

# THE DIASPORA

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BI-WEEKLY

Issue: 79



Federation of Indian Associations NY-NJ-CT-NE. 501(C)3. The Largest Non-Profit Grassroot Umbrella Organization in the Eight-state of NY-NJ-CT-NE



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## FIA's 'Dance Pe Chance' - 39 Edition Entices the Audience

Over 500 children from 22 community dance academies spread across four states enthralled a 1,000-plus crowd with their mesmerizing performances as they performed to showcase their talent, discipline, technique, and costumes in FIA's oldest cultural competition, its 39th annual edition. FIA's annual

dance competition 'Dance Pe Chance' was held on Saturday, February 18th, Patriots War Memorial Theatre, Trenton, NJ. Ages 6 through 60+ years took to the state-of-the-art stage, which had dazzling professional-grade production, including led spot lighting, sound, and 50 feet LED backdrop. Performing participants

displayed a variety of cultures and traditions, including languages, in the performances consisting of a fusion of classical, folk, and contemporary dance compilations.

The participating groups showcased 22 captivating variety performances. Four categories comprised minors, juniors,

seniors, and adults competed within their age groups. The event was anchored by Miss India PA 2022 - Charmy Shah, Veteran RJ and popular anchor and host Mamta Narula.

This year's judging panel comprised renowned Bollywood Choreographer Rohan Virdee, celebrated Kuchipudi Exponent and Guru Swathi Atluri, and the locally popular choreographer Mitali Das.





Groups performing at the February 18, 2023 Dance Pe Chance event



# WINNERS OF FIA'S 'DANCE PE CHANCE 2023'

Group Category	Prize/Trophy Category	Group Section	Dance School
Minor	3rd place 2nd place 1st place	M2 M6 M7	<b>BollyMoves Dance Academy</b> <b>Aum Dance Creations</b> <b>Rudra Dance Academy</b>
Junior	3rd place 2nd place 1st place	J1 J2 J4	<b>Dancing Shiva</b> <b>BollyMoves Dance Academy</b> <b>Aum Dance Creations</b>
Senior	3rd place 2nd place 1st place	S4 S3 S5	<b>Aum Dance Creations</b> <b>Sanskriti School of Dance Academy</b> <b>Rudra Dance Academy</b>
Adult	3rd place 2nd place 1st place	A2 A4 A6	<b>DanceXstudio</b> <b>Nirmiti School of Dance with Happy Feet</b> <b>Rudra Dance Academy</b>
RISING STAR	1st place	M5	<b>Shehnaaz Dance Academy</b>
	Best choreography Best Costume	A4 S5	<b>Rudra Dance Academy</b> <b>Nirmiti School of Dance with Happy Feet</b>



FIA members with Nirmiti School of Dance with Happy Feet at DPC 2023



*Recognitions presented to Hon. Randhir Jaiswal at the Dance Pe Chance event*

Hon. Counsel General of India-New York Shri Randhir Jaiswal was the Chief Guest of the program. Also in attendance were Jaipur Foot Chairman Prem Bhandari, Former Congressman of New Jersey Michael Pappas, Padma Awardee and FIA Advisor Dr. H R Shah, and veteran community leader Peter Kothari among other distinguished guests.

Randhir Jaiswal expressed his joy to witness and be a part of the event and praised the performances and performers for their sheer hard work to perform and compete with precision, coordination, and high energy. He wished that the event would continue to grow with each passing year for the coming decades and provide a platform over 19,000 children have utilized in the past 39 years.

Michael Pappas expressed his happiness to be a part of the event and was

impressed to witness FIA organizing a youth-oriented event on such a large scale and at a venue known to hold historical events.

Prem Bhandari expressed his happiness and joy in witnessing the participation of diverse communities and thanked FIA for providing the kids with such an incredible platform.

FIA President Kenny Desai praised all the judges, sponsors, and members of the FIA executive team and the DPC team for their arduous efforts in putting together this difficult event.

FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya thanked the sponsors, the FIA Executive team, and the DPC led by FIA Vice President Saurin Parikh, Nishi Dhami, and Priti Patel. He summarized the joy of seeing over 500 children compete in sportsmanship, for which he expressed gratitude to the parents, the

choreographers, and all the participants.

FIA Vice President & Dance Pe Chance Chair Saurin Parikh congratulated all sponsors, media partners, and the Indian Consul General in New York for their continued support.

Also in attendance were Past President & Board of Trustee Srujan Parikh, FIA Vice President Dr. Avinash Gupta, FIA General Secretary Nishi Dhami, FIA Treasurer Priti Patel, FIA Joint Treasurer Mahesh Dubal, FIA Joint Sec Haresh Shah, FIA Past President Alok Kumar, and other notable community members.

Mementos, trophies and prizes totaling \$20,000 were distributed during the event.

*Dance pe Chance*, for nearly four decades, has seen the participation of over 19,000 children. The competition aims to inspire creativity and

foster teamwork and competitiveness among upcoming generations.

Meals, certificates, a complimentary rehearsal, and a complimentary ticket were provided to all participants, their managers, and choreographers, courtesy of the FIA and its sponsors. FIA's vision through such grass-roots initiatives is to connect the next generation of Americans of Indian origin with our culture and the native motherland.

FIA expressed gratitude to its sponsors River Comics, Parikh Worldwide Media, TV Asia, Bansal Foundation, Arista Care, Mehta Foundation, and Media Partners ITV Gold, TV Asia, South Asian Times, Radio Zindagi, and Indian Panorama, and The Indian Eye.



