



SHARMAJEE KI BETI

STEEL MAGNOLIAS **P10**

FUSS-FREE FASHION

P16



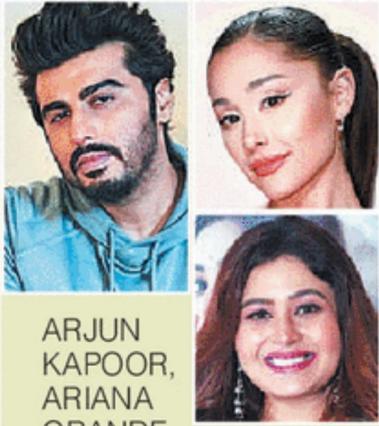
- B'DAY, TECH **2,4**
- MUSIC, ITALIAN FEST, WATCHIT **6,7**
- TOLLY, DANCE **8,9**
- BIDDING ADIEU, FOOD, WHATSUP **14,15,17**
- STYLE STOP, PRIDE PICKS, TEAM T2 IS **18,19**



JACOB
ELORDI

B'DAY BOY CHARMER **P11**

T O D A Y ' S T I P S by Nita Chhotalal



ARJUN KAPOOR, ARIANA GRANDE, RITABHARI CHAKRABORTY

This year, a fresh and promising financial venture or investment may be on the horizon, bringing with it the possibility of abundance and fulfilment. You will be in a situation where you may have a heavy workload, numerous obligations, or demanding deadlines. You need to be mindful of your own well-being and not allow yourself to become completely consumed by your responsibilities. If in love, there will be stability and reliability in your relationship.

— Nita Chhotalal

ALSO: JACOB ELORDI, CHRIS O' DONNELL, SAMIR NASRI



ARIES

DO to take pride in your hard work and enjoy the fruits of your labor
DONT get disconnected from your current environment
EXPECT to find satisfaction in your accomplishments



TAURUS

DO reconnect with your roots and return to a simple life
DONT cling to past hurts
EXPECT to find joy in the small, meaningful moments of life



GEMINI

DO step back and analyse the situation from a logical standpoint
DONT misuse power
EXPECT to harness your mental prowess and tap into your inner wisdom to navigate any challenges that may come your way



CANCER

DO align with your vision, choose your battles wisely, and stand up for yourself
DONT be afraid to express yourself firmly and assertively
EXPECT to speak your truth, and let your inner strength guide you towards success



LEO

DO diligently work on your skills, and create a solid foundation that will serve as a springboard for future success
DONT procrastinate
EXPECT to embrace a learning mindset and invest time and effort in developing your talents



VIRGO

DO embrace a fresh perspective that can lead to unexpected breakthroughs
DONT hold on to old patterns that no longer serve you
EXPECT to be introspective and consider all your options very carefully



LIBRA

DO allow yourself to be inspired on your journey
DONT jump from one venture to another without fully considering the consequences
EXPECT to explore uncharted territories, or to take on a new project



SCORPIO

DO embrace uncertainty and seize opportunities without fear
DONT be afraid to take risks
EXPECT to embrace the unknown with optimism and trust in the journey ahead



SAGITTARIUS

DO seek opportunities for partnership, whether in your personal or professional life
DONT get disconnected from loved ones
EXPECT to embrace the dualities within yourself



CAPRICORN

DO find solace in leaving behind turbulent waters and moving towards a peaceful horizon
DONT let unresolved issues hinder progress
EXPECT to leave behind a difficult situation and embark on a new path



AQUARIUS

DO try and differentiate between what is truly important to you and what merely appears enticing in the moment
DONT fall prey to unrealistic fantasies
EXPECT to be mindful of the illusions that may cloud your judgment



PISCES

DO embrace the joy that comes from skillfully navigating life's intricate dance
DONT juggle too many responsibilities
EXPECT to learn to prioritize, multi-task, and maintain a steady equilibrium



B'DAY WISHES:
 Thank you so much for all the greetings and congratulations!! Another year that coincides with my birthday being with the National Team... So celebrated a little bit more and we kept getting ready for our next game. Hugs! Uploaded by @leomessi (Lionel Messi)



LOOKING SHARP:
 Uploaded by @jakegyllenhaal (Jake Gyllenhaal)



SHOPPING SPREE:
 Uploaded by @diljitdosanjh (Diljit Dosanjh)

Nita Chhotalal is on @Divine Grace - Nita Chhotalal @mysticalguidancebynita

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A good espresso with some crema releases an intoxicating scent that is earthy and fresh... each time. There needs to be consistency. Consistency of performance is also a good quality to look for in a laptop. With laptops coming in every other week for review, it becomes easy to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Samsung Galaxy Book4 Pro is the latest "skinny jeans" in the laptop world and it competes with MacBook Air at many levels. It's no surprise that this is one of the best Windows laptops you can buy at the moment, especially if you are already using a Samsung Galaxy phone.

Geared towards creators and gamers who are on a quest for speed and performance, the laptop has enough future-proofing in terms of performance.

PRACTICAL DESIGN

I have been testing the 14-inch version of the Galaxy Book4 Pro, which is the perfect size for anyone who travels a lot or carries a laptop to the office every day. It's compact and light weight (1.23kg) while in terms of look, I am reminded of the wedge shape that the MacBook did away with a few years ago.

Those familiar with Samsung's laptops will be happy to stick to a design from the previous generation. It's a no-nonsense style with the brand's logo on one side of the lid. The matte brushed metal chassis is classy and doesn't attract too many fingerprints. It's solidly constructed and there is almost no wobble when you open the screen. The same goes for creakiness — zero, unlike on many other laptops. The display is helmed in by skinny

Samsung Galaxy Book4 Pro has a thin and light chassis, a standout screen, and excellent battery life. Pictures: The Telegraph



SAMSUNG GALAXY BOOK4 PRO: A NO-BRAINER FOR ANYBODY LOOKING FOR A PREMIUM WINDOWS LAPTOP EXPERIENCE

bezels while the port situation is better than on most slim laptops: A pair of Thunderbolt 4, a Type-A USB 3.2, a micro SD memory card and an HDMI 2.1 port (besides the 3.5mm headphone jack).

For security, there is a fingerprint scanner on the power button and even when your finger is moist, there is no problem logging in. As with Samsung devices, there is a layer of protection for your biometric data, courtesy Knox security.

Even though the keyboard doesn't fill the entire chassis but the

keys are large enough, click-y and have a fair bit of key travel. Being well-spaced, the keys are easily accessible and typing documents on the fly is easy. But here's a quibble — the keyboard backlighting could have been brighter. Touching upon the touchpad, it is of decent size and responsive.

DAZZLER OF A DISPLAY

Be it the 14-inch or the 16-inch model, both come with a dynamic AMOLED 2X display with 3K resolution, 120Hz refresh rate and anti-reflective surfacing. Needless to say, Samsung

offers some of the best displays in the industry. The 3K resolution is a stunner, so colours pop and once you get used to watching videos on this machine, it's difficult to switch to anything else. Bright, vibrant and pop-y... that somewhat captures the feeling of viewing things on the Samsung laptop. There are a number of different colour profiles you can set — Samsung AMOLED Adobe RGB profile, P3 Profile, sRGB Profile and auto mode. With HDR active, expect stunning contrasts when you are streaming content on Netflix, with deep blacks and clean whites. It's ideal for outdoor usage.

There is even an anti-reflective surfacing, which works well: Even if you have bright lights in the room, there will be very little reflection. It's like what you have on the Galaxy S24 Ultra phone.

The distinguishing factor here is the touchscreen. No, you don't get a touchscreen on the MacBook. Some argue that having a touchscreen on a laptop is unnecessary because you can't hold your hand up for long (fatigue sets in) while using a touch display and if you must, a tablet is a better option. Without getting into the argument, all we can say is that the display is touch sensitive and works fine.

Coming to audio output, it's excellent and almost matches the MacBook Air. What you get out of this skinny laptop is amazing, despite the speaker grilles being housed below the laptop.

There is not much to say about the webcam — the 1080p FHD webcam keeps images bright and there are features such as eye contact correction and Auto Framing in Studio effects.

Further, you can link your Samsung Galaxy smartphone to the Samsung laptop and then use the phone's high-res camera as an alternative.

TOP-TIER PERFORMANCE

Now you can have 32GB LPDDR5X RAM and this great for people who use Adobe Photoshop or Adobe Premiere and even AI tools. The laptop is powered by Intel Core Ultra 7 155H. This is impressive configuration. Samsung is clearly focussed on Gen AI because video apps and photo tools are incorporating plenty of AI features which can be demanding. I am not getting into benchmark scores but be it single-core or multi-core performance, it's among the best in the industry.

Playing a game like Resident Evil 3 was easy. I kept the laptop plugged in to get the best performance. It's a demanding title and the Samsung laptop delivered, even with all the high-res features switched on. While playing Forza, graphics were of high quality and reflections appeared super smooth.

The performance on a MacBook Air or Pro is silky smooth because the company is using its own silicon. Samsung does a great job but the company should look at bolstering its chipset division because that way it can introduce features that others don't have.

Overall, be it audio or video editing, there is enough power to go through all the tasks.

AT A GLANCE

Device: Samsung Galaxy Book4 Pro

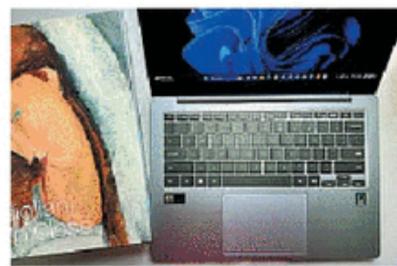
Price: Upwards of Rs 131,990

HIGH NOTES

- ▶ Excellent design and lightweight
- ▶ Powerful performance
- ▶ There is future-proofing
- ▶ Works very well with Samsung devices
- ▶ Brilliant display

MUFFLED NOTE

- ▶ Keyboard backlighting could have been better



The keyboard has a very satisfying click, and the user can surpass normal typing speeds



The fingerprint reader is on the power button



Samsung Galaxy Book4 Pro (left) versus Apple MacBook Air M3



For anyone who wants something really light, this is a good Windows laptop

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

You can expect around seven to eight hours of usage if you are working on demanding tasks. If entertainment is all you want then you get more out of the battery. Samsung Galaxy Book4 Pro is a no-brainer for anybody looking for a premium Windows laptop experience.

Mathures Paul

SAMSUNG HAS A NEW PRODUCT FOR THE INDIAN MARKET — MUSIC FRAME

Samsung has an innovative product that's finally available in India. Called Music Frame, it's a wireless speaker that looks like a work of art. It comes with features such as Dolby Atmos and wireless music streaming.

Music Frame is not a TV but has the same design philosophy as The Frame. It's a music speaker — originally announced at CES 2024 — that can be paired with, say, a Samsung TV. It has built-in woofers, or bass speakers, and intelligent audio processing for what Samsung calls a "premium audio experience". There are

File picture of Music Frame on display at Samsung Opera House in Bangalore. Picture: The Telegraph



wave guides to help spread the sound far and wide in a room. It can be used either in Wi-Fi or Bluetooth mode. There is support for Dolby Atmos. With Samsung SpaceFit technology, it can also calibrate your audio to your environment. The stylish wireless speaker blends seamlessly into living spaces like never

before by doubling as a picture frame.

"The new Music Frame epitomises exceptional technology in the form of a picture frame with its unique, elegant design while delivering a cinematic audio experience," said Mohandeep Singh, senior vice-president, visual display business,

Samsung India.

Who is Music Frame for? Anybody who likes "invisible tech". With The Frame TV, when it's switched off, all you see is a beautiful painting and it can be kept anywhere in the room. The same goes for Music Frame. You can keep it on, say, the bookshelf and people may think it's a chic photo frame.

The speaker eliminates uneven sound distribution and promotes crystal-clear audio throughout the room, making every seat the best seat in the house. The Music Frame offers effortless control with built-in voice assistants like Alexa and Google Assistant. All for Rs 23,990.

In case you have a mid-size room, the wireless speaker can easily fill up the same. To get the maximum out of the speaker, pair up a couple of them.

Mathures Paul

ADVT



9th I-GLAM carnival



A show full of *Glitz & Glamour*

Founder & Director IGLAM, Ddevjani Mitra quotes that the aim of IGLAM is to nurture and empower 10 million talents across India in coming years and to provide an authentic platform to them so that they can showcase their true potential to the world.

The highly anticipated and much awaited edition of IGLAM Pageant took place in Bengal. For the very first time, Iglam had a married Winner in IGLAM Mr. Bengal criteria as Adarsha Mukherjee. IGLAM organised the first season of its national pageant IGLAM Miss & Mrs India 2024 which had Shrubabati Chowdhury as IGLAM Miss India 2024 and Sanchita Banerjee as IGLAM Mrs.India 2024 winner.

Moving further in Dabur Gulabari IGLAM Miss & Mrs Gulab-Pari Bengal 2024 we had Meher Balmiki as Dabur gulabari Iglam miss gulab-pari 20224 winner and Madhusnata Guha as Dabur Gulabari IGLAM Mrs Gulab-pari Bengal 2024 winner.

