

#TEACHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Young authors weaving their own stories

Teaching since 2009, Varnika has impacted various lives over different cities. Finding her beat in education and shaping the lives of students, teachers' day for her is one where the children, whom she has taught, have learned to imagine and create.



ne book, one pen and one child can change the world. With this very intent, an English language teacher Varnika Agarwal has taught students how to weave stories. On Teacher's day, her gift to her students and herself was the stories that they've written, come to life through the form of physical books by each of them. Hence, Aarush, Leisha, Ayaan, Yuvaan, Manika, Varidhi, Ishaya, Amaira, Aarika, Aadya, Kashvi, Aarav, Shiven and Shivang have seen their first book come into light. They've learned the process of writing, over the course of time, after several baby steps. After multiple drafts and mind maps, they weaved their stories on different settings, striking a chord with a vast audience. Teaching since 2009, Varnika has impacted various lives over different cities. Finding her beat in education and shaping the lives of students, teachers' day for her is one where the children, whom she has taught, have learned



Spooked out and Laughing too!

This is what my agenda has been whenever someone watches my movie, they should always remain on the edge. They should be so involved that they don't want to miss any dialogues. So, I try to pace the movie in such a way that my audience should always be engrossed in the movie completely because I get irritated when someone is looking at their mobile in the middle of the movie.



hen you first start talking to Amar Kaushik, it is difficult to imagine this soft-spoken man as the director of movies like *Stree*, *Munjya* and the current reigning blockbuster *Stree 2*. You would imagine him to direct a gentle romance rather than a horror comedy. But then, appearances can be deceptive. When he gets talking, his tales can completely captivate you, and then you realize what makes him such a great storyteller.

Some excerpts:
What are your earliest memories of your childhood?
 My father was a forest ranger. When he was posted in Arunachal Pradesh, we used to hire VCRs and watch films. We always had electricity outages. So, we used to finish one film in three days depending on the electricity. So, when I would watch the movie, it would stay with me for all the time. I remember watching movies like *Khoun Bhari Mang*, *Maine Pyar Kiya*, and all those Hindi classical, 90s films.
So, did you think there influence the movies that you have made so far?
 Yes, my movie *Bhednya* has a lot of influence from that part because I have lived near jungles and watched my father. At that time, he had to battle a lot of smuggling of wood and trees. So, I did use a lot of those memories in *Bhednya*.
What about *Stree* and *Munjya*? Where did those movies come from?
 These movies have been inspired



Aman Kaushik on the sets of Stree 2.

(a lot) from Kanpur, where I did my college. Things like friendship of friends, the small town environment, how friends keep talking for hours about the same thing, how in every group, there is a person who gives *gyan*, how every little thing is blown into a big thing.
Let us talk about the *Stree* movies. In the first one, the *Stree* abducts the men and in the second one, the women are being abducted. How did you come about the idea for the second one?
 This was the demand of the script. In the first one, *Stree* was left, so what was next? Niren Bhatt, the writer, and I had a lot of discussions. In the first part, we already had established the back story of why *Stree* was killed and how she comes back to exact vengeance from those who killed her. So, we decided to bring back the character who had killed her, and whom she had killed in return by chopping off his head. So, we got this character called *Sarkata*. He was someone who could not handle modern women and believes that women should be subjugated and enslaved.
 So, he comes back as a ghost and starts abducting those women who were modern in their thinking. But it takes time for the townspeople to realize that someone is abducting the girls. Initially, everyone thinks that since the girls were modern, they were simply running away in pursuit of better opportunities. The irony was that in the first part, when the boys were disappearing, everyone knew that they were being abducted by *Stree*, but in the second part, when the girls were disappearing, no one thought that someone was

