

'NEHA BHASIN AND ADITI SINGH SHARMA WOULD BE MY MUSES'

Mamta Sharma answers a few quick questions about all things music

The crooner of spicy numbers such as *Munni Badnam* (Dabangg, 2010), *Fevicol Se* (Dabangg 2, 2012) and *Taang Uthake* (Housefull 3, 2016) among others dropped a single, *Song Change* (feat. J Hind) recently. Mamta says about the infectious dance track, "We mostly shot at nights and it was difficult to stay energised till the wee hours. But it feels so great that it got 10 million views so quickly." The songstress shares some of her favourites...



Mamta Sharma



A still of Kamariya from Stree

ON MY PLAYLIST

5 DANCE SONGS I'M GROOVING TO

Akh Lad Jaave — LoveYatri
Kamariya — Stree
Bom Diggy Diggy — Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety
Hauli Hauli by Garry Sandhu
Aa Re Pritam Pyaare — Rowdy Rathore

MY ALL-TIME FAVOURITE SONG

Hungama Ho Gaya from *Anhonee* (1973), which was sung by Asha Bhosle and starred Bindu. Its lyrics,

tune, music arrangement and the combination of Ashaji and RD Burman make it so awesome.

MY FAVOURITE SINGER

Ashaji because she is so versatile and sings *ghazals, bhajans*, sad songs, romantic tracks and cabarets with equal ease. She also performs these live as beautifully. If I ever have to sing a song by her, it would be *Nisha* from *Sanam Teri Kasam*.

DREAM COLLABORATOR

Sanjay Leela Bhansali

because he has the same kind of passion for the music in his projects as he has for the direction and production. The soundtrack blends so well with the film each time.

IF I WERE A COMPOSER, MY MUSE WOULD BE
Neha Bhasin and Aditi Singh Sharma because these two beauties are gifted with such lovely voices and the way they use it is just amazing.

— Dhaval Roy

'THE MADNESS OF SEEING PEOPLE CONNECT TO A SONG'

... is what has kept Prashant Ingole, lyricist of *Malaal*, going in spite of struggling for 17 years

Dhaval Roy

Lyricist Prashant Ingole looks at song-writing the same way he views life — both are irreversible. He explains, "Whatever we do, happens only once. When your work goes into the archives, there's no taking it back. Everything you can do, should happen while you're doing it. So, I believe going slow is the key." And that's why he took almost two years to write the lyrics for the six out of seven numbers in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's production, *Malaal*, starring Sharmin Segal and Meezaan. He also credits it to SLB himself, since the filmmaker likes to take time working on a film's music. Prashant jokes, "I'm a chef, too. I like my work to have marination and cooking time."

Breaking the monotony

With his lyrics, Prashant has tried to kill the monotony of Punjabi music that's rampant in Bollywood. There are songs like the rowdy *Aila Re*, and the most-recently released celebration ditty *Udhal Ho* that are both high-energy with Marathi



A still from Udhal Ho in Malaal

dhol-taasha beats. "I've tried to keep the words more realistic, earthy and centred towards *Bambaiya* lexicon," he informs, adding that there's also a romantic track lined up apart from the heartrending title number.



Prashant Ingole

Since the soundtrack is a potpourri, which emotion comes most easily to him? "I don't know where the words come from. It's magical because I'm a Marathi guy and as a student, I used to get just about 35 out of 100 in Hindi," he chuckles. "I've struggled a lot for 17 years to reach where I am. So, every time I have to write something, I'm transported to those days and words just flow," he elaborates.

Direction and screenwriting

Prashant, who has written lyrics in *Race 2* (2013) *Mary Kom* (2014), *Bajirao Mastani* (2015) among others, is also dabbling in screenwriting and direction. He has three scripts in the offing. While he does have projects as a lyricist, he cannot reveal what they are. As a parting shot, he tells us that he's not in the profession for the money. "It's the madness of seeing people dance to a song and connect to it. That's the high I seek," he signs off.

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE AND DEATH

A NEW EXHIBITION SEES THREE FEMALE ARTISTS EXPLORE THESE CONCEPTS IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL WAYS

Rinky Kumar

Life and death are one thread, the same line viewed from different sides. These famous words by Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu in a way encapsulate what's in store for viewers when they visit *Osmosis*, an art exhibition which is currently underway at Tarq, an art gallery located in Colaba, Mumbai. Curated by Shaleen Wadhwana, it features the works of artists Rithika Merchant, Samanta Batra Mehta and Savia Mahajan. Each of them uses different mediums such as drawings, paintings in watercolour and ink, assemblage and collages, ceramic sculptures, found objects and digital prints to explore the universal truths of life as well as death while deciphering the meaning of distance and belonging.

THE CURATOR'S JOURNEY

Shaleen, who has been associated with art for several years mainly as a scholar and a teacher, got the concept while she was teaching her students last year. She says, "When we were building historical timelines, and studying ancient burial practices, a student in my class asked me about the History and Future of Death. It led to my curiosity about exploring the histories of ideas that permeate across time and



Daughters of the sky



Rithika Merchant



The Interior World

space, and nullify barriers, like death and life, and the feeling of home and belonging. Creating spaces that allow for that contemplation was the motivating factor in curating this show." What prompted her to approach Rithika, Samanta and Savia, was the fact that all three of them dabble with different mediums. She adds, "My primary thoughts were about the massive geographical movement of Rithika and Samanta, who have travelled extensively for their work, study and building their personal life, and how that has impacted their practice. Similarly, the repurposing of material by Savia, through everyday objects and creating sculptures of and from them, and Samanta, who re-contextualises 18th-19th century antiquarian books,

text and photographs in her practice, linked both these artists very strongly for me. As I delved deeper, I found that the usage of ink and iconography was common to all the three artists' practices."