*FIA Vice President Saurin Parikh addressing the crowd at the Dance Pe Chance event*



*CG Randhir Jaiswal addressing the gathering along with FIA committee members, organizers and sponsors at the DPC event*



Groups performing at the February 18, 2023 Dance Pe Chance event



DPC 2023 attracted an audience of almost a thousand people



Awards/recognition presented to distinguished winners at the DPC



**THE  
DIASPORA  
BI-WEEKLY**

75 years of India's Independence

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

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Wednesday, February 22, 2023

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THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF INDIA, NEW YORK  
&  
THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS NY-NJ-CT-NE

Celebrates  
International  
**WOMEN'S DAY**



**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2023**

**5:00 PM**

Consulate General of India - New York  
3 East 64th Street, New York, NY 10065

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treasury@fiannjct.org | www.fiannjct.org

# Layoffs Abound - Petition Demands Extension For H-1B Visa Holders

**T**wo Indian-American organisations have started an online petition asking President Joe Biden to increase the grace period for H-1B visa holders from two months to a year amid widespread layoffs in the American tech industry that have left many Indian professionals without jobs.

This means that after being fired from a job, a foreign tech worker on an H-1B visa would have one year instead of the current 60 days to find a new employment before having to leave the country.

"On behalf of immigrants (from the world, mainly from India and China) as well as naturalised citizens like Indian-Americans, Foun-

dation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies and Global Technology Professionals Association (GITPRO) has submitted an appeal to the President of the United States, the Secretary of DHS (Department of Homeland Security) and the director of USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration Services) to extend the current grace period from 60 days to 1 year (minimum 6 months)," the online petition said.

"We join the appeal and request to sympathetically consider the impact of the families on humanitarian grounds. We believe that this extension will pause this brain drain and ensure that the US will continue to be a world leader in technology and innovation. We also

request elected officials to support this extension and if needed introduce a bill in the House of Representatives," said the online petition that has been signed by more than 2,200 people so far.

According to *LayoffTracker.com*, 91,000 were laid off just in January 2023 and this number may grow in the coming months. This has a huge impact on them, and their families, especially on the H-1B holders who would need to leave the US immediately within 10 days beyond the H-1B grace period, the petition said.

In addition to the impact on them and their families, this is also a long-term impact on the talent that the US has. For example, 70 per-

cent of startup founders are immigrants. About 50 CEOs of public companies are of Indian origin. Hence, the exodus of this talent from the US is harmful for the long-term interests of the US, especially in the modern age of Artificial Intelligence competition, it said.

"The laid-off H-1B holders currently have about 60 days to find another employer to file for the H-1B transfer or leave the country. During the current economic situation, it would be impossible for these hard-working, tax-paying and talented people to get hired till the economy recovers," said the petition.

# Sikhs Targeted in US Hate Crimes

**J**ews and Sikhs were the two most targeted religious groups in hate-motivated crime in the US in 2021, according to the annual compilation of nationwide incidents by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

A total of 1,005 hate crimes related to religion were reported in 2021, the

FBI said.

Anti-Jewish occurrences made up the majority of religion-based crime categories with 31.9%, followed by anti-Sikh incidents with 21.3%. 9.5% of hate crimes motivated by religion were anti-Muslim. 6.1% of occurrences were anti-Catholic, and 6.5% were anti-Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek,

or Other) incidents.

Overall, law enforcement agencies reported 7,262 total incidents and 9,024 victims, demonstrating that hate crimes remain a concern for communities across the country, the FBI said.

According to the FBI data for the year 2021, 64.8 percent of victims were targeted because of the offenders'

bias towards race/ethnicity/ancestry, which continues to be the largest bias motivation category.

At 63.2 percent of all single-bias events in 2021, anti-Black or African American hate crimes are still the most prevalent bias incident type. In addition, 4.3% of reported occurrences in 2021 were anti-Asian incidents.

# US Plans New Move on H-1B Visa

**T**he US is planning to resume "domestic visa revalidation" in certain categories on a pilot basis with the goal of scaling it up in the next few years.

"We are working in earnest on plans to restart this service for certain petition-based NIV categories, and we hope to have a pilot up and running later this year. This would eliminate the need for these applicants to travel abroad to renew visas," a State

Department spokesperson told PTI.

The State Department facilitated domestic visa



Image Credit: istockphoto.com/belterz

revalidation until 2004 for applicants who were physically present in the US and renewing a visa in certain petition-based non-immigrant visa (NIV) categories, the official said.

"We cannot comment on how many visa holders would be initially eligible, but the pilot would begin with a small number of cases before scaling over the following 1-2 years," said the State Department spokesperson in response to a question.

# US City Bans Caste Discrimination

**S**eattle has become the first city in the United States to criminalise caste discrimination, following the passage of a motion by an Indian-American politician and economist to include caste in its non-discrimination policy.

The resolution moved by Kshama Sawant, an upper-caste Hindu, was approved by the Seattle City Council by six to one vote. The results of the vote could have far-reaching implications on the issue of caste discrimination in the US.

"It's official: our

movement has won a historic, first-in-the-nation ban on caste discrimination in Seattle! Now we need to build a movement to spread this victory around the country," Sawant, a city council member, said soon after the resolution was voted.

Hours before the vote, Indian-American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal backed the proposal.

"Caste discrimination has no place in society anywhere in the world, including here in America. That is why some colleges and universities have banned it on campuses,

and workers are fighting for their rights and their dignity in cases involving caste discrimination," she said.

Equality Labs, the brain behind the anti-caste discrimination resolution in Seattle and which has been spearheading a nationwide

campaign said: "Love has won over hate as Seattle has become the first in the nation to ban caste discrimination. We have braved rape threats, death threats, disinformation, and bigotry."



# Successful Rollout: NYC Launches Unique Small Business Initiative

**N**ew York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York City Small Business Services Commissioner Kevin D. Kim hailed the successful rollout of the *NYC Small Business Opportunity Fund*.

Since the fund's inception, a diverse group of over 10,500 small businesses from all five boroughs have applied for low-interest loans. The fund, which was made possible through a public-private partnership between the city, Goldman Sachs, the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, and local community development financial institutions (CDFIs), fulfills a goal outlined in Mayor Adams' "Renew, Rebuild, Reinvent: A Blueprint for New York City's Economic Recovery" plan.

"Small businesses represent a vision, a unique set of skills, the fulfillment of the American Dream, and, just as importantly, key services to New Yorkers. Small businesses kept our city running during the pandemic, and they are leading the way on our economic recovery,"

said Mayor Adams. "The unprecedented success of the *NYC Small Business Opportunity Fund* is a testament to the value of public-private partnership, along with the robust on-the-ground outreach led by Commissioner Kim and his team at SBS. The response to this initiative is further proof that New York City is not coming back New York City is back."

The impressive demand for the Opportunity Fund shows that we are delivering the right resources at the right time to small businesses that need them the most," said Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development Maria Torres-Springer. "With new businesses and jobs emerging across the city, this injection of funds is just the fuel our businesses need to thrive as we head into spring."

"When opportunity knocked, more than 10,500 small business owners answered like true New Yorkers fast," said SBS Commissioner Kim. "This unprecedented positive response is the direct result of robust door-to-

door outreach, and historic coordination between eight community development financial institutions, elected officials, business associations and grassroots community groups. As we pause intake of applications, our partners are working as quickly as possible to process those in the pipeline and disburse funds to eligible small

businesses. This high level of demand demonstrates the importance of designing programs centered on equity, and we stand ready to help all business owners with a full suite of additional free services including help with permits and violations, commercial leases, hiring workers, and more."



Mayor Eric Adams  
@NYCMayor

...

Our NYC Small Business Opportunity Fund has been an unprecedented success — more than 10,500 small businesses from all five boroughs have submitted applications.

I want to thank @NYC\_SBS, @GoldmanSachs, @CNTR4growth and @crf\_usa for their support. nyc.gov/office-of-the-...



# THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS

## 200 Boeing for India: Joe Biden Praises Narendra Modi

The White House issued a statement from President Joe Biden on Air India's historic purchase of Boeing aircraft on February 14, 2023.

"The United States can and will lead the world in manufacturing. I am proud to announce today the purchase of over 200 American-made aircraft through a historic agreement between Air India and Boeing," the president said.

"This purchase will support over one million American jobs across 44 states, and many will not require a four-year college degree," he noted.

"This announcement also reflects the strength of the US-India economic partnership," President Biden said.

"Together with Prime Minister Modi, I look forward to deepening our partnership even further as we continue to confront shared global challenges creating a more secure and prosperous future for all of our citizens," he said.

## US Legislator Grants Special Diwali Break

New York City Councilwoman Linda Lee has passed a resolution supporting the Diwali school holiday for students, New York state Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar said on *Twitter*.

Sharing the video on *Twitter*, Lee wrote, "We can't fully appreciate #NYC's great diversity of culture when one-fifth of our students must choose between attending class and celebrating traditions with family. Today we passed a historic resolution to call on @NYCSchools to make Diwali an official school holiday!"

Linda Lee said, "It is an honour and privilege for Council members....and I to pass a resolution today calling upon the Department of Education to recognize Diwali as an official holiday for our students. And I also want to give a heartfelt thank you and shout out to our amazing colleagues in this chamber who supported and co-sponsored this legislation."

"I also want to thank our state colleagues who are carrying this bill. I know we have Assembly Member Jenifer Raj Kumar who's here with us today, carrying it on the assembly side. And thank you to Senators Joseph Adavo and John Lu who are carrying it on the Senate side," Lee said.

"This is not just a victory for the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who are Hindu, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists who every year have to make the difficult choice between going to school or celebrating an important holiday with their families. But it is a historic step forward for the larger AAPI community of 1.1 million New Yorkers," she said.



## Vivek Ramaswamy Aims for US Presidency

The second member of the community to enter the Republican Party's presidential primaries after Nikki Haley is Indian-American tech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy. He has pledged to "put merit back" and end dependence on China as he launches his 2024 presidential campaign.

"We are in the middle of this national identity crisis, Tucker, where we have celebrated our differences for so long that we forgot all the ways we are really just the same as Americans bound by a common set of ideals that set this nation into motion 250 years ago," Ramaswamy said.

"That's why I am proud to say tonight that I am running for United States president to revive those ideals in this country," he announced.

"I think we need to put 'merit' back into 'America' in every spirit of our lives," he said, adding that he will end affirmative action in "every sphere of American life."

"The people who we elect actually make them run the government rather than this cancerous federal bureaucracy. That's gonna be the heart of my message," Ramaswamy told *Fox News* in an interview.

It "has got to be our top foreign policy threat that we've gotta respond to, not pointless wars somewhere else". "That's gonna require some sacrifice. It's gonna require a declaration of independence from China and complete decoupling. And that's not gonna be easy. It's gonna require some inconvenience," he said.

Foreign policy is all about prioritisation, Ramaswamy said.

"We gotta wake up to the fact that China is violating our sovereignty and the reason, if that had been a Russian spy balloon, we'd have shot it down instantly and ratcheted up sanctions. Why didn't we do that for China?" he asked.

"The answer's simple. We depend on them for our modern way of life. This economic co-dependent relationship has to end," he said.


