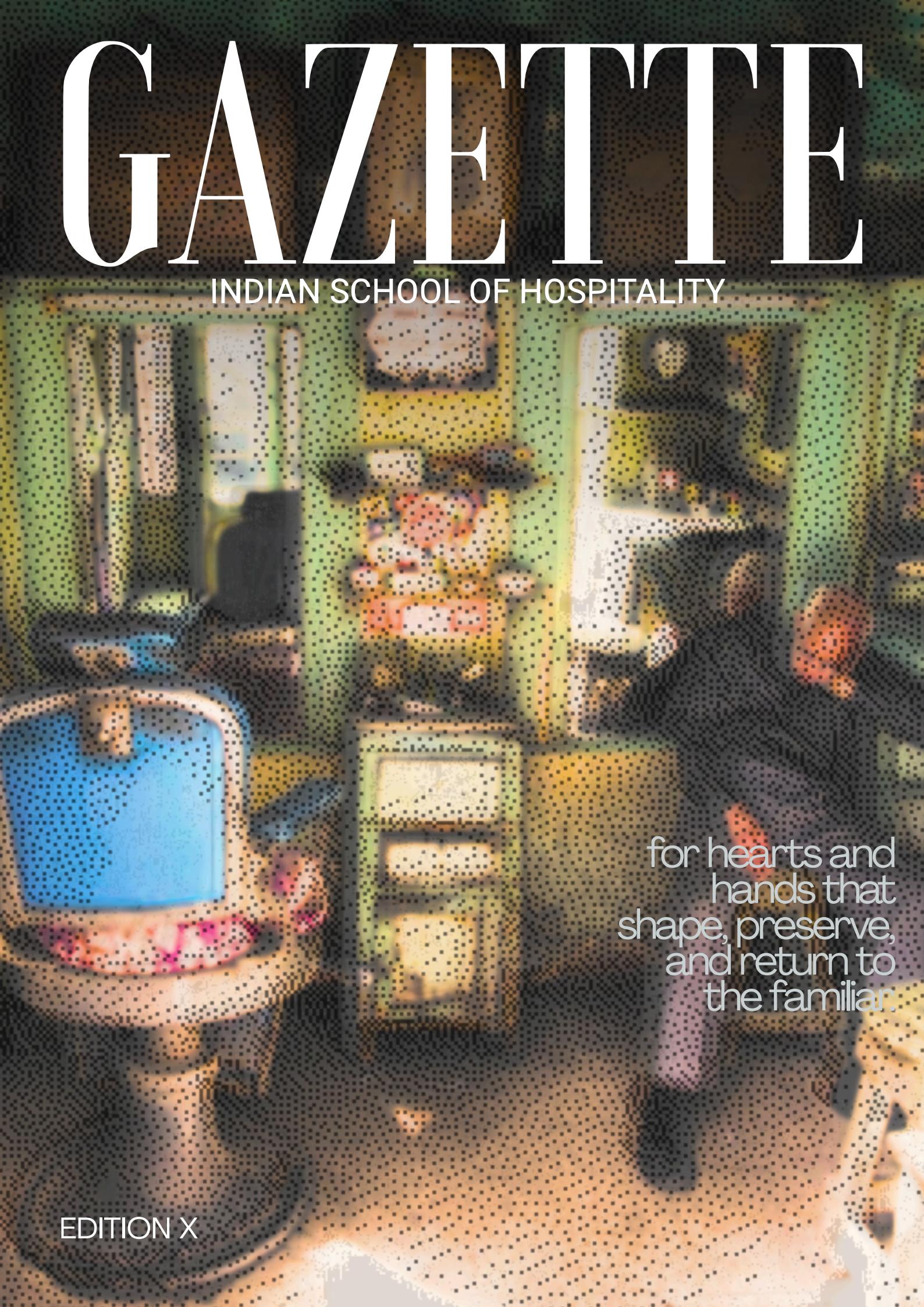


GAZETTE

INDIAN SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY



for hearts and
hands that
shape, preserve,
and return to
the familiar.

EDITION X

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GAZETTE

September 4, 2025

Letter from the Editor

I've been thinking about what it means to reach ten editions. Not in a grand, milestone sort of way, but in the quieter sense of realizing how far we've come and how much we've grown along the way. Every edition has been an experiment, an effort to shape a space for creativity – and this one is no exception.

Each edition teaches me something new about the magazine, about the people around me, and about myself – whether it's discovering a story that makes me feel something new, seeing someone's artwork come alive on a page, or realizing how much we've grown as a community of creators. Putting it together has never felt like a formula; it's been guided by instinct and this joy in watching it come alive and really, I've loved every minute of it.



Edition X feels special in its own way. It's more people-forward than before – the articles aren't just rants or reflections, but glimpses of all that we hold close: from conversations and connections to passing comforts. Reading them has felt like walking through familiar rooms, seeing faces, moments, and memories I didn't know I'd missed until I saw them here. When I look at these pages, it feels like flipping through one of those old family photo albums. There's something archival about it, the way art becomes memory and memory becomes tradition.

That is what I love about this magazine; it captures art not just in the things we create, but in the people themselves – in the stories they tell, the photographs they take, the emotions that spill into their work. It's an archive of art, yes, but also an archive of us.

Edition 09 was a circle closing; Edition X feels like opening a box of keepsakes and adding something new inside – something of value, something to hold close evermore.

With love,
Rhea

Letter from the Creative Director

Creativity cannot be forced. There are days, weeks, sometimes even months, when I don't feel like I'm in the right headspace to create. You can surround yourself with references, hunt for inspiration, and yet still find yourself unable to reinvent or reimagine. There's always a silent pressure to do something better, something new.

On some days, I look back at my past work and wince. On others, I marvel at how I've managed to pull it off. That, to me, is the paradox of creative work. It isn't just the outcome that matters — it's the process. The act of stumbling, revising, chasing after half-formed ideas until they make sense. Even writing this letter began with a messy outline, but the process of shaping it into something more is what keeps me coming back.



Yet, the process can feel like a double-edged sword. Once you've discovered the perfect way of doing something, it's tempting to chase that same formula again and again. But when the formula fails, it leaves you stranded — hopeless even. That is the burden of creativity: the reminder that you can't will it into existence. You can only wait, work, and trust it will return.

In truth, creativity is no different from effort, from performance, from work itself. It resists being forced, yet the world doesn't wait for it. Deadlines still loom, expectations remain, the clock keeps winding. The show must go on — and so we show up, even when it feels impossible.

If there's one lesson I've drawn, it's this: creativity is not about perfection, nor is it about constant brilliance. It's about persistence. It's about allowing yourself to try again, to wrestle with the process, and to find, every now and then, those fleeting moments of magic.

Mitodru Ghosh|

Court Side, Cloud 9

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Court Side, Cloud 9

Becoming myself, one basket at a time

Rigved Srinivas: "ATTENTION! STAND AT EASE! Warm up and you can go play."

This was the start of every PE period in school. Back in 5th grade, all of us would huddle up and run to the PE room to grab a ball. Someone always picked up a basketball, and eight of us would play our hearts out in that one hour every week. The trash talking, the screams of "HAHA, WE WIN!" after each game, and picking each other up after falling in the funniest ways possible – those were the highlights of how my love for basketball began.

