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# Contributors



## ROHAN SHRESTHA

Rohan Shrestha is an Indian-born Nepalese origin photographer who lives and works between Mumbai and New York. The son of one of India's pioneering photographers, Rakesh Shrestha, his photographs have made the covers of several prominent magazines, including *L'Officiel*, *Cosmopolitan*, *FHM*, *Grazia*, *Verve* and *Filmfare*, among others. For this issue of *MW*, Rohan shot Tiger Shroff for his very first cover feature with the magazine (page 98).

## ANAND VASU

Anand Vasu is one of India's most respected cricket journalists. He has followed the Indian team at home and away for over 15 years for outlets such as *Cricinfo*, *The Hindustan Times* and *Sports Illustrated India*. Vasu was the only Indian on the International Cricket Council's jury that chose the Player of the Tournament and the Team of the Tournament at the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup. He has won four national awards for journalism, including the Ramnath Goenka Memorial Award for Excellence in Journalism. In this issue, Vasu writes about the imbroglio the BCCI finds itself in. (page 60).



## KUSHAN MITRA

Kushan Mitra, currently the managing editor of *The Pioneer*, has been a journalist for over a decade and a half and has worked at the *Hindustan Times* and *Business Today*. With a peculiar passion for Delhi gossip, thanks to being the son of a journalist-politician, he has run salacious blogs in the past. When he is



not travelling to somewhere exotic, he lives happily in Delhi with his wife, a 46-inch television and super-fast internet connection. For this issue, Mitra writes on the troubled relationship between father-son political duo, Mulayam and Akhilesh Yadav (page 62). "In 2012, Mulayam Singh Yadav had made way for his son. Akhilesh was a media darling — young and dynamic, he was everything the Samajwadi Party was not. India's largest and most populous state also has India's largest population of young people, and Akhilesh managed to inspire young voters in droves, cutting across caste lines, and he deposed Mayawati from the seat of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister. With every high comes a fall, however, and Akhilesh's government descended into chaos as his father, uncles and other party 'elders' started dictating terms" Mitra writes.

ROHAN SHRESTHA





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# Letters



made a remake of a Tom Cruise film, I'd be a fan too.

It was good advice coming from him to explore your options rather than plunge into a serious commitment before you have matured as a person and in your relationship. The title of the article is a befitting one, given that the actor does

out a lot of his knowledge sourced from life experience about different situations and how to deal with them. It is obvious from his answers that Hrithik is an avid reader and a self-confessed curious soul, who likes to expand his horizons, be it about acting, planets or the reason for our existence. The end of the article felt abrupt, or maybe it's the Hrithik Roshan fan in me who was curious to know more about him. Overall, it's a well-structured interview with a lot of focus on what's happening with Hrithik.

**RISHABH CHAKRABORTY**, Mumbai

## SHELF LIVES

Your piece on the reducing career spans of Bollywood's leading men is quite spot on. Yes, at first, it might read like an anti-Hrithik Roshan and/or anti-Shahid Kapoor tirade, but the writer backs up his views with cold, hard facts that cannot be ignored.

Roshan and Kapoor both have embarrassing hit-flop ratios, which is quite disappointing to hear, given that they are both fine actors who have proved their mettle in the few good films they have been a part of.

Similarly, I feel more people are also realising that the hoopla around Salman Khan's a non-actor as far as I am concerned - is dying down a bit. His fans are a bit weary of the cut-paste job he has done with *Wanted*, *Ready* etc and want some more meaningful cinema from him now. This is why *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* came as a well-deserved success and breath of fresh air, and hopefully *Tubelight* will also follow suit.

To SRK's credit, he is also trying to reinvent


himself with age and realises he can no longer get away with the roles that were his bread and butter for so many years. He is fantastic in *Raees*, and his upcoming films, such as Imtiaz Ali's next, seem promising.

Being a huge Ranbir Kapoor fan, I sincerely hope that *Jagga Jasoos* does the trick for him at the box office. Going by the trailer, though, I have my doubts. I feel the Sanjay Dutt biopic may be his next acclaimed release. He is by far the most versatile and experimental actor of his generation, so I sincerely hope to see success come his way.

The only actor you failed to mention on this list, and who rightly deserves to be on it, is Varun Dhawan. He may not be the best actor around, but he has managed to establish a connect with his audience that is far better than his contemporaries like Sidharth Malhotra, Arjun Kapoor or Aditya Roy Kapoor. He has a squeaky clean record that even the Khans and Akshay Kumar don't, and that is noteworthy even though he has done only a few films compared to them.

Coming back to the big four, yes, their stardom is unlike the reverence any actor from subsequent generations can hope to achieve. But, with a wiser and harder-to-please audience heading to the cinemas these days, the A-listers are well aware that they need to constantly innovate, with author-backed performances to complement their out-and-out potboilers.

**AVAIZ SHAH**, Mumbai



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**LETTER  
OF THE  
MONTH**

## Fan mail

Hrithik Roshan's aesthetic appeal is so overwhelming that a lot of heterosexual men may want to change teams in the hope of justifying what they feel for this near-perfect creature. It's great to know that he is also smart rather than just a pretty face who can barely construct a sentence.

In a recent tweet, Salman Khan congratulated Hrithik Roshan on #17YearsofKHNP, and you will feel really old to think that it has been nearly two decades since the world feasted its eyes on his alluring persona in *Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai*. But, it's bliss for his fans that age really is just a number for him. On being named the third sexiest man in Asia, you would immediately want to know who could have possibly have beaten him to the title. It doesn't affect Hrithik to be in the list because he didn't sign up for this competition, but that doesn't stop such compilations and his fans aren't complaining either. It's hard to swallow the pill that beautiful people don't believe in skin-deep looks. But, it is also the mark of a learned soul, because flesh and bones fade away but your perception of the beauty of the world has no expiry date.

Arnesh Ghose immaculately captures the emotions that a Hrithik Roshan fan would feel at his answers. I would love to share Hrithik's ease of accepting yourself, but it's extremely difficult unless you look into the mirror to see a face that was clearly sculpted by the gods. Even if you are, there are certain unwritten social rules that define what is beautiful and what's not. Regarding his son's favourite movies, I thought they would say *Krrish* instead of *Bang Bang*, but I guess if my father



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# Managing Editor's Letter



## A growing actor, an actor who needs to grow and India's cricketing mess

If you look up Tiger Shroff in the videos section of a Google search, nine of the first ten results have names like "Tiger Shroff's Karate Stunt", "Tiger Shroff's Amazing Stunt", "Tiger Shroff Vs Hrithik Roshan Dance Face Off", "Tiger Shroff's Workout Regime" and so on. Clearly, the chap can karate, amaze, stunt, dance and work out with the best of them, which is evident if you've seen any of the three films he's headlined. I haven't seen any of them in their entirety, but scrolling through them is somewhat like watching a whole bunch of those YouTube videos in rapid succession — clearly, Tiger Shroff is happiest when he's doing something that requires him to use his entire body, and it's a body and a half. When (before you've had a single film out) Aamir Khan invites you over for a workout session or two in preparation for *Dhoom 3*, you're definitely doing something right in terms of getting ripped. Indeed, rumour has it that Shroff wasn't initially keen on becoming an actor and wanted to be a sportsperson, having trained in martial arts for years. With his background, though, it was almost inevitable that he'd take the plunge, and to his credit, he's grown as an actor with each film he's done.

Speaking of actors and growth brings me to Nawazuddin Siddiqui, who has long been considered one of the finest actors in the business. Everyone is familiar with the story of how he struggled in the industry for years, before finally gaining recognition and, ultimately, stardom. Here's the thing, though — just how

good is he, and is it time for him to reinvent himself as a performer? Arnesh Ghose explores this idea, which may sound heretical to his many fans. "Barring his segment by Dibakar Banerjee in *Bombay Talkies*, almost all of Nawaz's characters are cerebral, conniving and deadpan — people trying to hold on to the last unravelling threads of opportunity and hope, sinking their teeth into the fabric of unforgiving cities, trying to survive. They are sans frills or finesse, eyes darting about, perpetually running away from or towards something. In the process, he has created a movie personality he can repeat with every film, one that people seem to enjoy. Should a Nawaz in *Badlapur* not be different from the Nawaz of *Raman Raghav 2.0* or *Talaash*?" he asks.

When the Supreme Court cracked its whip at the BCCI and performed one of the more memorable defenestrations in recent Indian history, many people rejoiced, fed up as they were of the board's ways. There was no doubt that the BCCI had been asking for it for a while, but after the schadenfreude had died down, one question still remained — what exactly was going to happen next? Regardless of its many demerits, there was no doubt that the board had done a lot for Indian cricket, especially in the last decade, so throwing the infant out with its bathwater seemed like an extreme step. Anand Vasu writes about how this could have been avoided, had both the Lodha Committee and the BCCI been willing to be more flexible. Enjoy the issue.

— Pablo Chaterji

## FROM THE MW VAULT FEBRUARY 2010



### A NEW SUMMER

For a while Vivek Oberoi seemed to have lost his footing in Bollywood. Now with some back-to-back films, including mentor Ram Gopal Varma's *Rakta Charitra*, Oberoi is set to turn things around.

By Deepali Nandwani

### THE GPS REVOLUTION

How location-based applications are changing our lives.

By Madhulika Mathur

### RAM GOPAL VARMA ON HIS AL-QAEDA CLAN

As he awaits the release of the much-talked-about *Rann*, RGV speaks his mind about the talented protégés he's spawned — some estranged and others who would never work with him again.

By Raja Sen

### FOIE GRAS GALOUTI AND OTHER STORIES

Conventional thinking has it that traditional Indian cuisine is impregnable to innovation and experimenting. Some highly regarded Indian chefs, most of them from London, are trying to change that. By Magandeep Singh

### 10 THINGS TO DO IN JO'BURG

Johannesburg is South Africa's financial capital and a cultural powerhouse and is gearing up for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Tushar Abhichandani spent a few days enjoying its best attractions

### SHERLOCK HOLMES'S INDIAN CONNECTION

Arthur Conan Doyle's cerebral, troubled sleuth's adventures have

received several fascinating Indian post-scripts. *Robin James* dips into the more recent ones — *Holmes of the Raj* and *The Curious Case of 221B* — and sets off in pursuit of the authors, Dr Vithal Rajan and Partha Basu

### THE RISING

The Burj Khalifa is a desperate, crisis-ridden Dubai's towering message to the world. *Keith Fernandez* spends a day at the world's tallest building

### WILLIAM BISSELL'S PRESCRIPTION

William Bissell reinvented Fabindia in the last decade. With his new book, *Making India Work*, it isn't the shirt on your back he wants. He wants to reorganise the way the country is run. By Jerry Pinto



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## COVER STORY

### FLEX CAPACITOR

No, we didn't ask Tiger Shroff to do splits or fold himself in half, although we're quite sure he would have happily obliged - it's no secret that he's insanely fit. Instead, we asked him 15 questions about his universe.

## FEATURES

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Never mind her goof-up in a general knowledge quiz — Alia Bhatt has proved she has the smarts to overhaul standard romcom stereotypes with persuasive ease. By MAITHILI RAO

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In his foreword to Rishi Kapoor's autobiography, *Khullam Khulla, Rishi Kapoor Uncensored*, Ranbir Kapoor writes about his relationship with his legendary father.

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And is he slowly joining the ranks of actors who are lauded more for their screen presence than their versatility?

By ARNESH GHOSE

### 96 The man who makes learning a joy

Starting off as a traditional brick and mortar coaching class, Byju's is now India's largest and best-funded digital ed-tech venture. By RAJU BIST

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ROHAN SHRESTHA



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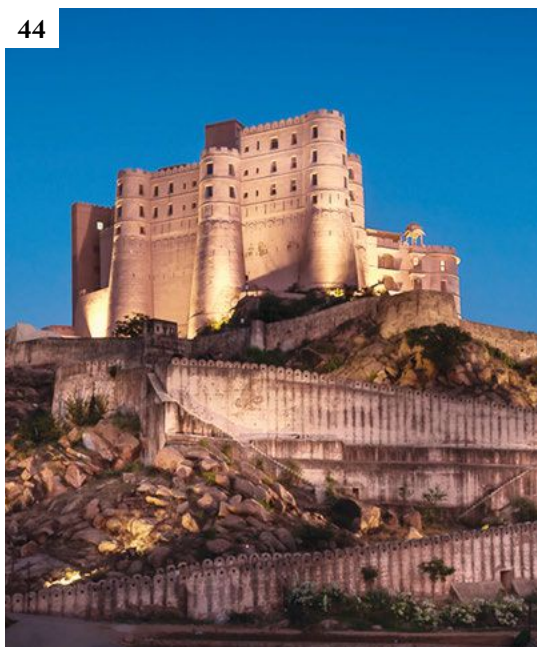
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**ON THE COVER**  
Tiger Shroff wears blazer and jumper by **Canali**; Octo 41mm steel case watch with alligator strap by **Bulgari**; Photographed by Rohan Shrestha; Styling by Atmaj Vyas; Assisted by Neelangana Vasudeva

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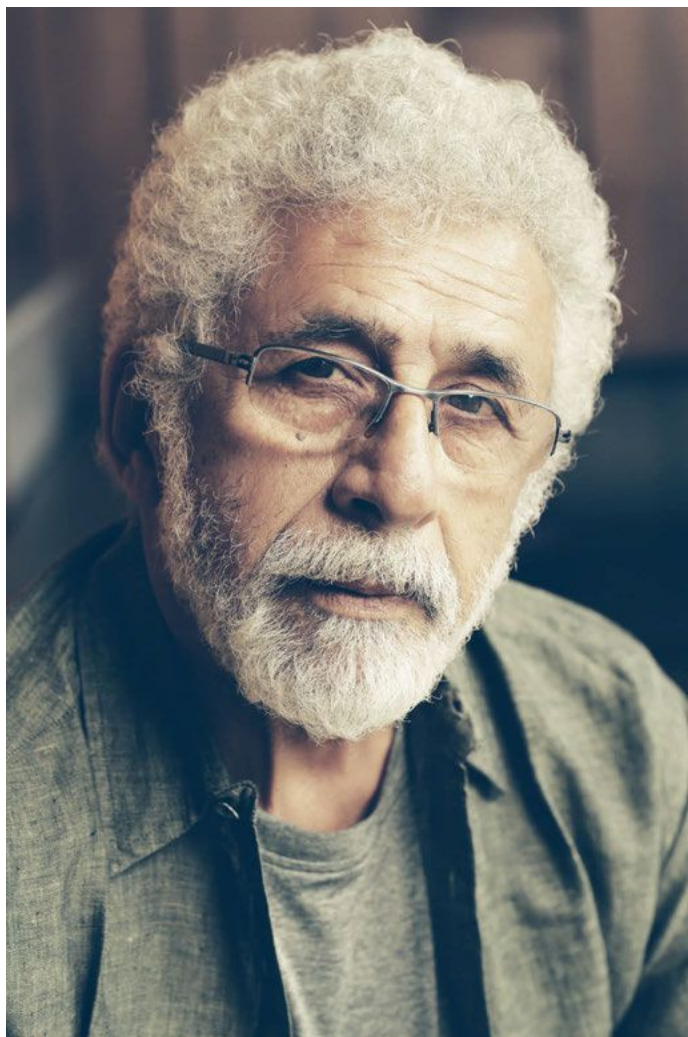
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# the megaphone

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## EAST TO WEST

Once, he [Om Puri] invited me for lunch. The house consisted of two tiny rooms, which was being shared by five persons. I asked him where he slept, and he took me out into the corridor and showed a corner. There was a bed cover, very neatly folded and kept, a pair of chappals, a couple of scripts and a book — *My Life in Art*. There was also a stove, on which he had cooked egg curry for me. The corridor was facing the Old Delhi railway station and you could smell the station stench. I can't describe what I felt when I saw that. Om's journey from that smelly corner to the career in international cinema, that all of us fantasise about, is a testament to his character."

**NASEERUDDIN SHAH REMINISCES ABOUT HIS 46-YEAR-OLD FRIENDSHIP WITH LATE ACTOR OM PURI.**

## A SLIGHT LASHING

"The government should keep an eye on PETA because unnecessarily they are interfering in our traditional things, which is not good for our country."

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**RAJASTHAN EDUCATION MINISTER VASUDEV DEVNANI PROVES HOW UNFIT HE IS FOR HIS PORTFOLIO.**



## THE FACE-OFF

*"When it was a film with Amitabh, it was like a 100m race, where other actors were handicapped by 50 metres right at the start. Films were mostly written with him in mind. I merely said that we were the small rungs on the ladder of success that he climbed. For instance, Deewar wouldn't have been possible without Shashi Kapoor. Without Dharmendra, Sholay wouldn't have been possible. So, if one can credit the directors and writers, one can surely credit one's colleagues."*

**RISHI KAPOOR TALKS KHULLAM-KHULLA.**



## THE SAVIOUR

"Many people in the last few days have told me that I was responsible for destroying the fear that Muslims had developed during the late 1980s. They tell me that it is their *saubhagya* [good fortune] that a leader like me is alive because of which they can live without fear. Samajwadi government's biggest success is that it has removed the fear from the minds of Muslims."

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# theinterview



Q&A  
WITH

ASHIM AHLUWALIA

His last film, *Miss Lovely*, was about the wolves of Mumbai — C-grade film-makers who combined porn with horror. His next film, *Daddy*, is on one of the lions of Mumbai — gangster-politician Arun Gawli. In an email interview, Ahluwalia talks to us about his undying love for renegades and louts.

By Ekta Mohta

IN 2012, Ashim Ahluwalia's *Miss Lovely* competed in 'Un Certain Regard' at the Cannes Film Festival. The experimental film showed, with authenticity and honesty, how love could wreck several careers in porn. It made you wonder what this advertising film-maker could do with a commercial film. Well, the upcoming *Daddy*, with actor Arjun Rampal playing the eponymous role, might be the answer.

Can you please take us through the journey of *Daddy*? Why and how did you decide on the subject?

*Daddy* just happened by accident. There was a film already being developed on the life of Arun Gawli with Arjun Rampal attached. I didn't have anything to do with that. I happened to meet Arjun while shooting a TV commercial [for Nivea], and we hit it off. He asked me if I would ever want to make a mainstream Hindi film, and I said, 'Absolutely not.' But, he had seen *Miss Lovely* and knew my sensibility. He then told me about the Gawli project and asked if I would be interested in getting involved with a true story like this, if I could make it with total freedom and no studio interference. He had the rights to the story, access to the family and didn't want to make a typical Bollywood gangster film. How could I resist that?

Obviously, Arun Gawli has been part of the mythology of this city and a presence ever since I was a kid. It's a story that really is in line with who I am as a film-maker, with all the elements of crime, betrayal, guilt, fear. There's nothing like the pleasure of being drawn into the world of someone who has broken all rules and crossed all limits. Real violence is not CGI stuff blowing up, but the conflicts we have within.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHANIE CORNFELD



**How was your experience of shooting in places such as Agripada and Grant Road with a major film actor?**

Insane, but I wouldn't do it any other way. You can't try and recreate the atmosphere of crime on a film set. It has to be real. We have shot in an illegal sweatshop, behind a warehouse in Kamathipura on Eid. It became a near riot situation. We were dealing with things like rats falling from the ceiling and real-life gangsters threatening us while we were shooting a gangster movie. I could probably write a book on this.

**In interviews during *Miss Lovely*, you deified C-grade film-makers. Has something similar happened with Arun Gawli as well? Has the criminal become an enigma in your retelling?**

What's common in these two films is that they are about people who are on the margins of society. These are stories you don't usually see onscreen. We live in an extremely hypocritical country, so in some ways, these are also characters that are the most honest. It's a way for me to understand how our society works, who we are as people. Who makes the rules? Who breaks them? I don't like films that define people as 'heroes' and 'villains', which is what our industry tends to do. It's boring. The interesting stuff happens when people are both simultaneously.

**As *Daddy* has been mounted on a much larger scale than your previous film, has it affected your artistic vision in any way?**

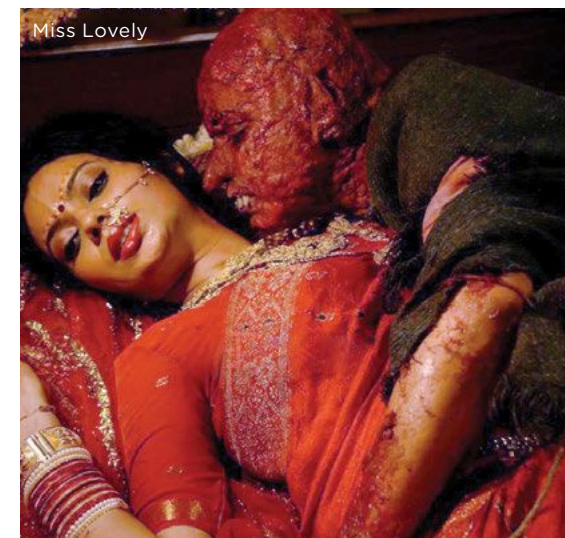
I don't think so. For many people, Gawli is a folk hero. So, I wanted the film to be more accessible to that audience. That's what is different from my other work — there is a different kind of viewer, perhaps someone who lives in Dagdi Chawl, and I don't want them to be excluded. But, at the same time, I didn't want to dumb it down or remove the complexity of his character and the world he comes from. For me, it's an experiment to see if we can make a more nuanced film within the system and whether the audience will be open to something that isn't all black and white, or all good and bad.

**What preparation went into turning Arjun Rampal into Arun Gawli?**

I think Arjun was already into Gawli by the time I met him. Without even having a director onboard, he was quietly writing down the real stories into a sort of screenplay form. That's what I found surprising about him. I don't usually think too much of our actors, at least in terms of their willingness to go out of their depth. I pushed Arjun really, really far. And, he was really willing to go there, which was amazing. He studied Marathi, broke down Gawli's mannerisms by watching his interviews on YouTube, he gave it everything. He was willing to shoot in extreme conditions, in the grimmest locations, with prosthetics on his face for 12 hours a day. I don't work with a bound script, and we improvised everything on set. He probably would have killed any other director.

Daddy

**“We have shot *Daddy* in an illegal sweatshop, behind a warehouse in Kamathipura on Eid. It became a near riot situation. We were dealing with things like rats falling from the ceiling and real-life gangsters threatening us while we were shooting a gangster movie”**



**As someone who comes from a position of privilege, why are you so fascinated with Mumbai's grime?**

I think we all come from a position of privilege. The act of making films or being in the media is a position of power that few in this country have. This conversation, in English, for a lifestyle magazine, is itself a function of the bubble we live in.

Having said that, I am interested not so much in grime or poverty, but in characters on the margins of society. They could be rich, poor or middle-class — that doesn't matter. For me, a film should explore worlds that people don't want explored, bring things out of the closet to examine why people want to hide certain things. That's the only way you can try and change mindsets. I relate to the idea of the outlaw, probably because I have a rebellious personality and because I don't feel

like I fit into any establishment either.

**Is Mumbai even deserving of your affection?**

It's the love of my life. I can't think of any other city in the world with the kind of density that this city has. At any time, you have a thousand parallel realities existing simultaneously.

**Your ad-film portfolio is so different from your cinematic work. How are the two aligned in your head?**

I am a Gemini, and I can split myself into two quite easily. On the one hand, I can make extremely realistic, gritty, open-ended cinema, and on the other, I can make a very cosmetic and glossy car commercial. Making a commercial, for me, is a very specialised craft. It's not art, it's a job. I think of myself as a very good carpenter, but the cupboard I'm making is not for me, it's for somebody else.





# CITY-PROOF SCALP CARE

**Kérastase introduces 'Anti Pollution Scalp Care' with its new and improved Specificque Range**



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Owing to rising pollution levels and the harmful impact of this on your scalp, Kérastase launches Anti Pollution Scalp Care with its Specificque Range. The advanced products are designed to combat various scalp concerns such as Dandruff, Sensitivity, Hair Loss & Oiliness.

Launching with a special in-salon Anti Pollution Ritual with cutting edge tools to ensure the most powerful cleansing and targeted action, this range is a must try for any one who's scalp struggles with the cities harsh environment.



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First, an Anti-pollution clay is used to unclog pores, eliminate oil and pollutant particles. This is followed with the use of a unique tool, a sonic Scalp brush, that cleanses and massages the scalp with unprecedented efficiency.



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### Step 3 TARGETED CURE ACTION

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## PERSONALISED HOME CARE REGIMES



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Spécifique Bain Anti-Pelliculaire takes the taboo out of dandruff flare-ups for dry or oily hair, eliminating scalp impurities for lasting relief. It is reinforced with Anti-Relapse Action to remove visible flakes and protect scalp from dry or oily dandruff for up to eight weeks. Scalp feels clean, healthy and balanced.



### ← ANTI - HAIR LOSS HAIR IS REINFORCED IN JUST 1 WEEK

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### ↑ ANTI - OILINESS SCALP PURIFIED. LENGTHS HYDRATED

This balancing shampoo gives you the light-as-air feeling of perfectly balanced, beautiful hair. The Bain Divalent shampoo regulates sebum production, while cleaning and purifying the scalp, so that hair regains its natural softness.





## Spinning back to life

Vinyl records are back, with aficionados rediscovering their depth of sound. Here's how to get on the bandwagon.

By Ruhin Chatterjee

**THE MAGIC** of vinyl records, like most forms of magic, is hard to rationalise, especially in 2017. Many will say that the unique warmth that accompanies the vinyl sound is immortal. However, with lossless digital audio formats steadily enticing even the most seasoned audiophiles, it's easy to see that there is a lot more to the vinyl experience than just what our ears can savour.

At a time in history when you're always just two clicks or screen taps away from your favourite song, the effort required to listen to a vinyl record is strangely appealing. Spending hours scouring through record collections in search of a gem always feels worth it. The sensation of holding a record, physically being able to touch your music as

an artist or a listener, is an irreplaceable one.

Even the sleeves that shelter these records are works of art, existing as far more satisfying canvases than the little square album cover on your phone's music player.

