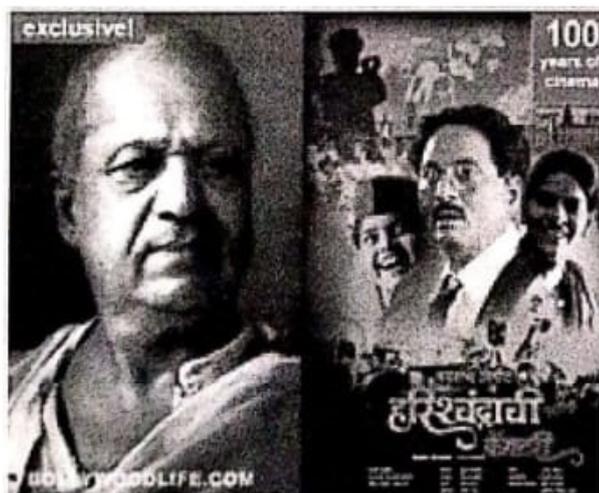


# "Print-Making Posters to Digitalisation through The Glimpse of Bollywood"

## Early Indian Cinema:

In May 2013, India celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first Indian feature film, Raja Harish-chandra by D. G. Phalke. The beginnings of Indian cinema can be traced to July 1896; barely six months after the Lumiere brothers exhibited their "actualities" in the basement of the Indian salon in Paris. Phalke's feature was a "mythological" one, a well known story of a Hindu king who, like Job of the Old Testament, was tested for his fidelity to God by being stripped of his worldly possessions. The inspiration for making a film based on Hindu mythology came from Phalke's viewing of a British feature film entitled Life of Christ. However, he wanted to make an "Indian" film, telling a Hindu story in an Indian narrative style.

However, Raja Ravi Varma, an artist and printer who adapted British academic painting of the time and in the process anglicized Indian Gods and Goddesses, giving them idealized human forms. His mass reproductions of these paintings became part of the established visual culture and popular iconography (Dasgupta 1991, 21).



Further, the "iconic frontality" in the work of Varma and Phalke is not of Indian origin. Rather, it follows a European tradition in which the subject looks directly at the beholder. By contrast, in the tradition of Indian art, Hindu Gods face

## Tanvi Singh

Kailash Kunj, Sailok  
(near GMS road ),  
Dehradun- 248001

the devotee, ready to receive his prayer, but they do not look directly at him (Dasgupta 1991, 22). Indeed, it is the devotee who looks up to the Gods and takes their darshan (Sanskrit, "blessed vision", "divine gaze").

### Introduction:

The concept of hand-painted poster arrived in India with the cinema itself. So, the story of poster art, from hand painted to offset printing to digitalisation, is a story of a gradual fading of this beautiful art and craft ship, which in many ways articulates the journey of cinema in India itself. From hand-painted posters with the stars in beautiful paint brush expressions to total mechanization in the digital era, where one has to just capture a frame from the film and then blow it up leaves nothing to imagination or creativity.



In the 50s and 60s of the twentieth century the posters, told a story, in the new millennium they are digital wonders without a soul or a space for creative expression involving the paint brush.

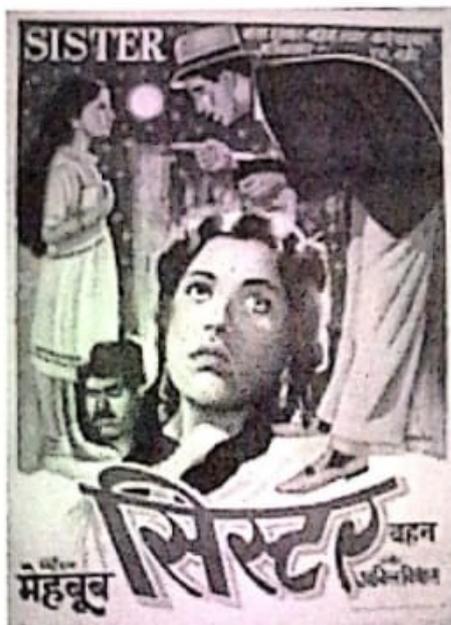
Balkrishna Vaiya's studio in Dadar, Mumbai and many others, attracted crowds because the film stars in their fancy cars but without non infamous retinue arrived at the small at elier to pose in person.

