

A Tribute



The Indian film industry has completed a hundred years in the year 2013. It is a fitting tribute to the world of cinema to recollect our favourite films, producers, directors, actors, and music and art directors.

Telugu audiences are proud of many great producers, directors and artistes. Savitri is one such prestigious artiste. Ever since she was eight, she evinced interest in learning dance. Later she associated herself with the theatre. She formed a theatre organization as well. She had little difficulty in entering the film field. When Savitri was twelve, she was offered a role in the film, *Agnipareeksha*, but was finally dropped as she looked too young for the role.

She was given a song sequence- *Ranante rane ranu*- in '*Pathala Bhairavi*'.

Savitri's part in it was brief, but the effect of her performance was considerable. Her expressions were beautiful. A lot of film makers recognized 'a potential artiste' in her.

As a result, she was elevated to the role of a heroine by the noted director L V Prasad in the film '*Samsaaram*'(1950). On the sets, she was nervous; she had to repeat many takes and this proved a setback for her. The role was given to someone else and she was given a small role of less import.

In the film '*Devadasu*' (1953), [one of] the best picturisation[s] of Saratchandra Chatterjee's novel '*Devadas*', Parvathi comes alive in Savitri. The young Parvathi with curly hair, a lock of hair straying to her forehead, the large round black berry eyes looking out from an innocent face left an indelible imprint in the minds of all cine lovers. She portrayed Devada's love and the role of a rich man's wife marvellously. Savitri left her mark in this evergreen Telugu classic.

Savitri established her credentials with 'Ardhangi'(1955) . She gave an exceptionally brilliant performance as a woman forced to marry a mentally retarded person (ANR). She nurses him back to health. She also teaches a lesson to her in-laws who conspire against her husband.



Savitri captured the audiences with her charm and magnificent acting. She was able to convey a wide range of feelings through her expressive eyes. Her mischievous look - it captivates anyone; the look of fake anger provokes, the look filled with real anger pierces the heart. The look of passion while waiting for her lover; the pain filled look when her love fails; the confident look that seems ready to face any situation, all these myriad emotions are hidden in her eyes. The dimensions are endless and pages can be filled to describe the magic spell of her eyes.

Savitri's amazing talent was in full form in 'Missamma', a hit comedy that established Savitri's place firmly as a star. Mary in the film comes into an agreement with a Hindu youth, Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao (NTR) to pretend as a couple in order to get a job in a school. Mary was a Christian to the core, whereas Rao was a tolerant Hindu. What results in is a three hour pure comedy for the audience!

Savitri was adored for the matchless ease in expression. Meena Kumari, the heroine of Hindi films said, "when I watch Savitri's acting, I usually get doubts about my own acting". Her strikingly expressive eyes and her superb sense of timing made her one of the greatest actresses. Amitabh Bacchan felt, 'Savitri was one of the first actresses with unbelievable spontaneity'.



Maya Bazaar is another film that brought fame to Savitri. She played the role of Sasirekha. Recollecting the *16-annas Telugu lass clad in parikini*, in the song '*allibilli ammayiki...*' reminds us of the rich Telugu culture of yesteryears. In the final part of the film, Savitri plays the role of



maya(not real) Sasirekha(Ghatotkacha in disguise).She walks in a masculine manner imitating the legendary SV Ranga Rao acting as Ghatotkacha in the film to perfection.

The theatre rocks with laughter when Lakshmana Kumara (Relangi) is teased by maya Sasirekha. She switches from the feminine to the masculine in the twinkling of an eye and needless to say, a female artiste displaying masculine demon qualities with a club in hand has no parallel.

Savitri gets totally involved in whatever role she plays. '*Chivaraku Migiledi*' is one such film. She played the role of a nurse in a psychiatry ward. In a particular scene the nurse has a nervous breakdown and cries uncontrollably. The shot was over. "CUT", the director said, but Savitri who played the role could not stop crying! Everyone in the set had to run to her and pacify her. The film became a milestone in her career!!

Savitri was awarded the title '*Mahanati*' (the Supreme artiste).She also received the Presidential award for her performance in '*Chivaraku Migiledi*', the *magnum opus* of Savitri. She was the recipient of '*Kalaimamani*' and '*Nadigayar Tilakam*' from Tamil film industry. Savitri had nearly 300 films to her credit. Her career was nearly 30 year long. She was equally admired by Telugu and Tamil film lovers. She also acted in a few Kannada and Hindi films. She had a lion's share of films when she was at the zenith of her career. Her passion for films was so strong that she directed and produced a few films, in spite of certain adversities.

Savitri was a humane artiste. She was generous to the people who were in need. Once, she donated all the jewellery she was wearing to the Prime Minister's fund. Her rise as a star was like a meteor. She left the world in 1981 leaving an envied and unsurpassed legacy behind her.

Savitri is no more. But she is among us with her unforgettable roles. Her versatility lives on and on and on.

Paying tribute to her, the director and producer Dasari Narayana Rao said:

"... Many artistes are forgotten soon after the death. But, it is not so with Savitri. SHE WILL BE REMEMBERED AS LONG AS CELLULOID LIVES ON.

'All her films would amount to an 'Album of life' due to their range of themes; they encompass human lives and passions in their full diversity. What is cinema? Is it a fiction or a reality? Many people say many things. But Savitri gave a different definition. She said that cinema is ' Life'. Life is eternal. So is cinema because life runs through it. AND SAVITRI IS ETERNAL SINCE SHE GAVE THAT LIFE TO CINEMA."

Glossary

<i>magnum opus (n)</i>	:	the greatest work
<i>16-annas Telugu lass (idiom):</i>	:	an expression which means <i>a perfect Telugu girl</i> .
<i>lion's share (idiom)</i>	:	major portion / part
<i>zenith (n)</i>	:	peak

Comprehension

Answer the following questions.

1. Have you ever seen any of the films in which Savitri acted? List them. Which of them do you like most?
2. Savitri's qualities and her acting have been mentioned in the tribute. Which of Savitri's qualities fascinates you most?
3. Why was Savitri taken away from her main role in the film, 'Samsaaram'?
4. How do you think Savitri was able to strike back after she was replaced from the main role in 'Samsaaram'?
5. The purpose of the tribute is ...(choose the appropriate answer)
 - a) to sympathize with Savitri
 - b) to admire Savitri's acting and her abilities.
 - c) to understand savitri's acting and qualities
 - d) to express different opinions about Savitri

Project Work

Collect the information about the people who are involved in making a film . Fill the details in the following table

Name of the film :

S. No	Area	Name of the person	Role
1	Direction		
2	Production		
3	Story/script		
4	Music		
5	Cinematography		
6	Costumes		
7	Fights		
8	Make up		
9	Publicity		
10	Acting		

Write a report about the people from the above list and their contribution for the success of the movie by giving relevant examples to substantiate your opinion. Present the report to the class

Self Assessment



How well have I understood this unit?

Read and tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

Indicators	Yes	Somewhat	No
Reading: I read and comprehended the text:			
A: Rendezvous with Ray			
B. Maya Bazaar			
C. A Tribute			
Vocabulary: I was able to			
• answer the questions given under comprehension of ‘Rendezvous with Ray’.			
• fill in the blanks with the words that collocate with the underlined words or phrases given under vocabulary.			
• pick out one-word substitutes from the text equivalent to the meanings given under vocabulary.			
• fill in the blanks with appropriate expressions given in the list under vocabulary.			
• write the meanings of the suffixes and prefixes given under vocabulary.			
• analyse the words in terms of the prefixes, roots and suffixes and their meanings.			
• think of some words that begin and end with the prefixes and suffixes given under vocabulary.			
• match the binomials with their meanings given under vocabulary.			

Indicators	Yes	Somewhat	No
Grammar: I was able to			
• arrange the sentences in proper order and write a paragraph and insert appropriate linkers given under grammar.			
• use the adjectives in sentences of my own.			
• fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions given under grammar.			
• fill in the blanks with appropriate verb forms of past perfect and simple past given under grammar.			
• understand and identify the functions of different modals.			
Writing: I was able to . . .			
• write a review of a film / a TV programme / an episode of a TV serial.			
• write a rejoinder to the letter given.			
• prepare a skit on the subject I like most.			
Study Skills:			
I was able to rewrite the given passage replacing the idioms.			
Listening and Speaking:			
I listened to the radio programme and answer the questions given.			
I was able to make a short speech about the film I have seen recently.			
Project Work:			
I was able to write a report about a successful movie and the different people involved in its production.			