

# PROGRAMMANUS

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## RADIO POPREEL

### Bollywood, India

#### Esshan Katara:

When you enter Filmcity, you're in Bollywood.

#### Pamela TW:

"When you enter Filmcity, you're in Bollywood."  
Every year, more than 1,000 movies are made in the heart of the Indian film capital. This 90s song, "Brimful of Asha", is a tribute to the **legendary** Indian movie playback singer, Asha Bhosle.

I'm Pamela, and you're listening to *Radio Popreel*.

#### SONG: "Brimful Of Asha" by Cornershop

*There's dancing, behind movie scenes  
behind the movie scenes, Sadi Rani*

*She's the one that keeps the dream alive  
from the morning  
past the evening  
to the end of the light*

#### **Brimful of Asha on the 45**

*Well, it's a brimful of Asha on the 45  
Brimful of Asha on the 45  
Well, it's a brimful of Asha on the 45*

#### **Somnath Sen, International Filmmaker and Vice President at the Whistlingwoods Filmschool:**

Although we make films in eleven languages, the main industry, which is known as "Bollywood", is based in a city called Mumbai, which used to be known as "Bombay", before. Our industry is big.

#### Pamela TW:

The international filmmaker, Somnath Sen, is also Vice President at the Whistling Woods Film School in Bollywood.

**legendary**  
*legendarisk*

**brimful**  
*fyllt till  
brädden/sprängfyllt  
the 45  
vynylsingel (som snurrar  
med 45 varv i minuten)*



**Somnath Sen:**

The effect Indian films have on the Indian **audience** is as **tremendous**, whether it's fashion, whether it's style, whether it's a...making heroes out of our stars. So, the effect is huge, because there are no... Not too many entertainment avenues in India.

**SONG: "Palat Tera Hero Idhar Hai"**

**Pamela TW:**

This is the official song from the *Main Tera Hero* movie. Rahul Puri has experience from both the UK and the Indian film scenes.

**Rahul Puri, Head of the Department:**

I suppose our films are more colorful. More **melodramatic**. We have songs in our films; we have dances in our films. I suppose our films are a little bit more **escapist**. You have to understand that the majority of people here in India have very tough lives. So, when they go to the cinemas, they don't want to see all of that, all over again. They want escape from their real lives; they want to **aspire to** things. They want to see things that perhaps they're unlikely to ever see. So, **our films take them away from the mundaneness of their lives** and take them into...into a world that is mostly fantasy, but unique and colorful in their own way.

**Pamela TW:**

The place here is in the heart of the Indian film industry.

**Rahul Puri:**

Yes, that's right. Filmcity, which is the 300 **acres** that we're in, is where probably about 75 or 80% of all the films in...that are produced here in Bombay are made. There are 28 shooting floors here, of all **various** shapes and sizes. There's Reliance Studios down the road, which is one of the largest private film studios in the world. And, yeah, every major Bollywood production, Hindi film production, comes to shoot here at some point in time. Songs, outdoor **sequences**... All the things that make Indian films famous are shot here.

**SONG: "Jaande (The Bollywood Hit)" by Aneela**

**audience**  
*publik*  
**tremendous**  
*enorm*

**melodramatic**  
*överdrivet känslösam*  
**escapist**  
*drömmare/ngn som ägnar sig åt verklighetsflykt*

**aspire to**  
*sträva efter, längta efter*

**our films take them away from the mundaneness of their lives**  
*ungefär: våra filmer låter dem fly från den grå vardagen*

**acre**  
*tunnland*  
*(gammalt ytmått, 4047 kvadratmeter)*

**various**  
*olika, diverse*

**sequence**  
*sekvens*



**Rahul:**

We dance. We're happy, we dance. We're sad, we dance. When we want to dance, we dance. When we don't want to dance, we dance. I think that it's been built into the **narrative structure** of the films that we make now, to incorporate songs and dances as a way to push the story forward. They're not **merely** there as song and dance pieces. They're there... They introduce characters. They... They, you know, introduce parts of the narrative. And, you know, our films unwind, a lot of **the stories actually unwind** during the songs, so they're **absolutely integral**.

**SONG: "Jaande (The Bollywood Hit)" by Aneela**

**Somnath Sen:**

The narrative style in India is based on our traditions of **storytelling**, which go back as far as Western traditions. So, all of, as you know, Western storytelling comes from the Greeks, Aristotelian storytelling.