#STREE STRIKES AGAIN



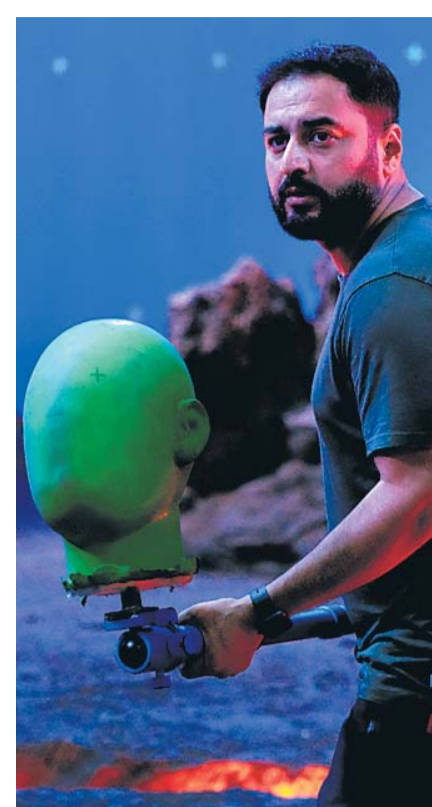
Aman Kaushik with Varun Dhawan, Rajkummar Rao and Ayushmann Khurrana.

laugh or not. I go by my instinct. I keep looking at my script and monitor. And the scenes are shot quite organically. One character says something and the other one replies. So, you have to take shots with three different cameras. But then, the magic also lies in editing. How you will cut the scene, how you will edit it out, where you have to stop the punch, where you have to make the music stick...
So, how do you create balance to enhance your horror elements without overshadowing the comedy parts?
 When it comes to horror comedies, we are very clear that if this is horror, then, we should treat this as a proper horror sequence. We should not buffoon this. We should go full horror in those things. And people should feel that. And then, comedy should come very organically from that scene. It's a very difficult thing. Actually, while doing such scenes of horror one has to be serious. And then, you also have to be aware of the kind of mood on the sets. For example, in the case of horror, no one should laugh or smile. Then, I put something in between that sequence where humour comes from. For example, let's say everyone is quiet in a scene and then someone will suddenly say 'Bhago' and his way of running will be very funny. Or maybe, they are five takes or ten takes, they have to keep on repeating the same energy, the same joke in the same manner. So, you have to have very great actors to do comedy. And then, there are some other aspects like the music, how to sound, how to edit. So, when the public sees all of this, they enjoy it. That's interesting. Because you say a joke, so you have to say it once and laugh. How do you make them laugh again? How do you do this, and then, you have to ask yourself, 'yes, this will work, this won't work.' Ultimately depends on the director's instinct.
When you do a movie or an artwork, it's like your own child. Don't you get biased



International Day of Charity

Charity is vital, as it enables us to reach out to wider parts of society, assisting those who need our help the most. This is why the International Day of Charity is so important. It raises awareness about charity and why it is important to help those who are in need. International Day of Charity serves to increase and enhance social responsibility across the entire world, increasing our support for charitable causes and bringing everyone together in solidarity. This day presents you with a great opportunity to get involved in the charity events that are going on around the world.



Aman Kaushik

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Rajkummar Rao, Shraddha Kapoor and Aman Kaushik.

#READING

Chanda Mama

Here are some of the best books about the moon for those interested in all aspects of our nearest neighbour

