

LENSIGHT

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Special Issue on Kumar Shahani

Call for Papers

FTII intends to bring out a special issue of *Lensight* on the cinema of great Indian auteur Kumar Shahani, around May-June 2018.

Kumar Shahani is one among very few Indian directors who has searched for the possibility of indigenous cinematic forms from the very beginning of his creative career, in relation to the pre-colonial art forms like epic, *khayal*, miniature painting, dance, *abhinaya* or architecture. This decisive act of 'looking back' was not only to invoke the memory of pre-colonial times within the post-colonial amnesia, it was also to calibrate the momentousness of the 'present' as experience with its undercurrent of violence, desire and rupture. For that he has examined the potency of these art forms in innovating a cinematic gesture where the post-colonial experiences in the subcontinent can be looked at with great nuance and subtlety and can be freed from the dominant and somewhat canonized historical tropes. He is also a significant practicing theorist of cinema which gets amply clear from his series of essays over the decades, published in the collection *'Shock of Desire and Other Essays'* (Tulika Books, 2015). The issue of *Lensight* would try to initiate a much needed discourse on the legacy of cinematic thought of Kumar Shahani.

Proposals for critical essays in this regard are invited from artists, scholars, filmmakers and reserachers. Some of tke key areas of interest are being provided. The essayists are free to interpret these domains in their own terms and also may delve in associated areas of interest.

1. The notion of 'epic' in Shahani's works, the celebration of 'epic' and the critique of 'myth'
2. Intersection of thoughts of D D Koshambi, Ritwik Ghatak and Robert Bresson (the celebrated teachers of Shahani) in his films
3. Shahani's methodology of dialogue with literature with reference to his adapted works (*Maya Darpan, Kasba and Char Adhyay*)
4. Evolution of mise en scene and 'cinematic objects' in his films over the decades
5. The choreography of the bodies and the choreography of camera in Shahani's sensibility
6. Concept of colour in Shahani's films
7. The mode of narration and musicality in Shahani's films
8. The modes and methods of figuration in Shahani's works
9. Shahani's cinema as a site of specific modes of interaction among pre-colonial and modern art forms
10. Avant-garde elements in Shahani's works
11. Shahani's cinema: Marxist praxis, critical modernist journey
12. 'Indian New Wave' and works by Shahani
13. Shahani's cinema and international reception
14. 'Slow reading' of cinematic texts of Shahani
15. Maps of Mind, subjectivity, desire in cinema of Shahani
16. Treatment of Gender as signifier in Shahani's works
17. What does it entail to beocme a post-colonial practicing theoretician of cinema: the case of Shahani
18. Marks of *Itihasa* and ruptures of history in the cinematic voice of Shahani
19. Materiality of the medium of celluloid and sensuality of cinema of Shahani
20. Lessons for future from the silent archives of Shahani's works

Interested authors may send their abstracts within 300 words to lensighteditorial@gmail.com by 22nd of February, 2018. The authors of selected abstracts will be required to submit their full essays by 6th April, 2018. The relevant images may be submitted during the subsequent week.