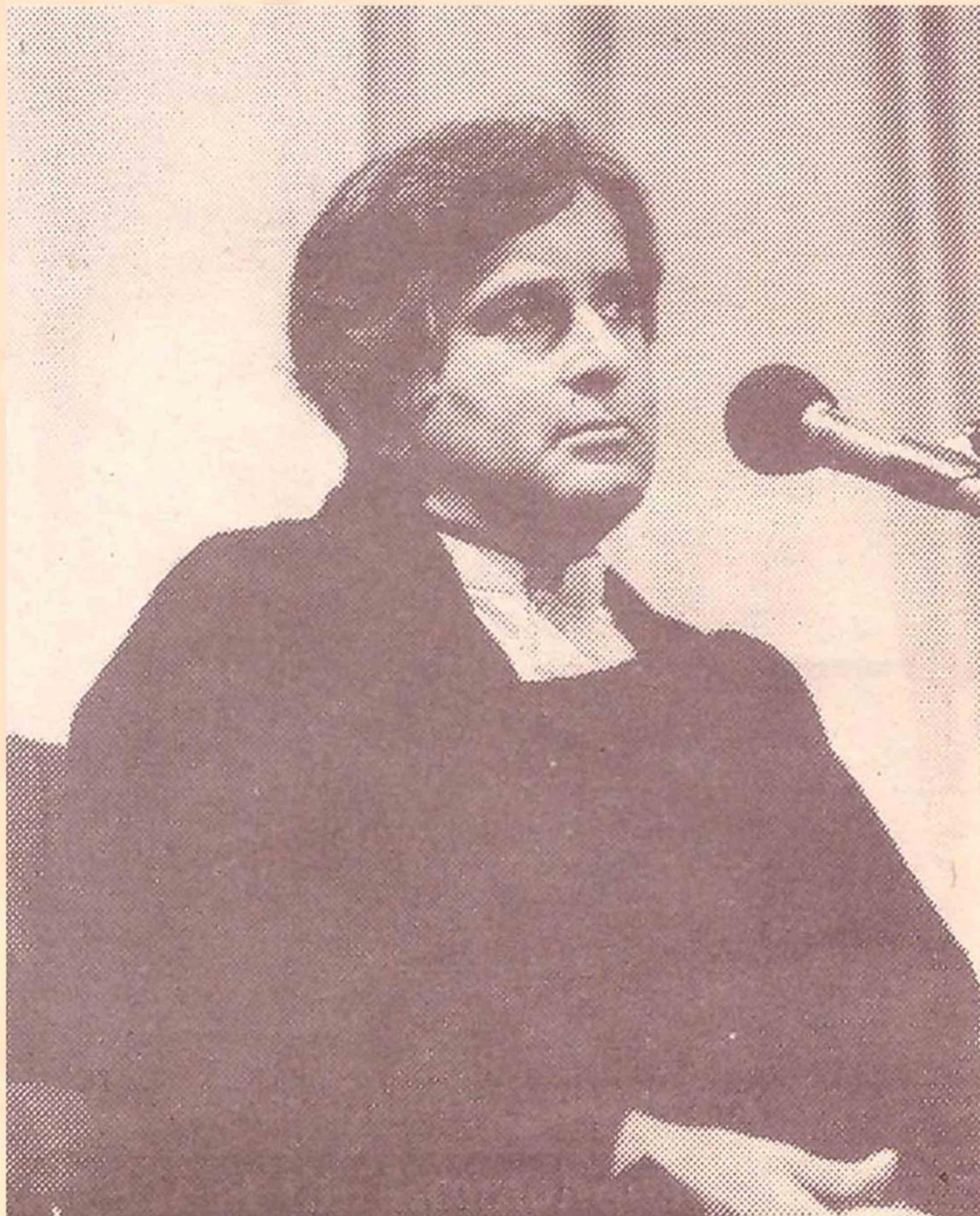




SHASHI KAPOOR

SCH....YOU KNOW WHO.... IT'S SHASHI KAPOOR

by Naqi Ali

Shashi Kapoor was in London to appear on a stage interview at Roundhouse on 30 March. He cut his busy schedule in Bombay, turned up tired after eighteen hours flight owing to a delay at Dubai and was still on time for the interview and very alert. One of the most articulate artistes from Bombay's film industry, he kept the audience's attention with his wit. The next day *Asian Times* spoke to him at his luxurious office in the West End of London.

