

#PARENTING

Make Reading Exciting

Try doing voices, picking books that your child loves, and more, to make reading pleasurable.

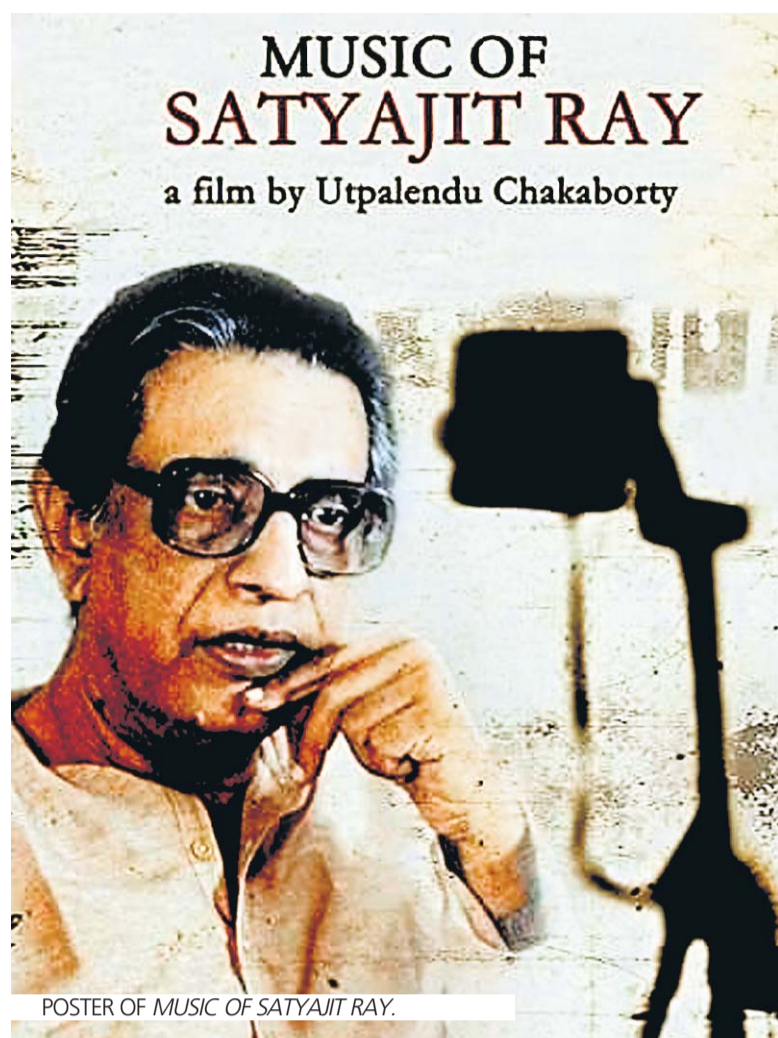


How can you continue to make reading exciting so that your child won't turn their attention to television or the tempting mélange of electronic gizmos at her disposal? You can't if you race through a story in a monotone so that you can pop off the light at bedtime. Instead, read aloud with gusto, exhilaration, and joy. Make kids feel the roiling seas and the warm breezes that blow on a summer night. When reading is a pleasurable experience, children stay connected to the story, and to you.



How to make the most of your reading time

- **Ham it up!** Read slowly enough for your child to build mental pictures of what he hears. Stop periodically so that he can study pictures in the book without feeling hurried. Raise or lower your voice to build drama and suspense. Dialogue adds life to a story. So, scan a book before you read, and follow the implied stage directions. If a character shouts, raise your voice! If he speaks in a stern voice, do the same.
- **Vary your subject matter as well as the kinds of things you read.** Wordless picture books give kids the chance to tell their own stories as they 'read.' Jump-starting the creative process. Let your child's imagination soar, and show her how excited you are by her ideas.
- **Hunt for books that match your child's interests.** When you make a point of finding books on subjects dear to your child's heart, you not only stimulate his interest in literature, but also let him know that you value what he thinks and does.
- **Look for books that interest you too.** Enthusiasm is contagious. If you're excited by an author or a storyline, your child will be too. The world
- of books provides a safe, inexpensive way to explore new subjects, travel to Japan, read about sports heroes, learn how astronauts prepare for space.
- **Foster closeness between siblings.** If your children are several years apart, you may want to schedule individual reading times as they get older to ensure that the books are at the appropriate reading level. But don't forsake family reading. Suggest that older kids read to younger ones.
- **Help your child notice new information as you read.** By sharing your feelings about a story, you motivate your child to do the same. By asking her opinions and listening to them without judgment or criticism, you let your child know that you value her feelings and ideas and respect her judgment.
- **Let her read to you.** Once your child starts to read, vary your ritual by taking turns reading to each other, and don't be too quick to correct a beginner. If your child mispronounces or incorrectly sounds out a word, wait until he finishes the page or the thought so that you don't discourage his attempts. Then say, "Did that word make sense?"
- **Get her a library card.** Most public libraries issue cards when a child is five or can write her name. Celebrate the event, and check out library reading hours and family reading times as well as book clubs and other motivating programs.



POSTER OF MUSIC OF SATYAJIT RAY.

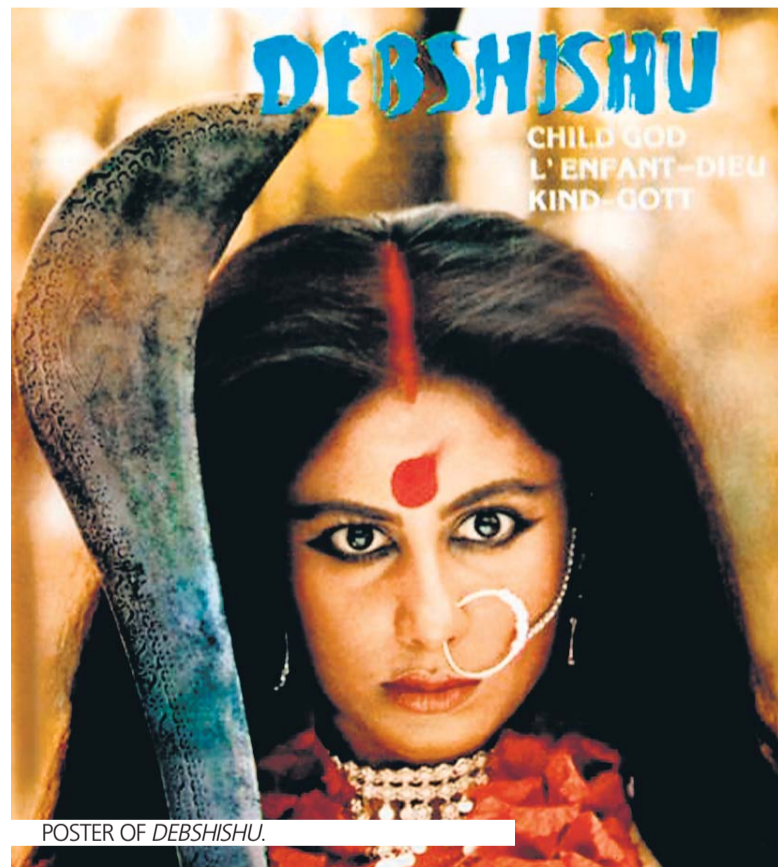


Dr. Shoma A. Chatterji
Film Scholar,
Journalist & Author

Utpalendu Chakrabarty's life story spells out more of tragedy than was observed in his films. He is one director who never wore a halo around his head, though he could have, if he had wanted to. Because he was counted among the most outstanding filmmakers after the milestones in Bengali and then international cinema, like Gautam Ghose, Buddhadeb Dasgupta and Aparna Sen.

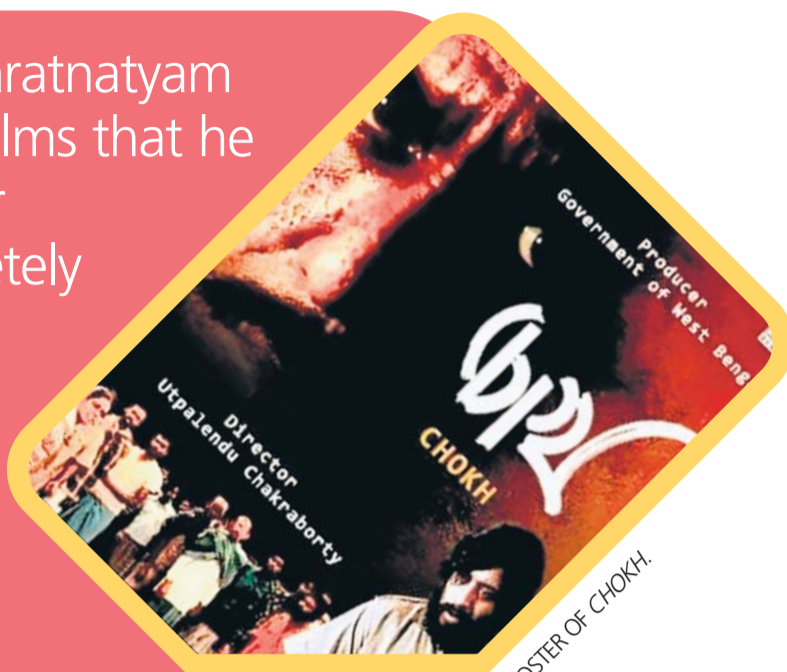
Each of these stalwarts has carved their names in golden letters in the post-Ray-Sen-Ghatak era and has established his/her personal oeuvre and signature in and through the films that they have made. But the difference between these three and Utpalendu is that though he won many National Awards, followed

by International Awards for his out-of-the-box films and documentaries, he went quite speedily downhill, following his direction of *Chhandaneer*, a feature film which was completely out of the genre that he had specialized in, and his discomfort in handling this film was clearly visible. He was celebrated mainly for expressing his personal ideology of strong Leftist beliefs, which he did not shy away from his initial films like *Chokh*, *Debshishu*, *Proshob*, *Phansi* and some rate documentaries like *Moyna Tadanta*, *Rong, Mukti*, *Chai*, *Chattrurtha Panipather Juddha*, apart from non-political documentaries like *The Music of Satyajit Ray*, *Shatabarsha Mohun Bagan*, *Debabrata Biswas and Children in the Cinema* of Satyajit Ray. He also made some short telefilms for Doordarshan, many of which were strong critiques on the low-middle-class and middle-class Bengali society. The story of his early life is as exciting as any feature film made during his time. He was an active participant in student politics during his college days, influenced deeply by his uncle, Swarna Kamal Bhattacharya, who was well-known as a Communist Writer of creative fiction in Bengali. After



POSTER OF DEBSHISHU.

After *Chhandaneer*, a biographical fiction on a Bharatnatyam dancer, which was worlds apart from the kind of films that he had made till then, Utpalendu's career as a director clambered down to never rise again. It was completely out of his system, ran against his ideology of humanism at its tragic best, and turned out to be a terrible cinematic disaster. No producer was willing to touch him with a ten-foot-long pole after this film, but his telefilms were quite good.



POSTER OF CHHANDANEER.

Utpalendu Chakrabarty Made It But Didn't

#TRIBUTE



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His personal life was also riddled by tragedy. He divorced his first wife, Indrani Chakrabarty, after they had a son and married filmmaker and poet, Satarupa Sanyal, whose career in films began under his directorial baton. But this marriage, too, ended after two daughters because, according to Satarupa, Utpalendu had turned into an alcoholic. His death was quite tragic as he died alone, taken care of by his long-time assistant, Arghya.

acquiring a Master's Degree in Modern History from the Calcutta University (1967), he was deeply involved with the CPI (ML) led student agitations, and reportedly, was jailed several times. As a filmmaker, completely self-taught, he infused almost every film, that he made, with strong political commentary. After his post-graduation, he wrote short stories, underlined by his political philosophy of the extreme Left. He also joined first as an informal teacher among the tribals of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. But always being of very indifferent health, he was forced to come back to his hometown Kolkata in 1971, where he took up the job of History teacher in a higher secondary school. But he also began to make films and became so busy, that finally, he had to quit his teaching job.

Prasab, a feature film, spelt out an interesting story of a young wife with a small child, forced to live under the shelter of a political activist and his sister-in-law, as her husband, a political extremist, is in prison. How she walks out of this friend's home when his sister-in-law is killed in an attack by extremists to move away into a village with her baby, how she fights her escape against some extremists by pretending to be pregnant and hiding important documents of the underground movement inside her garment, where she pretends to be a *Punjabi*, clothed in *Punjabi* attire, depicts the inner strength of an ordinary woman placed in extra-ordinary circumstances. In retrospect, the film looks rather outdated in terms of its technical and aesthetic finesse

but considering that it was made by a new filmmaker, it made a strong political statement against the backdrop of the extremist movement in West Bengal. Besides, there seems to have been no attempt by any organization, including the NFAI and others, to make efforts to preserve the original prints of the films, as a consequence of which, none of the prints that you get to watch are clear and lucid while some are not available for viewing at all.

He won the *Indira Gandhi National Award* for the Best Film of a Debut Director, for his film *Moyna Tadanta* in 1980. However, it is extremely difficult to access his films for wider viewing. Research on his films is also conspicuous by its absence. Chakrabarty was also known for his wonderful ear for music, and often, he composed the music of his films himself. *Chokh* (Eyes) (1982) is the first feature film of Utpalendu Chakrabarty, which drew attention with this strong indictment against a corrupt system, where a sympathetic gesture like the donation of one's eyes for someone who is blind can be subjected to political manipulation of the medical fraternity by vested interests. Chakrabarty was involved in politics in his student life and spent some time in Purulia among the tribals. At the 30th National Awards, the film beat Mrinal Sen's *Kharaj* to win the Best Feature Film for 'its courage in exposing an aspect of contemporary reality which has great social relevance, and for doing so, with passion and integrity.' Chakrabarty had also received

the award for 'best direction' for the same film, a rare achievement for a new director. *Chokh* also won the *OCIC Award* at the Berlin International Film Festival in 1983. The time setting of the film is 1975, during the Emergency. The place setting is Kolkata, captured in its sole public screening. This film won National Film Award for Best Non-Feature Film at the 32nd National Film Awards in 1984. His last documentary, perhaps, was on *Children in the Cinema of Satyajit Ray*, which, sadly, was never released.

After *Chhandaneer*, a biographical fiction on a Bharatnatyam dancer, which was worlds apart from the kind of films that he had made till then, Utpalendu's career as a director clambered down to never rise again. It was completely out of his system, ran against his ideology of humanism at its tragic best, and turned out to be a terrible cinematic disaster. No producer was willing to touch him with a ten-foot-long pole after this film, but his telefilms were quite good. His personal life was also riddled by tragedy. He divorced his first wife, Indrani Chakrabarty, after they had a son and married filmmaker and poet, Satarupa Sanyal, whose career in films began under his directorial baton. But this marriage, too, ended after two daughters because, according to Satarupa, Utpalendu had turned into an alcoholic. His death was quite tragic as he died alone, taken care of by his long-time assistant, Arghya, in a flat given to him by the West Bengal Government. Like his films, his life too, spells out a very sad tale.

One sad reality of Chakrabarty is that there has been very little research on his films as an auteur of great merit and greater courage.



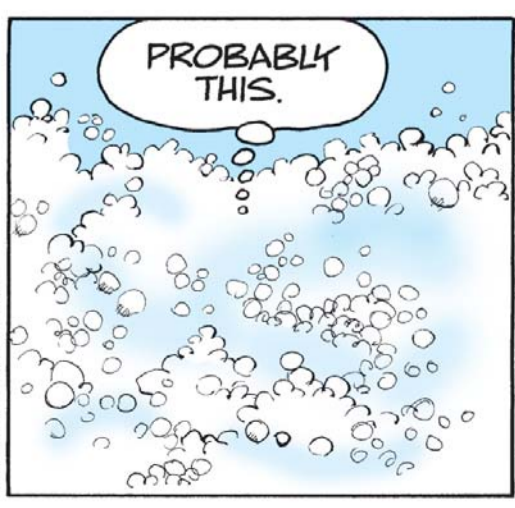
POSTER OF CHHANDANEER.

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

BABY BLUES

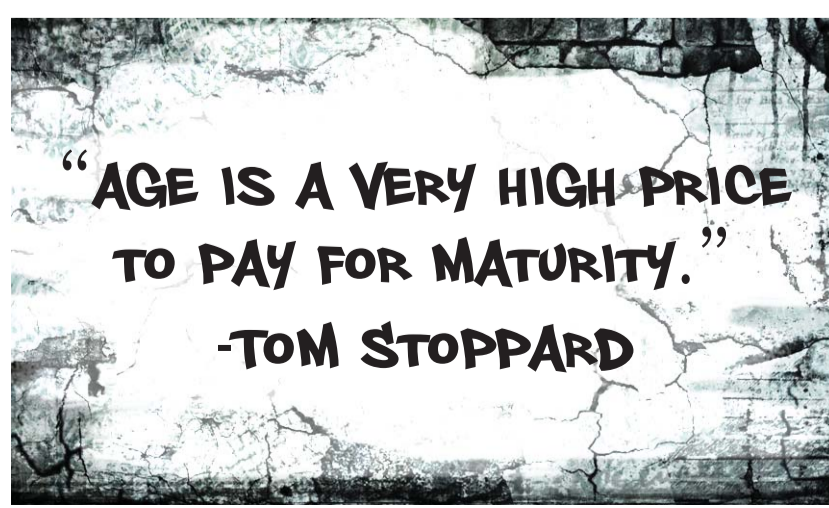


ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

THE WALL



#HERITAGE

Decoding The Nation's Love Affair With Tea

India is a land of *chai* and *chaiwalas*, and on *National Chai Day 2024*, we honour the country's beloved beverage.

"*chai peeni hai!*" This phrase is as familiar as it is inescapable, if you live in an Indian household. Tea is an indispensable part of being an Indian. Tea is not just a beverage in India, tea is an emotion.

In all our memories rooted in our inherent Indianness, 'chai' has been an intrinsic part of them all. Be it those rainy evenings, stuck inside the house, having endless cups of *masala chai* with *pakoras*, or lazing on a hot summer afternoon, when the refreshing lemon tea would come to our rescue. Whether it was skipping classes in college to sit at the roadside *tapri*, clutching a *kadak kulhad* of *chai* and talking about politics, or the shrill call of the *chaiwala* on trains, waking you up at the crack of dawn, this sweet concoction has always had a permanent spot in the lives of Indians. India is a land of *chai* and *chaiwalas*, and on *National Chai Day 2024*, celebrated annually on September 21, we honour the country's beloved beverage by diving deeper into our cups to explore the diverse varieties of tea, enjoyed across the nation.



India's Diverse Chai Varieties

India, with its diversity and multicultural preferences, couldn't have gone with just a single variety of tea. As varied as its culture, the preparation of tea also follows the same rules. Here are some of the popular ways in which India consumes its *chai*.

Butter Tea (Gur Gur Chai), Tibet

Butter tea, known as *Gur Gur Chai*, enjoys popularity in Ladakh and Sikkim. Traditionally crafted from tea leaves, yak milk, butter, water, and salt, this hearty brew is cherished by Himalayan nomads, who consume some over 30 cups daily. It is also made with cow butter and served in small cups that leave you craving more.

Kahwa, Kashmir

Hailing from the picturesque valleys of Kashmir, *Kahwa* is an exotic *chai*, bursting with rich flavours. Preparing this concoction is surprisingly simple, just boil water and add cinnamon, saffron, cardamom, dried rose petals, and green tea leaves for the desired strength. Top it off with honey and almond slivers for a truly indulgent experience. *Kahwa* is the perfect companion on a chilly winter day.



Masala Chai

India's status as the world's leading tea exporter traces back to its colonial history. Yet, the country's diverse culinary traditions birthed *masala chai*, a beloved concoction of black tea, simmered with milk, sugar, and an array of fragrant spices like ginger, clove, cardamom, and cinnamon. Each Indian household boasts its exclusive *masala chai* recipe.

Lebu Cha, Kolkata

Lebu Cha, or spiced lemon tea, is Bengal's answer to flavourful *street-style chai*. This zesty infusion of black tea combines the essence of lemon with a unique blend of spices, curated by each street vendor. A final squeeze of lemon adds a tangy kick to this delightful *chai*. It's reminiscent of classic lemon tea but a distinct *desi* twist makes it a must-try, when in the city of joy.

Kangra Chai, Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh's Kangra region reigns as North India's tea capital. The lush, green gardens of Palampur offer a haven for tea enthusiasts. *Kangra chai*, both green and black, has been cultivated here since the mid-19th century. It boasts a fresh, vegetal aroma and a subtle pungent taste, making it a tea lover's dream.

