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SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



Music Mogul's Unsung Lines



Actress Elina Samantray, who is busy promoting her upcoming women-centric movie 'Drustikona', loves reading mythological books on non-working Sundays. Watching 'Ramayana' and other mythological series is her favourite pastime, says the 'Love Station' actress



With her pets

Stray care

I have adopted six stray doggies and I take their care not only on Sundays but on all my days-off. Apart from routine care, I also take them for vaccination at regular intervals. I enjoy their company when I am free.

Brother's favourite

I don't like hanging out with friends at parties. I love being at home and with my family, with brother Reet in particular. I gorge on cheese maggi prepared by him on Sundays. I also enjoy shopping with him and mom.



With brother Reet



With co-artists

Gossip session

We hold a gossip session on Sundays when Reet, mom and I chat for hours on trivial issues. We thoroughly enjoy those leisurely hours.

Passionate writer

Writing is a passion for me. So, I manage to take some time off from my busy schedule to write English quotes that come spontaneously to me.

Fitness freak

I follow a Korean trainer for my daily workout sessions. On Sundays, I spend extra half an hour to get good results.

Being spiritual

I discovered my spiritual side soon after the Covid outbreak in 2020. It was then I found my new love, reading mythological books. I also binge-watched Ramanand Sagar's Ramayana at that time. Since then, I have not looked back and kept exploring my new passion.

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes received to: features.orissapost@gmail.com
 And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- My wife is so negative. I remembered the car seat, the stroller, AND the diaper bag. Yet all she can talk about is how I forgot the baby.
- What do you call the age of a pilgrim? Answer is pilgrimage.
- What is the biggest lie in the entire universe? And the answer is "I have read and agree to the Terms & Conditions."
- PATIENT: Doctor, I need your help. I'm addicted to checking my Twitter! DOCTOR: I'm so sorry, I don't follow.

A MUSICAL VIRTUOSO

Dear Sir, The tete-a-tete with Mukund Dev (April 17), the renowned Dhrupad singer and exponent of Nada Yoga was an interesting read. The exposition to various genres of Indian classical music at a relatively young age not only honed his musical sensibilities to perfection but also enriched his repertoire in the realm of classical music. As a soloist, the gifted vocalist has earned widespread acclaim for his performances at major music festivals in the country. His musical versatility came to the fore when he evolved a new musical variety by successfully blending Dhrupad, Agra and Gwalior Gharana styles. A leading protégé of Guru Bijayananda Nayak (Gwalior Gharana), he was a lead musician in the theatrical productions of the Habib Tanvir group and classical dance performances of the Lata Singh Munshi dance ensemble. Sunday POST deserves plaudits for featuring this multi-faceted musical virtuoso.

AMIT BANERJEE, NEW DELHI

LETTERS

A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to features.orissapost@gmail.com
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Musical genius Prafulla Kar, through his soulful creations, has ruled the playlist of several generations but not many are aware about his indomitable human spirit and the circumstances that established him as a legend

Music Mogul's Unsung Lines

BIJAY MANDAL, OP

Legendary musician Prafulla Kar has presented an imperishable treasure trove to Odia music which is still a matter of discussion across media platforms even as it has been nearly a week to his unexpected exit from Odisha's cultural firmament. This space will be too small if one sits to write about his brilliance in Odissi music, light classical vocal or how he incorporated Odia literature in Odia films. But not many people are aware about his indomitable human spirit and the circumstances that estab-

lished him as a legend.

Sunday POST brings you a few interesting, lesser-known corners from the life of the musical genius.

Bonding with 'Kuni Nani'

He shared a warm relationship with his sister 'Kuni Nani' who is more popular as the Iron Lady of Odisha or Daughter of Fire. Yes, she was Nandini Satpathy, his cousin (father's sister's daughter). So much so, that on a rare occasion, Nandini, once considered the eyes and ears of the

more than my share. In fact, I used to idolise her which I still do. At that time, she had joined as a Minister of State in Indira Gandhi's cabinet and was allotted a quarter at 2, Janpath. After about a week of joining the ministry, she made an urgent call to my mother seeking my immediate presence at her place in Delhi. Reason: The area was isolated and jackals could be spotted roaming on her verandahs. So, she was not at ease at her new residence. After learning this, I rushed to the national capital without



then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, had to call his younger brother Prafulla to give company at her new ministerial quarter in Delhi.

Recalling that incident in his regular column *Saamta Smriti* published in Odia monthly magazine *Pourusha*, Kar said, "Kuni Nani's care was known to all but I was fortunate to be blessed with little

further delay. The original plan was to stay there for a week or two but I stayed back for over four months as I had no work at hand."

He went on to add, "As I was idling at her place she was concerned about my future. She even arranged a cushy job for me in Delhi. But after learning that I had an interest in practicing law or doing business, Nani didn't force me as I had her confidence."

Commoner at CM's grievance cell

By the time Nandini Satpathy became the Chief Minister of Odisha, Kar had already carved a space in Odisha's music scene. But it was not easy then to eke out a living from music. The going was tough.

However, he never approached his CM 'Nani' for any favour. One day, his friend film director Dhira Biswal almost forced him to meet his high profile kin to resolve his problems. So, he met the Odisha CM but not as her brother but as a common citizen of Bhubaneswar standing in the queue at her grievance cell. Satpathy too was shocked to spot him in the line. Known for her professional approach, she too asked him to follow the standard operating procedure like others if he wanted the matter to be taken up. Needless to say, the matter was taken up by CMO on merit.

Prafulla-Harihar, friends forever

If Prafulla Kar was the singer, composer and music director, his school friend Harihar Mishra from Puri was his songwriter. Harihar would write songs on contemporary issues and Prafulla would work on them. The two, ardent lovers of Odissi music, had shifted their base from Puri to Cuttack for a flourishing career. The camaraderie was such that Prafulla became upset when Harihar left Cuttack after landing a government position. But they remained in touch and continued to work in tandem.



With friend Harihar Mishra

Harihar, a former Sahitya Akademi president, recalls their bonding by saying, "During Chinese aggression in 1962, All India Radio had arranged a musical programme at Cuttack to spread patriotism and raise funds for the soldiers. The event, comprising all auditioned radio artistes, was to be relayed by several centres. At that time my friend Prafulla was not an auditioned singer of AIR. Still he asked me to write a song which he would perform. Though it was beyond the protocol, he managed to get an assurance from event's coordinator actor Hemanta Das that he would be given an opportunity to perform before a large audience. Seeing his zest, I started penning the patriotic song Ratri Pahichi..Jatri Chalichi. But unfortunately there was a power cut in Puri, so I had to continue in the lantern light. As if that was not enough, my fountain pen ran out of ink. I was afraid that I might forget some important lines if left incomplete. So, I cut my finger tip with the lantern glass and completed the song by dipping the pen's nib in my blood."

Harihar continues: "But our efforts seemed for a lost cause as the music director Bhubaneswar Mishra rejected Prafulla outright as he was not an auditioned artiste. Since we had given so much to this song, I was determined to give my friend the opportunity by any means. Left with little choice, I snatched the microphone from anchor Hemanta Das before he could announce the closure of the event and told the audience, 'the last song of the event, dedicated to the nation, will be presented by budding singer Prafulla Kar'. Even though AIR didn't record the song, Prafulla gave one of his best performances on that occasion and it was not less than an achievement for us."

Mohd Rafi & important life lessons

Had everything been gone according to the plan, not Shantanu Mohapatra but Prafulla Kar would have been given credit for making legendary singer Mohd Rafi sing his first Odia song. For the record book, Kar is the first Odia music director to rope in Rafi to sing for a bilingual film *Jharana* (Hindi-Odia) but it remained unreleased.

Recalling the entire episode, Kar in his *Saaunta Smruti*, revealed, "I was approached by M Bhimeswar Rao from Madras to score music for the local version of a Hindi-Odia bilingual movie *Jharana*. Shankar-Jaikishan was roped in for the Hindi version. Legendary playback singer Mohd Rafi had to lend voice for both versions. I was quite excited to direct Rafi. But the production house put a condition that my compositions have to be approved by



Duttaram, the assistant of Shankar-Jaikishan. My friend Harihar Mishra, the songwriter of the movie, and I went to Mumbai and after a couple of sessions we were introduced to Rafi Saab. He was very

happy with the composition and my rendition. He was excited when told by Duttaram ji that the songs will top the chart. After the mahurat, our photographs with Rafi Saab and Duttaram were splashed in prominent film magazines of Mumbai and I was on cloud nine. Perhaps directing Rafi had gone to my head and I had crossed the line between confidence and arrogance.

The movie was shelved and with that my dreams of making Rafi sing his first Odia song."

This reminded him of his grandfather's advice that God may forgive man's several mistakes but not arrogance which was proved in that case, admitted Kar.

Gesture that caught detractors off balance

Akhaya Mohanty and Prafulla Kar are two glowing stars of Odisha's musical sky. The duo ruled the scene for decades and created many timeless and soul stirring songs. They also received countless awards and honours for their contributions to music. However, like their creations their professional

rivalry too was legendary.

But what happened at an award event in 2011 scripted a new chapter in the history of Odia music industry. Eminent poet and storyteller Satya Das was a witness to that incident.

Bioscope award is one of the most prestigious awards of Odia film industry and the 'Prince' of Odia music industry Prafulla Kar was nominated for the honour in 2010-11. The organisers were in search of a person who can match his stature and do the honour of felicitating the legend, says Das.

Kar came to know about the organisers' dilemma and told them not to worry. "My mother will be the chief guest of this event and it will be an honour to receive the award from her hands," he said to the organisers, recalls Das.

The event arrangers were at their wit's end as Kar's mother had passed away long back. They wondered who he was referring to as his mother.

It was none other than Subarna Manjari Devi, mother of his arch rival Akshaya Mohanty.

He had seen his mother in Subarna Manjari and the organisers finally had to bring an ailing Subarna Manjari to the event. Prafulla came down from the stage to receive the award from her December 9, 2011 at Sahid Bhawan, Cuttack amid thunderous applause. After that, there wasn't a dry eye in the hall, recalls Das, adding, the incident also turned his detractors into his admirers.



With Subarna Manjari Devi, mother of legend Akhaya Mohanty



Prafulla donned an actor's hat in Odia film *Mukti* as the performance of the original actor was not up to the director's satisfaction



At a recording studio with director Dhira Biswal and playback singers Vani Jayram and Chitta Jena

Tied to tradition

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

Sambalpur district stands out uniquely in the cultural canvas of the country. Be it language, attire, food, festivals, dance and music, Sambalpur is the epicenter of a very high profile and rich culture. And when it comes to Sambalpuri dance and music, they play an indispensable part of the culture of western Odisha. Therefore, it is time to recognise the folk artistes who have put this art form, derived itself from the city of Sambalpur, on a global platform. While there are many who have made the region and state proud with their spellbinding skills, **Sunday POST** caught up with folk artiste couple Mohit Kumar Swain and Padmini Dora to learn more about their struggle to uplift Sambalpuri folk art.

Mohit is many things rolled into one. He is a folk performer, dhol player, teacher, choreographer and researcher. So far, he has conceived, designed, executed and participated in more than 200 festivals, seminars, exhibitions and workshops of national repute. On the other hand, Padmini, popular as Teejan Bai of Odisha and Cuckoo of western Odisha, and recipient of prestigious awards like Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar and Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, is one of the most sought-after artistes of Odisha. With more than 200 stage shows and a spate of albums to her credit, Padmini has travelled across the country to propagate the folk culture of Sambalpur. That's not all. Their children Sriyansi Subhadarshini and Chandrasekhar are also doing their bit to spread Sambalpuri dance and music in and around the country. While singing and dancing skills of Sriyansi have made her a household name in Sambalpur, Chandrasekhar has carved a niche for himself for his flair in playing folk instruments. So, Mohit's whole family is on a mission to revive and popularise Sambalpuri folk art.

Folk dances in western Odisha stand a class apart for its typicality and no festival or celebration is complete without folk music and dance, says Mohit who has recently been conferred with Ph.D in Performing Arts having specialisation in Sambalpuri folk dance and music from Utkal University of Culture, Odisha. He has also been awarded with a national research fellowship (Jr) in folk and traditional dance from the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India for the year 2011-12 for his 26 years' contribution in the field of folk art. He has also authored two books titled *Paschima Odisha ra Loka Badya* and *Folk Dances of Western Odisha, A Triumph of Joy* in English for popularising the folk culture of western Odisha.

How did you get attracted towards Sambalpur dance and music? To this, Mohit who was born and brought up in Bargarh district replies, "My father Bihari Kumar

Swain was a folk singer and he used to recite Chhanda, Champu and Bhagabat at religious events. He used to take me to such programmes to make me learn music but I accompanied him just to collect some paisa offered to my father as part of 'dakhina' and eat chocolate. I couldn't know when I developed an interest towards Sambalpuri music and dance. I was so much in love with folk dance that I moved to Sambalpur in 1990 to learn the skills. I took admission in Gangadhar Meher College for my further studies. Famous Sambalpuri folk artiste Ranjan Kumar Sahu once came to our college during a cultural event. It was actor Manoj Mishra who made me meet Ranjan sir. Ranjan sir praised my steps and asked me to join his institution following which I got enrolled in his institution Ukai to hone my dancing skills. I used to be the only male dancer in the group and performed at several programmes for six years. Then I launched my own organisation Lahari to promote Sambalpuri dance and music."

Though Mohit had done post-graduation in History, Tourism Management and Performing Arts apart from doing MCA from Sambalpur University, he had no interest in going for a job. He got many job offers but he was so passionate about dance and music that he rejected every job opportunity. His decision also led to discontentment among his parents, but he followed his passion."

Padmini recounting her childhood days says, "Having blessed to have a musician parents, I took to music at an early age. My father Harishankar Dora was a khol (percussion) player and my mother Sobhabati Dora was a sankirtan singer. We were four sisters and two brothers. All of my siblings were good at dance or music. As we belonged to a poor farmer's family, becoming artistes was not even in our dreams. But my father was a fan of my voice. He took me to Guru Bijay Behera and Ratan Pujahari for my grooming."

She recalls: "My parents encouraged me to sing at home but were against my decision

to be a folk singer because a girl performing on stage was looked down upon in our society then. Being determined to make a mark as a

folk singer, I bought an old harmonium from my pocket money that I could save. In the meantime, I applied to All India Radio, Sambalpur where I happened to meet Mohit."

About his meeting with Padmini, Mohit says, "Padmini

AT A TIME WHEN SEVERAL FOLK ART FORMS ARE ON THE BRINK OF DISAPPEARANCE, MOHIT KUMAR SWAIN AND PADMINI DORA, AN ARTISTE COUPLE FROM SAMBALPUR, IS ON A MISSION TO POPULARISE SAMBALPURI DANCE AND MUSIC ON GLOBAL PLATFORMS

used to sing on the radio. I approached her requesting to sing for my group and she agreed. However, I was not aware that she was earlier rejected for singing in my troupe as a folk singer. I really felt bad. In the course of time, I developed a feeling for her. One day, I asked her if we could spend rest of our lives under one roof. She said yes and we got married without the support of our families. Initial days of our marital life were very tough. Our



Mohit and Padmini with their children

family, friends and neighbours had stopped talking to us and inviting us to functions just because we were folk artistes. We struggled for 12 years to create an identity in the field of folk art. We are happy that those who used to criticize us have now turned our fans."

Recalling her tough days, Padmini says, "I married Mohit against the wishes of my family because being an artiste he understood the artiste in me and was willing to support my dream. My family later realised that my decision to get married to Mohit was not wrong because he stood by me to make me what I am today."

Padmini is well versed in Sambalpuri genres like Nachniya, Bajniya, Dalkhai, Raserkali and Danda.

For her music is a passion and not her profession. "It's an art not a source of employment. I feel really privileged that I have got the opportunity to popularise this art form. Sambalpuri music was losing its popularity, so I formed a folk music band in 1998 to popularise it," says Padmini, adding, "Our band is called Padmini Dora & Group and we started it as a movement."

Padmini attributes her success to Mohit while Mohit owes his success to Padmini.

About her tryst with Sambalpuri dance, Sriyansi, who has 50 shows to her credit, says, "I was smitten by the dancing bug at the age of three. As both of my parents were into performing arts, it was quite

natural for me to develop an interest in dance. They first spotted my passion for Sambalpuri dance at an event in Kendrapara. My mother was part of that event. In the middle of the show, I suddenly walked up the stage and started dancing. My moves impressed the then District Collector and he too joined me on the stage. It was he who asked my parents to nurture my talent."





Kiara on her character from *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*

After the success of *Sher Shah*, Kiara Advani is back with her much-anticipated forthcoming film *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* starring Kartik Aaryan. Ahead of the film release, she took to her

Instagram handle and introduced her on-screen character Geet in the new motion poster.

Featuring her first look from the horror-comedy, Kiara is seen striking a petrified look as a scary hand approaches her head in the poster. Dropping hints about film, she wrote in the cap-

tion, "Meet Reet, Don't be fooled She's not so sweet".

Previously, Kiara had dropped the first teaser of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* and shared, "The haunted haveli is all set to reopen its doors! Are you ready?"

Apart from Kiara Advani and Kartik Aaryan, the film also stars Tabu in a pivotal role.

Helmed by Anees Bazmee, *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* will debut in theatres May 20 this year. It was previously slated to release in July 2021, however, it got pushed owing to the COVID-19 cases in the country. While it had booked March 25 as its final release date, the makers further pushed to May to void the clash with SS Rajamouli's *RRR* at the Box Office. **IANS**



Priyanka-Nick's baby girl name out

Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Nick Jonas, who welcomed their baby girl through surrogacy in January this year, have been tightlipped about their little one.

However, media reports suggest that their daughter has been named, Malti Marie Chopra Jonas.

TMZ has seen the birth certificate of the couple's child and has reported the baby girl's name. TMZ also revealed her time of delivery as January 15, 8 pm (Pacific Standard Time). While Malti is an Indian name of Sanskrit origin, Marie is a Christian name. The newborn has both her

parents' surnames and her names honour both her parents' heritage and culture.

Priyanka and Nick, who tied the knot in 2018, had shared the news of the little one lighting up their hearts with her arrival, a few days after her birth, on their social media.

Taking to her Instagram in January, Priyanka had shared a note where she wrote, "We are overjoyed to confirm that we have welcomed a baby via surrogate. We respectfully ask for privacy during this special time as we focus on our family. Thank you so much." **AGENCIES**

'I have worked with the entire Shahid Kapoor family'

In her upcoming film *Jersey*, Mrunal Thakur will be seen sharing screen space with Shahid Kapoor and his father Pankaj Kapur. But did you know that the actress has also got an opportunity to work with his step-mother Surpiya Pathak and brother Ishaan Khatter too?

She shares, "It all started with the film *Toofaan*, where I got to work with Supriya maam. Now, In *Jersey* of course I got to shoot with Shahid and Pankaj Sir. My next film *Pippa* is with Ishaan."

Talking about her experience working the actor and his family, Mrunal says, "The entire family is so talented, because everybody is bringing some x-factor to the table. I learnt a lot working with each of the member of the family. I learnt to surrender myself to the director from Pankaj Sir. From Supriya ji I learnt how to speak with your eyes. Shahid is extremely focused as an actor. He is very clear in his head about his character and this is what I learnt from him. Likewise, from Ishaan I learnt to feel the moment and grasp it."

The actress feels that

Shahid and Ishaan should do a film together. "I do feel that because they are such good actors I am sure they will be very good on screen together. Overall, it was amazing working with this family as through the journey I could discover myself in the entire process." **AGENCIES**



Yash wanted to debut in Hindi films with Deepika



KGF: Chapter 2 has been smashing box office records all week long. Meanwhile, a throwback video of *KGF* fame Yash has gone viral where he's talking about Deepika Padukone and the reason why he prefers to debut with her in a Hindi film. In that interview, Yash was asked the question, "One Bollywood actress you'd like to make a debut with in Bollywood?" To this Yash replied, "Deepika, since she is from Bengaluru."

This Bangalore connection is the reason why Yash prefers Deepika as his co-star in Hindi films. Not just that, Yash also had an interesting reply to a question involving Deepika's better-half Ranveer Singh. He was asked another question with relation to Hindi film industry. The question was, "One Bollywood star you look

upto?". To this Yash first replied, "Ranveer Singh is good." But then he realised his faux pas and changed his answer saying, "Oh sorry, I mixed that up. I meant Ranbir Kapoor." **AGENCIES**



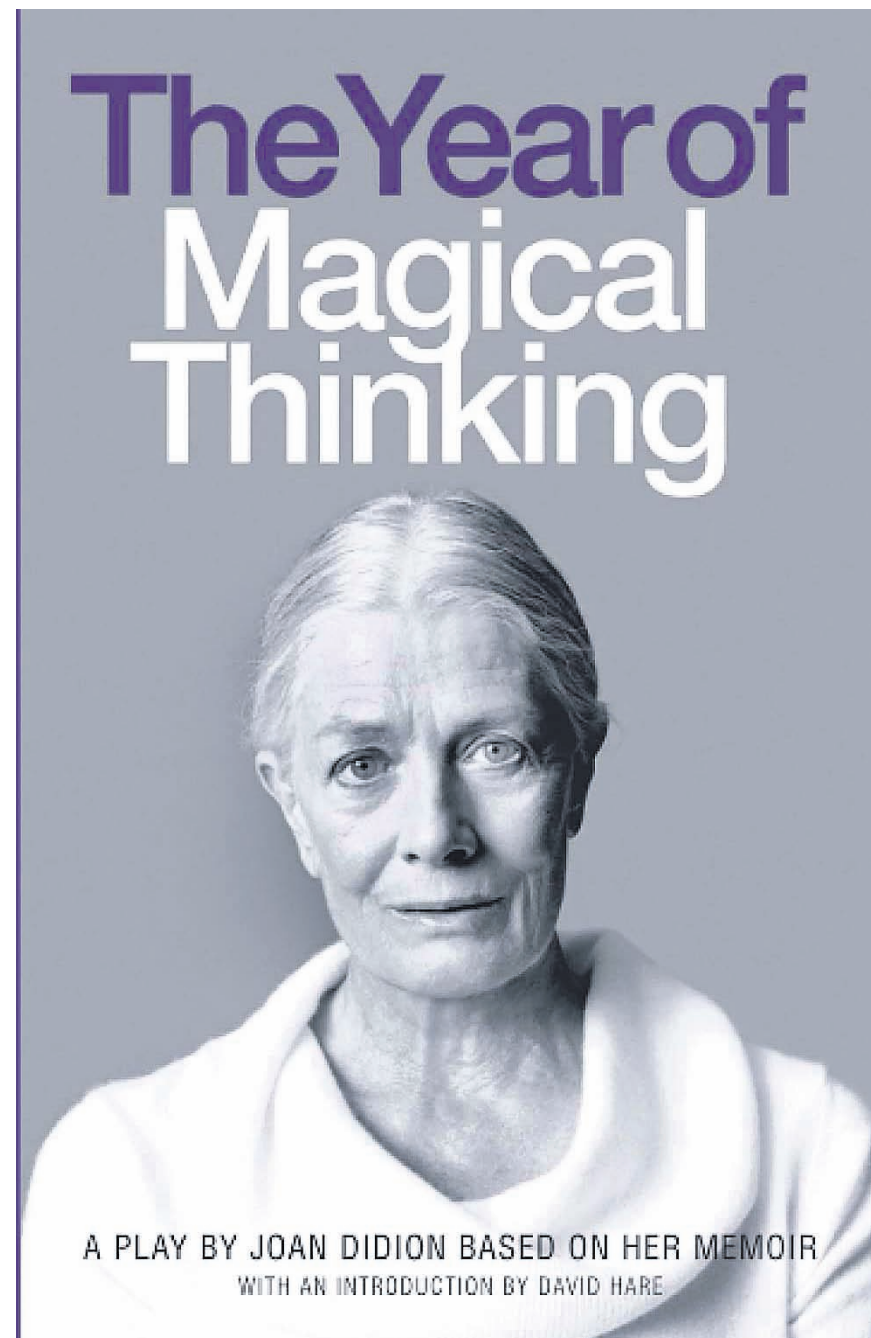
A testament to human spirit

Joan Didion the acclaimed essayist and novelist died recently leaving behind a legacy of reason and objectivity, an unflinching gaze at the world and its doings. A master stylist in her own right she worked on short clipped sentences with surgical precision saying so much by saying so little. "Nobody writes better English prose than Joan Didion" says the critic John Leonard, "Try to arrange one of her sentences and you have realized that the sentence was inevitable, a hologram". The Times of London called it "a masterpiece of restraint and perception." I discovered Didion in my own year of *Magical Thinking* when my husband passed away suddenly and she walked me through a journey of loss, pain, desolation and finding myself in the long aftermath.

The Year of Magical Thinking is a classic on mourning and grief, a portrait of a marriage and an account of loss that will speak to anyone who has ever loved and lost. Here she confronts the loss of her husband and fellow writer, John Gregory Dunne with characteristic courage even in the midst of overwhelming despair, the detachment to examine a devastating personal loss. The book opens with sentences like sledge hammer blows - "Life changes fast. Life changes in the instant. You sit down to dinner and life as you know it ends. The question of self-pity." Even in the midst of mourning she is the 'cool customer' going through the nitty gritty of her husband's medical records, her conversations with doctors and social workers and trying to cope with a daughter at the edge of life in the ICU when an ordinary flu morphed into a serious infection. This is a testament to the human spirit that carries on despite enduring an intimate tragedy and on the brink of another. Through the ephemerality of life she retains the ability to process grief and capture the universal madness of mourning, wrestling and writing alongside her emotions.

She was not prepared to accept his death as definitive, what had happened was reversible. She needed to spend the first night alone so that he could come back. This was the beginning of the year of magical thinking. Even as she was packing to give away his personal effects she felt she could not give away his shoes because he would need the shoes when he returned. On the one hand we have the clear knowledge that a loved one has died and on the other the magical belief that he will return. This is the disorientation that grief brings, the power to derange thought and emotion, morphing life and death - "a single person is missing you and the whole world is empty".

"Grief has no distance. Grief comes in paroxysms, sudden apprehensions that weaken the knees and blind the eyes and obliterate the dailiness of life". *The Year of Magical*



Thinking is so powerful in the pulsing vulnerability of the human predicament, to cope, understand and move forward in a largely unthinking world. A recurring motif is the 'vortex' which she describes as a wave of memories that come unbidden, triggered by things that remind her of her husband and daughter and drive her back to her cycle of grief. "There was nothing I did not discuss with John. Our days were filled with the sound of each other's voices", the small routine gestures of many couples contained in the unspoken steadfastness of love. They wrote together, they travelled together as journalists, finished each other's sentences, a habit which made their conversation a "two

person monologue". They were in Didion's words 'terrifically and terribly dependent on one another.'

In the midst of her heartbreak is the candour with which she shares her experiences and the vulnerability she offers. In Didion's own grief are comfort and recognition for her readers with whom her words resonate "Grief turns out to be a place none of us know until we reach it." After her husband's death she seeks solace in an old manners handbook. "Mrs Post would have understood that. She wrote in a world in which mourning was still recognised, allowed, not hidden from view." In writing about her grief Didion created a world that mourns recognisably,

permissibly and publicly. She removes the shroud surrounding death and shows us how lonely and isolating grief is. In doing so she creates a chance for connection and solidarity.

Didion's grief is far from self indulgence or self pity. For all the words she offers in remembrance of her husband, she is equally strong in her commitment to live life as a functioning individual. When she hosts the ritual Christmas dinner she did with her husband she says, "I was also doing it for myself, a pledge that I would not lead the rest of my life as a special case, a guest, someone who could not function on her own". She leaves readers with an assurance that for her, death offers a sort of reunion with those she has lost. "In my unexamined mind there was always a point, John's and my death, at which the tracks would converge for a final time."

Didion is described as an exact and exacting writer, her prose like a shining carapace, terse, elliptical, clinical in detail. At the same time she is brittle and spectral, barely there. Her work is filled with parallelisms and rhythmic repetitions, literary references and the rigours of working earlier with the magazine 'Vogue- "we were connoisseurs of synonyms, collectors of verbs", she could delicately walk the line between the novels cool and detached writing style and its raw, intimate emotions. The repressed emotion amplifies the emotional undercurrent of the book. Her fragmentary paragraphing shows how grief fragments her thoughts. Her haunting rhetorical questions, questions addressed to her husband, questions he can no longer hear, questions he will no longer answer make Didion's loss more tangible. It documents grief in all its cruelty.

The memoir is only 227 pages but within these pages she captures a love that spanned over five decades and the grief that accompanies the loss of one's partner. In the wisdom that comes with grieving she says "I know why we try to keep the dead alive; we try to keep them alive in order to keep them with us. I also know that if we are to live ourselves there comes a point at which we must relinquish the dead, let them go, keep them dead." And in mourning the dead we are also mourning ourselves as we were and never will be again. The memoir is a marvel of magical thinking; an act of consummate literary bravery and the take away from the memoir are lessons in terms of becoming a better writer and a better human being.



SUDHA DEVI NAYAK



Sagarika

PHOTO : ODISHA FASHION VILLA