Our storytelling is based on our traditions, which is a lot of folk theater, which is a lot of music. I would like to say that Indian storytelling is steeped in music. Music might even be the **matrix** of our storytelling. So, when we are born we sing, when we die, we sing, we sing for every other **occasion**. **Harvest festivals**, we sing. When somebody's child is born, we sing. Marriages, we sing.

So... This culture of storytelling which is based in music, automatically came into our storytelling, which is not really understood by the West. But this is something we grew up with, because it is part of our culture. So, the day that Indian film started talking... The first Indian talkie film was a film called *Alam Ara*, which was made in 1931. The day the Indian film started talking, it also started to sing and dance.

**SONG: "Dekh Ke Teri Nazar" by Asha Bhosle**

**Pamela:**

This is the legendary singer, Asha Bhosle, with her song, "Dekh Ke Teri Nazar". She has sung **playback** for over 1,000 movies, since her **career** started in 1943.

Shernaz Patel is Head of Acting at the film school.

**narrative structure**  
*berättarstruktur*

**merely**  
*bara, endast*

**the stories unwind**  
*historierna nystas upp*  
**absolutely integral**  
*här: absolut nödvändiga*

**storytelling**  
*historieberättande, sagoberättande*

**matrix**  
*här: källa, ursprung*  
**occasion**  
*tillfälle*  
**harvest festivals**  
*skördefester*

**playback**  
*playback (med sång och musik uppspelad i bakgrunden medan artisen mimar)*  
**career**  
*karriär*



**Shernaz Patel, Head of Acting:**

I work here as the Head of Acting, and I teach acting here, so that's my day job, while I'm **struggling** to, you know, work in the theater, and I have my own theater production company. So, I've been doing theater for the past 25 years, and my parents are also both from the theater, so I come with a kind of theater tradition. It's fun teaching, it's fun **passing on** your knowledge to the next generation.

**Pamela TW:**

What's typical for acting the Indian way?

**Shernaz Patel:**

I think the Indian basic ethos is, you know, internationally there's a lot of subtext, a lot of things that are left unsaid or under the surface. I think, we being a very emotional culture, we tend to **keep our hearts on our sleeves**. So, I think performance-wise, even though we are aiming, obviously, for truthful acting, there is a sense of a little bit of a "**larger than life**" performance style. And of course, in mainstream Bollywood, there is dancing.

**Somnath Sen:**

Why is cinema so popular in India? You know, I'm not a sociologist, so I can just give you my personal opinion. For one thing, there aren't too many avenues of entertainment in India. Television does not reach a certain part of our population, but cinema does. So there are these people who will take a projector and a white bed sheet, and go to villages and show movies and charge some 2 **rupees**, 3 rupees, 5 rupees. So, cinema has historically been the main entertainment that our **audiences** are used to.

Also, at the beginning of cinema, just like in Europe, subjects, lay subjects, started being told in stories. In India, it was mythology. Early Indian cinema spoke mostly about mythology, so somewhere there was this connection of the stories that cinema was telling, and a family audience. So, the Indian audience never got **fragmented** into an adult audience or a children's story. Indian filmmakers try to make their stories **palatable** to the whole family, so that a father, mother, two kids, can all go and watch the film together. And grandparents also, to keep within themes that the whole family can watch, to not be too violent, to not be too **sexually explicit**.

**to struggle**  
*att kämpa*

**pass on**  
*föra vidare*

**wear heart on sleeve**  
*visa sina känslor öppet*

**larger than life**  
*här: storslaget (på ett överdrivet sätt)*

**rupee**  
*indisk valuta*

**audience**  
*publik*

**fragmented**  
*fragmenterad, splittrad*  
**palatable**  
*angrämt, tilltalande*

**sexually explicit**  
*här: sexscener, pornografiskt material*



So, they try to make films that a whole **cross-section** of people can like. I think that's the reason Indian cinema is so popular in India.

**Pamela TW:**

Film industry all over the planet has got the same problem, the inclusion of female directors. Your country... How is it in Bollywood?

**Somnath Sen:**

It's even worse. It's even worse than the rest of the world. In fact, I'm ashamed to say that most films, **mainstream** films, which are sold on star power, are sold because of the hero, never because of the lady **lead**. In fact, the lady leads pretty much in big films don't matter. I talk to my students all the time; I want them to change it.

Lately, we have seen some films which have been...have had females in the lead. That's one big difference from Hollywood. Even today people are writing scripts for Meryl Streep, for Jodie Foster, **single-lead films**. In India, very little. Very little. We are seeing a few women directors **emerge**. We have a lot in the documentary area, because of activism, women's issues. But not in the mainstream filmmaking world, unfortunately.

**Pamela TW:**

When do you think it will change?

**Somnath Sen:**

I hope it changes. I don't know if it will. We are a... We are a society in **transition**. We are going from a very traditional, **agrarian**-based economy, to a more globalized, modern economy. Somewhere, we are still a mix of traditional and modern, where even in cities, major **metropolises**, you'll see a lot of influence of our agrarian past. There's nothing wrong with that. We still respect our parents; our students respect us - the teachers. But somewhere that patriarchy **intervenes**.

Girls... Girl children are not treated as well as boy children. They are sometimes denied education because their brothers need to go to school. So, we are a very **unequal** society, compared to much of where you guys are from, much of the West.

**cross-section**  
*tvärsnitt*

**mainstream**  
*konventionell,  
huvudriktning*  
**lead**  
*huvudroll*

**single-lead films**  
*Filmer där  
huvudpersonen är en  
berömd skådespelare  
som förväntas bära upp  
hela filmen. Manus skrivs  
med denne skådespelare  
i åtanke.*  
**emerge**  
*dyka upp, komma fram*

**transition**  
*förändring, övergång*  
**agrarian-**  
*jordbruks-*

**metropolises**  
*metropoler, storstäder*

**intervene**  
*komma emellan*

**unequal**  
*ojämlik*



It is all changing for the better, I know. But I think part of women being **absent** in the workspace in most areas, especially in film, is because of this...this traditional **patriarchal** society we live in. But are women making their presence felt? Absolutely. Absolutely, in all areas. I'm not saying that women are not there at all, but I wish there were more. We don't have as many women as we should have in the film industry or in most other areas.

### SONG: "Dekh Ke Teri Nazar" by Asha Bhosle

#### Pamela TW:

Could a child from rural, poor India come to Bollywood and become a star?

#### Shernaz Patel:

You know, of course you can. People come here from all over the country. Every day they're just **pouring** in, with this dream to be an actor. And, you know, that's what dreams are for. They can be achieved. I don't think, luckily, especially in performing, or in any creative field, I don't think your economic background or your educational background really **affects** your, you know, your possibility of **achieving** your dream, so, you know. And we know of so many success stories, of people who've been **bus conductors** and become big actors, and all kinds of stories. People come from all over, and make it. So, that's the fantastic thing, I think, about being in any creative profession.

#### Pamela TW:

It's like the dream of Bollywood and the dream of Hollywood.

#### Shernaz Patel:

Yeah, I think so. I think so.

#### Pamela TW:

"Everyone can become a star in Bollywood", said Shernaz Patel. Or, at the very least, an extra. That happened to Niall Todd from Scotland. He was traveling in India and was **approached by** an agent. First, Niall thought the man was trying to sell him a carpet. Then he realized he was a **film scout**.

**absent**  
*frånvarande*

**patriarchal**  
*patriarkal,  
mansdominerad*

**pouring**  
*flödar, väller*

**affect**  
*påverka*  
**achieve**  
*uppnå*

**bus conductors**  
*busskonduktörer*

**approached by**  
*kontaktad av*

**a film scout**  
*talangjägare,  
talangscout*



**Niall Todd:**

Basically, it seemed a little bit **seedy**, because you're sort of used to people approaching you, you know: "Hello, my friend, would you like to buy a carpet?" Why would a tourist want to buy a carpet is beyond me. But somebody said: "Would you like to be in a Bollywood film?" "Sure."

Out of [unintelligible], a lot of other people didn't quite like sort of waiting around all night, because it was a night shoot, so, sort of 7:00 p.m. till 7:00 a.m. And I loved it. I didn't **complain**. I went back for the second day, when they needed more.

**Pamela TW:**

What's your opinion on Bollywood mainstream movies?

**Niall Todd:**

I'm not the target audience, I think. But I mean all the techniques are the same, and the song **sequences**... Again, it's something extra, because it's basically music videos inside the film. So, you almost get to see something else for free when you watch one. So, it's exciting seeing them shoot...shoot them with multi-camera set-ups and things like that as well.

**SONG: "Palat Tera Hero Idhar Hai"**

**Pamela TW:**

If you want to be an extra, or maybe even a star, in a Bollywood film, the best place to hang out in Mumbai is Cafe Leopolds or Colaba. They are places where agents look for Europeans who want to do a bit of acting in a Bollywood production.

**Pamela TW:**

Keshav Uppal has lived almost all his life in Canada, but now, he has moved to India and wants to make it big as an actor in Bollywood.

**Keshav Uppal:**

My background's Indian. I'm from Canada myself, though. I've... I was born in Canada, I was raised in Canada, and I've spent about seven years in India. And then I went back to Canada for university, and high school, so I was there for a bit.

**seedy**  
*sunkigt*

**complain**  
*klaga*

**sequence**  
*sekvens, stycke*



And then I came here and I chose India because I've always wanted to become an actor. Like, I did theater in school. I didn't do it as much in university. I was in a totally different field in university. It was economics and **political science**. But I always wanted to become an actor, so... It was either Los Angeles or it was Mumbai, but I was more inclined toward the Hindi film industry, because I still spent a lot of time just watching that growing up. So, that's why I chose Mumbai.

**Pamela TW:**

So, during your childhood in Canada, you saw Bollywood films at home and...

**Keshav Uppal:**

Yeah, my dad used to rent out... At that time we had VCRs, so we used to rent out these VHSs, and then we used to bring them home. On the weekend, we used to watch a movie then. But I didn't watch them too much over there. But when I moved here, for the first time in India, when I was about six or seven, I think, by then, and that's when I really got into the movies, because that's what the kids talked about in school. That's what really pulled me towards them. And then I saw people dancing. I used to copy them, and not just Holly...Bollywood. It was Michael Jackson. I used to copy Michael Jackson *a lot* as a kid. So I had this **tendency** in me. And then I just started watching those movies and then I kind of grew into them.

**SONG: "Whistle Baja" by Heropanti**

**Esshan Katara:**

It's pretty much in our culture that, you know, the productions that we make are musicals, in a way. If you go to the roots of Sanskrit tirtha, where it all started, it used to have about 11, 10-11 songs. So that is still in our culture, which is why you see a lot of dancing, and you just randomly leap into a dance in movies as well. So, we've retained that, so it's pretty much a **part and parcel** of it. In fact, it's quite **integral**. You end up telling a story within those three minutes.

**Pamela TW:**

Aninav Sharma is studying to become an actor. And now, a short visit to the dance class and the video shoot at Whistling Wood International Film School,

**political science**  
*statskunskap*

**tendency**  
*här: böjelse, benägenhet*

**part and parcel**  
*en viktig del av något*  
**integral**  
*väsentlig*





where the actors as to be, Esshan Katara, Shristi Mitra, Aninav Sharma, Chiragi Patil, Nirhomi Mali and Stalia Pinto are practicing their dance moves **from dusk to dawn**.

**Shristi Mitra:**

Dance is all about expressing yourself. And expressing your emotions and it's good.

**Stalia Pinto:**

It needs a lot of hard work. A lot of hard work. Rehearsals. We start our day from 8:00 in the morning and end up during this time, 10:00 to 12:00.

**Nirmohi Mali:**

At first you know it's very... You learn your mistakes quickly, you know, you find out you're stiff; you can't do all the movements. So, yeah, it's learning. Learning process.

**Esshan Katara:**

Especially we were very **stiff** when we started. We are non-dancers. We are from a theater background, and we just never had to dance much. So, we are pretty new to it, and we just didn't know how to move our body parts. And we are just not **aware of** it, so that's good learning that as to how an actor uses his body.

**Shristi Mitra:**

So, do you want to become Bollywood star?

**Males together:**

Absolutely!

**Esshan Katara** Yes! That is why we are here.

**Stalia Pinto:**

Come to Bollywood, baby!

**SONG: "Om Shanti Om" by Kishore Kumar**

**Pamela:**

Niclas Jensen, Carl Nilsson and myself, Pamela Taivassalo Wikholm, produced the program. You have been listening to *Radio Popreel*.

**from dusk to dawn**  
*från morgon till kväll*  
**dusk** - *gryning*  
**dawn** - *skymning*

**stiff**  
*stel*

**aware of**  
*medveten om*