

Super Success Of Five Films Took All By Surprise

By Subhash K Jha

There are successes and there are also-rans. Then there are those which catch everyone by surprise. Five films came from nowhere and hit the top bar, taking the audience by surprise. Here's a salute to the magnificent five of the year.

"Stree": Not much was expected from this spooky satire about a smalltown tailor, played by Rajkumar Rao who falls in love with a mysterious girl who may be a chudail (witch). Rao's 'Vicky pleej' dialogue was heard all across Hindustan.

Folklore met a campy horror in this mix of myth and mirth which proved its worth. A huge mone-yearner, this was a film where supernatural beliefs are dragged to the extremes of self-parody and then dragged back up, panting, puffing and gasping for breath. It served up a delicious, voluptuous mishmash of terror and titillation all titivated in loads of guffaws.

To sustain the mood of mirth during times of terror is not easy. Stree managed it. The producers and director Raj-DK hoped to make a tidy profit. It cracked the magical 100-crore collection. Take a bow, you alumni of the cool ghoulish school.

"Parmanu": John Abraham's glorious comeback fought against



Swara Bhasker, Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Shikha Talsania and producer Ekta Kapoor at the music launch of their film "Veere Di Wedding" in Mumbai.

all odds. It was a troubled project with the producers (one of them John) at loggerheads. Legal wangles, financial chaos and all other hurdles were somehow surmounted. John bravely released this noble, if a little trite, nationalistic film about India's first nuclear explosions.

Director Abhishek Sharma had his heart in the right place, though the budgetary constraints showed up on many occasions. The plot was new to audiences and they just fell for it. Belying all boxof-

face predictions, Parmanu made huge profits. Everyone associated with this project deserves a standing ovation.

"Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety": Who would have expected this non-star rom-com with pronounced misogynist leanings to swish past the 100-crore mark? Director Luv Ranjan is still reeling from the news. And after seeing this bromance-versus-romance about an overpossessive friend (Kartik Aaryan) creating insurmountable hurdles in his

best friend's love life and marriage, we are reeling too.

The repartees in "Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety" just rolled off the characters' tongues making them sound sassy and sombre even when they were being mean and vicious, just because it suits the script's purposes. And God knows, this film needed no excuse to let the words flow. The wickedest, meanest comedy of the year, it turned Kartik Aryan into an overnight superstar.

"Veere Di Wedding": Sparkling

with humour and warmth, eye-catching locations and irresistible glamour made this Kareena-Sonam-Swara Bhaskar-Shikha Talsania chick flick a chic trick and freak hit that had us all hooked. This film was great fun to watch.

The quartet of gorgeous women were more entertaining than the four guys in Dil Chahta Hai. One of whom had famously said: "You can't improve on perfection." True, but you can do a helluva lot with imperfection. Especially if you have the wealth to play around with to hide your ongoing bouts of gaffes and faux pas. "Veere Di Wedding" was one helluva joyride, a designer's delight and yet not quite the air-headed experience it loudly proclaimed itself to be.

"Raid": The fifth surprise 100-crore earner of the year was a one-note plot about an income-tax raid carried out on the fortified premises of a wily politician in Uttar Pradesh, who threw his weight around, because he had a lot of it to throw.

Let's say, if in 'Padmaavat' Al-lauddin Khilji was not after the beautiful queen but instead after her husband's wealth, then you get the picture in "Raid". Ajay Devgan and Saurabh Shukla played off against one another in this smash-the-fortress videogame-on-wheels with vigour.

Mrinal Sen Was A Master Filmmaker Who Challenged Social Sensibilities

KOLKATA:By accident, a maker of films... Good or bad, yes or no, they know me as an iconoclast," Mrinal Sen said about himself in his autobiography, giving an apt and characteristically witty description of his cinematic philosophy.

Sen (95), who died in Kolkata on Sunday, was the last surviving member of the 'trinity' from Bengal - including master filmmakers Satyajit Ray and Ritwik Ghatak -- who gave birth to the parallel (or new wave) cinema in the country by starting the domestic film society movement.

Sen regaled in breaking age-old stereotypes, highlighting issues such as exploitation and erosion of values. Take for instance the film 'Kharij' (The Case is Closed), where the servant boy, a minor, working in a middle class family in Kolkata (then called Calcutta), dies by carbon-monoxide poisoning after being made to sleep in the kitchen. The employers are left morally shattered.

His trilogy - Interview (1970), Calcutta 71 (1972) and Padatik (1973) are regarded as master-



pieces for their social messages and political overtones.

Born on May 14, 1923, at Faridpur (now in Bangladesh), Sen made his first Bengali film 'Rat Bhore' (The Dawn) in 1953, but it was his second directorial effort 'Neel Akasher Niche' (Under the Blue Sky) that received acclaim in the country.

Sen followed up with 'Baishey Shraavan' (Wedding Day). In 1969, Sen worked on a small budget provided by the government of India to direct 'Bhuvan Shome' (Mr. Shome) -- regarded as an important milestone movie..

Among his venerated films are 'Ek Adhuri Kahani' (An Unfinished Story -1971), Chorus (1974), 'Mrigayaa' (in Hindi - The Royal Hunt - 1976), "Ek Din Pratidin' (And Quiet Rolls the Dawn -- 1979), 'Akaler Sandhane' (In Search of Famine -1980), Chalchitra(The Kaleidoscope - 1981), 'Kharij' (The Case Is Closed - 1982), 'Khandhar' (The Ruins -- 1983), Genesis (1986) and 'Ek Din Achanak' (Suddenly, One Day - 1989).

Sen received the Padma Bhushan in 1981, the Dadasaheb Phalke -- the highest award in Indian cinema -- in 2005, the French government's Commandeur de l'ordre des Arts et lettres (Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters) in 2001, and Order of Friendship from the Russian government in the same year.

He was a member of the Rajya Sabha from 1998 to 2003. He served as a jury member of various film festivals, including Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Moscow, Karlovy Vary, Tokyo, Tehran, Mannheim, Nyon, Chicago, Ghent, Tunis, and Oberhausen.

B-Town New Year Wishes

Continued from page 1

other and love for Mother Earth.

Sara Ali Khan: Thank you 2018, welcome 2019. Happy New Year. Looking forward.

Bhumi Pednekar: Happy happy memories. Thank you 2018 for being such an outstanding year,

preparing me for what's to come.

Kriti Sanon: Have a meaningful new year full of happiness, love and memorable moments with people who matter.

Sushant Singh Rajput: Be together and happy always.

Other stars also sent messages.

Astro Screenshot



From the Bollywood desk of Sanjay Jumaani:

#Simmba is our client & good friend Rohit Shetty's eighth film to cross Rs 100 cr mark... Rohit holds the record for maximum

films in Rs 100 cr Club... Indeed, Rohit is making the audience laugh in theatres and his distributors laugh all the way to the bank!

#Numerology #Jumaani #jumaanified

<p>416.742.3456</p> <p>1530 Albion Rd. Etobicoke</p>	<p>416.299.3456</p> <p>1571 Sandhurst Circle, Scarborough</p>	<p>905-707-3456</p> <p>115 York Blvd, Richmond Hill</p>
<p>albioncinema.com 416.742.1765</p> <p>newwoodsidecinemas.com 416.299.1045</p> <p>yorkcinemas.ca 905.707.3456</p>		

live with joy
purpose
confidence

Learn Sudarshan Kriya™

HAPPINESS PROGRAM

Health Energy Inner Peace

January 18-20

Fri.: 6.30 pm - 9.30 pm
Sat./Sun.: 10.30 am - 1.30 pm

Fee: \$375
Student: (\$275)

Art of Living Centre - GTA
14-1510 Drew Road
Mississauga, L5S 1W7

Jayant Gokal / Bhavik Parikh
(905)405-9642 gta@artofliving.ca

www.artofliving.org/ca-en/program/3328