

*The world speaks to me in colors
my soul answers in music..!*

Ravindranath Tagore



INDIAN FILM ACADEMY

Presents

Singing In Cinema

(Documentary / Beta -DVD / 2005 / 70mins)

Concept / Research / Written / Directed
By
Ashok Rane

Produced by
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For

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Singing In Cinema

A film by
Ashok Rane

A lot has been said and written about song and dance format of Indian cinema and something very important is yet to be told to the world. What's that..? The song and dance are not just for sake of entertainment but they are part and parcel of cinematic expression of Indian cinema. There are instances where songs have played the role of very vital scenes. Remove them and the whole narrative would crumble. There are many more reasons why Indian cinema has song and dance and at the same time one cannot deny the fact that the song and dance are over used. But all said and done it is a fact that Indian cinema has its own peculiar identity among cinema of the world. 'Singing In Cinema ' touches various aspects of song and dance format of Indian cinema. The renowned personalities of Indian cinema and film academics like Ashutosh Gowariker, Govind Nihalani, Jabbar Patel, Amol Palekar, Vishal Bharadwaj, Atul Kulkarni, Maithili Rao have expressed their studied and elaborative views on the topic, which are supported by clippings from numerous films right from the first talkie of India made in 1931. The film also briefly mentions how the film music was under influence of theatre in the beginning and how attained its own identity eventually. 'Singing In Cinema ' is a film that brings all those nostalgic memories of melodious film music and also introduces Indian cinema in its right perspective.

The film is on DVD and duration is 70 minutes. This would follow an interactive session of about 50 minutes.

Singing In Cinema
Song & Dance Format of Indian Cinema
A Talk & Audio-Video Presentation

By
Ashok Rane

Indian cinema has its own peculiar identity. It is because of its song and dance format that makes it different and unique. The Indian cinema is the only cinema in the world that has this very distinct identity. Right from the day one the talkie era started with Ardeshir Irani's Alamara (1931), the Indian cinema has used this format and over the years kept on evolving it for various reasons. India has a long tradition of classical and folk music and dance. Not only that Indian theatre has very strong element of the both. When cinema arrived in India in 1896, Indian theatre was at its peak. Any genres in theatre, whether it be social, comedy, historical, mythological, it had songs and the audience clapped it UP. It was too an extent that they kept their rationale aside and wholeheartedly praised the songs. People used to go to see plays repeatedly for their songs. Mostly they were classical based. For them it was theatre and also a sort of musical concert. This is the time Indian cinema evolved, first as silent movies and than talkie. The moment it started 'talking' it kept singing prominently, profoundly. This was a clear influence of theatre. And since than it never stopped singing. Songs became an integral part of Indian cinema. One can go to an extent and make a statement that *songs are part and parcel of cinematic expression of Indian cinema*. There are instances where songs have played a vital role in dramatic scenes. Remove them and the whole structure would crumble.

Indian cinema has been using songs in its narrative subtly and also unnecessarily. There are generations of audience, which have kept humming melodious songs all these years, but they have also been criticizing simultaneously for the overuse of the format. There was also a fraction of audience right from the beginning who always rejected songs, saying that they make a film over emotional and melodramatic. But all said and done, songs are still there in Indian cinema and with change of time they have kept on taking newer forms and trying experimentation.

There are several issues, which are involved in song and dance format of Indian cinema. In my talk I try to tackle most them and analyze this peculiar format of Indian cinema. During my talk I show clippings from the films for last 75 years (1931-2006) to support my analysis.

This is followed by a 70 minute documentary 'Singing In Cinema', which is based on my concept and research and written and directed by me. After this a Q-A session will be held. A detailed note on the documentary is given separately.

The talk and the entire presentation emphasize a need to look at this peculiar identity of Indian cinema, with a view to understand it better.

ASHOK RANE, the Director of IFA - Indian Film Academy, in one of the noted Film Critics, a Film Academician, Researcher and Writer. He has been in film journalism for the last three decades. In this tenure of thirty years he has been writing extensively on Indian and World cinema. He has been attending Film Festivals not only in India but all over the world. This academician has watched and studied films made all over the world, right from the first film of the world made by the Lumiere Brothers of France in 1895.

As a missionary of good cinema, as he is fondly known, he has been actively participating in film society movement for the last twenty-five years.

Ashok Rane is regularly attending Indian Film Festivals since 1984. He has been invited as Film Critic to the **Berlin International Film Festival** since 1996 and so far he has attended the same seven times. He was also invited to the **Locarno Film Festival** (Switzerland) in 1999 and **Sundance** and **Asian Film Festival** (Orlando) in USA in 2002. He was a member of **FIPRESCI** (The Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique) Jury for **Moscow International Film Festival** - 2003.

He has visited various Film Institutions, Film Schools, Film Archives, Studios in Berlin, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Bern, Zurich, New York, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Hollywood and Moscow. He has visited several major art galleries and also Science Institutes in almost all these cities.

While individually conducting Film Appreciation Courses he has also been a member of the visiting faculty for Film Technique, Appreciation, Criticism and Aesthetics at the **University of Mumbai** and other renowned Institutes such as **Xavier's Institute of Communication**, S.N.D.T. University and many more.

He has also successfully tried his hand in creative writing. television serials and Radio Programmes.

'Cinemachi Chittarkatha', 'Chitra Manatla', 'Anubhav', 'Chitrapat Ek Pravast' and the compilation of his most popular column in the largest circulating Marathi Daily 'Loksatta', 'Sakkhe Sobti' are few of his popular published works. 'Sakhkhe Sobti' was awarded Kokan Marathi Vangmay Purskar in 2004. He has recently edited a book 'Views & Thoughts on Scriptwriting' focusing writing for Indian cinema, which is first of its kind.

He received the first **National Award** for his book 'Cinemachi Chittarkatha' in 1996 and the second one for Best Film Critic in 2002.

Though being a hard core film lover, Ashok Rane has great admiration for Theatre, Literature, Music, and Painting.

The Indian Film Academy (IFA) has been formed to reintroduce Indian cinema to the film lovers of world over in its right perspective and also to make conscious efforts to enlighten people about the role of cinema in our society. IFA does this by conducting various courses, workshops, seminars, series of lectures on various topics, publishing an annual issue of **ifa Cinema**, books on Indian cinema and producing series of documentaries. The first issue of **ifa Cinema** which dealt with the best of Indian cinema was published in 7th Mumbai International Film Festival last year. The book '**Views & Thoughts on Scriptwriting**', the first of its kind in context with Indian cinema, was released by renowned filmmaker Ashutosh Gowariker at the concluding function of recently held 8 Days Workshop on Scriptwriting. IFA has produced a documentary 'Singing In Cinema', the first in the series of documentaries on various aspects of Indian cinema, which has been received very well by film lovers and media as well. This documentary discusses all the aspects of song and dance format of Indian cinema. IFA, Indian Film Academy, is the brainchild of Mr. Ashok Rane.

At IFA we eat Cinema, drink Cinema, and breathe Cinema ...



INDIAN FILM ACADEMY