We began with *Uran*, his latest production. Shashi Kapoor looks happy and relaxed. The film has started to pay off now and he can look forward to his other projects. "All of my films are different" says Shashi. The *Uran* is off beat. It is a light comedy, well acted and directed. Reacting to my comments about the political undertone of the film, Shashi admits, winking implacably, whether one likes it or not the politics creep into it. Shashi is happy with his part as a villain, a comical - anti-hero. "This part was actually meant for Amitabh Bachchan," says Shashi. "but Amitabh fell ill and I had to do it myself." And he thoroughly enjoyed it. As for the influence of Fellini and Pasolini on

the film (another im-jah wish) he believes they both are masterful conversationalists. "I'm a modern day like Girish Karnad I found to be influenced by them."

The phone kept ringing and many of Shashi's business associates were hovering around at the office. The drinks started to circulate. The conversation turned round to his role in other films. Being 45, Shashi is not resigned to be a character actor. Given are the days when he used to be a young, debonair hero. As a matter of fact after doing a lead role in *Yeh Dilli Tooti*, he has not come back to the screen. "I've half a career South, *Poor Ki Jan*, *Apnaa*, *Ek Hote Do*, *Ek Tu*, all in character roles and Shashi is looking forward to many more."

I asked Shashi Kapoor to elaborate on the point he made at the Roundhouse interview about the good cinema and the bad cinema. Shashi thinks good cinema is the one where one can identify oneself with the hero's terms of beauty, philosophy and literature. And adding, "one drinks up phone calls that brought me to his

own productions. Shashi has used four renowned filmmakers - Shyam Benegal for *Jaanam*, Govind Nihalani for *Vijay*, Apurva Sen for *16 Chatterbox Lane* and Girish Karnad for *Uran*. They were all good, meaningful films. With the sole exception of *Jaanam* none of his films have ever recovered costs. Things are now looking better for *Uran*. Shashi is now producing two formula films using the biggest directors and stars, Amitabh and Sri



In conversation with Parminder Vir at the Roundhouse

Always an ear for the public

Devi is one of them. He hopes them to be money spinners. He hopes he would still be making good films, with the money and would make with his purely commercial ventures.

Captional phone calls and friends and associates hovering around did not deter him to listen to each question carefully. Feline to the point of mal-

ling his guest embarrassed, he elaborated on his relationship with the 'other' or a 'year-lit' cinema. Shashi believes there is a lot of potential and some fine talent in the 'other'

Facing the world - dignified and if necessary defiant

cinema. But they should realise their responsibilities. They should know that they are accountable to the people and they should find a formula to reach the audience they intend to reach so much instead of harping on

the hype. Shashi Kapoor has very strong ties with the theatre. His wife Jennifer Kapoor who lives in London, last year, comes from a family deeply involved in the theatre, and his father Prithvi Raj

Kapoor was a great Magdool of Indian theatre. Prithvi Theatre in Bombay, which Shashi has established in memory of his father, is doing a great deal to promote theatre in India. Shashi is pleased that his daughter has now entered the

phone rings again, more people with in the room and my question is sent to the telephone. And back to the nice ties again and more conversation....

How would he like to be remembered? The



Signing autographs for his fans, in company with Asian Times Managing Editor Pakash Singh

(1)

①. Welcome - Shashi Kapoor & Raedhouse Black Arts
- last acts before demise of GLC.

②. Introduction. Needs no introduction. Household name.
He is to Indians what Sean Connery, Roger Moore, Robert Redford "is" to west.
His acting matches any of the great film actors of the west.

For those who do not know:

Shashi is the ~~youngest~~ ^{youngest} son of Pitruviraj Kapoor of the silent era, a brother of the famous Raj Kapoor who gave us *Awara* like *Bagh*, *Anarm*, *Robby* and to name recent ones *Teri Ganga Meri* (first kiss on to screen). The Kapoor family for Pitruviraj Kapoor onwards have become a kind of living legend in the history of Indian cinema. Their names and status continues as each generation has produced a super star.

Shashi Kapoor made his debut in acting - *Agar*, *Anarm*.

③ ~~Agar~~

You have asked in film too numerous to mention and in the last years produced a number of very successful films.

♀ Given your father's established position and your brother's success in the film industry, I did not put you off & encourage you to go for yourself.

(2)

④. When you were a child what movie made the greatest impression on you.

⑤. How did you select which roles to accept and which to reject. Have the fundamental principles changed over the years.

⑥. OF all your films is there any one which you see as a turning point for the development of your career which is true any one film in your 37 years of acting which launched you into stardom and acquired you the role of Superstar.

⑦. Indian Cinema has evolved dramatically from religious mythological films of 20/30s; to social reformist films of 40/50 and the emergence of "new cinema" in the 60s-70s. You have been a witness and participant to some of the changes.

What would you identify as your favourite period in the development of the Indian Cinema.

②

Film acting was not your only interest. In fact you worked with your father theatrical company as an assistant stage manager and it was during one of these tours that you met Jennifer Kendal who you married and who died very tragically two years ago. Jennifer's contribution to the development of contemporary Indian Theatre will long be with us.

⑧. How did Jennifer influence your career, your creative thinking and development?

⑨. How did her interest in theatre affect your film making, acting.

⑩. When I met Jennifer in London what impressed me most about her was her knowledge about the Black Theatre and things there both in Britain. She was very keen to establish exchange pages with her theatre as the host.

(11)

11 You had three teenage children - are they also going towards acting?

(12) You had had a long steady relationship with Merchant & Ivory starting in 1962 Householders; 1965 Shakespearewalla; 1970 Bombay Talkies to Heart & Dust.

How did this begin and what do you find interesting about working with them.

⑬ When did you set up your production company 'Shashi Kapoor Productions' and why.

⑭ You have produced some very successful films namely - Junoon 1978

Junoon 1978 directed by Shyam Benegal based on story by Ruskin Bond titled "A Flight of Pigeons" - a historic epic with vivid action and absorbing human story. A drama of 1857 Sepoy Rebellion.

What attracted you to this subject

36 Chowringhee Lane - starred Jennifer Kendal. French
by F. Signif only of making
social film.

Did you make conscious choice / did you have doubts about Appermeier's ability to direct.

Utsav lavish production. Included - 1984 IFFI
made two version - Hindi / English.

Why did you make two versions
not success.

Kalyug

(6).

Shyam. Bheegal are all making T.V series. ~~How~~

How is T.V affecting your production. Are you producing like for T.V,

11. How do you see India films evolving over the next 10 years given the ~~large~~ growth of video & Televis in India. Will people still flock to see the movies in the cinema.

2) Plans for Film - Film + Theatre

1) Thank you for being with us and sharing your thoughts.

2) Thank the Roundhouse for taking to invite to invite Shashi and for giving me the opportunity to talk with him.

Facts

22+9 shots

16 Ghana language with an script

1652 dials

1983 - produced 768

largest no. in Telugu.

Developed of India Cinema

• religious mythology film of 20/30's
Social-reformist film 40/50's
critique of social evils such
as dowry system, prostitution

End of 50's marked the ~~end of~~ exclusion of cinema
in this narrow field.

Thinkers like Roy in Do Bigha Zamin
Roy in Pather Panchali

Both film seen by large audiences, discussed, talked
about. Signalled end of monopoly of
"the national - historical - social system"

Theoretical approach & finally also changed. Influenced
by French & Japanese film

Change - social & political movement - Individualistic
ideological debate with to culture that based
then it look internally. See new wave in
context of social change & not technological or
over style.