But basketball isn't just a game. It's a teacher, a friend, and a mirror. The competitiveness, the social butterfly in me, even my questionable sense of humour – all of it came from the court. Ten years later, I still can't get through a week without playing at least once.

I officially picked up basketball in 6th grade. One of our PE trainers was also the basketball coach. One day he calls me over: "Hey boy, come here, show me how you shoot the ball." I dribble, I shoot and I miss. He goes, "I'll see you at team selections after class."

Little did I know, those selections would become the start of a lifelong addiction.

I made the team, and literally a week

later, I had my first tournament. Twenty different schools. Twenty different teams. We may have lost the third game, but I knew from that day that basketball was my sport. Fast forward two years, upgraded team, a few trophies under our belt, and more motivation than ever. Grade 8 arrives, and the coach tells us we have a huge number of tournaments that year. We had to be at the top of our game.

School starts, and the first week itself – another tournament. All of us: "Already?"

The tournament begins. We go in, *instant* domination. 8–0 record. Hype beyond hype. We knew it was going to be a good year. Same week, different tournament, same result. We were *unstoppable*. Twenty-two tournaments later, twenty podium finishes. And then came the call: Easter Cup, Berlin. Only three Indian teams were invited and we were one of them.

We landed in Berlin that May, and the energy was insane. Nothing but hype across the city. We knew we were ready until we found out who we were up against in our first game. Rotterdam. A team full of literal 13-year-old six-footers. NBA-range height before high school.

We started off strong. End of the first quarter: down 20–18. We had hope. We

were poised. We were motivated. Final score? 114–22. They didn't let us score more than 4 points in 30 minutes. But honestly, it was still a great game. We made friends (I still talk to some of them seven years later), and had an overall blast. Thank goodness it was a league-based tournament, because we still had more games to play.

Next day, next match – against the home team, Germany. So much drama, such a close game. We bagged the win, 56–52! More games followed, and somehow we found ourselves in the semi-finals (Rotterdam had lost a knockout game, phew). Once again, we were up against Germany.

First quarter: tied 18–18. Second and third: tied 31–31. The crowd was going insane at the game being played. My boy *Vishal* was on fire, scoring 18 of those 31 points. The passing, the assists, everything looked artistic. Our inner *Kobe* and *Shaq* were coming out.

Then, things went horribly wrong for me. Injury struck – literally on the head. I was forced to sit out, just going *AAAAAA* in my mind. No subs left, since the others were playing elsewhere. I thought, "Yep, great run, but this is our finish line."

20 seconds left. The game still tied at 45–45. Somehow, we were still in it. Defenders all over us. Clock running down. Five seconds left. *Vishal*, like the madman he is, just throws the ball up. Time slows down. Buzzer sounds. AND HE MAKES THE SHOT. We won, 47–45. Yeah, that means exactly what it sounds like – WE'RE INTO THE FINALS, BABY! God bless *Vishal*. I miss you, my boy.

We were wounded. We were exhausted. But nobody in the universe could've been happier than us. More excited, more pumped. The underdogs of the entire tournament were now in the finals against the top dogs. Team USA. The inventors of the game.

Team USA had a perfect 10–0 record, dominating every single game. And us? We had just about scraped our way into the finals. We walked up to the trophy and said, "Great seeing you in person." We wanted to make the game close, but honestly, we had no hope of winning.

“Bad times? Basketball. Good times? Basketball.”

The game starts – and somehow, we're leading by 12 points at halftime. We were running confident, full of poise. Third quarter comes, and we lose the lead completely. End of the quarter, the game is tied. Our coach was furious – we had choked.

Fourth quarter starts. The hype in the stadium is unreal. The nerves are there, but so is the confidence. Team USA walks in, and the back-and-forth begins. Ten minutes go by, no baskets from either side.

Two minutes left: 35–35.

Team USA scores a 3-pointer. 38–35.

One minute left. Timeout. We huddle up. "*We can't lose this. We've come too far. FOR THE WIN!*"

We go back in. Straight away, we hit a 3-pointer. 38–38. 25 seconds left. Back-and-forth again. And then – the worst

WINNERS : EASTER CUP – BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT, BERLIN, GERMANY



possible thing. One of our main five players fouls out. Team USA gets two free throws. First one goes in. The second one misses. 39–38. They're up by 1. Ten seconds left.

We rush the ball up the court, passing, rotating, searching for an opening. Two seconds remaining. The shot goes up. Time slows again. *Drum rolls.*

THE BALL DROPS IN.

Final score: 40–39. We win. We were on *cloud nine*, and nobody could stop us.

The entire tournament was surreal. The experiences, the friends made, the bonds deepened. But above all, it

proved something simple: sports are never just about winning. They're about community, resilience, and the moments that stay with you long after the buzzer ends.

Basketball does it for me, man. Bad times? *Basketball.* Good times? *Basketball.* Wanna hang with my people? *Basketball.* My daily life literally depends on it.

And that's the point. For me, basketball will never leave my side, and I will never leave basketball. But more than that – it shows how a ball, a court, and a team can change who you are, and give you a family you didn't know you needed.



Public Playlist

rock on & keep livin'

• 5 songs, 26 min 30 sec



...

List

#

Title



1



The Chain - 20...
Fleetwood Mac

4:30

2



Bohemian Rha...
Queen

5:54

3



Welcome to th...
My Chemical Ro...

5:11

4



Paradise City
Guns N' Roses

6:45

5



Don't Stop Beli...
Journey

4:08

No Music, No Life

A tribute to what saved me.

Manya Kadian;

[2:31/4:30] The Chain – Fleetwood Mac

"Without music, Life would be a mistake."

– Frederick Nietzsche

You see it on posters, printed out slogans and other **memorabilia**.

Of course, it's evolved over the years from Nietzsche's to a simpler "No music, no life."

I can't think about life without music. It's like a whisper in my ear at every point of the day. Every important moment in my life has occurred with music playing.

You might think it's cliché like a stupid tattoo idea you'll cover up in a few years, but it was and is everything I feel about music and its impact on our lives summed up in a two-part sentence.

The belief is a long, exasperating journey that took a lot of desperate songs from Evanescence to achieve.

John Michel Basquiat wrote, probably my favourite **adoration** of music, either inebriated or in love, "Art is how we decorate Space, and Music is how we decorate time."

It hit me like a sledgehammer the first time I read it because it is truly an ode to voices that have shaped generations, tradition and my embarrassing "emo phase" of shaved red hair.

This is a tribute and essentially me *nerding* out over bands, audio devices and vinyls that shaped my soul.

Mama, Life had just begun.

But now I've gone and thrown it all away

[1:09/5:54] Bohemian Rhapsody – Queen

Jimi Hendrix, Chester Bennington, Kurt Cobain, Freddy Mercury and Amy Winehouse. Dead for decades.

All are still making young boys and girls feel like they belong and becoming the soundtrack to their rebellion.

War Pigs, Don't try suicide, Teenage Dirtbag, Smells Like Teen Spirit, Dear Maria Count Me In.

Most are from The 27 Club – still the blueprint of all the newer artists due to the seismic impact their music had and is having on generations.

The 27 Club was this social phenomenon that formed when brilliant artists with money, fame and **insurmou-**

ntable talent never made it beyond the age of 27.

I like to envision the Club as a room to make deals with life and the devil – fame, money and legendary status – in exchange for not even making it three decades breathing.

The Law of Equivalent Exchange (This is a Fullmetal Alchemist reference) is quite brutal when it comes to the performing arts. Ballerinas retire early, and rockstars never get the chance to.

Perhaps the most apt way to describe them is as the **propulsors** they use to launch rockets into space – loud, necessary and possessing a dangerously short lifespan.

***I won't explain or say I'm sorry
I'm unashamed, I'm gonna show my scars***
[3:43/5:11] Welcome to the Black Parade – My Chemical Romance

I was one of the kids who grew up with no phone till grade 11 and used my dad's iPod and broken headphones to ignore the fact that I hadn't been able to hold onto a friendship for more than two years.

I desperately needed a sense of community and an escape from reality that music provided me with.

The army brat lifestyle (This is not a *Charli XCX* reference), coupled with the general unsettling aura I had as a child, left me with very few options to find friends or even an inkling of familiarity that would last beyond the posting.

Lonely children love to listen.

I need music in my veins to escape from the monotony of people and the monstrous expectations of the world. Because there is a song for every emotion, every situation.

It's not an exaggeration to say that the iPod gave me hope and a small silver lining that there is someone out there who I will probably never meet in this lifetime, but knows what the pain is like and channelled it to create a community.

“Lonely children love to listen.”

Case in point, I really love grilled cheese sandwiches, and whaddya know, there's a literal song called *Grilled Cheese Obama Sandwich*, I'm dead serious, look it up.

On a serious note, when I was starting high school and shifting yet again, the entirety of going away from people I enjoyed spending time with was daunting and, honestly, was when I realised I might have really serious anxiety issues (I still do, but that's for another edition). It was during that time that *Imagine Dragons* released *Birds*.

I felt so seen, and as cringe as it sounds, it felt like the world was gonna be okay, of course, COVID was happening, and I was severely wrong about that, but we emerged mostly **unscathed**. Of course, my mental health took a nosedive to rock bottom.



At 17, I was weighed down by the massive expectation to succeed and turn the underdog story of a diamond in the rough into reality. I'd already deviated after potentially ruining a 4-generation tradition of military excellence because of a medical complication.

In the graveyard of lost potential and endless hobbies, music was the constant that kept me **tethered** to hope and to silver linings and shooting stars wishing for success. It is a majorly universal emotion when you find community and someone who was able to beautifully capture your pain into an anthem.

(the lore keeps getting deeper why am I trauma dumping in an article ?)

Humanity is a loud species; we celebrate everything with sound and song. Birth, death, and religion are incomplete without a background of instruments and vocals, which have been passed down generationally.

It is cyclic evidence that regardless of the century, humanity grieves, celebrates and hurts the same way. I picked up the guitar a while ago, and it's both really fun and really frustrating.

When you finally reach the end of a progression and you almost nail it, and then you mess up, the urge to smash your very expensive piece of equipment is **tantalising**. I like to imagine all the greats, Tchaikovsky, Hendrix, and Slash, getting as frustrated and working through it. We all suffer to create, but we suffer together.

Marceline, my electric guitar is the most valuable thing I own. She frustrates me 9/118 times when I try to play anything after a while. She is heavy, delicate and has to be carefully connected to her amp or all hell breaks loose. But when you finally get it, the progression, the pattern of the strumming, it's *euphoric*.

Take me down to Paradise City.
Where the grass is green and the girls are pretty.
[0:21/6:45] Paradise City - Guns N' Roses

Over the years, as the audiophile in me has evolved full circle back to the vinyls and the walkmans and burned CDs.



My father started a record collection in the early months of this year, and we've started building it brick by brick, vinyl by vinyl.

Vintage finds like Anand circa 1972, Edith Piaf – *Mea Culpa* 1958 and freshly pressed ones of *AM* by Arctic Monkeys, the best of Queen and an assortment of *Pink Floyd*.

Cleaning those records every day is the closest I have come to understanding religious devotion. The vinyls are delicate, fuzzy and must be treated with the same adoration as you would your lover.

Vinyls have again become popular for their "vintage aesthetic". For once, I am quite grateful for this vinyl revival.

For an industry that bottomed out in 2006, physical media became quite an **arduous** task to collect.

Now we have *The Revolver Room*, *Kala Ghoda* and many more as a sanctuary to collect physical media. I think towards the end of my time on this planet, those vinyls will be the most significant thing I can pass down to the future.

Don't stop believin.'
[3:24/ 4:08] – Journey

To conclude, this article offers no advice, no welcoming message to get you into genres. This is simply an ode to what saved my life in one of its darker periods.

Rock on and keep livin'.



not every
shaadi needs
a bride and
groom

Oscars who? ISH stole the spotlight.

**Glam, gossip, and a touch
of Gurgaon glitter — ISH's
Red Carpet Rewind turned
the college into Hollywood
for a night, with students
serving looks, laughs, and
Oscar-worthy drama.**



**STUDENTS
STEAL THE
OSCAR'S!**



Page 3



The lights flashed, the music thumped, and ISH was transformed into a scene straight out of old Hollywood. Red Carpet Rewind by our very own student societies and clubs — EVENTORIUM, MASCOTS, DIVERCITY, UMAMI, EDITORIAL, FLYP and CAS wasn't just an event — it was cinema.

With juniors stepping onto their first-ever ISH red carpet and student leaders debuting as hosts, the evening carried the excitement of fresh beginnings wrapped in silk, sequins, tuxedos, and jazz-age glamour. It was the kind of night where the anticipation hung as heavy as the spotlight, and every guest felt like a star.

The gala began with a kind of elegance that would make even the Oscars proud. Students and faculty strolled the carpet in the bling of the evening. Interviews done by HYPLE on the carpet brought out laughter and nerves alike, as the newest members of the ISH family had their moment in the limelight. It was a true mix of prestige and play with the activities conducted by FLYP — the charm of Hollywood with the warmth of a community welcome.





“It felt like our own Oscars, minus the acceptance speeches, plus a lot more dancing.”

On stage, the energy never dipped with the performances organised by DIVERCITY. A soulful group singing performance set a melodic tone, followed by a group dance that had the audience clapping to the rhythm. The couple dance added a softer, more romantic flair, reminding everyone that glamour has many forms. Each act reflected the creativity and collaboration ISH is known for, blending rehearsed artistry with spontaneous joy.

As the evening unfolded, the mood shifted. The red carpet walkway gave way to a buzzing dance floor, and the gala atmosphere melted into an all-out celebration. Beats grew louder, sneakers joined stilettos, and soon no one could resist the pull of the DJ.

But beyond the sequins and music, what stood out was the sense of belonging. Juniors tasted their first true ISH night, while seniors set the tone for the months ahead with leadership and camaraderie. By the time the last song faded and dinner was served, the night had already etched itself into memory. Red Carpet Rewind was more than a welcome, more than a party. It was a celebration of togetherness, an ode to new beginnings, and a sparkling promise that this semester is one for the books.

