

## History Revisited

# DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARDS PRESENTED A TIME TO CELEBRATE, BUT ALSO TO THINK

Sometimes two minds think alike at the same time and the same place. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, Randhir Kapoor was at the Bhaidas Hall where the Dadasaheb Phalke Academy was presenting its annual awards. I was there too. Randhir was there to receive the award on behalf of his grand father, Prithviraj Kapoor and I was there to receive my award for my humble contribution to Journalism. I was sitting silently and thinking of all that was happening in the hall and all that was happening in the industry all over India, thinking if all this could have been possible if a man called Dhundiram Govind Phalke had not taken the bold step of risking all that he had to make the first ever Indian film "Raja Harishchandra" and even as my thoughts were running all over, Ranbir WHO was on stage and in his spirited speech he said, "Nothing would have been possible, no one would have been here not even Prithviraj Kapoor, Raj Kapoor, me or you or anybody if it was not for Dadasaheb Phalke". His speech received a thunderous ovation because everyone knew it was the only truth .....

The Academy is doing a wonderful job trying its best to keep the memories of the father of Indian Cinema alive and deserves all the praise and all the encouragement to carry on. But, it would do the Academy some good if it avoided some of its lapses. Why can't the Academy prevail upon every member of the Industry to be present at this most prestigious award? Why can't they be present when they can show off their importance at awards being given away by mere gossip magazines? Why has the Academy to ask for sponsors and plead with its own community to help with funds to have a better function? Why should there be lapses at a function of the Industry for the Industry? Like how could they not acknowledge the presence of the 91 year old Padmavibhushan Samshad Begum till someone with a heart stood up and reminded them about her being very much around? And how could they not allow a man like Manoj Kumar to speak? Why should a Chief Guest like Mahesh Bhatt leave the function



half way? Why was their so much confusion while distributing the awards? I am not raising these questions as criticism but out of love and care. I hope I am taken in the right spirit by all concerned and they take whatever I say seriously because I would like to see the next function organized in a much better way. My report on all that happened on that sacred and solemn morning which could have been much better than it was.

Dadasaheb Phalke Academy celebrated 140<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of father of the Indian film industry Shri Dadasaheb Phalke on 4<sup>th</sup> May at Bhaidas Auditorium, Mumbai. The anniversary falls on 30<sup>th</sup> of April but due to election on that day in the city it was decided by the members of the Academy to organise the event on 4<sup>th</sup> May.

On this occasion "Phalke Kalptaru Award" was presented posthumously to Prithvi Raj Kapoor and his grand son Randhir Kapoor was present to receive the honour.

In his brief but emotional speech Randhir said, "the members of our four generations are really grateful to Shri Dadasaheb.



Not only our family but all the members of my bigger family that is film fraternity will ever remain thankful to Shri Dadasaheb. Because of the efforts of Shri Dadasaheb lakhs of people are earning their live hood today." Randhir

Kapoor received the award from Ramesh Prasad of L V Prasad Group of Companies. and the members of the Phalke Academy joined with him to present the award.

Veteran writer-producer-director-actor Manoj Kumar had come with his wife, Shashi Kumar and son and the patriotic film maker was the recipient of "Phalke Ratna Award". The gorgeous Sridevi presented the award to him. "Phalke Golden Singer Award" was presented to Ms. Shamshad Begum and Randhir Kapoor presented her the award. Despite her ill health Shamshad Begum came to receive her award and it was indeed a touching scene when this 90 years plus old singer stood from her chair to thank with the the folded hands for the applause she received, "on receiving this award at this age I feel really very happy" only this she could say with her choeked voice.

The "Phalke Legend Actor Award" was presented to Shammi Kapoor but due to his ill health he could not make it so Randhir Kapoor received the award on his behalf. Ashutosh Gowariker was presented with The "Phalke Memorial Commercial Film Award" for his magnum opus "Jodha Akbar" while Surinder Kapoor was felicitated by "L V Prasad- Phalke Award". Boney Kapoor, Sridevi and Sanjay Kapoor

also joined him on this occasion. Randhir Kapoor presented award to Sr. Jornalist Ali Peter John, for his contribution in Film Journalism. Music director Vipin Reshamiya was honoured for his valuable contribution in the field of music and his son Himesh Reshamiya enthralled the audience by singing somelines of his songs and added that "whatever I am today is because of the dedication of my father". The Academy also honoured the veterans who remained behind the camera and serve the industry and notable amongst them who were honoured were: writer B. R. Ishara, dance director Jay Borade, cinematographer Alok Das Gupta, hair dresser Manju Sharma, make-up artist Anand. Kumar Jagdane, dressman Bhalchandra Chandekar, dubbing artist Ajay Chaddha, still photographer Kalapi Joshi, music director Surinder Kohli, production executive Manik Gupta, stuntman Yasin Lala etc.

As this Academy felicitates member of every craft from super star to spot boy the Chief guest of the function Shri Mahesh Bhatt remarked, "today we quench our thirst from the water of the wells dug by others.

As we go ahead we should also look back and take care of those who made the way for us. This Academy is doing the right job by honouring our veterans".

In all it was an event with tons of nostalgic value and it will be cherished for a my long time.

- A. P. J.