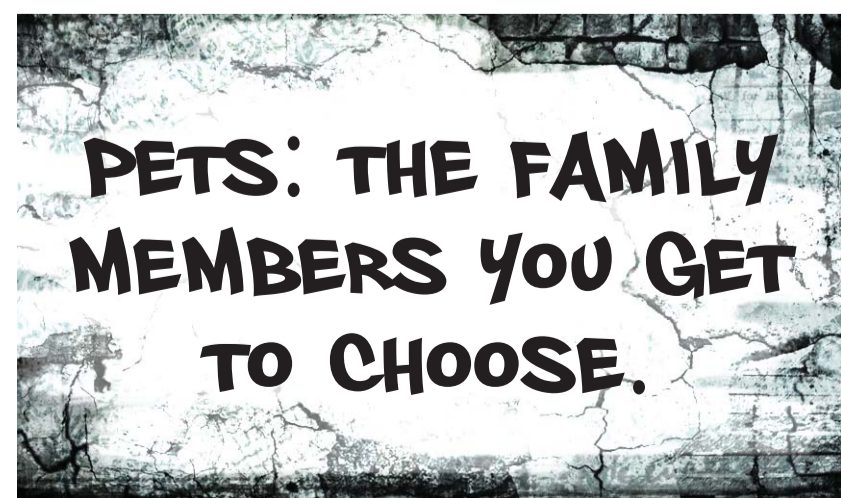
The moon has always played a central role in human history and culture, unsurprisingly so. The orbit of the moon impacts the tides, and the changing phases of the moon have been used to mark time since the earliest days of human history, providing us with a natural calendar before we had the ability to calculate time ourselves. Scientists and astronomers from various cultures have focused on the moon, calculating its age and trajectory, and posting theories and writing books about the moon and where it might have come from, long before the space race allowed us to reach the surface of the moon itself. The beauty of the moon has also made it a frequently-referenced figure in legends, literature and songs. A huge number of cultures have made the moon a religious focus, developing stories of moon gods or creating legends around this celestial object. Hundreds of songs include the moon in their lyrics, and poets and novelists often create moon-based metaphors in their work. Our fascination with the moon has continued into the present day, with stargazers often turning their telescopes on its surface, and people returning to the lunar calendar as a way to reconnect with nature. Here, are some of the best books about the moon for those interested in all aspects of our nearest neighbour.



Many cultures have a moon goddess, as the moon was so central to historic human life, often providing the most reliable calendar. Daughter of the Moon Goddess draws on the Chinese myth of the moon goddess *Chang'e*, following her daughter *Xingyuan*, as she infiltrates the Celestial Kingdom in order to find her exiled mother.

- The Book of the Moon**
By: Maggie Aderin-Pocock
Astronomer and presenter of the BBC's famous show *The Sky at Night*, has always loved studying the moon. In *The Book of the Moon*, she introduces readers to many different aspects of moon study, which will appeal to amateur and seasoned sky-watchers alike. The Book of the Moon looks at the history of humanity's relationship with the moon, the moon's topography, and the potential future of space exploration.
- The Moon: A Celebration of our Celestial Neighbour**
By: Royal Observatory Greenwich and Collins Astronomy
An excellent overview of the moon for people interested in the science and social impact of our orbiting neighbour. *The Moon* was produced by Royal Observatory Greenwich to mark the 50th anniversary of the Moon Landing. It touches on the way that astronomers have observed the moon over the centuries, and the events that led to the first expedition to the moon.
- The Moon**
By: Hannah Pang
A beautifully-illustrated book about our history and cultural relationship with the moon. Hannah Pang's *The Moon* is a perfect guide to lunar studies for beginners, although, seasoned moon-watchers will also undoubtedly find new information and trivia in its pages. It looks at myth, fiction, and the impact of the moon on our everyday lives, as well as the science behind our history with the moon.
- Beneath the Moon: Fairy Tales, Myths, and Divine Stories from Around the World**
By: Yoshi Yoshitani
The moon has played such an important role in human history and culture that it's unsurprising that it has been featured in so many legends and stories from across the world. In *Beneath the Moon*, Yoshi Yoshitani retells myths from across the globe, including stories about moon gods or tales that focus on the moon.
- Eight Years to the Moon: The History of the Apollo Missions**
By: Nancy Atkinson
Nearly everyone knows a little of the story of the 1969 Moon Landing, but while the names of the astronauts and the first words spoken on the moon are common knowledge, the long journey to get there is less well-known. *Eight Years to the Moon* contains stories from many of the background figures, such as engineers and other scientists who worked on getting the Apollo astronauts safely to their destination.
- The Quiet Moon**
By: Kevin Parr
Humanity's relationship with the moon doesn't always mean venturing into space. The moon has also had a huge impact on our earth-bound lives. In *The Quiet Moon*, Kevin Parr uses a focus on the moon as a framework for exploring a year of engaging with nature, working from a lunar calendar and drawing on Celtic history.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman