

## Acne Positivity Day

Imples on the face and body can bring about a literal rash of issues that can be painful, frustrating, and even embarrassing. People, who have acne, can struggle with severe confidence issues, having a negative impact on the self-image. With at least 9% of people worldwide affected by acne, this is a concern that affects hundreds of millions of people. *Acne Positivity Day* is here to change the stigma behind acne, recognizing that all humans deserve acceptance and everyone can embrace their unique journeys with acne!



## #LOST ART

### World Letter Writing Day

Digital media just doesn't quite carry the same personal level as this old method



For hundreds of years, communication took place through just a couple of ways, you either sat down and had a conversation with someone, or you wrote your thoughts and feelings down on a letter and had it delivered to them by courier. The nature of letters made them incredibly intimate, as

each carried the indelible mark of its creator. Every thing, from the subtle scents of your home and perfume, to snippets from your garden could be included in a mailed letter. Digital media just doesn't quite carry the same personal level as this old method, and *World Letter Writing Day* is your opportunity to remember the wonders of the 'hand-written word.'

## Learn about World Letter Writing Day

*World Letter Writing Day* is all about paying tribute to the age-old form of communication, letter writing. *World Letter Writing Day* presents you with a great opportunity to reconnect with people that you may not have spoken to for

quite some time now. It also gives you to think before you write. With modern connection forms, we don't tend to reflect and think before we communicate with someone. However, a letter gives you the perfect opportunity to do this.

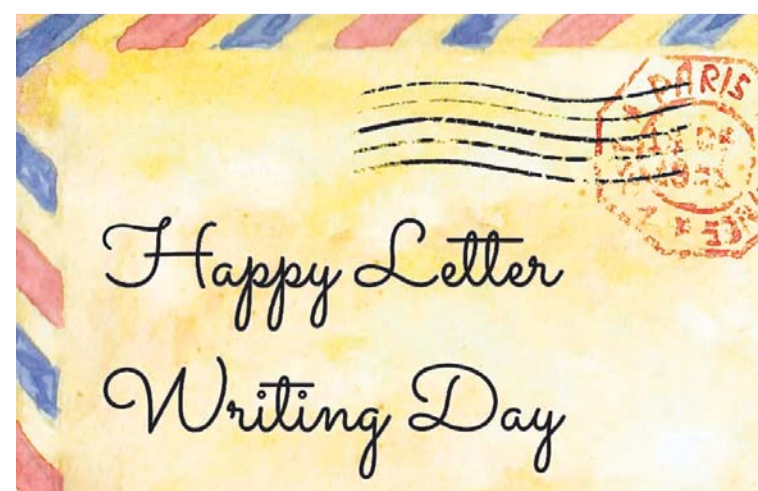
## History

*World Letter Writing Day* was established by Richard Simpkin as a tribute to the joy and excitement he felt when a hand-written letter would arrive in his mailbox. His appreciation of the hand-written word came about as a result of a project he was working on, called "Australian Legends," he would send out letters to everyone he considered to be an Australian Legend, with the interest of arranging a personal interview and photography session. There was just something amazing about receiving a letter with the legends own personal touch to it, and it certainly doesn't hurt that while hand-written letters are collectible, digital communication, certainly, is not.