And then there's the exciting matter of setting up your very own audio system that can play records. Vinyl still has a very niche audience, which often means that those who join the club pay close attention to the nuances of every component they indulge in. There is no magic formula for the right setup, as it will depend on what kind of music you listen to, how you want that music to sound, and decisively, your budget.

Let's start with turntables, otherwise known as 'record players'. When buying a turntable, a key factor to keep in mind is

upgradability.

The cheaper ones will usually not be upgradable, whereas the high-end turntables for serious vinyl listeners will have several upgrade options. It is vital to understand that replacing components like the tone arm that swings across the record, or the needle that touches the record can have a dramatic effect on what the music sounds like. You may also want to ensure that your turntable is capable of playing records at all three speeds – 33 RPM, 45 RPM and 78 RPM.

If you're contemplating whether your fascination with vinyl is just a passing phase, Jensen has a series of budget turntables below \$50 that are perfect to start off with. The JTA-230 3 Speed Stereo Turntable is one of them. It comes with built-in speakers and a USB port that lets you commit the blasphemy of converting your old vinyl records into MP3 for portability. It also comes with tone controls, which is rare for a low-end turntable.



**Clockwise from left:** The Clearaudio Concept turntable; the Jensen JTA-230 turntable; the Arcam FMJ A19 amplifier; the Klipsch Reference Premiere RP-280F speakers

But if you're looking to spend a serious amount of money on a turntable (about \$1600 to be exact), look no further than the Clearaudio Concept, with the pre-mounted MM cartridge. This is an easy to setup, beautifully designed turntable that utilizes its innovative Verify tone arm to deliver some exceptional sound. Clearaudio goes as far as to factory set the counterweight to provide the correct tracking force, making it remarkably simple to plug-and-play.

As you delve deeper into the vinyl world, an



A more intermediate investment at \$299 would be the Audio-Technica AT-LP120-USB Direct-Drive Professional Turntable. For slightly more experienced vinyl listeners, this is a pretty good buy. Its S-shaped pivoting tone arm comes with an adjustable counterweight that lets you adjust downward force on the records. And the in-built preamp lets you connect directly to a set of powered speakers.

amplifier will be one of the key expansion areas for your setup. The higher-end turntables won't include the phono-preamp that you will require to increase sound levels to that of your other audio components. So it is ideal to look for amplifiers that come with a built-in phono stage. The Arcam FMJ A19 is one such solidly built amplifier that delivers a rich, dynamic sound.

The final grand pieces of your audio setup are



the speakers. Every other component you choose, no matter how expensive or well strategized, will sound disappointing if you pick underwhelming speakers. You'll want to assess how versatile your speakers are across the bass, midrange and treble spectrums. Great speakers will pick up the nuances of intricate music, like a Hans Zimmer score, far better than low-end speakers. The soundstage capabilities of speakers (the ability to recreate where instruments/voices are, as though they were on stage) also make a huge difference when listening to vinyl records. Bookshelf and floor-

standing are the two popular speaker categories, the latter generally being larger and more appropriate for bass-heavy music. The Bowers & Wilkins 600 Series 685 S2 and the Klipsch Reference Premiere RP-280F are two of the elite speakers from either category, but expect to do a lot more research and auditioning before you find the pair that perfectly fits your needs.

After you've planned your setup, it's time to acquire records, a fairly simple task in India these days. Iconic stores like The Revolver Club in Mumbai and the New

Gramophone House in Delhi now have websites that deliver across the country. Mahatobar Distribution on MG Road is pure heaven for audiophiles in Bengaluru, while a stroll down Free School Street should suffice for avid vinyl listeners in Kolkata.

These records require fairly basic maintenance. You shouldn't expose them to extreme changes in temperature and humidity. When they require cleaning, use a carbon fibre brush to dust them off before wiping them down with a damp micro-fibre cloth. As for your turntable, ensure that the needle isn't worn



out and the tracking force is correctly adjusted, or you could end up permanently damaging your records.

And after all that is done, it's time to sit back, relax and appreciate the magnificence of the experience you've put together. As the first notes travel from the speakers to find you, consider it your warm welcome to the incredible vinyl club. Trust us when we tell you this - it all sounds good here.

**Clockwise from top:**  
The Bowers & Wilkins 600 Series 685 S2 speakers;  
the Audio-Technica AT-LP120-USB turntable



## Lenses for your smartphone

We find out if attaching additional lenses to your smartphone's camera transforms it into a DSLR-killer.

**WE'LL KILL** the suspense right away — it doesn't. The clip-on (or magnetic) lenses that are widely available on websites like Amazon and Ebay are made with fairly cheap glass, and any photographer worth their lens cap will tell you that the magic is in the glass. Attaching a really good lens to a basic DSLR body will produce stellar photographs; put a crappy lens on a high-end body and you'll get ordinary results. This logic extends to smartphones as well, and clipping a miniature telephoto or macro lens to your iPhone or Galaxy S7 isn't going to dramatically transform your photos, especially since the lens is a totally external element that puts an obstacle of sorts between whatever you're shooting and your smartphone's internal camera.

With that out of the way, there's no doubt that these external lenses can be fun to work with, as long as you understand their limitations. Thus, don't look at them as quality enhancers, because they're not — rather, they give you the ability to take some quirky photographs. The macro lenses, for example, allow you to shoot objects from really close, with some pretty interesting results. The fisheye attachments, meanwhile, distort images in a myriad of ways, all the while applying a huge vignette on the frame. The telephotos do allow you to zoom in to scenes to a greater extent than your smartphone (and in an optical manner, as opposed to digitally), so at a pinch, they're useful if you need that level of zoom. These lenses usually come in sets of three or four, with a wide angle, macro, fisheye and/or telephoto, and here's a selection that you can consider.



### ← Aukey 3-in-1

These lenses can be clipped on to a variety of smartphones and include a wide angle, a fisheye and a macro.

**Rs 1,350 on Amazon.in**

### ↓ Mobilegear 4-in-1

This set has a telephoto, a wide angle, a fisheye and a macro.

**Rs 2,199 on Amazon.in**

### ↘ Olloclip 4-in-1

This set of lenses is for the iPhone 6/6S and consists of a wide angle, a fisheye and two macros. It doesn't come cheap, but the reviews are quite good.

**Rs 7,500 on Amazon.in**







Dr. Sushila Nayar, Mahatma Gandhi, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Amtus Salam and others walking in the countryside, North West Frontier Provinces

## Kanu's Gandhi

Rare and intimate photographs of Mahatma Gandhi, shot by his grand-nephew, come to life in a well-displayed show in Mumbai.

### NO FLASH. NO POSING.

And no financial support from the Sevagram Ashram. These were the three conditions that Mahatma Gandhi set for his grand-nephew Kanu Gandhi in 1944 when the latter developed an interest in photography. Kanu had been supervising the correspondence and accounts of the Mahatma at the Sevagram Ashram, near Wardha, Maharashtra and wanted to document Gandhi's life.

The end result was that Kanu was able to freeze for posterity

some rare glimpses of Gandhi in his unguarded moments, in his personal as well as public lives. These include images with his family members and also other historic figures of his time, like Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Kanu Gandhi (1917-1986) was the son of Narandas Gandhi, a nephew of Mahatma Gandhi. His wife was Abhaben Chatterjee. It was in Abha's arms that the Mahatma breathed his last, at Birla House (now Gandhi Smriti), New Delhi, on January 30, 1948. Vinobha Bhave's brother Shivaji encouraged Kanu to take up photography seriously. Industrialist GD Birla gifted

him Rs. 100, enough to buy a Rolliflex camera and his first roll of film.

Kanu was able to sell his images to most of the leading newspapers of the time. Since he was the only photographer in such close proximity to the Mahatma, he was soon producing images on a daily basis. But after Gandhi's assassination in 1948, Kanu rarely picked up the camera. Instead, he and Abha devoted the rest of their lives to conveying the Gandhian message. They travelled all over India, promoting khadi and handicrafts and teaching khadi.

A part of Kanu's archival collection, called 'Kanu's Gandhi', is now on display at the Jehangir Nicholson



Kanu Gandhi

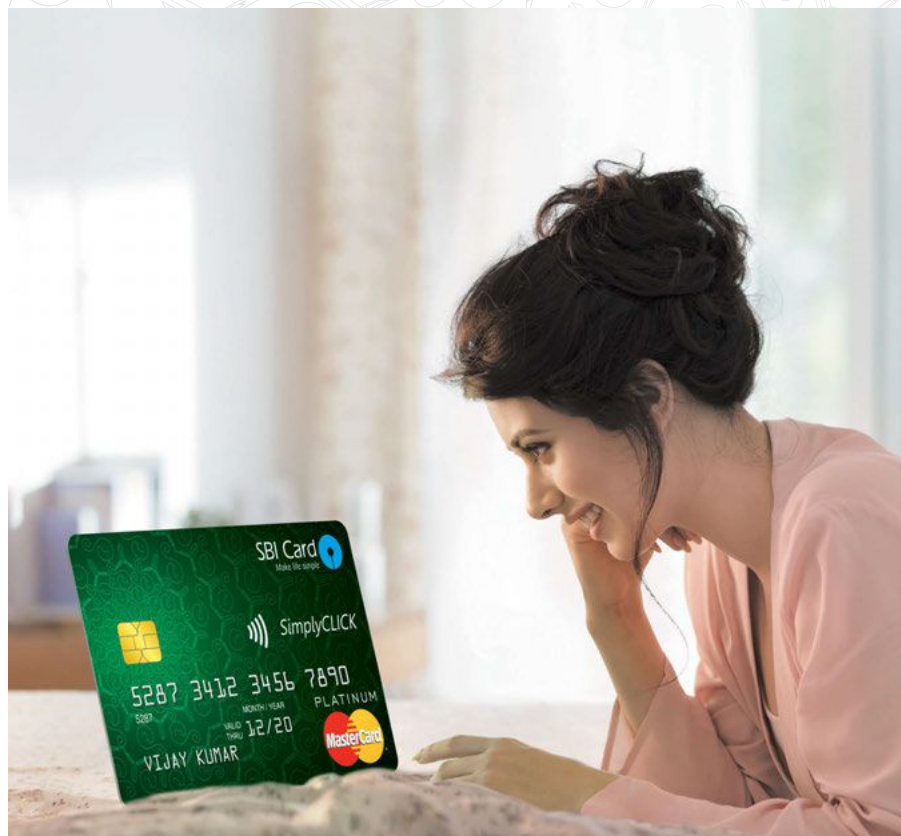


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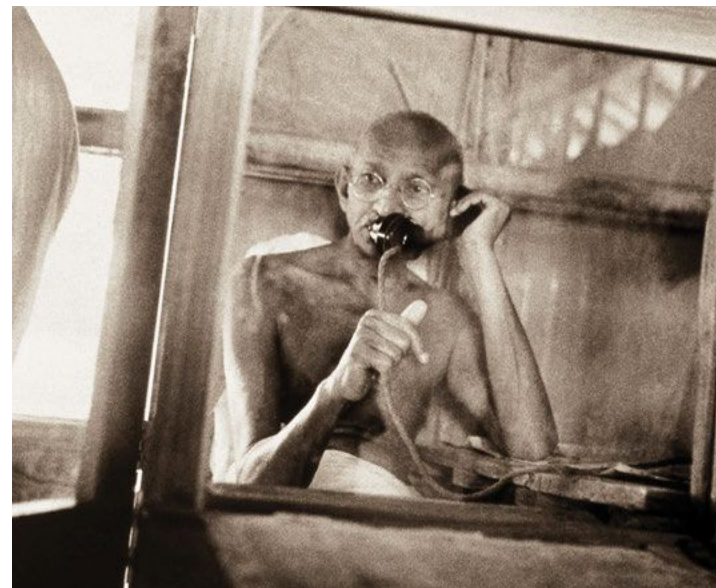
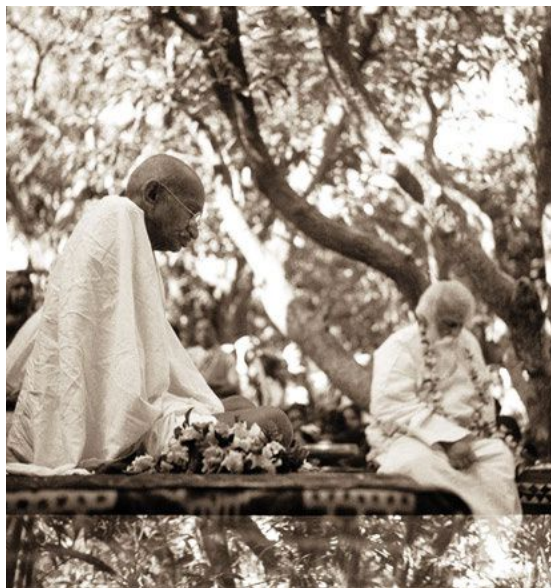




Gallery in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (earlier known as the Prince of Wales Museum) in south Mumbai. There is a brilliant shot of Gandhi walking outdoors in a group, using a pillow to shelter himself from the sun. Another shows him in an animated conversation with Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan, a year before the Nobel laureate's death. In yet another wonderful photograph, we see him sitting happily next to a train window, while on a journey to Bengal, Assam and South India.

Manu's Gandhi has been curated by photographers Prashant Panjiar and Sanjeev Saith. A 150-page book of the same name has been published by Nazar Foundation, an NGO run by Panjiar and photographer Dinesh Khanna. It features 92 rare pictures of the Mahatma.

*Kanu's Gandhi, January 12, 2017-February 26, 2016, Jehangir Nicholson Gallery, 2nd floor, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya*



**Clockwise from top:**  
With Sudhir Ghosh and Ramkrishna Bajaj on a boat to Midnapur, East Bengal; Gandhi spinning on Dhanush Takli, Sevagram Ashram; Gandhi telephoning from the office hut, Sevagram Ashram; Kasturba washing Mahatma Gandhi's feet with Sardar Patel in the background, Bardoli; Gandhi with Rabindranath Tagore at Shantiniketan





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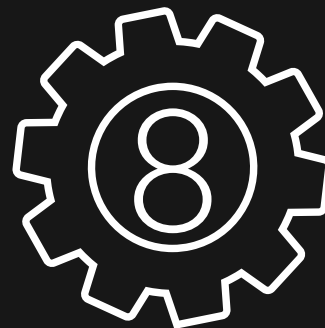
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• WHEELS

# The Levante, Maserati's first ever SUV, in numbers

It's a compelling reason to buy into the Trident club



The Levante's 8-speed automatic transmission is smooth, responsive and a willing accomplice to the engine..



The Levante with a V6 petrol engine comes in two states of tune – 325 and 424 bhp. You should buy the one with more power, because that's the correct thing to do with a Maserati. Better yet, wait for the version with a twin-turbo V8. Oh, wait – India will only get the diesel Levante to begin with, and that 3-litre V6 puts out 271 bhp of power, which isn't chump change.



The top-end petrol V6 will let you hit 264 kph before the speedometer runs out of room, and the 0-100 kph dash can be dismissed in 5.2 seconds.

Allow us to assure you that in an SUV, 264 is a whole lot of kph, and that you'll almost never need to push it that far.







59

That's 59 kgm of wholesome torque, which is pretty impressive for a petrol engine, considering that the diesel powerplant delivers 61 kgm. Torque, as you know, is the key when it comes to off-road cred.

5

If you're looking to fit your extended family into a Levante, well, don't. It's a 5-seater, although the person in the middle of the rear row of seating is likely to feel a touch cramped.

1,20,00,000

The Levante is likely to have a starting price of around Rs 1.2 crore when it launches in India, which puts it at a premium against the likes of the Porsche Macan and in the same ballpark as the Porsche Cayenne, the BMW X6 and the Range Rover Sport

5003

At 5003mm (a smidge over 5 meters) in length, the Levante is longer than SUVs like the Porsche Cayenne, although it doesn't look it at first sight. It has a pretty decent ground clearance of 200mm, and a capacious 580-litre boot.



## • WHEELS



### Ducati 1299 Superleggera

RS 1.12 CR

The ultimate track machine from the Bolognese house of motorcycles, the Ducati 1299 Superleggera made its way out of the petrolheads' bedroom posters recently. You can now buy one in India; but only if you have a sum of Rs 1.12 crore (ex-showroom, Mumbai) to spare. This staggering price tag has made the Superleggera the most expensive bike available in the country at the moment.

Quite the masterpiece on wheels, the 1299 Superleggera is the world's lightest mass-produced bike with the most powerful twin-cylinder engine. Power comes from the 1285cc twin-cylinder Superquadro engine from the Panigale that has been reworked to produce 215bhp of power, while there is a race kit version that further pushes the output to 220bhp and 14.9kgm of peak torque.

## The Rs 1.12 Cr Ducati Superleggera 1299 And India's Other Most Expensive Bikes\*

The Harleys, the BMWs and more – straight out of the fantasies of a petrolhead!

\*All prices ex-showroom, Mumbai

### Harley-Davidson CVO Limited

RS 53.34 LAKH

The CVO Limited peaks the summit by flawlessly combining performance with looks and style. The bike gets a Twin-Cooled Twin Cam 110 engine – a 1,801cc V-twin that delivers 13.9kgm of peak torque at just 3,750 rpm.

Suspension duties are carried out by a dual bending valve on the front and a spring-loaded adjustable emulsion on the rear, whereas a pair of 300mm four-piston callipers takes charge of stopping the bike. An infotainment system with a full-colour touchscreen, dual control heated seat with passenger and rider backrest and keyless ignition comprise an impressive feature list.



### MV Agusta F4 RC

RS 50.34 LAKH

One of the most sought-after Italian superbikes in the world, the F4 RC is a droolworthy replica of their Reparto Corse team's FIM Superbike World Championship motorcycle. It comes powered by a 4-cylinder Corsa Corta engine that puts out more than 207bhp of power and propels it to top speeds of over 300kph.

The bike also features several mechanical upgrades in terms of braking and suspension over the standard F4 RR. It gets high-end fully electronically adjustable Ohlins suspensions and high-performance Brembo GP 4-piston brake callipers both up front and out back.



### BMW K1600 GTL

RS 36.28 LAKH

This is the most expensive sports tourer in India. The German motorcycle houses an in-line 6-cylinder motor beneath its fairing and works on a maximum power rating of 158bhp and peak torque of 17.8kgm. On top of that, it gets modern tech, from ABS to a fully adjustable suspension as standard.





## Moto Guzzi MGX-21

RS 27.78 LAKH

The most expensive offering from this legendary Italian bikemaker is powered by a 90-degree transverse-mounted V-Twin from the California 1400. The 1,380cc engine churns out a maximum of 96.6bhp and develops a peak torque of 12.2kgm. The bike is also equipped with a host of electronics including ABS, adjustable traction control which can also be disabled, the Ride-by-Wire accelerator and cruise control.



## Indian Roadmaster

RS 39.85 LAKH

The biggest offering from Indian Motorcycles in the country is a giant that tips the scales at over 400kg. At the heart of things is a 1,811cc mill that packs 14.16kgm of peak torque while there is no shortage of luxury either. It features a 200-watt stereo system with Bluetooth and smartphone compatibility, just to give you an idea of things.

## Aprillia RSV4 RF

RS 23.46 LAKH

Another Italian manufacturer's marquee seller earns a special place on this list. Essentially the race-spec version of the RSV4 RR, the Aprilia RSV4 RF features the same 999.6cc liquid cooled V4 engine as the RR. However, in the RF it has been tuned to produce 180bhp at 13,000rpm and 11.7kgm of torque at 10,500rpm. It is mated to a six-speed cassette type gearbox.



## Ducati Panigale R

RS 50.46 LAKH

Ducati's previous flagship offering in India before the Superleggera is tailor-made for race tracks, with its Superquadro 1198cc, L-Twin engine that puts out 195bhp of power. The 2-1-2 exhaust system is made of titanium, using stainless steel exhaust headers. The two titanium mufflers have carbon fibre end caps. The Panigale R gets carbon fibre mudguards, ignition and cockpit surrounds and exhaust tube heat shield. Different riding modes, power modes, cornering ABS, DTC (Ducati traction control) and EBC (engine braking control) further add to the track shenanigans.





## Heart of the matter

The 2017 Road Glide Special might just be the easiest-to-live-with touring motorcycle Harley Davidson has ever made, says **Meraj Shah**

**EVEN WITH THE SCREAMING EAGLE EXHAUSTS**—that add decibels, power and torque—the Harley Davidson Road Glide Special that I'm piloting up the highway, at a reasonably reckless velocity, feels uncharacteristically refined – hell, I can still hear John Fogerty belting out 'Born on the Bayou', on H-D's BOOM! stereo that this bike comes fitted with. The trademark Harley growl is there – audible even through my full-face helmet—but it's not pounding my chest.

That feeling is amplified, when I pull over, by the toned down vibes, which are watered down enough not to be unpleasant. Then there's the business of steering a motorcycle with a fixed front fairing—I've never been on a Harley with that set-up before. What that does, effectively, is make the steering feel exponentially lighter, and that, when you're trying to take slow-speed U-turns on a big touring motorcycle, is quite liberating. Riding a big

American tourer ought not to require burliness on the part of the rider, and the Road Glide Special makes that case rather effectively.

In 2017, with the incorporation of the brand's first all-new engine—christened the Milwaukee-Eight, because of the four valves per cylinder in the big twin—the quartet of the Road King, Street Glide, Road Glide and CVO Unlimited have gotten a seminal upgrade. The CVO is the only one to get the bigger displacement 114 variant of the new motor.

The combination of a new engine on a hitherto unavailable model is why all the auto hacks on this HOG ride from Delhi to the quaint township of Deogarh, in Rajasthan, are falling over themselves to get astride the Road Glide Special. Cunningly, H-D India has installed Screaming Eagle exhausts on this particular bike, which make it feel even more nimble and quicker than the stock bike. There's

a host of upgrades—engine, suspension, electronics—on the spec sheet, but it's how they manifest themselves that impresses. The four-valves per cylinder—a standard on many modern motorcycles, but a first for H-D—lower emissions and reduce the roar of the engine; the single cam (down from a couple in the 103 engines) brings down mechanical noise; the front-end-incorporated counterbalancer reduces vibrations; the all-new adjustable suspension (adjustable at the rear on the Road Glide Special) just feels much more empathetic to the travails of long-distance touring; a more sophisticated oil cooler keeps the engine temperature in check much better (although the reason you feel less heat on your posterior is on account of a fan that directs hot air below the seat down to the exhausts). On the highway, the slipper clutch comes into play at high speeds and keeps wheel-spin in control. All in all, the Road Glide just inspires much more confidence, handling with an ease that belies its prodigious dimensions.

The 6.5-inch infotainment system comes loaded with

navigation, voice-activated commands, USB and Bluetooth connectivity. The front windscreen can be electronically raised and lowered: at the highest setting, it blocks wind blast to the shoulders and head for any rider shorter than six feet. Three vents in the fairing keep head buffeting down, while you melt into the most comfortable saddle (apart from the CVO) on a Harley Davidson. The lockable saddlebags and cubbyholes in the front fairing provide enough boot space to pack for a few days on the road. Crucially, for night riding in India, the LED reflector headlamps beat the twin halogens of the other cruisers in the line-up hands down.

A weekend with the Road Glide nearly toppled the Road King as my all-time favourite Harley; the 2017 variant of the latter gets all the functional upgrades, but not the infotainment and the luggage space of the Road Glide. But that's an emotional conclusion; the Road Glide is definitely the star of H-D's 2017 touring line-up. It's easier to ride, handles better and has all the accoutrements to make long distance touring a breeze.

### WHAT WE LIKE

Greatly increased refinement levels

### WHAT WE DON'T

Still quite a handful of motorcycle



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To know more about Ciaz Smart Hybrid please visit <https://goo.gl/rOL43t>. Features shown may vary from variant to variant. Car colour may vary due to printing on paper. Accessories shown in pictures may not be a part of standard equipment. Automatic Transmission is available in Petrol. Smart Hybrid Technology is available in Diesel. For Test Drive, please visit your nearest Maruti Suzuki dealership today or call at 1800 102 1800 (toll free).



## • WHEELS

# Quirk box

The new Ignis hatchback sees Suzuki getting its funk on.

By Pablo Chaterji

**I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD SAY THIS**, but one of the reasons I like the Suzuki Ignis' design is because it has a backside that looks like a grinning cartoon character. Specifically, the Ignis' heinie looks like Felix the Cat, the perpetually happy feline who made his screen debut way back in 1919, and the reason for this is the enormous strip of black plastic embedded in the car's rear bumper – that's the bit that looks like a grin. Ordinarily, I would shrink from a design element like this, and I still believe that a couple of fog lamps would have balanced it out, but in the Ignis' case, I'm willing to make an exception – it's such a cheerful car that an oddball feature or two can be forgiven. In fact, I would go as far as to say that the Ignis is the quirkiest car to have been launched in India in a while, and to see a normally staid manufacturer like Suzuki going out on a limb is refreshing.

There was a lot of marketing speak about 'Millenials' and whatnot

at the car's launch, and after some research, I found that I appear to be a cusp-Millennial; maybe that's why the Ignis appeals to me (I can confirm that people in their early 60s liked it too). It's essentially a boxy hatchback, but its designers have done a fine job of making it look eye-catching, beginning with its segment-first 'floating' LED headlamps and its widely-stretched grille. Side on, the Ignis is all slashes and angles, with slits between the hood and the top of the wheel arches (which are flared) and a trio of Adidas-like stripes placed between the rear window and the tailgate. The blacked-out alloy wheels are another cool touch, and, along with old Felix at the back, make the Ignis the coolest looking car in its segment.

That theme continues in the cabin, too. You'll see a new steering wheel (and not the unit that appears in a whole bunch of Suzukis) in front of a bright, readable instrument cluster. The dual-tone dashboard looks good, and I particularly like the rocker switches on the 'floating' A/C console – they operate with a satisfying



### WHAT WE LIKE

Looks, quality cabin, proven engines

### WHAT WE DON'T

The need for a heavier than usual wallet

'click'. I'm not so sure about the way the enormous touchscreen protrudes from the dashboard, however – it feels like it was slapped on as an afterthought. It works fine, though, and it's good to see us Android users finally being catered to, with the addition of Android Auto to the existing Apple CarPlay functionality. Aside from all this, the cabin is roomy, with generous head and leg room for four, and all-round visibility is excellent, as is the quality of fit and finish.