The founder and director Ddevjani Mitra adds that the reason behind organising such talent hunt show is to help young budding and groundless talents get platform which further helps them manifest their true potential.



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কভার ড্রাইভ ২:

টলিউডে পরিবর্তনের হাওয়া: পরস্পরের প্রতি বন্ধুত্বের হাত বাড়ালেন জিৎ ও দেব। পাশে রইলেন প্রসেনজিৎও

নেপথ্য কথা:

দু'টি থাপ্পড়: কঙ্গনা রানাওত ও সোহম চক্রবর্তী দেখালেন থাপ্পড়ের দু'টি ভিন্ন অভিমুখ

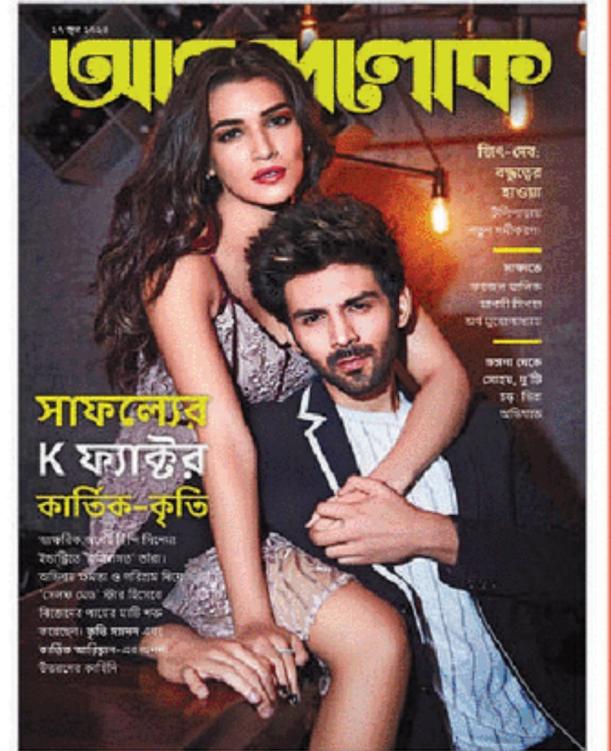
জুম ইন:

সোনাক্ষী সিনহা বিয়ে করলেন জাহির ইকবালকে। কেমন হল সেই অনুষ্ঠান?

সাক্ষাতে:

■ ফয়জল মালিক ■ মানসী সিনহা
■ অর্ণ মুখোপাধ্যায়

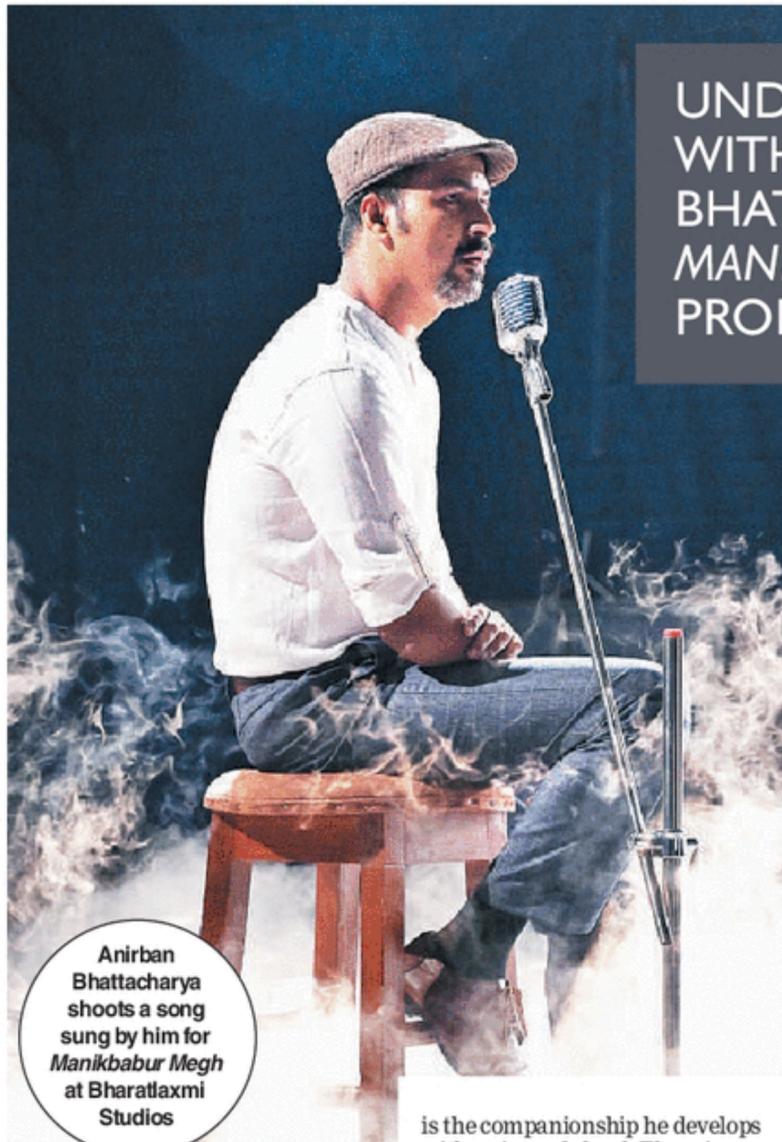
আক্ষরিক অর্থেই হিন্দি সিনেমা ইন্ডাস্ট্রিতে 'বহিরাগত' তাঁরা। শুধু অভিনয়, পরিশ্রম দিয়ে 'সেলফ মেড' স্টার হিসেবে নিজেদের পায়ের মাটি শক্ত করেছেন।
কৃতি স্যানন এবং **কার্তিক আরিয়ান**।
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আগণ্ডাগোফ

২৭ জুন ২০২৪

UNDER A CLOUD WITH ANIRBAN BHATTACHARYA AT MANIKBABUR MEGH PROMO SHOOT



Anirban Bhattacharya shoots a song sung by him for *Manikbabur Megh* at Bharatlaxmi Studios

*Tomar amar golpo hoto jodi
Golpo hoto raatbirete jege
Bhor akashe hariye gele tara
Thamiye ador bajar jetam rege...*

A song has been composed steeped in the romanticism, laced with the fantasy and fraught with the dissonance that informs the core of the lyrical cinema that is *Manikbabur Megh*.

Directed by Abhinandan Banerjee, *Manikbabur Megh* is a solitary middle-class, middle-aged individual's lonely trudge through life in which his only attachment

is the companionship he develops with a piece of cloud. There is neither colour nor music in the ordinary man's workaday motions — going to the fish market, dozing amid a pile of files in office, and tending to a paralytic father whose death provides the only break in his routine. His emotions take colour only in his mind. The film is shot in black-and-white and has no songs.

Manikbabur Megh, adjudged the Best Film in the Asian Select category at the 27th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF), is set for a theatrical release on July 12.

If Chandan Sen, who has bagged the Best Actor award at the Pacific Meridian Film Festival in Moscow as



(L-R) Producer Bauddhayan Mukherji, presenter Anirban Bhattacharya and "Manikbabu" Chandan Sen at the shoot

the laconic, oppressed and alienated Manikbabu, is the face and soul of the film, the film has now found a voice. Anirban Bhattacharya will present *Manikbabur Megh*, and has sung a song, which will play while the end credits roll.

"Can you think of any producer who would bet on a story of a man and his feelings for a piece of cloud?" co-producer Bauddhayan Mukherji challenges t2 with a rhetorical question. "That is why we had to make the film," says the National Award-winning ad filmmaker, who himself has directorial credits for indie features like *Teenakahon*, *The Violin Player* and *Marichjhapi* to his name.

Abhinandan had collaborated on the screenplay for Bauddhayan's debut feature *Teenakahon*. "He told me the story of *Manikbabur Megh* one night in Santiniketan. It blew my mind," recalls Monalisa Mukherji, his wife and co-producer of the film.

SET POINTS

The Little Lamb Films duo were on the sets of Bharatlaxmi Studios

in Calcutta recently where the song was being shot. "This will be the only promotional tool for the film. We are not a big production house. We have to use our resources intelligently," Bauddhayan tells t2, while overseeing the shoot.

Anirban had recorded the song earlier in Mumbai. The tune, composed by Subhajit Mukherjee, is soft, melancholic and reflective, like the film, and Anirban's dulcet voice plays in the ear even after the sound system on the floor



Abhinandan Banerjee, director of the film

falls silent with the call to "cut". "Subhajit is an ace composer and music producer in the advertising world. He used to be with the band Lakkhichhara (as lead vocalist and composer)," Monalisa explains.

The lyrics were penned by Abhinandan himself. "The words came intuitively when we were working on the edits, in 2021. The shooting took place in April-May 2019," says the architect-turned-filmmaker. "Doesn't the shape of the cloud remind you of the human brain? That's how I had visualised the poster too."

On the sets of the promo shoot, it is Bauddhayan calling the shots. "I am directing the song as my belated birthday gift to Abhinandan (who turned 32 on June 11)," he smiles.

The only props on the floor are a high chair and a cloud hanging over it. "That's synthetic cotton fitted over a frame with blown-up paper lanterns within," Monalisa explains.

Anirban, dressed in a white shirt and grey trousers, takes his position on the chair. As the prelude plays on the track, Bauddhayan

turns to the DoP Debojeet Roy: "The camera starts moving towards him on the count of 20."

As the long shot pans into a close-up, Anirban, looking downward, raises his head. "Cut," comes the call.

The rest of the song is a play with smoke. "They are putting dry ice in those machines," Monalisa explains, as assistants feed them with scoops from an ice box. "There is boiling water underneath. That creates the steam."

The retakes are decided by how the smoke settles on the floor. The effect on the monitor is magical — as if Anirban is seated amidst clouds.

PROPER CINEMA

A while later, Chandan Sen, aka Manikbabu, drops by. When t2 tells him that he is to the film what Tulusi Chakrabarti was to Satyajit Ray's *Paras Pathar*, the veteran actor responds: "Bangali *bohukal* cinema *dekheni* — serial *noy*, OTT *noy*, proper cinema. *Pather Panchali dekhe manush kemon chomke gechhilo?*" he says.

Sen had accompanied the crew to Goa when it was screened at Iffi. "The south Indian filmmakers were jubilant. They said they wanted to make films like this. I expect deep sighs here too (from local filmmakers), just like there were after *Asha Jaoar Majhe* (which won the Indira Gandhi Best Debut Film of a Director award at the National Film Awards in 2015)," Sen reflects.

The film, he adds, is a feeling, a sentiment. "It is on the urban crisis of loneliness — *ekakitwer sonkot*. The 96 minutes you spend in the hall watching the film, you will feel completely alone. That was my feeling when I saw it."

Agrees Monalisa: "Films are made on the battles of the mighty or the tragedies of the poor. But no one talks of the middle class. Their lives are too mundane to make it to the big screen. This film is our tribute to their struggles, dreams and aspirations," she says.

The song will be released on Wednesday.

Sudeshna Banerjee

'SEEING MANIKBABUR MEGH, I AM SO EXCITED THAT I WANT TO DIRECT A FILM AGAIN'

Anirban Bhattacharya speaks to t2 on his association with *Manikbabur Megh*.

What made you get involved with this film?

I got involved after speaking to Bauddhayanda (Mukherji). It is not as if I have seen a lot of Abhinandan (Banerjee)'s work. But I have worked with Bauddhayanda in a short film titled *251* that was screened at several film festivals, including KIFF. Abhinandan had made the poster for the film. An artist leaves an impression of the depth of his art in every aspect of his work. I also heard of Chandanda getting a prize for the film. He is my teacher in acting. So I took a lot of pride in the news. I was in touch with Bauddhayanda last year as *251* was touring the festivals. When he gave me the proposal, I agreed even before seeing the film. I have since done

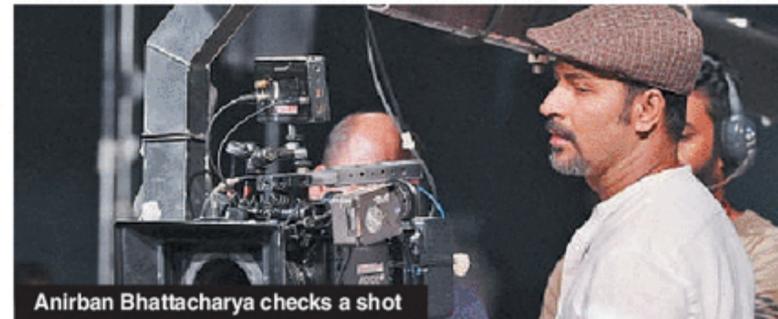
so and honestly, this film is much bigger than the fact that Anirban Bhattacharya is presenting it. Rather *ete amar somman barbe*. If even 10-20 more people go to watch the film because of my involvement, I would be delighted.

What's your view of the film?

I believe this film deserves to be seen. But now films are compartmentalised, and tags are put on each. We have to live with this practice. *Manikbabur Megh* tells the tale of a mind, of multi-layered living. The fact that my name got connected to such a film is an honour for me, though I don't know if I am worthy of the honour.

Does it help the song that the director and screenplay writer is the lyricist?

