



ASHA PAREKH
THINKING
ON MY
FEET

"Filmfare" presents the first colour photographs of Asha Parekh in Bharat Natyam poses.
These photographs and the cover portrait of Asha are by Dhiraj Chawda.



New Horizons

THE address by the Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting at the second Convocation of the Poona Film Institute was remarkable as much for what it left unsaid as for what was said. The moral preoccupation that films should strive to make us better men and women, that vitiated all Government's thinking on the subject in the post-independence era was mercifully absent. The call to produce new and original films could not have been more timely; producers of Hindi films who began by plagiarising Hollywood are now busily plagiarising one another's films. How fortunate that the Kurosawas, Fellinis and Bergmans of the world cinema have escaped this sincerest form of flattery! A cursory survey of even the titles of recent films, permutations and combinations of a few "hit" titles, betrays a total bankruptcy of sense and sensibility.

The Minister's contention that very few high-budgeted films have made a great impact on cinema was not really to counter the repeated financial plaints of our film-makers: It was a plea for the restoration of a proper sense of values. Was it not one of the great film-makers of all time who declared that one who wishes to make a significant film needs two things, "a camera and a conscience"? Equally refreshing was Mrs. Gandhi's plea that the non-conformist in films should be encouraged: "There is an element of risk, for he may turn out to be a crank, but it is equally possible that he may be a

genius. In a sense, he is a scientist bent on new discoveries." This is a plea that should rather be heeded by Government's own Film Finance Corporation. The reasons for its signal failure to back the man with new ideas, the non-conformist and the revolutionary will certainly repay careful study.

Two other points in the Minister's thought-provoking address are worthy of special comment. One was that film-makers in India should immerse themselves in the larger background of the arts. The film which has been referred to as "the seventh art" scores over other arts in creative possibilities, particularly in its ability to cut through space and time, but it continues to derive sustenance from these arts. The other point was the importance of building contacts with film movements in other Asian countries, particularly Japan. How the Japanese Government encourages its film industry may indeed be an eye-opener for our Government itself. To take only one telling example, entertainment tax in Japan which was as high as 40 per cent of the price of admission some years ago has been gradually brought down to 25 per cent. A part of this tax is further utilised to improve theatre conditions so that the cinegoer who is the patron of the industry may benefit. What a contrast to India where states vying with one another for the world record, as it were, charge as much as 75 per cent of the admission rates and nothing is ploughed back to the industry!



IN THE
NEXT
ISSUE



Highlight of our next issue: "On The Sets" in colour—three pages featuring Sadhana, Rajshree, Rajendra, Shashi, Nanda and others.

In colour:

* Cover: Kamaljeet with cover story and two pages of photos * Centrespread: Nanda * David — "My Memorable Roles" * Portraits of Sowcar Janaki and foreign actor Roddy McDowall * Mario's "Film Frolics."

Also —

An article on the recent Berlin Film Festival—with photographs; Impact Study Findings; "Behind The Screen" — Producer-director Vasant Joglekar, Kalpana—"My Ideal Man" plus all the usual features.

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It all started as an itch in the feet about the time I had reached the grand age of four.

At odd hours of the day, whenever some music started (on the radio), so did the itch. I would scrape my feet on the floor. Eventually the appalling truth dawned on my conservative parents—I was going to be a dancer.

Poor Mother! She particularly wanted me to become a doctor. (That was the time, I think, when all mothers wanted their favourite daughters to become doctors). It was a treat, according to Mother, for someone in the family to fall ill when I was a child. I loved to play nurse, she says.

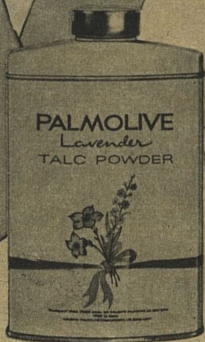
But, growing up, I was determined to confer on modern medicine what may possibly rank as its single greatest blessing—I was determined to stick to dancing.

Lots of children dance at home, entertaining their parents. I know it means nothing. A

Margot Fonteyn or a Balasaraswathi is not in the offing. And I say: *these children are lucky*. For, when true art really summons you, *beware*. It is the call of a gypsy tune that gets into your head, running off and on, but always

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