## How to celebrate

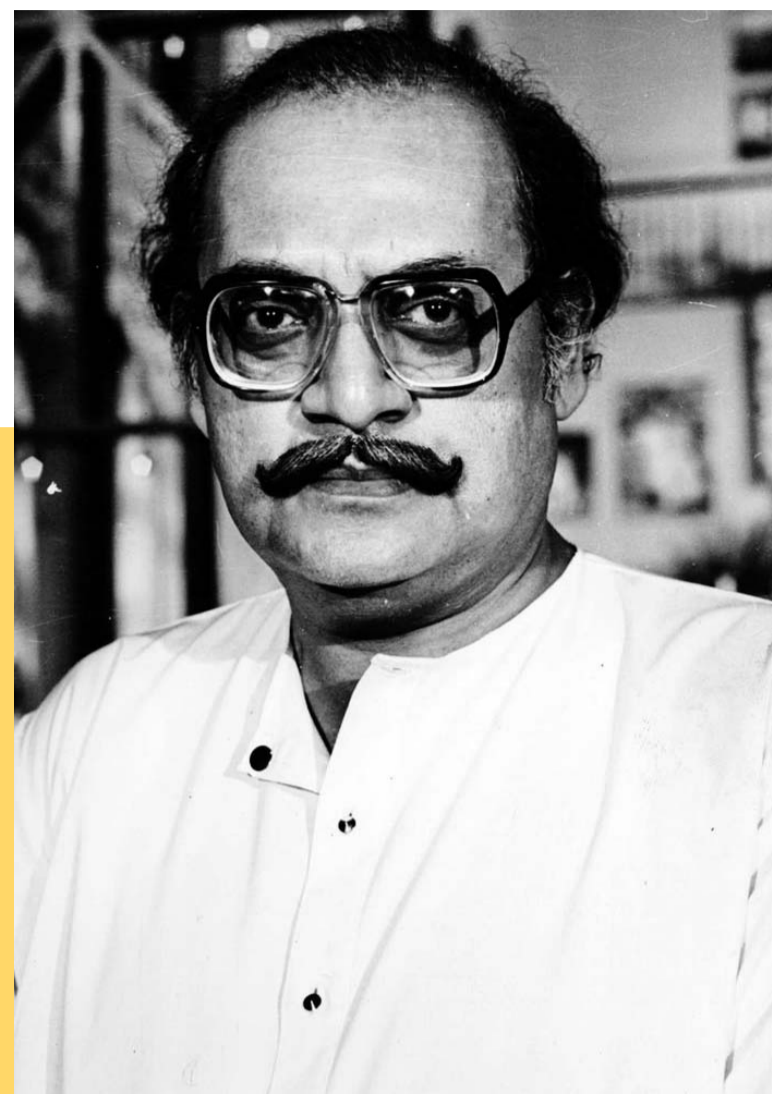
Get out pen and paper and start writing. Picking whom to write to, too, can often be the hardest thing, but you should select an old friend or family member of any age. For the young, it can be novel for them to receive a written personal letter. It's just something that isn't done anymore and through doing so, you can share with them that unique and personal experience, that is, receiving a written letter from a loved one. If saved, it's something you can hold on to long past the time they fade from this earth, and you can't hold a digital email. Another option is to send it to a grandparent or parent, who was around when there was no other option, when you wanted to communicate with someone far away. Phone calls were all very well and good, but they were quite expensive, and letters were

cheap to send through the post. Take the opportunity provided by *World Letter Writing Day* to work on your writing skills, and let a loved one know that they're worth a little extra effort. You don't have to send your letter to a friend or family member, though. There are plenty of other options. You could write a letter of encouragement to a patient in your local hospital. Something like this could really put a smile on someone's face and help them to push through with a difficult day. You could also write a letter of appreciation to an older mentor, or you could write a letter of encouragement and thanks to someone, who is currently serving in the Military or has served in the Military. A *thank you letter* can go a very long way and make the recipient feel appreciated.

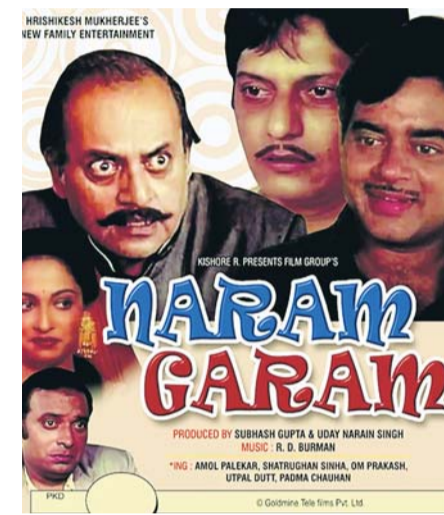


# A CONTRADICTION CALLED UTPAL DUTT

Dutt strode like a *Colossus* over the realm of *Bengali theatre*, staging one production after another and, at the same time, trying to evolve a comprehensive theory of Epic Theatre which, the indefatigable Thespian hoped, should serve as a model for others. Utpal Dutt, closer to his own theatrical tradition and Stanislavski (the Russian theatre director and actor), aspired to raise his Epic Theatre based on the reinvigorating power of myths, while Bertolt Brecht formulated his vision by subjecting this very myth to question. In all his productions, some of them were breathtaking, Utpal Dutt achieved what he wanted to (in his own words), "reaffirm the violent history of India, reaffirm the material tradition of its people, recount again and again the heroic tales of grand rebels and martyrs."



Bhuvan Shome.



Naram Garam.



Dr. Shoma A. Chatterji  
Film Scholar,  
Journalist & Author

This year completes 31 years since Utpal Dutt passed away on August 19, 1993. Yet, few remember his rich contribution to the history of theatre in the country, much less, his contribution to the world of cinema, both Hindi and Bengali, mainstream and off-mainstream. Dutt, who began his career as a stage actor when he was a schoolboy, in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, took theatre beyond the geographical parameters of the stage. Like Augusto Boal (the Latin American theatre personality who wrote *Theatre of the Oppressed*), Dutt felt that all theatre is political. He never worried of stressing that theatre could never be meaningful if it does not consider the political ethos within which it has to negotiate the terms of the volatile and fluctuating relationships between and among human beings.

His career in films spans an oeuvre of more than 100 films, covering forty years. It covers a colourful range of characterizations, beginning from the upright and honest government officer in *Mrinal Sen's Bhuvan Shome* (1969) to Satyajit Ray's *Agantuk* (1991) and Gautam Ghose's *Padma Nadir Majhi* (1993). His range covered a happy mix of the comic and the villainous in Hindi mainstream cinema. He reigned the audience as the lovelorn *Bhuvan Shome*, smitten by the beauty of *Savar Sampat*. And the audience hated him for his diabolic villainy in Shakti Samanta's *Amanush*. He played the despotic dictator to the hilt in Ray's *Hirak Rajar Deshe* while he used his *Bengali-ised Urdu* to make audiences laugh away in a delightful guest appearance in Dulal Guha's *Do Anjaane*. "Visual images did not make any impact on me, neither during my childhood days, nor when I turned older," he once said when asked why he stepped into cinema much later in his life, after he had already done a lot of theatre. His entry into cinema was more by chance than by deliberate choice. When Shakespeareana International Theatre Company, led by Geoffrey Kendall, left India for good, Utpal Dutt's troupe con-

## #TRIBUTE



A scene from film 'Agantuk.'

Visual images did not make any impact on me, neither during my childhood days, nor when I turned older," he once said when asked why he stepped into cinema much later in his life, after he had already done a lot of theatre. His entry into cinema was more by chance than by deliberate choice.



Madhu Bose, came to watch the performance. He was then looking for a leading man to do his film, based on the life of the Indo-Anglian poet, Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Impressed by Dutt's interpretation of *Othello*, Bose offered him the role. Dutt was then looking for an opportunity to widen his canvas and to branch out and seek fresh pastures, so, he accepted the offer happily. This was the beginning of a long career, marked by a thick portfolio of films in Hindi and Bengali, while the stage remained his first love and his troupe continued its movement in serious political theatre.

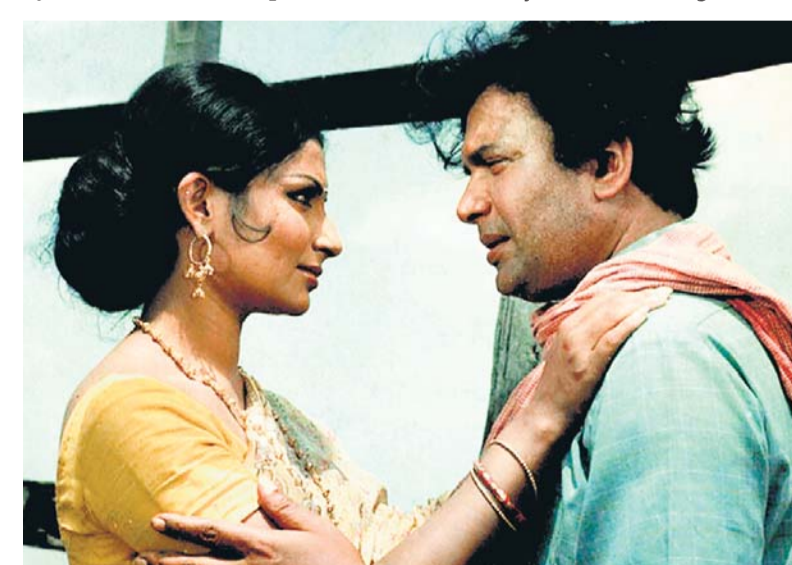
Mrinal Sen once, admiringly, described Dutt as "an actor who could play roles from the sublime to the ridiculous with equal flair." When asked how he made the switch from an outright commercial *masala* film like *Fariyaad* to a Ray film like *Joy Baba Phelunath*, Dutt said, "I have developed a tech-

nique of shutting my mind off, switching it off, rather. I will not be able to tell you even the names of the films I have acted in or even the name of the character I have just finished shooting." Among some of his memorable films from both mainstream and off-mainstream cinema are *Bhuvan Shome*, *Ek Adhuri Kahani* and *Chorus*, directed by Mrinal Sen, *Agantuk*, *Jana Aranya*, *Joy Baba Phelunath* and *Do Anjaane*. None of these films

