

## Deepa Mehta: On The Go...

By Ranga Rajah

She needs no introduction to lovers of cinema. Her elements are Fire, Earth and Water...

Deepa Mehta as we all know her is known for making thought provoking films.

What inspires her to make films as varied as, lives of widows in Varanasi (Water) to partition in the subcontinent, (1947-Earth) to domestic violence (Heaven On Earth) and last but not the least, homosexuality (Fire)?

Shifting from socially relevant topics to making a fun-filled hungama with Bollywood-Hollywood with Lisa Ray and Rahul Khanna, to working on Komagataru, a historical with Akshay Kumar. To all these questions, Deepa very simply answers, "What interests me is what I don't know." That is exactly her style, simple yet profound.

Based in Toronto, Deepa Mehta has won international acclaim for her movies.

Commenting on her films she adds, "I am inspired by reality. On my visits to Varanasi I have seen the widows there." It seems that visit made an impact on Deepa and cinema lovers were treated to a soul-stirring picturesque saga of a widow in Water.

Water, a movie that created controversies all around, was made. If it were something that had not moved or intrigued her, maybe it would not have hit the cinema halls. And there were plenty of reasons for her to shelve it. But her determination to explore her intrigue was enough for her to want to make movies including Water, Fire etc against all odds. Of the trilogy, Fire had its own share of fireworks. In 1947-Earth, Deepa brought out the beast in Aamir. (definitely one of the best performances by Aamir Khan). Deepa does that to her actors and her movies as well. Her movies have a force that gently nudges you to take action. It is exactly this passion one can sense in her when she is around you. A passion that is easy, not aggressive. And the ease with which she talks about different places including Delhi gives you the impression that either she is a traveler or a jetsetter, Deepa who emigrated to Canada 26 years ago from India, is both. Her movies are proof enough.

To say Deepa's interest is multilevel is an understatement, because at one level she talks about intense movies, next minute she moves onto simple pleasures of having found a great Hakka cuisine and in the same breath talks about how she was lured by a good dosa to travel to Mississauga. "This is my second visit to Mississauga and first to Saravana Bhavan. My daughter Devyani (Saltzman) has been here and she mentioned it to me. David (Hamilton) loves dosas and so far he has tried every other place in town as well as in India."

David adds, "This is very authentic and sambar is one of my favorites, it is excellent and perfectly spiced. The chutneys, both tomato and coconut taste good because of its freshness. This is absolutely the best place."

Deepa agrees and adds, "Food is great, it is non-greasy and the paper masala dosa filling is great. I must share this. I usually leave my shawl in the car because after dining in most Indian restaurants, the food smell hangs onto your clothes. But this restaurant, I did not find that smell. And I must comment on your washrooms, both David and I found the kitchen and washrooms to be clean. We love the ambience of this restaurant."

Thus she moves, from one thought to another, one place to another, one location to another.

