I came to this industry, I joined as a menswear designer, and honestly, at that time, there were very few menswear designers, and right now also most designers focus on women wear. But,



my target was quite different since I wanted to do something different, and discover new things something new that would give people from Kolkata as well as outside the taste of fashion that left undiscovered in terms of colour, palette, and embroidery. When talking about my journey, it was quite interesting since I got to learn a lot of exciting insights into the fashion world. I love discovering new styles and it certainly does not mean going overboard. Whenever I thought of designing clothes, I always kept in mind about what people would be comfortable in.

Expresso: *What was your inspiration behind your label?*

Surbhi Pansari: From the very beginning, I was pretty much attracted to colours and silhouettes so whenever I used to visit menswear stores and shops, I realized that we have things well designed and tailored, but few things were missing like a beautiful ethnic touch and colour palette. This gap always made me realize that a lot of things could be done with the menswear. So, when I launched my label, I received a lot of good feedbacks since my designs were not at all overboard. My entire collection was immensely loved since people thought that I successfully fulfilled the gap that was present in menswear for years. So, even if they were kurtas they were not all too much embroidered with zardozi. Instead, I always chose simple designs and pastel colours, which anyone can carry if they are searching for ethnic wear. So, this was my inspiration behind the launching menswear and label.

Expresso: *Did you always dream of having a fashion brand of your own?*

Surbhi Pansari: Planning your destiny is something that is not in your hands but yes, we all dream of becoming successful. I always wanted to become something with my hard work like everyone else. I believe that life gives everyone opportunities, and it is up to you that what you want to do with it. It is always better to grab that opportunity and turn



your dreams into reality. I always had a passion for designing, and fashion designing allowed me to unfold my passion in a new way. So, today I am here and happy with all my accomplishments.

Expresso: *What is the first thing that you learned as a designer?*

Surbhi Pansari: I feel that the things that I have learned or wrote are not enough. Your true learning begins when you are on the floor with the client. Apart from that, the ups and downs of the business are also something that teaches a lot such as the colours, embroideries, styles that would suit everyone. So, what you can do is read the fashion magazines, but once you are on the floor, you get the experience with the person who is physically present there. This I believe is a thumb rule and it applies to every field. Whatever we are doing at this time is not even half. The things we actually get is the journey as well as the experience. I feel that it is quite significant as a fashion designer.

Expresso: *You have designed apparel for celebrities so share with us something about their style statement.*

Surbhi Pansari: I have designed outfits for Prosenjit Chatterjee, Jeet Madnani, Manav Kaul, as well as Ravi Awana. If I talk about Prosenjit Chatterjee, then his



sense of fashion was quite subtle as he didn't like vibrant colours. Instead, he likes well-structured cuts, linen, checks, and subtle colours. I have noticed that he is fond of beige.

When shooting for

KaunBanegaCrorepati in Kolkata, he wanted my team's input for designing outfits as he believed that we have the capability of designing some outstanding outfits for the show as per the requirement so that it does not get pixelated on the screen.

So, I designed clothes for him that will suit him with subtle embroidery.

For Jeet Madnani, we designed such garments that he can wear in movies, so for him, I designed patialas, jackets, etc. I have noticed that he loves trying out unique cuts. For Manav Kaul, I designed an event outfit for him, which was a shirt and a blazer. For Ravi Awana, I worked on garments for his special day when he attended the award show. I designed a suit for him, which he wore while collecting the award from the jury.

Expresso: Who do you think has become style savvy you have worked for?

Surbhi Pansari: The style statement is something that varies from person to person. When working with different celebrities, I have really enjoyed the time since everybody's fashion sense is unique. I never felt any unlikely things when working for different clients as fashion has got various definitions for everyone.



So, for me choosing someone particularly is no doubt difficult.

Expresso: As a designer how would you describe your personal style statement?

Surbhi Pansari: I always prefer wearing something in which I am comfortable, but I like wearing stylish things and this is the thing I always keep in mind. I love teaming up accessories like scarves with outfits. Also, I love wearing ethnic outfits a lot. For me, the style statement is something in which you are comfortable and looks stylish as well.

Expresso: What is the most important thing behind the success of your brand?

Surbhi Pansari: I believe that for making a brand successful, the first that you need to do is take care of your clients. This means that whenever you are working with a client, not just you are delivering it on time, but it is well designed and finished according to their requirement. Also, you have to keep things in mind, such as proper cut and fit, design, etc. These things make customers happy. If you get a happy customer it feels extremely good. Our customers after buying garments from our store always give a good feedback in terms of quality, fit, service, and everything. So, I feel that all these things have certainly made my brand successful.

Expresso: So the festive season is around the corner is there any upcoming project?

Surbhi Pansari: Of course, we are working on new designs, and that would certainly come up for the festive season. But, as I mentioned earlier, the spring-summer collection is now on the floor. As a designer, I would no doubt work on new designs, and come up with new garments that would match with the vibe of upcoming festivals for sure.



BEAUTY

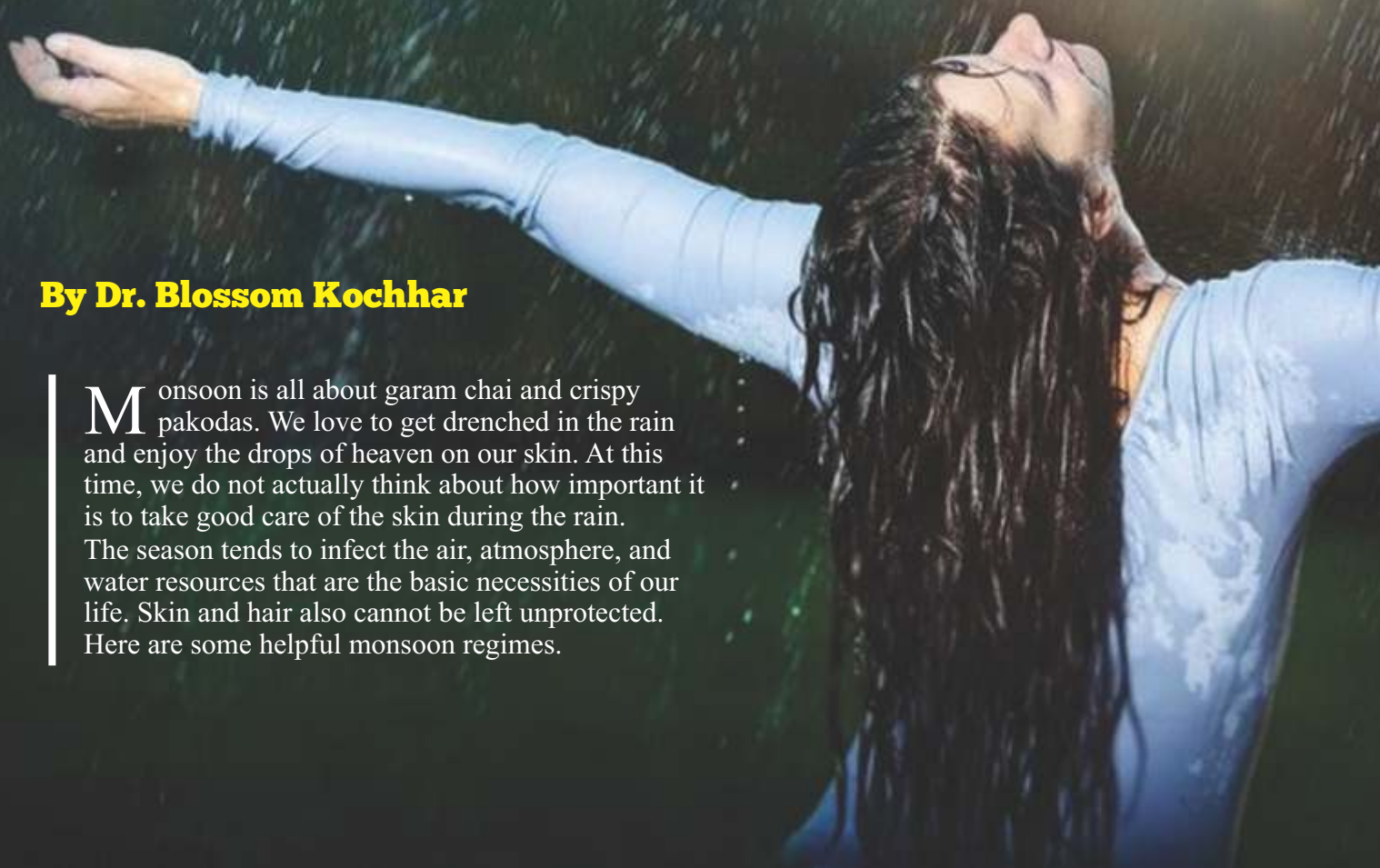
Get Ready For Some
Tips and Tricks

Monsoon

Rain Rain Come Again

By Dr. Blossom Kochhar

Monsoon is all about garam chai and crispy pakodas. We love to get drenched in the rain and enjoy the drops of heaven on our skin. At this time, we do not actually think about how important it is to take good care of the skin during the rain. The season tends to infect the air, atmosphere, and water resources that are the basic necessities of our life. Skin and hair also cannot be left unprotected. Here are some helpful monsoon regimes.



