

JANUARY 26-1 FEBRUARY, 2025

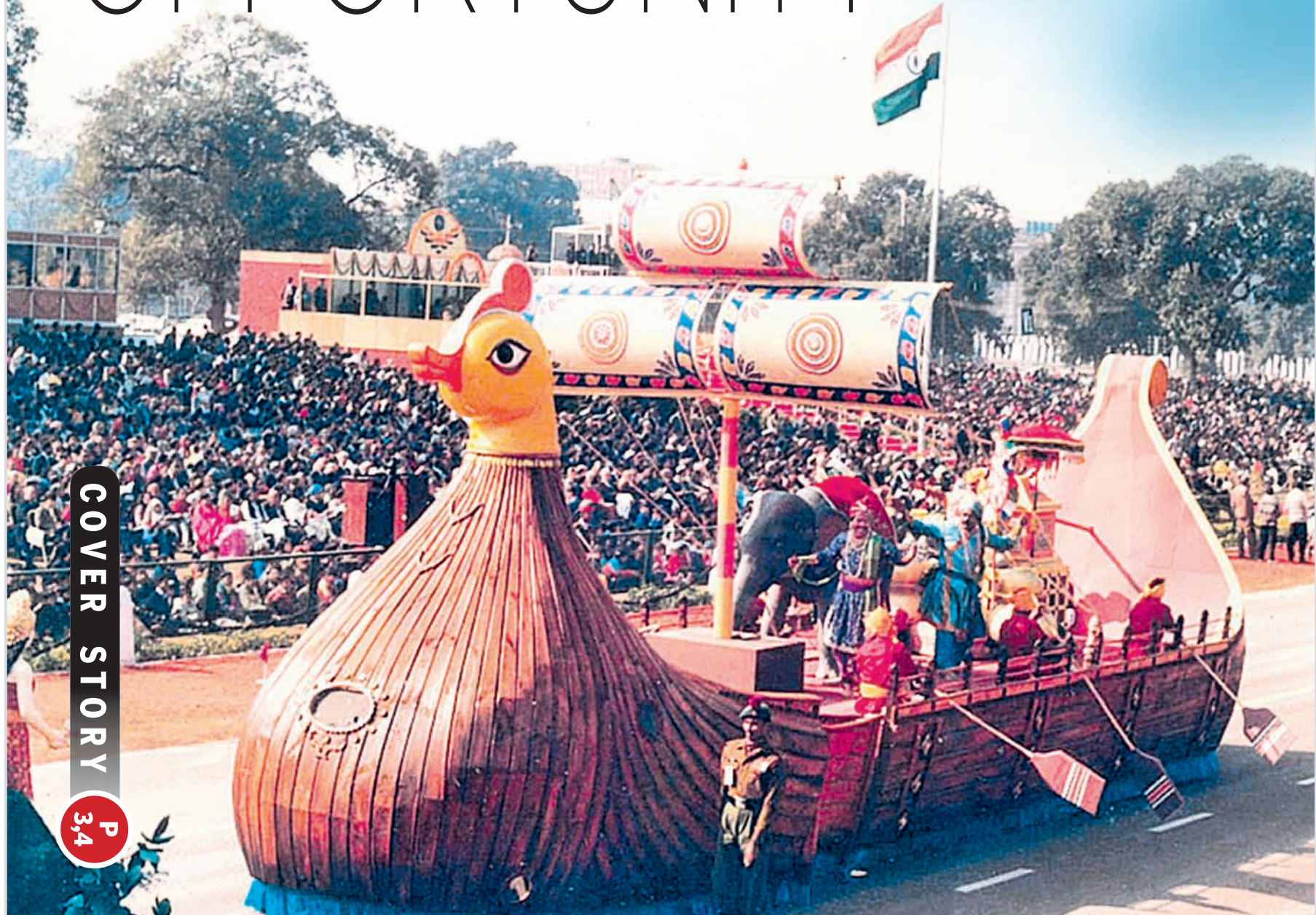
SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



A LOST

OPPORTUNITY



COVER STORY

P
3,4



Aneesh Raghavan is a distinguished Odissi dancer, Carnatic vocalist, and Sanskritist, embodying the perfect blend of artistic excellence and cultural depth. A disciple of the renowned Odissi exponent Sangeeta Dash, Aneesh has been rigorously trained for years in the unique Debaprasad Das style of Odissi. The alumnus of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education did his Masters in Sanskrit from Pondicherry University. He currently works as a research scholar in Sanskrit at Heidelberg, Germany. A recipient of several top honours in India and abroad, Aneesh loves to spend his leisure hours reading books

Day to bust stress

Sundays in Germany are my escape from professional pressures. They are entirely dedicated to my passion for dance, music, and literature.