FACTS

22 + 9 States

16 official languages with own script
'52 dialects.

1 763 (720 in colour & 43 black)

①

RK Films : attracted by proletarian theme made film
Cito Success, Tiger to Rho

Funds from Columbia Pictures.

Reenacted adventures of the Kendall family which had toured India in Shakespeare performances. Production won critical acclaim & sharp letters into Stardom.

Interest because film was first Indo American collaboration as opposed to many Indo Soviet collaborations

1962 Householder Merchant Ivory Production.

1978 Juncos Story by Ruskin Bond titled
 as Flight of Pigeons, historic epic
 with vivid action & absorbing human story.
 An Indian Grand into the wind
 Drama of the 1857 Sepoy rebellion

Shashi approached Sharmy Denezel to direct what interested you in this subject. First was
of Independence; Putting.

Period of late 60's - 70's, emergence of two kinds of
Cinema. New & Art and Populist
Ray, Ser, Bengel, Gurish known & critical
all experimented with form & technique
and widened subject matter of Indian
films. Period of new birth

wanted to lit away to "miserable ancient syndrome",
wanted to express something & avoid ending.

Effects of Emergency June 1975

20 Point Program initiated by G. Banning of the
Like Andolan & Kissa Kussi Ka. Ask question
in relation to Censorship. Effects on Indian Film
industry. Any worse than any other country.

New Indian Cinema

Genesis, growth & trends of the New Cinema.

Result of technological changes
thematic changes
change in theoretical approach
changes in media environment.

~~Effect~~
* Effects Richard Attenborough making Gandhi

* Effect of the Raj Narkharia - ~~the~~ Gandhi, For
Parag Mehta, Parag Mehta, Parag Mehta - to crown, about a day
on Indian Film Industry.

to have a more of the as he shows abroad in film
retrospect, series. IS that
makers will begin to make film
marked '1'.

36 Crowsing's book (H81) was sent away.
Kandell played to lead, but it was
deserted by G. No first film. Did you
make conscious choice

" Your earliest celeb was - your brother Jit to
I well know Raj Kaper Ag. Anand and
later Satyame Shivam Sundaram
~~Did you~~

" 1985 saw the election of these two film stars
to Lok Sabha -

" Production company which will produce low cost serious
production like utra ^{diff} low cost serious
cinema story & make films to suit different
sections of society

Concentrate on be aff'd without undermining the
artistic element

" Latest film New Delhi Time by Ramesh Sharma
1st Grade film. Best described as Political
Thriller
Already a video market.

* Influenced by Ray, Sen,

- Is this really possible. Can you really operate
with your foot in each camp and still come
out successful producer

- ⑤. Last few years saw the revival of the
Raj Nostalgia with the like Gandhi,
The Pavillians, Dussard & India, Travel in the
Green, West & West.

What effect if any did time interest
- India has a to fl industry, has
~~there been~~ ~~received~~ it affected to distribute of
India Fls abroad; advanced to chances of
(products with America - Europe.

- (19). T.V. ~~how~~ India is dependy in a big way
 & I notice a number of the well known
 directed Sen, Ray, Ghosh, Ghosh,

LKS.

6 & 7th

Faily had - letter
Chaly Chaplin
Don Ford
John Wayne

1944 - 7th Confy

Chely. Lying at 3 a.m.
Asked: all in

Secure

Present Dead - Shark Gaudio
- 70's Shark Gaudio

Fisher Fendash

Video

Positive item

28th Feb

Politics

1/4 on
2/4 on
3/4 on
4/4 on

1/4 on
2/4 on
3/4 on
4/4 on

TWELVE DAY AT

The Roundhouse

TOILETS

CRÈCHE

ENTRANCE

THE

EXHIBITION

EXHIBITION



Being welcomed at The Roundhouse by Rohan Jayasekera

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