

DEEPTI NAVAL: A PROFILE



INTRO

Deepti Naval is an Indian film actor, director, writer, painter and photographer. A multi-faceted personality, her major contribution has been in the area of art cinema, winning critical acclaim for her 'sensitive and close to life' characters that emphasized the changing role of women in India. The first American-Indian girl to join Hindi films, Deepti made her debut in the year 1980 with the path-breaking film *Ek Baar Phir*, for which she won her first Best Actor award, and has since appeared in more than 90 films, including *Chashm-e-Baddoor*, *Katha*, *Rang Birangi*, *Kisise Na Kehna*, *Saath Saath*, *Yeh Ishq Nahin Aasaan*, *Mirch Masala*, *Kamla*, *Ankahi*, *Andhi Gali*, *Mohan Joshi Haazir Ho*, *Main Zinda Hoon*, *Didi*, *Panchwati*, *Leela*, *Shakti*, *Firaaq*, *Memories in March*, *Listen Amaya*, *NH-10* and *Heartless* etc., carving a distinct niche for herself in the Indian Film Industry.

Deepti was awarded Best Actor in several international film festivals for her roles in *Leela*, *Firaaq*, *Memories in March* and *Listen Amaya* etc. She also won Best Screenplay at the NY Indian film festival for her directorial film, *Do Paise Ki Dhoop Chaar Aane Ki Baarish*. Deepti Naval was recognized as the 2007 Tribute Honoree of the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles.

She wrote and directed *Thodasa Aasmaan*, a women-centric TV serial and produced a travel show *The Path Less Travelled*.

Deepti has recently made her debut in theatre, with the poetic stage show, *EK MULAQAAT* where she plays the celebrated Punjabi writer, Amrita Preetam.

As a writer, her selection of poems, *LAMHA LAMHA* was published in the year 1981. Her second book of poems, *BLACK WIND And Other Poems* was published in 2004. *THE MAD TIBETAN: Stories From Then and Now* was her first anthology of short stories published in 2011.

As a painter her knife work with oil on canvas is distinctly expressionistic – especially her landscapes, figures, self-portraits and sketches. She first showed her paintings at the Jehangir Art Gallery in a solo exhibition, called *REFLECTIONS* followed by several exhibits in India and abroad.

The still camera is another excuse for soul-searching time with her Self. Deepti displayed her photography in the series called *IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER SKY*, *ROAD BUILDERS* and *SHADES OF RED*.

Apart from all her interests, Deepti is actively working to create awareness towards the Mentally ill.

For the education of the girl child she runs a charitable trust.

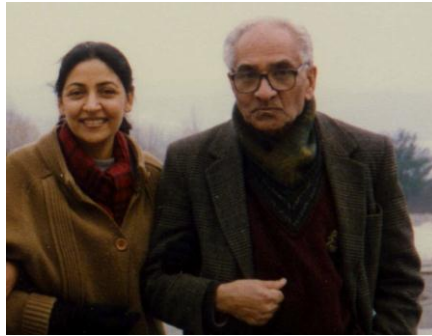
A gypsy at heart, Deepti enjoys trekking in the remote mountains of Himachal and Ladakh.

EDUCATION

After her schooling at the Sacred Heart Convent, Amritsar, Deepti migrated to the US with her family in the year 1971. A graduate of Hunter College of the City University of New York, Deepti acquired her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts studying Painting as her major subject and English and Psychology for minors. Her interest in a whole range of other subjects led her to study American Theater, Photography, and Astronomy.

After graduation Deepti had a brief stint with the 'Gene Frankle Institute of Film and Television' pursuing her passion for films and acting. Inspired by her father, Deepti believes in education as an ongoing process throughout life and has spent several winters in New York doing workshops on Creative Writing.