He carried on from one experiment to the next, not once moving away from his belief in the need to merge politics, literature and theatre. "I do not advocate that things be portrayed either as black or as white. On the contrary, I say that is precisely what Marxism disallows. There is no such thing as black and white in life."

and *Hirak Rajar Deshe*, directed by Satyajit Ray, *Paar* and *Padma Nadir Majhi*, directed by Gautam Ghose, *Bombay Talkie* and *Shakespeare Wallah*, directed by James Ivory, *Jukti Takko Aar Gappo*, directed by Ritwik Ghatak, *Guddi* directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee, *Swami and Golu*, directed by Basu Chatterjee, *Amanush*, directed by Shakti Samanta, and *Michael Madhusudan*, directed by Madhu Bose, among many others. His villain in *Amanush* was backed by a string of theatrical tricks and turned out to be a big hit with the audience. His performance in *Agantuk* brought him the Best Actor Award from the Bengal Film Journalists' Association in 1992. Dutt also directed some meaningful films during his career. These were *Megh* (1961), a psychological thriller, *Ghoom Bhangar Gaan* (1965), *Jhor* (1979), *Baisakhi Megh* (1981), *Maa* (1983) and *Inqilab ke Baad* (1984). None of these films

Dutt represented India. In his presentation, Dutt explored the symbiotic relationship between



A scene from the film 'Amanush.'

met with any kind of commercial success but this did not seem to deter him.

Dutt strode like a *Colossus* over the realm of *Bengali theatre*, staging one production after another and, at the same time, trying to evolve a comprehensive theory of Epic Theatre which, the indefatigable Thespian hoped, should serve as a model for others. Utpal Dutt, closer to his own theatrical tradition and Stanislavski (the Russian theatre director and actor), aspired to raise his Epic Theatre based on the reinvigorating power of myths, while Bertolt Brecht formulated his vision by subjecting this very myth to question. In all his productions, some of them were breathtaking, Utpal Dutt achieved what he wanted to (in his own words), "reaffirm the violent history of India, reaffirm the material tradition of its people, recount again and again the heroic tales of grand rebels and martyrs."

In May 1990, Lancaster University organized a seminar on theatre and ideology, where

the inadequate portrayal of the exploitative nature of religion. He tried to establish a link between basis and superstructure, highlighting the superstructure prevalent in ancient India.

Public pronouncements often landed him in trouble. Dutt was arrested on December 27, 1965, on a warrant issued by the Government of West Bengal under the Preventive Detention Act. He was released on bail soon after, since he was then busy shooting for the title role in Shashi Kapoor's *The Guru*. He was open about the fact that his career in films stemmed from the need for funds for his theatre group. Many of his peers laughed at this statement, but he stood firm in his commitment to theatre as much as he did in his commitment to films, that went completely against the grain of his strongly Marxist ideology. He carried on from one experiment to the next, not once moving away from his belief in the need to merge politics, literature and theatre. "I do not advocate that things be portrayed either as black or as white. On the contrary, I say that is precisely what Marxism disallows. There is no such thing as black and white in life, there are only greys," he would say and promptly enact a completely black character in a Hindi or Bengali film! This contradiction is what makes Utpal Dutt stand apart from his peers in theatre.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

## #HOUSEKEEPING

# Plants That Repel Mosquitoes

These are the plants to get, if mosquitoes frequent your home.



Mosquitoes are never a pleasant sight in or around your home. These unwelcome guests leave nasty bite marks that they leave behind on our skin which can cause it to swell with an inflamed and itchy rash. In extreme cases, these insects can also transmit fatal diseases as they bite, including the likes of malaria and dengue fever. That's why this is a pest you should deal with as soon as possible. And while it's handy to know how to get rid of mosquitoes, if you can keep them away from your home in the first place, you can save yourself a lot of trouble. One way in you can deter mosquitoes is by having the right plants on your side. There are many *mosquito-repelling plants*, which will actively keep these pests out of your home. If you're keen to take advantage, we've listed some here.



### Marigolds

The plant to make to this list is *marigolds*. The orange and yellow blooms will make a pleasant addition to any garden, and such a plant can reduce your pest problems at the same time. This is because it contains a natural compound, often found in insect repellents, known as *limonene*. This produces a citrusy aroma that mosquitoes just can't stand. So, these pests will actively steer clear, while beneficial insects, such as ladybirds and butterflies, will flock from far and wide.