With friends in Germany

Reconnection plan

I strategically plan my holidays to combine fieldwork with visits to India. This not only allows me to escape the harsh German winters but also gives me the opportunity to reconnect with my family and to perform vibrant winter season.

Guru and during India's dance festival

Companion for leisure

In my leisure time, I enjoy reading and composing music. Some of my most productive moments have been when I was immersed in reading.



Pushing boundaries

As an Odissi dancer and singer, Sundays are my practice days. I also work on mastering the Champus of Kishorachandrananda by Kabisurya Baladeba Ratha. Besides, I invest time in learning the Mardala, which enriches my understanding of the art form.

Love for north Indian cuisine

Although I enjoy eating, cooking is not my strong suit. If I could live without cooking, I'd happily choose that life! As a vegetarian, I relish dishes like paneer and naan, and North Indian cuisine has become a personal favourite despite my South Indian roots.

ANISHA KHATUN, OP



WhatsApp This Week

Only on **Sunday POST!**

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

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- Living on earth may be expensive, but it includes an annual free trip around the sun.
- My ex wrote to me: Can you delete my number? I responded: Who is this?
- You're not old until a teenager describes you as middle-aged.
- Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.

Trend reversal

Sir, This refers to a Tinsel Town story about Odia actress Sonam Dash. It's indeed a matter of pride that an Odia girl will make her debut in the Telugu film industry. She even claims to have signed a Tamil movie also. This marks a paradigm shift from a time when actors used to dream of appearing in Hindi movies, as Bollywood was considered the final destination as an actor. Though not many from Odisha could make it to Bollywood, barring some exceptions like Prashanta Nanda (*Naiyya*), Uttam Mohanty (*Naya Zaher*), Sadhu Meher (*Mrigaya* and several others), and Bijaya (Dolly) Jena (*Razia Sultan*, *Amma*, *The Naxalites*, and a few others), most actors certainly dream of getting a foothold in Mumbai. But with Hindi movies performing miserably at the box office, south-based pan-Indian movies are now becoming big draws for the aspiring actors.

SHAMITA SENAPATI, BHADRAK

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. Feel free to send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to

Features.orissapost@gmail.com
B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa.
Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948

A LOST OPPORTUNITY

Whether it's official criteria or political conspiracy or inefficiency of artists, Odisha's tableau will not roll on Kartavya Path this Republic Day. For a state, known for its timeless traditions, artistic brilliance and spiritual legacy, the exclusion has dealt a blow to Odia sentiment, leaving millions disheartened



ANISHA KHATUN, OP

Today, the nation is celebrating its 76th Republic Day and display of tableaux of different states showcasing their culture, tradition and heritage on Kartavya Path is an integral part of the celebration. However, Odisha tableau will not roll this year as the Ministry of Defence rejected the state's tableau proposal after five intense rounds of selection. For a state known for its timeless traditions, artistic brilliance and spiritual legacy, the news has come as a blow, leaving millions of Odias disheartened, who were eagerly waiting for the chance to see Odisha's cultural brilliance take center stage at the national capital. Republic Day parade is more than just a ceremonial event, it is a platform to celebrate India's diversity and Odisha's absence from it feels like a void in the nation's cultural narrative.

unity in diversity of the nation. For Odisha, whose history and traditions date back millennia, the tableau is a chance to gain its deserved spotlight amidst this diversity.

What could be the reasons behind such rejection? Is it political?



or lack of quality work? On the occasion of Republic Day, Sunday POST speaks to a few experts to learn about the practical

and examine how such exclusion can be addressed in future.