FAMILY



Her father Uday Chandra Naval, hailing from Punjab, was a professor, head of the English Dept. Hindu College, Amritsar. He had graduated from Govt. College Lahore with Honors in English literature during pre-partition India. Her mother Himadri Gangahar, a teacher and a painter, was born and brought up in Burma, where she acquired her education at the Jesus and Mary Convent in Mandalay. She later had to migrate to India during the Japanese invasion of 1942. Himadri was a woman of fine sensibility and a great cinema enthusiast. Her fascination for music, dance and drama were infused into the mind of her younger daughter through bedtime stories.

Deepti's older sister Smiti Khanna, a biochemist, spent substantial years working on Cancer Research at the Sloan Kettering Institute of NYC. Her younger brother Rohit Naval is a Technology Product Designer and lives with his family in Long Island. Deepti's nephew Sanaj Naval also stars in her debut film as director, *Do Paise Ki Dhoop Chaar Aane Ki Baarish*.

Deepti's paternal grandfather, Pandit Gyan Chand Sharma, was a leading advocate of Punjab. Her grandmother, Shrimati Manorama Sharma was a highly qualified woman and remained a committed social worker through her life. Her maternal grandparents were simple yet erudite people who hailed from Himachal, but lived most part of their life in Burma. These were the people who made an indelible impact on Deepti's young mind during the years of her childhood.

PERSONAL LIFE



Deepti Naval was married to the filmmaker Prakash Jha and the two have an adopted daughter, Disha.

In 1991, Deepti was engaged to Vinod Pandit, a singer (Nephew of Pandit Jasraj ji). Vinod encouraged her in all her creative endeavors.

But untimely death took him away in 2001.

Deepti lives on her own, immersed in her creative pursuits.

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Apart from all her interests, Deepti is actively working to create awareness towards the Mentally ill.

For the education of the girl child she runs a charitable trust.

CAREER AT A GLANCE

Compiled and Edited by Dr. Bhagyashree Shrikishanji Varma,
Associate Professor in English, University of Mumbai.



CAREER

ACTOR

SELECTED FILMS

TELEVISION

STAGE

DIRECTION AND SCREENPLAY

WRITER

PAINTER

PHOTOGRAPHER

FAMILY

PERSONAL LIFE

SOCIAL CONCERNS

FILMOGRAPHY

AWARDS

ACTOR

A sensitive and serious actor, she has worked in more than 90 films, and has carved a distinct niche for herself in the Indian Film Industry. Her major contribution has been in the area of 'parallel cinema' with films as *Kamla*, *Chashmebaddoor*, *Katha*, *Ankahi*, *Panchwati*, *Main Zinda Hoon*, *Didi*, *Leela*, *Firaaq*, *Memories In March*, *Listen Amaya Heartless*, and *NH10*, playing characters 'close to life' and emphasized the changing role of women in India. Through her work, Deepti has given a new prolific aspect to Neo-realistic cinema, making her one of the most celebrated and respected artistes of her time.

TIMES OF INDIA WESTSIDE PLUS – DEC 31, 2005
8 OUTSTANDING PERSONALITIES

DEEPTI NAVAL

If there is one Bollywood actor who has always risen above the script, re-invented herself time and again and kept in sync with the changing times, it is Deepti Naval. From the bubbly Miss Chamko of 'Chashmebaddoor' to the smoldering Kamla (of Kamla), her histrionic prowess remains unparalleled. Her roles have ranged from playing the de-glamorized village belle to the well-heeled city-slicker and from the homely housewife to a peppy secretary! But the persona of the actress has gone way beyond filmi roles. An accomplished artist, Deepti's oil paintings speak to the viewer. Landscapes with a lot of depth and women with haunting eyes are special features of Deepti's oils and a huge painting of herself with Smita Patil remains one of Deepti's personal favorites. A keen environmentalist, Deepti has lent her name and efforts to the preservation of greenery and mangroves in the Andheri West region.

SELECTED FILMS

<i>Ek Baar Phir</i>	<i>Panchvati</i>
<i>Hum Paanch</i>	<i>Main Zinda Hoon</i>
<i>Chirutha</i>	<i>Didi</i>
<i>Chashmebaddoor</i>	<i>Mane</i>
<i>Katha</i>	<i>Madhi Da Diva</i>
<i>Saath Saath</i>	<i>Shakti</i>
<i>Angoor</i>	<i>Leela</i>
<i>Kamla</i>	<i>Freaky Chakra</i>
<i>Mohan Joshi Hazir Ho</i>	<i>Firaaq</i>
<i>Ankahi</i>	<i>Memories In March</i>
<i>Andhi Gali</i>	<i>Listen Amaya</i>
<i>Mirch Masala</i>	<i>NH10</i>

TELEVISION

Deepti Naval has also acted in several TV Serials, including *Sauda* – directed by Ravi Chopra, *Aakhri Dao* opposite Farooque Sheikh, *Kehkashaan* directed by Jalal Agha, *Tanaav* directed by Vikram Mayra and *Muqammal* directed by Ashok Pandit.

Thodasa Aasmaan is a serial she wrote, produced and directed for Doordarshan, apart from playing the lead role in it. We last saw her the successful *Mukti Bandhan*, playing a Sanyasan.

STAGE

EK MULAQAAT – A stage play starring Deepti Naval and Shekhar Suman - written by Summana Ahmed and Saif Hyder Hasan - and directed by Saif Hyder Hasan.



Bombay Times

A LOVE BETWEEN POETS. A MARRIAGE OF WORDS.

The crumpled pages of a musty poetry book hold the story of two of India's most famous poets. A heart warming tale of their unfulfilled love ignited by half-lit-cigarettes. One that found its way into verse and words. And now finds its way on to stage. Bombay Times presents "Ek Mulaqaat". A musical in which Deepti Naval and Shekhar Suman breathe life into this forgotten tale. Designed & Directed by Saif Hyder Hasan.

Playing at Rangsharda Auditorium, Bandra (W) on August 23rd at 7:30pm. Collect your complimentary invites from the Times of India bldg., Dr. D. N. road, V. T. on a first-come-first-serve basis from 11am to 5pm.

Ek Mulaqaat. Deepti's debut on stage is about a imaginary meeting between two eminent poets - Amrita Pritam, a prominent figure of Punjabi literature and Sahir Ludhianvi, the celebrated Urdu lyricist of India.

DIRECTION AND SCREENPLAY

THODASA AASMAAN



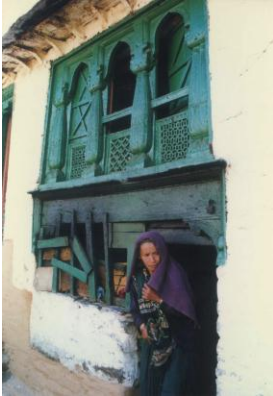
Apart from being an accomplished actor, Deepti has written and directed *THODASA AASMAAN* (A handful of Sky), a woman-centric 14 part TV serial, about three women protagonists -

Thodasa Aasman is a serial about three women of different age groups, the 60-year old Mrs. Joshi played by the veteran star, Nadira of 'Mur murk e na dekh' fame, Naashi, a 30 year old married woman (played by Deepti herself) and a 19-year old graduate Anu (Mona Ambegaonkar), who happen to come together at turbulent turning points in their lives, interact with one another for a while, then go on to achieve their respective destinations.

As the serial unfolds, we see how these three women come to terms with their respective situations and move towards making a new beginning.

THE PATH LESS TRAVELED

Deepti also produced a travel show, for Star TV, *THE PATH LESS TRAVELED*. Telecast in 1995, this six-part travel show explores the UP Himalayas, focusing on the remote regions of Kumaon and Garhwal. Anchored by Deepti Naval and Vinod Pandit, the series is directed by Rajkumari Asthana and scripted is by Sankalp Mishra and the music composed by Anand Sharma and Vinod Pandit.



One of the highlights of the show was her visit to a dancers' village in Munshiyari where she discovered an old man, a students of dance maestro Uday Shankar, and also discovered interestingly carved green wooden doors, which she later painted in her Kumaon series.

DO PAISE KI DHOOP CHAAR AANE KI BAARISH - 2008

A film after Deepti's heart, *DO PAISE KI DHOOP CHAAR AANE KI BAARISH* (Two Paise for Sunshine, Four Annas For Rain) is

Deepti's debut as a film director and screenwriter – starring Manisha Koirala, Rajit Kapoor and her nephew Sanaj Naval. The title song of the film is by Gulzar and the music is by Sandesh Shandilya. Kiran Deohans is the cinematographer. It's a heartwarming story about an unusual bond between an ageing prostitute, a struggling gay songwriter and a disabled child.



The film journeys through tender and dramatic moments of three characters striving to reach out and connect. Debu, a struggling songwriter dumped by his lover, runs into Juhi, the streetwalker struggling to find a consumer on the road. Debu, desperate for a roof over his head, convinces Juhi to take him on as a babysitter for her disabled child. However, Juhi begins to feel left out as the bond between her son and the outsider cements . . . a bond she could never build with her own child. Debu wants Juhi to give up being a prostitute and tries transforming her into an elegant, dignified woman. Juhi begins to look at Debu with new eyes . . . Can he possibly be a man in her life? Can the three of them be a *family*? The film explores the complexity of relationships in today's society, where, above all, the human bond survives . . .

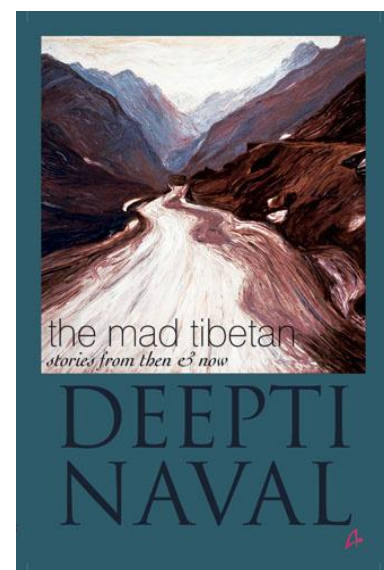
About her film, Deepti says –

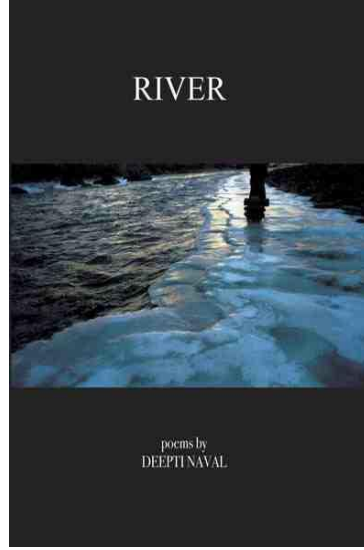
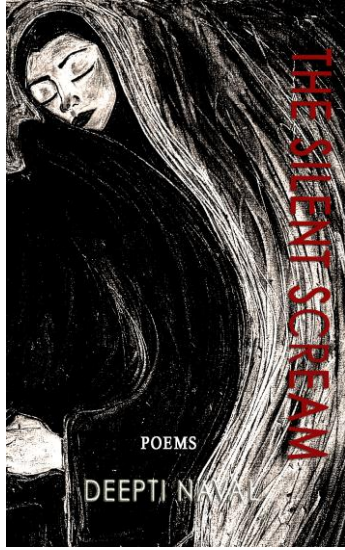
'I did not set out to make a film about prostitutes or gays . . . I wanted to tell a story . . . a story about human bonding. Love is not about finding someone who can make you feel complete, but being with someone with whom you can share your incompleteness.'

WRITER

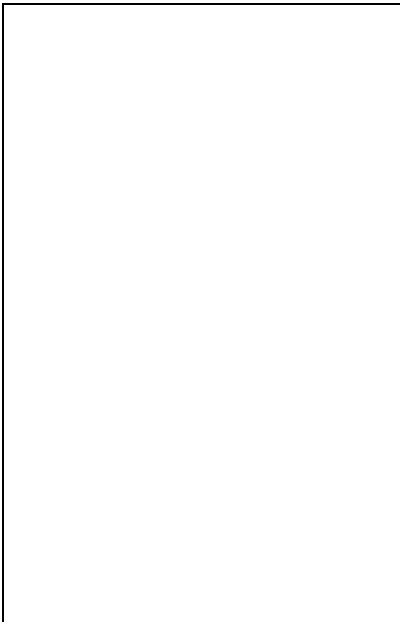
Bulbul Mankani writes –

'Deepti is a seeker of Beauty: an explorer of wilderness. Her poems spring from anguish both within and without. And the visual intoxication of nature. And the burnished loveliness of living. There is innocence in her writings – 'I stop the car and watch in disbelief – with what 'elan the peacocks cross the street. . . .' She takes such delight in the visual form. Her own personal spaces shift constantly lack words to juice out the possibility of more beauty.





LAMHA-LAMHA - 1981



A sensitive poet, Deepti has to her credit a book of poems in Urdu-Hindi called, *LAMHA-LAMHA* published in 1981.

LAMHA LAMHA (Moments) – Deepti’s first anthology of poetry in Urduized-Hindustani was published on the behest of Amrita Pritam, the eminent figure of Punjabi literature. In Deepti’s writing of blank verses, interestingly for the first time Punjabi words flow in as smoothly as the Urdu words. With all her dreamy-eyed vision of life she overcomes a sense of loneliness, a strain of subtle sadness, and a compulsive desire for self-expression, by pouring the romantic moments in verse.

BLACK WIND AND OTHER POEMS - 2004



BLACK WIND and Other Poems was published by Mapin Lit. Highlighting the early 90s, the poems are largely autobiographical. The poetry is highly reflective and throws light on the actresses’ concerns in life and relationships. *Black Wind and Other Poems* is a second collection of Deepti’s poetry delving into the darker side of life.

In the words of the editor Suguna Ramanathan -

'These poems constitute a direct and honest female voice speaking of suffering, madness and pain. They deal with broken relationships, abortions, lost chances, city riots, love, suicidal thoughts, friends from the film world now lost, and very occasionally, the possibility of beauty and joy.'

*Will you do something for me?
When I die,
Will you bury the cloud with me?*

A distinct poetic sensibility and rhythm, emotion and images all coalesce here to achieve something quite beautiful. Life walks on the edge of a knife, tips over into the unspeakable, rises at sight of a flower, sinks again, rises again, and walks on. *BLACK WIND* extends the scene a little but the world outside is not very different from the madhouse in *THE SILENT SCREAM*.

My dreams

Look for the real thing,

And my reality chases a dream. . .

THE SILENT SCREAM - 2004



THE SILENT SCREAM is a section within *BLACK WIND AND OTHER POEMS*, comprising twenty-four poems. It is the outcome of a stay as an observer in the mental Ward of a hospital, wherein Deepti evokes powerfully the dread, freedom and horror of life within.

OUT ALONE

She stood at one end of veranda
A naked bulb glowed
At the other end
Staining the dark floor

With dull yellow light

Beyond the empty ward
Dragged echoes of the autumn night

From pillar to pillar
In severe silence
Moved brilliant shadows

Out alone in the cold, she stood
Night after night
Fighting her demons

Her body frail and brittle
Flapped life-like
On two glass feet

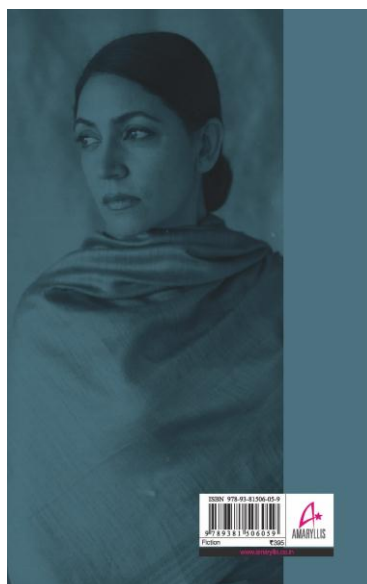
The torched face broken
Then tacked together, so bluntly
The ridged joints showed

Hounded eyes that did not blink
Frozen in a deathlike glaze
Her fragile spirit, splintered . . .

These are not the features
She was born with
This is the face we gave her

THE MAD TIBETAN - 2011

QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

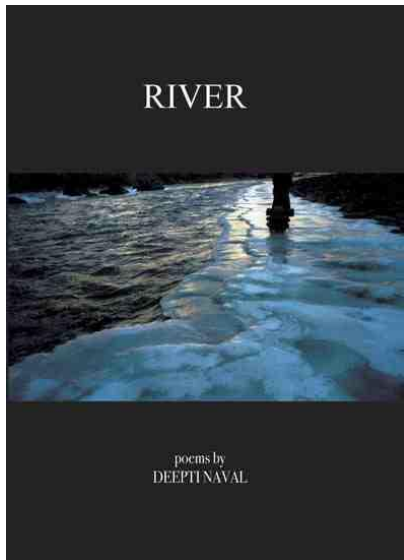


THE MAD TIBETAN: Stories From Then And Now was her first collection of short stories published in 2011 by Amaryllis.

Review - Jaskiran Copra writes...

‘There is a new world that opens up to the reader in every tale and at times, it becomes difficult for us to disengage ourselves and step out of that world. Long after the story is over, its landscape and characters stay in our mind and sometimes take on a life of their own. Sincerity, simplicity and sensitivity are the three most dominant strands that run through Deepti’s flowing narration’.

THE RIVER AND I - 2015



THE RIVER AND I is an anthology of poems written during her Tchadar Expedition, the Frozen River Trek, which she undertook in the winter of 2002 walking the Zanskar riverbed over eight days. Every little thing that she felt during that journey she scribbled in her notepad and these poems are the outcome of that experience.

About this unique experience she writes –

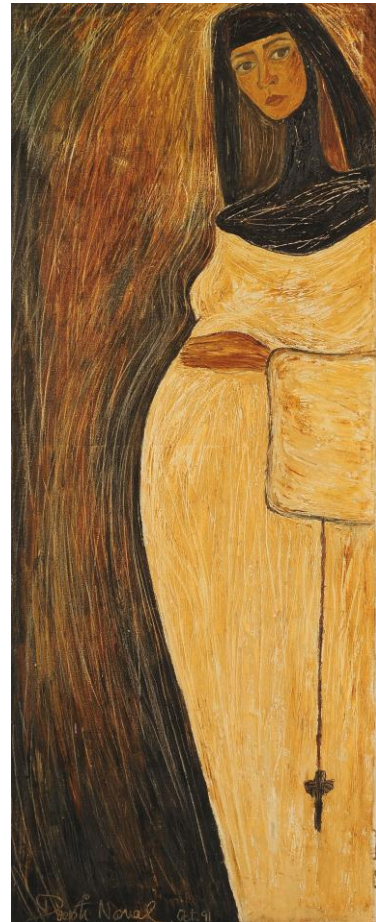
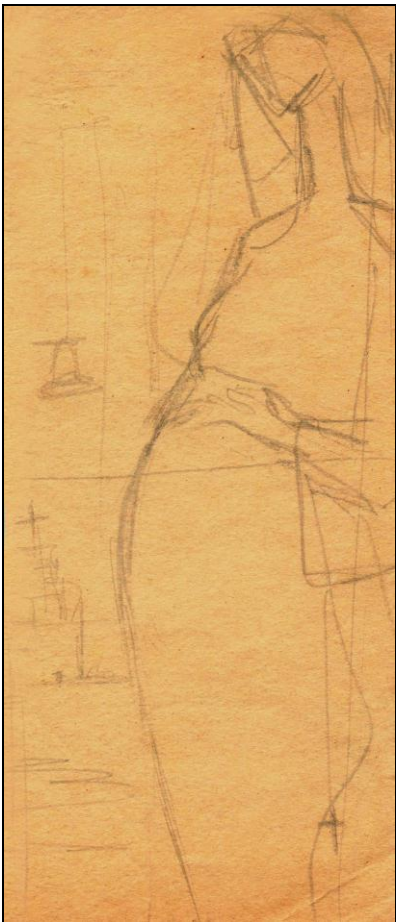
‘I was not going back without experiencing the river. Something told me, ‘Follow your heart!’ And I did. I did this journey all by myself. Let me be honest, I did not want to share the river with anyone’.

NOTES FROM LAMAYURU - IN PRINT

Currently Deepti is working on the publication of her next collection of poems – *NOTES FROM LAMAYURU*. This she feels would be the third phase of her poetic journey.

PAINTER

Apart from acting, Deepti’s brush-strokes also speak volumes about her. A keen painter, Deepti has many showings to her credit. She first opened with a very successful exhibition of her paintings, a one-woman show at the Jehangir Art Gallery in Bombay titled, *REFLECTIONS*. Her work is essentially ‘expressionistic’. She is distinctly known for her portraits and landscapes.



In one of her signature self-portraits she paints herself as a pregnant

nun, a painting titled *Contradiction*.

An accomplished artist, Deepti's oil paintings speak to the viewer. Landscapes with a lot of depth and women with haunting eyes are special features of Deepti's oils. A huge painting of herself with Smita Patil remains one of Deepti's favorites.

PHOTOGRAPHER

IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER SKY – an exhibition of photographs where she depicts images of a Ladakh winter was held in Piramal gallery, Bombay, Gallery Espace, Delhi and Nehru Centre in London.



Naval wanted to capture Ladakh's tranquility, when it is difficult to find a soul around, rather than during its tourist season. The blue sky, she says, is enchanting and refreshing for the soul. "There is

poetry in the starkness," she says. Indeed, a talented photographer comes alive in Naval's pictures that capture the breathtaking landscapes with the ravishing sky, the dried trees, the texture of sand and the rows of chortens. In fact, these desert scapes reveal a poetic sensibility.

SHADES OF RED – An exhibition of her photographs of Lahore and Kumaoun hills.

ROAD BUILDERS – An exhibition of photographs from the Himalayan regions of Ladak and Himachal.

TREKKER



She happens to be the first non-Ladakhi Indian woman to trek the frozen Zanskar River. Her images from this Tchadar Expedition were seen in various exhibitions.

FILMOGRAPHY

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- 3 - CHIRUTHA - 1980
- 4 - HUMDARD - 1981
- 5 - DOOSRA KINAARA - 1981
- 6 - HUM PAANCH - 1981
- 7 - CHASHMEBADDOORE - 1982
- 8 - JAIAAN WAALA BAGH - 1982
- 9 - SAATH SAATH - 1982
- 10 - AASHIYANA - 1982
- 11 - SHRIMAN SHRIMATI - 1982
- 12 - MAIN AUR MERI TANHAI - 1982
- 13 - CRICKETER - 1982
- 14 - ANGOOR - 1982
- 15 - PARTNER - 1982
- 16 - KATHA - 1983
- 17 - EK BAAR CHHALE AAO - 1983
- 18 - CHHAYA - 1983
- 19 - KHAMOSH NIGAHEN - 1983
- 20 - YEH ISHQ NAHIN AASAAN - 1983
- 21 - HOLI - 1983
- 22 - RANG BIRANGI - 1983
- 23 - ANDHI GALI - 1984
- 24 - WANTED - 1984
- 25 - KISISE NA KEHNA - 1984
- 26 - MOHAN JOSHI HAAZIR HO - 1984
- 27 - KANOON KYA KAREGA - 1984
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- 30 - ANKAHI - 1985
- 31 - HIP HIP HURRAY - 1985
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- 36 - APNA JEHAN - 1985
- 37 - MIRCH MASALA - 1985
- 38 - AURAT PAIR KI JOOTI NAHIN - 1985
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- 65 - WINGS OF HOPE - 1999
- 66 - ANANT - 1999 - TELEFILM
- 67 - KASAK - 1999 - TELEFILM
- 68 - KABHI PAAS KABHI FAIL - 1999
- 69 - BAWANDAR - 2001
- 70 - SHAKTI -2001
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- 72 - MUQAMMAL - 2003
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- 77 - MEMORIES IN MARCH - 2010
- 78 - RIVAAZ - 2011
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- 80 - BHINDI BAZAAR - 2011
- 81 - ZINDAGI NA MILEGI DOBAARA - 2011
- 82 - B A PASS - 2012
- 83 - INKAAR - 2013
- 84 - AURANGZEB - 2013
- 85 - LISTEN AMAYA - 2013
- 86 - HEARTLESS - 2014

87 - TEVAR -2014
88 - BANG-BANG - 2014
89 - NH-10 - 2015

CHARACTER ROLES

JUNOON - 1979 - CHARACTER
HUMDARD - 1981
MAIN AUR MERI TANHAI - 1982
WANTED - 1984
MOHAN JOSHI HAAZIR HO - 1984
DAMUL - 1985 - GUEST
TERE SHEHAR MEIN - 1985
BEGAANA - 1985
FAASLE - 1985 - GUEST APPEARANCE
GHAR HO TO AISA - 1988
SAUDAGAR - 1989 -
DUSHMANI - 1991
JAI VIKRANTA - 1992
YALGAAR - 1992
GUDDU - 1995
SAUTELA BHAI - 1996
WINGS OF HOPE - 1999
KABHI PAAS KABHI FAIL - 1999
BAWANDAR - 2001
SHAKTI -2001
LEELA - 2002
ANAAHAT - 2003
YATRA -MAY 4, 2007
RIVAAS - RELEASE - 2011
TELL ME O KHUDA - 2010
BHINDI BAZAAR - 2010
ZINDAGI NA MILEGI DOBAARA - 2011
B A PASS - 2012
INKAAR - 2013
AURANGZEB - 2013
TEVAR -2014
BANG BANG -2014

TV SERIALS

HIMALAYA DARSHAN - 1988 - TV SERIAL
AAKHRI DAAO - 1988 - TV SERIAL
SAUDA - 1989 -TV SERIAL

UMEED - 1989 - TV SERIAL
LAPATAA - 1991 - TV SERIAL
KEHKASHAAN - 1993 -TV SERIAL
TANAAV - 1994 - TV SERIAL
THODASA AASMAAN - 1995 - TV SERIAL

TELE FILMS

ANDHERE - 1987
ANANT - 1999
KASAK - 1999

AWARDS

BEST ACTRESS FILMWORLD AWARD for *EK BAAR PHIR*, 1981

BEST ACTRESS AWARD for *LEELA* at KARACHI INT'L FILM FESTIVAL

BEST ACTRESS for *MEMORIES IN MARCH* at MADRID IMAGINEINDIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

BEST SCREENPLAY AWARD for *DO PAISE KI DHOOP CHAAR AANE KI BAARISH* at NIAFF (NEW YORK INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL).

BEST ACTRESS AWARD for LISTEN AMAYA at the New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) 2013. Deepti Naval nominated for Best Actress, at the New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF) 2013 edition.

Compiled and Edited by

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