IMAGE CREDIT: axovant.com

## From UN Envoy to Possible Next POTUS: Nikki Haley

Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor and UN ambassador, declared her presidential candidacy, becoming the first significant competitor to officially challenge Donald Trump for the Republican nomination in 2024.

Haley released an online video saying, "It's time for a new generation of leadership." She added, "I'm Nikki Haley, and I'm running for president."

Nikki Haley spoke of her experiences growing up in the American South as a daughter of Indian immigrants in her 2020 Republican National Convention speech. "I am the proud daughter of Indian immigrants," she said. "They came to America and settled in a small Southern town. My father wore a turban. My mother wore a sari. I was a brown girl in a Black and white world. We faced discrimination and hardship, but my parents never gave in to grievance and hate," Nikki Haley told the crowd.

"I see America leading the world – in freedom and peace. But this vision isn't just mine. It's the core of our nation's history and it called to my parents over fifty years ago. I am the proud daughter of Indian immigrants," she said.

The next presidential election in the United States is scheduled for November 5, 2024. US President Joe Biden, has not declared whether he will run for re-election.



## NEWSMAKERS

# Indian American to Serve on Key US Committee

**A**mi Bera, an Indian-American congressman, has been elected as the Ranking Member of a key House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee that oversees the Indo-Pacific region.

"I am proud to continue my leadership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee as Ranking Member of

the Subcommittee on the Indo-Pacific. The Indo-Pacific remains the most consequential region of the world for our national security, economic interests, and values," Bera said in a statement.

"I am committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to address the many challenges facing the region, including the

People's Republic of China's aggressive and coercive actions, the dire need for economic recovery post-pandemic, and the backsliding of democracy and human rights," he said.

Congressman Bera added, "I look forward to continuing to help lead the Subcommittee's bipartisan work towards supporting a more free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific."



PC- US Congress

# Indian-American on Panel to Address Racism, Health Discrimination

**T**he O'Neill-Lancet Commission on Racism, Structural Discrimination, and Global Health has chosen Priti Krishtel, an Indian-American attorney who specialises in health justice, along with four other US-based experts.

Housed at Georgetown University Law Centre in Washington, the three-year commission, co-led by UN Special Rapporteur on right to health, seeks to identify anti-racist strategies to improve health globally, according to its website.

"I'm so proud to serve on this commission that will help shape a future where all people know they can keep their loved ones healthy, where people actively shape what access to medicines looks like for their families and communities," Krishtel said in a statement.

The Commission starts with substantial evidence that communities are facing health barriers solely on



PC-daijiworld

the basis of race, ethnicity, tribe, caste, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ability, class, geography, or religion, a statement posted on the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health website reads.

She has spent 20 years exposing structural inequities affecting access to medicines and vaccines across the Global South and in the United States. Krishtel was chosen as *2022 McArthur Fellow* for exposing inequities in the patent system to increase access to affordable, life-saving medications on a global scale.

Early in her career, she worked to increase access to antiretroviral (ARV) treatments at the height of the global AIDS epidemic, and in 2006, she co-founded the Initiative for Medicines, Access, and Knowledge (I-MAK) to ensure the public had a voice in the pharmaceutical patent system.

# Purdue Names Indian Professor as New Engineering Dean

**A**rvind Raman, a professor and administrator of Indian origin, has been appointed Dean of the esteemed College of Engineering at Purdue University, located in the US state of Indiana.

"It is truly an honour to be selected to lead the nation's largest top-ranked

college of engineering at a university with a tremendous legacy and a record of innovation and impact on a global scale," Raman was quoted as saying in the statement.

"The College of Engineering, in partnership with our faculty, students, staff, alumni and industry partners, is poised for

excellence at scale and the promise to pursue and lead truly game-changing initiatives that will impact the state, nation and world," he said.

Mark Lundstrom, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, will be replaced by Raman, whose tenure will start on April 1.



PC-economictimes

# YouTube's Neal Mohan: Newest Indian-Origin CEO in the Tech World

**N**eal Mohan, an Indian-American, will take over as YouTube's



PC-timesnownews

CEO from Susan Wojcicki who has announced her resignation after 25 years with the Google-owned corporation.

Mohan joins a growing number of Indian-origin CEOs leading US-based multinational conglomerates, including Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, and Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen.

In a tweet after his appointment, Mohan wrote, "Thank you, @SusanWojcicki. It's been amazing to work with you over the years. You've built YouTube into an

extraordinary home for creators and viewers. I'm excited to continue this awesome and important mission. Looking forward to what lies ahead."

Mohan had been the Chief Product Officer at YouTube for seven years before becoming the CEO.

Under Mohan's leadership, YouTube launched a number of successful products and features, including YouTube Music, YouTube TV, YouTube Premium and YouTube Shorts, wrote Susan in her farewell blog. She also credited Mohan for developing new revenue

streams for creators, such as Super Chat, Super Stickers, and channel memberships. He has also helped creators get more value out of their content by improving ad targeting and providing them with better analytics.

"Mohan has led our Trust and Safety team, ensuring that YouTube lives up to its responsibility as a global platform. He has a wonderful sense for our product, our business, our creator and user communities, and our employees. Neal will be a terrific leader for YouTube," she wrote.

# Indian American Artist Behind America's First Art Tunnel

**Y**ou will be astounded to see an immersive audio-visual treat when moving between terminals D and E at the George Bush International Airport in Houston, Texas.

The 240-foot-long Aquarius Art Tunnel was unveiled earlier this year.

The tunnel's bottom

is covered in coral, and Andrew Karnavas combined classical music with the artist's own contemplative underwater breath to produce the accompanying noises.

Janavi Mahimtura Folmsbee, an Indian American artist, is the mastermind behind the art experience. The Aquarius project is unique in many



PC-americanbazaaronline

ways because it may be the first endeavour ever led by a person of colour to represent contemporary art in America.

Mahimtura Folmsbee acknowledged at the launch that the tunnel holds a personal significance for

her as it is from there that she and countless others board flights back to India.

The 240-foot Aquarius Art Tunnel is an immersive art installation. It consists of two distinctive murals measuring 240 by 9 feet.

# UN Leads Fight Against Malnutrition with Afshan Khan

**A**fshan Khan, an Indo-Canadian, has been named the coordinator of the "Scaling Up Nutrition Movement," according to UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

"Afshan Khan will succeed Gerda Verburg of the Netherlands, to whom the secretary-general expresses his gratitude for her efforts and dedication in leading the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement," he said.

The Scaling Up Nutrition or SUN Movement is a

country-driven initiative led by 65 nations and four Indian states united in their mission to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030, Stephane Dujarric, spokesperson for the secretary-general told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York.

Born in India, Khan will lead the SUN Movement Secretariat, as well as coordinate the network of SUN Government Focal Points, the movement's stakeholders, and supporters, Dujarric said.

According to a UN

statement, in her new assignment, Khan will work to ensure the execution of the Scaling Up Nutrition strategy at the global level by

building partnerships, and galvanizing engagement and commitment to end malnutrition in all its forms.



Pc- indiaonlinemart

## GUITAR PRASANNA Live in Phoenix

*First time in  
15 years*

**Workshop and Concert**

**Chandler Community Center**

125 E Commonwealth Ave  
Chandler, AZ

**March 5th**

**4:30 pm - 8 pm**

**4.30 pm - 6.30 pm - Prasanna  
Workshop/Lec-Dem - The Music  
of Ilaiyaraaja and A.R. Rahman**

**For tickets and info - Email  
sarayuc@hotmail.com**



**6.30 pm - 8 pm  
PRASANNA GUITAR  
CONCERT - songs by  
Tyagaraja, Rush,  
Annamacharya, Steely Dan,  
Ilaiyaraaja, A.R. Rahman,  
Deep Purple, R.D. Burman,  
Grateful Dead, Nirvana, Pink  
Floyd.....**



# Religious Events

## Ved Mandir



1 Ved Mandir Dr, Milltown, NJ 08850 Ph: (732) 821-0404

Open Every day - 7:00 AM to 7:30 PM

### AARTI TIMES

Morning Aarti - 7:00 AM, Evening Aarti - 7:00 PM

Everyday Online Session by Mandir Priests

5:00 PM To 7:00 PM

Feb 25 - Sunderkand Path - 5 PM

[www.vedmandir.org](http://www.vedmandir.org)

## Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir)



1 Balaji Temple Drive, Bridgewater, NJ-08807, Ph: (908) 725-4477

Mon - Fri: 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM & 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Saturday, Sunday & National Holidays: 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM

Every Sunday - Vishnu Sahasranama - 8:30 AM - 9:15 PM

[www.venkateswaratemple.org](http://www.venkateswaratemple.org)

## The Hindu Temple Society of North America Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam

45-57 Bowne Street, Flushing, NY 11355, Ph: (718) 460-8484

Weekdays: 8:00 AM to 8:30 PM; Weekends: 7:30 AM to 8:30 PM

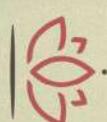
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KNOW  
THYSELF

CALM  
YOURSELF



SHARE  
YOUR SELF

FULFILL  
YOURSELF



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Alotusinthemud.com is a new wellness + spirituality web magazine.  
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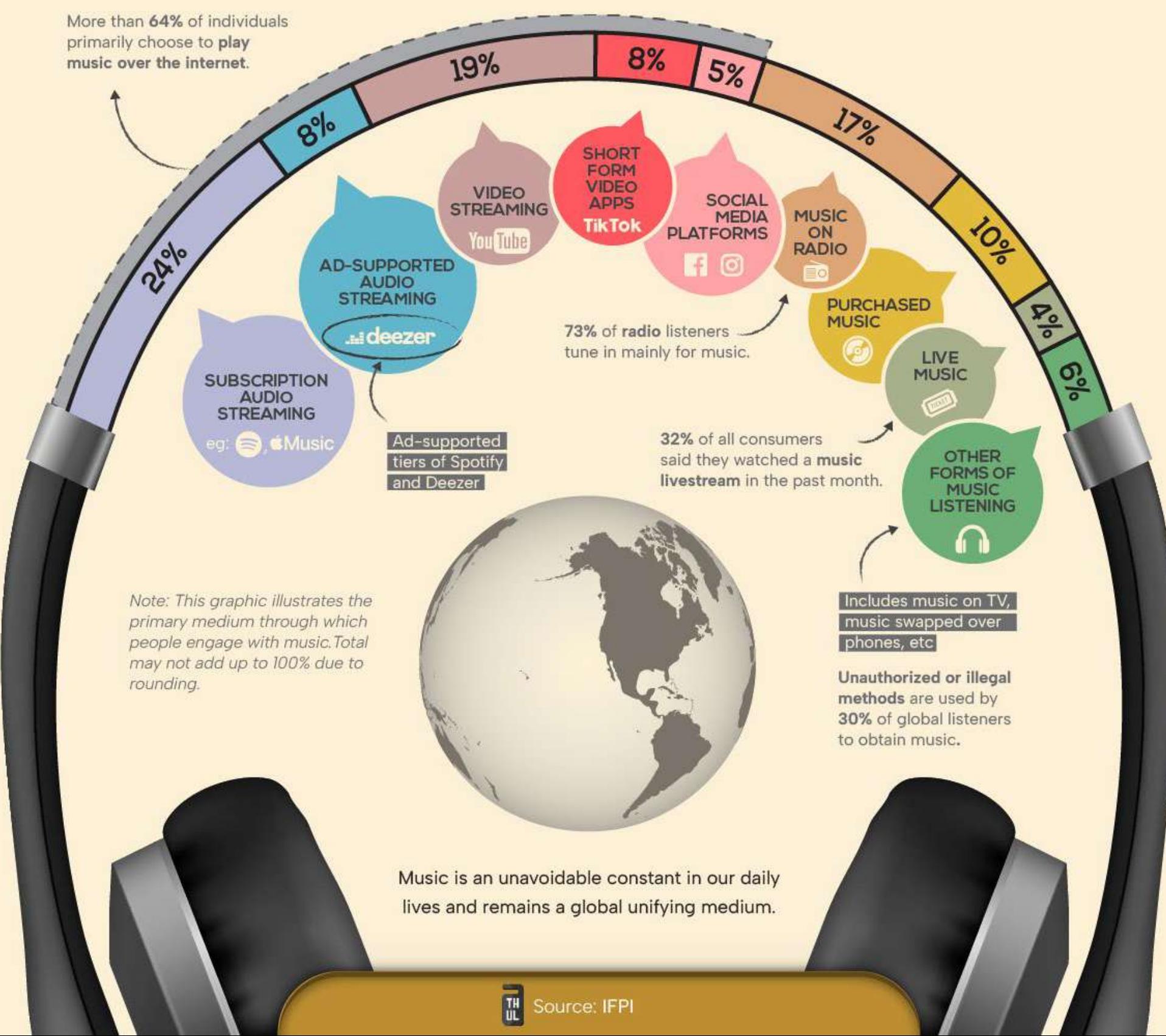
Founded by Parveen Chopra, seasoned journalist based in New York.

# GLOBAL MUSIC CONSUMPTION

2022

With the emergence of new technology, various platforms for listening to and engaging with music have become available. Here's a glimpse into how people around the world consumed music in 2022.

More than 64% of individuals primarily choose to play music over the internet.



A - 359746



★★★★★

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# Shahmaran

(Turkish Series / Netflix / Fantasy Drama)

## Engrossing Turkish Tale About Myth and Mystique!

Shahmaran is a mythical creature, popular in Turkish Folklores, a powerful 'half snake half woman', who sacrificed herself for love.

It's a Persian word where in Shah means King and Maran means snake.

**Cast** Serenay Sarikaya, Burak Deniz, Mustafa Uğurlu, Mahir Gunsiray, Berfu Halisdemir, Nilay Erdonmez, Nil Sude Albayrak

Photo: Shahmaran

### Plot

Upon her mother's death, Shahsu arrives in Adana to confront her grandfather Davut, whom she has never met before.

While she gets no answers from Davut, she meets a man named Maran there.

There's sizzling chemistry that both of them are resisting. There's a prophecy that he is denying. There's a lurking danger that she is unaware of.

There are baffling occurrences and behaviours that leave her stumped and scrambling for answers and love...

### Analysis

If folklore, myths, romance, suspense, fantasy, and drama seem alluring to you, then this Turkish series of 8 episodes is something that you could probably enjoy.

It is set in present times but has an air of delicious mystique and intrigue around it.

The setting is an offbeat place, and you get to soak up a different culture and lifestyle.

Most scenes are set in lush green surrounds with rustic places and the prominent sounds of crickets or just swishing winds surround your senses. I just loved the effect.

It has a great background score that uses minimal effects

to add to the almost scary feel at times. But don't worry, there is no horror element. Just great atmospherics, lending a superb mystifying feel.

Our heroine looks super gorgeous, and her character gradually and beautifully carves out as the story proceeds.

Her loneliness, psychological issues, resilience, the pain of her past, the antagonism surrounding her, her quest to know the truth, and the danger lurking around her make you feel for her. I liked the way the character made a place in our hearts.

I loved the lead actress and also the ones who play Maran's three sisters. They are

adorable.

Amongst men, more than the lead actor, I found the actor playing Cihan more expressive.

The only drawback that the series suffers from is its slow pace. They could easily have winded things up in 6 episodes at the max. But those who have a penchant for slow burn wouldn't mind it. Interesting characters and places would keep you sufficiently occupied.

The climax makes way for the second season, and I would certainly be looking forward to the outcome of Shahmaran's legend and also to see the destiny of Shahsu and Maran's love story.

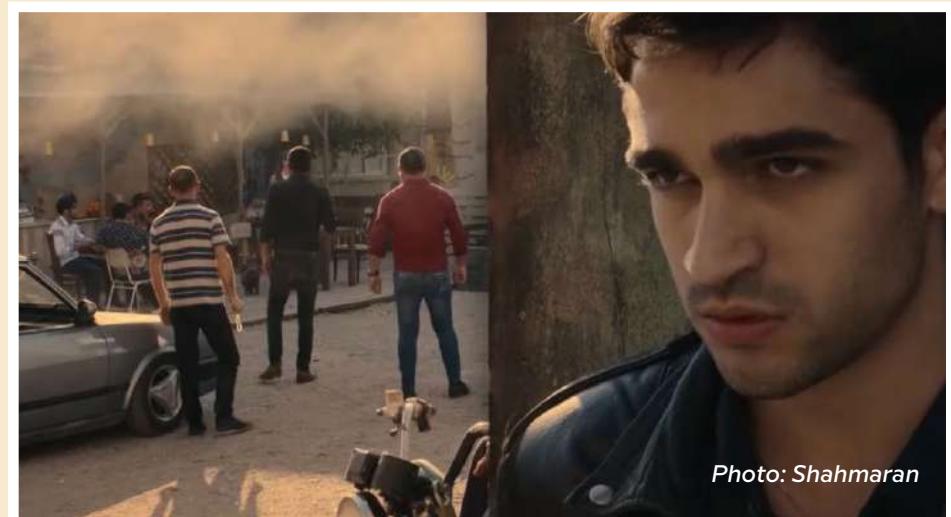
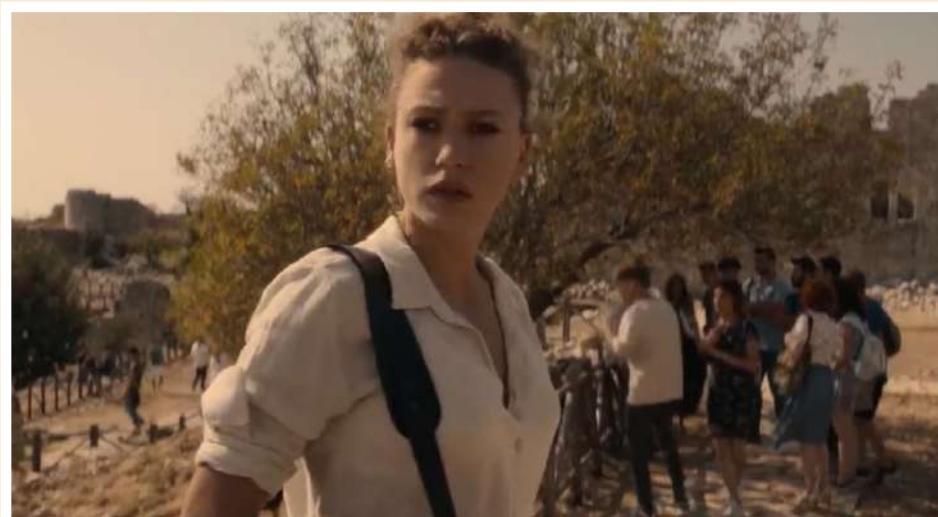


Photo: Shahmaran



# Everything Everywhere All At Once

(2022 / Comedy Drama)

**EEAO.... THIS FILM TRULY HAS EVERYTHING  
EVERWHERE ALL AT ONCE!!!**

**Writer/Director**

**Cast**

Daniels (Dan Kwan and Daniel Scheinert)  
Michelle Yeoh, Stephanie Hsu, Ke Huy Quan,  
Jamie Lee Curtis, Jenny Slate, Harry Shum Jr.



This phenomenal film boasts 11 Oscar nominations, which might be a surprise for some but not for me. But oh boy, the cinephile in me was waiting with bated breath for the nominations to come out.

EEAO was not only my favourite film of last year, but also one of my all-time favourites. The reason being that the movie has everything that I want from a film.

It's like a whole freaking package. What's that? Let's find out.

The reason why this movie worked is that it captured basic human emotions in a manner that is relatable to most people.

At the heart of it, it is a simple tale of a stubborn mother and a daughter who's struggling

to explain who she is. Sounds like a freaking Pixar movie, ain't it?

But it's a lot more complicated than that, despite which I could understand the proceedings and never felt alienated as a viewer, for which the credit goes to the writing department.

The multiverse shenanigans would put any comic book movie to shame, with how perfectly it has been executed without either messing up the narrative or complicating it to the point of ruining it. Very nicely done.

The variants introduced in the multiverse aren't just props, they have definite character arcs, motivations, and emotions underneath, which makes them the characters to

root for.

For example, the actress Evelyn (Michelle Yeoh) has a certain character arc, and celebrity Waymond (Ke Huy Quan) too has one. There's a distinctive feel to them.

The performances are such a treat.

Michelle Yeoh has added another iconic character to her filmography. The vulnerability, protectiveness, and fierceness while portraying Evelyn and her variants are simply astounding.

Waymond, portrayed by Ke Huy Quan, is my favourite character. I not only felt bad for him but also his variants. A father who is torn between his wife and daughter and who's struggling to pay off his debts. I am sure many middle-class people would relate to that.

Stephanie Hsu plays Joy who isn't the quintessential teenager you regularly see in movies. Her performance coupled with the writing elevates that character. I cannot reveal more, I don't want to spoil the experience.

The dialogues are simple yet beautiful. My favourite one is "So, Even Though You Have Broken My Heart Yet Again, I Wanted To Say, In Another Life, I Would Have Liked Just Doing Laundry And Taxes With You." This one perfectly portrays the pain, the desperation, and the incredibly emotional longing.

I would like to thank everyone who worked on this movie and were a part of making it an incredible piece of art.



Photo: EEAO

# Barry Keoghan Set to Portray Iconic Billy The Kid

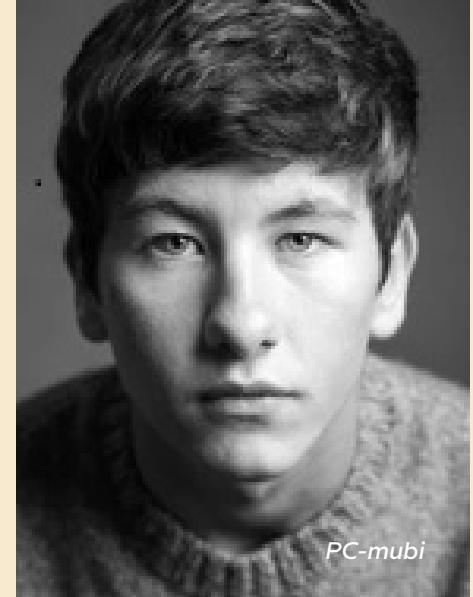
**B**arry Keoghan, who is now riding high on the success of his Oscar-nominated performance in *The Banshees of Inisherin*, has announced his next project: In a new movie directed by Bart Layton, the 30-year-old actor will play iconic criminal Billy the Kid. The actors previously collaborated on the 2018 heist flick *American*

*Animals*.

The movie is Keoghan's passion project because he, like the actual Billy the Kid, was born and raised in Ireland and lost his mother when he was a little child (Billy the Kid at age 15, Keoghan when he was 12). He allegedly originally presented Layton with the concept while *American Animals* was being made, and the project was almost

launched in 2020. Unfortunately, the epidemic foiled that attempt.

"As we were digging into the project, there were so many things we discovered about his life. There are so many eyewitness accounts, and lots of different versions of his story that didn't add up but that contributed to the legend," the 30-year-old actor told Deadline.



PC-mubi

# US Actress, Model Raquel Welch Dies at 82

**A**t the age of 82, Raquel Welch, an American actress widely credited with creating the modern action heroine role in Hollywood films, passed away.

The star passed away peacefully on 15 February morning after a brief illness, according to her management.

During a brief stint in Dallas, Texas,

the divorced mother-of-two modelled for the Neiman Marcus clothing store and worked as a cocktail waitress. Her big break came in 1964 soon after she moved back to California, when she scored cameos in *A House Is Not A Home*, and *Roustabout*, a musical starring Elvis Presley.

In her biography *Raquel: Beyond the Cleavage*, Welch

continued to confront her image. There, she talked about her upbringing, her struggles as a young single mother in Hollywood, and why she would never lie about her age.

"We'll never forget our remarkable friend Raquel Welch, one of our favorite guests on *The Muppet Show*," the Disney series tweeted.

Actor Paul Feig said

he enjoyed working with her on TV series *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*.

"Kind, funny and a true superstar whom I was pretty much in love with for most of my childhood," he wrote, adding: "We've lost a true icon."

She leaves behind a son, Damon Welch, and daughter Latanne "Tahnee" Welch, who is also an actress.



PC-REUTERS

# Oscar Luncheon Sees Cruise, Spielberg, and Fazal Unite

**A**li Fazal attended the Oscars luncheon with Tom Cruise, Cate Blanchett, Steven Spielberg, Guillermo Del Toro, alongside director Shaunak Sen and producer Guneet Monga.

This year the Oscars have a record number of nominations from India, including Shaunak Sen's *All That Breathes*, SS Rajamouli's *RRR* being nominated for original song and Guneet Monga's *The Elephant Whisperers*

directed by Kartiki Gonsalves.

Ali, who is in Los Angeles for work, joined them and added his support for the Indian movies. Talking about the same, Ali said, "It was great to be there alongside Shaunak and Guneet as a representative of Indian cinema. *All That Breathes* is one of the most iconic films I have seen in the recent past and to be there to see the film and our cinema being celebrated was truly a proud moment".



PC- alifazal9

# Kapoor & Renner International Collaboration Confirmed

**T**he streaming space is a "whole new beast," according to actor Anil Kapoor, after filmmaker Shekhar Kapur stated that OTT platforms have allowed the former to explore boundaries as an actor that traditional cinema never did.

Anil Kapoor is now riding high on the success of his long-form streaming debut, *The Night Manager*. Aditya Roy Kapur and Sobhita Dhulipala also appear in the Disney Plus Hotstar show.

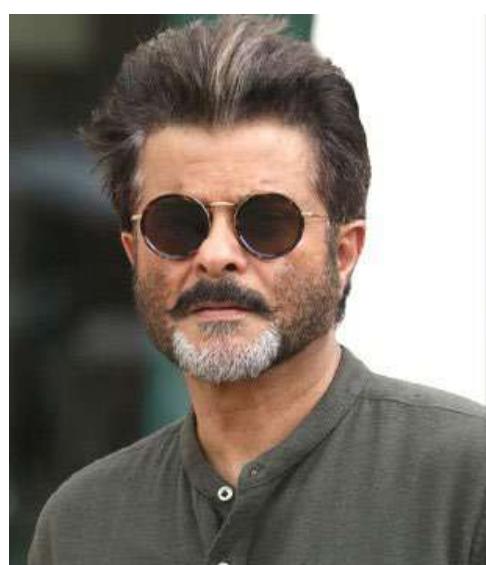
*The Night Manager* is the Hindi adaptation of John le Carré's novel of the same name, which also led to a

British series featuring Tom Hiddleston, Hugh Laurie, Elizabeth Debicki and Olivia Colman.

Shekhar Kapur recently took to Twitter and wrote, "Amazing how the actor in @AnilKapoor evolves with everything he does and OTT allows him to explore what theatrical cinema

never did. What's next Anil? Hope it's International? #nightmanager."

Anil replied to Shekhar's tweet and confirmed that his next international project would be the Jeremy Renner-starter Rennervations for Disney.



PC- bollywoodhungama



You're too kind @shekharkapur 😊 OTT is a whole new beast and I love it. As for what's next international I am looking forward to Jeremy Renner's Rennervations for Disney...Hopefully I'll continue living up to your words!



Amazing how the actor in @AnilKapoor evolves with everything he does and OTT allows him to explore what theatrical cinema never did. What's next Anil? Hope it's International ? #nightmanager

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