Rinse the Dirt Away

It is important to keep your skin clean and dirt-free. Haven't you tried **Aroma Magic Grapefruit Facewash** and **Aroma Magic White Tea & Chamomile Facewash**? They are the perfect partners for monsoon skin. Not only do they clean your skin but keeps the skin hydrated and nourished.

Exfoliate for the skin to Breathe

Exfoliation is the process to remove the dead cells from the skin and open blocked pores. This helps the skin to breathe and

live longer. **Aroma Magic Coffee Bean Scrub** exfoliates, deep cleanses, and improves circulation. It helps the skin look fresh and young.

Don't Let the Clouds Fool You

So what if the sun is not shining and it is cloudy outside? It is always important to wear sunscreen as the harmful rays of the sun can penetrate through the clouds. Get **Aroma Magic Aloe Vera Sunscreen Gel SPF 20**. The gel formula creates a physical barrier between you and the sun. Aloe Vera extracts hydrate, purifies, and provides smart sun protection.

It's Time to Detoxify the Skin

Detoxification is a significant part of the monsoon regime. You can't go wrong with **Aroma Magic Detoxifying Mineral Pack**. The natural combination of minerals and essential oils helps in absorbing impurities and repairing tired skin.

Hair Fall Tips

Every girl encounters severe hair fall issues when it starts to rain. Aroma Magic has introduced **Hair Revitalising Serum** to make your perfect hair care partner for the monsoons. It helps to reduce hair fall, strengthen hair roots, increase blood circulation, and stimulate hair follicle formulation.

Make Your Feet Happy

Doesn't it feel amazing when you get drenched in the rain? It is this time of water, mud, bacteria, fungus, and infections too. It is important to always keep your feet clean. One of the most important foot care tips is to dip your feet with mild soap and lukewarm water with 2-3 drops of **Tea Tree Essential Oil**. It helps to remove the dirt and keep your feet clean. Try to wear covered waterproof shoes to keep your feet free from dirt and infection.



COVER STORY

I Don't Believe In Any Kind of Nepotism

Vineet Raina

Written By - Abir Majumder

Television is considered to be one of the most entertaining factor in the industry. And to be working on this field needs immense dedication and hard work. A Jammu and Kashmir origin talent Vineet Raina has does the exact same thing for this industry over the decade of his career. He started his journey back in 2004 with 'Tum Bin Jaaoon Kahaan' in small screen and able to build his huge fan following with his versatility in acting. Being from a humble family background he believes that his journey has just began and he wanted take this ahead to be much stronger. Here are some cozy encounters with the actor himself which Expresso wants share with you all.



Expresso: *How do you spend most of the time in this quarantine?*

Vineet Raina: I spend most of my time with myself and try to do my work on my own. I mostly do my dishes as well as all the household chores, which I failed to do during shoots. These days I am mostly focusing on taking care of my house or you can say I am pampering my house as well as my belongings. So, this how I kill the time throughout the day.

Expresso: *What are the new things that you have learned in this time?*

Vineet Raina: For me, my work always came first, and I give enough value to it since it tops my priority list. During this emergency situation, I have learned to give more respect to my profession. Everything has grown two folds since I am not getting a chance to work deliberately. I am feeling that someone has locked me up, and said that I cannot work. You see, I always like to stay busy and occupied with work since it is impossible for me to stay static. So throughout this lockdown period, I have learned to respect my work more than before.

Expresso: *What kind of things you are missing in this lockdown?*

Vineet Raina: I am a movie freak and these days I am missing watching movies a lot. I am the kind of person who loves watching movies in theatres and big screens. Also, I am missing my friends, going out with them, shoots. All in all, you can say that I am missing my freedom a lot.

Expresso: *When the lockdown is over what is the first thing that you will do?*

Vineet Raina: Once the lockdown gets over I would go to watch a movie. I would take some popcorn, aerated drinks, or a cup of coffee, grab a recliner, relax, and watch a movie. So, this the thing that I am going to do once the lockdown gets over.

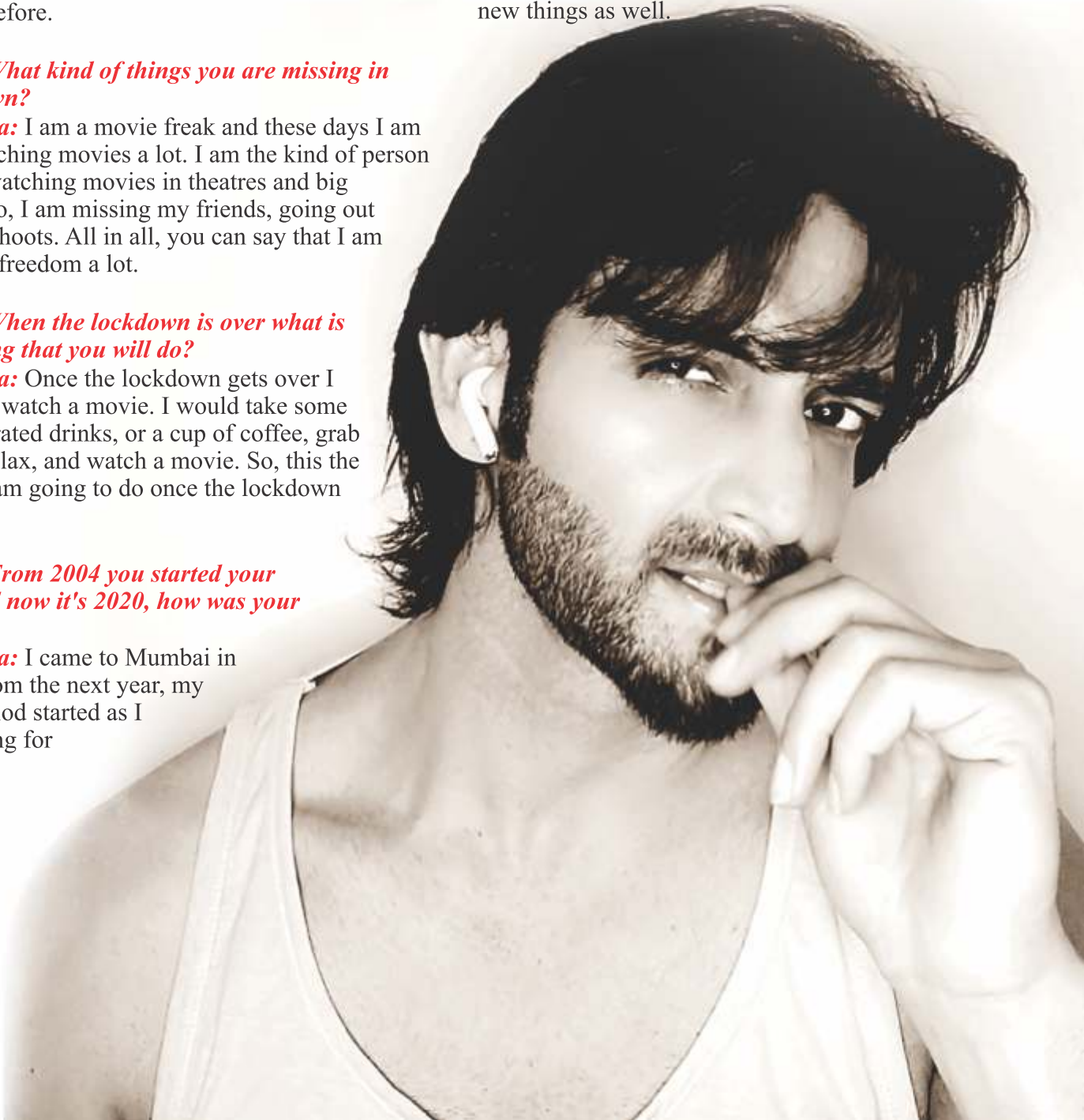
Expresso: *From 2004 you started your journey and now it's 2020, how was your experience?*

Vineet Raina: I came to Mumbai in 2004 and from the next year, my struggle period started as I was searching for

work. It's almost fifteen years that I have spent in this industry, and according to me, my journey has just begun. I have started working on different projects, I feel that now I have started doing the right things, and I feel that I have learned a lot of things. I belong from a small family and we are quite humble. From here onwards, I want to take this journey ahead.

