

# Reel-ing in reality

Narinderpal Singh Chandok has given the tried and tested comedy genre a miss to showcase the sombre side of Punjab with his debut Punjabi movie *Jaspal*

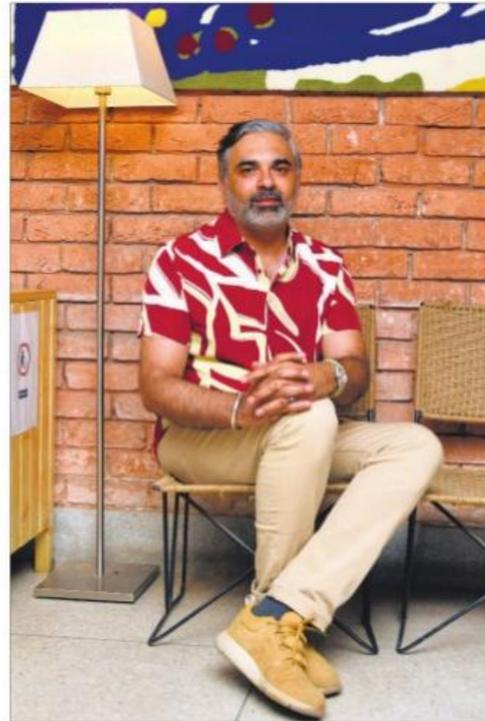
SHEETAL

French-Indian documentary director, Narinderpal Singh Chandok embraces his Punjabi roots with his feature film debut, *Jaspal*. The film was recently screened at the Art Gallery, Alliance Francaise (AF), Chandigarh. In talks with the regional OTT platform Chaupal to release it for the Punjabi audiences, his film will also be showcased at AF centres of Kolkata and Lucknow.



Born in Delhi in 1971, Chandok moved to France during the 80s with his family. He has directed as many as 35 documentaries during the past 18 years. Each of them was broadcast on several TV channels like France 5, Ushuaia TV, Discovery Channel Asia and TV5 Monde.

Ask him if working in a feature film was different and Chandok calls it a lot more challenging than documentary filmmaking. "When you approach a subject from a documentary angle, the idea



is to showcase the truth and you simply have to start shooting. But a feature film is another world altogether, as you have to work along with many people, including the writers, producers and technical staff. To manage all that is challenging."

#### LONG JOURNEY

Chandok took five years to complete *Jaspal* and when he posted the trailer on YouTube, he got both positive and negative feedback. He explains, "There would always be people who would

not understand where you are coming from and what the story wants to convey, but that wouldn't stop me from doing what I want. I wouldn't like to believe that shooting in Punjab, India, staying away from my family and working this hard on a project isn't worth it. Change is always repelled, but this sure is different from regular cinema that Punjabi audiences usually watch in theatres."

It's always tough to choose a person's name for a film's title, as Chandok did for his



"I AM DEEPLY CONNECTED TO MY MOTHER TONGUE, PUNJABI, AND ALSO EXPOSED TO WORLD CINEMA WHILE RESIDING IN FRANCE."

#### CHANDOK'S NOTABLE DOCUMENTARIES

- *El Seed, Behind the Calligraphy* (2020)
- *Penjab, India* (2019)
- *Wudang, China* (2018)
- *Christmas Time in Pakistan* (2014)
- *Irezumi, The Japanese Art Of Tattoo* (2013)

debut feature project. "I wanted a name which could be pronounced the same way in major languages, be it Punjabi, French, English, Spanish or any other. And *Jaspal* comes across as one such name."

#### GOING GLOBAL

Chandok is driven by the dream to see a Punjabi film breaking fresh ground in the international market. "At the global level, many perceive us as *pendu* and do not know about our culture and how deeply we are attached to it, even if we have migrated to

different countries. I am fed up with Korean and other language films doing great internationally. If we have a great Punjabi story, we shouldn't be waiting for Bollywood to make it in Hindi, but rather choose our own language to tell it."

Shooting in Punjab was also a different ball-game for Chandok. "I like to start on time and finish on time, which came as a surprise for the local staff. It took me time to break the barrier between the director and staff; I like to treat everybody equally," he says.