ARTISTS' SPEAK

While Rithika has sought inspiration from myths, history and rituals, Samanta turned to anatomy and Savia delved into her fascination for ceramics and sculpture to explore the themes. Rithika says, "The



Samanta Batra Mehta



Illusion of identity and salvation #15



Shaleen Wadhwana

works in this show can be seen as a collection of modern artefacts that draw on myths, history and rituals. Each piece can be seen as a totem and invites the viewer to stitch together their own narrative, drawing on collective memories and signifiers to generate meanings. The work invites the viewer to connect with an archetypal part of

themselves and by extension tap into our collective roots. In doing so, I explore how objects can be markers of identity and how these may be reworked in contemporary contexts as meanings and interpretations change."

She adds that some of her works also explore feminine identity and the power of women. "People tend to associate femininity with things which are beautiful but passive, vulnerable, and weak. I attempt to use a variety of feminine symbols to recontextualise this and present a more rounded idea of femininity," she states.

Savia, on the other hand, was fascinated with the core themes as it helped to experiment with her medium further. She mentions, "The cycle of life and death as a subject was not such a challenge to face, as constant creation/constant destruction and its threshold as concepts lie at the heart of my practice and art making. But with home and belonging, it is difficult to portray these ideas in a symbolic form. Home to me is a transient space in its physical sense, but a permanent space in an emotional sense. Hence, if I held on to transience as a thought, it was accessible or simpler to express myself. Also, the everyday materials I use along with clay which seems visually blur or ambiguous like; paper, cloth, materials like natural loofa, pillows or



Savia Mahajan



Liminal Entity 2

quodiam extracts like tea and onion skin, supported the temporariness of home and belonging."

The artists sought inspiration from popular culture, mythology and even their personal experiences to create the artworks. Savia elaborates, "The notion of death and curiosity of what after and beyond it has been deeply embedded within me as a child. These questions find

Osmosis is on till August 10 at Tarq, Colaba from 11am-6:30 pm
Closed on Sundays and Mondays

their way into the art that I make. In the sculptural work titled *Resurgo* (that translates as Resurrection in Latin), which visually resembles discarded fire sparklers, the sparklers clustered as flower bouquets are used as a visual metaphor of 'Death' being a process of transformation and afterlife."

Likewise, Rithika used myths as a vehicle for telling certain stories and exploring certain ideas. She explains, "One of the references I've used is the myth of the Visha Kanya. According to it, young girls were made poisonous by exposing them to low-intensity poison from a very young age. They would develop immunity to it and their body fluids would become poisonous; any sexual contact with them would be lethal. They would then be used as assassins against powerful enemies. This depicts the complexity of what it is to be a woman — a warrior or weapon, a lethal symbol of seduction yet still a tool of the patriarchy. There is also a reference to the burning of the witches and Sita's *Agnipariksha* and how these stories represent men's fear of women as well as the fear and punishment of women in power."

CONTD FROM P1

WHAT IS CONSTANT IN MY LIFE IS THE WORSHIP OF LORD SHIVA: AMISH



Amish

It's just the pathway to the last paragraph that I had to discover. It's the same with the *Ram Chandra* series. I have the last chapter of the fifth book in my mind. Even the words of the last paragraph are very clearly there. I don't make notes, it just remains in my head. But I will discover the pathway to the last chapter as I write.

Do you want to write on other genres as well?

I do plan to get into non-fiction as well. But my first love will always be fiction. Even my fiction books begin with some non-fiction philosophy or premise that I want to convey. So, the non-fiction premise at the heart of the *Shiva* trilogy is the answer to the question, 'What is evil?' The non-fiction premise at the heart of the *Ram Chandra* series is an explanation of the debate that 'what is an ideal society?' I try and present my point of view on the subject through a fictional story.

What's the update on the rights for the film adaptation of the Shiva trilogy?

The rights have come back from Karan Johar, who's still a friend. We are going to make an announcement soon. We have signed with a Hollywood producer for a series based on the *Shiva* trilogy.

Have there been any queries regarding the rights of the Ram Chandra series?

I didn't want to have any deal before the release of *Raavan*. I have used a complex structure of the multi-linear narrative. The first book was about the birth of Lord Ram until the kidnapping of Goddess Sita. The second book was about Sita's birth until her abduction, while the third is about *Raavan's* birth till he kidnaps Sita. Fourth book onwards, it's a common narrative. It's only fair that the person who buys the rights sees how the story goes, which is why I wanted to do a deal only after the third book.



RAAVAN

NEW DELIVERY ALERT

Egged-on!



Australian Fry

The goodness of eggs cannot be denied. And so, it was with a happy heart that we learnt that Ghatkopar-based Ministry of Eggs has opened a new delivery-only outlet in Bandra. The menu remains the same as the original Mumbai outlet, which means you get all the scrambled, boiled and fried eggs you want, along with their signature dishes including Egg Khimchi Salad, Egg Lahori Combo, Lemon Pepper Omelette, Australian Fry and Egg Green Fry among others. Our order for a rainy Friday evening included an Australian Fry (₹245), a half fry that soaked up the yolk-based cheesy gravy along with boiled eggs, a must-have, especially for breakfast. The Peri Peri Roll (₹140 for maida and ₹155 for whole wheat) was eggy and spicy (and our favourite), while the *Anda Thali* (₹299) was a wholesome affair of egg *lasan kachu*, egg curry, fried, *paav*, salad and a beverage.