

A Different Evening  
International Film Club at Ahmedabad University  
(In Memory of Prof. Niranjana Bhagat)

Date: June 10, 2022, Friday.

Time: 8:30 p.m.

Venue: Ahmedabad University Auditorium,  
GICT Building, Near M G Science College.



Name of the Film: 27 Down

Date of Release: July 19, 1974

Director: Awtar Krishna Kaul (Winner, Locarno International Film Festival)

Cinematography: Apurba Kishore Bir

Music: Hariprasad Chaurasia + Bhubanesh Mishra

Genre: New Wave Film

Duration: 1 Hour 55 Minutes

Awards: (Winner: Locarno International Film Festival, National Award: Silver Lotus)

Also known as: Sattaees Down

Actors:

M K Raina (Winner of 2 International Awards + 1 International Nomination)

Rakhee Gulzar (Winner of 8 Awards + 10 Nominations)

Om Shivpuri

Audio Language: Hindi Subtitles: English

Colour: Black & White

Aspect Ratio: 4:3 High Definition (720p)

About the film:

27 Down, the only film directed by Awtar Krishna Kaul, before his premature death at the age of 32 years. It is considered to be one of the greatest landmarks in the foundational years of Parallel Cinema in India. This was the first wave of Parallel Cinema before the FFC criteria was redefined in the mid 1970s because of protestations concerning the types of films being funded were either too esoteric or avant-garde for the tastes of Indian film audiences.

27 Down is about Sanjay a young aspirational man, who is pressured into becoming a train conductor by his lonely and obstinate father. The film's narrative is structured around a series of flashbacks narrated by Sanjay as he journeys on 27 Down, the Bombay-Varanasi Express. With a naturalistic production design by Bansi Chandragupta, a regular collaborator with Satyajit Ray, and luminous black and white cinematography by Apurba Kishore Bir for which he won a National Award, 27 Down is very much a study of loneliness, regret and indeterminacy. An existential dimension is explicated through Sanjay's introspective voice over, used to coincide with the iconographic use of the train, here very much a symbol of Sanjay's transient state. More communicative than the symbolism of the train, it is the benign romance between Sanjay and Shalini, depicted as an almost organic development that takes each of them by real surprise.

Trivia about the Film:

For an unknown reason, after the film was completed and about to release in the theatres, Director Awtar Krishna Kaul committed suicide at the age of 32. Perhaps India lost another Satyajit Ray or Mrinal Sen.

Om Shivpuri directed and acted in many plays leading the initial years of famous National School of Drama Repertory. He directed one of the most acclaimed Hindi plays, Tughlaq. Later he started the theatre group Dishantar with his wife. Tickets for any show of a Dishantar play was extremely difficult to get for many years. One of the few artists, having acted in more than 175 films.

The copy of the film to be screened is rare in the sense that it is remastered for audio as well as high-resolution video.

Tagline: Perhaps we could reverse the clock....