'Lack of structured approach could be a reason for exclusion'

Ramhari Jena, a national award-winning painter and first Odia artist to receive National Academy Award by Lalit Kala Akademi, says, "As an Odia artist, I feel that we failed to present a proper design and adequately represent our state and Odia culture during the selection process in Delhi. I think this maybe the primary reason for which we were not selected this year."



Jena believes that the authorities concerned should have been more proactive and a dedicated committee should have been formed specifically for this purpose. "Additionally, I think a competition should have been organised where art-

ists could submit their concepts. From these submissions, a few concepts could have been shortlisted, and the selected artists could have been asked to develop 3D models and presentations. Based on these, 2-3 models could have been finalised. Unfortunately, this structured approach was missing."

Jena points out, "The lack of innovation in design, ideas and representation by artists is, in my opinion, is the main reason for this outcome. It is not a political issue. Instead, it reflects a need for better planning and preparation. Moving forward, we need to be more vigilant and strategic to ensure we do not miss such opportunities in the future. A collaborative and well-organised effort will help us showcase the richness of our Odia culture and secure a prominent place in such platforms."

'Attractive design can earn us a spot in future'

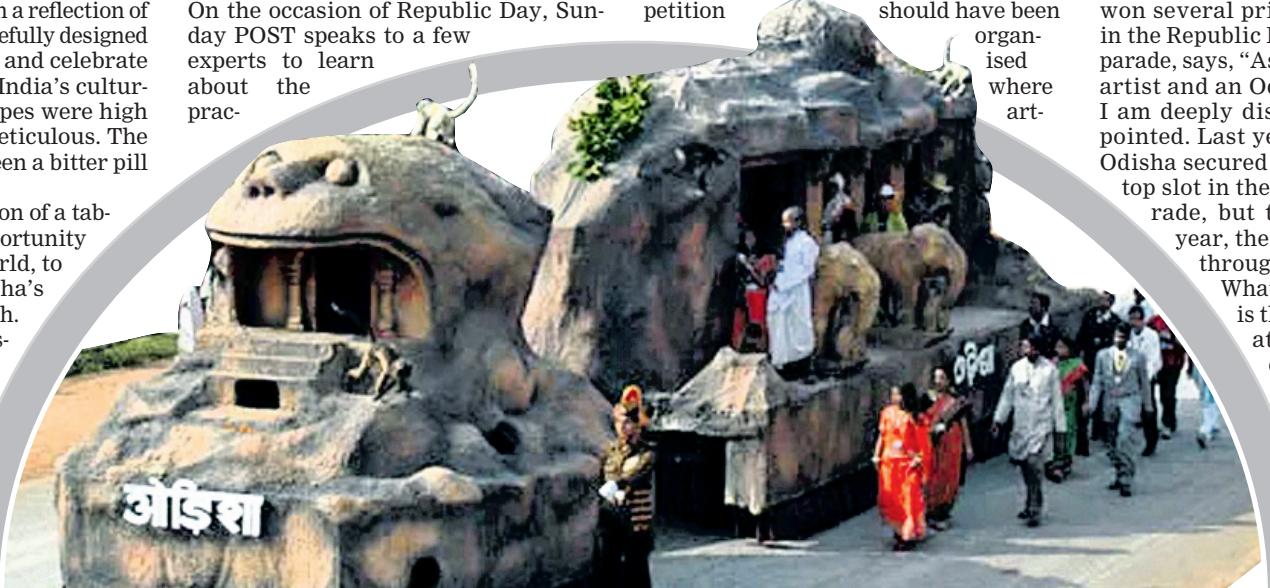
Biranchi Prasad Sahu, a tableau designer, under whose guidance Odisha won several prizes in the Republic Day parade, says, "As an artist and an Odia, I am deeply disappointed. Last year, Odisha secured the top slot in the parade, but this year, the state could not make it through the selection process. What is more disheartening is that Odisha was rejected at the final stage. There could be several reasons for this rejection. The selection process involves various parameters, with a primary focus on design."



For decades, Odisha has been synonymous with a vibrant cultural legacy that includes the timeless beauty of Konark's Sun Temple, the intricate dance forms of Odissi, the soulful beats of tribal music and the devotion captured in the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath. The state's tableau proposals have always been a reflection of these myriad elements, carefully designed to captivate the audience and celebrate Odisha's contribution to India's cultural tapestry. This year, hopes were high and preparations were meticulous. The rejection, however, has been a bitter pill to swallow for many.

This is not just a rejection of a tableau. It feels like a lost opportunity to tell our story to the world, to remind everyone of Odisha's unmatched cultural wealth.

The disappointment resonates deeply because the parade is more than just a celebration of Republic Day; it is a stage that brings millions of Indians together to witness the





At times, if two states present similar themes, such as handicrafts, the committee tends to select the one with the better execution. It is possible that there was some shortcoming in our design or theme this year.”

Making the matter worse, this year, only one artist participated in the tableau-selection process, shares Biranchi. Many artists have lost interest in presenting their models as they are not being treated properly by the government, he goes on to add.

They have to spend from their pockets to make the tableau models. The concerned artist incurs losses if the model is not selected, as the department only bears expenses after selection of the model, he said.

Additionally, there are flaws in the selection process. The selection panel also lacks experts with experience, which impacts the quality of model, quipped Biranchi. It's alleged that the models of certain states are rejected due to political biases. On this, Biranchi says, "Fortunately, this time, there seems to be no political agenda behind the rejection, as same party rules at both state and Centre. In the past, there were speculations about political bias when the governments were different. While this outcome is disappointing, it should serve as a learning experience. Odisha has a rich cultural heritage and immense potential to showcase its uniqueness on a national stage. By focusing on innovative themes and improving design quality, I am confident that we can secure a spot in the coming years. Let this setback be a

motivation to work harder and represent our state with pride in future parades.”

'Odisha's tableau was not selected following government criteria'

An eminent artist of the state, who has been part of state's tableau presentation on several occasions, under condition of anonymity, says, "This year, Odisha's tableau was not selected for the Republic Day parade due to the government's established criteria, not because of any political conspiracy, inefficiency of our artists, or issues with our design. Every year, only 15 to 16 tableaux are selected to participate in the parade through a defined selection process. States are given opportunities on a rotational basis. Odisha belongs to the East Zone, along with West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand. Last year, Odisha's tableau was selected, while the other three states did not get a chance. This year, the opportunity has been given to them as part of the rotation. There is no reason to view this as unfair or suspicious. Previously, some used to believe that Odisha's exclusion was due to differences in the state and central governments. However, this perception does not align with the transparent selection process currently in place.”

He further shares, "Although Odisha's tableau will not feature in the Republic Day parade this year, it has secured a spot in the prestigious 'Bharat Parv' event. This highlights the recognition and appreciation for Odisha's rich cultural heritage and artistry. It is important not to politicise this matter or harbor negative feelings about the decision. The selection process is impartial and follows government protocols. Odisha's artistic excellence remains unquestionable, and the state continues to shine on other significant platforms. Instead of focusing on this as a loss, we should celebrate our participation in Bharat Parv and look forward to future opportunities to represent our state in the Republic Day parade.”

History of R-Day tableaux

The tradition of showcasing tableaux during the Republic Day parade began in 1950, the same year India became a republic. These creative and colorful displays were introduced to represent the cultural, historical, and socio-economic diversity of the country. Over the years, the tableaux have become a significant part of the parade, narrating India's rich heritage and modern achievements. Initially, the focus was primarily on cultural and historical themes, but with time, the scope has expanded to include technological advancements, environmental awareness and social progress. Each tableau serves as a visual story reflecting the essence of India.

proposed tableau. These include explanations of the design, theme, and how the concept aligns with the overall theme of the Republic Day parade.



Former PM Indira Gandhi takes a look at a tableau design from Odisha (File photo)

Significance

Cultural representation: Each tableau highlights the traditions, art, and culture of a specific state, union territory, or ministry, showcasing India's diversity.
National pride: The tableaux serve as a platform to celebrate India's achievements and innovations in science, technology and governance.
Unity in diversity: By representing different regions and themes, the tableaux symbolise India's unity amidst its vast cultural and geographical diversity.
Global display: As the parade is broadcast worldwide, the tableaux are an opportunity to project India's heritage, accomplishments and aspirations on an international stage.

Expert evaluation: A panel of experts—comprising eminent designers, architects and cultural experts, artists and officials from the Ministry of Defence reviews the submissions. The evaluation focuses on:
 - Relevance to the theme.
 - Aesthetic and creative appeal.
 - Technical feasibility of the design.

Shortlisting and modifications: A shortlist of designs is prepared and participants may be asked to make modifications to refine their concept or meet technical specifications.

Final approval: Once the modifications are made, the final list of tableaux is approved. The selected participants are informed to begin the construction of their full-scale tableaux.

Selection process

Call for proposals: The Ministry of Defence invites proposals from states, union territories, and central government ministries/ departments. The proposals are based on themes related to India's culture, heritage, development, or significant achievements.

Theme alignment: The Ministry suggests broad themes each year, such as freedom fighters, environmental conservation, or government. For instance, the theme of 2025 is "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas" (Golden India: Legacy and Progress) Participants align their concepts with these themes.

Submission of designs: Participants submit detailed sketches, models, or digital presentations of their

Construction and rehearsal: The approved tableaux are constructed and undergo rehearsals to ensure they meet the required standards and fit seamlessly into the parade. Each tableau is mounted on a motorised vehicle or platform, ensuring smooth movement during the parade. The tableaux are a cornerstone of India's Republic Day celebrations, providing a vibrant, dynamic representation of the nation's spirit and achievements.



First tableau from Odisha



Redefining opulence

For many, buying pre-owned luxury goods is not just about affordability; it's also about sustainability, as they can participate in the luxury market without contributing to the overconsumption associated with fast fashion



ANISHA KHATUN, OP

One are the days when luxury items were simply indulgent purchases meant to satisfy personal desires or flaunt status. Today, high-end watches, designer handbags, rare sneakers, and even limited-edition collectibles are being viewed as serious investment opportunities. A new wave of savvy consumers is reshaping the luxury market, turning their passion for exclusivity into a lucrative financial strategy.

From the glossy runways of Paris to online auction platforms, luxury goods have proven their worth as assets that not only retain value but often appreciate over time. For example, a Hermès Birkin bag, once seen as a symbol of opulence, has outperformed gold in terms of annual returns over the past decade. Similarly, Rolex watches and limited-edition sneakers have become sought-after commodities in secondary markets, often selling for double or even triple their original retail price.

This growing trend is fueled by a mix of cultural shifts and economic realities. On one hand, millennials and Gen Z consumers are blending their love for fashion and art with an investment mindset, making high-value purchases with an eye on long-term returns. On the other hand, the rise of online marketplaces and platforms has made it easier than ever to buy, sell and trade luxury items globally.

What makes luxury investments particularly appealing is their resilience during economic downturns. Moreover, there's a growing market of consumers who may not be able to afford brand new luxury items but still desire to own them. These buyers are turning to the pre-owned mar-

ket as a more accessible option. Platforms that specialise in authenticated pre-owned luxury goods have made it easier for these consumers to purchase iconic items at a fraction of the original retail price. For many, buying pre-owned is not just about affordability; it's also about sustainability, as they can participate in the luxury market without contributing to the overconsumption associated with fast fashion.

As this trend gains momentum, the lines between collector, investor, and enthusiast continue to blur, proving that in the modern world, luxury is no longer just about lifestyle, it's about strategy, foresight and accessibility.

'At times luxury items offer better, quick returns than mutual funds'

Somadatta Mishra, a writer and an investor in luxury items from Bhubaneswar, says, "As a collector, I see luxury items not merely as indulgent possessions but as strategic investments with significant financial potential. Each acquisition, be it a timeless Sabyasachi clutch, a classic Chanel Flap Bag, a rare Audemars Piguet watch or exclusive Air Jordan sneakers, is carefully selected for its enduring value, driven by impeccable craftsmanship, scarcity and cultural relevance. The luxury market's evolution, bolstered by growing demand and the emergence of secondary platforms like Luxepolis, Darveys and many others has transformed my collecting approach.



These platforms simplify authentication, trading and reselling, turning a personal passion into a smart financial strategy. By staying attuned to market trends, I invest in items that not only retain their value but often experience substantial appreciation over time."

Mishra further says, "What makes this strategy particularly compelling is its resilience. Unlike volatile assets like crypto currencies, iconic luxury goods hold their intrinsic worth, even in uncertain economic conditions. In fact, sometimes these luxury items can offer greater returns than mutual funds in a relatively short period of time. The expanding pre-owned market in India has also made luxury more accessible and sustainable, offering opportunities to connect with buyers who appreciate the heritage and craftsmanship of these pieces. For me, collecting is about more than ownership, it's a purposeful blend of passion and foresight. By curating a portfolio that mirrors both personal style and investment acumen, I enjoy the artistry of luxury while leveraging it as a tool for wealth creation in an ever-evolving marketplace."

but I also believe in making thoughtful choices that align with my values. That's why I've turned to pre-owned luxury; it allows me to enjoy the elegance and exclusivity of high-end pieces while contributing to a more sustainable way of living. Pre-owned luxury provides access to high-end items at prices that make owning luxury more attainable. Whether it's a pre-owned Montblanc pen for my professional life, a pair of Gucci loafers, or a classic Louis Vuitton wallet, these purchases are carefully chosen for their utility, elegance and enduring value."



'Buying pre-owned luxury goods is about being part of a conscious community'

Deepak Kumar Prusty, an entrepreneur and consumer of luxury products, Bhubaneswar, says, "For me, luxury is about embracing quality, heritage, and sustainability. I've always admired the craftsmanship and timeless appeal of iconic items,



Prusty adds, "Buying pre-owned luxury isn't just about affordability, it's about being part of a conscious community. It feels good to know that I'm making choices that contribute to reducing waste and promoting sustainability in the fashion industry. Plus, there's something special about owning items with a history; it adds a unique character to each piece. For me, pre-owned luxury is about redefining what it means to own something special. It's not about keeping up with trends or impressing others, it's about making thoughtful purchases that align with my personal style, values and financial goals. Through this approach, I'm able to enjoy the best of luxury without compromising on practicality or responsibility."

Manisha opens up on ageism

Actress Manisha Koirala has highlighted the prevalence of ageism in the entertainment industry, particularly against women. Speaking

cluded from roundtable conversations because they were about a certain age group. If a male co-actor of the same or older age was part of the project, he wouldn't be sidelined. This bias impacts women more significantly. While older male actors are embraced, older female actors face exclusion."

Addressing misconceptions about female artistes in their 50s, Manisha emphasised the need for change. "People think, 'She's old, what work can she do?' or limit us to mother or sister roles. But women can play dynamic, fiery roles. Many before me have proven that. I want to continue growing as an artiste and age is just a number. Women can lead fulfilling, phenomenal lives at any age. I still have fire in my belly, and I'm not stopping," claimed the actress.

AGENCIES

to a news portal, she shared how women are often shamed and trolled for their age. She stated, "Ageing is an issue with women, both in the industry and otherwise. We are shamed, whereas I've never heard trolls targeting male figures for growing older." The 54-year-old actor revealed instances where she was sidelined due to her age. "I was ex-

Sonam channels her inner diva

Sonam Kapoor has cemented her position as a true blue fashionista in the industry. The stunner makes heads turn with every look she decides to try on. The Neerja actress recently took to the stories section of her official IG and posted a video flaunting her latest pair of sweats. Seems like these sweats were gifted to Sonam Kapoor by her sister Rhea Kapoor. Posing in a black tracksuit with a white crop top, she wrote, "@rheakapoor love my sweats".

On another note, Oscar-winning actress Venus Williams will be in action Venus Williams in 2025. Addition-Pike, Venus in as the new campaign is pioneering professional roped cine-2010

Sonam Kapoor recently joined the ranks of Oscar-winning actresses Charlize Theron and Wimbledon champions for luxury label Dior's first campaign of ally, Glenn Close, Laetitia Casta, Rosamund Williams and Xin Liu have also been roped faces of Dior Capture femininity. The an attempt to reinvent Capture, Dior's line. Shifting our focus to Sonam's commitments, the actress has been in to be a part of Battle for Bittora. A matic adaptation of Anuja Chauhan's novel of the same name, the project has been produced by Anil Kapoor Films Company banner. IANS



Triptii backs herself

Triptii Dimri's career reached new heights with her role in *Animal*, despite facing criticism. In a recent interview with Forbes India, the actress addressed the backlash and expressed confidence in her choices, stating she has no regrets.

"I am someone who wants to give 100 percent. If I find the character or the story interesting, I want to give my all. That's what I've learned—if it works, it works, and if it doesn't, it doesn't. We won't always be liked by everyone. There will be some people who like you, and some who don't. You can't keep all that noise in mind. You have to follow your heart and do things that you feel are right," she said.

Responding to speculation about avoiding an "overtly sexualised" image, Triptii dismissed the notion. "I am going with the flow. The aim is to play different characters because I don't want to go to a set and feel bored. I want to feel challenged and wonder, 'How will this happen?'—and then make it happen," she explained.

Currently, Triptii is focusing on Vishal Bhardwaj's *Arjun Ustara*, alongside Shahid Kapoor, and will soon begin filming *Dhadak 2* with Siddhant Chaturvedi under Dharma Productions.

AGENCIES



Launching of *Aashiq Deewana*



Bhubaneswar: The mahurat of Mahadev Productions' new Odia movie *Aashiq Deewana* was held recently at Gateswar Mahadev Temple in Cuttack.

Produced by Pramod Kumar Swain and directed by S Dilip Pandaa, the romantic and family drama stars Deepak and Riya in lead roles. Priyanka Panigrahi, Pradyumna Lenka, Prithviraj, Bobby Mishra, Jeevan panda and Disco Reddy

play other key roles.

JN Padma scores the music of the film while the lyrics have been written by Nirmal Nayak, Arun Mantri and Manoj Kumar Panda.

Humane Sagar, Deepti Rekha, Kuldeep, Satyajit, Swayam padhi, Aseema panda, Antara Chakraborty and Ananya Sritam Nanda have lent their voice to the songs.

PNN

My Antonia: Rich with myth, metaphor

Willa Cather's *My Antonia* is a powerful story of immigrant populations of Slavic, Germanic, Scandinavian, Bohemian, Latin origin who came to Nebraska in the 19th century in search of livelihood and the American dream. The prairie land of Nebraska with its unyielding soil and unforgiving landscape is a symbol of man's struggle to coexist with the stark forces of nature. The narrator Jim Burden through whose voice and eyes we see the story is in some way a surrogate for Cather herself who like him shifted from Virginia to Nebraska and spent her childhood there. The story is about the resourcefulness, the grit and determination of the first group of pioneers to overcome the harshness and brutality of pioneer life. A wide variety of people from different countries were confronted simultaneously with building new lives and creating a new world. They mainly depended on themselves and their neighbours, each was his "brother's keeper", for building homes, for farm equipment and the land was the protagonist in the conflict to survive and prosper. "There was nothing but land; not a country at all but the material out of which countries are made". No fences, no creeks or trees, no hills or fields. An immemorial zone of grass, trees, birds, water and wind "Between that earth and that sky I felt erased, blotted out." The environment was a natural vital force that sustains all living things in rich abundance if one knows how to cultivate it. Back-breaking labour, sacrifice and deprivation characterised their lives initially and they felt challenged by the prairie of packed grass and sod which needed to be cut down

by axes and hand-plows to plant corn and wheat and winter fodder. Then there were the plagues of grasshoppers and locusts, drought, prairie fires, frost to contend with.

The story chiefly revolves around Antonia who came as a child and grew up to be a woman in Nebraska and made a life for herself and others with her undefeated strength, resilience and a tenacity that was spiritual. To Jim Burden and his friend "the girl seemed to mean to us the country, the conditions, and the whole adventure of our childhood." Jim and Antonia's childhood is described in evocative detail. His attention is drawn to her vibrancy and her "eyes big and warm and full of light, like the sun shining on brown pools in the wood." She lives through the horror of her father, Mr Shimmerda's suicide, a tragic, cultivated figure who was defeated by his alien surroundings and the family had to be helped by understanding neighbours with his burial and coping with the aftermath. Her metamorphosis

sees her after twenty six years, a matriarch, perfectly content, with her pride of accomplishment, a symbol of fecundity and continuity surrounded by family. "She lent herself to immemorial human attitudes which we recognise as universal and true. She was a battered woman now, not a lovely girl, but she still had that something which fires the imagination, could stop one's breath for a moment by a look or gesture that somehow revealed the meaning in common things"