### Lemongrass

*Lemongrass* might not look like much, but it packs a punch when it comes to mosquitoes. It contains *citronella oil*, which can be extracted from the leaves and stem. This produces an overwhelming lemony scent, which overpowers mosquitoes and leaves them running, or flying, for the hills. Its scent comes in use in more ways than one and it will also keep mice and rats at bay.

### Catnip

While our feline friends might love the smell of *catnip*, mosquitoes would rather keep away from it. This plant contains *Nepeta Cataria*, a substance which a number of insects dislike, including flies and roaches. In fact, *catnip* is widely regarded as just as effective, if not more so, than synthetic alternatives, such as DEET. You can crush the stems by hand to extract the oil and apply directly to your skin as an active insect repellent.



### Lavender

*Lavender* is often used all over the home. Its popular fragrance can be found in soaps, candles and detergents, so you may already be using it without knowing it. Plus, lavender oil can be used for health and wellness purposes, as well, such as helping us sleep or relieving stress. If that weren't enough, the plant itself is beautiful on display and its vibrant, purple flowers can add a striking pop of color to any home. The good news is, while we may love this fragrance, mosquitoes do not. In fact, the smell of lavender, whether fresh, dried or in oil form, will overwhelm these pests and keep them away. Not only that, lavender is effective on flies, ants and even rodents for the same reason, so, it's a handy pest-repellent plant to have around the home.

### Rosemary

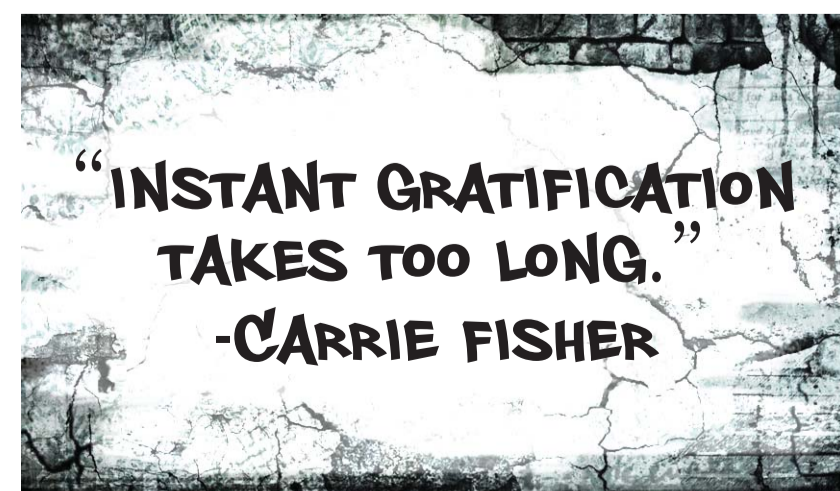
*Rosemary* is a versatile plant to say the least. The oil can be used to stimulate hair growth, the fragrance is often found in bathroom products and, as an herb, it can be used to spruce up all kinds of dishes in the kitchen. On top of all that, it can be beautiful when in bloom, with delicate blue flowers growing along the stem. The uses don't stop here either. While we may enjoy the smell of rosemary, it's no friend of mosquitoes, with the insect actively avoiding it. In fact, rosemary can repel all kinds of flies as well as ants. So, it's a great addition to keep your home pest-free in general.



### Sage

The final plant in our list is *sage*. We add this herb to our recipes to enrich the flavour and aroma. It also actively repels mosquitoes and flies as well, particularly when the leaves are dried and burnt, releasing the oils as a vapour. Alternatively, the leaves can be strategically placed around your home for a deterring effect as well. Sage is straightforward to grow. It can be planted indoors in containers or outside in your flower beds. It prefers sitting in the sun, so, a windowsill would work well indoors, and the soil should be well-drained.

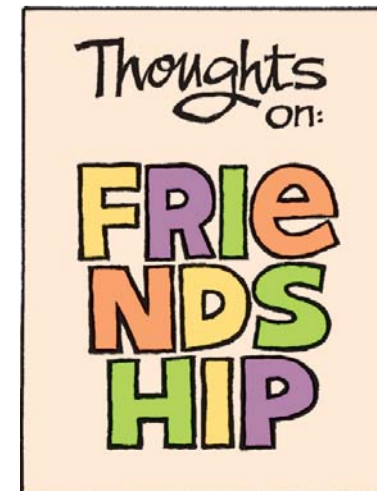
## THE WALL



## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman