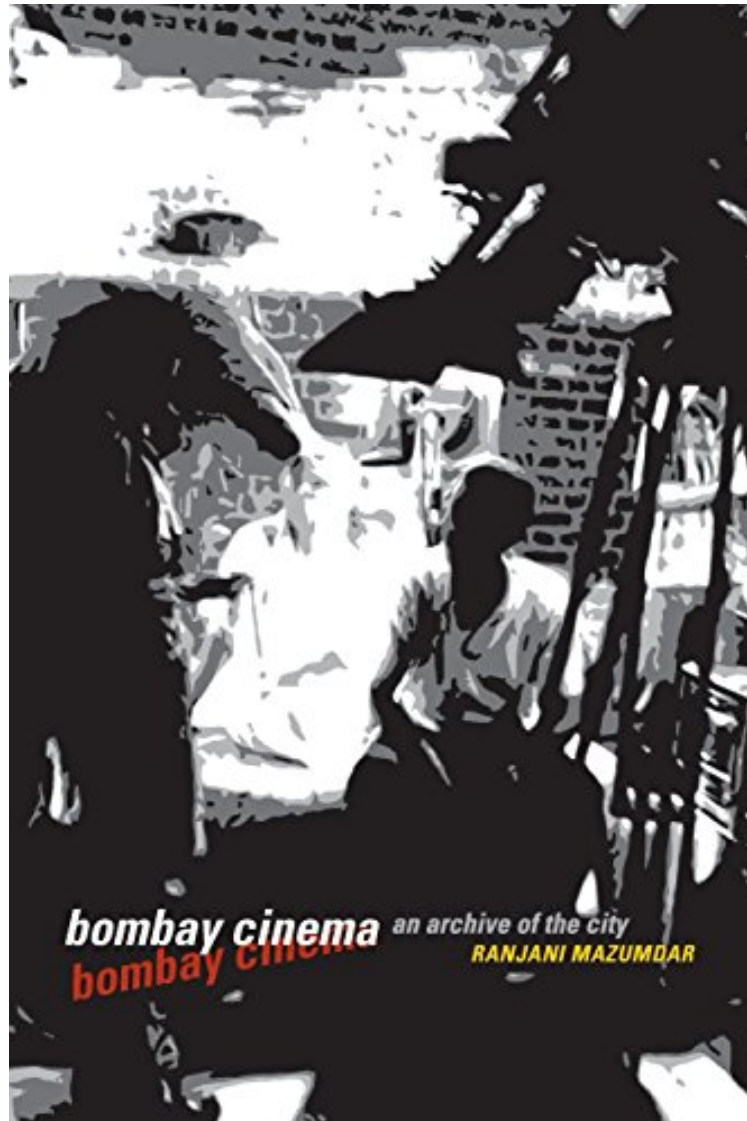


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Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City

Ranjani Mazumdar

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Ranjani Mazumdar : Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City:

Cinema is not only a major industry in India, it is a powerful cultural force. But until now, no one has undertaken a major examination of the ways in which films made in Bombay mediate the urban experience in India. In Bombay

Cinema, Ranjani Mazumdar takes a multidisciplinary approach to understanding Bombay cinema as the unofficial archive of the city in India. In this analysis of the cinematic city, Mazumdar reveals a complex postnationalist world, convulsed by the social crisis of the 1970s and transformed by the experience of globalization in the 1990s. She argues that the upheaval of postcolonial nationalism led to Bombay cinema's articulation of urban life in entirely new terms. Specifically, the place of the village in the imaginary constitution of anticolonial nationalism gave way to a greater acknowledgment, even centrality, of urban space. *Bombay Cinema* takes the reader on an inventive journey through a cinematic city of mass crowds, violence, fashion, architectural fantasies, and subcultural identities. Moving through the world of gangsters and vamps, families and drifters, and heroes and villains, *Bombay Cinema* explores an urban landscape marked by industrial decline, civic crisis, working-class disenchantment, and diverse street life. Combining the anecdotal with the theoretical, the philosophical with the political, and the textual with the historical, *Bombay Cinema* leads the reader into the heart of the urban labyrinth in India, revising and deepening our understanding of both the city and the cinema. "A landmark study carefully researched, well organized and offering refreshingly uncondescending and strikingly insightful discussions of mainstream film that deserves to be read by anyone interested in India's popular cinema or its contemporary urban life." *Journal of Asian Studies* "Bombay Cinema is an exciting and important contribution to a field that has, to date, been under researched and under theorized. Lively, provocative and richly suggestive, it will also serve as a surefire incentive to watch those films all over again." *Screen* "Here, at last, is a book length study on Cinema in India that does not get locked into a dance of hermetic closure between what transpires on screen and a set of stock off screen textual and cultural references, but more importantly, walks the streets where the films are set, looks at shop windows, publicity material, costumes, fashion, architecture, telecommunications and the concrete materiality that surrounds the film object." *Seminar* "Bombay Cinema is lucid, provocative, stylish and substantial. It is an illuminating scholarly study that spares no effort to bring Bombay cinema out of the academic closet." *The Book Review India* "Departing from the obsession that Film Studies in India has displayed with the idea of cinema as a national allegory, the book convincingly argues for the need to examine the city's hidden archive as one that cannot be subsumed within the sign of the national." *Biblio* "Mazumdar has a great capacity to discuss Indian cinema, with a brilliant grasp of its political, historical, and aesthetic developments, but equally she is well attuned to the interests and ruptures in the academic discourse of film and cinema studies." *Film International* "Mazumdar's experience as a filmmaker allowed her to offer significant readings of not just the narratives and character development in the films, but of the cinematography, mise-en-scene, and other technical and performance aspects of production." *Journal of Popular Culture* "At once about Hindi films, spatial practices, urban modernity and globalization . . . the strength of *Bombay Cinema* lies in bringing all of them together in a productive conversation. *Economic and Political Weekly* "Bombay Cinema is methodologically challenging in its deployment of moments rather than discursive formations of film as text. The book also refuses to read film alone, but interprets the medium alongside the detailed insights of people involved in making them, and with the recent history of Bombay, within which the film industry is located. In Mazumdar's evocative reading of the films she engages with, the cinematic city becomes the space of critique of the nation, the site of the ruin of the modern nationalist project." *Contemporary South Asia*

About the Author Ranjani Mazumdar is an independent filmmaker and associate professor of cinema studies at the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.