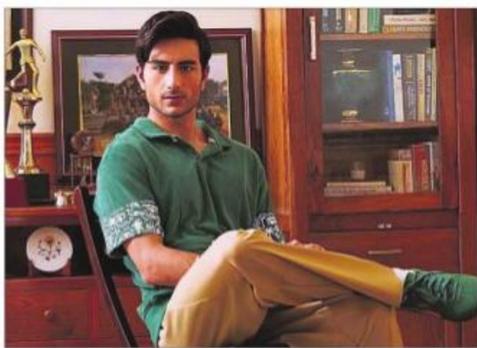
## Billie's blast!

Singer Billie Eilish locks September for her world tour

Singer-songwriter Billie Eilish is gearing up to embark on a world tour in support of her forthcoming third album, *Hit Me Hard and Soft*. The album is set for release on May 17. The Live Nation-produced tour will kick off in September in Quebec and continue through North America until December. In February 2025, Eilish will hit Australia, followed by Europe, the UK, and Ireland, from April to late July.

General tickets will be released for sale on May 3 through Ticketmaster. Eilish will continue her collaboration with the environmental non-profit organisation Reverb for the tour, focusing on reducing greenhouse gas pollution and minimising single-use plastic waste. A portion of ticket sales in North America will also contribute to Reverb's initiatives. Her tour will span across Canada, the US, Australia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Germany, the Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, Italy, France, Spain, the UK, and Ireland. — IANS

## Ibrahim makes Insta account public



Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh's son Ibrahim Ali Khan is all set to make his acting debut very soon, and to develop a more personal connection with the audience, the young artiste on Tuesday made his Instagram account public.

A while ago, Ibrahim shared his first Instagram post. It's a photoshoot for the sportswear giant Puma, of which he's been announced as a brand ambassador. His stepmother Kareena Kapoor

'Saif 2.0' fires up Instagram as he posts his first photoshoot for a sportswear brand

Khan is also Puma's brand ambassador.

Giving him a shout-out, Kareena took to her Instagram Story and wrote, "Love it." In no time,

Ibrahim's comments' section was flooded with heartfelt reactions. Many comments also reflected on how much Ibrahim resembled his father.

"Ditto Saif," a social media user commented. "Saif 2.0," another one commented.

Ibrahim is currently shooting for a couple of projects. However, an official announcement on his projects has not been made as yet. — ANI

## Kajol's cryptic reply

...after she is trolled for old post about her being 'rude'

Kajol, who is being trolled on social media for allegedly being rude to an autistic boy, shared a cryptic post on Tuesday, saying 'when you aren't ready for that level of nonsense and need a minute to recalibrate'. The backlash stemmed from a viral post on Reddit, where a user recounted an incident involving his/her brother.

The post, which was posted years ago, read, "I love my brother so much, he is on the autism spectrum, so life has been really hard for him, until a few years ago. People finally began accepting him for who he was, and he got to work at a high-end restaurant

in Juhu, where people encouraged him to work. He had been really, really happy with his job for the past few months, until yesterday. He is a huge fan of Kajol. Yesterday, Kajol came with a couple of friends to the restaurant and he was overjoyed. He usually gets back-end duties because he is good with numbers, but they allowed him to handle the bill once the dinner was finished."

The note further read, "All he wanted to say was that Kajol brought him a lot of happiness and that he wished the best for her future. My brother was overwhelmed and started crying, but all she did was say, 'hogaya? Ab nautanki band karo aur bill loh'. And she complained to the manager about employing people like him..." — IANS

## Meet the spies

The upcoming *Spy Universe* film, starring Alia Bhatt and Sharvari in the lead roles, will feature seven big action sequences. The yet-to-be-titled film is directed by Shiv Rawail, who made his debut with the streaming series *The Railway Men*. The film's producer, Aditya Chopra, is sparing no effort to make the first female-led *Spy Universe* film into an action spectacle. The film also stars Bobby Deol as the antagonist.

Created by producer Aditya Chopra, the *Spy Universe* commenced with the *Tiger* franchise, featuring Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif. It commenced with *Ek Tha Tiger*, followed by *Tiger Zinda Hai*. IANS



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