The Ignis comes with Suzuki's well-established 1.2-litre/1.3-litre petrol/diesel engines, which have proven themselves over the years, so there's no reason to believe otherwise with this car. You won't be shocked or surprised once you fire up either variant and get on the move, because the powerplants feel so familiar. I'm partial

to the 81bhp/11.4 kgm petrol variant with a manual transmission, because it's the most fun to drive – the gearbox is smooth and assured, and the engine is playful and refined. The diesel engine, with 74 bhp and 19.3 kgm, is no slouch either and will offer greater fuel efficiency; the automatic (AMT) transmissions offered as options with both engines are very convenient in city traffic, but out on more open roads, they're somewhat sluggish.

Dynamically, the Ignis feels solidly planted at high speeds, and is very stable during lane change manoeuvres; I didn't get to throw it around any proper corners on the test drive route, but I'll wager that it'll take such corners in a controlled manner, with little body roll; it also rides well, ironing out all but the harshest bumps in the road. The steering is the lone downer in an otherwise sorted package – it's too vague and doesn't offer much feedback, although it's very easy to use in city traffic. At Rs 6.69/7.8 lakh (ex-Delhi) for the top end petrol and diesel variants, the Ignis is certainly not easy on the pocket – in fact, it's quite close in price to its bigger sibling, the Baleno. Suzuki is taking a bit of a punt and positioning it as a premium, lifestyle product, and it will retail from the company's Nexa network of upmarket showrooms. Should you be paying that sort of money for a hatchback with a cartoon cat on its butt? The answer depends on how 'Millennial' you're feeling, I suppose, but personally, I'd definitely put down that deposit.



# inthemoment



## PRITHVI SHAW

The Mumbai batsman was the saving grace in Mumbai's recent Ranji Trophy final defeat, and he's showing signs of bigger and better things to come.

By Sameer Jha

**AT THE TENDER AGE OF 17,** Prithvi Shaw is showing that a knock on the doors of the Indian team may not be very far away. He is an opener, plays with a vertical bat and has a huge appetite for runs. The Mumbai batsman grabbed eyeballs during his debut Ranji Trophy game, where he scored a match-winning hundred. That the match was a semi-final only accentuated the worth of his contribution, although the knock wasn't without its share of drama. When Shaw was on 99, he was caught at gully by Tamil Nadu's B Indrajith, but fortunately for him, Vijay Shankar, the bowler, had overstepped. Shaw had another chance to complete his century, and

the young lad didn't waste the opportunity. This was not the first time that he had made waves. In 2013, Shaw had scored a staggering 546 runs in a Harris Shield game, and thus broken the record for the highest score in Indian minor cricket.

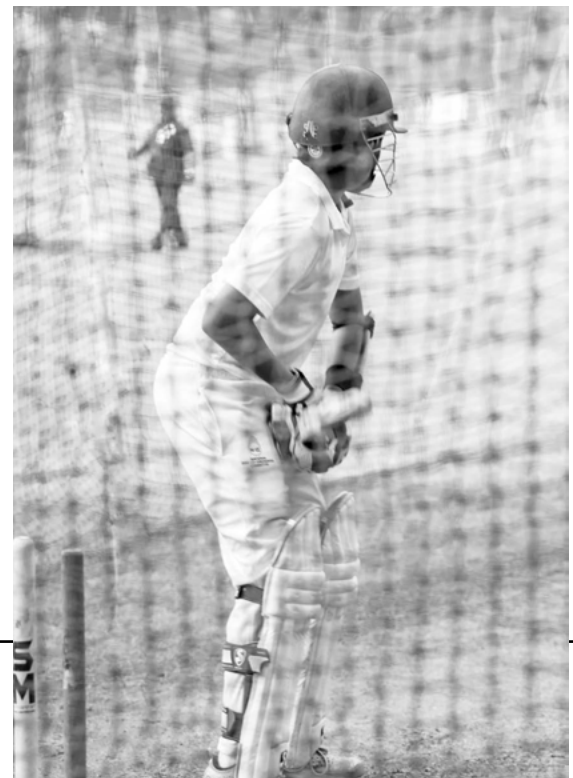
His selection in the Mumbai team had a touch of fortune about it. Mumbai's regular opener, Akhil Herwadkar, was injured, and the team had tried three replacements without much success. That's when Mumbai's chairman of selectors, Milind Rege, decided to ring up Rahul Dravid (who had seen Shaw play for the India Under 19 team) and ask for his advice. Dravid gave Shaw a thumbs

up, and the teenager got an opportunity to prove his mettle.

In the Ranji Trophy final, Shaw displayed his fine skills by scoring 71 in the first innings and a quickfire 35-ball 44 in the second innings. Unfortunately, he couldn't take his team to victory, but that didn't stop him from getting noticed. It remains to be seen whether the selectors invest in him right away, or wait for a few more seasons to see if he can sustain the rigours of domestic cricket. It makes sense to track his performance in a few more games, and then give him a shot on the international stage to see if he has the skills to play for India for an extended period. Right now, it's important for him to stay calm and just focus on getting big runs. A lot of attention can sometimes break a player, and it's vital that Shaw retains his humility and doesn't

let the praise translate into arrogance. It will also be interesting to see his performance in this year's IPL, since chances are high that some team will pick him up. With T20 becoming as important as the other formats, Shaw will be intent on honing his six-hitting skills. That doesn't mean he should let his defensive game suffer, though.

Like many other cricketers, Shaw's story has been that of rags to riches and not without its share of setbacks. He lost his mother at the age of four, something that would have made his childhood an extremely tough phase to go through. Years later, Shaw's prowess with the bat earned him some generous sponsorships, and he even got a chance to travel to England to play cricket. Shaw has made every opportunity count, and it perhaps won't be long before we see him in a Team India jersey.





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# THE TRAVEL HOT LIST

We did the recce so you don't have to. These are the hottest destinations for the year, according to our travel experts. [By Prachi Joshi](#)

## BISHANGARH, RAJASTHAN

Hidden in the Aravalli hills, Bishangarh is a tiny village known mainly for the imposing, 230-year old fortress of Shahpura's royalty. Sitting atop a granite hill and surrounded by thick walls with turrets, the fort has been restored over the past seven years, and will debut as a luxury, all-suite resort, Alila Fort Bishangarh, which opens in early 2017. Apart from soaking in the royal ambience, you can also sign up for bespoke cultural activities, including visits to neighbouring farming communities, engaging with artisans and taking a class in local cuisine.

## THANGU VALLEY, SIKKIM

After Assam and Meghalaya, Sikkim is the next hot destination in the Northeast. The high-altitude alpine meadows of Thangu Valley are awash with blossoming flowers in summer and shrouded with snow in winter. There are some fabulous treks from here to Chopta Valley and Muguthang, or you can take a two to three day yak safari to explore the valley.

## SUNDARBANS, WEST BENGAL

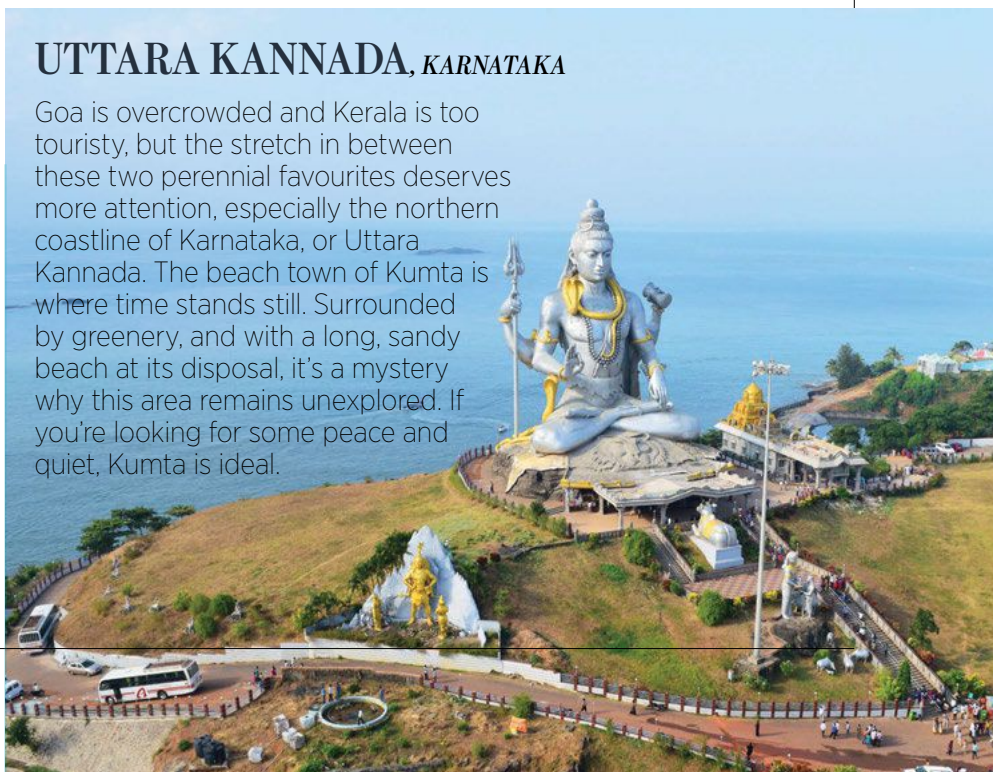
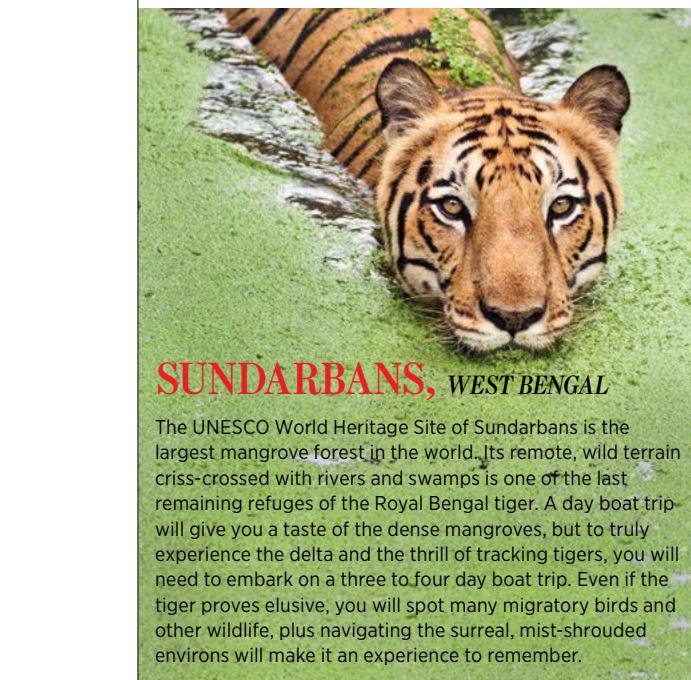
The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sundarbans is the largest mangrove forest in the world. Its remote, wild terrain criss-crossed with rivers and swamps is one of the last remaining refuges of the Royal Bengal tiger. A day boat trip will give you a taste of the dense mangroves, but to truly experience the delta and the thrill of tracking tigers, you will need to embark on a three to four day boat trip. Even if the tiger proves elusive, you will spot many migratory birds and other wildlife, plus navigating the surreal, mist-shrouded environs will make it an experience to remember.

## BINSAR, UTTARAKHAND

Binsar was the summer capital of the Chand kings of Kumaon, and it's not hard to imagine why they preferred this picturesque hamlet with stunning views of the Himalayas. On a clear day, hike up to 'Zero Point' from where you can spot some of the most iconic peaks, including Trishul, Nanda Devi, and Panchachuli. Binsar is a nature lover's paradise – the wildlife sanctuary is excellent for birding and for spotting rare animals. For the adventurous traveller, there are many trails winding through the misty mountains and rhododendron forests.

## UTTARA KANNADA, KARNATAKA

Goa is overcrowded and Kerala is too touristy, but the stretch in between these two perennial favourites deserves more attention, especially the northern coastline of Karnataka, or Uttara Kannada. The beach town of Kumta is where time stands still. Surrounded by greenery, and with a long, sandy beach at its disposal, it's a mystery why this area remains unexplored. If you're looking for some peace and quiet, Kumta is ideal.





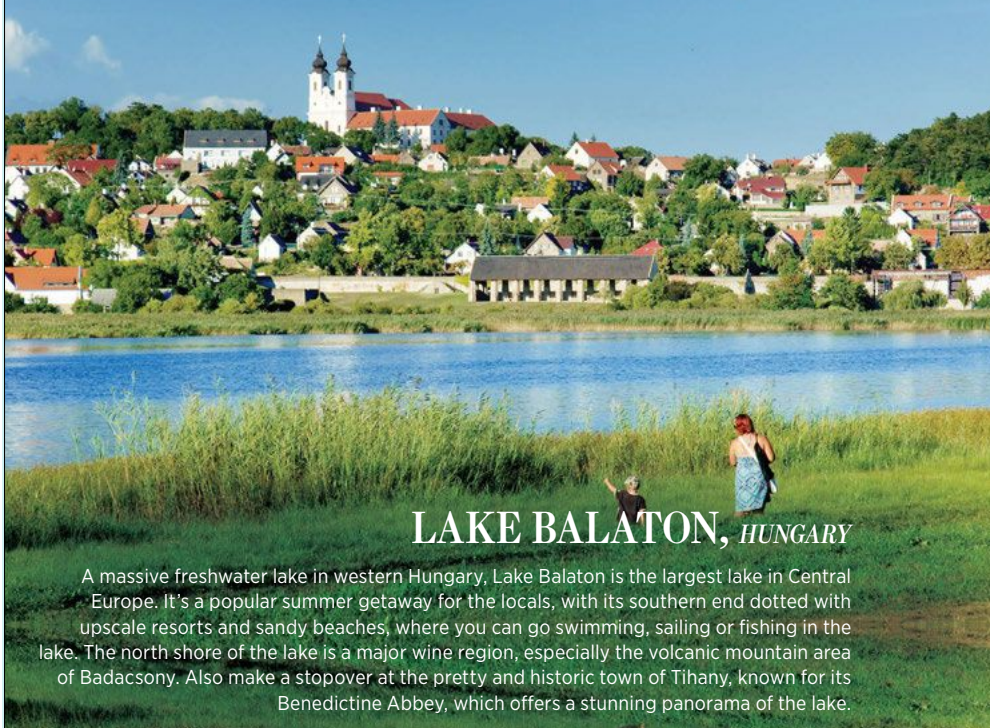


## PORT LINCOLN, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The seafood capital of Australia, Port Lincoln is a charming city on the lower Eyre Peninsula overlooking Boston Bay. This is a great place to base yourself to explore the coast and the peninsula. Indulge in some superb aqua adventures, such as shark cage diving and swimming up, close and personal with sea lions. Also experience the Outback way of life on a seafood safari to hunt and gather your own 'catch of the day', or go on a tour of the fabulous wineries of the region.

## FRÉGATE ISLAND, SEYCHELLES

Move over Mahé and La-Digue; if you are looking for an island hideaway in Seychelles, look no further than Frégate Island, the easternmost of the inner islands of Seychelles. Its dazzlingly white, powdery Anse Victorin beach is regularly voted one of the best beaches in the world. In this Garden of Eden, fringed by the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean, is the secluded luxury resort, Frégate Island Private, with 16 villas built against the stunning backdrop of gleaming granite rocks.



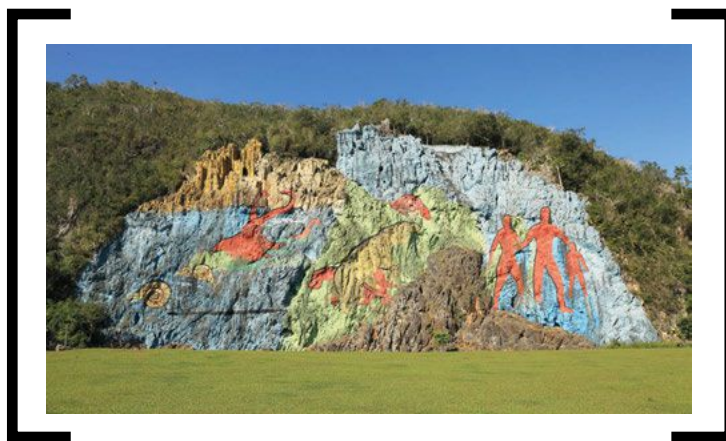
## LAKE BALATON, HUNGARY

A massive freshwater lake in western Hungary, Lake Balaton is the largest lake in Central Europe. It's a popular summer getaway for the locals, with its southern end dotted with upscale resorts and sandy beaches, where you can go swimming, sailing or fishing in the lake. The north shore of the lake is a major wine region, especially the volcanic mountain area of Badacsony. Also make a stopover at the pretty and historic town of Tihany, known for its Benedictine Abbey, which offers a stunning panorama of the lake.



## YALA NATIONAL PARK, SRI LANKA

Our gorgeous neighbouring island has become a hot destination over the past few years. Look beyond the beaches in the south and the tea plantations of the north, and consider instead a wildlife destination. Yala National Park, on the southeast coast of the country, is the second largest national park in Sri Lanka and is home to the largest concentration of leopards in the world.



## VIÑALES, CUBA

Cuba may be on everyone's hot list right now, but there's more to it than the iconic images of colourful Havana and its vintage cars. The Viñales Valley has been hailed by UNESCO as a cultural landscape – a traditional settlement known for its tobacco plantations, the very same tobacco that goes into some of the best known Cuban cigar brands. The area has some striking landscapes and also offers many hiking and climbing opportunities.



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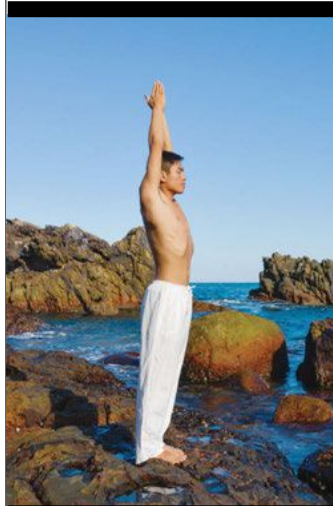
## SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

The future of travel is green. More travellers will pick their accommodations wisely. From opting for homestays and public transport, to eating local and avoiding animal entertainment activities, there are many ways of being a responsible traveller.



## EXPLORING THE HOOD

Local travel will become one of the hottest trends of 2017. Instead of jetting off to Europe this summer, more Indians will be getting to know their backyards better.



## WELLNESS HOLIDAYS

Need an escape from the urban jungle? Whether it's a much-needed digital detox, or yoga retreat, or just a bit of R&R, wellness travel is just what the doctor ordered.

## IN HIGH SPIRITS

Wine and craft beer are passé; the next big thing is regional micro-distilleries using local ingredients to brew small batch gins, experimental vodkas or high quality whiskies.



## FAM JAMS

Sure, solo travel is cool, but remember the time you used to travel with your extended family? Multi-generational travel may be challenging, but travelling with two to four generations of your family can be an enriching experience, not to mention the shared memories you will make.



## TRAVEL TO EAT

Culinary travel has seen a revolution in the past couple of years, and it's only going to get bigger. You will explore the hutongs (alleys) of Beijing to uncover its street food, and savour eri polu (a dish made with silkworm pupa) in Assam.

## #TRAVEL

2017 will see the rise and rise of social media and its use to document our travels. All the action will be on Instagram and Snapchat, so get hashtagging and filtering







# A Gateway to bliss

The Gateway Hotel Ambad Nashik is the perfect getaway for a lazy weekend from Mumbai or Pune

**T**he Gateway Hotel Ambad, Nashik welcomes guests with the kind of comfort you would experience at a Maharashtrian residence. It is located amidst 20 acres of lush, landscaped gardens. Guests can choose from an array of inviting accommodation options – Suites, Executive and Superior rooms. For an indulgent stay, you could opt for one of the beautiful Wine-themed Suites; after all, you're in the wine capital of India.

As a tribute to the city, Gateway Nashik has launched wine suites. The essence of the four kinds of wines (Red, Rose, Sparkling and White) has been brought out in the four themed suites through colours and textures. The design language is simple and minimalistic, with straight lines to maintain the luxurious feel of the suites.

The hotel also organises

customised tours and wine tasting sessions to a variety of wineries in the region. The helpful staff at the hotel can also arrange trips to places of tourist interest, as well as the business district. Nashik is one of the most prominent business destinations in India.

A guest can end the day at the hotel with a drink at the Bar. The cosy all-day diner Citrine offers variety of cuisines. The Grill is a perfect place to watch the amazing Nashik sunset. For the 'foodcationers', the hotel provides authentic Maharashtrian fare at Panchratna, the Indian restaurant with signature dishes from Konkan, Vidharbha, Kolhapur, Khandesi and Marathwada. The delicious food is prepared by local housewives of the region.

**Contact Info: The Gateway Hotel Ambad Nashik, P 17, MIDC Ambad, Mumbai Agra Road, Nashik, Maharashtra – 422 010 +91 253 6692300 / +91 0253 6603366**





## Toy story

When he isn't doing his day job as an HR professional, Shahzad Bhiwandiwalla can be found on his terrace studio, photographing action figures in life-like situations.

By Shweta Mehta Sen

### THE STORAGE CUPBOARD

in Shahzad Bhiwandiwalla's terrace apartment in Mumbai is packed with action figures and Lego sets. Some of them are from his childhood — he's painstakingly painted over faded Lego, leaving the rest to touch-ups — while a larger chunk is pristine and new. There's a super cool Spartan Batman collectible, a number of Star Wars figurines, Lord of the Rings characters and more. The detailing on the face of a 12-inch Obi Wan Kenobi is the most intricate and realistic I've ever seen.

"I'm going to have to figure out where to keep the new ones; it's a pretty good problem to have," grins the



24-year-old HR professional, who photographs toys as a hobby; what stemmed from a childhood passion for toys, combined with a need to have a creative outlet as an adult, is something Bhiwandiwalla didn't foresee.

"I experimented with wildlife and landscape photography before coming across these amazing Star Wars pictures on Instagram — turns out they were all created using toys," he says, explaining that at that point, he hadn't studied photography and had only his childhood toys to experiment with. Bhiwandiwalla started photographing his limited collection, his lack of technical knowledge meaning that multiple tweaks in settings would

lead to the desired image.

A two-month course in the basics of photography and several experiments later, he's finally figured out how to create top-of-the-line imagery using his favourite characters. Apart from engaging with fellow toy photographers on Facebook, Instagram, blogs and webzines, Bhiwandiwalla has managed to catch the eye of toymakers as well. "None of the brands making these toys sell them in India because of a lack of demand. So buying them online is expensive. A 12-inch figure can sometimes cost around Rs 25,000," he says.

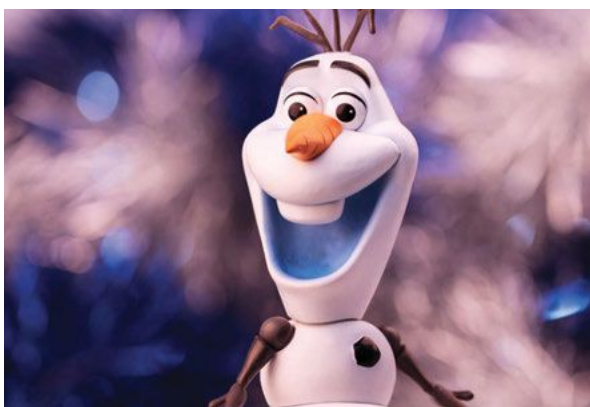
Bhiwandiwalla immediately started writing to these brands, and — only too happy to explore a way to bridge the gap — they agreed to send him a steady supply of the coolest figures they came up with. "I post the images on Indian photography collectives to promote this as an art form. Plus, brands post the images I shoot on their pages, and that's how it has snowballed," he explains, adding, "I started off with just two table lamps and a black backdrop, superimposing figures onto backgrounds I would create on Photoshop." Now, he shoots outdoors on his terrace, using plants and sticks to create trees and forests, sparking small, controlled fires where possible. Not all experiments yield the results he hopes for, though. "Last Diwali, I tried using a sutli bomb to get a sparkling effect and it went off in my face," he laughs.

He might be one of India's only photographers dabbling in this genre, but Bhiwandiwalla is one among a sea of professional toy photographers in the US, UK,

**Clockwise from top:** Bhiwandiwalla with his collection; Want me to get that itch for you, bub?; Genius, Billionaire, Playboy, Philanthropist!; Always be yourself, unless you can be Batman. Then always be Batman; You don't know the power of the dark side!







**From top:** The Amigos; Last of Our Kind; Some people are worth melting for; Bhiwandiwalla sets up a shot at his terrace



Japan, Singapore and other countries, so he makes an effort to engage with them, and in a way, represent India. He says, "It's a pretty strong movement abroad, so why not bring it here? Lots of my friends enjoy pop culture, but there isn't much exposure here. This is a small start." It helps that his parents are supportive, and don't cringe at wads of money being spent on a rare action figure either.

From Flickr uploads that had a lukewarm response to Instagram and Facebook pages that have met with considerably more success, Bhiwandiwalla's journey has been slow but sure-footed. He regularly contributes as a guest blogger to independent publications, like the toy photography magazine *Exclu Collective* and popular blog *Stuck In Plastic*. A couple of his pictures also made it to an exhibition at Mumbai's National Institute of Photography last year, and he now wants to have a solo show in the near future.



## THE BASICS OF TOY PHOTOGRAPHY

### Know your gear

Understand the strengths and limitations of your camera as well as your subjects — the toys. Play with them to understand the best stance for balance, and the good photography angles.

### Understand the character

Knowing its back story helps you play on its strengths, weaknesses and come up with a concept accordingly — or you could turn the concept on its head and put the character in a completely different world.

### Fill the frame

The only breathing room to be left for the subject is when you as an artist feel it is important to do so. It's also practically mandatory to have a good macro lens to bring out the details of your figures.

### Photoshop and YouTube are your best friends

Shoot in RAW format to have more control during post-processing. Photoshop is great for making finer adjustments to lighting and other variables that you can't control with the camera. YouTube videos are an excellent repository of tutorials to learn the basics and even certain advanced techniques in photo manipulation.

### Experiment with practical effects

Daily-use objects have the ability of breathing new life into your images — potted plants for a forest or practical sources of fire for the illusion of explosions. For the latter, it would be advisable to test out the effects on cheaper figures before going in headfirst.



## • TELEVISION



### ◀ AMERICAN GODS

Premiere: April 2017

Us Neil Gaiman geeks have been waiting for this show for almost a year. Starz's *American Gods* is an ambitious adaptation of Neil Gaiman's classic 2001 novel, in which a bunch of old gods living in the U.S. are suddenly challenged by the "new gods" of technology and media. Caught in the midst of it all is ex-convict Shadow, who has a life-altering rendezvous with the mysterious Mr. Wednesday. Do I have your attention? Also, given the novel's expansive plotline, several seasons are expected.

## Couch surfing

New shows? Old favourites? Here's what you should be watching on TV in 2017.

By Arnesh Ghose

### POWERLESS ▶

Premiere: February 2017

Whom would you call if Superman, say, smashed your car to smithereens, while fighting some bad guy? This promising new sitcom starring Vanessa Hudgens is based in a world where superheroes exist and is about a subsidiary of Wayne Enterprises, whose staff deals with dispute resolution for common people who have been affected by superhero antics. I am chortling already.



### ◀ A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

Premiere: January 2017

Who can do a better job than Jim Carrey in the film version? Yes, I hear you, but imagine relishing this wicked revenge fest over 8 episodes, you glorious binger — and Neil Patrick Harris shows immense promise as Count Olaf. The episodes are out, and take it from someone who has already seen it — it is a smashing effort.



### THE YOUNG POPE ▶

Premiere: January 2017 (ongoing)

Young, hot and Machiavellian — there is a new pope in town. A joint venture between Sky Atlantic, Canal+ and HBO and helmed by Paolo Sorrentino, Jude Law plays Pope Pius XIII, who is shaking things up at the Vatican, much to the chagrin of the religious elders. But, does he also have an ulterior motive? To top it all, he's American. The show also stars Diane Keaton and has been lauded for its production and performances. Conspiracy theorists, start your engines.



### ▼ SCANDAL (SEASON 6)

Premiere: January 2017 (ongoing)

Who wins the election? Will Jake and Olivia get back together? What will Eli Pope do now? Will Fitz and Olivia get back together? What will Fitz do now that he is almost done being president? If Mellie wins, will Olivia go back to the White House as her Chief of Staff? Will Jake really become Veep? Or is Eli Pope's plant in the administration? Too. Many. Questions.







### ◀ HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER (SEASON 3)

Premiere: January 2017 (ongoing)

If you didn't know already, Wes was dead long before the fire started (Shonda Rhimes, these mid-season breaks are heartless and unfair). The season started off pretty hot and action packed (the narrative as wickedly non-linear as it can get), with Annalise spiralling out of control. Just when she finally got it together, the shit hit the fan. The anticipation for the latter half of the season is feverish, so let's hope Shonda pulls an Ekta Kapoor and Alfred Enoch is not really dead.



### ▲ BIG LITTLE LIES

Premiere: February 2017

A fascinating limited series based on the best-selling book, the trailer has already become a hit with audiences worldwide. Starring heavyweights like Nicole Kidman, Reese Witherspoon, Alexander Skarsgard, Adam Scott and Shailene Woodley, the show feels like a slicker (and nastier) update of *Desperate Housewives*. Set in idyllic Monterey, it delves into twisted relationships, upper-class mom rivalry and (naturally) a murder.

### ▼ SENSE8 (SEASON 2)

Premiere: May 2017

If you have seen the Christmas Special episode of *Sense8*, you know that nothing is working out for any of the characters. Sun is still in jail, Nomi is on the run, Riley and Will are trying to fight Whispers with heroin, Lito and Hernando are bearing the brunt of Lito's coming out and Wolfgang is being mercilessly hunted down. A recipe for a fantastic upcoming season, I must (heartlessly) say.



### ▼ THE HANDMAID'S TALE

Premiere: April 2017

It feels frightening that an adaptation of Margaret Atwood's dystopian story of women's subjugation is so uncannily relevant today. With a promising cast led by Elisabeth Moss and Joseph Fiennes, this thriller is definitely one of the highlights of the year.



### ▼ SANTA CLARITA DIET

Premiere: February 2017

Let me be honest here: this is my favourite from the list of shows to look forward to in 2017. Drew Barrymore is a boring real estate agent who has a transformation of sorts and shifts to a whole new diet — human flesh. Pitched as a horror-comedy and with dashes of Sweeney Todd, here's something outrageous to stay glued to.





# ANANDA SOLOMON

CHEF

► **What does success mean to you?**

I strongly believe in the saying "Atithi Devo Bhava", which means the guest is god. My focus has hence remained in the endeavour to exceed a guest's expectations and therefore, for me success has always been measured by the smile of a satisfied guest.

► **Who is the most unforgettable person you have met and why?**

Ratan Tata has been one of my greatest inspirations. Despite being an icon, a business legend and a role model, he remains humble and has the most magnanimous heart. He has left an indelible impression on me both on a professional and a personal front.

► **Do you have any role models or people you look up to?**

I look up to anyone who has the willpower to follow their passion and those who have the dedication to see their vision through to the end.

► **How do you deal with failure?**

Failure is nothing but part of life's greatest lessons. Without failure you cannot grow, you cannot evolve and you cannot succeed.

► **What would you have become, if not a chef?**

I am a deeply spiritual person, and feeding people

has always made me feel closer to god, and hence if I wasn't a chef I would look for another way to contribute to society.

► **If you could turn back the clock, what would you change?**

I would change nothing. Life is a journey. The highs, the lows, the successes and shortcomings all make for an exciting roller coaster ride, and I have and continue to savour every moment.

► **Has money ever been a problem?**

Money is a means for living and should never be confused with the meaning of life. I have been blessed with good fortune, but have never taken my fortune for granted.

► **Do you think much about death?**

In life, I believe it is important to leave a legacy and hence my only hope in death is that I be remembered for contributing in my own way, no matter how small, to society.

► **Do you believe in god?**

Yes. I am deeply religious and believe in a great power.

► **What is the biggest decision you have ever made in your life?**

I guess the decision to become a chef. At a time when this profession was not considered prominent,

I followed my passion and it has remained my greatest decision.

► **What advice would you give to the younger generation?**

Build a foundation, strengthen your basics, be grateful and always give back.

► **What would you call a defining moment in your life?**

Travelling around the world and speaking to people from different walks of life has opened my mind to possibilities that I never imagined. If you listen to patrons and the older generation, they offer a wealth of knowledge and the learnings I have received

from these interactions have shaped the man I am today

► **What has been your biggest high — personally and professionally?**

Representing India through our diverse and exciting culinary heritage has been my greatest personal high. Professionally, I feel proud that I have been a part of India's culinary story.

► **What has your field of work taught you about life?**

I have learnt that you never stop learning. Every day I embrace the new and look forward to continuing to better my art.

► **When did you know it was the right time to retire? Do**

**you sometimes think you made the wrong decision?**

Life is all about moving forward. I look at the past with fond memories, but I don't believe in regrets.

► **What do you plan to do with your free time now?**

Who said anything about free time? I am now busier than ever, working on the next chapter in my life.

► **What are some of the memorable experience and learnings you have had over the years?**

There are so many, but I think some of my most treasured have been serving the Prime Minister of India and representing my country on a global platform.





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# THE 10 BEST Indian White Wines

Whoever thinks a white wine can't be paired with a rich meat dish, or a spicy vegetarian curry, has a lot of drinking to do on the path to wisdom. Here is my pick of the best whites made in the country. BY MAGANDEEP SINGH

1



## Fratelli Sangiovese Bianco

Let's start with a light, easy number; gently fruity and extremely crisp. This is a great wine to kick-start an evening. The dry finish will leave you thirsting for more, so remember to keep a sizeable stash.

## Fratelli Vitae Chardonnay

Gently oaked and a nice medium-bodied wine, it shows some soft toasty notes and a fairly intense palate. Great with snacks and light preparations.



2

3



## Reveilo Chardonnay Reserve

India's first Chardonnay and still the only one that's properly oak-aged. Few whites are made at this level of finesse, and this wine can marry with the most flavourful of foods, meaty or vegan.

4



## Sula Riesling

A curious wine, which manages to show good typicity and acidity in spite of the warm Nashik climes where it is made. Very affable and enjoyable, this is off-dry in style and, with some soda, can make for a great spritzer.

5

## Vijay Amritraj Viognier

An aromatic white wine with a lovely creamy palate. The grape is not for everyone — almost greasy on the mid-palate — but this wine is a great example of what a good Viognier is. Gently toasty too, it is good as a starter but also fantastic in a pairing, especially with Indian cuisine.





6

### Charosa Viognier Reserve

Yet another extremely aromatic expression of the Rhone white grape - soft and balanced.



7

### York Chenin Blanc

I'm not a big fan of local Chenin, as none of them measure up to what the rest of the world produces. York, however, does a decent job of making a fresh, clean wine with apt freshness and flavour.



8

### KRSMA Sauvignon Blanc

Most brands do a decent Sauvignon Blanc, but this is the only one which almost seems to have the richness of a Sauvignon Gris incorporated into it as well. It's a lovely, crisp wine with intensity and body. It is also up for cellaring for a year or two, which imparts richness to it, making it ideal with curries and similar dishes.



9

### Vallonne Vin de Passerillage

A thick, honeyed and luscious sweet white wine with a refreshing finish, this is among the best sweet wines to be found in India.



10

### Reveilo Late Harvest Chenin Blanc

A lovely, expressive wine with marmalade and fruit compote notes.







## Sunder Aaron

Partner at Pizza Mia and Chicken Man

**AARON GAVE** up a successful career in television, working with Sony Pictures in Los Angeles and Mumbai, where he launched their English channels PIX and AXN. Eventually, he quit Sony and moved to Goa a year later.

Having felt a gap in the market for quality fast food, he got together with some others and launched Chicken Man, a rotisserie chicken specialty outlet in Panjim. Soon, other locations followed, and now Chicken Man is ready to spread its wings beyond Goa. Pizza Mia, a New York style pizzeria, opened in Panjim as well. This time, a bar and gelateria were attached. Similarly, new outlets cropped up in other locations, with home delivery as a key part of the business model. Here's what Sunder has to say about his serial restaurateur success.

**What I love about Goa and running a business here**  
We decided to incubate our

QSR brands in Goa because of the low cost structure. While there are other challenges that don't exist in Mumbai or the other major metros (labour pool, low population density) we were correct about the low cost compared to Mumbai to get the brand up and running, and then to proof them. Now we are at an inflection point, and are excited to take the brands into the major metros. Of course, another thing to love about running a business in Goa is the option to reward yourself by taking a trip to the beach after a particularly hectic run of days!

**What it takes to succeed**  
It takes failure to succeed. There's nothing like experience, and through the bad experiences, that's when your mettle is made, your soul is formed. Challenges strengthen your resolve and sharpen your skills. They also tune your instincts and make you pragmatic enough to know what a business requires.

**Address:** No. G-2, Nizmar Centre, Dr. A.B Road, Off 18th June Road, Near EDC Complex, Panjim. Phone: 0832 242 3333

## Four men living the Goan dream

Giving up on a successful career midstream and retiring to Goa, to start a restaurant or a bar, is a common fantasy. Meet some men who have actually done it.

By  
**Sapna Shahni**

## Gaurav Arya

Cafe Cotinga

**A FAMILIAR FACE** at some of the most exclusive parties in Goa, Arya has his finger on the pulse of the expat hubs of Anjuna and Vagator. His gregariousness is partly what attracts many long-time residents, who are seen at his restaurant Cafe Cotinga in their charming Assagao hotel. Starting out his career at the advertising agency Grey Worldwide in Delhi, Gaurav moved to the UK to study music, but "missed the sun" and decided to move to Goa in 2006. His father Ram Arya has

been a veteran in the hospitality business and his mother Param has a keen eye for design and baking. This may be why the desserts are huge hits at Cafe Cotinga. In fact, everyone in the family has played a role in making the restaurant and hotel a success. His

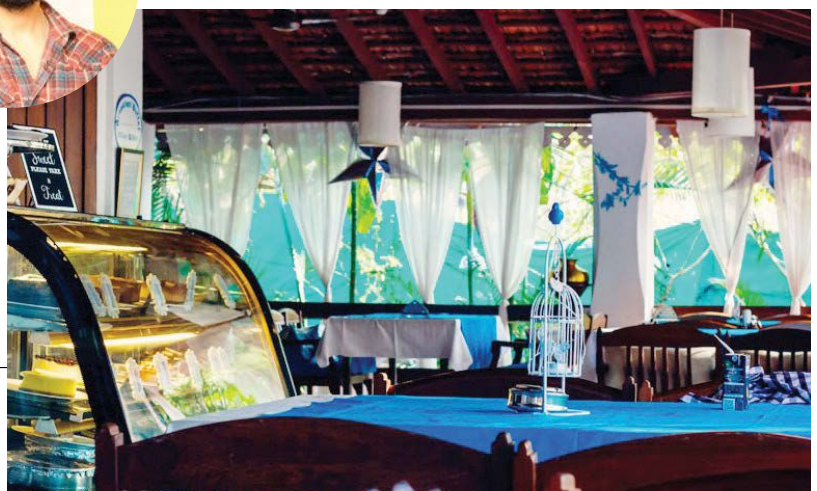
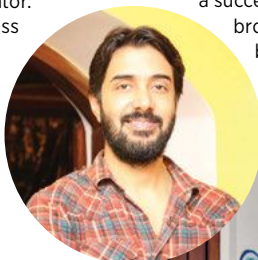
brother Avijit is behind Media Moguls, a leading digital

marketing agency, specialising in boosting revenue for hotels. Sister Simran owns a designer women's wear brand, Carousel, which has an outlet at the hotel.

Gaurav's favourite cuisine is Indian, which is also Cafe Cotinga's specialty, along with tamarind-inspired dishes like Tamarind Chicken and Margaritas, and a host of continental mains and desserts. He says, "The

gratification one gets from feeding people is the best thing about owning a restaurant. While the criticism and the love is immediate and strong. It's a big responsibility because it's dealing with fresh produce and people's health, mood as well as their holiday experience."

**Address:** 1286, Kumar Vaddo, Opposite St. Michael's Church, Anjuna. Phone: 0832 651 9999







## Prahlad Sukhtankar

*The Black Sheep Bistro*

### A FEW YEARS AGO,

Prahlad Sukhtankar's 'modern, social and urban' bistro took Panjim by storm. He and his wife Sabreen had moved to Goa, where Prahlad's family lived, after meeting in Switzerland. The Black Sheep Bistro opened its doors serving a kind of contemporary Goan and international menu that no one had seen before. Today, the Inspired Chorizo Pao, Spicy Chocolate Pasta or the Amante Picante cocktail have probably featured on dozens of celebrity's Instagram handles. So if you would like to be next, here is some insight into the restaurant business from Prahlad, who's also an international guild-certified sommelier.

### What inspires me

I am inspired by my travels, which are centered around the food and people of

that region. We learn from our experiences across the world and continually strive to challenge our team to work on new ideas and inspirations. I am also inspired by creativity. I enjoying cooking and working alongside my team to create something new.

### What it takes to succeed

The restaurant business is great for people who are passionate about hospitality. By hospitality, I mean when things happen 'for you' as opposed to 'to you'. For instance, if I go out for dinner with my wife, I'd like things to happen 'for me' and not 'to me' and if one can understand the science behind 'for you' vs 'to you', then one will be a successful restaurateur every step of the way. That said, one also needs good leadership.

### My outlook on the restaurant business

It is a fantastic business, with great prospects for entrepreneurs with the right attitude and skills. However, it is also vastly

misunderstood. Many assume that it is a very easy business to get into because of some idea they might have had on their travels, or seen on TV or some fad concept they might have experienced in a big city, but this is a very serious business that requires a scientific approach and systems for all processes. One has to remember to be open to criticism and always wear a smile, no matter the pressure.

The prospects for this business are positive in India. We are a great nation with a rising middle class and increasing disposable income. I am happy to see interesting new concepts popping up all over the country and I am hopeful that with the passing of new GST tax laws, curbing black money and transparency in licensing laws, things will be even better in the coming years.

**Address: The Black Sheep Bistro, Swami Vivekanand Road, Panjim. Phone: 098817 31901**



## Bilal Dar

*Tamarin Mediterranean Bistro*

**ON THE BUSY** Calangute-Candolim road, one walks into an oasis of calm at Tamarin. Set in an urban garden atmosphere, with an extensive menu of unusual dishes from all around the Mediterranean, and an impressive wine list, travellers are awed

here. Everything is just perfect, from the Moroccan Prawns to the Lebanese Beef Kibbeh Kebabs and Tunisian Briouats. Part-year residents of Goa from Europe mingle with local domestic tourists, enjoying the live music here in the evenings. Bilal is responsible for the impeccable flavours and is hands-on in the kitchen, while his wife Jennifer is out front interacting with guests.

After moving to England and getting married, Bilal began working in hospitality, where Jennifer had already carved out a reputation as a chef and later a manager. After completing his training, Bilal worked as a chef at London's top restaurants, such as Quaglino's, Carluccio's Cafe and the Digby Trout restaurants at the British Museum and Barbican Centre. Inspired by their travels, they decided to fulfill a long-

held ambition and opened Tamarin in 2012, serving Mediterranean cuisine. The Kashmiri Wazwaan menu was developed in the second season..

### What makes Tamarin unique

The dual menus. The flavours are bold and authentic, whether you are eating Mediterranean or Kashmiri.

### What led him to becoming a restaurateur

Bilal was a passionate home cook, having been inspired by his mother from an early age. When he started travelling, his passion and love of Mediterranean food evolved. His wife has always worked in the industry, so it seemed like a natural step to start up on their own.

### What it takes to be a successful restaurateur in Goa

Bilal thinks it takes a lot of hard work and stamina, as



well as courage, to bring something new to the food scene whilst staying true to your goals and vision.

### What his experience has been like

It is a constantly unfolding story, as he develops with the restaurant and the Goan

food scene. Things have not always been as expected. Ultimately it has been an amazing experience, where he continues to grow as a chef, and as a person.

**Address: Guarra Vaddo, Calangute, Calangute. Phone: 095454 77670**







## Sagar Baheti

Despite being diagnosed with Stargardt's Disease in his 20s, Bengaluru's Sagar Baheti has become the first visually impaired person to qualify for the Boston Marathon.

By Alshaar Khan

### IMAGINE WAKING UP AS

**A 20**-something one day to discover that your vision has started deteriorating, to the extent that it could fade away completely in a few years. This is the story of 31-year old entrepreneur Sagar Baheti, who has battled Stargardt's Disease to become the first visually-impaired person to qualify for the celebrated Boston Marathon, to be held in April.

The Bengaluru-based runner disclosed that he didn't even take it seriously until one of his friends, who lives in Boston, applied for it. "She suggested that I should give this a shot, and helped me with the application process, because I can't overwork my vision," he said. "It only dawned properly upon me once I got a call from the Boston Athletic Association, who took an interest in my

case after going through the application. They wanted to know more about my condition and upon gauging my eagerness to participate, they finally accepted my entry into the marathon in December last year," he added.

The IIM-B graduate first learnt about his condition in 2012, and was initially left in a state of disarray, when he found that there is no cure for the condition. "There is no better way to deal with Stargardt's than to accept it and adapt your everyday life accordingly. So I started changing the little things, like getting a larger, brighter wall clock with magnified fonts to begin with. Then I started getting accustomed to using artificial intelligence on the phone and other assistance in public places," he said. "A big fact that I've realised during

my battle with the condition is that talking really helps. People are willing to help, if you express your problem to them. And even if they are unable to help, they do whatever best they can," the marathoner said.

It's not new for Sagar to be associated with outdoor sports, as he recollected his days of playing competitive cricket. "I used to play club cricket regularly before the diagnosis. It was something that kept me both fit and passionate about daily life. And to ensure that this was not affected in any way because of Stargardt's, I decided to start running, because it was also the safest alternative to any other sport, which requires better vision," revealed the engineer.

What initially began as a hobby gradually turned into an obsession. "I took part in my first 10k in 2013, and wanted to simply finish it. I clocked around 68 minutes, but as I came into contact with the fraternity, I realised that I had to do much better. So with some more hard work, I started clocking considerably less in the following runs."

The carpe diem feeling soon kicked in and Sagar then started reaching for the targets that he won't be able to, once his vision has completely gone. "By the end of 2014, I was doing half marathons in places like Ladakh. I also ran my first full marathon in Goa later that year, and finishing it boosted my confidence even further," he said.

He has also taken part in

endurance cycling events like the 900km-long Tour of Nilgiri, in order to tick other things on his bucket list. "I wanted to do the Great Wall of China Run last year, but work and other commitments came in the way. However, I'm really looking forward to the Boston Marathon now."

The young businessman, who has now employed a professional trainer to supervise his preparation for the event in Boston, also wants to do something for other Stargardt's patients around him. "I was fortunate to be born in a well-off family, so that I could get the best possible treatment. But there are some people who don't get any help, so I'm planning to start a local support group with the objective of building a community," he said.

"In Boston, the Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired is doing some fantastic work for people like me. So when I go there for the marathon, I plan to bring back the best for my upcoming support group. I'm also raising funds for the same through a crowdfunding campaign online," said Sagar, adding that "My disability has given me newer perspectives. I hope that we can evolve as a more inclusive society in the times to come. In my company too, we are hiring more and more visually impaired employees to nurture this ideology."

Support Sagar's campaign here: <https://www.crowdrise.com/teamwithavisionboston2017/fundraiser/sagarbaheti>





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# Board games

The courts have brought the BCCI to heel, but is that necessarily a good thing for Indian cricket?

By Anand Vasu



Anurag Thakur,  
former BCCI  
President

Approximately one year ago, it is fair to say that no Indian cricket fan had heard the name Rahul Johri. A successful executive with significant experience in the media business, Johri was appointed the first paid Chief Executive Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India on June 1, 2016. Back then, it was widely speculated that the old-school administrators (who had a tight grip on the running of the game through vote-banks and decades of holding office) would not look kindly at the arrival of an outsider in such a key position. It was thought that Johri would be tolerated, because the courts left the BCCI with no choice in the matter, but that he would have no real power or say in the manner in which the game was governed. Eight months later, Johri is practically the only man left standing with any decision-making authority.

The courts, and at their forefront Justices Lodha and Thakur, have been hailed as pioneers who took path-breaking and historic decisions. But, just as Arun Shourie pointed out on the subject of demonetisation, the very fact of something being extreme does not make everything about it right. There was no doubt that there was a lot that was wrong

with the way cricket was being run in India - the manner in which certain individuals clung endlessly to power, the opaqueness of how state associations used the not inconsiderable funds that came their way year after year and the obvious skews in certain electoral processes that weighted things in favour of a powerful few, among other things. However, just as there was much to desire in terms of some of the individuals that occupied positions of power, there was a lot that was right about the sport in India. Apart from being the most popular and financially solvent, the team was in the pink of health in all formats, the support from fans and corporates was as strong as it had ever been and given the shambles that are other sporting bodies in India, the BCCI was far from uniquely incompetent.

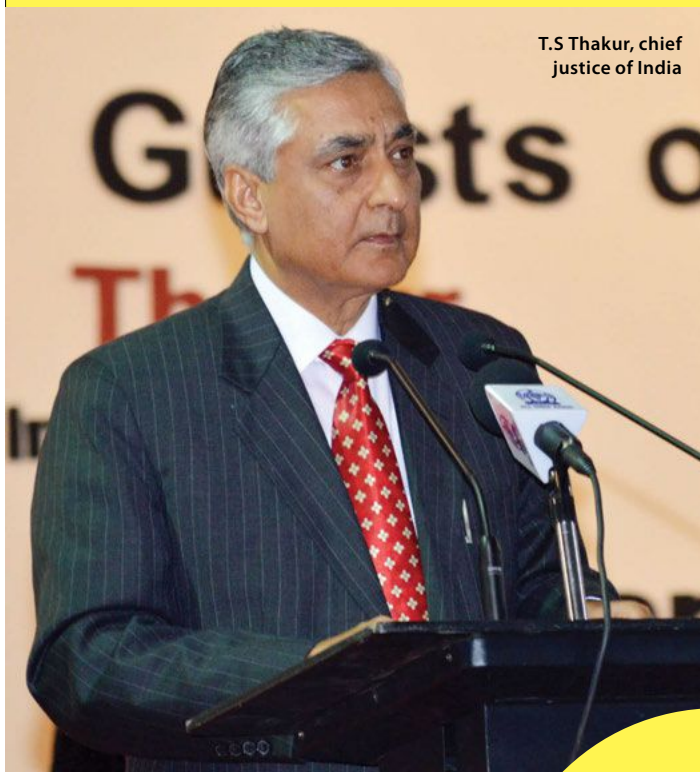
Charged with deciding the quantum of punishment for two Indian Premier League teams who were suspended for alleged involvement of betting by key members of their ownership teams, the Lodha Committee's brief expanded to looking into every last aspect of Indian cricket, thanks firstly to the BCCI's inability to either take fair decisions about its own and later its open defiance of the highest authority in the land. The Lodha Committee as recommenders, followed by Justice Thakur as enforcer, decided that it was up to them to save Indian cricket. Exactly what they were saving Indian cricket from, however, is not entirely clear.

The BCCI's approach to the recommendations was equally baffling. Not giving up till the final ball is bowled is an excellent way to play the game, but the BCCI's approach was more akin to trying to resuscitate a corpse that had been shot, stabbed and garotted. To begin with, they did not approach the recommendations made to them in the spirit intended. Instead of extending an olive branch of sorts, implementing a majority of the recommendations and approaching the more contentious clauses in a reconciliatory manner, the Board believed it could brazen its way out of the situation, unused to coming up against an adversary that could not be bought by favours, browbeaten by power or simply ignored.

To be fair to the BCCI — and there is not a lot of that happening amidst the gloating sections who follow the game, but know little about what it takes to actually administer it — there were many recommendations made by the Lodha Committee that defied common sense. The first among these was the dismantling of the age-old process by which players were selected. Given the geographical vastness and complexities of India, it made perfect sense to have a selector from each of the five zones. Did this lead to parochialism? Decades ago this was a serious issue, but in the recent past, the number of players who made it to the highest level and stayed there, simply because they were from a certain city or had a powerful uncle, are few and far between.

It is worth remembering that the five-member zonal system is the one that allowed both a 16-year old Sachin Tendulkar to be blooded when the time was right, and for someone such as Robin Singh to emigrate to India from a country thousands of kilometres away and play 130-





T.S Thakur, chief justice of India

plus ODIs after the age of 30. Simply put, the advantages of the system and the results it threw up on a consistent basis far outweighed the relatively minor number of instances where it failed to recognise the ability of a player, or overvalued another. Yet, this was something that the Lodha Committee, and Justice Thakur, in their wisdom, could not recognise.

The second major point of contention is the limiting of terms of office of any individual to a total of nine years, taking both time spent in office in state associations and the BCCI combined. And to further stick it in, there was a mandatory cooling-off period of two years after each three-year term. This effectively meant that nobody would be eligible to be president of the BCCI if they had spent any more than six years on the job in any capacity at either state or national level. How they expected anyone with so little experience to fully grasp the nuances of a complex job in a country such as India beggars belief. To draw an inexact but not absurd parallel, this is like expecting someone to become a Supreme Court judge after only six years' experience of law.

What is even more inexplicable about this decision (which rendered virtually every cricket administrator in the country ineligible to hold office through a single court order) was the complete lack of an alternate plan. If, at one go, there was no single office bearer to run the game, was one CEO and a handful of employees expected to conduct literally thousands of days of domestic cricket each year, negotiate deals with sponsors and float and approve tenders with broadcasters, just to name a few major functions that BCCI office bearers had traditionally performed?

To say that cricket is too big in India to be affected and that the show must go on is easy, but the effect of the decisions of the court will not be known or felt immediately. But, to suggest that there will be no widespread implications is also wishful thinking. In one stroke, the courts rendered some of the most sought-after positions in administration — ones that the biggest businessmen and most powerful

politicians scrapped over — utterly unattractive and even unviable. Just how will the brightest and best be attracted to the game, when they know they are little more than clerks, implementing the orders of one judge or another?

**I**t is also vital to recognise that while there have been rotten eggs in the BCCI, who have used it to feather their nests and grow their fiefdoms — and this is a way of life in every walk of Indian society, of which even the judiciary is not an exception — there have been men of exceptional calibre who have given far more than they have taken. Where would cricket in Mumbai be without a Wankhede, or Tamil Nadu without a Chidambaram, or Karnataka without a Chinnaswamy?

More critically, the grassroots of the game, the club structure, is run wholly by an unsung, anonymous army of individuals who do everything from recruiting players to organising fixtures to more mundane things such as organising kit for players and food at grounds. A vast majority of these individuals go through a lifetime in the game without seeing one rupee of the billions that pour in at the highest level. They do so out of a genuine love for the game, a passion for administration and, to use a much-maligned word, enthusiasm to be positive agents of change. Aside from the sheer pleasure doing what is right, for these men and women, who still have families to feed and day jobs to do, the sole incentive is the chance, however minute, to progress to the next level, to aspire to a role in state administration and perhaps eventually something bigger. Now, of course, the scope of such a logical and welcome progression has been severely limited.

In many ways, the committee's recommendations are similar to telling a 16-year-old cricketer that he will never play for India, irrespective of what he does in the few years ahead of him. To expect that individual to still put heart and soul into his vocation is beyond absurd. The courts, and those who had axes to grind with certain individuals in the BCCI, may be of the belief that Indian cricket has been saved. Decapitation is one way to cure a headache, but actually locating the origins of said pain and embarking on a sustainable method of treatment may be a wiser course of action..



**THE LODHA COMMITTEE AS RECOMMENDERS, FOLLOWED BY JUSTICE THAKUR AS ENFORCER, DECIDED THAT IT WAS UP TO THEM TO SAVE INDIAN CRICKET. EXACTLY WHAT THEY WERE SAVING INDIAN CRICKET FROM, HOWEVER, IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR.**



A first class match in progress



## PALACE INTRIGUE

# THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY BROTHER(S)

Political gossip has Sultan (Akhilesh) becoming Tipu, but the question is whether Akhilesh just did an Aurangzeb instead. [By Kushan Mitra](#)



Politics is deeply rooted in history, and recent events in North Indian politics are a reminder that history, even ancient history, is never too far away in this political land of ours. Ergo, let's begin the narration of this political drama with a short history lesson, about the 'evil' Aurangzeb, and how he deposed his father Shah Jahan and committed fratricide with Dara Shikoh. Everybody knows this story, which is why the move to remove his name from a road in Delhi had widespread popular support.

Nobody wants to play the devil's advocate and argue that Aurangzeb was frustrated by his father draining the treasury (the Taj Mahal wasn't free, right?) and that an ideological rot had crept into the Mughal empire. Aurangzeb rode a wave of popular discontent against the ruling elite (sound familiar?) and actually expanded the empire to its greatest land area. The seeds of its decline were also sown at the same time, when a certain western Indian

**AKHILESH WAS A MEDIA DARLING — YOUNG AND DYNAMIC, HE WAS EVERYTHING THE SAMAJWADI PARTY WASN'T**

brigand came to the fore and began chipping away at the empire, which soon collapsed into a rubble heap.

Two paragraph history lesson done with, let us get back to current-day political chess. For four weeks, between December 2016 and January, India's political capital shifted to Awadh, and the simmering discontent inside the ruling family of Uttar Pradesh spilled out into the open. The battle ostensibly began earlier in 2016, as Akhilesh Yadav (possibly India's only Chief Minister who is a self-confessed heavy metal fan) and his paternal uncle, Shivpal Yadav, began a feud. We don't

know what triggered it, but some suspect that it was the rehabilitation of Amar Singh. Singh is renowned as one of Delhi's top political fixers, but while he has never been convicted of any wrongdoing, his reputation has never really surfaced above the ground in a while. Mulayam Singh Yadav 'Netaji', Akhilesh's father and the grandfather of UP politics, decided to bring Amar Singh back from the cold and make him a member of the Rajya Sabha again, last May. There are some theories about why Netaji did this, and one is that he needed Singh to negotiate with the powers that be in Delhi. The other is that he was just asserting himself ahead of the UP elections this March; the latter is what probably happened, and Netaji's partner in this was his brother, Shivpal — or so Akhilesh believed.

This was the culmination of four-and-a-half years of drama. In 2012, Mulayam Singh Yadav had made way for his son. Akhilesh was a media darling - young and dynamic, he was everything the Samajwadi Party was not. India's largest and most populous state also has India's largest population of young people, and Akhilesh managed to inspire young voters in droves, cutting across caste lines — he deposed Mayawati from the seat of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister. With every high comes a fall, however, and Akhilesh's government descended into chaos as his father, uncles and other party 'elders' started dictating terms. Youth was the face of the government, and it was what propelled the Samajwadi Party to power, but the old guard, surrounded by their cronies and persistent charges of corruption, ran the show. The running joke in Lucknow became that there were five and a half chief ministers in the state, and Akhilesh was the half. The fall was





hard — very hard.

Cue May 2014, and the BJP winning 75 out of 80 Uttar Pradesh seats in the parliamentary elections. Mulayam, who had harboured genuine (albeit genuinely misguided) dreams of becoming Prime Minister was shell-shocked. The five seats the BJP did not win belonged to three Yadav-clan members and the Mother-Son Gandhi duo of the Congress. The results were devastating, and a huge slap on the face of Akhilesh's government. To his credit, Akhilesh realised this and borrowed a page from Narendra Modi's book. Not only were infrastructure projects, such as the signature Agra-Lucknow Expressway and Metro projects in Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi speeded up, but he went on a public relations overdrive. Aided by his right-hand man, bureaucrat Navneet Sehgal, Akhilesh released advertisements across national newspapers and made sure that his projects were spoken about. He also began the process of consolidating his own power-base among younger voters, and started sidelining his uncles, both the real ones and the adopted ones, like Amar Singh.

This was bound to lead to the crisis that erupted in late 2016, which was precipitated by the nomination of Amar Singh. According to those close to Akhilesh, Amar Singh represented the 'old' Samajwadi Party and all that was wrong with it. The story goes that Akhilesh did not want to take on his father, but when he saw Amar Singh cosy up to Mulayam, and his father ignoring him, he had little choice but to strike out. However, it was not Amar Singh who became his

## IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE ELDERS WILL HAVE THEIR REVENGE AND HAVE AKHILESH DEFEATED

target but Shivpal Yadav, his father's younger brother. Now, one popular theory has it that this entire drama (just short of the patricide and parricide that George R.R. Martin would inevitably have pencilled in) was staged — all the shifting of houses, snatching of microphones, name-calling and rallies of supporters was nothing but a script. Forget *Game of Thrones*, though — this was moving faster than an entire season of *House of Cards* in one day, and like those two great shows, people started to take sides. While Shivpal Yadav became the 'evil' uncle, his other uncle Ramgopal Yadav, the Samajwadi Party's long-time face in New Delhi, quickly swore allegiance to Akhilesh, as did Shivpal's son Aditya.

Mulayam was livid. This was not a corporate takeover by the next generation — this was a palace coup, where the new King wanted the old King and his coterie out. Mulayam was befuddled at just how quickly Akhilesh had dramatically swung the media and, crucially, the administration to his side. In retaliation, Mulayam did not announce a candidate for Chief Ministership in the coming 2017 elections, he expelled Ramgopal Yadav from the party and lashed out at his son for the loss in 2014 which (in his mind), had scuppered his chances at becoming Prime Minister. Akhilesh in turn expelled his father

and uncle's favourites from the cabinet and other governmental posts.

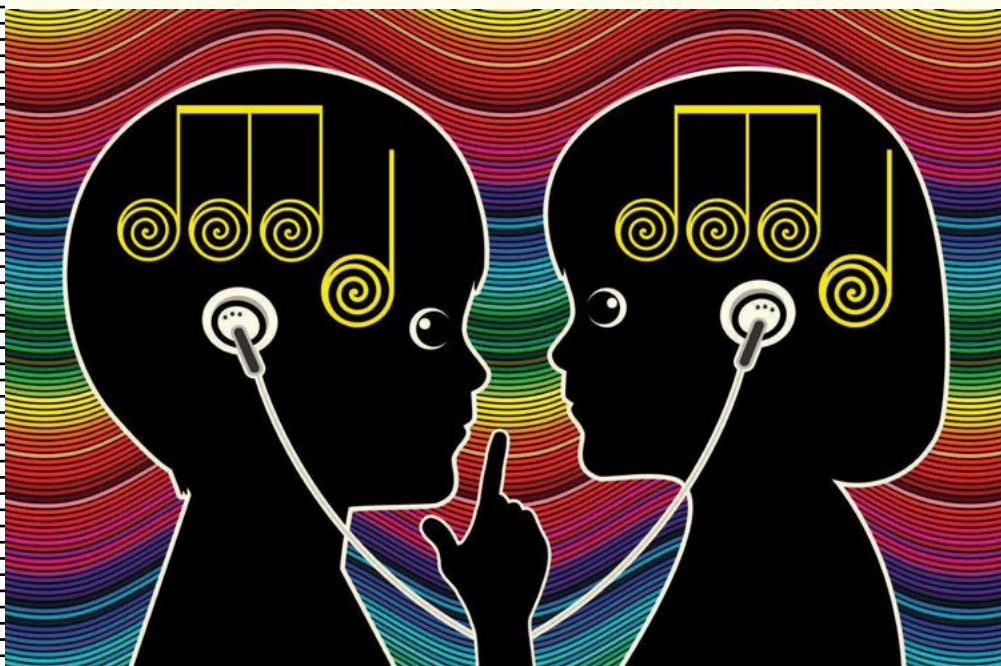
Then, as the sun set and rose again, peace was restored - expulsions were revoked and people reinstated. But, the very next day, war broke out again. This looked like the battle of the Somme - stalemate, action, stalemate, action. Political observers and journalists in Lucknow and New Delhi were getting increasingly irritated, because between the Samajwadi crisis and the demonetisation crisis, the drinking season had gone for a toss. And as if this was not enough, there was talk of Rahul Gandhi negotiating with Akhilesh for a seat-sharing deal.

Nobody gave Akhilesh enough credit, despite not having his trusted Sehgal next to him, as he had had a horrible car accident on the new Expressway. Mulayam may not have realised it, but the coup was over — he had already lost by the time he made his final move of expelling Akhilesh. Mulayam could have fought on, (his other son Prateek remained at his side), but he realised that any further fighting would completely consign the party to the dustbin of Indian political history. Akhilesh too did not want to completely humiliate his father, just to display that he, the son, was now a leader in his own right. After all, Aurangzeb never did kill his father — he just banished him to a room in Agra Fort.

Defeat was a very bitter pill for Mulayam Singh Yadav, but in politics, defeat is a constant. Akhilesh had done the unthinkable, stood up to his family, his father and his uncles and won an unbelievable victory. Every north Indian man has daddy issues (admit it, you do) but Akhilesh resolved his — and that, in more ways than one, invigorated his support base.

Yet, this is not the end of this tale. While Akhilesh has won this battle, his victory in the Uttar Pradesh polls is not a given. After the stinging defeat in Bihar last year, the Amit Shah-led BJP is consolidating its position in the state, and would have to lose a significant vote share to not become the single-largest party in UP. Indeed, even with the tie-up with the Congress, the Samajwadi Party has a lot of work to do, and while palace intrigue is one thing, winning India's largest state is something else altogether. Nobody is discounting Mayawati or her vote bank, and it remains to be seen if the elders will have their ultimate revenge and manage to have Akhilesh defeated. Who needs George R.R. Martin when we have UP politics? ☹





## THE AGE OF THE PORTABLE PLAYLIST

By Palash Krishna Mehrotra

**N**owadays, I'm terrified of people coming over to my place. It's not that I mind company but I have problems with the corollary that it brings with it: music.

This is the age of the portable playlist. You carry your music with you. People don't stop there. They insist on inflicting their musical tastes on the host, which can become tedious after a point.

Rewind to the 1980s and early 1990s. My best friend in school and I would go to each other's place. Both of us were music buffs and had, what in those days, was called a 'collection'. It could be fifty tapes but it was called a collection. When my best friend came over to mine, he'd listen to music from my collection. I would do the same when I went to his. It was an unwritten rule that you didn't bring your own tapes unless the belt of your cassette player had broken, it was in for repairs and you were dying to listen to a track.

The arrangement worked quite well. When you'd sample albums from someone else's collection, it meant you stepped out of your

### THE MULTIPLICITY OF CHOICE ONLY MEANS THAT INDIVIDUAL LISTENERS WALLOW IN THEIR RESPECTIVE NICHES

comfort zone and heard new songs. This is how I came across Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska*, a gentle brooding album written in the wake of his father's demise.

Things are different now. Friends have their music on a variety of devices: the iPod, the hard drive, the pen drive, the mobile phone. And when someone comes over, they're like: 'Man, you gotta hear this.' Your music is paused while the person who takes over—the acting DJ—continues listening to the music he was listening to at home and in his car. And just in case he's forgotten his devices at home, there's always YouTube.

Hosts have already started making rules about this. Indian hypocrisy dictates that you don't just draw the line and make sure it

remains drawn. Indians are a touchy yet thick-skinned lot. If you make a rule, no one is going to follow it. If you say the truth—I don't like your music—he might take offence.

Lately, I've heard some great excuses that hosts make to avoid listening to the guest's music. The speakers have conked out. The audio cable is kaput. My modem is not working. This works only to an extent. Indians are stingy so it's unlikely they will start pulling on their 4G data if you say your wi-fi isn't working. But chances are they will have some music on their phone and the phone will have speakers. It's difficult to avoid. There is a solution: the phone will run out of battery and when he asks for your charger, say you've misplaced it.

After a few drinks, there's usually plenty of elbowing, shoving and pushing around the laptop or tablet. 'Move, man, let me play my track. Stop hogging the music.' Meanwhile, the host sinks back in his armchair and resigns himself to his fate.

What's also happened is that now there is very little common ground that people have when it comes to music. Just electronica, for instance, is split into so many subgenres. Everyone's into their own thing. Earlier there were four or five genres and there wasn't that much choice. These days we have access to whatever we want—and this when Spotify hasn't even started streaming in India; ironically, the multiplicity of choice only means that individual listeners wallow in their respective niches.

It's not like when everyone was into Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Nirvana and Pearl Jam. These days I lose count of what I'm into myself: James Dickinson, Bel Esprit, Cabbage, Childish Gambino, Yellow Magic Orchestra, Beadyman and the Masters of Distraction.

I know human beings are social beings and they like to share. But we live in a world where everyone likes to believe that they have impeccable taste in music. You curate your playlist and this puffs you with self-satisfaction, as if you made the music yourself. It's nice to share but please do not inflict your music on others. For that, there's Twitter, Facebook, torrent and YouTube. ☹

*(The writer is the editor of House Spirit: Drinking in India, published by Speaking Tiger)*



## LIFE SKILLS



## THE ART OF DOING NOTHING REALLY WELL

As our lives become busier and crazier with every passing year, knowing how to switch off is increasingly becoming an important skill.

By Arnesh Ghose

I remember a very interesting scene from *Eat Pray Love*. Yes, it is a mediocre adaptation of a mediocre book, but just one scene stays etched in my memory. The ethereal Julia Roberts, who is staying as a tenant in a dilapidated apartment in Rome, cooks a beautiful plate of spaghetti, fish, grilled asparagus and carbonara for herself, plates it, garnishes it with care, sits down on the floor of her living room and slowly starts eating her meal. “*Dolce far niente*”, she sighs — a phrase she has recently picked up — and relishes her pasta.

*Dolce far niente* - the sweetness of doing nothing. “You Americans are always running”, one of the characters in the film tells Roberts. “You need to slow down and enjoy every moment, lady. You need to know how to enjoy not doing anything at all.” These wise words are a turning point for Roberts’ character in the film, and she goes on a spaghetti-pizza-pesto spree. For me, the phrase struck a chord with my innate passion for daydreaming, lazing around and enjoying a constant state of non-activity.

### WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU DID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING? SOMETIMES, IT IS DELICIOUS BEING UNPRODUCTIVE

“*Aulosh*”, the Bengali word for “lazy”, is the oft used rebuke hurled at children who are not hard working. Interestingly, the word hints at the existence of acumen but the absence of slogging-your-ass-off. It has a Mycroftian connotation, hence making the bearer of this tag even more annoying to their parents and elders. “Why are you wasting your talents? If you can score so much without studying at all, imagine how much you would have scored if you actually did! You won’t do your *riyaaz* daily, you won’t touch the paintbrushes, the tablas are gathering dust!” Is the said child interested and talented enough for all those singing-painting-sculpting-elocution-dramatics classes she is being sent for? Of course. Does she give a shit about them? No. Said child is busy fighting goblins on the

terrace with a long twig for a sword. Or wiping the secret, invisible hormone off ant trails and watching the long line of ants suddenly lose their sense of direction.

Laziness is a delightful Indian pastime. I recently took to puffing the hookah and I realised how absolutely unnecessary the apparatus is (unless some holy herbs are added). But, it is still deliciously addictive, and you can keep bubbling the water pot for hours, exhaling clouds of thick smoke in circles, watching time pass by. The Bengali obsession with “*adda*” or informal conversations on verandahs or roadsides, or over tea or something stronger, is another example. While it might evolve into something meaningful and insightful if the company is good, the need to self-importantly argue and criticise is a part of the Bengali gene. You will see men talking for hours at alley corners on weekends, holding bags full of vegetables and fish, about Messi and Mamata, till they realise that it is nearing lunchtime. The “*addabaaq*” Bengali man comes home to a furious wife. She screams at him. He is quite used to it.

These days of course, we have cellphones, and all she needs to do is constantly keep calling him. And even though wasting time can be easily equated with social media, it does not encompass the joy of doing nothing. We don’t spend hours on our terraces any more, squinting for magical characters in the clouds. Or spend a summer afternoon unravelling cassette tapes and screwing them back in with a pencil. Or hold a pair of spectacles in the sun and watch it slightly singe the newspaper. Or make shadow animals on the ceiling at night, with sound effects and dialogues. With jobs and families and Saturday nights and New Year bar crawls and Sunday morning brunches, we have become socialisers. “What’s the scene?” and “What’s the plan?” have become questions that relieve and terrorise us in equal measure. Ironically, for a generation that might not have had a dinner table conversation with their own family in months, Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO) has become a hashtag. As a generation, we are either intoxicated, occupied or asleep.

When was the last time you cooked a fancy meal just for yourself? Or didn’t check your phone for a day? When was the last time you relished doing absolutely nothing? There is something delicious in being unproductive sometimes. ☺



**ELLI AVRAM,**

Actor

■ To laugh is something we all enjoy doing in life, so one thing a guy really needs to have is a great sense of humour. To make us laugh makes us feel happy and that's definitely something we strive for — to find that partner in life that will make sure he keeps us happy.

■ Apart from humour, a guy should be intelligent and know how to have a deep and interesting conversation.

■ Be a hardworking man and not a lazy one. Of course we all know that looks are something that will draw our first attention, but there always has to be so much more to it.

■ Confidence and humility are very important. Attitude and a huge ego are not appreciated at all.

■ No matter how good your six packs are and how great your dressing sense is, if you do not know how to behave like a gentleman, it will all fade away and you won't be interesting anymore.

■ Hands and feet have to be kept clean at all times. That's one thing I always observe, so if your nails are going to be dirty and not cut, I will clearly look away.

■ Smell nice and for God's sake, brush your teeth every day.

■ Have respect for your family and for others too, because that will only show how much respect you will give the family you will have one day.

■ Treat your lady like she's your world, because she needs to feel that way to be able to give her entire world to you.

■ Know how to just listen sometimes without giving answers unless she asks for them.

■ Give her flowers as often you can; it's a very simple but beautiful gesture that will make every woman smile.



# Style

## A LOOK FOR 2017

→ The Autumn/Winter 2017 men's fashion week shows in London, Milan and Paris showcased what appeared to be the comeback of the double-breasted suit, but not in the manner that one has been used to. While the tailoring and fabric in most cases was formal, the styling reeked of calculated insouciance. The suit was rarely paired with a conventional shirt or formal shoes, and the attitude was one of deliberate casualness. The Canali version on this page, for example, is made from pure wool birdseye fabric, and is combined with a deep V-neck shirt, flat front pants and buff calfskin boots. More styles follow on the next page.

CANALI







EMPORIO ARMANI



ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA



FENDI



HERMÈS





# BLURRING THE GENDER LINE

By Magandeep Singh

**O**f late, there seems to be a trend for some of the top clothing labels to merge aspects of their male and female lines. This is not to be confused with androgyny — although one can see how it can be hard to tell the difference — because androgyny is about gender ambiguity, whereas what I am on about is the conscious move to emulate form and fashion from the other side. The interchangeability of materials and patterns between the sexes is so new a trend that it's time to shine is still a while away.

Examples would include corduroys for women, satin for men's shirts, button-downs for women and berets for men. Some may argue that these aren't anything new, and history has seen zanier cases in point, but in the cycle that is fashion, even when it comes around, nothing is never entirely the same. For example, we may wear a thin flow shirt, but the lace that adorned it may not be as popular as it was the last time around.

So, all said and done, if you wish to ride this pony, here are five things you should acquire — and when we say acquire, we don't mean from your girlfriend's cupboard.

**BERET:** If you've got the head for it, not to mention a supportive social circle that won't cast you out for being too pansy, flaunt the beret.



**SILK:** In any form, raw or brilliant, silk can be a great choice for formal jackets and even suits. Sure, they have a certain shine (let's use the word sheen, shall we?) but that is what sets it apart from wool. Get the cut fitted and shorter in length than usual, just like Daniel Craig did in his last outing as James Bond.

**SHEER SOCKS:** Or colourful short stockings, by any other name. Don't worry, nobody will judge you for it. And if you already wear patterned socks, then this won't seem like a big departure from the norm. They're thinner, just as snug, but with much more variety of patterns and colours.

**WATCHES:** Bold is old; go instead for slightly subtler sizes. Anything over 39 mm in diameter is near-vulgar. Get instead the middle-range sizings, which are just as at home on a man's wrist as on a woman's.

**HEELS:** Shoes with heels stand to become trendy; from Oxford to wingtips, incorporate any style with a little more obvious heel to somewhat elongate the silhouette and give it a gradual taper.

**FLORALS:** Stereotypical as it may sound, floral patterns on just about anything, from shirts to shorts, cuff links and ties, will be a trend in the coming season. Embrace it.

These are but a few subtle ways to soften your otherwise stoic silhouette. It doesn't make you any less male, just like wearing three-piece suits doesn't detract from the femininity of a lady. Ditch the old imagery and define new ones.





# NICOLA FORMICHETTI

Artistic Director, Diesel

## STYLE

**Shop** - Dover Street Market, London

**Jeans** - Jogg Jeans by Diesel

**Suits** - Maison Margiela

**Shirts** - Diesel

**Casuals** - Uniqlo

**Shoes** - George Cox

**Sunglasses** - Diesel



## THE GOOD LIFE

**Restaurant** - EN Japanese

Brasserie, New York

**Club** - Battle Hymn in New

York, organized by Ladyfag

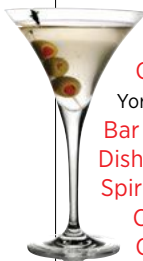
**Bar** - Cipriani in Venice

**Dish** - Anything Japanese

**Spirit** - Tequila

**Cocktail** - Dirty Martini

**City** - New York



## TRAVEL



**Hometown** - Tokyo

**Destination** - Bali

**Activity** - Running



## TECH

**Phone** - iPhone 7

**App** - Instagram

**Website** - Wired

**Gadget** - GoPro

## GROOMING

**Fragrance** - Maison

Margiela

**Moisturizer** - Shiseido

**After shave** - Armani

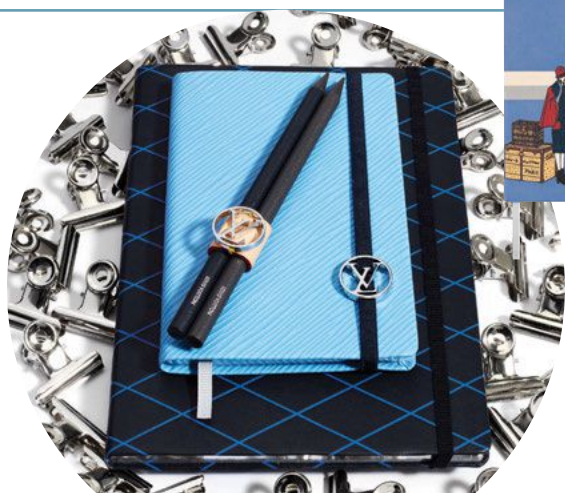
**Hair product** - Gatsby



*Interviewed by Shweta Mehta Sen*







### WRITE CHOICE

Penholders, graphite pencils, desk pads, bookmarks and stamp pads enhance the pleasure of writing. The highly resistant and waterproof monogram canvas makes an appearance, while notebooks in various sizes and colours come in leathers like Épi and Taiga, or bearing the trademark Malletage motif.

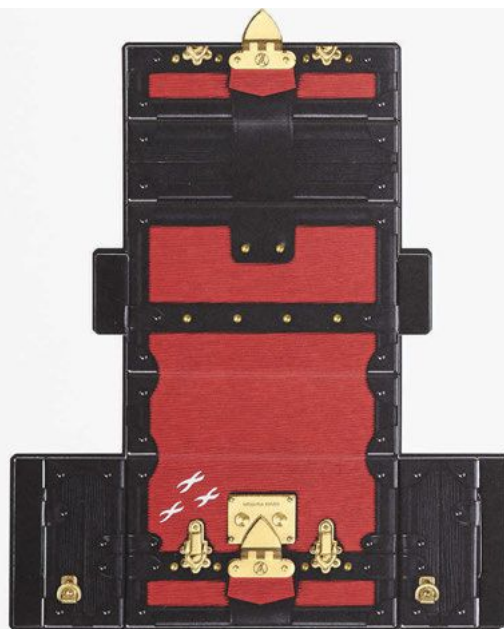
### FUN AND GAMES

Inside Monogram canvas boxes are sets of dice and decks of cards bearing the house logo; there are tops with colourful leather discs, yoyos and even a "Louis" teddy bear in leather patchwork.



## GIFTING MADE EASIER

We pick our favourites from Louis Vuitton's newly launched range of gifting objects. When Louis Vuitton opened his House in 1854, trunks were among the objects that gave the brand its luxurious reputation. At the same time, he created some delightful objects – like the Pateki, a brainteaser crafted from a piece of wood by his grandson, Gaston Louis Vuitton. In the 1920s, a series of catalogues entitled *Le Cadeau ou la BonneManière* invited clients to come and select the gift they would like to offer or receive in any of the Louis Vuitton stores. This year, the House has opened a fresh chapter, with 30 superbly crafted gifting items across three categories. We pick our must-haves.



### LUXE DÉCOR

Pick from nesting boxes in leather marquetry, embellished with a Monogram flower, plexiglas or leather picture frames embossed with the House's initials and porcelain vide-poches trays bearing illustrations inspired by travel themes from the early 20th century. A pocket mirror, with leather topstitching, can be used for display at home or travel snugly in your handbag.







## SUIT YOURSELF

Savile Row tailor Paul Jheeta, who has dressed the likes of Sachin Tendulkar and Abhishek Bachchan, tells you how to have the perfect suit stitched.

By Shweta Mehta Sen

► **What should you look out for when selecting a tailor?**

When it comes to suit makers on Savile Row, everyone has their own unique cut and style. It also largely works on a system of recommendations and referrals.



Men who take pride in dressing do their research on styles they like and then choose accordingly. Not everyone likes a closely fitted suit. Some want more comfort, softness etc, so which house does what is the key. What you can be assured of is top class service and fabrics, which you may not be able to acquire when you buy certain made to measure or ready to wear garments.

► **Could you share a checklist to picking the right kind of suit collar/lapel?**

While fashion keeps changing, I believe that there are some basic standards that stay the same, bearing in mind classic styles. These styles are all about staying proportional to your figuration. If you are of a small build, the size reduces from the basic measure. But if you have a

narrow collar or lapel on a big guy, that's a disaster. So there isn't a set measurement — it must just be proportionate to one's body.

► **Would you say fabrics are occasion specific? How do you select them?**

There's a lot of choice when it comes to black tie and ceremonial wear. When it comes to dinner suits and tuxedos, we do have some limitations — they must be in black and the cloth we use is called barathea — if you want them to be genuine and authentic. Where I'm based, things are very much classic. Fabrics could cost as much as 4,000-5,000 Pounds per metre. Those who like to experiment often opt for colour. A lot depends on the occasion and what your personality is; not just what looks good.

► **Run us through the various pointers to keep in mind regarding cuts for formal suits and informal jackets.**

For me, personally, there is nothing like informal wear. You have blazers and then sports jackets, which are casual. The construction is the same; the only difference is in the fabrics. If you want a soft look, you could opt for a sports jacket, depending on

the climate and where you're going to wear it. But in terms of the craft, nothing changes. Everything will be crisp and well made.

► **How do you accessorise suits and jackets for various occasions?**

I don't go by trends; I stand by my classic look. You have limited accessories, but at the same time you can play with them. If you aren't wearing a tie, a silk pocket square will look nice in your breast pocket. By all means, you can have both as well. Apart from those, I usually offer a side strap and a buckle so you don't have to wear a belt as an accessory. You can also use them to adjust the waistline should your trousers feel a little loose. When you take your jacket off, it's also a nice little accessory on your trousers. We don't go for gimmicks.

► **Share some guidelines for the correct trouser length.**

Wearing trousers that end above the ankle is not my style at all. For me, it must be very proportional to your figuration. Certain Italian brands are known to do narrow styles that end above the ankle, giving a very straight look. My look is very classic and slick. According to me, the back length should be slightly above the heel and the front quite angled and short, so you get one break in the crease line when you are standing straight.

► **Which are the suits every man must own? How would you describe the perfect suit?**

If you are someone who wants to look good and dress well, you need to have a wardrobe with some solid colours — dark grey and navy suits, and maybe a black suit or a black tie-style dinner suit. Also invest in a couple of sports jackets and blazers to go with your casual trousers. The perfect suit, I would say, just has to be an extension of you and enhance your personality. It must be something you can carry off and at the same time, make you feel comfortable.



# HOW **TO** MAKE **A** STYLE STATEMENT



**Kunal Rawal,**  
Designer

- I believe in the motto 'dress to de-stress'. Dressing up should be fun. I personally gravitate towards interesting separates that I put together, depending on my mood.
- I like to always have one fun element in my dressing. There's a ring I own that I never remove. Other than that, it could be a graphic or print, or some interesting shoes.
- I started my label to be able to create clothes that match my sensibilities and aesthetic sense. The silhouettes I use most often are casual, long line T-shirts, long-line bundi jackets as well as short kurtas, which can even be paired with western jackets.
- My favourite brands include Rick Owens for comfortable casuals, Belstaff for jackets, Balenciaga for denims and All Saints for pretty much everything.
- London has to be my favourite shopping destination. I've lived and studied there, and I go back very often, so I'm updated on where to get exactly what I am looking for.
- Every man's wardrobe needs a few essential items. In my opinion they include a well-fitted black blazer, sneakers – preferably in a darker shade – that can be used for day and night, a pin-tucked bundi in a dark shade, a good pair of sunglasses and a backpack to carry your stuff around.
- I'm a huge fan of Acqua di Parma. I rely on them for my perfumes, deodorant sticks etc. Also, I can't leave home without Kiehl's Facial Fuel. I use Matte Hed for messy, texturized hair. I don't like a very well-groomed look; I prefer my hair slightly unkempt.
- I've already decided what my next few purchases are going to be. I have my eyes on a Rick Owens formal parka. I also want a new pair of high-top sneakers that Owens collaborated with Adidas to create. Also, Dolce & Gabbana have a new range of cartoon T-shirts.
- My go-to Indian look consists of a black kurta paired with a black bundi jacket. With western wear, I have three favourite shirts that I pick from. I usually pair them with a scoop-neck T-shirt and sneakers.
- I strongly believe that good design is worth the steeper price tag. These days, people value contemporary design a lot more. Besides, it comes with the guarantee of good quality too.



[ How to look good ]

## The Woman's Take

**Neha Bhasin,**  
Singer

- ➔ For me, fitness is very important. I don't mean six-pack abs, a big chest and quads, but a proportionate and healthy frame.
- ➔ Whatever the clothes may be, it is of utmost importance that they fit well.
- ➔ In colder climates, I think men in overcoats and long jackets look great.
- ➔ There are men who love to experiment, and to each his own, but I like my men to have a clean and classic style. They shouldn't overdo things while dressing up. Leave that to the ladies.
- ➔ For a night out, I love men in well-fitted suits, jackets and bowties. Waistcoats are nice as well. White shirts look the best on men. In the day, pair a white shirt with a simple belt and good shoes. That's the best look to go for.
- ➔ Fitted shirts paired with denims and moccasins or loafers also look great.
- ➔ Select your pants carefully. Not all styles suit all body types. The same goes with shirts and the way they sit on your shoulders.



Jacket, jumper,  
T-shirt and pants by  
**Corneliani**; Curio  
Luggage bag by  
**American Tourister**;  
Spectra 2.0 Travel  
Case (black) by  
**Victorinox**; duffel  
Bag by **Bottega  
Veneta**; suede slip-  
on shoes by **Tod's**

# THE RIGHT KIND OF BAGGAGE

After dogs and shoes, bags are the best friend a man can have. They could be understated and classic, or shocking and statement, but trust us, bags are the perfect accessory.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JUHI SHARMA  
STYLED BY ATMAJ VYAS  
ASSISTED BY NEELANGANA VASUDEVA  
MODEL: FREDDY DARUWALA  
MAKE UP: MAHESH BHASME



## IN TRANSIT

No one said you cannot travel in style. Stuff them to the top and live out of them — runways are the new ramps.

Hat by **Ted Baker**  
@ **The Collective**;  
exclusive  
cashmere and  
silk scarf by  
**Stefano Ricci**;  
Spectra 2.0 Travel  
Case (black)  
by **Victorinox**;  
Marine Blue  
Lightrax Luggage  
Bag by **American  
Tourister**; striped  
jumper by  
**Tommy Hilfiger**







**LONE  
WOLF**

For those who like to live on the road, here are a few of our favourite things.

Rookie Scoutpack in Grey Camo by **Superdry**; Business Class Brief Pack by **Tumi**; Black Label Zento by **Samsonite**; biker gloves and helmet by **Royal Enfield**; denim jacket by **G-Star Raw**





Jacket, Jumper  
and joggers by  
**Z Zegna**;  
backpack, biker  
gloves by **Royal  
Enfield**; helmet  
by **Diesel**





Blazer, shirt  
and jeans by  
**Hugo Boss @  
The Collective;**  
jacket by **Tommy  
Hilfiger**; shoes by  
**Superdry**; Mickey  
Mouse backpack  
by **Jack &  
Jones**; watch by  
**Emporio Armani**



**JACK  
OF ALL  
TRADES**

All work and  
no play makes  
Jack a dull  
fella. Here's  
something that  
can rock the  
board room and  
the bar.

Josh Backpack  
by **Louis Vuitton**;  
Logan Backpack  
by **Tumi**







**LIKE A  
BOSS**

For those of you who like to keep it simple and classic, here are some of the best a man can get.

President Classeur Briefcase by **Louis Vuitton**; blazer by **Marks & Spencer**; dotted tie by **Thomas Pink**; handmade crocodile leather briefcase by **Stefano Ricci**; Harris Tweed Briefcase by **Brooks Brothers**



Shirt by **Thomas Pink**; trousers by **Marks & Spencer**; belt by **Z Zegna**; watch by **Michael Kors**; leather briefcase by **Da Milano**





Shirt, pants  
and bomber  
jacket by **Tommy  
Hilfiger**; Pebble  
Leather Duffel by  
**Brooks Brothers**;  
sneakers by **Vans**



**UP ALL  
NIGHT**

Party animal  
and one-night  
stands — we  
have you  
covered. Be  
prepared and  
play safe.

Keepall  
Bandoulière 55  
by **Louis Vuitton**;  
top handle bag  
in China red  
by **Bottega  
Veneta**; dress by  
**Diesel**; blazer by  
**Corneliani**; shoes  
by **Christian  
Louboutin**





# EXPERT SPEAK

THIS MONTH, **MARK SPROSTON** ON THE BENEFITS OF **WET SHAVING**, THE CORRECT WAY TO GO ABOUT IT AND USING **CUTTHROAT RAZORS**



► **I was taught how to wet shave by my father, and I've been doing it the same way ever since. What am I likely doing wrong?**

Chances are you may be doing it right if your father shaves on a regular basis. If your father shaves at least four times per week, it is very likely he will enjoy shaving and will have taught you about preparation and careful handling of the razor around your face. However, if he isn't a frequent shaver and only shaves on average once or twice a week, then it is likely that he doesn't enjoy shaving and he has taught you the 'quick fire' shave that more than likely

doesn't involve any shave preparation, with rushed shaving strokes that may cause skin irritation from shaving rash to razor burn.

► **Why would I wet shave, and risk nicking my skin, when I can use a dry shaver?**

Wet shaving has more scientific benefits for your skin than electric or dry shaving do. Every time we wet shave, up to four of the outer layers of the epidermis plus dead skin are removed by the razor blade, allowing the blade to shave the hair follicle deeper and closer to the root under the dermis. After each hair has been shaved, it will then take longer to reach the outer surface of the skin when it regrows, resulting in

a "closer shave". Using shaving products while wet shaving also helps keep the skin hydrated and replaces moisture that is heavily lost during shaving, encouraging healthy looking skin – something you will not experience with dry shaving. Dry shaves will strip essential oils from the skin, leaving it extremely dry, which over time becomes very tired looking, dull in appearance and ageing.

► **Run me through the steps for the perfect wet shave.**

This is one of the most frequently asked questions.

1. Scrub your face before you shave.
2. Use a pre-shave product like a shaving oil to lubricate the skin.
3. Apply shaving gel or a good quality shaving cream that can be used with or without a shaving brush.
4. Choosing the right razor for your hair/stubble type is important too. What I mean by this is the right number of blades, from twin blades, triple blades and now up to five with some razors made by leading brands.
5. Always apply a post-

shave product like a moisturizer or cooling gel to cool the skin and make up for moisture loss.

► **I'm thinking of buying an old-school cutthroat razor. Am I putting my face in grave danger of disfigurement?**

I always recommend stepping up to a DE (double edged razor) first. This will encourage you to slow the shaving strokes down and learn new blade angles that will be required when using an old-school cutthroat razor. All modern safety razors come equipped with lubricating strips and heavily guarded blades, allowing you to move the razor blade around your face more quickly – something you cannot do with an old-school straight razor. It can take years of practice for a highly skilled barber to shave himself with an old-school razor without nicking or cutting himself, so always be extremely careful and treat it with the respect it deserves.

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*Mark Sproston is the CEO of Shave Doctor, a brand of shaving products available on Nykaa.com*

*Interview by Shweta Mehta Sen. If you have any wardrobe or grooming related queries, mail us at editor@mansworldindia.com*







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# When cute goes grunge

Never mind her goof up in a general knowledge quiz — Alia Bhatt has proved she has the smarts to overhaul standard romcom stereotypes with persuasive ease. [By Maithili Rao](#)

**T**he weight of cuteness is not to be borne lightly. Only a resolute actor with self-belief in her talent could have transited from the brainless bimchette of her debut — where she can't decide who to love between two juvenile hunks caught in their own love-hate bromance — to the sex-slave junkie with a ferocious will to survive her victimhood in *Udta Punjab*, and then follow it up with *Dear Zindagi*, as the rebellious young cinematographer with a massive chip on





Highway

her shoulder, holding her own in the charms stakes against our charmer-in-chief, SRK. In between came *Highway*, *2 States*, *Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania* and *Kapoor and Sons*. All of them, in their own way, underline the nuanced impact of an elfin with a transparent gaze and an infectious, dimpled smile. There was a spine that held up the petite frame; here was this girl of the fetching teenager look, with the nous to make fluff believable.

Alia Bhatt could have been crushed by the burden of being a reinvented Pooh (Kareena



Dear Zindagi

**Highway stamped Bhatt as the actor to watch out for. She also sounded a warning to established seniors. Here was a young actor not afraid to bare not just an un-made up face but also her raw vulnerability**

Kapoor of *K3G*) courtesy her fond mentor Karan Johar. He introduced the teenybopper as a dumb fashionista in his fantasy high school that glorified retarded adolescents for others similarly afflicted. In *Student of the Year*, Shanaya is the standard issue poor little rich girl who loves to shock her socialite mother, married to a rich man who perhaps can't tell one step daughter from another. So, the poor lonely princess can't recognize true love when she sees it. Designer bags dangling from a delicate arm, Shanaya pouts and pirouettes and is confused and bitchy while vying for the most popular girl tag on her own terms. In a film that celebrates retro music, Johar introduces her to a revamped Gulabi Ankhen and Bhatt struts to 'I am the best', oozing oodles of required attitude. To give Johar his due, he recasts petite Alia as Radha of the sexy body (making the item a teen favourite), getting her own back at the straying boyfriend. That is the extent of acting demanded of her.

The setting changes in *Humpty Sharma Ki*

*Dulhaniya* to a downmarket Dilli mohalla. Her love interest is determinedly middleclass, whose middle name is chutzpah. He woos and wins the Punjabi lass, whose only ambition in life is to get married in a designer lehanga. It is as if Alia Bhatt is condemned to play the pretty dimwit, occasionally sparking into defiance. Pumped up music, sexually adventurous young lovers and a declared homage to *DDLJ* might have made the film a commercial success, but there was hardly a hint of what Bhatt was capable of. Luckily, directors who could see beyond the cuteness quotient backed her potential.

For that, you had to thank Imtiaz Ali, who ventured into experimental territory that is anathema to the box-office. *Highway* stamped Bhatt as the actor to watch out for. She also sounded a warning to established seniors. Here was a young actor, barely into her career, not afraid to bare not just an un-made up face but also her raw vulnerability, holding nothing back. It's simplistic to dub *Highway* as a film about the Stockholm Syndrome. In spite of the deliberate artifice of the plot, *Highway* digs deep under the thriller-chase-road movie format to explore the encounter between two most unlikely people, who find the wounded, hurt child in each other. An old dictum goes that a film chooses its actor — and actors.

Alia finds both an inner fragility and tentative resilience to play Veera: the privileged, demure good girl breaking free to voice the trauma of the damaged, abused little girl hiding under imposed good manners, forced upon her by those who were supposed to protect her. Randeep Hooda as the abductor Mahdeep is tough, taciturn, anger always simmering under the mean look — a





Highway

man to fear, instinctively.

While the confused and confusing kidnapping takes place and the petty hired crook discovers his hostage is the daughter of a tycoon with immense reach, Veera's reactions run the expected gamut — fear, desperation to escape, the hopelessness of her situation and, finally, apathy. At times, she is disturbingly flaky, talking aloud to herself, wondering if it's all really happening. Or it's as if a movie is going on and she is watching herself, she ruminates, unable to get a grip on reality. Bhatt grasps the flaky unreality of the situation with astonishing surety and touching vulnerability, even as we question what makes this pampered daughter of privilege act in the strange, unsettling manner that gets under Mahdeep's skin — and ours.

The responses to each other are instinctual, reading each other beyond words. He too is a hurt child, coping with the loss of his beloved Amma. The road, rolling through varied landscapes, is the obvious metaphor, complemented by A.R. Rahman's evocative music, redolent with Sufi and Manganiyar songs — but what rescues the mundanely obvious is Veera's revelling in the freedom of the outdoors, as if her inner self has finally been liberated from constraints that chained



Dear Zindagi

**Bhatt's growth from repressed victim to finally accuse her abuser before the whole family is organic. She proves that she is not a one-tone actor. She suggests an immense reservoir of emotions that she can tap into and bring to the surface, without the usual tricks of the trade**

her hitherto.

Her confession — in heartbreaking half-sentences, devoid of overt emotion — comes after she chooses not to escape when the opportunity comes. It is an uncle who brought her imported chocolates and abused her in the bathroom, stifling her cries with hands clamped tight on her mouth. And since then, she is almost robotic, submitting to family strictures. A mute doll on whom jewellery and clothes are hung for a forthcoming wedding. The difference between sheltered and suffocated is what ails Veera. It is on the road to nowhere in particular and finding a kindred soul in suffering that Veera finally overcomes her trauma. *Highway* is perhaps the first Indian film — I am not sure — that is so open about the sexual abuse of a girl child. *Kahaani 2* had the adult onlooker recognize what she herself went through, and she thus kidnaps the young child to rescue her from her own family.

Bhatt's growth from repressed victim to finally accuse her abuser before the whole family — and her fiancé's too — is organic. She proves that she is not a one-tone actor. She suggests an immense reservoir of emotions that she can tap into and bring to the surface, without the usual tricks of the trade. Her eyes are infinitely expressive, and so is the





freedom of her body language. A hug can be many things. When Veera hugs the stiff, unresponsive Mahdeep the first time, she suggests the seeking of comfort, the giving of affection, the recognition of a fellow victim. The credit for imbuing a simple act with so many layers goes the director and the two actors, who play off against each other with consummate ease. Bhatt won a couple of awards for *Highway*, and deservedly so.

*2 States* had a lot going for it, and Alia Bhatt's Ananya Swaminathan makes up much of the lot. She is comfortable as not the usual IIM geek, taking the initiative with the rather morose, hesitant Arjun Kapoor, setting the pace for the relationship — be it having sex, or berating him for getting cold feet later on, and putting them to test against parental opposition. She easily dons the TamBram traditional look when required and holds her own when the two sets of parents get into the North-South culture war. The combination of spunk and demure decorum works in making *2 States* a fun film. Bhatt proves that she is as good with a formidable ensemble cast as she is in the two actor, multi-layered narrative.

She has the uncanny ability to leave her mark in an almost cameo. *Kapoor and Sons*, a path-breaker (for Bollywood) delves deep into the insecurities and simmering resentments of a dysfunctional family and its sons locked in sibling rivalry. Once again, her Tia Malik is a poor little rich loner, who bears her loss with equanimity most of the time, a hostess with the mostest, throwing impromptu parties at her heritage home. Her regret, of not telling her parents she loved them before they died, breaks through almost casually and yet, rings true and deep. She seems to own the space before the camera, however little screen time she gets.

As for *Udta Punjab*, the unnamed Bihari migrant sears our minds and conscience, if we have a collective one. She seeps under the skin



**As for *Udta Punjab*, the unnamed Bihari migrant sears our minds and conscience. She seeps under the skin like the dust swirling in the rural landscape. The young girl's fight is never futile. Survival is victory, and Bhatt makes us care for her with aching sadness**

like the dust swirling in the rural landscape. The young girl's fight is never futile, because as she gazes at the hoarding of a sunny Goa beach, she keeps her spirit somehow alive. Survival is victory, and Bhatt makes us care for her with aching sadness. Abhishek Chaubey uses her like a subdued tragic note in the dramatic excess of the other horrific events. The acting calls for a balance between expressive emotion and eloquent stillness. Her spirit resurfaces when she wakes from a zombie state, despite the repeated forced injections, sexual degradation and physical violence. Like grit under her nails, the will to escape lies smouldering, like un-doused coals in a chulah. Her gritty, moving portrayal makes us fear for her and cheer her when she finally does manage the escape from living hell. The bleak despair of the film needed her innocence to survive the carnage.

*Dear Zindagi* is a high octane performance, where Bhatt's Kaira veers from confident

professional to teenage tantrums, quick mood changes and waspish ill-temper. Gauri Shinde's obvious dip into autobiographical elements — the unresolved mother-daughter conflict she has explored in *English Vinglish*, seeking forgiveness from a disrespected mother — is now told from the young, ambitious woman's point of view. You don't have to be Freud to guess that a deep childhood trauma is central to Kaira's walking away from relationships — however fulfilling potentially — before the other person does so.

Bhatt doesn't just represent the urban professional woman afraid of, or walking away from romantic commitment, but lives the highs and lows of a life lived communally and yet, hiding the essential loneliness under the compulsive partying. She is moody and skittish, charming and rude, confused and yet, certain of her professional goals. SRK's Jehangir Khan might be disbarred for unprofessional conduct, for meeting his patient in unconventional places. But what the heck — cinematic license is for the taking in the interests of good storytelling, and Shinde does tell a good story. The chemistry between Bhatt and Khan is electric, in a non-conventionally conventional way.

As my film-maker friend Vinay Shukla observed, Bhatt makes no references to earlier actors and their methods in her performances. Actually, there are no precedents for *Udta Punjab*, *Highway* and *Dear Zindagi* in Hindi cinema. Alia Bhatt seems to be inventing her own grammar of acting, refining it as she goes along. More power to her. We are watching. ☺





# RANBIR KAPOOR ON RISHI KAPOOR

IN HIS FOREWORD TO RISHI KAPOOR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY, *KHULLAM KHULLA, RISHI KAPOOR UNCENSORED*, RANBIR KAPOOR WRITES ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS LEGENDARY FATHER.

I'm thirty-four now. As I sit down to analyse my relationship with my father, I would say that the most precious gift he has given my sister Riddhima and me is that we can love our mother unconditionally. He showed us by example that she was at the centre of all our lives and our home. With her as our bedrock, none of the ups and downs in our lives could really touch us.

The second gift is that he has been a good husband to my mother. My parents have had their fair share of intense fights. They have sulked with each other and all of that, but he truly loves my mother in a very solid way. He gave her and continues to give her tremendous respect, love and care. To my sister and me, this matters a lot. As children we have learnt a lot about love and human behaviour through observing our parents —how they are with each other, how they speak to each other. I am not sure if I can adequately convey how much I admire the respect and deep caring they have for one another.



The third thing is that he taught me to respect my work. I became an actor in 2006-07. I was living with my parents at that point. And each morning I would observe my father getting ready for his shoot. I saw his enthusiasm even at that age, after all those years in the industry. He had it in him to better his craft, go shopping for his costumes or examine every minute aspect. He is that kind of man; very detail-driven. This is something I deeply admire. Looking back,

he probably did the same kind of characters for the first twenty years of his life. However, in his second innings, he has worked hard to reinvent himself. He started experimenting with the characters given to him. He started having fun with his work. I sensed a child-like enthusiasm and a certain abandon when it came to his approach to roles. Again, this was done with a lot of respect — his ultimate goal was always to excel in what was offered to him. Perhaps this is what has stood him in good stead.

As far as my personal relationship with him goes, well, it is one of complete reverence. I am closer to my mother. I feel that Dad modelled his relationship with me on the one he shared with his own father. And it is true that I have never crossed a certain line with him. But there is no sense of loss or vacuum here. I do wish sometimes that I could be friendlier with him or even spend more time with him. Sometimes I wish I could just pick up the phone and ask him, 'Dad, how are you doing?' But we do not have that. We do not have a phone relationship. Of



course, he does message me. He also takes care of the financial side of my work. So we are more connected now.

**W**hen I get married and have children, I would want to change that dynamic with them. I don't want my relationship with my children to be as formal as the one I have with my father. I want to be friendlier, be more connected, spend more time with them than he did with me. Having said that, I love my father dearly and have immense respect for him. I'm inspired by him and never want to let him down. I know he has only my best interests at heart. His confidence in me and my work makes me take pride in it. I persevere that much harder because of this. His belief and his encouragement are important to me.

I know my father appears boisterous and loud, but he is, in fact, a very reserved man. He never really 'exposes' himself to the world. Perhaps because he is an actor, he reserves a lot of emotions within. A lot of actors do that. They have a reserve bank of emotions because they need that to portray emotions on screen. My dad also does that.

I do not have a take on his Twitter personality, though that is usually the first question anyone asks me about my father. All I can say is, so long as he is being honest and having fun, it's his prerogative. Social media is something very personal. Of course, he gets himself into a spot sometimes with his frank speak, but I know he has no agenda and no hidden motive. My father is a straight arrow.

These are, however, personal things. I have a professional assessment of him too. I am an actor myself and I have a keen interest in movies and performances, and I can honestly say I do not see anyone on the same level as Rishi Kapoor. There is a certain naturalness about him, a certain spontaneity. And he was like this way before anyone else. Most actors of the earlier generation had a distinct style to their acting, but my father was very natural and effortless. The way he enacted his songs, the way he serenaded his heroines on screen was laudable. Here I must say that he was also an overweight actor. Even when actors started becoming conscious of their weight, he continued to remain the way he was. He never let this come in the way of his performances. You must remember that looking good, having



**I feel that Dad modelled his relationship with me on the one he shared with his own father. And it is true that I have never crossed a certain line with him.**

a fabulous body are important aspects for an actor. After all, an actor has to entice an audience. My father managed to do that despite the fact that he wasn't exactly slim. In that way, he broke certain barriers. And he was so charming. See *Chandni*, *Deewana* or *Bol Radha Bol*, or for that matter any of his work in the 1980s and '90s, and you will see that, despite his weight, his charm remained infectious.

Now, with his second innings — *Agneepath*, *Do Dooni Chaar*, *Kapoor & Sons*, and others — my father is winning more accolades and awards than he ever did in his first stint. Nothing can keep a good actor down. A man who has withstood the test of time for forty-four years in showbiz must have something special in him — there's little else I need to say in summing up here. ☺

*Extracted with permission from Khullam Khulla, Rishi Kapoor Uncensored, by Rishi Kapoor, HarperCollins Publishers India*



# WHY IS BOLLYWOOD OBSESSED WITH NAWAZUDDIN SIDDIQUI?

And is he slowly joining the ranks of actors who are lauded more for their screen presence than their versatility?

By Arnesh Ghose

**I** am toeing sacrilegious territory with this piece. When I pondered about this subject aloud at a house party last weekend, I was yelled and cussed at, my friends shocked at the fact that I was even choosing to question Nawazuddin Siddiqui, a man whose acting prowess has attained legendary proportions in the last few years. “There is no one better than him!” they said.

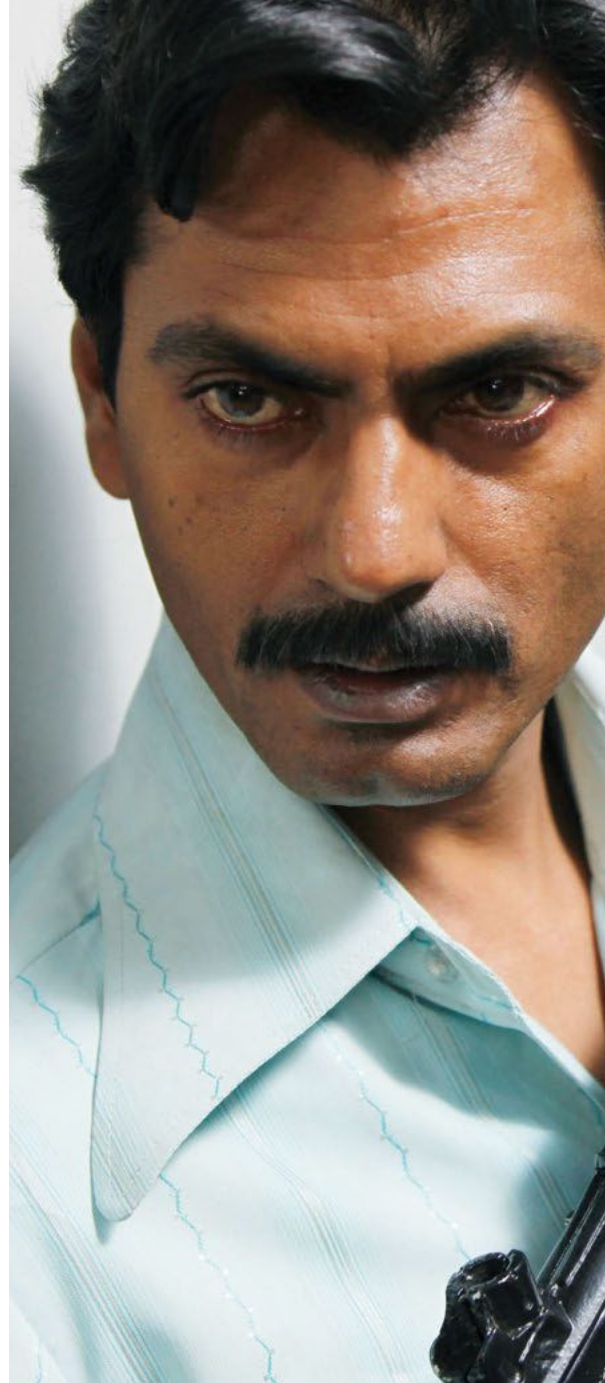
Any debate about an actor’s calibre requires a clarification about what the writer thinks of acting as a discipline. How would you define the process?

Is it the ability to embody a character, become someone else and completely forget yourself? Is it the craft of sculpting a new personality, which is portrayed with training and technique? Is it the ability to empathise with and understand the spectrum of another individual’s emotional and personal experiences, immerse yourself in it and perform that personal journey with conviction and truth? I believe it is, and if we do agree, we also agree that every character an actor portrays needs to be completely divorced from the other — allowing no spillage or overlapping of one’s own personality or other characters — to produce a portrayal that is unique, honest and wholesome.

A contrary point of view would be an affective one — the success of a portrayal depends on how well and how much it affects the audience. That is something an actor friend of mine calls “executive acting” — getting the job done (which in this case means getting the required emotional response). Actors who practice this approach generally have extremely imposing and

individualistic personalities. The audience buys into the experience said actor promises, and hence is “affected” by the actor as a direct response to his or her charisma, personality and presence. Most people would recognise that the affective approach is primarily used by mainstream actors — the Khan triumvirate would be the best example — while versatility is expected of parallel or indie actors. Based on these parameters, indie actors have enjoyed more respect, and are seen as the custodians of “good acting”.

When we say that Nawazuddin Siddiqui is a good actor, what are we making this statement on the basis of? His public personality is extremely endearing — he is grounded and unabashedly *desi*, his North Indian sense of humour is dry and wicked, straight-faced and caustic, he is a







Gangs of Wasseypur



Haraamkhor

fine conversationalist and gives off a strong, backslapping buddy vibe. But you know that he is the wily fox, eyes searing with intelligence, the one who will win a fight thanks to his wit and brain. His characters, much like himself, have been men whose primary qualities are perseverance, presence of mind and an utter lack of self-importance. What supports these qualities is Nawaz's physical appearance — there is nothing striking or memorable about it. On the male beauty spectrum of Indian cinema, if Hrithik Roshan (fair-tall-abs) is one extreme, Nawaz is the other. "I still have confidence issues, because my biggest competition is with myself," Nawaz had told me once during one of my interactions with him. "I have been fighting way too many factors for the last 15 years. I am not tall enough, not fair enough, I don't look good enough, I don't speak in English at all. My fight is much bigger than everyone else's." He does not 'look' like a movie star, and that tends to decide the kind of roles he is offered — if one goes through Nawaz's filmography, almost all of his roles belong to the lower-middle class socio-economic milieu.

**I**n 2015, Nawaz was hot property after *Badlapur*, *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* and *Maanjihi*. He came back in 2016 with *Raman Raghav 2.0* and two experiments — *Te3n* and *Freaky Ali* (both of which tanked). This year, *Haraamkhor* and *Raees* released last month. While *Haraamkhor* had him back in his *Wasseypur* avatar, Nawaz struggled to hold his own in front of Shah Rukh Khan in *Raees*, delivering a watered down version of his IB officer character in *Kahaani*. His south Indian act in *Raman Raghav 2.0*, or the Gujarati Majmudar in *Raees*, do not 'belong' to the region and are portrayals dominated by his UP swagger and persona. The characters he portrays are primarily fringe members (convicts, thugs, beggars or morally ambiguous law enforcers) in society. Even though he might say that the industry suffers from a "slave mentality", his film choices seem to agree with the same.

How different are his character designs and portrayals, really? Barring his segment by Dibakar Banerjee in *Bombay Talkies*, almost all of Nawaz's characters are cerebral, conniving and deadpan — people trying to hold on to the last unravelling threads of opportunity and hope, sinking their teeth





Badlapur

into the fabric of unforgiving cities, trying to survive. They are sans frills or finesse, eyes darting about, perpetually running away from or towards something. In the process, he has created a movie personality he can repeat with every film, one that people seem to enjoy. Should a Nawaz in *Badlapur* not be different from the Nawaz of *Raman Raghav 2.0* or *Talaash*? For example, there is a scene in *Badlapur* in which Nawaz's Liak creates a fake brawl in a prison cell when he meets Varun Dhawan, his face instantaneously shedding all pain, fear and sorrow the moment Dhawan leaves. This crafty two-facedness was repeated in *Raman Raghav 2.0*, when Ramanna is locked up under suspicion in a deserted building outside the city by the police.

**T**wo of Nawaz's colleagues, Irrfan Khan and Manoj Bajpai, have also faced this sort of stereotyping. Irrfan did *Haasil*, *Footpath*, *Maqbool*, *Aan*, *Charas*, *Chocolate*, *Rog* and *Chehraa*, in succession. I won't discuss the quality of the films but rather how Irrfan's characters in all of them were similar — grey, anxious, steadily losing control and emotionally troubled. Manoj



Gangs of Wasseypur

Bajpai suddenly became the designated UP guy in Bollywood (credit must be given to Prakash Jha for repeatedly casting him in films based in the region) from 2010 onwards, with *Raajneeti*, *Dus Tola*, *Aarakshan*, *Gangs of Wasseypur*, *Chakravyuh*, *Special 26*, *Satyagraha* and *Tevhar*. The characters barely changed, mostly being conniving thugs or politicians. Bajpai surprised us with *Aligarh*, a mediocre film hyped out of proportion, which

survived only because of Bajpai's nuanced and sensitive performance. You could see the hard work he put in to ditch the UP archetype to play the Maharashtrian Prof. Siras. Nawaz is still to deliver a performance truly outside his comfort zone.

This brings me to the fact that the creation of a movie personality and thriving on it is not something only mainstream actors do — quite a few parallel/art/indie actors have fallen into



the same pattern, and a lot of this has to do with physical appearance. Even when working in “art” films, Naseeruddin Shah has been cast as the lead more than an Om Puri. Even in the films that they have worked in together, from *Bhumika* to *Aakrosh*, *Mandi* to *Jaane Bhi Do Yaaron*, *Sparsh* to *Mirch Masala*, Shah has mainly been the lead, with Puri in various supporting roles. Most strikingly, *Maqbool* is one of those rare films in which they share equal screen space and importance.

**S**hah reminds me of Soumitra Chatterjee, Satyajit Ray’s golden boy and the leading man of Bengali parallel cinema (a position he had to later share with other good looking indie actors like Barun Chanda and Dhritiman Chatterji) — his appearance made him “hero” material even in the art cinema space. The likes of Om Puri, Anupam Kher, Pankaj Kapur or Paresh Rawal did not have that luxury, as a result of which they got more character roles and therefore, arguably, have more proof of versatility. Also, Shah and Chatterjee also enjoyed mainstream successes, something Om Puri or Anupam Kher didn’t as leading men. They soon moved on to playing fathers, conniving villains or well-etched best friends. This is also why they lapped up opportunities abroad — though mostly those of Indian fathers or Pakistani doctors — because the Indian industry is cruel to those who don’t fit the bill.

Over the decades, art and mass have mostly merged in the Hindi film space, and today a Nawazuddin Siddiqui garners the respect of a good actor (something generally reserved for indie actors during the New Wave) while being in the mainstream. He works with the Khans and also Anurag Kashyap (“We sit and talk and discuss stuff he has not done,” Kashyap had told me about Nawaz in an interview, “I want to use Nawaz in a way he has never been used before.”) but unfortunately, everyone falls back on the same, tested character design.

That brings us to another question: how relevant is an actor’s own personality in his or her process of crafting characters? Salman Khan the person is not very different from most of the characters he has played on screen. The same can be said about Shah

Rukh Khan or even Rajesh Khanna. Do matinee idols hold on to their personalities even in their on- screen characters, because that is the experience people are buying into? Amitabh Bachchan sticks out as an anomaly to this conjecture. Both the Angry Young Man (1970s) and the Straight Shooting Patriarch (1990s onwards) motifs are different from his actual personality. He is neither a Don nor Vijay Dinanath Chauhan or a Yash Raichand in real life. Why so? What made Indian cinema’s most enduring movie star craft separate movie personalities?

Could it be because he is not interesting enough? Does acute self-awareness lead to performance anxiety in the case of actors too? Take Christian Bale, Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Day-Lewis and Johnny

to create characters far from themselves because, well, their own personalities have nothing much to be derived from?

An actor that Nawazuddin Siddiqui is similar to is Benedict Cumberbatch. Just like Nawaz, Benedict has two distinctly different personalities. His personal self is humble, funny and charming. His movie personality is intelligent, arrogant and sarcastic, and because the world has been enamoured with it, no one calls him out for repeating the same archetype across all his films. His characters in his breakthrough films, such as *The Imitation Game*, *The Fifth Estate*, *Doctor Strange* and *Star Trek* are nothing but variations of his Sherlock act. Like Nawaz’s *Bombay Talkies* performance, Benedict’s role in *August: Osage County* stands out for its departure from his regular thinking-woman’s-sex-symbol.

Versatility is seen as a hallmark of acting craft, research and hard work. This is exactly what one of the oldest schools of acting, The Lee Strasberg Method (or what we colloquially talk about as “method acting”), says till even

today. In simple terms, it is the process an actor goes through to mystically “become” the character, shedding all signs and symbols of his or her own self. I am not saying that this is the only valid approach to acting as a craft, but given that the Stanislavsky-Chekhov-Strasberg combination is still hailed as an important acting process (and this country’s veterans have all been students of the same system), I am only drawing attention to its definition. If a certain school of thought is your guiding principle, should it also not be the thumb rule for your assessment? ☹

## IN 2015, NAWAZ WAS HOT PROPERTY. THAT YEAR, AFTER *BADLAPUR*, *BAJRANGI BHAIJAAN* AND *MAANJHI*, HE CAME BACK IN 2016 WITH *RAMAN RAGHAV 2.0* AND TWO EXPERIMENTS – *TE3N* AND *FREAKY ALI* (BOTH OF WHICH TANKED).

Depp, possibly Hollywood’s most versatile male actors. When you watch them on talk shows, they’re not especially captivating. They are not as entertaining as a Ryan Reynolds, Robert Downey Jr, Michael Fassbender or Will Smith. But, on screen, Bale, DiCaprio, Day-Lewis and Depp have had a legacy of unforgettable characters, creating movie experiences like never before — I could go on and on about *The Machinist*, *American Psycho*, *Shutter Island*, *Wolf of Wall Street*, *Nine*, *Lincoln*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Edward Scissorhands* and *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. Do these actors push themselves



Raman Raghav 2.0





Byju  
Raveendran

## THE ENTREPRENEUR

# THE MAN WHO MAKES LEARNING A JOY

Starting off as a traditional brick and mortar coaching class, Byju's is now India's largest and best-funded digital ed-tech venture. **By Raju Bist**

**HAD IT** not been for sports, says Byju Raveendran, he would have never succeeded in business. A keen sportsman in his school and college days, even today Raveendran turns up in his trademark black T-shirt for work as Founder & CEO of Bangalore-based ed-tech (Educational Technology) firm Byju's. Every evening, he continues wearing it for a round of football with his colleagues. "I used to play multiple sports from a very young age. I have always believed in the adage 'Games teach you teamwork'," says Raveendran. "Sports help you in developing and honing real life skills like peer bonding, performance under pressure, controlled aggression and leadership qualities."

The sporty entrepreneur has imbibed these abilities very well if the stupendous growth of his company is any indication. In the six years that it has been around, the business has mushroomed to employ more than 1,000 employees, many of them ex-students of Byju's, including his wife Divya Gokulnath. There have been over seven million downloads of the Byju's App to date. Around 330,000 paid users are using the app on an annual subscription basis. Byju's clocked a turnover of Rs. 120 crore for the financial year ending March 2016. "We expect to grow at 2.5x for the FY ending March 2017," reveals Raveendran.

Son of a physics (father) and maths (mother) teachers in a Malayalam medium school at Azhikode village, Kannur district, Kerala, where he studied, Raveendran started working as a service engineer for UK-based shipping firm Pan Ocean after graduating from Calicut University. He recalls how it all began: "During one of my work breaks in 2003, I ended up sitting for the CAT exam (the Common Aptitude Test, which students appear for to gain entrance into the IIMs) along with my friends. I was surprised that I scored 100 percentile, without actually having prepared thoroughly. To test myself and the way I learned, I sat for it again and repeated the score."

After this, his friends encouraged him to teach and prepare them for the exam. Slowly, his friends started getting more friends – who brought in more friends and before he knew his workshops with around 100 students went up to 1000+ packed in auditoriums and later, in stadiums as well. "The overwhelming response validated my method of teaching. I believe and have always taught my students how to predict questions and more importantly on how to learn," says Raveendran.

Eventually, he quit his engineering job and took up teaching full-time, even travelling to other cities to reach as many students as possible. In 2007, his students came up with a brand name – Byju's Classes. With a strong and dedicated team in place, in 2009, Byju's launched online video-based learning for CAT through VSAT. This was the first time that the company was using technology as an enabler which helped in scaling up the business. This helped the Byju's team to conduct lectures in 50 centres across the country.

But the quantum jump came six years later, in August 2015, with the launch of Byju's - The Learning App. The app is today the flagship product of the group, contributing to about 90 per cent of its revenues. This was a turning point because smartphone as a learning device, and app as a medium, gave Byju's an infinite reach for its learning programme. Bundled within the app are Byju's original content, watch-and-learn videos, animations and interactive simulations.

The company follows a freemium business model whereby students



get access to the content free for 15 days, post which they can subscribe for advanced levels. The average annual subscription works out to Rs 10,000. Apart from school students, the app coaches students for CAT, the civil services examination, the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) and the National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET).

The company focuses on making learning visual and contextual, rather than just theoretical. "Our students spend an average of 40 minutes per session. More than 90 per cent of the students who come on board renew their subscriptions. Overall, the main idea behind starting Byju's was to make learning accessible, effective, engaging and personalised for everyone. We noticed that there was a huge gap in the way students learn and how concepts can actually be learnt. Especially amongst students, memory-based learning has been mostly driven by fear of exams rather than the love for learning. We wanted to inculcate love for their studies through the use of technology," says Raveendran.

Others have also believed in the founder's vision. Venture capitalists and other funders have been quick to recognise the potential of the ed-tech pioneer. Byju's was started with Rs 2 lakh, seed money made from Byju's Classes. The first big investment came in 2013 when Mohandas Pai and Ranjan Pai, Chairman and CEO respectively of Manipal Global Education, decided to invest \$10 million in return of a 26 per cent stake. The investment came in after Ranjan Pai happened to pass by a classroom packed with students attending Byju's video classes at the Manipal Institute of Technology.

Last year, Byju's became the first company in Asia to receive an investment from the Chan-Zuckerberg Initiative, the philanthropy organization set up by Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan. Other prominent partners include World Bank's investment arm International Finance Corporation; Brussels-headquartered Sofina which invests in several sectors; Times Internet, the digital venture of the Times of India Group; California-based Lightspeed Venture Partners; and Sequoia, which invests in technology companies across the US, China, India and Israel. All these outfits have till date, collectively invested over \$ 150 million in Byju's making it the largest funded ed-tech company in India.

"During our second meeting with Byju we caught on to the fact that there were a couple of things he was doing that were unique, that were allowing him to scale and acquire customers," says GV Ravishankar of Sequoia on the company's website. "He didn't see himself as an ed-tech company. His primary mission was to help students learn better. With him, it was always education first - with technology as the enabler. His go-to market strategy was very well-crafted."

Raveendran repeatedly brings up the education angle in his

## ALL ABOUT BYJU'S APP

Byju's is  
India's largest  
K-12  
learning app

The app has  
over 7 million  
downloads and  
330,000 annual  
paid users

High engagement  
metrics demonstrate  
learning effectiveness  
with 90 per cent  
retention year  
on year

With over 70  
million lessons  
watched and  
average time spent on  
the app being  
40 minutes a day,  
Byju's has created  
a new segment of  
self-paced  
learners

conversations. As a brand, Byju's focus has been on solving core problems like access to quality teachers across geographies with technology and offering personalized learning according to the learning style of every student, he asserts. With 70 per cent of its users being from outside the metros, the company's reach is wide and across geographies. Today, it has active users from 1400+ cities and towns in India.

The entrepreneur says his company's USP lies in its aim to make students fall in love with learning. "Once that happens, they will take up the initiative and learn on their own. What makes this possible is our unique combination of content, media and technology," he elaborates and adds that his team is constantly innovating on how to make learning more engaging, effective and personalized. A robust R&D team of 500+ people across media, content and technology is continuously working towards creating best-in-the-class learning products. "Our core strength lies in creating high quality learning modules, videos and interactives across grades. The success of the app has made us realize the rewards of investing in high quality products. Today, with a wider bandwidth, we want to create similar products for the international markets, especially the English-speaking markets," says Raveendran.

Some time back there were talks about Byju's acquiring a US education technology company. Raveendran refuses to go into the details but adds, "We are open to explore partnerships as well as acquisitions that can offer us reach across schools, students, parents and teachers. With the work that we have done in India, we are sure that we will attract some good partners across the globe."

Even as he waits for the right target abroad, last month, Byju's acquired Bangalore-based Vidyarthi, reportedly for Rs. 50 crore. Raveendran explains the rationale: "Vidyarthi has been doing some great work in the learning guidance and career planning space for school students. They have created a

unique learning guidance platform."

The takeover is in line with industry trends in the ed-tech space in India. Explains Ankur Lekha of Mumbai-based Takshzila Shikshak, which reaches out to more than two lakh graduate level test takers via YouTube, "As far as the number of players is concerned, the field is getting over-crowded and a shakeout has begun, with traditional classroom players most in danger of acquisition." Byju's, he adds, has made effective use of its visibility and money resources and is definitely here for the long haul.

But Raveendran is not one to rest on his laurels. The real impact will come, he insists, when his team gets millions and millions of students learning right from their formative years at school. "My father is a Communist and I grew up in Kannur, the bastion of Communism. So money does not hold much importance for me. For me, the real fun is not in creating a billion dollar company but changing the way millions of students learn."



COVER STORY

# *Flex* *capacitor*

NO, WE DIDN'T ASK TIGER SHROFF TO DO SPLITS OR FOLD HIMSELF IN HALF, ALTHOUGH WE'RE QUITE SURE HE WOULD HAVE HAPPILY OBLIGED — IT'S NO SECRET THAT HE'S INSANELY FIT. INSTEAD, WE ASKED HIM 15 QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS UNIVERSE.

BY **ALSHAAR KHAN**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ROHAN SHRESTHA**

STYLING BY **KUSHAL PARMANAND**

ASSISTED BY **NEELANGANA VASUDEVA**

HAIR STYLED BY **AMIT YASHWANT YADAV**

MAKE UP BY **RAHUL KOTHAVALA**



Shirt by **Levi's**;  
jumper by **Brooks  
Brothers**; joggers  
by **Louis Philippe**;  
shoes by **Mochi**





1

# What has been your biggest achievement so far?

I think my biggest achievement has been to be accepted by the masses. When I speak of the masses, I mean the single screen theatres that have given me a lot of love. Most of the collections of my films come from them, and I guess that's because the films I've done cater mainly to them. Maybe they like seeing me do that, the action and everything. It's something I'm really grateful for. I've also been especially lucky with children. One of the bigger achievements is that I get calls from random mothers, saying that her child won't eat until he or she hears your voice. Some of them even have to watch *Heropanti* or *Baaghi* before sleeping every night.

5

## Tell us about your fitness mantra.

I THINK FOR ME IT'S A STATE OF HAPPINESS. MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY BEING FULFILLED – THAT, SORT OF, IS AT THE CORE.

2

## Do you have fond childhood memories of your father's sets?

I used to enjoy watching my father shoot, watch him do all the action and stuff. That inspired me to do what I'm doing right now. I can't name anything in particular – it's because every day was full of love and laughter. My father used to get mobbed whenever he stepped out in public. So I used to be very proud *ki mera papa hai*. (Laughs) Every son's first hero is his father, so yeah.

4

## What is the best piece of advice he has given you?

Always listen more and speak less – and to think before speaking as well. Professionally, he has always asked me to respect my seniors. I've also been taught to treat everyone with the same respect, from the lightmen to the director. That's why my father has so much respect in the industry.

3

## WHICH OF HIS FILMS DO YOU LOVE THE MOST?

*Hero*, of course, and *Shiva Ka Insaaf* and *Parinda*.

6

## WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO ASPIRE TO SUCH STRENUOUS FITNESS GOALS?

My idols inspire me. Both of them – Bruce Lee and Michael Jackson – had been such perfectionists in their fields. I've always wanted to be like them. I've always wanted to be a 'superhero' like them. In the industry, I look up to Hrithik Roshan and Akshay Kumar when it comes to fitness.





Denim shirt  
and T-shirt by  
**Tommy Hilfiger**





T-shirt by **Parx**;  
chinos by **Nautica**



A person is lying on their back on a large pile of colorful foam blocks. The blocks are in shades of orange, yellow, blue, and red. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt with a graphic and khaki pants. The scene is brightly lit, creating strong shadows.

7

*Which  
superhero  
would  
you want  
as your  
nemesis?*

Spiderman. I'd like it to be me versus him. I want similar powers to what Spiderman has, but I will just use them in a villainous way — something like the black Spiderman.





Suit by **Paul Smith**;  
shirt by **Celio\***, bow  
tie by **Raymond**;  
shoes by **Vans**



8

## Are you critical of yourself?

AFTER EVERY FILM, I KEEP TELLING MYSELF THAT 'I SHOULD HAVE SAID THAT LINE THIS WAY' OR 'I SHOULD HAVE DANCED LIKE THIS' OR 'MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE KICKED WITH MY BODY LEANING BACK A LITTLE.'

10

## Did you ever crush on your father's leading ladies?

Madhuri Dixit! I love Madhuri. I didn't get to meet her much as a child. I recently ran into her at an award function. That too was a "Hi Bye" sort of a meeting.

11

## WHO IS THE HOTTEST WOMAN IN BOLLYWOOD RIGHT NOW?

I THINK AISHWARYA RAI IS AN ETERNAL BEAUTY. SHE LOOKS FANTASTIC, FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN OF *AE DIL HAI MUSHKIL* THROUGH THE PROMOS AND SONGS. IN THIS GENERATION, ALL OF THEM ARE CUTE, BUT NO ONE POSSESSES THE APPEAL OF AISHWARYA.

9

## Do you watch your own films?

I can't. There's something about me watching myself. On the big screen, everything gets so magnified. Every little detail is so blown up.

12

## If you could date someone from the industry, who would you ask out?

I THINK THEY'RE ALL TAKEN, SO NO ONE, I GUESS

13

## WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF A PERFECT DATE?

Go to a restaurant and have some great food together. Follow it with some ice-cream, drop her home and come home and sleep. Or go to the cinema and watch films. I like caramel popcorn (laughs).

14

## You follow 95 people on Instagram. Which of them do you stalk regularly?

I think the fans I've made. I follow some of them. It's nice to stay in touch with them. They make edits and everything that really encourages you. These are the people who have supported me even before my first film came out. They always win every contest at every promotion that I go for. I always see the same bunch of people. It's very heartwarming to see them coming back. I know them by name now. I like all this attention, so it's great.









**15**

*WHICH  
IS THE  
LAST  
FILM  
YOU  
SAW AND  
LOVED?*

I watched *Troy*  
on TV the other  
day. I love that  
film. I want to do  
something like what  
Brad Pitt did in it.

Denim shirt and T-shirt  
by **Tommy Hilfiger**

LOCATION COURTESY  
**SMAAASH, MUMBAI**



# India's **original** men's magazine



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## SHOWSTOPPERS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2017

THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED SALON INTERNATIONAL DE LA HAUTE HORLOGERIE IN GENEVA SHOWCASED SOME STUNNING NEW WATCHES THAT WILL BE UP FOR SALE THIS YEAR. HERE'S OUR PICK OF THE BEST.



### JAEGER-LECOULTRE HYBRIS ARTISTICA MYSTÉRIEUSE

This timepiece, featuring a suspended orbital flying tourbillon within a finely worked dial, indicates time in a unique way. The hour is read from the tourbillon's position on the dial, while the flange disc shows the passing minutes with the help of a discreet arrow. The blue aventurine dial is overlaid with skeletonised mother-of-pearl lace, which is also reproduced on the reverse. It comes in a 42-millimetre pink gold case. The power reserve is 50 hours, and it is a limited edition of 5 pieces.





### ROTONDE DE CARTIER MINUTE REPEATER MYSTERIOUS DOUBLE TOURBILLON

This open-worked minute repeater stays true to the aesthetic of Cartier mysterious movements, inherited from the mystery clocks first created in 1912. Its flying tourbillon, which effects a complete rotation in 60 seconds, appears to float in mid-air, seemingly unconnected to the movement. Adding to the illusion is the sapphire disc bearing the tourbillon that in turn completes one rotation every five minutes. The mysterious double tourbillon is off-centred between 9 and 10 o'clock, and the hammers of the minute repeater are visible at 6 o'clock. The 45 mm titanium case which comes with a beaded crown set with a sapphire cabochon is just 11.15 mm thick. The manual winding mechanical movement has a minimum power reserve of 3.5 days. This is a limited edition of 50 pieces.

### HYT HI RC44

This new version of the pioneering hydro mechanical watch comes in a 48.8 mm titanium case, with a blue rubber-clad screw-lock crown. The retrograde fluidic hours are in blue. The mechanically hand-wound HYT caliber movement has a power reserve of 65 hours. The gold small seconds wheel in the shape of a 4 is at 09.30, while the power reserve indicator is at 02.30. This is a limited edition of 10 pieces.



### AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK EXTRA- THIN OPENWORKED

This new version of the skeleton watch, first introduced in 2012, comes in two limited editions featuring the same size 41 mm case case - in brushed 18K pink gold with matching bracelet, and in stainless steel. Like the preceding platinum and yellow gold versions, the 31.5 mm diameter model is powered by the in-house caliber 2924 hand-wound skeleton movement that is only 31.5 mm in diameter and 4.46 mm thick. The pink gold version (50 pieces) features a pink gold mainplate and bridges, while the movement of the steel version (100 pieces) is rhodium plated in understated tones. The power reserve is 70 hours.

### GREUBEL FORSEY GRANDE SONNERIE

11 years in development, this minute repeater combined with a 24-second tourbillon is Greubel Forsey's most complex creation to date. The movement is manually wound, with a 72-hour chronometric power reserve. The striking mechanism features a self-winding system which provides about 20 hours of power reserve. It comes in a 43.5 mm titanium case. The chiming mechanism has three modes: Grande Sonnerie (which strikes the hours and the quarters in passing), Petite Sonnerie (which strikes the full hours in passing) and Silence (which does not strike in passing). The multi-level dial is in gold and black, with a window showing the hammers and the gongs. This is a limited edition, with only 5 to 8 pieces to be released annually.



### IWC DA VINCI TOURBILLON RETROGRADE CHRONOGRAPH

On a single dial, this watch combines three complications: a classic tourbillon, a chronograph and a retrograde date. The distinctive flying tourbillon cage at 6 o'clock is bearing-mounted only on the underside, and is not connected to an upper bridge. The tourbillon also features a technically complex hacking function that guarantees down-to-the-second accuracy when setting the watch. The retrograde hand shows the date from the 1st to the 31st of the month as it moves across an arc and then, at the end of the scale, reverts to its starting point. It comes in a 18K red gold case with a silver-plated dial. The self-winding mechanical chronograph movement has a power reserve of 68 hours.







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### VACHERON CONSTANTIN TRADITIONNELLE CHRONOGRAPH PERPETUAL CALENDAR

This new version comes with subtle changes like the dial, which features various shades of grey with finishes that differ according to the functions, reflecting the layout of 1940s Vacheron Constantin chronographs. But the most important one is the new manually wound Caliber 1142 QP, which drives the chronograph functions and the perpetual calendar – with the usual indications of the days, date, months, leap years and moon phases – and also the leap year indicator, positioned between 1 and 2 o'clock. It won't need any adjustments until March 1st 2100. It comes in platinum and 18K 5N pink gold.

### BAUME & MERCIER CLASSIMA

Inspired by a 1940's museum piece in the brand's archives, this sleek watch has roman numerals, a date aperture at 3 o'clock and a sophisticated steel case. Equipped with a Swiss quartz movement, it comes in three case sizes – 40mm, 36.5mm and 31mm, with a matte white or sun satin blue dial (40 mm).



### ULYSSE NARDIN INNOVISION 2

Since 2001, the Ulysse Nardin Freak has been considered a pioneer in the field of horology, with its radically new design that did away with crown, hands and even the dial itself. It's been re-interpreted several times, including the 2007 version called InnoVision 1, which stood out for its widespread use of silicon including in the double escape wheel escapement, escape wheel bridge, bearings, shock protection system and so on. The stunning InnoVision2 goes much further, both in its use of Silicon as well as innovations like Dual Constant escapement, Direct silicium bonding, a silicium balance wheel with gold mass elements and stabilising micro paddles, sapphire-coated silicium bridge, three-dimensional glass minute hands and so on.

### ROGER DUBUIS EXCALIBUR SPIDER PIRELLI - DOUBLE FLYING TOURBILLON

Part of Roger Dubuis' new partnership with Pirelli, this watch features a sturdy 47mm diameter black DLC titanium skeleton case with vulcanised blue rubber accents highlighting its titanium crown and 'container'. The flying tourbillon at 5 and 7 o'clock are rimmed by speedometer-like seconds counters, complete with automobile-inspired pointers, while the multi-coloured power-reserve indicator is a nod to racing-car fuel gauges. It is a limited edition of eight pieces.

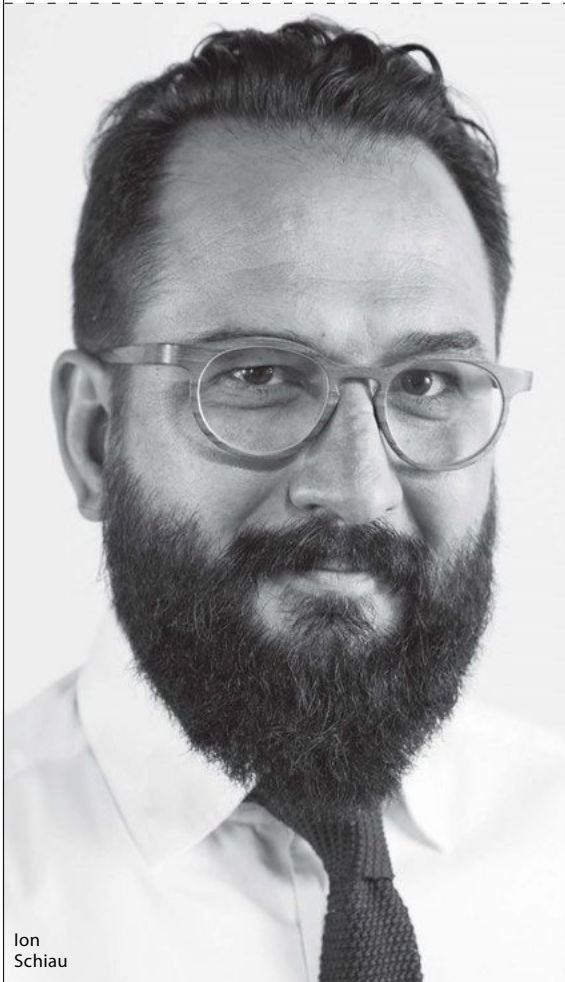


### RICHARD MILLE RM 50-03 TOURBILLON SPLIT SECONDS CHRONOGRAPH ULTRALIGHT MCLAREN F1

At a mere 38 grams, strap included, this is the lightest mechanical chronograph ever made. It is the first product in a 10-year partnership between McLaren F1 and Richard Mille. Much of the watch is made using high tech materials developed by McLaren for its Grand Prix winning cars. It introduces an entirely new material into the world of watchmaking: Graph TPT, which is six times lighter than steel, and 200 times stronger. The watch combines a tourbillon escapement with a split-seconds function. The hollow pushers are representative of the air intake ducts on the McLaren-Honda race car, while the shape of the crown takes its cue from the racing competition wheel rims used by the team. Graphene has been used to make the rubber strap of the watch as well. It is a limited edition of 75 pieces.







Ion  
Schiau

## “INDIA IS A VERY SOPHISTICATED MARKET BASE”

Ion Schiau, Vice-President Sales and Marketing HYT, talks about the brand its unique offerings.

### **HYT watches are already being sold in India. What has the response so far?**

Indian customers were, from day one, very receptive to the technology. When we launched the brand in the market three years ago, the first customers came from India — worldwide. We want to further develop our communication in the market, and to push more for that, we opened our subsidiary for South East Asia, two years ago. We are now beefing up the team in Switzerland in order to support more of the local markets in the Middle East and India. It's a very sophisticated market base,

and collectors know their horology — they are more advanced than Europeans.

### **Do you see India as a big market for watches now?**

Right now it's not a big market, but it's a fantastic base for collectors. That's something we want to continue to push.

### **How old is the brand?**

We consider that it's only three years ago that we started having mature distribution worldwide. We were at 60 point of sales worldwide, and we produce approximately 400 watches every year.

### **Which are the countries where you sell the most watches?**

This year, it's Hong Kong, because retailers understood that with our technology they have something completely unique, working with fluids and liquids — there's no competition. Also, right now, the newly rich Chinese customers are demanding something different, not just a brand known and worn by thousands of people. They want something exclusive. We're successful in South America, Russia and Switzerland as well, but the biggest customer base is Chinese.

### **HYT has revolutionised the watchmaking world. When the watch first hit the market, what was the immediate response?**

We presented the first model in Basel in 2012, and we came out with the first watches that December. I looked at my own watch and said, “How many people will get it? Maybe we'll sell 40-50 watches this year.” We got orders for more than 10 times that amount. People are tired of seeing, over and over, the same watches. It was an amazing introduction, actually — a good price point and a unique complication.

We continue to develop and innovate — when we started we were three, and now we are 50 people, within two companies. One also makes devices for the medical industry, and the other for the watch industry. We have developed a light module, producing a watch with a light feature — it's produced mechanically. It lights up the liquid in the dark. That's a first in watchmaking. Every day, we find new discoveries and applications. Last year alone, we put down forty patents on new technologies.

**Were the senior people ever nervous that people might not take to these watches? After all, a hydromechanical watch is unlike anything the watch world has ever seen.**

Yes, but at the same time we had promising signs. You know before that it was a big brand that was active in Formula 1, and when this big brand made a movie with the car and our sponsorship on it, we had tens of thousands of views on YouTube. So I said I have a benchmark. After four days, we had 400,000 views. So the tech world spoke about it, the internet talked about it, and it was a snowball effect. We were nervous, because in this industry, most of the time they'll tell you that's not possible, it doesn't work, it's a stupid idea. And when you make a watch that brings back liquid inside, whereas the whole industry wants it outside, you really have to make sure it works.

### **Of your five collections — H1, H2, H3, H4 and Skull — which is the one that has gotten the maximum appreciation and accolades?**

Since last year, it's been the Skull. In the last 16 months, we are discovering a customer we did not expect to discover. Why is that? It's a 51 millimetre watch in which you guess the minute while reading the fluid between two sections — and it was a bestseller. We started this collection almost as a

talking piece — a provocation from a client. Then we said, let's do the real job, and let's make a capillary in the shape of a skull. We had to create machines, we had to recreate the movement. Because as you can see, the section between the hours, sometimes it's longer, sometimes it's shorter. My friends in the industry went, “Haha, you are frankly thinking you are going to sell this piece to anyone?” Well, we proved everybody wrong.

### **What should we expect from HYT this year?**

What we understood with the Skull and Iceberg pieces is the lifestyle component of the creation. When you start a brand with five pieces only, you have to fine-tune your sense of what the customer is looking for. He is looking for a statement, and that creativity can be brought to different levels. You'll see us going more to a lifestyle contemporary component, with interesting materials and adaptations of the product. Later in the year, you'll see a new line for 2018, and something that you'll not see, we're not disclosing! It'll have a new movement, will be smaller, thinner and again, a new position for a new line.

HYT Skull AxI  
Rose





# Nota Bene

This month in fashion and style



## ◀ Pall Mall

The winter collection draws its inspiration from the English tailors of the 18th and 19th centuries. For formal evenings, you can stand apart in the new range of bandhgallas, tuxedos and custom-made three-piece or two-button suits made from great Indian as well as world-class fabrics such as Zegna, Scabal and Dormeuil. For party wear, you can choose from the new range of smart Jawahar or chequered jackets. The new range includes 'Cadini' - a pure Italian range of suits - and Xacus, a range of fine Italian shirts.



## ▲ Aéropostale

Valentine's Day is the perfect occasion to slip into hues of red - these colours imbibe us in the season of love. Aéropostale offers a perfect mix that matches colour palettes and styles of the season with cozy turtleneck sweaters, comfortable tees and polos with warm essentials such as hoodies. Super comfortable jackets, sweatshirts and denims are also part of the range.



## ▲ Corneliani

The Italian luxury brand offers a sophisticated selection of items conceived to enhance and complement the gentleman's closet. This Valentine's Day, consider gifts such as ties, cashmere scarves, palladium cufflinks, belts and leather accessories crafted in calfskin.



## ▲ Silhouette

The brand has launched the SPX Illusion that is rich in variety and individuality, conjuring up contours and plays of colour on the faces of its wearers. The four shapes, combined with fresh gradients of colour, make an expressive statement.



The Ultra Lite is the thinnest full-rim plastic eyewear in the market, and it sets new benchmarks while providing the greatest wearing comfort possible. One milestone is the extreme minimalism of the high-tech SPX+ plastic, with its great resiliency and stability. The screwless designer hinge appears to be transformed into a jewelled ornament on the SPX+ side part.





## ▲ Da Milano

The premium leather accessories brand has launched a travel collection that includes duffel bags, strolleys and backpacks to make your journey more stylish. The assortment combines unique design with an alluring colour palette. Crafted in premium leather and lightweight polycarbonate, the pieces are more streamlined, with increased packing capacity and leather trims adding a style spin to the regular travel gear.



## ▲ Green Snack Co

Busting the myth that tasty food cannot be healthy, The Green Snack Co has introduced a range of distinctive and delicious kale chips and quinoa puffs for the health-conscious consumer. Kale chips are prepared through a unique process of dehydration that does not involve baking or frying, while quinoa puffs are roasted. This keeps the nutrient value and raw goodness of the ingredients intact.



## ▲ Vans

The Valentine's Day special collection comprises cheerful colours like pink, red, black, green and blue. Ideal gifts for your loved one include shoes, caps, socks and backpacks. The designs and patterns of the assortment range from dolled up princess and floral prints on shoes to quirky cartoon patterns in the accessories. The selection is also a mixture of Vans collections such as Nintendo, Dabs Myla, 50th Classic, Toy Story and Van Doren.



## ▲ Epson

The new EH-TW6700 home theatre projector is designed to deliver 3,000 lumens of colour and white brightness. The projector is engineered with up to 70,000:1 dynamic contrast ratio and lets you witness stunning realism with up to a three times wider colour range. The projector offers unmatched image quality that is a hallmark of all Epson projectors, which carry the 3LCD Technology. Epson 3LCD projectors deliver great colours that match its white brightness to give balanced, realistic, and vibrant images.

## ► Metro

Crafted with leather and suede in a host of trendy colours, the new collection offers a plethora of options for occasions ranging from date night to a formal get-together. Choose from shoes in timeless styles and others that embody the latest trends.







## ▲ Z Zegna

Z Zegna Cities is a limited edition of three fragrances inspired by some of the world's most exciting cities – Shanghai, Milan and New York. These cities, which never sleep, offer unending inspiration for this collection, aimed at the young, travelling man – the dreamer and the creator – who understands that the journey is as important as the destination.



## ◀ Victorinox

Victorinox Travel Gear has introduced a stylish set of navy-coloured, multi-purpose bags, made from premium Nüwa fabric. The six designs provide on-the-go minimalists and business professionals with multiple options to pack everything for the day into just one bag. The high-quality materials and smart interior pockets can be trusted to transport valuable items such as laptops, tablets and smart phones.

## ► Tom Ford

The Orchid Soleil Eau De Parfum – which illuminates Tom Ford's original obsession with the elusive Black Orchid – is a great Valentine's Day gift for your lady. The fluted-glass bottle, with art deco-inspired lines, gleams in luminous rose gold, embellished with an embossed gold plaque and finished with a golden neck cord. Uninhibited top notes of bigarade and pink peppercorn bewitch with fresh cypress, before unleashing the molten floralcy at its sparkling heart.



## ▲ Moët & Chandon

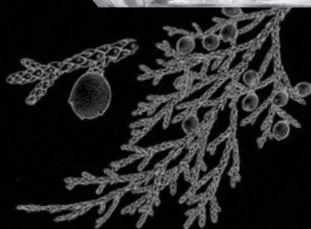
The creative, expressive world of emojis and emoticons inspires a limited-edition Valentine's Day gift box, titled Rosé Impérial Emoëticons. You can personalise your message and the bottle with emojis that include champagne bottles and flutes, eyes, lips, heart sunglasses, music notes, smileys, the words 'kiss', 'love' and more.



## ▲ Bulgari

Inspired by the Atlantic Ocean, Bulgari's new fragrance, Aqva Pour Homme Atlantique, contrasts freshness with sensuality, creating a powerful, distinctive signature. Designed for the magnetic man, he dives into the vitality of the sea, resurfacing with an athletic perseverance, a tacit understanding of the ocean, and a respect for its power.





# GENDER BENDER

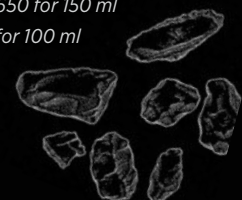
**Miuccia Prada's fascination with fluid identity is reflected in L'Homme Prada – a fragrance that celebrates the individualities as well as differences of its wearer**

**Born out of an olfactory investigation** that explores cultural conditions to form the basis of the brand and its ideas, L'Homme Prada reconsiders gender roles while merging and inverting ingredients that are perceived as masculine or feminine, to disrupt the status quo and emerge with a powerful, unexpected statement.

The signature Prada masculine ingredient – Amber – collides with its most overtly Prada feminine counterpart – Iris. It is a mix that is both airy and yet purposefully, highly sensual. The classic codes of the male Fougère are all present too – in neroli, geranium and patchouli.

L'Homme Prada's packaging utilises the classical, symbolic language of the House. The iconic Prada Saffiano wraps the rounded back of the bottle in black and is echoed in the crosshatched design of the box packaging. The original Prada logo appears raised in silver on the front of the bottle. The House absolutes of black and silver are applied to the fragrance, reflecting the chillier notes of its scent, its grey glass emphasizing this classicism.

*Available at Parcos and select department stores across the country; Rs 7,650 for 150 ml and Rs 6,100 for 100 ml*







In the early summer of 2003, writer Jane Gopalakrishnan, accompanied by photographer Neha Didee, travelled to Allanganallur, a small, dusty town 25 km outside Madurai in Tamil Nadu, to witness the annual Jallikattu festival. Here is an excerpt from how she described it:

"Almost 400 bulls were brought in by their proud owners from the surrounding villages. The bulls, bred, they claimed, solely for Jallikattu, were scrubbed down and brightly decorated, with flowers, chains, beads, coloured powders and often an advertising logo. Their humps were often oiled down to outwit any 'tamer' who got close enough. The animals were lined up, next to each other, each facing the wall and their owner alone. One by one, they were then led into the huge archway, beyond which lay the sea of people. Almost every bull, without exception, got completely hysterical at this point, refusing to go into the battlefield. But it was cajoled, bullied and finally pushed out. There is no doubting the courage of some young men, who flung themselves at the bull's hump. Whoever first slowed the bull down got to run back to the arch, and demand his prize. That is what the event boiled down to. A few brave men. And one terrified animal. There were accidents, people trampled by other people, or by bulls who fled in blind terror, looking for an exit. There were plenty of onlookers who merely hit them, pulled their tails, or just screamed. Half the bulls made it to the finish line 'untamed', some didn't, but most just stood in shock at the centre of the battlefield."





I T A L I A N   A T   H E A R T

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