

Qala (film)

Qala (transl.[ⓘ], *Art*) is a 2022 Indian Hindi-language period psychological drama film,^[1] written and directed by Anvita Dutt[ⓘ].^[2] The film is produced by Karnesh Sharma under Clean Slate Filmz[ⓘ]^[3] and stars Tripti Dimri, Swastika Mukherjee, and Babil Khan in his film debut.^{[4][5][6]}

Qala was released on Netflix on 1 December 2022.^[7] It is loosely based on K. Viswanath's *Swathi Kiranam*, and Miloš Forman's *Amadeus*.^[8]

At the 2023 Filmfare OTT Awards, *Qala* received 6 nominations, including Best Web Original Film, Best Actress in a Web Original Film (Dimri) and Best Supporting Actress in a Web Original Film (Mukherjee), and won Best Production Design (Web Original Film) (Meenal Agarwal).

Plot

Set in 1940s, *Qala* is about the tumultuous relationship between an aspiring singer and her domineering mother. The movie begins with Qala Manjushree who has just won the "Golden Vinyl". She is being interviewed by several journalists who mention her brother. Distraught, Qala replies that she does not have a brother. In a flashback, her mother Urmila, who was pregnant with twins, gives birth to Qala, but her stillborn brother does not survive. In a fit of rage, Urmila attempts to smother Qala.

Urmila teaches Qala the art of music but warns her against being a courtesan. Qala is haunted by visions of her brother who accuses her of taking what is rightfully his, for which a doctor advises her to rest. In another flashback, Qala is being taught music for a performance in 3 days but Urmila chides her and accuses her of not working hard enough. To punish her, Urmila locks Qala out in the snow. At the performance, few people show up and Qala is upstaged by an orphan, Jagan. Urmila takes a liking to his music and brings him home to live with her, to the dismay of Qala, who is jealous of him. In the present, a renowned singer, Sanyal, dies. It is revealed that her mother seduced Sanyal to obtain a chance for Jagan to sing with him. To

Qala



Official poster

Directed by	Anvita Dutt[ⓘ]
Written by	Anvita Dutt[ⓘ]
Produced by	Karnesh Sharma <div> Anushka Sharma[ⓘ]</div>
Starring	<div>Tripti Dimri[ⓘ]</div> <div>Swastika Mukherjee[ⓘ]</div> <div>Babil Khan[ⓘ]</div>
Cinematography	Siddharth Diwan[ⓘ]
Edited by	Manas Mittal[ⓘ]
Music by	Songs: <div>Amit Trivedi[ⓘ]</div> <div>Sagar Desai[ⓘ]</div> Background Score: <div>Sagar Desai[ⓘ]</div>

further Jagan's career, Urmila attempts to marry Qala off but she refuses. Urmila hosts a party and invites several influential people. At the party, Qala feels invisible but is noticed by Sanyal, whom she kisses.

Jagan falls sick and cannot sing so Qala sings instead, impressing the guests. Jagan's sickness worsens to the point of being unable to sing but is cared for by Urmila. Qala seduces Sumant Kumar to obtain a chance at recording a song, taking Jagan's place. That night Jagan talks to Qala one last time before he hangs himself in the forest. The next day, Qala discovers his body and hugs his corpse. Her mother is distraught and cradles Jagan in her hands. Urmila and Qala have a fight during which Qala calls Urmila a courtesan, after which she forbids Qala from coming back to their house ever again. Qala leaves for Calcutta for her recording session. She is nervous and cannot sing even on the 11th take. For a last chance, she is forced to provide oral pleasure to Sumant. She recalls Jagan, who said that he always sung for himself. Using this mindset, she successfully records the song. Qala slowly rises to fame as a singer, becoming close with Majrooh, the songwriter who advises her to cease her arrangement with Sumant.

While being interviewed by journalists again, she sees another vision of Jagan. While recording a song, she breaks down and sees snow falling all around her. Her mother hears her interview being broadcast over the radio. In a flashback, Qala is shown dropping a globule of mercury into Jagan's milk before his performance, leading to his sickness. She attempts to kill herself by overdosing on sleeping pills. Her doctor calls her mother and informs her of Qala's suicide attempt. Her mother comes to Calcutta to visit her, but finds that she has hanged herself. Later, she tearfully listens to Qala's vinyl which Qala had sent to her in Tanuku.

Cast

- [Tripti Dimri](#) as Qala Manjushree
 - Aadhya Jha as 10 year old Qala
- [Swastika Mukherjee](#) as Urmila "Urmi" Manjushree^[9]
- [Babil Khan](#) as Jagan Batwal
- [Amit Sial](#) as Sumant Kumar
- [Sameer Kochhar](#) as Chandan Lal Sanyal
- [Girija Oak](#) as Sudha
- [Swanand Kirkire](#) as Mansoor Khan Sahab
- Tasveer Kamil as Naseeban Appa
- [Varun Grover](#) as Majrooh
- Veera Kapur EE as Rani Mandira
- [Abhishek Banerjee](#) as Dr. Banerjee