Expresso: *Throughout this long journey, what are the new things that you have learned?*

Vineet Raina: After coming to Mumbai I had to face a lot of challenges. One of the biggest challenges that I had to face here was interaction. You see people from different parts of the world come in this industry, some are good some are not good. When dealing with people I had to face a lot of challenges, and many taught me lessons as well. I have learned that how people be your friend on your face and stab you from the back. This industry has taught me to be strong, I have learned to cook, to handle different situations. I have learned a lot of things after coming here. I am sure that in the future also I will get to learn a lot of new things as well.





I am a professionally trained DJ, and I have done a diploma in it.

-Vineet Raina

Expresso: *There is a lot of debate going on about insider-outsider topics so did you ever feel that you are an outsider in this industry?*

Vineet Raina: This debate has been in this industry for years and I have not felt an outsider here. You see everybody has to survive. I have learned that even after having thousands of contacts, even after being a popular face in the industry, people will always try to pull you back since competition is everywhere. With competition, people trying to pulling you down are a part of it. But, what I have learned is it is best if you never compromise on your talent, instead all you can do is you should work on your talent. Since in the end, talent is something that matters the most, and even if you have millions of contacts, once you appear on the silver screen, you have to show your talent. Even if you have a blessing hand of an insider over your head, if you fail to showcase your talent, you will lose your position. I have seen a lot of examples in our industry who has made a name through pure talent. Also, no matter in which profession you choose to go you will get limited seats. Even if you take the help of an insider, you will certainly get a good launch platform, but it is the talent that takes you forward. So, I do not believe in any kind of Nepotism.

Expresso: *Currently, you are working in this show 'Meri Gudiya' on Star Bharat so what made you say yes to it?*

Vineet Raina: Yes, I was working on 'Meri Gudiya', but due to lockdown, the shoot had to be stopped. Even though the journey was short, but it was very important for me. My character was quite different, and due to this reason, I guess I accepted the offer. I don't think that until now, no one has ever portrayed the character of Rahu. Everybody knows that Rahu plays a significant role in astrological readings and charts, and I don't think that no one ever brought out the character of Rahu in front like this. So, I feel that the character was quite challenging. So, as soon as I

heard the concept and understood that the character can be extremely challenging, I instantly said yes to it. I love to portray challenging characters quite a lot.

Expresso: *Do you relate yourself to Rahu?*

Vineet Raina: I do not relate myself with the character Rahu since it is a mythological character, a shadow planet. I just had to portray the character, but apart from that, there are not many qualities that I can relate to. But, keeping the bad sides aside, Rahu also has good qualities as well such as leadership qualities, strength, and aggressiveness. So, I do relate myself with the good qualities for sure.

Expresso: *You have played many negative roles so do you like playing negative roles?*

Vineet Raina: I did play a lot of negative characters and many shows received amazing reviews, and the critical reviews were also very good. You can say that I am fond of playing negative characters, and if once you play negative roles on screen, you can get a lot of scopes to perform, you can show your acting skills. The reason behind this is because negative characters come with a lot of shades, ups, and downs, and he can be unpredictable as well. Compared to the positive characters, you get a lot of scopes for improvisation, but when it comes to positive roles, you never get enough scope or

freedom to act, to explore the roles. Due to this reason, I like playing negative roles.

Expresso: *Out of all the characters you have played so far which one is your favourite?*

Vineet Raina: I cannot pick any one particular character since from the very beginning I was very choosy when picking work. I never used to work just for the sake of working even if I had to struggle for it. But, I always used to be very choosy regarding my characters, and all of them are very close to my heart. I used to choose the characters only after the proper narration, and then I played them. May be due to this



reason, people have remembered me still now due to all the characters I have played. Every day I get emails and messages on my social media handles.

Expresso: Any character that you have not played yet but you are looking forward to playing in the future?

Vineet Raina: I want to play a patriotic character just like Aamir Khan played in 'Lagaan'. I also want to play the role of Bhagat Singh, and if it is a religious show, then I would love to portray Jesus Christ on screen. These are some of the characters that I am looking forward to playing.

Expresso: If not an actor, then what would you want to be?

Vineet Raina: I would want to be in the armed forces be it in army, police, navy, or airforce. I have always been an active member of NCC when I was in college and spent a lot of time with the Indian army. If not in the army, then I would want to be a doctor since I have a huge interest in medical studies.

Expresso: Mention three things which nobody knows about you.

Vineet Raina: I am a professionally trained DJ, and I have done a diploma in it. I do practice DJ. The rest of the things are best if people do not know about me.

Expresso: What is the last thing you Googled?

Vineet Raina: The last thing which I Googled was regarding the updates on the COVID-19 vaccine.

Expresso: A childhood memory you always carry with yourself?

Vineet Raina: I would say the exile of a Kashmiri pandit from the Jammu city. During the time of migration from Kashmir to Jammu in the '90s is one such childhood memory that I would like to carry with myself. It was the turning point of my life, as we became rich to rags overnight. The situation was extremely pathetic and also I became quite strong as a person. Now when I am all grown up I can say that the terrific situation that I had to face during that time has taught me a lot of things, and made me strong enough to deal with

almost every kind of situation.

Expresso: What is the theme song for your life?

Vineet Raina: My life song would be 'Zindagi Kaisi Ye Paheli Hai, Kabhi Ye Hasaye Kabhi Ye Rulaye' since it sums up my entire lifecycle.

Expresso: What is your crazy fan moment?

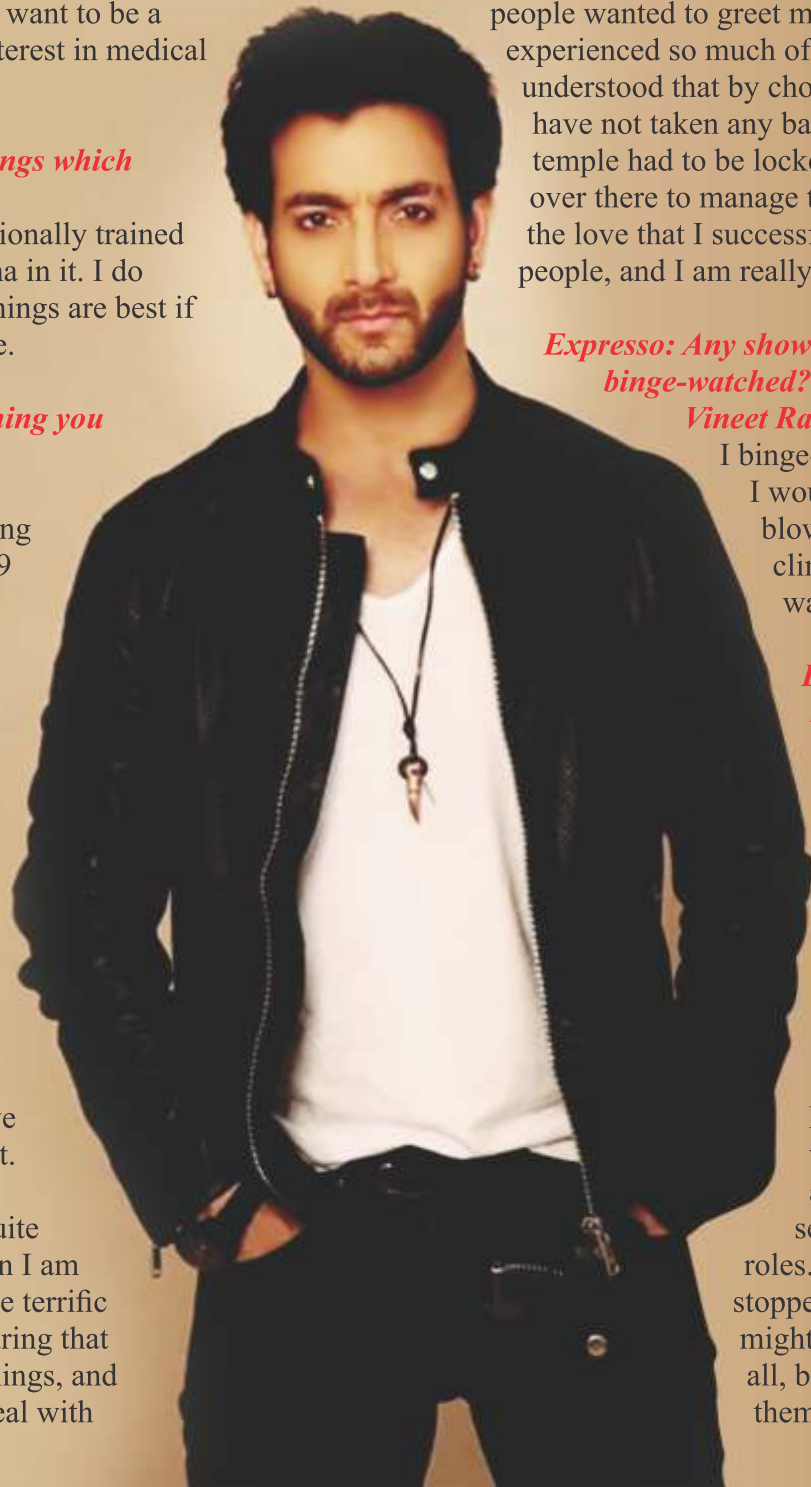
Vineet Raina: I remember I was shooting Benaras for one of my shows 'Mariyada' on DD1 which was immensely popular. It was my first show as a lead actor that it gave me a name, which was Krishna. I was shooting for a sanyasi role with a lot of beards stuck on my face. The shooting was going on in Vishwanath Temple. There came a group of college girls who came to visit the Vishwanath Temple. As soon as they saw me they literally pounced on me since no one was prepared that something like this can happen. My clothes were literally torn down and people wanted to greet me. Trust me, that day I experienced so much of love, and I understood that by choosing this profession I have not taken any bad decision. So, the temple had to be locked down, police came over there to manage the situation. I was all the love that I successfully received from people, and I am really thankful for it.

Expresso: Any show that you recently binge-watched?

Vineet Raina: The show, which I binge-watched was Patalok. I would not say that I was blown away with the climax, but I enjoyed watching it.

Expresso: What is the biggest risk that you have taken?

Vineet Raina: The biggest risk that I have taken is experimenting with myself. I tried acting as a lover boy in Mariyada, and then in Maayka, and Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai. I wanted to grow as an actor, and so I started searching for negative roles. A lot of people stopped me by saying that it might end my career and all, but I did not listen to them. I did play a lot of





negative roles, which helped me to grow as an actor. After that, I decided to try another genre, and I chose comedy. So, I chose 'Laapataganj', and even that time people stopped me too. I have always taken risks of experimenting with roles, and people think it as a risk, but I feel that it helped me to grow a great deal as an actor. I have always tried to work for every kind of role, which I felt will enhance my skill. I don't feel that all these things should be considered as risks.

Expresso: One habit that you want to get rid of?

Vineet Raina: I have a habit of overthinking. If something or someone is bothering me I start thinking or worrying about it a lot. My brain starts overthinking, and I feel that this annoying habit is certainly not good, and I literally want to get rid of it soon, and I am trying hard to do it.

Expresso: What brings a smile on your face mostly?

Vineet Raina: I am a big time foodie, and even if someone else is cooking any dish, and I get that aroma, it instantly puts a smile on my face. I have a huge connection with food, and if I see that someone is cooking food, it gives me a lot of pleasure as well as a smile on my face.

Expresso: What are the things that you miss mostly of Kashmir?

Vineet Raina: I miss everything of Kashmir starting from the lanes to the spots. I have visited a lot of famous spots in Kashmir like Dal Lake, Mughal Gardens, then the lanes I used to play, my primary school. So, I miss everything of Kashmir, and I hope that one day we would be able to go back there and spend time without any kind of fear.

Expresso: Tell something about your upcoming projects?

Vineet Raina: A lot of things going on with my upcoming projects. Many movie narrations are there, scripts are being worked upon, and if I get any updates regarding it, I will talk about it later on. Talking about the TV shows, a lot of good shows are lined up, and as I already mentioned, I am very particular about choosing shows. So, let's see which one really works out for me.

RUNWAY

Budapest

*The City Of Palinka
And Ruin Bars*

TO KNOW A CITY, YOU HAVE TO KNOW IT'S PEOPLE

By Sangita Marda Agarwal

Story teller & Sunrise watcher

Co-Founder - 33 & Third Studio x Lab

My knowledge about Hungarians was limited to actress ZsaZsa Gabor and her nine marriages or architect Erno Rubik of the Rubik's Cube fame. So, it was a good feeling when I realized that Bence, our cab driver, was open to chatting and sharing details. I always try and take a taxi from the airport to my accommodation upon arrival in any new city. Many would debate that local transport is cheaper and a good way to get introduced to the city's movement.

But I have always rationalized that a cab drive not only eases your arrival woes but if you are lucky, your cabbie can provide meaningful insights into the local life. And, I have always been lucky in this respect. Be it Amman or Istanbul, Xian or Sydney!

And Budapest was no exception. All the way from Ferenc Liszt International Airport or Ferihegy as it's popularly known, to our apartment on Dob Street, in Pest- Bence, happily answered my questions.

So, where did the Hungarians come from? I was amazed when he replied - Mongolia! Born on horses, he added, the Hungarians were skilled archers on horsebacks.

Among others, one last question that I asked him, was what should I take back with me when I leave the city a few days later. Our passion and pain, he said, because we have seen the glory of the Austro Hungarian Empire and the gloom of Nazi and Soviet Occupation. And of course a bottle of Palinka, he chuckled and added almost as an afterthought :)

The apartment on Dob street or Dobutca, as it's called in Hungarian, was right opposite the GozsduUdvar, which is the core of the city's Jewish quarters, teeming with local life.

The best way to become friends with a city is to walk it. Budapest enticed us to walk and how! The weather in March was a pleasant five degrees. The perfect backdrop to don our walking shoes. It was a Saturday afternoon and the city was buzzing with people but with little tourists in sight.

We walked everywhere. But this is not only about places like Hero square, the Buda Castle or the enchanting Chain bridge, apart from this Budapest offer you opportunities to find your inner peace at the Matthias Church or the Fishermen's Bastion also.

But, I want to talk to you about a quaint corner shop that we stopped by near the synagogue where a baker was selling freshly made Kurtoskalacs or chimney cones.

He took ribbons of thin dough and wind them around a wooden cylinder and then baked them over an open fire. A scoop of ice cream filled the cone and we were ready to sample this local delight.

I want to talk to you about rectangular brass plaques called stolperstein, which Agnes, a very friendly and an extremely knowledgeable young Hungarian who lives on the Buda side, asked us to look out for, outside old residential homes. We found many as we walked around.

On them were inscribed the name and life dates of victims of Nazi extermination, commemorating them outside their last place of residency.



But despite the turmoil that Hungary has faced - the people here are friendly and they love life. The locals in Budapest hang out in thermal baths like the Brits hang out in pubs. And that's where we decided to head too.

The Szechenyi baths were stunning in their neo-baroque architecture and I wondered should I be wearing a ballroom gown here instead of a bathing suit?

I was a little awkward initially when I saw men in chest-deep water playing chess and women chatting with each other. But soon I settled into its therapeutic warmth and began relaxing like a local.

Mummy, it's Sunday exclaimed Urmika when she got up the next morning - we can't miss the Gouba or the weekly Sunday bazaar at the beautiful Gozsdu quarters. Vendors were selling one of a kind jewelry and antiques. It was a treat to the eyes.

We walked even more today. And the subsequent day. We were intrigued by the graffiti on the wall and life-like statues of famous people in sitting and walking postures.

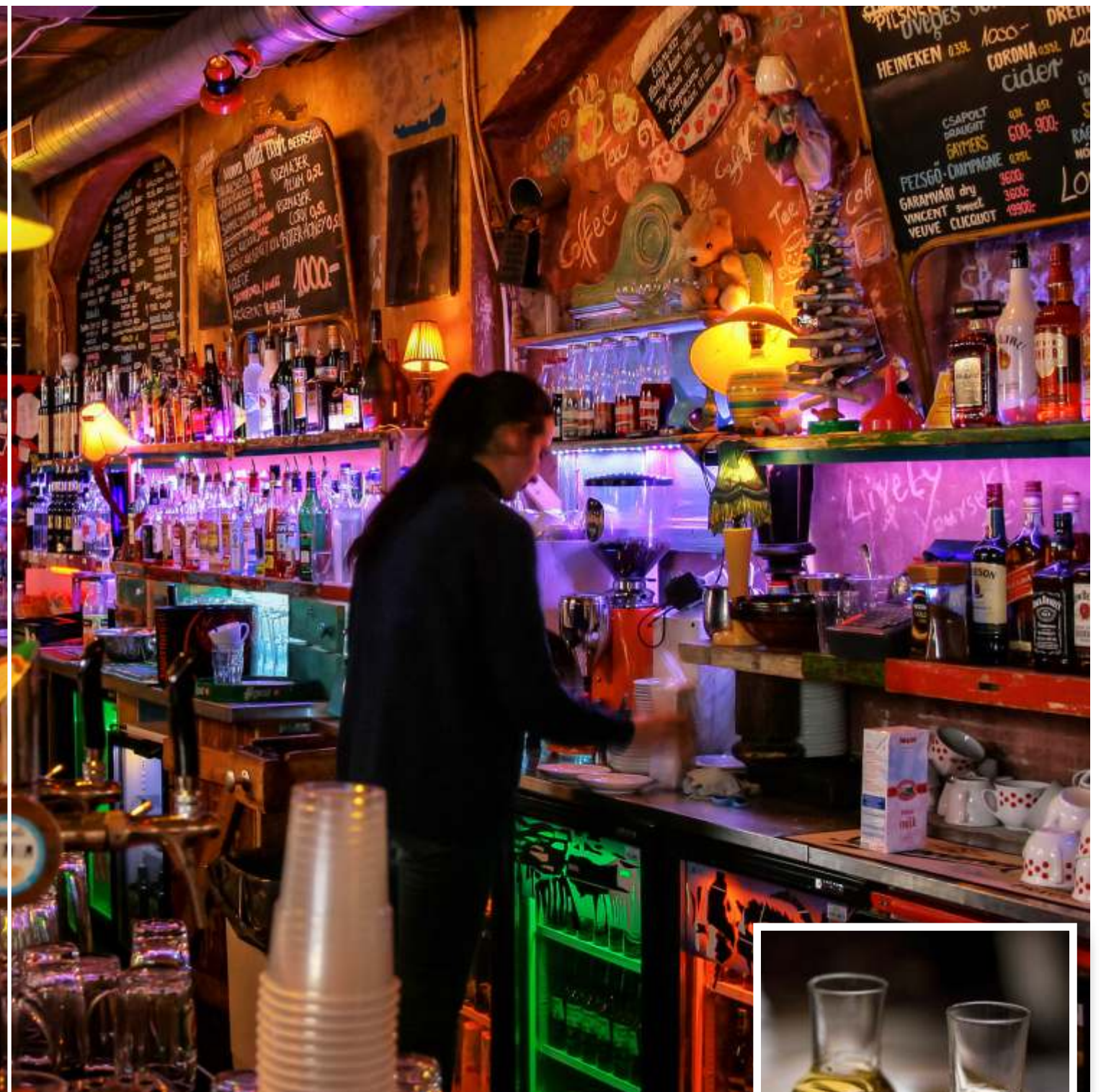
We met an American right next to the statue of the famous Hungarian architect Istavan - he had come down to track his ancestral roots and found them in this famous Hungarian's lineage. We listened to his fascinating story of discovery and clicked him with his great grandfather's idol.



Calling Budapest pretty would be an understatement. Its architecture can awe you and when the sun sets and the lights begin to twinkle around the Danube, the entire feel is surreal, almost magical.

Budapest lives it's nights in the bars built in the ruins of abandoned buildings in the Jewish quarters. And, SzimplaKert is the Mecca of all ruin bars!

We walked in a little before midnight and found ourselves in the middle of a hip, funky, and artsy surround bustling with the local crowd, drinking, dancing, and enjoying the laid back atmosphere.



The crowd began to swirl in number and it started to get pretty hot inside. I was intrigued by the entire look of flea market furniture and colored glass lanterns hanging from the ceiling. As we moved from one courtyard and room to the other we were charmed by the eclectic feel all around.

It was easy to start a conversation here. We met locals who were more than happy to talk about their life

and why they would rather be on Hungarian Forint and not on Euro.

Reclining back in the aeroplane on my way to Mumbai, as I write this, I am thinking how my senses had become engaged in the last few days and how my feelings came truly alive ! And I thought, falling in love with a city is as exciting as falling in love with a person.

Perhaps even more !



My Dream Role Would Always Be Kripal Singh

Written By - Nabanita Dutta

In '90s and early 2000s, Chandrachur Singh was working actively in films and was considered to be an out of the ordinary and outstanding mainstream actor of Bollywood.

He started his career in 1996 with the film *Tere Mere Sapne*, under the production of Amitabh and Jaya Bachchan. Alumnus of Doon School, Chandrachur Singh mesmerized everyone with his acting skills and magnificent performance in *Maachis* in 1996. That was one of his path-breaking works in his career. From there on he was considered to be one of the most unconventional actors of Bollywood.

After several years of gap in his career, he is back with his distinctive persona with Hotstar Special's web series 'Aarya' opposite Sushmita Sen. This 54 year old has already been applauded by everybody with his comeback performance in this web series. In a candid conversation with *Expresso Magazine* the very polite Chandrachur Singh shares his journey, comeback and many more life-inspiring real stories...



Expresso: What kind of response did you get from the audience regarding Aarya?

Chandrachur Singh : I received a lot of positive responses from the audience regarding my character, and for the entire series, I received a great response as well. Everybody's work was appreciated and the effort, which the entire team gave for the series was appreciated as well. I personally feel that Sushmita has done a mind-blowing job in the series and her character especially was undoubtedly amazing.

Expresso: Why did you grab the offer for Aarya?

Chandrachur Singh : I always believe and listen to my gut instinct, and when I got an offer for the series, I knew that Ram Madhvani is an amazing director. Previously, he made many amazing films like Neerja and Let's Talk, which were quite great. So, when I received an offer from him, I thought that I should go



for it and my character is also mind-blowing. In addition to that, I also got to know that Sushmita would be working as Aarya in this series. Sushmita and I got an offer for a project a few years back, but unfortunately, it did not happen. So, I felt that this time something out of the box is definitely going to happen and I grabbed the offer.

Expresso: You came by making a digital debut with Aarya after many years so how did you groom yourself?

Chandrachur Singh : I would say that the entire team was very supportive, and played a huge role in preparing us for the roles. Also, acting workshops had been arranged for us as well to make us ready. This helped us to get used to the character requirements. The workshops helped us to absorb the character, adapting to the camera angles, and shoot without any cuts, especially for the lengthy scenes, showing emotions without using any kind of glycerin, etc. So all in all, we all were introduced to a whole new method of shooting. Everyone was prepared for the series in such a way so that every time camera comes on to us, we can get ready for the shot no matter how big or small the scene is. Our acting coach Vinod Rawat efficiently guided us to prepare for the character.

Expresso: Can you relate yourself to the character Tej?

Chandrachur Singh : I do relate myself to the character to a certain extent. There are few new things in this character that does not match with me, and then the other things are certainly there with which I can definitely relate myself to.

Expresso: How was your experience working with Sushmita Sen and how was the on-screen chemistry?

Chandrachur Singh : My experience was quite good with her, and if you have watched the series you will understand that her performance was quite good as well. She is a very warm person, and when working together we both had a lot of energy, which I feel is necessary while shooting. Onsets, we both had a great experience as the kids on sets use to call us as Mama-Papa, we both used to recognize as husband and wife, and the other people on sets use to call us Tej and Aarya. Also, the kids on the sets were being called by their character names. So all these helped a great deal as calling the actors with their character name helps to keep them in their zone, which is extremely beneficial while shooting.

Expresso: What according to you was the best moment of shooting Aarya?

Chandrachur Singh : My entire experience of shooting Aarya was amazing, and it is impossible to choose any particular memory. Everything was so perfect about the shooting that I enjoyed and loved every moment so finding out any particular memory is difficult. You will find a lot of videos on shooting

moments on Instagram where you will find that the technical team and the cast and crew had so much fun on set. Ram Madhvani is a very jolly person, and he tried to keep everything chilled out during the shoot, which made everything quite smooth.

Expresso: Any favourite scenes from the series which is close to your heart?

Chandrachur Singh : I enjoyed all the songs from the series and in real life, I do sing songs. So, every scene that had songs are my favourite.

Expresso: Share with us your experience working with Ram Madhvani?

Chandrachur Singh : I had a great experience working with Ram Madhvani as he is a very good person, creative as well as intelligent. He is very jolly, and if someone works with Ram Madhvani, he would learn a lot of things from him. So, I would say that I have learned a lot of things from him and overall I had a great experience. You see working with a mind-blowing director lets you feel that you have achieved something great and I felt the same too. I would say that after ages, I got an opportunity to work with such a talented actor.

Expresso: Your journey began in 1996 and is continuing to date so what are the things you have learned throughout these years?

Chandrachur Singh : I have learned a lot of things throughout these years in the industry. You see I have spent half of my life here, and time has made me worthy enough to play different roles. In one of the interviews given by Sushmita Sen, she said that a few years back if I would have got this role, it would have been tough for me to play it. I feel that time is a great teacher and throughout these years I have experienced and learned a lot of new things, which made it possible for me to play this character efficiently. The house where we were shooting had this name 'Sukoon', and the actual name was 'Aarya House'. When I came to Mumbai for some personal work, I went to meet

Sushmita as well as the team. At that time, I did not even know that Sushmita would be working for the role of Aarya. Later on, when I went to the workshop, I saw that Sushmita is working with the kids on the set. So, it felt like I met my family over there, and I was quite surprised to see that Sushmita working for the role Aarya. Everything made me so comfortable that even after ages, working seemed quite smooth.

Expresso: Among all the other characters that you have played which is your favourite one?

Chandrachur Singh : Usually, everyone loves their first character, which they played since it is impossible

to forget about the role, which opened your door to success.

I feel that roles depend on your fate, and I personally do not believe in making things in mind about what role I would want to play. I do not have any specific dream role so I believe that whatever my fate has in store for me would be the best one for me.

So, for me, I would say that my dream role would always be Kripal Singh, which was my first role in the movie "Maachis", and now when I worked after so many years, so it would certainly be Tej.

Expresso: Mention three things that people do not know about you?

Chandrachur Singh : I know cooking, I do practice astrology sometimes since it is my hobby, I sing songs as well, and sometimes I do jamming with my kids.

Expresso: What brings a smile on your face mostly?

Chandrachur Singh : It would undoubtedly be my son. He is the one who always brings a smile on my face.

Expresso: What is the biggest risk that you have taken till now?

Chandrachur Singh : The biggest risk would be getting into the film industry. When I started getting offers for films, I was not sure about since people don't make it in the industry. Also, initially, I had to struggle a great deal to get into the industry. So, it was my





Chandrachur Singh : Right now I am in Gurgaon and all the actors did the dubbing from their respective houses. Initially, it was planned that the entire dubbing would be done in Mumbai, but due to lockdown, the plan had to be cancelled. We all use to sit at home and record the dialogues in our cell phones, and then sent it to the team. It was quite difficult to do since the whole process had to be done without any kind of disturbance. So, everything was quite difficult yet interesting.

Expresso: The series was shot in Rajasthan so what you miss most of Rajasthan?

Chandrachur Singh : I would definitely miss the entire situation that we use to live at the time of shooting and definitely Dal Baati Churma, the famous food of Rajasthan.

biggest risk since there was no guarantee that whether I would be getting any chances for making a debut.

Expresso: We have heard few songs in Aarya so have you thought to do something with this talent of yours?

Chandrachur Singh : I did sing a song for a movie a few years back, and you can check it from my Instagram profile. The song was been sung quite professionally.

Expresso: Looking from a singer's perspective what would be the theme song for your life?

Chandrachur Singh : It would be "Mai Zindagi Ka Sath Nibhata Chala Gaya, Har Fikar Ko Dhuye Mai Udata Chala Gaya". I absolutely love this song and I sometimes relate to it a lot.

Expresso: One song that you would want someone to sing for you?

Chandrachur Singh : It would be "Ehsan Tera Hoga Mujh Par". This song from the movie is beautiful and I love it.

Expresso: You hail from Dehradun so what do you miss the most from Dehradun?

Chandrachur Singh : A lot of things in my life connected to Dehradun and the place is very special to my heart. But, I belong from Aligarh. My childhood, schooling, guruji's ashram everything was in Dehradun. The school in which I used to teach is also in Dehradun and it is close to my heart as well.

Expresso: Aarya had to be promoted digitally so how difficult it was?

Expresso: Vetaran choreographer Saroj Khan passed away so do you want to say anything regarding her sudden demise?

Chandrachur Singh : I was really shocked and disheartened when I came to know that Saroj Khan is no more. I have a lot of good memories with her as she is undoubtedly an eminent choreographer. She used to act everything so that we can understand the scene properly. Be it for any male or female character, she used to give such natural expressions, which was mind-blowing. I have worked with her for many of my unreleased films. May God let her soul rest in peace.

Expresso: What according to you would compel the audience to watch Aarya?

Chandrachur Singh : I would say people should watch Aarya for the performance, music, editing, and last but not least the direction.



Blitz up the Perfect Walnut Butter With These Easy Recipes

Recipes Curated by Celebrity Chef Sabyasachi Gorai

What's creamy, delicious, and just waiting to be added to all your favourite snacks? That's right, Walnut Butter has got it all. It's easy to prepare and flavoured naturally, so it checks all the nutrition boxes for your snacking goals. This versatile spread is the perfect topping for toasts and pancakes or a great dip with your favourite appetizer.

Walnuts provide key nutrients like protein (4g/28g), fiber (2g/28g), and plant-based omega-3 fatty acids (2.5 g/28g), making them a simple yet powerful addition to your meals. So, enjoy the goodness of walnuts in a tastier buttery form by preparing a large batch in less than thirty minutes and enjoy your new favourite snack – all week long.

And why limit yourself when it comes to walnut butter? Try out these walnut butter recipes in a variety of sweet and savoury possibilities by giving the classic recipe a flavourful twist.



Honey California Walnut Butter

Ingredients

2 cups California walnuts, 1 tablespoon honey, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract, 1 teaspoon walnut or vegetable oil (or as needed), Salt to taste

Preparations

- Preheat oven to 150°C. Place walnuts on a small baking sheet and toast for 10 minutes; let cool.
- Transfer to a food processor and process until thick paste forms. Add remaining ingredients and process until smooth



California Walnut Parsley Pesto

Ingredients

120g California Walnuts, 1 bunch parsley, 1 clove of garlic, 28g parmesan cheese, 4-6 tablespoons olive oil

Preparations

- Wash the parsley, pat dry, and pluck off the leaves.
- Peel the garlic and chop it coarsely.
- Grate the cheese.
- Grind the walnuts as described in the basic recipe. As soon as the walnuts have formed a thick paste, add the parsley, garlic, cheese, and olive oil, and blend again thoroughly.



California Walnut Parsley Pesto

Ingredients

450g California walnuts, Salt to taste, 1/2 cup shredded unsweetened coconut

Preparations

- Toast the coconut in a dry pan at low heat until golden brown. Let cool.
- Grind the walnuts and salt in a blender or food processor for 3-4 minutes until the mixture becomes a creamy paste.
- Add the toasted coconut and blend well.

Sweet Temptation

*Bring on delectable yummy, mouth-watering
Chocolaty Desserts that will win your
hearts straightaway!*

By Chef Suvir Saran,

Chef and Owner at THC - The House of Celeste.

Candy Cane Kisses (Makes 4 1/2 dozen)

These are a must at our house during the holidays. The only problem is that they never last—I am known to eat a dozen within minutes! The recipe comes from a pastry chef friend of mine, Allison Heaton, who grew up in Austin, Texas and learned how to make these from her dad, Kencil Heaton. A retired Air National Guard General, he grew up eating these airy, sweet, and minty meringues. Though Allison now makes them with fancy 75 to 85% cacao bittersweet chocolate bars, she grew up making them with semisweet chocolate chips courtesy of Air Force ration supplies! So feel free to use what you prefer.

Ingredients

4 large egg whites at room temperature, 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar, 1/8 teaspoon fine salt, 1 1/2 cups/300 g sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, 3 tablespoons crushed candy canes, 8 ounces/225 g semisweet chocolate, finely chopped, A few drops of red food coloring (optional)

Preparations

- Heat the oven to 250°F/110° C. Line 3 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside. (If you don't have 3 baking sheets, be sure to allow the baking sheet to cool completely before baking the second and third batches of meringues.)
- Using a stand mixer or a hand mixer, beat the egg whites on medium speed until they're foamy. Add the cream of tartar and salt, increase the speed to medium-high and beat the whites until soft peaks form. With the mixer running, add the sugar 1 tablespoon at a time and beat the whites until they're glossy and hold stiff peaks. Remove the bowl from the mixer and add the crushed candy canes, chocolate, vanilla, and food coloring (if using). Use a rubber spatula to fold the ingredients into the meringue.
- Use a tablespoon to measure out dollops of meringue onto the prepared baking sheets. Bake the meringues until they begin to crack on top, 30-45 minutes. Remove from the oven and let them cool completely on wire racks. Store the cookies for up to 5 days at room temperature and in an airtight container.



Fig Flan (Serves 8 to 10)

This recipe came about after my life-partner Charlie discovered a wonderfully delicious bottle of fig jam in our pantry. It was a bitter winter morning and with no fruit in the house and little else around to create something special, we turned to the fig jam to sate our sweet tooth. Charlie thought of my flan base and to that we added the jam and some Kashmiri dried figs we had been guarding with the utmost care since our visit to the region during Christmas 2005. The Flan came out shockingly good and we now serve it regularly, always thinking fondly of the snow-capped Himalayas and fig trees whenever we do.



Ingredients

- 8 dried figs (about 6 ounces), finely chopped
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 4 large eggs
- 1/4 cup dark rum
- 2 tablespoons fig jam
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 1-inch piece cinnamon stick

Preparations

- Set an oven rack to the lowest position and heat your oven to 350°F. Place the figs, milk, and cream in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat, cover the pan and steep the figs for 10 minutes.
- Place the condensed milk, eggs, cream cheese, fig jam, and rum in a blender and blend until smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the milk, cream, the figs, and the dark rum and blend until they are completely incorporated.
- Bring the sugar, water and cinnamon stick to a simmer in a medium, heavy-bottomed saucepan and remove the pan from the heat. Stir until the sugar is dissolved and the syrup is clear. Then return the saucepan to the heat and bring the liquid to a boil, swirling the pan now and then, until the syrup caramelizes to a deep brown, about 4 to 5 more minutes. Immediately pour the caramel into a 2 1/2-quart metal charlotte mold or a 9 X 5-inch loaf pan. Carefully remove the cinnamon stick with a spoon or tongs. Tip the mold or pan to coat it with the caramel. Let it cool for a few minutes and then pour the custard mixture into it.
- Line an 8-inch square baking dish (or a larger rectangular baking dish, if using a loaf pan) with a doubled kitchen towel. Put the mold in the baking dish on top of the towel and then place the dish into the oven. Use a cup to add hot water to the baking dish, adding enough water to reach the top of the mold or loaf pan. Bake the flan until the custard is set but still jiggles when shaken and a skewer stuck into the flan about 1-inch from the pan edge comes out clean, about 1 hour and 25 minutes.
- Carefully lift the mold out of the pan and refrigerate it until it is completely chilled. Turn off the oven and let the water in the baking dish cool a little before removing it.
- To serve, set the mold over direct heat until the bottom gets hot, about 1 minute. (This is to melt the bottom layer of caramel so that the flan will slip out of the mold.) Run a knife around the edge of the flan to loosen it from the mold. Invert a serving platter on top of the mold and then turn the mold upside down onto the plate. Remove the mold. Cut the flan into slabs and serve.

RAKHI SPECIAL

Mark And Memorialize The Eternal Bond of Love

Raksha Bandhan holds a special place in every Indian heart, as brothers and sisters on this special occasion, commensurate their strong emotional bonds. The ongoing pandemic has also made us revisit our relationships and ensure that we keep them strong. To make this momentous day even more special, **Ferns N Petals and other brands** have come up with a unique idea to celebrate this bond of togetherness, and this year to make this eternal bond of love stronger and fresh forever.



Ferns N Petals brings Trendiest Rakhi Collection

Food Trails Rakhi

These cute little mouth-watering delicacies in the form of Rakhis are exclusively handcrafted, bringing to your loved ones the flavours of food. **Made with Thai clay, each piece takes three days to be ready.** Offering in menu everything - from soft-melting GulabJamun and ever favourite KajuKatli to Paneer Tikka to North-Indian Parantha with Lassi to classic South Indian Sambar Dosa to Punjabi Dal-Makhni Nan to yummy Burgers, Sandwiches and crispy Lays. These rakhis have **embedded magnets in the pieces** so that every time your brother opens the fridge door, the pieces would recall your everlasting sibling love.

Agate Stone Rakhi

The stunning Agate Stone Rakhi with gold plated edges is the perfect choice for sisters looking for attractively designed rakhis. The uneven surface and the raw edges give each piece a unique look making the bond even more special. These are available in shades of **Blue, Green, and Pink.**

Personalized Rakhi

Manifest the affection for your beloved brother or sister with expressive Personalized Rakhi available on the website. To express love and respect, one can get engraved the favorite image or the name of their sibling on a range of designer rakhis available in the category. This range also includes stylish **Leather Rakhi with Personalization** and **Metal Rakhi with Laser Personalization.**

Apart from Personalized Rakhi App, other **Digital Gifting** options offered by FNP for Rakshabandhan are Violinist on Call, Singer on Call, Flute Tunes on Call, E-Yoga Training Classes and Personalized Celebrity Video Messages for siblings from renowned artists like Shaan, KailashKher, IshaKoppikar, Jay Bhanushali, Hitesh Tejwani, JhontyRodes, Rohit Roy, etc.





Argento by Aditi Amin

RakshaBandhan is a very special occasion for brothers and sisters. It celebrates the love between them and the fact that siblings have been your true companion throughout your life. RakshaBandhan is celebrated by sister tying a Rakhi on her brother's wrist, and brother gifts something very special to their sisters.

To make this RakshaBandhan extra special **Argento by Aditi Amin** has launched a **Rakshabandhan's special jewellery collection**, which makes gift-giving easier and more fun. It includes great gifting options such as Hoops, Studs, personalized bracelets. Along with a variety of options, Argento also ensures that gifting jewellery does not burn a hole in your pocket as the price range is under Rupees 5000 only. To provide more options to their customers, Argento has kept the option of customized jewellery option open.



Celebrates The Everlasting Love

Every sister in this country eagerly waits for Raksha Bandhan as this is the time when she can demand any gift from her brother and he has to oblige. If you are also looking for a pretty gift to bring a smile on her face, Jewellery Designer Archana Aggarwal's beautiful gift range is for you. Check out our gorgeous selection of beautiful Rakhi gifts for your sister.

Graceful jewellery collection: Exquisite earrings and gorgeous rings are a part of our rakhi collection jewellery. The entire collection celebrates the beautiful bond between a brother and a sister

Beautiful gold jewellery design: Each and every jewellery piece in the rakhi special gift collection epitomises grace. The contemporary and chic pieces speak a lot about modern women and their choices. The pieces are enough to create a strong fashion statement. Every piece, be it the kada, ring, or earring, displays intricate and modern designs.

Gold and diamond earrings: The studded gold earrings in the rakhi jewellery collection features a numbers of designs and patterns. There are clip-on, bali-style earrings and much more. Our drop earrings with pearls are to die for. Your sister will surely go crazy over them. All the earrings included in the collection are gorgeous, and can be worn on casual, formal, as well as traditional occasions

Traditional design patterns: If your sister adores traditional design patterns, you will get many beautiful pieces to gift her on Raksha Bandhan. Our collection has traditional design pieces like a peacock collection, rings and pendants, temple jewellery, as well as plain earrings, rings, and bracelets.

Gold/ diamond rings: This collection features stunning finger rings that can be worn regularly. The lightweight rings look extremely alluring, and goes with any look be it modern or traditional. Our special rakhi jewellery collection comprises most stunning rings in terms of their design, pattern, and workmanship. The modern rings are eye-candy for the college-going girls to some and these are elegant for housewives; the collection has something for everyone. It also features gemstone rings.

Raksha Bandhan is a celebration of the everlasting love between brother and sister duo. This beautiful rakhi jewellery piece by Archana Aggarwal makes the celebration remarkable.



Commemorate Bond Of Togetherness With Vibrant Gifts

Raksha Bandhan is the most precious day of the year that fills everyone's heart with excitement and brothers eagerly wait for the rakhis to be decked up on their wrists by their loving sisters.

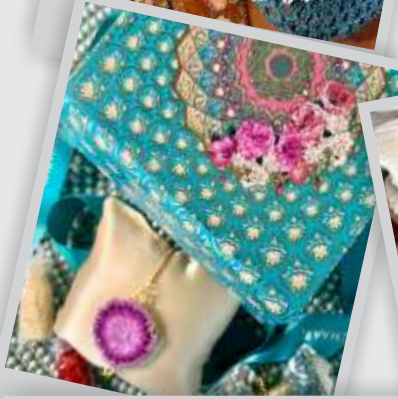
To make this day even more memorable and remarkable, Izhaar has come up with a unique idea to celebrate this bond of togetherness. Curate a personalised box of love for your dear brother or sister, and Izhaar will deliver to his doorstep, a gift always to reckon with. Luxury & sustainable, each box is a statement piece that can be used as a home decor item. Right from wooden carved boxes to luxury leather boxes, Izhaar has it all! Izhaar has launched a wide range of Semi-Precious Agate Stone and Silver Rakhis for you to choose from. To make for a complete hamper, it has also added handcrafted sweets, with individual & contactless packing to each box of love. To top it all, Izhaar is sending a Personalised Note for your Dear Brother, it's bound to bring a smile to his face even if you are not going to spend this day with him!

Talking about this occasion Ruchita Bansal Creative Director & Founder of IZHAAR shares, "The festive season has arrived and my team is all set to make it special for you! On this occasion of Raksha Bandhan, we'll make sure that you cherish the special bond with your siblings even if you're away from them. We have followed all safety measures while curating this experience."

She further added, "We have created beautiful Rakhi gift boxes with semi-precious stone Rakhis and statement gift items. Ranging from luxury room diffusers to white marble boxes and handcrafted sweets, we have tried to create a perfect gift hamper. Through our gift collection, we found that adding bright patterns and peppy colours make heads turn".

Izhaar offers a wide range of gifting options to celebrate this day. Innovative designs and intricacy is the USP! Curated specially for this day, all the products in this collection are bound to make this occasion extra special!

Mark this special relationship and bond you have with your sister in style.



A man and a woman are standing next to a vintage motorcycle on a dirt path. The man is wearing a blue and yellow striped jersey with 'INDIA 31' on it and blue jeans. The woman is wearing a yellow jacket and blue jeans. They are both smiling. The motorcycle is a vintage model with a large headlight and round mirrors. The background is a blurred green landscape.

A Heartwarming Journey Mixed With Love Loss And Emotions

Written By
Nabanita Dutta

Story: When romance blossoms between Kizie and Manny, two youngsters fighting cancer, they live their life to fullest even after knowing the fact that an inevitable tragedy is hovering over their head.

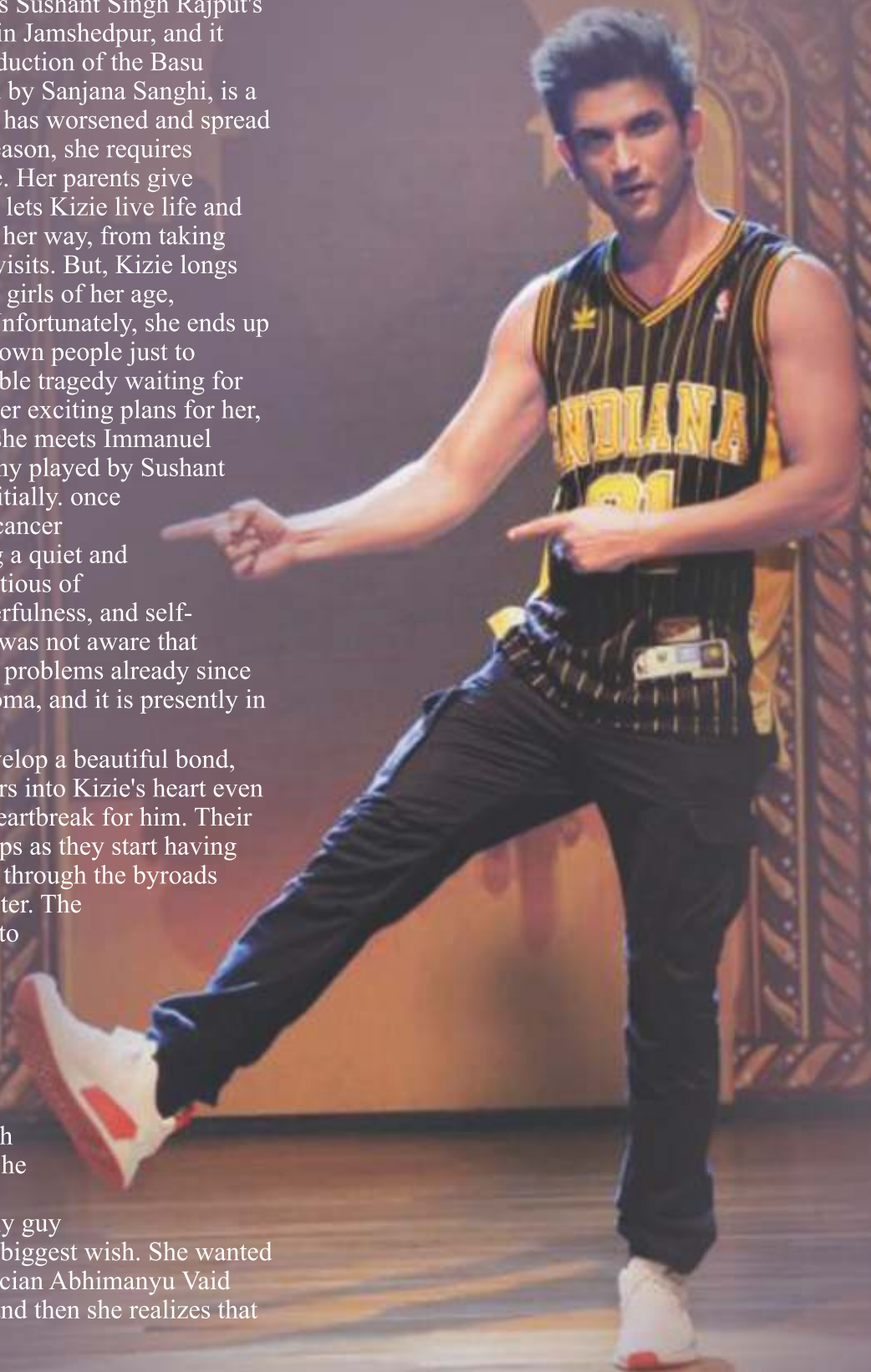
Review: 'Dil Bechara' is a Hindi movie adapted from John Green's famous novel 'The Fault in Our Stars' that became popular back in 2012. Hollywood's adaptation from the book received accolades as well as critical acclamations in 2016.

A story describing life's ephemeral nature, which is quite poetic, Dil Bechara is Sushant Singh Rajput's last film. The story brews in Jamshedpur, and it begins with a simple introduction of the Basu family. Kizie Basu, played by Sanjana Sanghi, is a thyroid cancer patient that has worsened and spread to her lungs. Due to this reason, she requires oxygen support every time. Her parents give complete support, and this lets Kizie live life and accept things that come in her way, from taking bleaks to regular hospital visits. But, Kizie longs for a normal life like other girls of her age, boyfriends, crushes, etc. Unfortunately, she ends up attending funerals of unknown people just to connect with the unavoidable tragedy waiting for her. But, life had some other exciting plans for her, and things change when she meets Immanuel Rajkumar Junior aka Manny played by Sushant Singh Rajput in college initially. Once again, she meets him at a cancer support group. Kizie being a quiet and introvert girl, was first cautious of Manny's high energy, cheerfulness, and self-confident nature. But, she was not aware that Manny is battling with his problems already since he has survived osteosarcoma, and it is presently in remission.

Later on, both of them develop a beautiful bond, and Manny somehow enters into Kizie's heart even after she tries to prevent heartbreak for him. Their adorable chemistry develops as they start having fun and making memories through the byroads of Jamshedpur on his scooter. The only motive they had was to make every moment memorable, and so they even shot a Bhojpuri film for Jagdish Pandey played by Sahil Ved, Manny's close friend. It was Jagdish's dream, which he wanted to fulfill before he loses his eyesight due to cancer. Manny being a jolly guy even tries to fulfill Kizie's biggest wish. She wanted to meet her favourite musician Abhimanyu Vaid played by Saif Ali Khan, and then she realizes that

Manny has already swept her off her feet, and she is in love with him. Little did she know that a tragic twist in her tale is waiting on the other end of her life.

The poignant story of Dil Bechara makes it a must-watch film for everyone, and also the unforgettable young actor who left too soon. The story focuses on celebrating every moment of life even after knowing that life is all about inevitability. This is what pushes energy inside the audience through Manny, who knows how to live everyday like it's last.





Sushant Singh Rajput successfully navigated through his character, and his stellar performance cannot stop anyone from falling in with him all over again. An intense, lively, charming yet vulnerable nature of Manny undoubtedly put a smile on every face even after watching the film with a heavy heart. Sushant effortlessly absorbed his character and oozed out his charm in every way. So, Sushant did add a commendable work to his legacy once again. The outstanding moves that he came up with for the title track, has been choreographed by Farah Khan. Sanjana Sanghi makes a debut in the film with a leading role, and she successfully made a confident entry with her performance.

When it comes to supporting cast, Swastika Mukherjee and Saswata Chatterjee played Kizie's parents. Their performance in the movie is outstanding, and talking about Saif Ali Khan's cameo is undoubtedly noteworthy. A.R Rahman along with Amitabh Bhattacharya developed the soundtrack, and it has been blended with fantastic yet melodious music such as Khulke Jeene Ka, Dil Bechara, and Taare Ginn. The chemistry between Manny and Kizie is no doubt refreshing and lively, and the ecstatic cinematography made by Satyajit Pande has been shot in Paris.

Mukesh Chhabra and the writers Suprotim Sengupta as well as Shashank Khaitan ensure smooth narration of the story. The movie will take you through tender yet cute and touchy moments between Manny, Kizie, as well as her parents. You have to be prepared for some emotional scenes that will bring tears.

The film does come with a breezy spirit, but being Sushant's last film, the movie will certainly leave a sea of emotions along with a heavy heart, especially when people will remember that this lively person is not with us anymore. So, it can be said that 'Dil Bechara' movie unfolds the realization of Sushant Singh's untimely demise.

The gnawing feeling of Sushant, who gave marvelous and superb performances in his short career span deserved more accolades and appraisals than what he received. Both Sanjana Sanghi and Sushant Singh Rajput successfully established a lively rapport with each other. Apart from the characters, the movie beautifully portrays a small-town ambiance of Jamshedpur. Also, the audience will be able to see Tata Main Hospital, Tata Steel Plant, Jubilee Park, and Payal Cinema in the movie. All these things gave a perfect backdrop for Manny and Kizie's world of joy.

Swastika Mukherjee gave a calibrated performance along with Saswata Chatterjee, and together they made a great pair as Kizie's parents. Sanjana Sanghi, even after being a newcomer gave a striking performance in the movie, and Manny's killer smile will no doubt take everyone's heart away. Dil Bechara will no doubt always be a memory of Sushant Singh Rajput, and his potentiality that he put into his films. Even though 'The Fault in our Stars' came with disarming simplicity as well as youthfulness, and pulled audiences' heartstrings.

But, on the other hand, Dil Bechara will not shake Bollywood since it brought a curtain call of one of the most talented actors who gave back to back hit movies. Dil Bechara premiered on Disney+Hotstar this Friday, and the audience celebrated his success to pay him a huge tribute and to remember his contributions to this industry.





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