Difference Between Poster Designer and Hoarding Painter:

There is a difference between a poster –Designer and Hoarding Painter. The Poster – Designer is the creative brain behind the visuals people see on the film's advertising media, while a hoarding painter usually enlarges any one poster design to the hoarding size proportionately.

The Poster indicated what was in store for the viewer for e.g. in Bahen , a film about a brother's obsessive shown dwarfed under the large shadow of her tall brother !

In Devdas, Dilip Kumar and his alcohol bottle on the posters took the viewer to the hero's self defeating journey of love and betrayal.



#### Sixties: Success of Music %

Few things changed as we reach the sixties. We move the focus from Social issues towards music and romance. Sixties was an era of romantic musicals embedded even in epics like Mughal-e-Azam (1960). The Film's Dialogue played as big a role in its success as Naushad's immortal compositions.

The Posters were distinctively ostentatious as we saw in most historical, but the film was essentially a romantic one.



Junglee (1961), Sahib Bibi aur Gulam (1962), Kashmir ki kali (1964), Guide (1965), Waqt (1965), Teesri manzil (1966), Jewel Thief (1967) and Aradhana (1969) were all musical success stories despite their varied plots. The posters began to highlight music in fact the reprint posters had the hit songs prominently written on top to indicate to the viewer that the film has hit music.

In the 30's, 40's, and 50's there were lithographic posters, the lithographic press gave way to the offset press and posters of the 17's and 16's were mostly offset press. The 19's and 20's popularised the digital press. Consequently, by the end of the 18's, the era of hand-painted posters ended, replaced by the printed collage of images.

With the end of hand-painted posters, came the realisation of treating the originals as piece of art, thereby making the hand- painted posters of any film from the 30's to 80's as an object of art. The craze for collecting such posters began in the 19's and has since Gained momentum in the new millennium. Today posters are being sold at art houses, galleries and premium auction hoses globally.

#### Designers:

The foremost Designer who ruled for three decades was DD.Neroy and there were many talented names and entities like Tilak, Diwakar karkare , Mulgaonkar, D.R Bhosle, Pandit Ram Kumar Sharma , Ellora Art , Aruna

Arts, Art View and many more. These are names of exceptionally gifted artists and companies that have depicted the visual journey of India culture on posters over the decades. They are largely unsung, and we need to applaud them if we celebrate Hindi cinema.

At last, I must say that poster fascinates me. I would stare at them endlessly and the artistic presentation of the stars would intrigue me. Poster art in Hindi cinema could never win an art historian's attention, at least till the mid of nineties.

Kitsch is what it would be generally referred to. The awareness spread in the mid-nineties as auctions houses and private collectors saw the potential of Hollywood posters at auctions abroad. The brush-stroke art that appeared in the publicity material of films till early eighties was belatedly celebrated. This Article is a small, humble step in that direction.

#### Reference:

1. [www.cinemasterpieces.com](http://www.cinemasterpieces.com)
2. [www.bollywoodmovieposters.com](http://www.bollywoodmovieposters.com)
3. [www.hippy.in](http://www.hippy.in)
4. [www.Bollywoodlife.com](http://www.Bollywoodlife.com)
5. Chabria, Suresh. 1994. before Our Eyes: A Short History of India's Silent Cinema. In *Light of Asia: Indian Silent Film (1912-1934)*, edited by Suresh Chabria, 3-24. Pordenone/Pune: National Film Archive of India
6. Dasgupta, Surendranath N. 1960. *Fundamentals of Indian Art*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Derne, Steve. 2008. *Globalization on the Ground: Media and the Globalization of Culture, Class and Gender in India*. New Delhi: Sage.
7. "Bollywood Posters" book written by Jerry Pinto