Production

The film was announced by [Netflix](#) on 10 April 2021, [Tripti Dimri](#) was cast in the title role, and was joined by Babil Khan.^{[10][11][12][13]} The film marks the second collaboration between [Tripti Dimri](#), [Anvita Dutt](#) and [Clean Slate Filmz](#) after *[Bulbbul](#)* (2020).^[14]

Principal photography started in April 2021, in Kashmir.^{[15][16]} Filming was completed in October 2021.^{[17][18]}

Soundtrack

The music for the film was composed by Amit Trivedi, the background score was composed by Sagar Desai, while guest-composed one song "Udh Jaayega" and lyrics were written by Amitabh Bhattacharya, Swanand Kirkire, Varun Grover and Kausar Munir. The teaser of the ghazal, "Phero Na Najariya", was released on 29 August 2022.^{[20][21]} The first single "Ghodey Pe Sawaar" was released on 16 November 2022.^[22] The second single "Rubaaiyaan" was released on 22 November 2022.^[23] The third single "Shauq" was released on 24 November 2022. The film also included a remake of a popular Kangri folk song, "Amma Puchdi", sung by Sireesha Bhagavatula.

<i>Qala</i>	
Soundtrack album by Amit Trivedi, Sagar Desai	
Released	24 November 2022 ^[19]
Recorded	2021
Genre	<u>Feature film soundtrack</u>
Length	25:24
Language	<u>Hindi</u>
Label	<u>Netflix</u> , <u>Sony Music India</u>

No.	Title	Lyrics	Music	Singer(s)	Length
1.	"Ghodey Pe Sawaar"	<u>Amitabh Bhattacharya</u>	<u>Amit Trivedi</u>	<u>Sireesha Bhagavatula</u>	3:14
2.	"Rubaaiyaan"	<u>Swanand Kirkire</u>	<u>Amit Trivedi</u>	<u>Shahid Mallya</u> , <u>Sireesha Bhagavatula</u>	4:13
3.	"Shauq"	<u>Varun Grover</u>	<u>Amit Trivedi</u>	<u>Swanand Kirkire</u> , <u>Shahid Mallya</u> , <u>Sireesha Bhagavatula</u>	3:39
4.	"Phero Na Najariya"	<u>Kausar Munir</u>	<u>Amit Trivedi</u>	<u>Sireesha Bhagavatula</u>	4:00
5.	"Nirbhau Nirvair"	<u>Sant Kabir</u> , <u>Anvita Dutt</u>	<u>Amit Trivedi</u>	<u>Shahid Mallya</u>	5:08
6.	"Udh Jaayega"	<u>Sant Kabir</u>	<u>Sagar Desai</u>	<u>Shahid Mallya</u>	4:37
Total length:					24:57

Marketing and release

The teaser for the film launched on 24 September 2022, on Netflix, and the trailer of the film was released on 15 November 2022.^{[24][25][26]}

The film had its World Premiere in Goa at the 53rd International Film Festival of India, on 24 November 2022.^{[27][28][29][30]} *Qala* was released on Netflix on 1 December 2022.^{[31][32]}

Reception

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 79% of 14 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5/10.^[33]

Debiparna Chakraborty of MovieWeb wrote, "Anvita Dutt's 2022 psychological drama *Qala* holds up a mirror to misogyny through a neo-expressionist lens with its distorted shadows and angles. From Amit Trivedi's music to Siddharth Diwan's cinematography, *Qala* weaves a beautiful but harrowing and tragic tale of loss, grief, and desire that starts off in the snowy moors of Shimla and ends in a burnished manor of Calcutta."^[39]

Renuka Vyavahare of The Times of India wrote, "A fictitious period drama about a playback singer, *Qala* treads an unfamiliar, unspoken path in terms of relationships. It looks beyond the obvious to explore the underlying complexities of a mother-daughter equation, a rare sight in Hindi cinema. The latter has either overlooked or villainised the conflict for the gallery. *Qala* dares to observe the raw, even ugly insides of a seemingly normalised relationship with heart aching longing and regret at its core."^[40]

Professional ratings

Review scores	
Source	Rating
<u>India TV</u> ^[34]	★★★★★
<u>NDTV</u> ^[35]	★★★★★
<u>Pinkvilla</u> ^[36]	★★★★★
<u>The Indian Express</u> ^[37]	★★★★★
<u>The Times of India</u> ^[38]	★★★★★

Accolades

Year	Award ceremony	Category	Nominee / work	Result	Ref.
<u>2023</u>	<u>Filmfare OTT Awards</u>	Best Web Original Film	<i>Qala</i>	Nominated	<u>[41]</u>
		Best Actress in a Web Original Film	<u>Triptii Dimri</u>	Nominated	
		Best Supporting Actress in a Web Original Film	<u>Swastika Mukherjee</u>	Nominated	
		Best Background Music (Web Original Film)	Sagar Desai	Nominated	
		Best Production Design (Web Original Film)	Meenal Agarwal	Won	
		Best Cinematographer (Web Original Film)	Siddharth Diwan	Nominated	

See also

- List of Netflix original films

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External links

- *Qala* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt14428598/>) at *IMDb*
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