Besides Antonia, there are other side-lights in the novel of the two Russians defeated by the challenges of the elemental landscape, the greedy moneylender Cutter who nearly seduced Antonia, the stoical strength of the hired labourers who worked the land, the vivacity of the hired girls who went to work

with more prosperous homes and the blond Norwegian girl Lena, charting out a successful career, generous, seeks an independent life without marriage, who however does not measure up to the heroism of Antonia. Jim shares a unique relationship, an uncommon bond with Antonia, pristine, full of sanctity that has no shade of the physical. "He admires her and sees her as the incarnation of a certain courage and robustness that must surely be a paradigm for the spirit of America." Elegiac in tone, set in rapturous prose, the book is rich with myth, metaphor and image.

The prairie is the great symbol, "As I looked about me I felt the grass was the country as the water is the sea. The red of the grass made all the great prairie the colour of wine stains. And there was so much motion in it the whole country somehow seemed to be running." The image of a plough silhouetted against the sky seen by Jim, Antonia and the other girls was "magnified across the distance by the horizontal light, it stood out against the sun, was contained within the circle of the disk; the handles, the tongue, the share-black against the molten red. There it was, heroic in size, a picture writing on the sun." Away from the sun the forgotten plough shrank into its littleness somewhere on the prairie. An inspired symbol it is the harmonious blending of the earth and heaven, the ultimate relationship and continuity between humans and the universe "The prairie which looked like the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed" is a Biblical reference to the Lord appearing to Moses in a flame of fire from a bush that looked as though it was burning, yet the bush was not consumed. The country with its profusion of flowers - "Sunflowers made a gold ribbon across the country". Brilliant frozen moments and images.

My Antonia is a valediction of the old days, the qualities of mind and spirit that were threatened by the materialism and the disappearance of the frontier spirit in the 19th century. The Nebraskan country symbolised hardship, penance, endurance and the celebration of the individual will and the creative impulse. Nature was the primeval force that enriched the lives and sustained the spirit of the early pioneers with the intensity of lived experience and the power of their convictions. The pioneers passed on their culture and customs and made immeasurable contributions to the tapestry of American history.

Above all we close the book with the all powerful memory of Antonia in whom we recognise the seminal qualities of a life force as does the narrator. "She was a rich mine of life like the founders of early races". He meant always "to carry her face with him, the closest, the realest face, under all the shadows of womens faces, at the very bottom of my memory. Jims love for her is more than conventional love and he tells her "I'd have liked to have you for a sweetheart, a wife, or my mother or my sister -anything a woman can be to a man. The idea of you is part of my mind, you influence my likes and dislikes, all my tastes, hundreds of times, when I don't realise it. You really are a part of me". It was a transcendent love beyond a state of relationship. When Jim comes to see her after twenty six years he had the sense of coming back to himself. This was the Road of Destiny he had undertaken with Antonia to those early days of struggle, and they possessed together the precious incommunicable past.

MY ANTONIA WILLA CATHER



in the midst of the burden of everyday living into an adolescent working in the fields alongside her brother, her subsequent shifting as a hired girl to a family in the township close by, betrayal by a railroad man who leaves her with a child out of wedlock, her marriage to a fellow Bohemian and a brood of healthy lively children, "a veritable explosion of life" is breathtaking. Jim now with a college education, a New Yorker with a legal career

Antonia and the other girls was "magnified across the distance by the horizontal light, it stood out against the sun, was contained within the circle of the disk; the handles, the tongue, the share-black against the molten red. There it was, heroic in size, a picture writing on the sun."

Away from the sun the forgotten plough shrank into its littleness somewhere on the prairie. An inspired symbol it is the harmonious blending of the earth and



SUDHA DEVI NAYAK



Shiwaneer

WANT TO BECOME A MODEL?
Send us your photographs at
features.orissapost@gmail.com

PHOTO : KUMAR SARAT