Yes, there is a deep connection but many lyricists can also achieve that. When I am shooting the song, it feels as if it is an extension of the film itself. What it is creating is the



Anirban Bhattacharya checks a shot

mood for the film's making. It will work as a preface to the film.

How much does it help lip-syncing a song you have sung yourself?

Very much. When it is a different singer who did the playback, I have to understand his breathing pattern. But here I know how I pronounce or how I breathe in and out in the song, that memory is fresh.

Some actors just utter the words

on camera but some sing. What do you do?

Even here I am singing along. I have not had too many songs picturised on me, maybe in two or three films.

Whose work do you like in this regard?

Several actors do a good job. I think the best in Bengali and Hindi films combined in this regard is Uttam Kumar. Unless you are singing along, you cannot get the *harkat* right. I have heard from contemporaries that Uttam *babu*

used to sing (hums *Dole dodul dole*, a light classical number from *Deya Neya*). Unless someone sings this, it is impossible to match the neck movement, face and expression or the movement of the Adam's apple that you refer to.

Your film *Athoi* is in theatres now.

Yes. We are getting a lot of response. It is our aim to make a film a talking point, be it to praise it or discuss its faults. We are happy that this conversation is happening.

What comes from you next?

I am working in a web series, for which shooting will soon resume. Some other projects are also lined up this year. And seeing *Manikbabur Megh*, I am so excited that I want to direct a film again, maybe next year.

Sudeshna Banerjee

Pictures: B Halder

FOOD

t2 ENJOYED THE TRATTORIA POP-UP AT SHAMIANA, A PIZZA AND PASTA PARADISE

If you're looking for yummy pizzas and Italian-style pastas, then head to Shamiana, the all-day dine den at Taj City Centre New Town, that is hosting a Trattoria pop-up till June 29. Trattoria is a speciality Italian restaurant from President, Mumbai - IHCL SeleQtions. We sat down for a hearty lunch and here are some of the delectable treats that we loved.

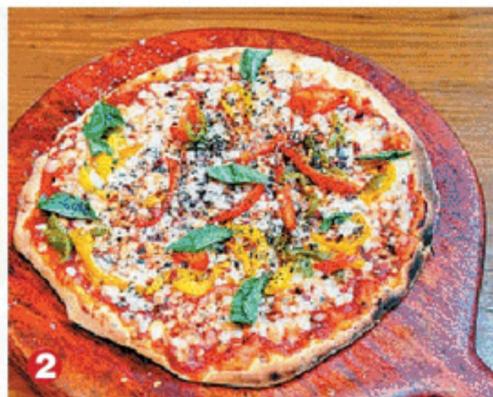


1

1 Mushroom Ricotta Ravioli: The mushrooms and the creamy ricotta makes for a nice filling. The pasta is al dente, and the lemon butter sauce with cherry tomatoes adds a kick of freshness.

2 Capricciosa Pizza: A vegetarian favourite, this has bell peppers, olives and mushrooms, all of which are great flavour bombs on their own. Bring them together with some cheese and tomato pizza sauce, and you have a great pizza.

3 Spaghetti Aglio Olio e Peperoncino: No Italian menu is complete without this simple staple of pasta, cheese, pepper and sun-dried tomatoes. The addition of green peppercorn adds a spicy yet fresh take.



2



3



4



5

4 Risotto Milanese: Loaded with butter, onion, Parmesan cheese and cooked in a nutritious stock, this is a creamy risotto. The star of the show here is the saffron that is added towards the end of the cooking process for that golden yellow colour and a beautiful fragrance.

5 Salsiccia Piccante Pizza: A non-vegetarian delight, the pizza has a great balance of caramelised onions and chicken sausages that have been barbecued for a smoky flavour. We love!

6 Classical Tiramisu: A must-have on all Italian menus, this quintessential Italian dessert is a melange of mascarpone, coffee and Kahlua. Super soft, creamy and melt-in-the-mouth.



6



Indranil Ray (left), general manager, Taj City Centre New Town, with Riccardo Della Costa, consul general of Italy in Calcutta, who was a special guest to mark the launch of the pop-up. "I think it is a great initiative, and would like to thank Taj City Centre New Town for making this happen. It's encouraging to see people in the city wanting to experience high quality Italian food. I loved the pizzas as well as the pastas, and chef has done a commendable job," said Della Costa.

Zeba Akhtar Ali
Pictures: B Halder

WATCHIT!



Captain America (Chris Evans) fights for the Avengers' autonomy with help from Winter Soldier (Sebastian Stan), Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner) and others after a political summit forces the superheroes to give up their independence. **Captain America: Civil War; STAR Movies, 11.15pm**

HINDI

SHOWSTOPPERS

- Suhaagan: Colors, 6.30pm
- Meetha Khatta Pyaar Hamara: STAR Plus, 6.30pm
- Krishna Mohini: Colors, 7pm
- Maati Se Bandhi Dor: STAR Plus, 7.30pm
- Kavya - Ek Jazbaa, Ek Junoon: Sony, 7.30pm
- Main Hoon Saath Tere: Zee TV, 7.30pm
- Dabangii...Mulgii Aayi Re Aayi: Sony, 8pm
- Radha Mohan: Zee TV, 8pm
- Doree: Colors, 8.30pm
- Pukaar - Dil De Dil Tak: Sony, 8.30pm
- Udne Ki Aasha: STAR Plus, 8.45pm
- Jhanak: STAR Plus, 10.30pm
- Rabb Se Hai Dua: Zee TV, 10.45pm
- Naagin: Colors, 11pm

SPORT

- UEFA EURO, Slovakia vs Romania - live: Sony TEN 1 & 1 HD, 12.30am
- UEFA EURO, Georgia vs Portugal - live: Sony TEN 2, 12.30am
- UEFA EURO, Ukraine vs Belgium - live: Sony TEN 2, 9.30pm

- UEFA EURO, Czechia vs Turkey - live: Sony TEN 1 & 1 HD, 12.30am
- UEFA EURO, Georgia vs Portugal - live: Sony TEN 2, 12.30am

ENGLISH

MOVIES OF THE DAY

- No Good Deed: &Prive HD, 1.35pm
- Ne Zha: STAR Movies Select HD, 2.30pm
- The Lodge: &Prive HD, 2.50pm
- Ip Man, The Awakening: STAR Movies Select HD, 3.45pm
- Murder, She Baked - A Plum Pudding Mystery: &Prive HD, 4.35pm
- It: Sony Pix, 4.50pm
- Bleeding Steel: STAR Movies Select HD, 5.15pm
- Incredibles 2: STAR Movies, 5.30pm
- Apple of my Eye: &Prive HD, 6pm
- John Wick, Chapter 3: Sony Pix, 6.55pm
- A.X.L.: &flix, 7.05pm
- Cinderella: STAR Movies, 7.15pm
- Conan the Barbarian: STAR Movies Select HD, 7.15pm
- Gemini: &Prive HD, 7.25pm
- Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets: STAR Movies, 9pm
- Guardians the Superheroes: STAR

- Movies Select HD, 9pm
- Mortal Kombat: Sony Pix, 9pm
- The Princess: &Prive HD, 9pm
- Insidious, Chapter 2: &flix, 9pm
- Pacific Rim: Sony Pix, 10.35pm
- Captain America, Civil War: STAR Movies, 11.15pm

SHOWSTOPPERS

- The Big C: Zee Cafe, 6pm
- The Flight Attendant: Colors Infinity, 7pm
- The Office: Comedy Central, 7pm
- Oh My Venus: Zee Cafe, 7pm
- Brooklyn Nine-Nine: Comedy Central, 8pm
- Shark Tank Australia: Zee Cafe, 8pm
- Game of Thrones: Colors Infinity, 9pm
- AP Bio: Comedy Central, 9pm
- Preacher: Zee Cafe, 9pm
- Nathan For You: Comedy Central, 10pm
- Better Call Saul: Zee Cafe, 10pm
- Peacemaker: Colors Infinity, 11pm
- The Daily Show: Comedy Central, 11pm

BENGALI

MOVIES OF THE DAY

- Inspector Notty K: Zee Bangla Cinema, noon
- Paglu 2: Jalsha Movies, 1pm
- Subho Drishti: Colors Bangla Cinema, 1pm
- Debar: Zee Bangla Cinema, 3pm
- Birodh: Aakash Aath, 3.05pm
- Sangharsha: Jalsha Movies, 4.10pm
- Khoka 420: Colors Bangla Cinema, 4pm
- Mama Bhagne: Zee Bangla Cinema, 5.25pm
- Haar Jeet: Jalsha Movies, 7.35pm
- Phande Poriya Boga Kande Re: Colors Bangla Cinema, 7pm
- Abhiman: Zee Bangla Cinema, 8pm
- Sabuj Sathi: Colors Bangla Cinema, 9.30pm
- Saap Mochan: Jalsha Movies, 10.30pm
- Sonar Pahar: Zee Bangla Cinema, 11.30pm

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AN AA FILMS RELEASE

Vienna, the city of dreams, with its opulent architecture and rich history, has always fascinated me. But beneath its charming exterior lies a deep-seated association with death that has permeated its culture and art for centuries. This duality of Vienna — its beauty intertwined with a melancholic undercurrent — has inspired my latest film, *Albrecht's Letzter Tag* (*Albrecht's Last Day*). As I prepare to bring this story to life, I'm honoured to work with an exceptional team of actors and technicians to craft an Indo-Austrian film that melds the German and English languages, capturing the essence of this enigmatic city.

Vienna's streets are a living museum, where every corner tells a tale from the past.

The grand palaces and cathedrals stand as testaments to a bygone era of imperial grandeur.

However, this city is also a repository of stories about mortality, evident in its art, music, and even its architecture. From the baroque magnificence of the Hofburg Palace to the somber serenity of the Zentralfriedhof, Vienna embodies a unique blend of life and death.

This juxtaposition is what drew me to set *Albrecht's Last Day* in Vienna. The city's history with death — from the tragic demise of its Habsburg rulers to the macabre fascination with its crypts and cemeteries — provided a perfect backdrop for my film. This story, centred around the last day of a man's life, finds a profound resonance in Vienna, where death is both mourned and celebrated.

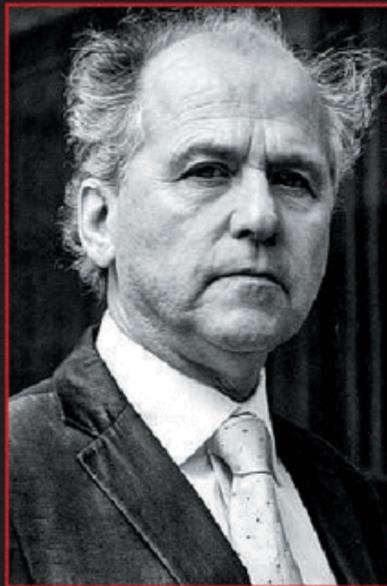
The concept of *Albrecht's Last Day* germinated from my own reflections on mortality and how different cultures perceive it. In Vienna, death is not merely an end but a continuum of existence, deeply embedded in the cultural fabric. The city's music, especially the works of Mozart and Schubert, often contemplates themes of death, adding layers of complexity to their compositions. And, I would like to mention my deep conversations with Bernhard Kammel, the producer of this film, that has been instrumental in shaping my opinions about this film.

In crafting the narrative for *Albrecht's Last Day*, I envisioned a story that delves into the psyche of a man on his final day, navigating the intersections of memory, regret and acceptance. The protagonist, Albrecht, is an embodiment of the Viennese spirit — a man who has lived a full life, now confronting his mortality with a blend of introspection and defiance.

Bringing Albrecht's story to life is a talented ensemble of actors, each bringing their unique flair to the project.

Michael Walde-Berger plays the titular role of Albrecht in this film. While Joanna Godin-Seidl plays Adele, Usha Banerjee portrays the

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Michael Walde-Berger



Joanna Godwin-Seidl



Tamalynne Grant



Usha Banerjee



Aneek Chaudhuri

character of Albrecht's daughter Diya and Tamalynne Grant plays Emilia.

Michael Walde-Berger's career spans performances in the US, Germany and Austria, both on television and in feature films. He has worked with notable actors like Rod Steiger, William Hurt and Donald Sutherland in productions such as *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, *Urban Menace*, *Hidden Fears* and *Seven Sundays*.

role in immersing the audience in the world of the film. Arun Rama Varma, with his expertise in creating evocative soundscapes, will design the auditory experience of *Albrecht's Last Day*. Varma's work will complement the visual storytelling, weaving in the ambient sounds of Vienna and the musical undertones that reflect the film's themes.

Producing this ambitious project is Bernhard Kammel, whose

and how universal themes can be expressed through a localised lens. The collaboration between Indian and Austrian artists and technicians is a celebration of diversity and a testament to the power of storytelling to transcend boundaries.

Directing *Albrecht's Last Day* is more than a professional endeavour; it's a deeply personal journey. As a filmmaker, I have always been drawn to stories that

a tapestry of stories that speak to universal human experiences. The challenges of working in Bengal have prepared me for this moment, and the opportunity to direct *Albrecht's Last Day* in Austria feels like a rewarding leap forward.

Transitioning to this project from my previous work in Bengal has been both exhilarating and reflective. Working in Bengal has shaped me as a filmmaker, honing my skills amidst the region's vibrant yet challenging environment. The cultural richness and artistic heritage of Bengal have always been inspiring, but the path has not been easy. The logistical hurdles, budget constraints, and sometimes the struggle to find the right audience have been persistent challenges.

In Bengal, every project required a fight — a fight for resources, a fight for creative freedom, and sometimes a fight for recognition. The limited infrastructure often meant improvising solutions and making the best out of minimal resources. However, these experiences taught me resilience and innovation, essential traits that I now bring to this international collaboration.

Albrecht's Last Day is a film born out of the timeless allure of Vienna and its deep connection with death. It's a story that transcends cultural boundaries, bringing together a talented cast and crew from Austria and India to create a film that speaks to the universal human experience. As we begin filming this winter, I am filled with anticipation and gratitude for the opportunity to direct such a meaningful project.

This film is a tribute to Vienna, a city that has inspired countless artists and thinkers with its beauty and its contemplation of mortality. It's a testament to the power of collaboration, where diverse voices come together to tell a single story. And most importantly, it's a reflection of our shared humanity, reminding us that in the end, we are all connected by our experiences of life and death.

As a filmmaker, I have always been drawn to stories that explore the human condition, and this film allows me to delve into themes of mortality, memory and reconciliation. The inspiration from Vienna's historical and cultural landscape has given me a unique lens through which to examine these universal truths

Tamalynne has been chosen through a series of auditions and I found her to be the best; she was apt for the character of Emilia. She plays Adele's daughter and Joanna as Adele was an automatic choice. Thankfully, I have got a series of collaborators for this film in the form of Joanna, Bernhard and Usha Banerjee. It's really great to have someone like Usha in the team as she is the first person to point out the flaws in my script; Joanna, my very trusted friend, is helping me with a hell lot of things.

Directing *Albrecht's Last Day* is an honour and a challenge that I eagerly embrace. The opportunity to create an Indo-Austrian film in both German and English is a testament to the universality of storytelling. This film is a celebration of cultural convergence, where diverse artistic traditions come together to tell a deeply human story.

The visual narrative of *Albrecht's Last Day* will be shaped by Arijit Bose, a cinematographer whose work I deeply admire. Bose's ability to capture the essence of a location and translate it into compelling imagery is crucial for a film set in a city as visually rich as Vienna.

Sound design plays a pivotal

vision and support have been instrumental in bringing *Albrecht's Last Day* to fruition. Kammel's experience in the film industry and his passion for storytelling ensure that the project is in capable hands. His belief in the film's potential to resonate with a global audience has been a driving force behind its development.

As we embark on the filming of *Albrecht's Last Day* this winter, the season itself adds another layer of symbolism to our story. Winter in Vienna is a time of quiet reflection, where the city's beauty is draped in a serene, almost ethereal, stillness. The snow-covered streets and the crisp, cold air create a backdrop that mirrors Albrecht's internal journey — a landscape of contemplation and resolution.

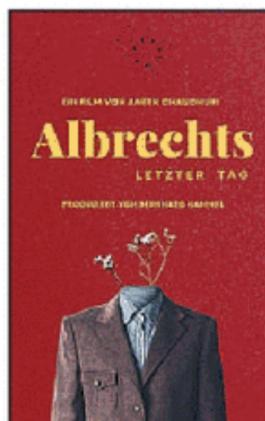
The process of making this film is not just about telling a story but about capturing the essence of Vienna and its intricate dance with death. It's about exploring how different cultures intersect

explore the human condition, and this film allows me to delve into themes of mortality, memory, and reconciliation. The inspiration from Vienna's historical and cultural landscape has given me a unique lens through which to examine these universal truths.

The city's relationship with death, both in its history and its art, offers a rich tapestry of inspiration. From the haunting beauty of the Zentralfriedhof, where Beethoven and Schubert rest, to the evocative paintings of Egon Schiele, Vienna's artistic heritage is imbued with a profound understanding of mortality. This awareness permeates every frame of *Albrecht's Last Day*, making it a film that is as much about life as it

is about death.

This journey from Bengal to Vienna is not just a geographical transition but a significant evolution in my artistic journey. It symbolises the blending of experiences and cultures, creating



The poster of the film

DANCE

SNAPSHOTS FROM OVM'S SAMBHAVA AT TOLLYGUNGE CLUB

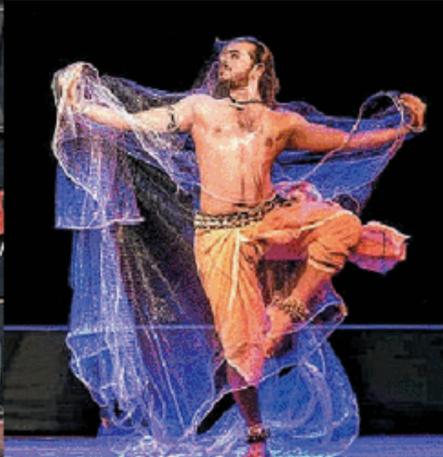
Odisi pro Sharmila Biswas's vision as a dancer and choreographer is inimitable and a new production from her institute Odissi Vision and Movement (OVM) is always eagerly anticipated. *Sambhava*,

presented at Tollygunge Club on June 7, was another enjoyable experience.

Lilting melodies, dynamic rhythms, vivid expressions and lyrical movements blended to bring out the ethereal quality of *Sambhava*. It was a melting pot in which Sharmila Biswas's choreography blended an ancient and traditional Indian dance form with innovative

choreography to make a powerful contemporary statement. A fusion performance, a *jugalbandi* with two groups of dancers and multiple instruments and a riveting finale featuring 25 dancers and musicians made up the production.

Guru Dhaneswar Swain, the seniormost mardala exponent of Odisha was present. Glimpses.



The high point of *Sambhava* was a grand mardala *jugalbandi*, presented by Guru Dhaneswar Swain and his disciples.

The programme commenced with a piece by children, combining songs, rhythms, painting, crafts, dialogue and dance, under the guidance of Suman Sarawgi and Rhea Bannerjee.



Conceptualised 30 years ago, *Maya Manav* has been choreographed repeatedly and was performed that evening by Krishnendu Saha. *Maya Manav* is about unravelling the mystery of Maya (created by Lord Vishnu) even as we are intrigued by Maya, attracted to it and sometimes frightened by it. The story of Ram and the golden deer Marich, illustrated this perfectly.

Bahu Sanchar, under the guidance of Piyal Bhattacharya, focused on the arms of dancers, as they beautifully sculpted, defined and designed space.



Dhwani Pratidhwani brought together the performance of mardala players with that of 25 dancers, in a fast-paced interface.

"It was very special to have Guru Dhaneswar Swain, who is a giant in his sphere, participating in *Sambhava* and the audience at Tolly, which is always appreciative, was enthralled. Oindrilla (Dutt; right) and I started our journey together around 30 years ago. We have a level of faith in and comfort with each other. So I had the freedom to experiment as we worked together," said Sharmila Biswas.



Pictures courtesy: Tollygunge Club



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TAHIRA KASHYAP KHURRANA ON HER FEATURE FILM DIRECTORIAL DEBUT SHARMAJEE KI BETI, RELEASING THIS FRIDAY



A moment from *Sharmajee Ki Beti*, streaming on Prime Video from June 28

This Friday, Tahira Kashyap Khurrana is all set to make her feature film directorial debut with *Sharmajee Ki Beti*, that will stream on Prime Video. The story of five women across different ages and circumstances, but with a common surname, the film stars Sakshi Tanwar, Divya Dutta and Saiyami Kher in principal roles. t2 caught up with Tahira on the journey of the film and why she didn't want to play the 'star wife' card.

Sharmajee Ki Beti has had a bit of a wait for a release. What are the emotions like as we approach D-day on June 28? It is a relief for me and for the people around me. When I told them it was coming out, more than happiness, their reaction was: 'Okay, finally!' I am glad that the film has found a beautiful home with Prime Video. I am grateful that they believed in this film. We showed it at the MAMI film festival last year. It got a decent response there and since then, there has been curiosity around the film.

What triggered the idea of the film? I am a storyteller. I have stories to tell almost every day because I don't know how else to live! I just need to write. I go to my social media and start putting up stories. I have so many stories that I don't know what to do with them! *Sharmajee Ki Beti* came from a place of authenticity, purity and completely not corrupted by algorithms and by what works and doesn't work and what works for a specific female age group. Women exist across the spectrum. It is not that everybody above 30 is menopausal and is crying all the time. Women below 20 somehow don't seem to exist (in our stories). It was important for me to tell compelling, heartfelt stories. My writing comes from a

Just not for our industry, even otherwise too, if your partner or husband has made it before you, everyone thinks it will be a cakewalk for you. Honestly, it was not a route that I wanted to take. It was a personal choice not to

place of humour. All the five ladies in this film are dealing with some issue or the other, but how they deal with it is comical, cute and humorous. And somewhere in between, there is something for us to take away. These stories have come from deep observation and have also been experiential.

Which of these women is closest to your experience in life at various stages?

All of them! When I was a teen, without giving anything away, I had that issue, as crazy as it may sound, which the teenager in the film has. In my 20s, I was a sportswoman and had a crazy appetite. I would eat as many parathas as my boyfriend and a lot of women had a problem with that! I don't know what goes on in people's heads, but girls with a big appetite are not seen as feminine.

When I shifted to Bombay, I didn't know what to do in a city where no one has the time to even exchange a few words. Also, it is overpopulated. Every square foot is occupied. And despite so many people around, there is such loneliness.

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generations of conditioning that women go through. There is this DNA memory that travels from one generation to the other. But at least when it comes to millennials, we are questioning things. Storytelling is my way of communicating everything... anger to frustration to happiness.

You have an eclectic cast. What special something did each bring to their roles?

They all come from a place of credibility and authenticity. They are also great actors. Divya Dutta has amazing energy on set, which makes you think that she is doing her first film. Despite making so many films, she was nervous at the shoot. I appreciated that kind of energy and it was my biggest takeaway. For every film, I am going to learn to be excited like a kid coming to set for the first time.

We have seen Sakshi play a certain type on television. She

competition reared its head. I had a friend who never did well in school and there was so much pressure on our generation to score good marks. The board exams were approaching and I heard parents telling their wards not to hang out with that girl because she was 'not a good influence'.

Till Class X, that girl would get 50 per cent but in Class XI, she suddenly got 83 per cent because she took up the subjects that she did well in. Not all of us are supposed to be mathematicians or physicists or biologists. We millennials had to sometimes give in and study subjects we didn't have an aptitude for. Most of this generation, however, doesn't have to do that. They have the freedom to choose. I hope the parents of today let them explore themselves in the fields which is best conducive to their growth.

You had to wait a long time for this film to release. People would think that being Ayushmann Khurrana's wife would have made things a little easier for you...

Just not for our industry, even otherwise too, if your partner or husband has made it before you, everyone thinks it will be a cakewalk for you. Honestly, it was not a route that I wanted to take. It was a personal choice not to. I am not condemning anyone who has done so, it is absolutely fine if it suits their purpose. But whether you use that choice or not, at the end of the day, you have to be good at your work and people need to like what you have made.

As far as being a 'star wife' is concerned, when I was asked about it the first time, I was like: 'How does one make it to this star wives club?! What is the syllabus? How does one qualify?' (Laughs)

Have you watched or read anything recently that has broken stereotypes as far as women are concerned or shows them from a new perspective?

I just re-read *The Palace of Illusions* (by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni). It is from Draupadi's point of view and simultaneously, I am listening to a Spotify podcast on *The Mahabharata* by Sudipta Bhawmik, which is told from the man's perspective. It is the same story but the lens through which it is viewed makes a huge difference.

I also enjoyed *Creve*. I am very happy that it did well with three women (Tabu, Kareena Kapoor Khan and Kriti Sanon) at the centre, that it was completely unapologetic and that there is no message in it... it's just three women having a good time. I like it when a film doesn't rub it in with: 'This is my gender, this is my agenda.' I liked *Heeramandi* as well. I liked *Everything Everywhere All At Once*. I love it when women do crazy stuff, it feels amazing!

The women in the film share the common surname Sharma, which contributes to the title. It is also a riff on the popular 'Sharmaji ka beta', which symbolises the habit of most Indian parents to compare their children to that of others. Were you ever subjected to something like that or saw it around you while growing up?

Both my parents were working people. That was quite an anomaly in a small town like Chandigarh. The household responsibilities were divided equally. My father would chop the vegetables and my mother would cook. My father used to dress me up for school because my mother would leave early for work.

In Class XI, when I stepped out into the world and started going to friends' houses, I experienced firsthand the gender inequality that exists in most Indian households. Plus, the whole aspect of

Priyanka Roy

FROM EFFORTLESS STREET STYLE TO VINTAGE VIBES, BIRTHDAY BOY JACOB ELORDI MAKES US DROOL AND HERE'S WHY

With chiselled features and standing tall at 6 feet and 5 inches, Hollywood actor Jacob Elordi has our heart. The actor's effortless street style has become a defining feature of his public persona, blending modern trends with nostalgia. His off-duty looks are characterised by a laid-back yet polished aesthetic, often featuring oversized hoodies,

distressed denim, side bags and fanny packs, usually seen slung across his chest or waist, providing a utilitarian edge. His frequent use of minimalist accessories adds a subtle edge to his outfits. Elordi's street style showcases how to remain comfortable while exuding a cool, unpretentious vibe that resonates with fans and fashion enthusiasts alike.

Being a fan of yesteryear Hollywood stars like Marlon

Brando, Steve McQueen and many more, Jacob often emulates their sense of fashion and draws inspiration from them. Elordi's red carpet and formal appearances are marked by impeccably tailored suits that bring back old-school Hollywood glamour. He favours sharp silhouettes, often choosing suits with clean lines and classic cuts. t2 highlights a few of his many style statements we drool over, on his birthday.



2 JUST A VEST: During the pandemic years, the *Euphoria* actor effortlessly showcased his street style with various phases. He simply donned a white vest paired with basic grey pants, converse, round shades and a silver chain complemented by those drool-worthy biceps. This minimalistic look merged casual comfort with style while he was simply running errands.

3 PRINCESS DIANA CODED: Does this remind you of someone? Yes, Elordi channelled his inner Princess Diana when he paired charcoal Nike shorts with an olive sweatshirt, a mini duffel bag and white ankle socks with his freshly shaven moustache while he was running for coffee. This look reminds us of an '80s dad!

4 THE AIRPORT LOOK: This is when *The Kissing Booth* actor gave the perfect "airport fashion" goals. He donned a literal airport/travel uniform look as he paired a simple white T-shirt with a fitted Perfecto leather jacket and army green cargo pants. Further, he styled the look with a blue baseball cap and chunky headphones while he passed the book aisle at the airport. A 10/10.

5 '90S KID: Just like any other '90s kid who is a sucker for vintage fashion, our Aussie boy literally recreates the decade's fashion. Elordi is often found re-wearing straight-light washed jeans paired with worker jackets and once-popular brand Kickers boots, while he carries labelled tote bags. The worn and relaxed look adds authenticity to the '90s recreation.

6 ANDROGYNY: He is tall, muscular and effortlessly carries a mullet and a moustache. As he kills us with his natural masculine energy, Elordi doesn't step back from exploring feminine fashion. From being photographed in a corset and drop earrings for magazine covers to having the trendiest handbag collection, the *Salzburg* actor does it all. He has boasted a number of luxurious handbags from Bottega Veneta, Louis Vuitton, Fendi and many more. In this outfit, he subtly carried a tiny Valentino Loco bag with a loose sweater paired with jeans and topped with a bucket hat.

7 When Jacob Elordi donned a pin-stripe light-blue blouse by Valentino with an unfastened bow paired with black trousers at the reopening of Tiffany & Co.'s store in New York, our hearts fluttered. That shaggy hair, glittering eyes and minimalistic Tiffany jewellery reminded us of a sultry romance.

8 Our Aussie boy treated us with this schoolboy-inspired look with tailored over-the-knee shorts, black tie, and black shades and paired them with white Nike socks and studded Chelsea boots.

9 When the 27-year-old actor mastered this Hugo Boss maroon suit in Al Pacino style on a late-night talk show. He made the outfit look more special with the loosely buttoned wide-collared pin-stripe shirt, giving off '80s vibe.

10 Fans lost their minds when the actor arrived at the opening of the TAG Heuer boutique in Adelaide in flowing white trousers paired with a Louis Vuitton off-blue cotton shirt perfectly draping his long body.

Rohini Chakraborty

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They all come from a place of credibility and authenticity. They are also great actors. Divya Dutta has amazing energy on set, which makes you think that she is doing her first film. Despite making so many films, she was nervous at the shoot. I appreciated that kind of energy and it was my biggest takeaway. For every film, I am going to learn to be excited like a kid coming to set for the first time.

We have seen Sakshi play a certain type on television. She

competition reared its head. I had a friend who never did well in school and there was so much pressure on our generation to score good marks. The board exams were approaching and I heard parents telling their wards not to hang out with that girl because she was 'not a good influence'.

Till Class X, that girl would get 50 per cent but in Class XI, she suddenly got 83 per cent because she took up the subjects that she did well in. Not all of us are supposed to be mathematicians or physicists or biologists. We millennials had to sometimes give in and study subjects we didn't have an aptitude for. Most of this generation, however, doesn't have to do that. They have the freedom to choose. I hope the parents of today let them explore themselves in the fields which is best conducive to their growth.

You had to wait a long time for this film to release. People would think that being Ayushmann Khurrana's wife would have made things a little easier for you...

Just not for our industry, even otherwise too, if your partner or husband has made it before you, everyone thinks it will be a cakewalk for you. Honestly, it was not a route that I wanted to take. It was a personal choice not to. I am not condemning anyone who has done so, it is absolutely fine if it suits their purpose. But whether you use that choice or not, at the end of the day, you have to be good at your work and people need to like what you have made.

As far as being a 'star wife' is concerned, when I was asked about it the first time, I was like: 'How does one make it to this star wives club?! What is the syllabus? How does one qualify?' (Laughs)

Have you watched or read anything recently that has broken stereotypes as far as women are concerned or shows them from a new perspective?

I just re-read *The Palace of Illusions* (by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni). It is from Draupadi's point of view and simultaneously, I am listening to a Spotify podcast on *The Mahabharata* by Sudipta Bhawmik, which is told from the man's perspective. It is the same story but the lens through which it is viewed makes a huge difference.

I also enjoyed *Creve*. I am very happy that it did well with three women (Tabu, Kareena Kapoor Khan and Kriti Sanon) at the centre, that it was completely unapologetic and that there is no message in it... it's just three women having a good time. I like it when a film doesn't rub it in with: 'This is my gender, this is my agenda.' I liked *Heeramandi* as well. I liked *Everything Everywhere All At Once*. I love it when women do crazy stuff, it feels amazing!

The women in the film share the common surname Sharma, which contributes to the title. It is also a riff on the popular 'Sharmaji ka beta', which symbolises the habit of most Indian parents to compare their children to that of others. Were you ever subjected to something like that or saw it around you while growing up?

Both my parents were working people. That was quite an anomaly in a small town like Chandigarh. The household responsibilities were divided equally. My father would chop the vegetables and my mother would cook. My father used to dress me up for school because my mother would leave early for work.

In Class XI, when I stepped out into the world and started going to friends' houses, I experienced firsthand the gender inequality that exists in most Indian households. Plus, the whole aspect of

Priyanka Roy

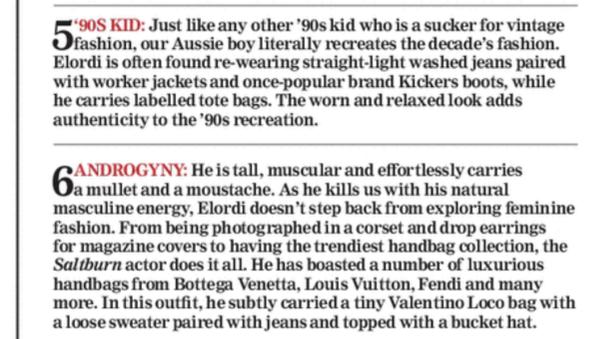
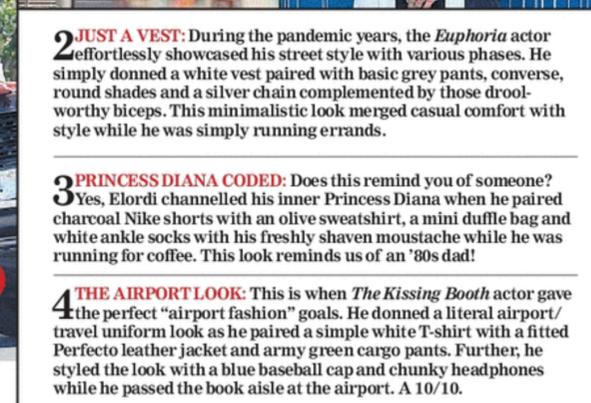
FROM EFFORTLESS STREET STYLE TO VINTAGE VIBES, BIRTHDAY BOY JACOB ELORDI MAKES US DROOL AND HERE'S WHY

With chiselled features and standing tall at 6 feet and 5 inches, Hollywood actor Jacob Elordi has our heart. The actor's effortless street style has become a defining feature of his public persona, blending modern trends with nostalgia. His off-duty looks are characterised by a laid-back yet polished aesthetic, often featuring oversized hoodies,

distressed denim, side bags and fanny packs, usually seen slung across his chest or waist, providing a utilitarian edge. His frequent use of minimalist accessories adds a subtle edge to his outfits. Elordi's street style showcases how to remain comfortable while exuding a cool, unpretentious vibe that resonates with fans and fashion enthusiasts alike.

Being a fan of yesteryear Hollywood stars like Marlon

Brando, Steve McQueen and many more, Jacob often emulates their sense of fashion and draws inspiration from them. Elordi's red carpet and formal appearances are marked by impeccably tailored suits that bring back old-school Hollywood glamour. He favours sharp silhouettes, often choosing suits with clean lines and classic cuts. t2 highlights a few of his many style statements we drool over, on his birthday.



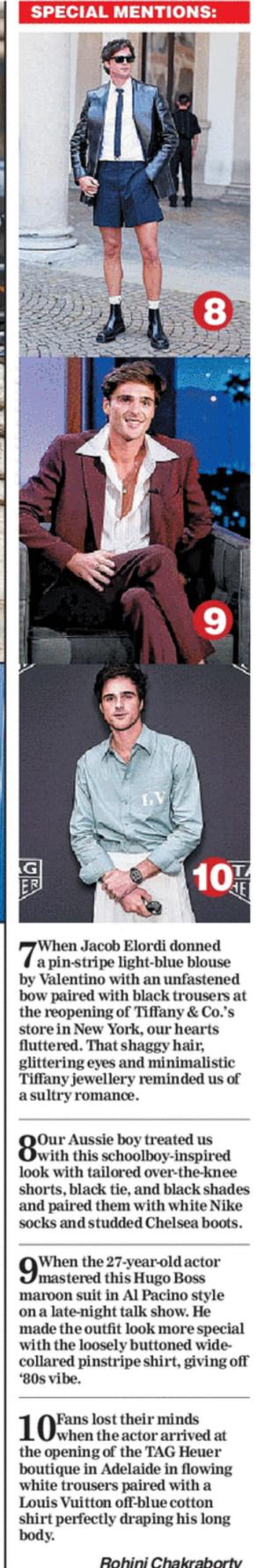
2 JUST A VEST: During the pandemic years, the *Euphoria* actor effortlessly showcased his street style with various phases. He simply donned a white vest paired with basic grey pants, converse, round shades and a silver chain complemented by those drool-worthy biceps. This minimalistic look merged casual comfort with style while he was simply running errands.

3 PRINCESS DIANA CODED: Does this remind you of someone? Yes, Elordi channelled his inner Princess Diana when he paired charcoal Nike shorts with an olive sweatshirt, a mini duffel bag and white ankle socks with his freshly shaven moustache while he was running for coffee. This look reminds us of an '80s dad!

4 THE AIRPORT LOOK: This is when *The Kissing Booth* actor gave the perfect "airport fashion" goals. He donned a literal airport/travel uniform look as he paired a simple white T-shirt with a fitted Perfecto leather jacket and army green cargo pants. Further, he styled the look with a blue baseball cap and chunky headphones while he passed the book aisle at the airport. A 10/10.

5 '90S KID: Just like any other '90s kid who is a sucker for vintage fashion, our Aussie boy literally recreates the decade's fashion. Elordi is often found re-wearing straight-light washed jeans paired with worker jackets and once-popular brand Kickers boots, while he carries labelled tote bags. The worn and relaxed look adds authenticity to the '90s recreation.

6 ANDROGYNY: He is tall, muscular and effortlessly carries a mullet and a moustache. As he kills us with his natural masculine energy, Elordi doesn't step back from exploring feminine fashion. From being photographed in a corset and drop earrings for magazine covers to having the trendiest handbag collection, the *Salzburg* actor does it all. He has boasted a number of luxurious handbags from Bottega Veneta, Louis Vuitton, Fendi and many more. In this outfit, he subtly carried a tiny Valentino Loco bag with a loose sweater paired with jeans and topped with a bucket hat.



SPECIAL MENTIONS:

Rohini Chakraborty

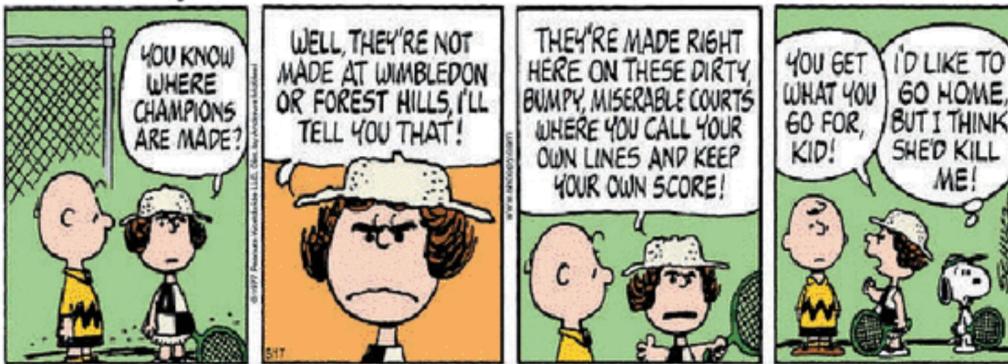
B.C. by Johny Hart



Luann by Greg Evans



Peanuts by Charles Schulz



The Wizard of Id by Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



Flash Gordon by Dan Schkade



Hagar the Horrible by Chris Browne



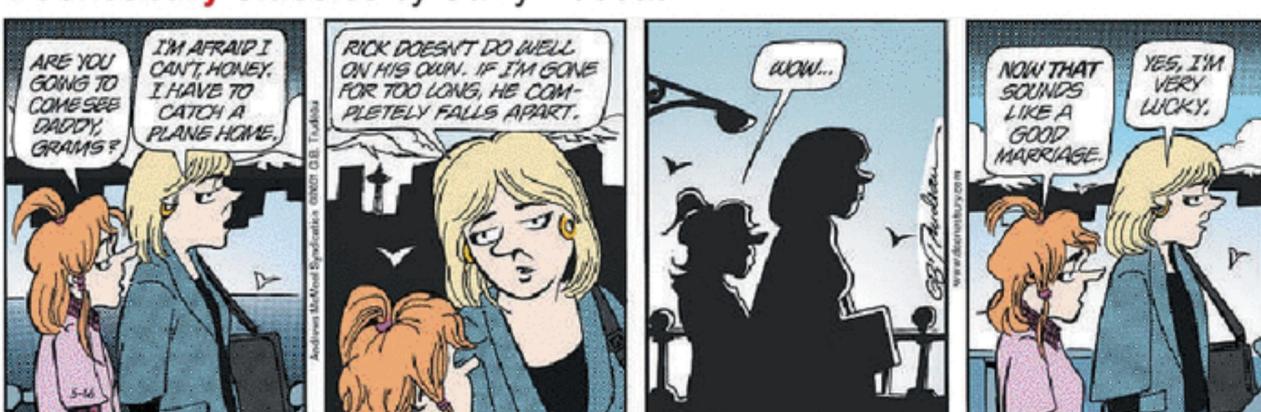
Blondie by Dean Young



Dennis the Menace



Doonesbury Classics by Garry Trudeau



PUZZLE

11028

SUDOKU MODERATE

	9	2		7	1	6		
					8			
								5
					5			
	4	8				3	9	
7			1					4
	7							
			8	4				
		9	5	6		7	2	

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11026 is on the right

9	2	1	6	3	5	4	8	7
4	5	6	8	9	7	1	2	3
7	3	8	4	2	1	6	9	5
8	1	9	2	4	3	7	5	6
5	6	7	9	1	8	3	4	2
3	4	2	5	7	6	8	1	9
2	8	3	7	5	4	9	6	1
6	7	5	1	8	9	2	3	4
1	9	4	3	6	2	5	7	8

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11029

SUDOKU DIABOLICAL

1	3							
4			1		9			5
	2	6						
					4	9		
	7		9		2	1	8	
		1	8		3			
							2	
	5		7		8			3
								4

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11027 is on the right

1	5	9	3	4	2	8	6	7
4	7	6	9	8	1	3	5	2
8	3	2	6	7	5	9	1	4
6	2	1	4	5	8	7	9	3
3	8	7	1	9	6	2	4	5
9	4	5	2	3	7	1	8	6
5	9	8	7	2	4	6	3	1
7	1	4	8	6	3	5	2	9
2	6	3	5	1	9	4	7	8

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14371

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
					9		
10			11				
	12					13	
14							
15		16		17			18
19			20		21		
22	23		24			25	
							26
27						28	
29			30				

ACROSS

- Right-winger, after drinks, makes up a tale (5,5)
- Golf club: Irish one, not English (4)
- Envious politician (5)
- Get to know when positive (9)
- Sceptic acting so ridiculously (8)
- Mannequin's exposed hand (5)
- A space left blank editor got round (7)
- Passage right inside bar (7)
- Fellow leaving Cambridgeshire market-town in pursuit of game (7)
- Fruit with a soft cheese? No ta (7)
- Cold, husband in Scottish river having capsized boat (5)
- Where there's scope for a snapper to develop? (8)
- Awfully upset foot is not in line with the others? (3,2,4)

DOWN

- Chat with climbers finally going to summit (5)
- Repeat code word (4)
- To see this fairground attraction, good publican goes by coach (5,5)
- Indication of vice involving head of government (4)
- Covered with weeds throughout – gardener gutted, worried now (9)
- Dance beat good? Not half (5)
- Sampled first drop of ouzo inside, and drank to someone's health (7)
- Extremely rare bike to use over again (7)
- True leader of men in field (5)
- A new name in New York, say, in a government seen as overprotective? (5,5)
- George Martin, for one, mixed up record (8)
- Tearful, my Rachel, so distraught (10)
- Tendency of female to fall asleep (5,3)
- Perhaps Tommy, troubled half-hearted rapper and cook (4,5)
- Travel with wife, pay separately (2,5)
- A move not entirely suitable (7)
- Hear start of carol at church (5)
- I, during break, have another go at paper (5)
- Hide family beneath roof of synagogue (4)

Yesterday's solution

Y	A	S	S	E	R	A	R	A	F	A	T		
A	E	I	A	N	N	W							
A	R	S	O	N	G	A	T	E	C	R	A	S	H
R	T	U	L	I	E	I	A						
O	V	E	R	S	L	E	E	P	S	A	T	Y	R
N	R		O	T		L							
C	E	D	A	R	W	O	O	D	R	O	S	I	E
O	A	E	K	E	A	U	Y						
P	A	Y	U	P	L	O	S	A	L	A	M	O	S
L	R	A			P	T							
A	I	S	L	E	H	E	A	D	W	A	T	E	R
N	H	S	O	D	A	U	E						
D	R	I	V	E	N	M	A	D	C	L	O	V	E
V	N	A	L	K	U	T							
C	A	N	T	A	N	K	E	R	O	U	S		

By arrangement with The Daily Telegraph

Jumble

David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ETLFE

BOIML

MHIYSM

TTIRHF

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BOOTH TIDAL MINNOW GLITZY
 Answer: Without any other numbers around, the zero had – NOTHING TO DO

14023

QUICK CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
					8	
9				10		
				11		
12	13	14				
15				16		17
18			19	20	21	
			22			
23						24
			25			
26						
			27			28

ACROSS

- cats and dogs (4)
- Liquid food (4)
- Twenty quires; mare (anag.) (4)
- Canvas shoes (9)
- Sousaphone, e.g. (6)
- Extreme (7)
- Aircraft shelter (6)
- Glowers (6)
- Boost (6)
- Summerhouse (6)
- Iberian language (7)

DOWN

- Supporter (4)
- and shaming (6)
- or later (6)
- Not if (6)
- Small brown bird (5-4)
- Mosque leader (4)
- Significant (7)
- Professional cook (4)
- Fireplace (9)
- Vehicle with a meter for fares (7)
- Reduce speed (4)
- Central American country (6)
- Car repair shop (6)
- Croatian capital (6)
- Adult male bird (4)
- Ragout (4)

Yesterday's solution

Across: 1 Writers; 5 Reign; 8 Manna; 9 Inhaler; 10 Nightclub; 12 Goa; 13 Insect; 14 Acacia; 17 Air; 18 Marseille; 20 Impasse; 21 Rejig; 23 Eider; 24 Lantern.
 Down: 1 Woman; 2 Inn; 3 Elastic; 4 Shield; 5 Rehab; 6 Illogical; 7 Nirvana; 11 Gastropod; 13 Imagine; 15 Chevron; 16 Ordeal; 18 Miser; 19 Elgin; 22 Joe.

By arrangement with The Daily Telegraph

ANOTHER MOUTH-WATERING ADDITION TO KOLKATA'S BENGALI CULINARY SCENE!

Scan the QR to know more

SET TO BID ADIEU TO CALCUTTA SOON, US CONSUL GENERAL MELINDA PAVEK OPENS UP ON HER THREE-YEAR SOJOURN IN THE CITY



US consul general Melinda Pavek at her residence

Melinda Pavek is not packing her bags just yet but she is into the last lap of her tenure. On the International Day of Women in Diplomacy, the amiable and affable US consul general met t2 at her official residence.

When do you leave? We are not saying goodbye yet, are we? No, no. We're saying Happy International Day of Women in Diplomacy (June 24). I leave in early August. But the last month is always chaos with all kinds of things that have to be finished so I thought it would be good to have some conversations a little bit ahead of time.

You have also started getting invited to farewell parties. Yeah, people are so kind. When I got here (in 2021), people were ready to start socialising again after being locked down. There was a natural warmth that might have been different than in the past. I think that made a big difference in the three years that I had. I feel sorry for my predecessor Patti (Hoffman) because she really only had just about a year of the warmth of Calcutta before the lockdown. She still said that this was one of her best jobs in the foreign service. That says a lot about how wonderful Calcutta is as a place to work in for a US consul general.

When you arrived in the middle of the pandemic, what were the challenges? I got here in August. Things were looking up a bit. In October, there was Durga Puja, but it was

somewhat restrained. My first event was the Indian Independence Day. We had the parade and the event at the governor's house where there was a small group of people. Then by December, we had the Omicron wave. Everybody had planned events for the Christmas-New Year holidays and everything started getting cancelled because

case numbers were rising. Thankfully, that wasn't a deadly variant though very contagious. That meant you had to be really flexible if you planned events and make sure that you or others were testing, that you had plenty of social distancing and such.

One of the fallouts of the

pandemic every consulate faced was the backlog of visa interviews. **How are things now?** Things are so much better. I looked at our wait times today for Calcutta. For B1-B2 visa, the wait time is only about 130 days, which is actually less than it was pre-pandemic. Some of our other consulates and the embassy have a little bit longer wait time. But we're in a very good position now. We're also doing a lot of student visas too. Our wait time



Pavek in a sari at an event

for student visas is less than that. In 2022, we were at about a 1,000-day wait, by April 2023 we had cut that in half and now in June of 2024, we're down to about 125-130 days. So we've made significant progress.

How did you manage to cut the backlog?

It's not only about doing more interviews, it's also about expanding the way we do things. The interview waiver process allows people who had a visa that expired in the last four years to process their paperwork without being interviewed if they were in the age range where we had already captured their fingerprints. We opened the consulate in Hyderabad and that has a huge staff. As that gets more and more online, we're able to do even more interviews. We had a record number of visas processed last year, almost 1.3 million across India. This year we're on track to have similar numbers as well. So India definitely did not lose its interest in going to the United States during the pandemic. (Smiles) In fact, it has surged.

Are you getting more visa applications now than before the pandemic?

Oh yeah, definitely more. Last year, the number that we processed, 1.3 million, was a record for us.

Travel operators are calling it revenge tourism and the business community too wants to recover lost time.

Yeah. One thing we hear from a lot of people is: "I want to travel next month or the month after that." It does take a bit of planning. Except for very specific emergency as expediting reason, for which you will find a list on our website, you are unlikely to get an appointment next week or the week after unless you're very, very lucky.

PERSONAL POINTERS

THE LAST BOOK YOU READ

The autobiography of Mr. (Hans) Mattson. He was the US consul general to Calcutta from 1881 to 1883. It's called *Reminiscences: The Story of An Emigrant* because he was a Swedish immigrant to the United States and it's so fascinating. The book was sitting in my office. On reading it, I learned that he was one of the first Swedish settlers in Minnesota, my home state. His journey from New York to Minnesota was via Illinois, where I went to college, around the same time it was founded, in 1860. And my college was founded by Swedish immigrants! And where he settled in Minnesota was only five miles away from where my parents had their campground, which was their second business that they retired from only a couple of years ago. So many of his experiences of India and, specifically Calcutta, could actually be set today if you just change some of the language. I had to actually call Brandon and tell him how strange this feels to have these legacy connections!



Hans Mattson

THE LAST FILM YOU WATCHED

Gail, Brandon and I went to see *Srikanth* (starring Rajkumar Rao), based on a true story of a gentleman who was born blind in Bihar and ended up competing for a spot in the sciences and was told that because he was blind he could not, even though he scored high enough. So he sued the ministry of education and won the right for visually impaired students to get an education in the sciences. He ended up going to MIT and had an exceptional experience and then came back to India and is running a company.

THE LAST HOLIDAY YOU TOOK

That was when my parents were here and we went to Delhi. Most recently, Brandon and I went to Cyprus.

IF YOU USE AI, WHAT WOULD YOU USE IT FOR?

I use AI regularly. In fact, I'm a Beta tester for the AI that the State Department is creating in order to help us do our work stuff. Beta testers are the ones who use early-stage products in order to give feedback on them. What I used to Google, I now use AI. You can ask it to do things that are more intensive instead of just searching for a term. For example, I like my remarks to be very meaningful. If I have an idea about what I want to say,

I type in my quick thoughts and ask ChatGPT or our Beta to flesh it out, then I can go through and edit it. It's easier to edit than to draft on a blank page.

ONE UNCOMMON PLACE IN THE US THAT YOU'D RECOMMEND TO INDIAN TOURISTS

I'm from Minnesota. There's a famous personality Laura Ingalls Wilder, who travelled around the Midwest with her family and when she was older, she wrote about her life. A part of where she lived was in southern Minnesota in a place called Walnut Grove. Her life was made into a very popular TV series when I was a child. I recommend watching the TV series and then going to visit some of the areas where she grew up.

ONE DISH USING INDIAN INGREDIENTS THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TO COOK

The mother of one of my foreign service batchmates, my Bengali mother Ruma, has taught me a couple of dishes. She treats me to homemade Bengali food regularly. I really like dal, because you can make it in different ways. Last time I was there she made Chingri Malai. It was so good!

PEOPLE

Sometimes recent dates are there only because people shift around or cancel. However, if we keep moving forward the way we have, I think we'll soon get down to even less wait time.

What other challenges did you face during your tenure here?

There is so much interest in the US-India relationship that I could be three people and still not be at all of the events that I'm invited to! So I think that's one of the biggest challenges I've faced — figuring out how to do everything. You have to look at what's strategic, what's important and then figure out how you fit that all into 24 hours. I'm also an introvert, so I need some downtime in order to rebuild my energy level. There's so much love for the US-India relationship that being able to respond to that love and be everywhere is challenging!

You had family over recently...

Yes, my partner (Brandon Dorsey) is here now. My parents were here and my friend Gail (Brinkmeier) was here. My sister and her family visited last year. We've had so much fun!

Where did you take them to?

My sister and her family, who came in May of 2023, are outdoors people. So, we did an overnight in the Sunderbans. We also did a bunch of the walking tours. We had *kathi* rolls....

From Nizam's?

Yes, that and about three or four different places. I took Brandon to Kusum's the other night. Some of the things we did involved my niece and nephew getting to meet some kids and spending time in the pool etc. With my parents, we went to the Taj Mahal and we did a day tour in Delhi. And once they were here, we did some walks in the neighbourhood, I took them to high tea at the Glenburn Penthouse. And we just drove around. Our community liaison office organised the visit for our team to Raj Bhavan and my parents accompanied us. It was a nice tour of the gardens and some parts of Raj Bhavan itself, and we had a nice conversation with the governor. I had intended to travel a bit more with my parents. Unfortunately, my mom broke her arm just before they came.

My partner has been going to a lot of the evening events with me. He's made a couple of what I call his bromance buddies and he's been going out while I work. I wish more people had come earlier. But what always happens is that people are like "Oh, you're leaving in August? I will get there as soon as I can."

Your earlier posting in Japan gave you karaoke singing. Is there anything in Calcutta that you imbibed that you would remember the city for?

One thing I've learned here is the art of the *adda* and the art of storytelling. I am always impressed that the public speakers here do not talk from talking points. They talk from their personal experience, about things based on stories and that is so much more effective. It really connects you with your audience in ways that formal speeches don't.

AN 'AMAZING FESTIVAL'



Melinda Pavek at a Puja in Howrah as a judge for CESC The Telegraph True Spirit Puja in 2023

So I've learned to open up, bring my own experience to whatever it is I speak on. Also everyone speaks about not only their personal experience but historical perspectives. That way history continues to live on in family traditions and aural traditions.

What would be the things that you'd want changed in Calcutta or Calcuttans can do better?

As we think about climate change, we need to think about greater sustainability. I have so many wonderful mementos but a lot of those would be more meaningful if they had a lower impact on sustainability. I really love the way some organisations have started doing saplings or things that are made of natural fibres or reflective of cultural traditions rather than sort of plaques. It's a sign of respect and affection, which is wonderful, but then, we need to think about the resources we're using from our planet, what can we do to lighten the resource usage without undermining our culture. There's so much in Bengali

culture that is sustainable, renewable. That could be a focus area to look at.

And there's always the Bengali way — everything happens at the last minute, sometimes that can be a culture mismatch, you know. (Smiles) It's hard for us to do things at the last minute.

What are your three favourite haunts in the city?

I love books, as you know, so I have spent a ridiculous amount of time at Oxford Bookstore. My second is the Glenburn Penthouse, because it is such a pleasant place to look over the city and to have wonderful tea. I'm a tea drinker, not a coffee drinker. So it's an opportunity to have different kinds of tea and know where the tea is coming from and have it prepared.

It's a great place to take guests, friends and family.

My third choice is not one specific place. I just love to walk. I like walking tours with people or on my own. That's one of the things I really love about the city. No matter where you go, if you walk — you can't walk and look up, but you can stop and look up and look around. The way that nature and the built city interact and connect with each other and create the stumbling blocks that you can't....

Calcutta has moveable stumbling blocks who refuse to move.

(Laughs) So true! The city may not be walkable in the way that you might score it, but the fact is you don't see all of these elements when you're moving by quickly in a car. You actually have to walk around neighbourhoods and interact with the people who are living and thriving or not thriving and understand what their daily struggles are and just revel in the resilience that you see.

What happens to the saris in your wardrobe?

Some of them I will probably leave for my successor and some I will take with me. I will do my best to use them. My struggle is, of course, I have not successfully managed to wrap myself.

Will your successor be a lady?

Yes. Kathy Giles Diaz — a wonderful person. She and I have known each other since

What's in Melinda Pavek's handbag?

"It has my Tokyo 2020 pencil case, a wallet, my glasses, my carry bags — I like to have reusable bags — my keys, my emergency medical tests for sick stomach, hand sanitiser etc. My bags are always heavy."

the early '90s. We both taught English in the same state in Japan. So we've known each other even before we joined the foreign service. It's just a strange and wonderful coincidence that she's succeeding me. She is originally from Massachusetts, which is where Benjamin Joy, our first consul general (nominated by President George Washington in 1792 to Calcutta), was originally from. In fact, she was serving in Japan when I was trying to get my job in Japan.

So she passed on tips then, and you are doing the same to her now.

Exactly, it's all about helping each other out.

Any regrets from these three years spent in Calcutta?

My number one regret is that I did not make the time to study Bengali. I started when I first got here and there's just 24 hours in a day. The second regret is that I didn't find a yoga instructor early enough and I never really found one consistently. I feel I could have benefited from that in stress management. The other regret is just that this tour is not longer. Three years is too short when you have 11 states that are as diverse and interesting and somewhat challenging to get to. The travel to the Northeast has gotten easier but that's mainly to the capitals and not the more rural areas. That's part of the reason why I know that I'll be back many many times. There's still so much I want to see and do (in India).

What next? Do you get a home posting?

I am going back to Washington. I will join what we call the Board of Examiners, the group that helps select the next generation of foreign service officers, similar to the Indian Foreign Service. We have a test that helps people get into the service. So I'm looking forward to that.

Sudeshna Banerjee

Pictures: Rashbehari Das and B Halder

'THERE IS EXCITING STUFF HAPPENING IN THE NEW WORLD AND I SHOULD BE PART OF IT,' SAYS NARENDRA KUMAR

Narendra Kumar's creative platter is overflowing with ideas. When we call him for a chat about his latest launch, a ready-to-wear brand called Tamiska, the co-founder and creative director of the brand tells us about four more! Fondly called Nari by the design fraternity, his journey started with menswear 24 years ago and reinvention and adapting to the times has been his forte. In this chat with t2, he tells us why he has a womenswear brand at this point in time and his mantra to stay relevant.



Narendra Kumar, co-founder and creative director, Tamiska

What does 'Tamiska' mean?
Tamiska is really an acronym of two-three names. My version of it means a new world. I have my own meaning for it. Who said you can't create your own meanings?
(Laughs)

You have done womenswear before too, but is there a reason why you thought of launching a new brand, now?

We have done womenswear in the shows in a small way, but we have never done womenswear like this, at a brand level. This is a different market segment altogether for a brand. It is a ready-to-wear brand. When we talk about fashion in the market, we talk about Zara, Mango and Vero Moda being the brand, but we never talk about an ethnic Indian brand as a fashion brand, though people pay a lot of money to buy. So, mass fashion is associated with that idea of these westernwear brands, but here's a piece of knowledge that I have learnt over my years of experience at Amazon (Fashion; of which he was the creative director for 11 years) that only 30-35 per cent of the people in the country can wear those westernwear brands.... many can't because of the fit and sizes. What I saw was a huge opportunity to bring that idea of fashion in the western terms to an Indian domestic market, in a sense that prints are international prints and wearable fits. The transition for an Indian consumer who wears ethnic



clothes to wearing western is quite severe. This is to ease that transference, give them a feeling of being a global citizen while having your own ethos which is local and Indian, in terms of fit and size. The fabrics are soft and long-lasting. For me, understanding consumer needs is simply the most important thing that Amazon taught me and on the basis of this, I have come up with Tamiska.

The aesthetics are very different...
The aesthetics are a little easy, but if

Number one is passion, to the point of obsession. Word number two is conviction because conviction colours your passion. Conviction is about who you are and what your values are as a human being and therefore you choose and give direction to your passion using that conviction. Number three and most important is evolution. You need to evolve to stay relevant to the times you are living in — Narendra Kumar



you see, in every piece there is tailoring detail, whether it's the cuff or in the collar. That is what we want to bring to the brand.

The (Indian) woman has progressed much further. More and more women are there who are homogenised by social media, by global trends, by inputs on the palms of their hands every day, from across the world and most women want to be global citizens. I saw the gap in the market for a brand that addressed that issue.

This is the right time for the creation



of new brands for the next 20 years. I always believe clothing is for the mind rather than the body.

We are also telling the story of the brand through colours. Every season, we'll have eight to 10 colours which will have eight to 10 prints, so that people can choose from the wide range available.

How have you reinvented yourself time and again?

There are three words that define a creative person's path to success. Number one is passion, to the point of obsession. Word number two is conviction because conviction colours your passion. Conviction is about who you are and what your values are as a human being and therefore you choose and give direction to your passion using that conviction. Number three and most important is evolution. You need to evolve to stay relevant to the times you are living in. There is exciting stuff happening in the new world and I should be part of it. I realised 15 years ago that the digital age was really important and if I weren't a part of this exciting place, I would be lost, in terms of my own self. I was talking to students about the impact of AI and creativity and design. The future is about storytellers who have a good command over the language and some basic knowledge about what they are talking about.

We have to ask you about the boom that menswear is seeing right now?

When I started with menswear, I realised that the biggest stars were the men and there were no designers for men. Added to that, I said I should add a sense of intellect to my design, in the way I tell my stories, so that there is craft, plus intellect, plus stories. That is what people know me for. Having dressed all the male stars in the country, I realise today that there is a new generation of young men.

There is a Gen Z that is globally aware and the generation which was millennial five-10 years ago and is now 35, is earning well and wants some kind of identity for himself which doesn't look like a teenager. Men have evolved over the years.

Everyone is wearing streetwear.

I launched a brand in 2017 called Fake News (FKNS) and now I am launching another streetwear brand, Ura Street, which has four different brands in it — Varsity of Nowhere, Humnade+, Uncover and Kool Beans. My plate is full right now.

It'll be 25 years for the brand next year!

I feel I am excited about the next 25 years as I was 25 years ago!

Saione Chakraborty
Pictures courtesy: Tamiska

FOOD

t2 GETS A TASTE OF TUSCANY AT SORANO. CHECK IT OUT!

Sorano, the chic Italian paradise tucked away on Ho Chi Minh Sarani, is taking Calcutta away on a culinary adventure through the sun-drenched Tuscany. This fine-dining gem, already renowned for its intimate ambience and

authentic Italian fare, has launched its third edition of Regional Selects—a dedicated menu showcasing the distinct flavours of a specific Italian regions. This time, Tuscany takes centre stage. Tuscany is known for its love of fresh, seasonal ingredients like local legumes, various kinds of

cheese, vegetables and fruits. Dishes are built around what's readily available at the market, resulting in simple yet incredibly flavourful meals. Sorano's menu captures this spirit, bringing the rustic charm of Tuscan cooking to Calcutta's plates. t2 gets a taste.

What: Regional Selects: Tuscany
Where: Sorano, first floor, Harrington Mansion, 8 Ho Chi Minh Sarani, Kankaria Estates
On till: June 30
Pocket pinch: ₹ 2,000



The Secret to Keep, is a delightful fusion creation. This refreshing tequila-based drink combined the vibrant flavours of Indian guava with fragrant Italian basil, offering a unique taste of both worlds.



Pollo Fritti con Mozzarella from the antipasti section is a winner. Tender, Parmesan-crusted chicken bathes in a rich tomato sauce made with San Marzano tomatoes – a prized Italian variety. This comforting dish is further elevated with melted mozzarella, baked in a pizza oven, and served with a dollop of pesto for added freshness.



The menu goes beyond classic pasta dishes. The Gnudi di Porcini al Tartufo from the pasta section is a revelation. Homemade dumplings filled with porcini mushrooms and ricotta, come with luxurious fontina cheese and truffle sauce.



For pasta purists, the Pici Aglione provides a satisfying experience. This freshly-made, long pasta is tossed with toasted breadcrumbs and topped with a vibrant tomato-garlic sauce.



Moving on to the Zuppe section, the Pappa al Pomodoro is a standout. This thick Tuscan soup features fresh tomatoes, garlic, and basil, blended with ciabatta bread for a hearty and flavourful experience. The dish is served warm or chilled, depending on your preference.

Crostatata al Pomodorini e Basilico from the Mains section stole the show. It features fresh oregano-marinated cherry tomatoes, mascarpone, and basil pesto in a crispy pie crust topped with extra virgin olive oil.



Torta Pistocchi provides a decadent ending to the Tuscan odyssey. This velvety smooth dark chocolate cake is accompanied by amaretti cookies and vanilla cream and makes for an irresistible conclusion to the culinary journey.



Another intriguing cocktail option was the Sicilian Message. This gin-based drink paid homage to an ancient technique – lacto-fermentation of red grapes. This unique process added a fascinating depth of flavour, offering a glimpse into Sicily's rich culinary heritage.

Bomonaa Barik (t2 intern)
 Pictures: Pabitra Das

ART

B-CAF CELEBRATES MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE WITH 'ECHOES OF THE EARTH'

Echoes of the Earth, a group exhibition curated by Reena Dewan, founder, Bridging Culture & Arts Foundation (B-CAF) celebrates the human-nature bond. On till tomorrow, the exhibition showcases the works of five artists — Pradosh Paul, Saumen Khamrui, Chandan Debnath, Ratna Bardhan and Shubhankar Chakraborty. This exhibition celebrates the personal connection between nature and all living beings, as seen through

the distinct lenses of these artists. Through the unique perspectives of five artists, this exhibition weaves a rich tapestry of experiences, honouring nature's enduring beauty while examining our modern relationship with the natural world.

"While curating 'Echoes of the Earth', I sought to bring together a diverse group of artists, each with their unique perspective, mediums and experience. The intricate and timeless conversation between humanity and

nature has been ignited in 'Echoes of the Earth' as this conversation given the change in weather, untimely seasonal variations and catastrophes has become more important than ever. The selection of artists aligns with B-CAF's ongoing commitment to showcasing independent artists and you will find some unique, experimental and fresh takes," said Dewan.

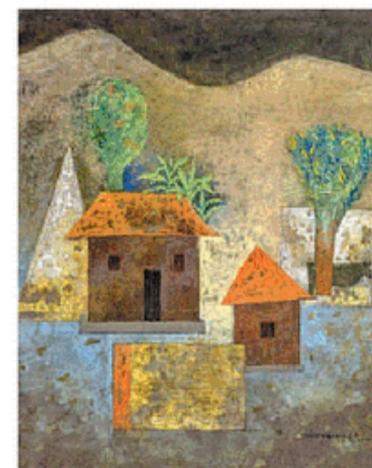
Pictures courtesy: B-CAF



(L-R): Chandan Debnath, Ratna Bardhan, Rupali Basu, Reena Dewan, art curator and founder director of Bridging Culture and Arts Foundation (B-CAF); Shubhankar Chakraborty and Saumen Khamrui at the inauguration of the exhibition 'Echoes Of The Earth' at B-CAF.



Glimpses of the work by the artists



ROOP SHRINGAR UNVEILS A NEW ADDRESS ON PARK STREET. HERE'S A WALKTHROUGH

Roop Shringar, a homegrown brand with an earlier address on Sudder Street, has answered to women's sartorial needs for years. Now, the brand has moved

to a prime location on Park Street. The new store at 95B Park Street (opposite deputy commissioner's office) which was launched on June 16 in the presence of a few stars from Tollywood, marks a significant milestone in the

brand's journey of merging luxury and tradition under one roof.

Spread over 5,000sq ft, the store is strategically divided into zones to cater to the different needs. From a wide range of saris for that

six-yard elegance to lehngas for a bigger occasion and trending salwar kameez for an ethnic event, the store offers it all in a tastefully-designed ambience that adds to the experience of retail therapy.



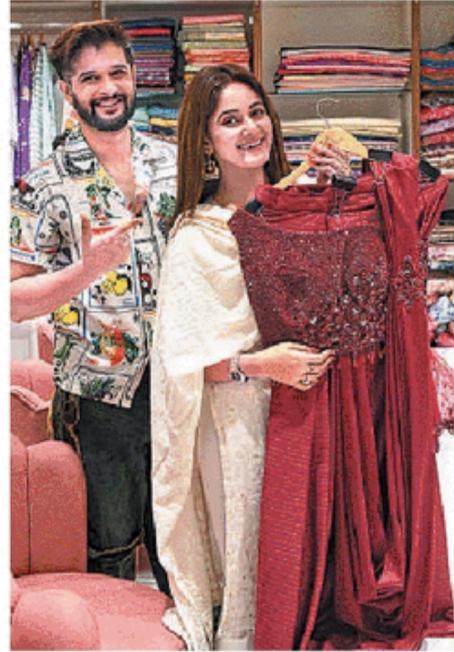
Apart from ethnic occasionwear, expect a wide range of everyday clothing and also Indo-western outfits crafted with meticulous attention to detail.



Roop Shringar's range of saris will multiply your love for the six yards and make you want to stock your wardrobe.



The store features a diverse range of suits and Indo-western outfits, providing customers with a one-stop destination for all their ethnic fashion needs.



Star couple and actors Neel Bhattacharya and Trina Saha dropped by for the store launch. "It feels great to be here at the store for their launch day. They have everything for every occasion. I am loving the outstanding collections that they have," said Trina.



Actor Prantika Das was also spotted at the launch. "This store has a great collection and I am honoured to be a part of their journey. The craftsmanship and quality of their pieces are truly exceptional, making every visit a delightful experience for all," she said.



"We are thrilled to unveil our inaugural retail store on Park Street, a landmark moment that epitomises our commitment to celebrating the timeless allure of Indian saris," said Suresh Tolani (right), MD of Roop Shringar. "With our new flagship store, we aim to offer an immersive shopping experience that not only showcases our exquisite creations but also celebrates the rich cultural tapestry of India," said Yash Tolani.

Urmimala Dev (t2 intern)
Pictures: B Halder

FEEDBACK

t2
TALK

FILMS WITH QUEER THEMES ON YOUR WATCHLIST

The Danish Girl tells the story of Gerda (Alicia Vikander) who asks her husband Einar (Eddie Redmayne) to fill in as a woman portrait model. Einar discovers the person he is meant to be and begins living life as Lily Elbe and embarks on a groundbreaking journey as a transgender, becoming the first to undergo sex reassignment surgery.

All About My Mother provides a dizzying, moving exploration of the meaning of motherhood. After Manuela, a nurse, loses the teenage son she raised on her own, she sets out to search for the boy's long-lost father in Barcelona. Here she reawakens into a new maternal role at the head of a surrogate family that includes a pregnant, HIV-positive nun, a star of the stage and a transgender sex worker. Beautifully performed and bursting with cinematic references, it is a vibrant tribute to female fortitude, a one-of-a-kind family portrait and a work of boundless compassion.

The Netflix series *Heartstopper* tells the story of Charlie a high-strung, openly gay overthinker and Nick, a cheerful, soft-hearted rugby player, who are made to sit together in class one day. Their friendship quickly turns to something more and makes Nick realise his sexuality and come out to his family. It also focuses on the stories of supporting characters like Tara and Darcy adapting to become an open couple; Elle's struggle to adapt to a new school



life after coming out as trans, Tao and Elle's relationship turn from friendship to something more. It portrays queer relationships along with friendship, love and loyalty in a realistic and heartwarming manner in its two seasons. The third season is expected in October and I just can't wait to see Charlie confessing his love to Nick.

Young Royals is a Swedish series whose story is about Prince Wilhelm when he arrives at the boarding school Hillerska and falls in love with fellow student Simon. It makes him grasp his sexuality, find his true self and find out what kind of life he wants. He starts dreaming of a future filled with freedom and unconditional love far away from royal obligations, but when he unexpectedly comes next in line for the throne, his

dilemma is heightened as he has to make a choice — love or duty. In the last episode of the third and final season, Wilhelm gives up his crown and decides to be with Simon. This show very accurately portrays the problems of coming out, self-independence, love and duty dilemmas, family and peer pressure, longing to be someone or to be with someone and the need for family support and understanding. (Add to the queer films watchlist... May 27)

Ramyani Sanyal

My list includes *The Whale* as one of the best queer films. How a bereavement can affect someone and how it brings out the best at his worst time, makes this story dark, agonising and heartwrenching. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is

also worth watching.

Among Indian screen stories, one can watch *Geeli Puchi* in the tetralogy of *Ajeeb Daastaans*. Its uncomfortable emotions and fractured relationships made the narrative layered, complex and obviously heart-touching. *Badhaai Do* and *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* would be good choices if one is looking for something light-hearted.

Shreyasee Dutta

Along with the wonderful list compiled by Team t2, I would like to add two more shows.

1. *Grace and Frankie*: This Netflix show may not be too popular but it's a refreshing watch because, for once, the show is not focusing on teenage drama but rather the complete opposite —

older people. Although I love that the guys do end up together in a society where it is still taboo to be gay, I cannot help but feel bad for the ladies, especially Frankie. That woman spent her whole life loving one man but in the end, found that the last 20 years of her life was a lie. This show makes you feel for both sets — how the guys fought so hard to resist each other but could not, how even after separating from their wives, they still care deeply about their ex-wives. Still, it is a happy-go-lucky kind of show, as in the end, the ladies too do find a purpose in life.

2. *XO, Kitty*: This story focuses on how, even in 2023, a queer couple had to hide their relationship from the public, as a result of which Kitty's relationship with Dae gets destroyed. The story becomes more interesting when Kitty catches feelings for Yuri, thus questioning her sexuality. It is a fun teen drama to watch with queer elements which are subtle and not too in your face.

Arundhati Das

The show I want to add to t2's queer watchlist is the historical television drama series *Gentleman Jack* which is focused on the life of a 19th century English lesbian named Anne Lister. Suranne Jones portrayed the character of the trailblazer in that fascinating, affectionate, inspiring and refreshing show. I think this show is a queer gem.

Sourish Misra

FUNSPACE



REVISITING...
this special cover that was designed by Ayushman 'Bobo' Mitra for t2's Pride Special edition last June. As much as we loved putting together the edition — t2's first Pride Special edition — this cover with Bobo's interpretation of queerness, had our heart!

RELISHING...
the most delicious and crispy jalebis we have ever tried! Last weekend at ITC Royal Bengal's Grand Market Pavilion's ongoing A Taste of Punjab, Chef Ranvijay served us the crunchiest jalebis with the perfect balance of sweet and we still think about it for dessert after every meal!

INDULGING...
in the most creative-looking rainbow-coloured desserts and making our sweet tooth very happy! These are only some of the delicious bites we had at Unlearning The Toxic Habits of Stereotyping presented by t2 in association with Kolkata Pride and Smirnoff Lemon Pop Non-alcoholic at Olterra last week. #yum

MISSING...
our Pari who decided to start his own journey to explore the world and left his 'home' one fine afternoon leaving a void in our lives. This t2 girl still hopes he might pay us a visit someday. #fingerscrossed



WONDERING...
if this futuristic vehicle will ever make it to India. Tesla's Cybertruck is taking over American roads and t2 recently got a close look at the machine. It's pointy and can handle sharp objects as well as bricks but it is the most polarising offering in the automobile industry at the moment. Elon Musk's team has gone out of their comfort zone to come up with a provocative design but, at the same time, it's flawed, like it doesn't have industry standard sensors that can keep the heavy doors from snipping off someone's digits.

SWOONING OVER...
the Shalimar Minaudiere from Sabyasachi's new line, Cinematique — the red-carpet collection. As a celebration of Art Deco, the new assemblage is inspired by vintage Bollywood, the Nizam of Hyderabad and the private clubs of Calcutta. This clutch takes us back to the Mughal gardens. What better way to celebrate 25 years of Sabyasachi than this heritage piece?



PROUD...
to have hosted this very special panel discussion to mark International Pride Month. Organised by t2 in association with Kolkata Pride and Smirnoff Lemon Pop Non-alcoholic at Olterra on June 19, the session talked about 'Unlearning The Toxic Habits of Stereotyping'. The panel made up of people from the community and an ally — Anasuya Sengupta, Kallol Datta, Don Hasar, Sudeb Suhana and Rukshana Kapadia — and moderated by Nil and Anindya Hazra, engaged in an impactful discussion about various aspects of queer identities.



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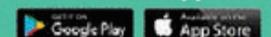


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A photograph of three women in traditional Indian attire. The woman on the left wears a green pleated skirt and a matching crop top with a colorful, patterned bodice. The woman in the center wears a red two-piece outfit with a matching jacket featuring a colorful, patterned design. The woman on the right wears a red and blue outfit with a matching shawl. They are all smiling and looking towards the right. The background is a textured, light-colored wall with a decorative archway on the right.

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