GAZE

50 BE RESTAU

Over ten editions, we've wandered through kitchens, cafés, and curious corners of the culinary world. To mark our 10th, we bring you *The Gazette 50* — a ranking of every restaurant we've featured so far. Judged on *Food & Beverages, Service, Ambiance, and Value for Money*, it's less about "the best" and more about the flavours, stories, and experiences that made us return for seconds.

1**Zuru Zuru**
New Delhi

2**Banng**
Gurgaon

3**Indian Accent**
New Delhi

4**Dum Pukht**
New Delhi

5
Inja

New Delhi

6**Megu**
New Delhi

Tres
New Delhi

7

Long Finish
Gurgaon

8

Best Ambiance
Kuuraku
Gurgaon

9

Kioki
Gurgaon

10

Plats
New Delhi

11

Bomba
Gurgaon

12

Dzukou
New Delhi

13

Best Beverages
Genre Journal
New Delhi

14

The List 15 - 50

15 Leo's Pizzaria
New Delhi

24 Sibang Bakery
Gurgaon

16 Japonico
Gurgaon

25 Lea Izakaya
New Delhi

17 Carnatic Cafe
New Delhi

26 Espresso Anyday
Gurgaon

18 Rude Chef
New Delhi

27 Chard
New Delhi

19 Best Value Sham Restaurant
Gurgaon

28 Mohinga
New Delhi

20 Swan
New Delhi

29 Naivedyam
Gurgaon

21 Chilli's
Gurgaon

30 The Big Chill
New Delhi

22 Hajji Nihari
New Delhi

31 Miam Pâtisserie
Gurgaon

23 Hornbill
New Delhi

32 Categorical Eat Pham
New Delhi



33 Teyys K-Cafe
New Delhi

42 Sri Sahab Ji Dairy
New Delhi

34 Hashery
New Delhi

43 Burgin'
Gurgaon

35 Evoo
New Delhi

44 Aku's
New Delhi

36 Karim's
New Delhi

45 Juggernaut
New Delhi

37 United Coffee House
New Delhi

46 Al Kauser
Gurgaon

38 Home
New Delhi

47 Deepak Bhai Ki Tapri
Gurgaon

39 Lha Kitchen
New Delhi

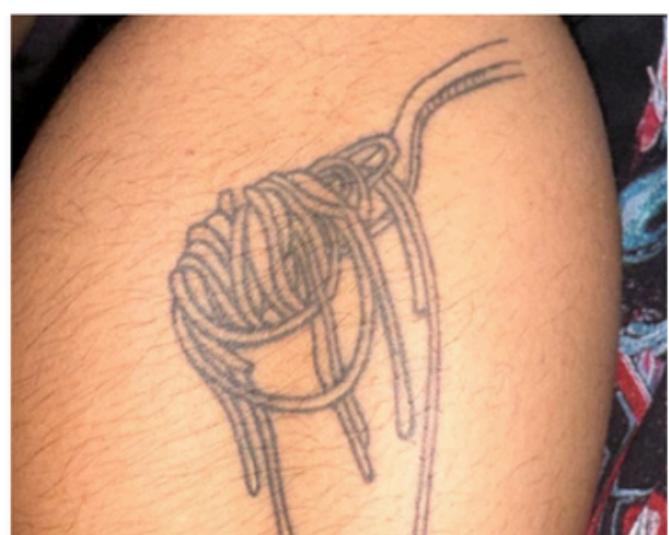
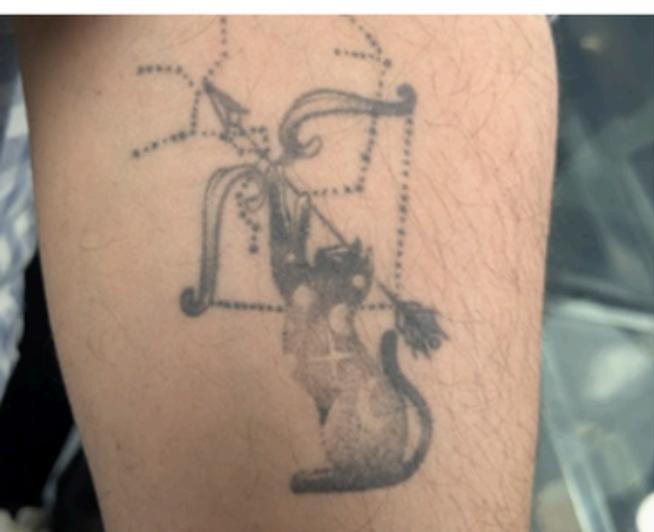
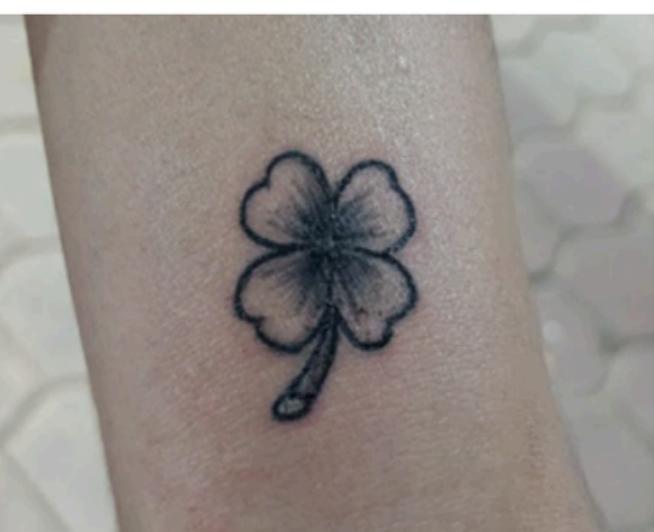
48 Taufeeq Dilpasand
New Delhi

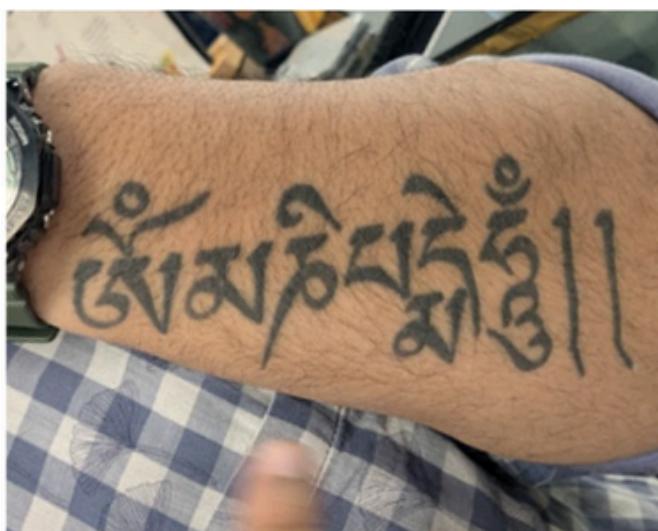
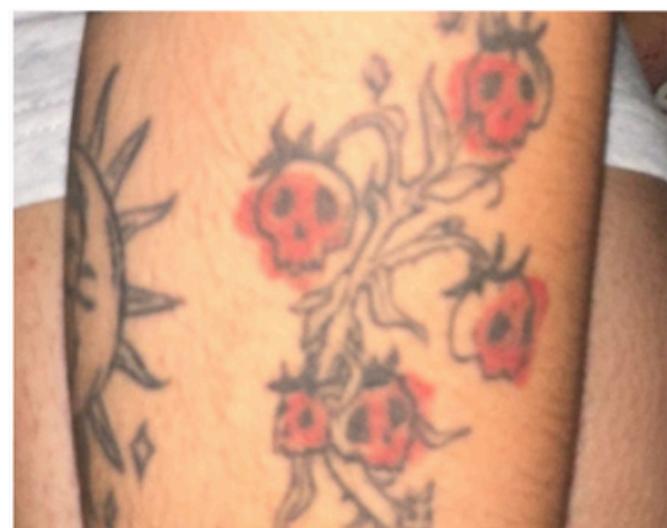
40 Café Paul
Gurgaon

49 Gulati Restaurant
New Delhi

41 Bibimbap
Gurgaon

50 Arabian Nites
New Delhi







Pierced With Purpose

The Cultural Significance of Piercings in Indian Culture & Their Possible Health Benefits

Harlene Singh: I absolutely adore jewellery – I'd make it my whole personality if I could. Not only the act of wearing it, but the artistry of designing it, the joy of selling it and the way it seems to carry fragments of memory and identity. For me, jewellery has never been an afterthought or an idle embellishment – it's been woven into the very fabric or the beads (*pun intended*) of who I am.

Growing up in Kenya, to truly connect with my Indian roots, I was immersed into the glamorous world of Bollywood – the Hindi I confidently speak is all through SRK. Heroines adorned with shimmering nose rings, brides radiant in intricate *naths* and family occasions where ornaments were as significant as the rituals themselves. Inevitably, this fascination grew into something more personal, more **tactile**, and I caught myself obsessing over designing and eventually curating jewellery of my own. Yet the deeper I ventured into this world, a striking realisation shined through.

Across Indian culture, piercings – particularly those of the nose and ear – are not simply decorative, they are

vessels of tradition, spirituality, and even health. What may seem like a mere sparkle of metal or stone is in truth, a centuries-old tale, rich with symbolism and meaning – one that can, understatedly, hold the power to alter your physical state.

“They are vessels of tradition, spirituality, and even health.”

The practice of piercings in India stretches back millennia. The ritual of *karnavedha* or piercing of the ear – is one of the sixteen *samskaras* (**sacraments**) in Hindu philosophy, often performed in early childhood as a sacred initiation into society and spirituality. In many regions, it was believed to usher a child into education, to ground them in their community and traditions, and to ward off negativity. Nose piercings, too, embody a tapestry of meaning. They are often linked with Goddess *Parvati*, who embodies love, fertility, and marital bliss. For centuries, brides have graced themselves with these as part of the *shringaar*, symbolising beauty alongside blessings for fertility and harmony. In some communities, the removal of a nose ring

after widowhood marked a sorrowful **emblem** of change – jewellery here served both as adornment and social signifier. Across India, regional expression has added its own flourish: the pearl-laden Maharashtrian *nath*, the delicate gold hoops of Rajasthan, or the multiple ear piercings stacks favoured in the South. Each speaks of heritage and identity, a reminder that jewellery has always been a bearer of stories as much as of **lustre**.

What struck me most while researching the Indian traditions of piercing was how deeply they resonated with the cultural practices that I grew up around in Kenya. As a child, I would watch Maasai warriors, their ears stretched and embellished with vivid beads, carrying themselves with an elegance that made their jewellery an inseparable part of their identity. The women, too, were teachers in their own right – showing me how to weave beads with patient hands, how to twist wire into form, how jewellery was as much an act of storytelling as it was of craft. Learning from them, I realised that adornment is never just surface decoration; but it's a language of belonging, a way of inscribing history onto the body. Linking a lived memory with the Indian rituals of piercing taught me to see jewellery as both heritage and a shared human practice – one that binds cultures together through beauty, skill, and meaning.

Piercings, in Indian belief, have never been purely aesthetical. They're also **imbued** with spiritual resonance. Ear piercings were thought to "open the

inner ears", enabling the child to better receive sacred sounds – the vibrations of *mantras*, prayers, and divine knowledge. Placement mattered – girls were traditionally pierced on the left ear, boys on the right, denoting a balance between feminine and masculine energies.

For women, the nose ring occupies a place of singular importance. Beyond its beauty, it served as a visible declaration of marital status and, by extension, fertility and familial continuity. Its removal in widowhood, therefore, was not merely ornamental but deeply emotional – a silent yet eloquent commentary on life's shifting states. Every piercing, then, was both an act of self-expression and a physical embodiment of tradition.

What makes Indian culture particularly fascinating is its refusal to separate beauty from well-being. Piercings were believed to possess therapeutic benefits, long before holistic wellness became a modern trend. Ayurvedic thought reckons that the left nostril, where women most often wear a stud or ring, is linked with the female reproductive system. A piercing on this point was believed to ease menstrual discomfort, regulate cycles, and even assist in childbirth. In some communities, brides were encouraged to adopt the practice for this reason.

Ear piercings, meanwhile, were thought to stimulate pressure points connected to vision, digestion, brain health, and reproductive balance. The lobes, helix, and tragus correspond to various meri-

idians in the body, echoing principles later echoed in acupuncture and reflexology. Parents would pierce their children's ears not simply for ornament, but in the hope of fortifying their well-being, sharpening their intellect, and channeling energy through the nervous system.

Of course, modern science regards many of these claims with caution, yet the overlap between traditional wisdom and practices such as acupressure reveals intriguing points of resonance. Even if not all the health benefits can be clinically proven, the symbolic fusion of **regalia** and wellness remains a reminder of the holistic nature of Indian philosophy.

Today, piercings have become global markers of fashion and individuality. From runways in Paris to cafés in Delhi, they are worn as symbols of personality, rebellion, or simply style. Yet in India they are layered with centuries of sacred, cultural, and familial memory.

As the world rediscovers *Ayurveda*, yoga, and other holistic traditions, piercings,



too, are being re-examined not only as fashion but as reiterations of ancestral knowledge. A simple stud may be worn for its aesthetical grace, yet it carries within, the threads of ritual and remembrance. Personally, as both designer and wearer, I find in every piercing a small act of continuity – to create or don one is to participate in something larger – an unbroken chain that stretches across generations.

Within Indian culture, piercings are far beyond ornamental, they are thresholds into tradition, spirituality, and sometimes health. From the sacred rite of *karnavedha* to the symbolic power of the nose ring, from Ayurvedic theories to contemporary fashion, they embody a rare intertwining of beauty and meaning.

Whether or not one accepts the health claims in their entirety, the symbolic power of these accessories remains undeniable. They remind us of how beauty is never merely *skin-deep*, it is charged with significance, memory, and spirit.

That, to me, is what makes jewellery so compelling. They sparkle, yes – but more importantly, they speak.





Love, Archived

Lace, rituals and everything in between.

Rhea Budhraja: I love the idea of love. I love celebrating love. I love how friends and families just stop everything they're doing and show up for days, sometimes weeks, to celebrate two people and their decision to build a life together. I love the way weddings become this heightened display of culture and tradition: the white dresses and veils in the West, the *lehengas* and *baraats* in India, the endless variations across regions and religions.

Maybe that's why I'm obsessed with *Say Yes to the Dress*. It's not just the drama – though the tears, the gasps, and Randy's gentle interventions make it delicious – it's the fashion. The cuts, the beadwork, the fabrics, the designers. Watching a bride see herself in "*the one*" feels like watching love itself materialise in tulle and crystals. Kleinfeld isn't just a store; it's a stage where fashion and emotion collapse into each other.

And then there's *Band Baaja Bride*. If Kleinfeld is the American temple of wedding dresses, Sabyasachi was India's equivalent, at least in my preteen/teenage imagination. I grew up watching NDTV Good Times with my mom, she was invested in the details of it all – the fittings, the backstories, the

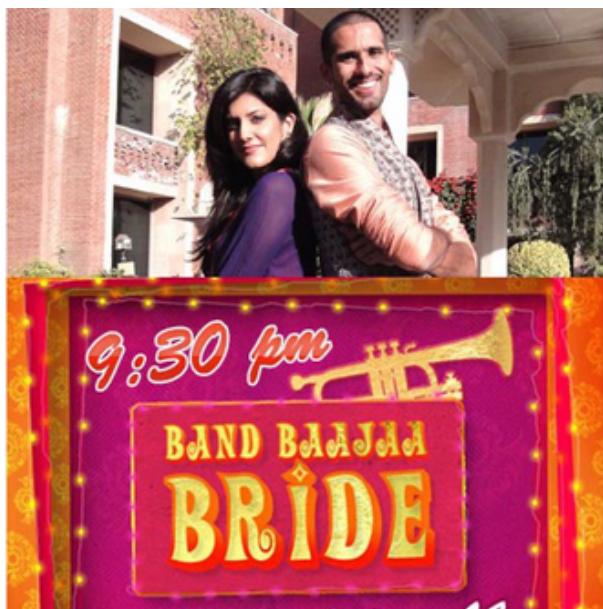
teary-eyed "dream come true" moments – while all I really understood was that every bride wanted a Sabyasachi *lehenga* and had been dreaming about this day forever. Before *Say Yes to the Dress*, before I had ever attended an Indian wedding as an adult, I already understood weddings as rituals of spectacle – where intent, culture, and love are woven into embroidered fabric and choreographed ceremonies.

I think that's why I've been conditioned to love weddings, not by family pressure or by the **sanctimonious** narratives of marriage – building a home, starting a family, ticking boxes – but by the media I grew up with. Bollywood practically raised me on *shaadi* season: the entrepreneurial chaos of *Band Baaja Baaraat*, the intercultural melodrama of *2 states*, the eternal joint-family spectacle of *Hum Aapke Hain Koun*, or the grandeur of *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*. Even TV joined in – makeover shows, reality competitions, dance numbers that aired like pre-wedding rehearsals. Together, they shaped one big truth: celebrating love is never just about two people. It's about culture, community, intent – and the optics, whether it's larger-than-life choreograph-

hy or a bare-bones registry ceremony with no frills, the staging of love is still a performance.

Because intent is what matters. The intention of preserving rituals, of keeping details alive, of gathering your people to mark something as significant – that's what makes the concept linger. Your community puts in the work to make sure these gestures don't disappear. That feels wholesome to me.

But maybe you don't need me to get you on board. Think about the wedding you attended. Be honest – did you not enjoy the free food, the dancing, the cousins you hadn't seen in months, the uncles slightly tipsy and insisting they're the fun ones while the women actually carried the conversations? Did you not feel that tiny thrill of coordinating outfits across three days of events, or waking up early to visit the bride and see her glowing, exhausted, but happy? Even the *mehendi*, with hands full of intricate designs – also pass around snacks – it's impossible not to love some part of it.



They may be surface joys but that's reason enough to love weddings, long before I even try to make my case.

Our Creative Director once said, "It's all about optics." And weddings, more than anything, truly are – both visual and emotional. They are maximalist by design – the colours, the textures, the layered fabrics and drapes – chandeliers dripping from tent ceilings, fairy lights cascading down walls, **tablescapes** stacked with florals and patterned china. Brides wrapped in embroidered silks, draped in jewellery heavy enough to last generations. Designers like Sabyasachi build entire maximalist visions out of embroidery and earthy-regal palettes.

But maximalism isn't only material, it's also emotional. It's the big reveal moment in *Say Yes to the Dress*, when tears fall and family members nod in approval. It's the drama of *Band Baaja Bride*, where a bride isn't just styled but transformed, carrying the weight of cultural memory. Maximalism is in the size of the guest list, the Instagram backdrops, the way rituals stretch into performances. Weddings aren't just intimate affairs anymore – they're theatres of identity and belonging, where love itself becomes a stage.

That's why I think of weddings as archives. They're where culture records itself – through outfits, rituals, music, family recipes, dances and even the photo albums we flip through years later, where every elaborate outfit and awkward cousin dancing becomes part of family memory. A wedding becomes a

time capsule of what your family looked like, the values you held, the aesthetical choices that defined you. It's an archive not just of tradition but of the personal culture you've built through friends, media, food, and principles.

And yet, weddings are also stages. They're where families signal who they are, what they can preserve, what they can afford, what they choose to display. Sometimes this creates tension between preservation and modernity, tradition and change. Think of modern tweaks – like choreographed *sangeet* numbers, hashtags, or drone videography – sitting alongside rituals that have been followed for generations. But even then, the intent is the same: to mark love with community and ritual, however you define it.

The media has only amplified this. From Bollywood films to reality TV, weddings are consistently portrayed as

heightened, sparkling, larger-than-life. They shape expectations – sometimes setting us up for disappointment, sometimes giving us dreams to hold on to. The disconnect between on-screen maximalist weddings and the smaller, everyday ceremonies many of us attend is real. And yet, both versions feed into the same longing: to be witnessed, to be celebrated, to belong.

Which is why, for me, what remains sacred in the grand scheme of it all is simple: weddings are moments of collective hope. They're about gathering your people to honour what matters to you – whether that's tradition, culture, love, or just the joy of dancing together after months apart. Whether it happens under disco balls and chandeliers or quietly at a registry office doesn't matter. The intent, the archive, the maximalism – those are what make weddings unforgettable.





Jamnipur colony
Bhadohi 221401

Dire and
Ancient

Dear DOTA, It's not me, it's you

March 2020, covid hit. For us children, oblivious to the tragedies, it was a dream come true. I still remember it clearly: at breakfast, our principal announced that the school was closing and that everyone had to go back home. Grade 7 me didn't have a lot going on. With all that free time, I booted up my computer and opened YouTube, like any sane person would. That's when I saw you – the most beautiful thing I had ever laid eyes on. DOTA 2, a five-player online MOBA game. It was love at first sight. I had been into video games before, but this was different. You weren't like the others.

Something about you drew me in. Maybe it was the fact that you were already a 14-year-old game and yet had a thriving player base. Few games could boast such **longevity**, and even fewer could say they were still growing by the day. Or maybe it was the fact that you, unlike most games on the market, had a team behind you who weren't just in it for the money, but were actually passionate about their project. You started off as a humble mod for *World of Warcraft*. That love carried over until eventually you were released as a proper game, becoming the most complicated online MOBA to ever exist.

I used to say you reminded me of chess, but that relationship was just as complicated as ours. We had a rough start. I, a simple small-town boy, struggled with your 100+ different combinations of heroes and items and the complete freedom of play you offered. At 100+ hours, I still understood nothing about you. Perhaps that's why I stayed. Ours was never a give-and-take. I loved you unconditionally, gave you my all, and you barely noticed me. With millions in your player base, I couldn't blame you.

I often think about our first TI (The International) together – the biggest E-sports tournament to date, with 40 million dollars in the prize pool. More than the money, you were what made people take E-sports seriously and put it out there for the world to see. I was fascinated by the cult following you had, even after being, well – you. People dedicated their lives to mastering you, casting your matches, creating content, and telling your story again and again.

You were someone who didn't respect people's time. Boot up a game, and it could go on for 10 minutes or two hours – there was no telling. But that unpredictability was what pulled people in.

No two games were ever the same. You didn't lure people with flashy, overpriced cosmetics or easy dopamine. You demanded time and effort, and in return, you gave meaning. Some days you were cruel, punishing me for every mistake. Some days you were generous, rewarding me when I least expected it. The raw chaos and uncertainty made every match unforgettable.

At around 500 hours, I started to understand what you needed from me. I took an academic approach and experimented. I watched professionals and learned from them. I studied my own replays and tried to fix my mistakes. I was obsessed with getting better – so I could be good enough for you, so I could deserve you. But I never did. Even if I got somewhat decent, there was always someone better. This was a 14-year-old game I was trying to master. For context, there are people who have been playing since the BETA launch and are still going strong. Some heroes have more than 15 abilities. It was nearly impossible to be half-decent next to 40-year-olds who did this for a living.

At 2,500 hours invested in this relationship, it hit me: we were never going to work out. While you scratched an itch I never knew I had, you also made me miserable. I poured everything into learning optimal timings, item combinations, spell casting. But it was never enough.

Your players were too toxic. Your matches, too demanding. Your combos, too hard. We both realised this wasn't healthy, and I had to pull the plug. I'd like to say it's not you, it's me, but no – it was you.

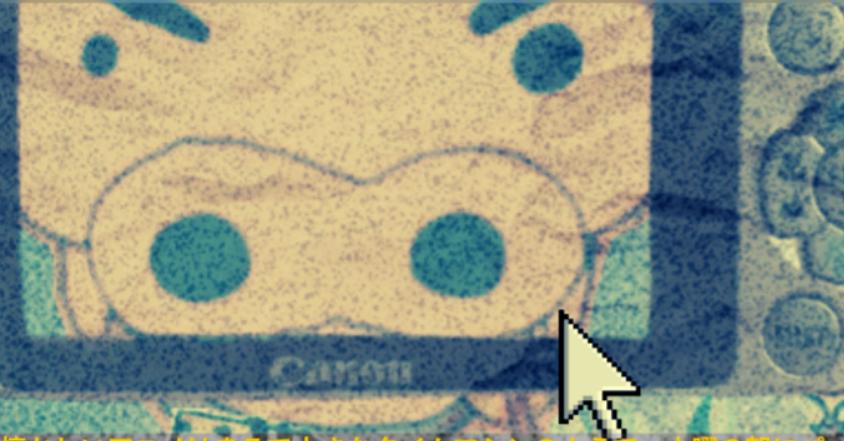
Still, even though you're no longer in my life, I think of you often. I think about our time together, how much you taught me, and how grateful I am for it all. You taught me patience, humility, discipline, and above all, the joy of trying to master something difficult, even if mastery never came. You showed me a world where strangers across the globe could unite for a single match – fight, win, lose, and still carry memories worth holding on to. You were brutal, but you were also beautiful.

Even now, I sometimes wonder what life would have been like if I had never found you. Maybe I would've spent more time outdoors, or picked up another hobby. But then again, I wouldn't trade the late nights, the adrenaline rush of a team fight, or the quiet satisfaction of pulling off a perfect play. Someday, I might stop loving you, but I'll never stop loving the days when I loved you.

Yours forever,
Sarthak Dubey

Nostalgia is a bittersweet emotional state, a complex cocktail of memory and feeling that arises when we recall moments, experiences, or eras from the past that carry deep personal or cultural significance. It's not just simple remembering—it's remembering wrapped in warmth, tinged with longing, and often polished by the soft blur of time. At its core, nostalgia functions as both a psychological anchor and a time-traveling lens: it transports us back to earlier chapters of life, letting us re-experience the textures, sounds, and emotions of those moments, while simultaneously reminding us of how far we've come.

REWIND



懐かしいアニメはまるで小さなタイムマシンのようで、土曜の朝にパジャマ姿でシリアルを食べながらテレビに夢中になっていたあの頃へと私たちを連れ戻してくれます。それはただの番組ではなく、子ども時代の大切な習慣であり、キャラクターたちはまるで友達のような存在でした。『トムとジェリー』のドタバタ劇、『パワーパフガールズ』のヒーロー感、『スクービー・ドゥー』のワクワクする冒険——どれもが純粋で楽しく、心をほっとさせる魅力にあふれています。今見返すと、ただのエンタメ以上のもので、子どもの頃の笑い声や驚き、そしてあの無邪気な喜びをもう一度感じさせてくれるのです。



日本

Nostalgic cartoons are like cozy little time machines, whisking us back to simpler days when Saturday mornings meant cereal bowls, pajamas, and

hours of pure animated magic. They weren't just shows—they were childhood rituals, with characters who felt like friends and catchphrases that still echo in our heads. Whether it was the goofy chaos of Tom and Jerry, the superhero thrills of Powerpuff Girls, or the adventurous spirit of

Scooby-Doo, these cartoons carried a charm that felt innocent, funny, and endlessly comforting. Watching them now isn't just about entertainment—it's about reliving the laughter, wonder, and carefree joy of being a kid again.

Psychologically, nostalgia serves important purposes. It reinforces our identity by connecting who we are today with who we once were. It can

bring us feelings of belonging, reminding us of people, places, and traditions that shaped our lives. Socially, it can bond groups together, since many people share nostalgic memories of the same cultural events, songs, shows, or trends.



Rewind isn't just pressing a button—it's the art of turning back time, of dragging the present by the hand and forcing it to relive the past. It's that magical, almost rebellious act of refusing to move forward for a moment, choosing instead to spin the wheel of memory back to where the laughter started, the music first played, or

Lights, Cameras & Cartoons

The first draft of the Ipad kid generation

Mayur Somaiah; Television was at the heart of our childhoods. We'd come back from school or wake up on a lazy holiday morning, grab whatever snacks we could find around the house, and plant ourselves in front of the screen. Even the smallest moments felt huge back then – sprinting back from the bathroom before the ads ended, or fighting with your siblings for the remote like it was a matter of national importance. And let's not forget the thrill of sneaking in an episode after our moms told us to go finish our homework – that little act of **defiance** always came with an adrenaline rush. I still remember watching *Pokémon* till midnight, way past my bedtime, and in those moments, that quiet rebellion felt like freedom itself.

But every once in a while, the routine episodes gave way to something bigger: a *movie*. Those special cartoon movie nights turned the living room into a mini theatre. The excitement of waiting for the premiere, knowing it would air just

once at a fixed time, was unmatched. You couldn't pause it, you couldn't record it – you had to be there, present, watching every second as it unfolded. And when you finally sat down, popcorn in hand – the homemade kind your parents threw together – it felt like more than just TV. These movies took familiar characters and dropped them into brand new worlds of suspense, mystery, and wild plot twists. That is what made them so unforgettable.

"During the day I watched these movies, in the night I lived them in my dreams."

I still remember watching those *Doraemon* movie ads that popped up while I was watching cartoons. Honestly, that was the only way for me to know that a new movie was coming out – and the moment I saw one, I'd clear out all my plans just so I could watch it without any interruptions.

But have you ever thought about how these Japanese cartoons even became part of mainstream television in India? Well, let's spill some tea about that.

Funnily enough, Asian household values are often very similar to each other, irrespective of their historical and cultural differences. Take *Doraemon* as an example. It's a show set in Japan about a male robotic cat from the future who comes to help a struggling middle school student. Now, how does this connect to a country like India? Well, for starters, Nobita constantly struggled with academics and faced immense pressure from his mother because of his less-than-stellar performance. He came from a middle-class family and was simply a kid with big dreams. Sounds familiar?

"These movies raised me more than anything else."

That's exactly why a cartoon like *Doraemon* resonated so deeply and became wildly popular in India. Honestly Indian animators could take a few notes from them. What often set Japanese cartoons apart was the simplicity of their settings – a blank canvas that allowed writers and animators to experiment with all kinds of genres and stories. Take *Chhota Bheem*, for example: every episode followed the same formula of *Bheem* eating *laddus*, gaining strength, and defeating villains. The repetition left little room for growth, and most shows lacked the kind of playful childhood humour that made others timeless.

"My best distraction during exams, which I don't regret."

Worse, they often leaned on stereotypes instead of authentic cultural representation. I still remember how Officer *Chingum* in *Motu Patlu* was portrayed – darker skin, heavy accent, dropping coconuts, and always eating *idli*, *dosa*, and *chutney*. That kind of shallow character design doesn't do justice to the richness of Indian culture, especially when millions of kids are watching. When you put that beside the freedom and creativity of Japanese cartoons, it's clear that Indian animation still has a lot of space to grow and step up to the competition.

On the flip side, Japanese cartoons thrived on simplicity – a basic plot that gave animators endless room to experiment with genres, ideas, and iconic episodes. That same simplicity is what made their movies stand out so powerfully, giving them a unique space beyond the shows. Maybe I'm fangirling a little too hard, but with global competition this strong, it's high time Indian animation stepped up too.

But there's something about these cartoon shows that often gets overlooked: the movies. Those special movies we waited days for, counting down until they finally aired. These weren't just extensions of the shows, they pushed the genre of cartoons further and played around with storylines in ways the episodes never did.

"The inner rebellion came out in me to watch these movies instead of doing homework."

So what made these movies stand out? For starters, they always had that element of fantasy. We're coming back to *Doraemon*, with two of my favorite films. The first, *Doraemon: Nobita and the New Steel Troops: Angel Wings*, was honestly one of the few cartoon movies that ever made me cry (along with *Pokémon: Mewtwo Returns*). Beyond the fact that it was emotional, the soundtrack was incredible, and the Mecha-themed storyline was my first real introduction to the Mecha genre. The second, *Doraemon the Movie: Nobita's New Great Adventure into the Underworld – The Seven Magic Users*, I adore for a much simpler reason: magic. Bringing fantasy and sorcery into *Doraemon* gave the movie a whole different flavor, blending wonder with emotional depth. Now that I think about it, almost every *Doraemon* movie carried some emotional turning point that pulled you in and made it unforgettable.



"Got my attitude and sass from them."

These movies also gave animators the chance to experiment with different art styles. If you've noticed, many *Doraemon* movies switch up the animation style compared to the regular show. That's unlike, say, *Studio Ghibli* films, which maintain a consistent look across their works. With *Doraemon*, you could feel the animators enjoying the freedom to play with style while still telling stories with the same characters. A great example is *Doraemon: Stand By Me* – instead of the traditional hand-drawn animation, it used 3D models. That choice made it stand out completely from the rest of the franchise – not just visually, but also emotionally (let's be honest, it wrecked us all in the best way). The movies were also super outside the box ideas, like as I see it from another perspective the amount of thought and creativity that went in, to make movie plots are genuinely crazy, and they get crazier when you watch them as a kid.



And that brings me to something I can't ignore: the social stigma around cartoons. There's always been this idea that "cartoons are solely for kids," and honestly, it bothers me. Cartoons are a medium, a way of expressing emotion, culture, stories, and ideas. They're often the spark of creativity for both children and adults, inspiring countless imaginations and even bringing families together. To be honest, when I'm at my lowest, watching *Pokémon* picks me right back up and keeps me going. Cartoons aren't bound by age – the whole point is that anyone can enjoy them. There's a reason movies are rated "5+" or "7+" instead of just "for age 5" or "for age 7." They're meant to be for everyone.

"I remember rewatching some movies, and it gave me the same goosebumps when I was 7."

So let this be your sign to go back and watch one of your favorite cartoon movies – or even check out the ones you missed because you "grew up" and stopped paying attention. Feeding that inner child once in a while isn't silly – it's necessary. Childhood nostalgia is one of the strongest emotions we carry, and it deserves to be cherished. Because the truth is, nostalgia never dies only the inner child does, unless you keep it alive.



Meet The Team

To love life, to love it even
When you have no stomach for it
And everything you've held dear
Crumbles like burnt paper in your hands,
Your throat filled with the silt of it.

*An excerpt from, The Thing Is
by Ellen Bass*

Glossary

adoration

noun (a · duh · ray · shn)

deep love and respect.

arduous

adjective (aa · dyoo · uhs)

involving or requiring strenuous effort; difficult and tiring.

emblem

noun (em · bluhm)

a heraldic device or symbolic object as a distinctive badge of a nation, organisation, or family.

insurmountable

adjective (in · suh · mawnt · uh · bl)

too great to be overcome.

imbued

verb (im · byood)

inspire or permeate with (a feeling or quality).

longevity

noun (lawn · jev · uh · tee)

long life.

lustre

noun (luss · tuh)

a gentle sheen or soft glow.

memorabilia

noun (meh · muh · ruh · bi · lee · uh)

objects kept or collected because of their associations with memorable people or events.

propulsor

noun (proh · puhl · sir)

a mechanical device that gives propulsion.

regalia

noun (ruh · gay · lee · uh)

the emblems or insignia of royalty, especially the crown, sceptre, and other ornaments used at a coronation.

sacraments

noun (sa · kruh · muhnts)

the consecrated elements of the Eucharist, especially the bread or Host.

sanctimonious

adjective (sangk · tuh · moh · nee · uhs)

making a show of being morally superior to other people.

tactile

adjective (tak · tile)

of or connected with the sense of touch.

tantalising

verb (tan · tuh · lye · zing)

torment or tease (someone) with the sight or promise of something that is unobtainable.

unscathed

adjective (uhn · skaydhd)

without suffering any injury, damage, or harm.

GAZETTE

INDIAN SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY