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Echoes from the past

WITH HIS LATEST BOOK, THE KRISHNA KEY, AUTHOR ASHWIN SANGHVI PROMISES YET ANOTHER EXHAUSTIVELY RESEARCHED WHOPPER OF A PLOT

ANNE SHAR

His books may deal with mythology, but he has a history of being picked and appreciated for his work.

After the success of his last two thrillers, *The Bombay Lion* and *Chandni's Ghost*, critically-acclaimed author Ashwin Sanghvi's latest novel, *The Krishna Key*, is ready for a formal launch on September 13. However, the book is already available on its site and has received a pre-release review.

Quite like his previous novels, *The Krishna Key* calls characters from our history. "It provides you with the ultimate explanation of the Vedic Age," begins Ashwin. Does this one too draw its plot from our mythology? "Well, *The Krishna Key* is much more historical in nature. It is a typical thriller. The crux of the book is to determine whether Krishna was a mythological subject or a historical one," Ashwin Ashwin, who promises his readers a thrilling read as "the pages need to themselves."

The author knows we have read and heard about Krishna a lot and already possess decent knowledge about the subject. In that case, Ashwin says his primary objective is to entertain his readers. "I'm, but, a paperback writer," he says, adding, "as far as important knowledge is concerned, the book will do its job. At the end of the book, I will offer you sources from where I drew my information."

THE BACKGROUND

The novel also attempts to retell the Mahabharata in the present context. When looking at Ashwin's previous works, we notice that they all inspire from mythology. We wonder why some of his writings

contemporary... Ashwin clarifies that his books may draw from the past, but they deal with the modern world, as set in the present day. "My genre of writing is fast-paced, I call it fast-food," he says.

In that, we draw my kind of 'fast-food' metaphor for contemporary world. If I am a metaphor, I am it as just and present excitement. I've tried to dig out the elements of the past which have a relation with today. In *The Bombay Lion*, we know that lion might have a spiritual context," says Ashwin who says he has a tendency to link the past with the present, history and myth.

"In *The Krishna Key*, there is a structured series of events that have a certain secret which needs to be discovered. It is, in a way, a quest to understand Krishna's life," he says.

Ashwin devoted nine months to researching the subject. Three months to creating the plot and about six to seven months to writing the novel. Having spent a month in producing the book, the author is now approached involved in marketing it. "Usually, I have spent a lot of time in production. Even though the book has already made it to the work-to-publish list, it requires intensive marketing," he says. In India, authors who aggressively market their books are often looked down upon, even if it actually doesn't perform any better. "The point is that in order to be taken yourself as a 'brand', you need to be aggressively marketed. You just can't expect it to happen on its own. Initially, the book is like you in a certain point with its side and more for reach. However, overall, the product has to be accepted," Ashwin Ashwin who says a response as by profession and a writer by passion.

Today, structured novel publishing houses are coming up with click-bait and similar genres. The content being fed to the readers, as such, suffering. "I was back about 20 years, indeed, the library fiction was popular, and it was really successful. But 2008 onwards, publishers spent their dollars in content, as a result which was really consumed by the Indian reader. Since the transition is still happening, we will take a month or two to improve complexity," he finishes.

In with more and more are the writers, can we now hope of filling the void left by the colonialists? Ashwin says Ashwin "With history and mythology in hand, we Indians make for great storytellers. Earlier generations didn't know how to monetize their creativity. But now you can see creative change and the demand will itself generate the requirement." ■



Metamorphosis with Mosaic

ANURADHA DHANU
ARTIST

When small pieces of coloured glass, stone, or other materials are put together to create art, Mosaic is born. It is a decorative art, which consists of both abstract and figurative style. Mosaic has a history, which goes back to the second half of the 1st millennium BC. The Mosaics made with coloured stones, shells and ivory that is found at a temple building in Aya, Mesopotamia, is one such surviving example from the time mentioned above.

However, the art of making mosaic was without patterns until the times of Byzantine Empire and Roman influence. The Greeks in the 4th century BC had started making figurative style in it and around 3rd century BC, it was believed that the mosaic in figurative style were copies of paintings made during that time. Romans later copied this style and created it as floor and wall art using it for decorative purposes. In the early Christian era, mosaic found its way on the walls and ceiling of Christian basilicas, churches and cathedrals. Adding glass, gold and semi-precious stones to it, artists used it to glorify God. It created a magical effect as the artwork glowed when exposed to light. Mosaic art is more a part of Byzantine culture than that of the Europe.



In the 5th century BC, Ravenna, the capital of the Western Roman Empire became the centre of Roman mosaic art. The themes of the mosaic were often religiously inclined to depict Christ in biblical stories. There are some scenes where the King and Queen are shown paying tribute to Lord Jesus. As mentioned before, mosaic was more popular in Byzantine art and under this art, gold had been added to the list of materials used for creating it. Mosaics were not only a medium to spread the faith to the masses but with the use of gold and other precious stones, it also became a way to flaunt wealth. The brightness that it added to an otherwise gloomy interior of the basilica was another feature in its favour. Mosaic was also popular due to its long-lasting quality, especially when compared to fresco and painting. Over



All roses, no guns in this battlefield

The idea was to create two music albums through melody and music and what better place than the red-hot showbiz Sabera that brings together singing talents from India and Pakistan, says Pakistani composer-actor-singer Anil Khan.

Going live Saturday, the Indian show has a heavy dose of Pakistani flavour. If Anil will be even considering singing from Pakistan, Anil Khan, Bachchan will be away with the Indian team. The Indian

and Khan. All about the international. "The promo has been made in such a way that it excites you are fighting. It needs to be the best composer. He has been the best musician in terms of a music director. He is a brilliant artist. He is my colleague and I enjoyed working with him." "When would it be Anil?" "When I get to know about the jury. I was interested. I was also interested for Pakistani to come on stage and sing. I meant to think about who I prefer to sing with."



REALLY functional kitchens

ARCHANA CHAUDHARY
Architect,
Pune



The 'functional', kitchen-cum-living area must really work from day one. Owners of such a kitchen are probably professional people under great deal of pressure who are forced to use their time efficiently.

That would hinder the room's function. All utility, shelving and worktops need to be made of good quality materials that demand little attention—laminates, metals and well-treated woods. And a properly 'zoned' kitchen is the most suitable, with no cooks and creations that will add few minutes to the time you spend cooking.

TIME-SAVING MACHINES

Every detail counts thought of in terms of the time it will

require or delivers used nearly out including time to a minimum. Rather than stacking cups and glasses on shelves, which tends to lead to slipping, store them neatly in shallow drawers. While a grid of fine wood dowels to fit on the base of the drawer so that cups and glasses sit in their own ridge. A stack of such drawers would form a kitchen file cabinet, and if installed under a worktop that concealed extra storage.