

## National Museum of Indian Cinema

“The cinema”, wrote the British documentary film-maker, film historian and critic Paul Rotha in the 1930s, “is the great unresolved equation between art and industry”. It was the first and is arguably still the greatest, of the industrialized art forms which has dominated the cultural life of the last and the present century. Its invention was, however, delayed probably because hardly any mainstream scientist had paid attention to this technology and had realized its potential in science and technology development.

Cinema was introduced to the Indian audiences in 1896 at the Watson's Hotel in Mumbai by a touring representative of Lumière Brothers of France, the inventors of Cinematography. Even at the inception it developed into a medium of mass entertainment and a powerful tool for communication. As it is generally believed, at the Watson's Hotel show was present H.S.Bhatvadekar (Sawe Dada), who eventually became the first Indian to produce moving images in India. In 1897, motion pictures were shown in Kolkata and Chennai.

Cinema over the last century has become the part of Indian life and expression and a major point of reference for Indian culture. At a rough estimate, approximately 15 million people see films in India every day. Today, India has the unique distinction of producing the largest number of films in the world in many languages

and the film industry has a huge annual turnover. Indian films and film makers have been admired all over the world for the aesthetic quality and novelty of Indian films. National Museum of Indian Cinema has been set up to commemorate the centenary of first feature film Raja Harishchandra made in 1913 by Dadasaheb Phalke in Mumbai. Spread over two buildings, in the historic GulshanMahal and the New Museum Building, in the Films Division campus in Mumbai, the museum takes the visitors through an absorbing journey of a century of Indian Cinema in a story telling mode with the help of visuals and graphics, films, publicity materials, artifacts, interactive exhibits and



multimedia and many more. The story is not exhaustive, but indicative only. Nevertheless, here one can enjoy the fascinating history of Indian Cinema.



### The Story of Indian Cinema



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century historic palace of GulshanMahal, the displays take the visitor to a nostalgic journey of a hundred years of Indian Cinema. The exposition is divided into the following nine sections namely, The Origin of Cinema, Cinema Comes to India, Indian Silent Film, Advent of Sound, The Studio Era, The Impact of World War II, Creative Resonance, New-Wave and beyond and Regional Cinema. There are several artefacts, posters and documents, film clippings, diorama multimedia kiosks in the museum and a 30-seater mini theatre.

The New Museum Building has four Exhibition Halls:

## Level 4 : Cinema across India

Besides being the largest film producing country in the world, India has a unique presence in a sense more than one, beyond just numbers. Since the rise of the digital age, there has been a spurt in film production. In 2016, Central Board of Film Certification had certified as many as 1903 feature films in over 22 languages. All films made in digital medium, except one using celluloid – in Marathi. Technology has been making sweeping changes across India, and the world. And with such democratization, films are being made in many Indian languages and dialects so far unknown even within the country. India is the land of so many tonalities and timbres, so many traditions and temperaments. With technological strides impacting both production and post-production of films, Indian cinema has also been able to enrich its audio-visual texture, its overall look, comparing with other advanced parts of the world. A generational change has imbued it with newer energies and exchanges with ever-expanding Indian diaspora. This gallery, dedicated to Cinema of Across India, attempts to comprehend such charismatic kaleidoscopic presence of vibrant cinematographic culture that is India.



## Level 3: Technology, Creativity & Indian Cinema

Cinema is essentially the product of technology and the human genius imbued it with a sense of art and aesthetics. It has the greatest ability to capture reality in its verisimilitude and at the same time create an amazing fantasy. In the years of its birth if the real train arrived at a station (Lumiere brothers), a space shuttle also voyaged to the moon (Meilies). Starting from the first feature film, Raja Harishchandra, Indian film makers made creative use of the technology to produce cinematographic impact on the silver screen; some examples being Phalke's animation techniques in early films, Barua's flashback techniques, Shantaram's tilted camera shots or SubrataMitra's bounce light effect. Even the first talkie was indigenously developed and colour films and digital technologies came quite early. India also is credited with the development of the first play back music in cinemas.

The story is supplemented with large numbers of artefacts and interactives contextually placed.





## Level 2: Children's Film Studio

Children's Film Studio is the Activity Area which will provide the visitors, particularly children, to explore the science, technology and art behind film making and get themselves acquainted with film making process including special effects. The gallery offers Hands on experience with camera, light, accessories, experience of acting, shooting, singing, editing, special effect etc.

The exhibits displayed in this gallery includes Chroma Studio, Immersive experience zone, Interactive multi-screen theatre, Interactive studio, Stop-Motion animation studio, Virtual makeover studio, Sound effect and mixing studio, Photo shoot studio etc.



## Level 1: Gandhi & Cinema

The Mahatma and movies have an enigmatic and yet uniquely enduring relationship. M.K. Gandhi (1869-1948)'s life-time almost coincides with the history of cinema and that provides us a fascinating journey that still continues and will continue as long as mankind survives on this earth. This exhibition is a glimpse of that ongoing journey...

As historians recount, in his entire life, Mahatma Gandhi had seen only one film (in parts) and that was Vijay Bhatt-directed Ram Rajya, as late as in 1943 when he was already 74 years old! Yet many film makers were impressed and influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's political philosophy and practice. Inspired by Gandhian philosophy and spirit, films on freedom movement and social were made during 1920-50. Gandhi is also believed to have influenced Charlie Chaplin in making his famous films like Modern Times and The Great Dictator.



Gulshan Mahal is a charming 19<sup>th</sup> Century Bungalow in Films Division Complex in South Mumbai which has been restored as part of the NMIC project.

Gulshan Mahal's first known owner was Peerbhoy Khalakdina (1816-68), a Gujarati Businessman from the Khoja community from the village of Bharapur (near Bhuj) in Kutch.

Gulshan Mahal is an ASI Grade-II Heritage Structure.



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