

Obituary**Sudhir Nandgaonkar will be Remembered Forever**

Sudhir Nandgaonkar was born on 11 June 1939 in a Marathi Hindu Brahmin family in a small village Nandgaon, near the town Chiplun, in the coastal district Ratnagiri in Maharashtra. His parents were Vasudeo and Indira Nandgaonkar. He lost his mother when he was only six years old. The village only had a primary school and so for secondary school he was sent to a boarding school from where he came to Mumbai in 1962 for higher education. He joined Siddarth College in Fort in 1964 and lived with his eldest sister in Girgaum. He graduated with honours and completed his master's degree in Marathi language from the University of Mumbai. As soon as he arrived in Bombay (now Mumbai) he started his career as a film in 1962 in 'Daily Maratha' where he continued till 1976. From 1976 to 1992 he worked as a film critic for the weekly 'Rasrang'. From 1992 he worked as a freelance film critic.

He was a stalwart leader of the film society movement in India, and also one of the pioneer leaders of organizing independent film festivals in India. In 1997 he started the International Film Festival of Mumbai (popularly known as MAMI Festival) as its Artistic Director and continued till 2008. He also founded the Third Eye Asian Film in Mumbai 20 years back and continued as the Festival Director till his last breath. Even during its 19th edition held from 12 to 18 December 2022 he monitored the festival from his bed.

'Prabhat Chitra Mandal' – one of the biggest film societies in India with more than a thousand members was founded by him in 1968 and he was there in the helm of affairs of this film society till his last day. At the apex level, he served the posts of the Regional Secretary, General Secretary and Vice President of the Federation of Film Societies of India and also represented in the General Assembly of the International Federation of Film Societies in Italy in 2009. He also served the office of the Secretary and President of the India Chapter of the International Federation of Film Critics – FIPRESCI. He served on the Advisory Panel of Film Censor Board in Mumbai for two terms: from 1978 to 1983 and from 1999 to 2003. He was also a member of the Film Import Committee of NFDC from 1984 to 1989. He served in the Jury of Maharashtra State Film Awards Committee in 1982, 84, 88, 92, 96, 98, 2003, 05, 07, 10, and 16. He served in the FIPRESCI Jury of Karlovy Vary (1999), Kerala (2000), Singapore (2002), Hongkong (2004) and Pusan (2008). He also served the Grand Jury of Portugal IFF in 2006 and Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary & Animation (MIFF) in 2000.

He was a close associate of Atal Behari Vajpayee, the former Prime Minister of India and translated his political speeches inside and outside the Parliament titled 'Ataljinche Awahan' in 1973. He edited an anthology of Vajpayee's non-political speeches in Hindi titled 'Rajniti Ke Us Paar' in 2004 which was released by the then Vice President of India H.E. Bhairon Singh Shekhawat in New Delhi. He translated Chidananda Dasgupta's book on Satyajit Ray's cinema in Marathi titled 'Abhijaat' in 1993. He authored the book 'Cinema Sanskruti' (Film Culture) in Marathi in 2017. To fill the vacuum of quality film criticism in Marathi, he started a film journal 'Roopvani' for Prabhat Chitra Mandal. He completed his novel 'Pyasa' based on the life of the iconic actor Guru Dutt just before his death. He was felicitated by FIPRESCI-India in Bangalore in 2019. Asian Film Foundation conferred him the Satyajit Ray Memorial Award for Promotion of Film Culture on 11 December 2022. He died at his residence in Thane on 1 January 2023. He is survived by his wife, two sons and one daughter. His undying spirit, energy, dynamism, simplicity, warmth, affection, honesty, perseverance, passion for cinema, and unmeasurable contribution to promote film culture will be remembered forever!

Premendra Mazumder