

## Press Release

### Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit addressed in release of book titled "An Unlikely Chemistry", at Chennai on 23.04.2018

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit addressed in release of book titled "An Unlikely Chemistry" written by Dr. S. Krishnaswamy, it is a autobiography of a couple, namely the author and his wife Dr. Mohana Krishnaswamy.

As a documentary film maker, Dr. S. Krishnaswamy obviously knows how to grab your attention with a winning title, and I congratulate him first on that score.

This is the story of a couple who combined their patriotism with passion for history and filmmaking. They have together made some outstanding documentary films on Indian heritage and culture. The book describes in detail the trials and tribulations faced by them during the production of their purposeful films over more than half a century.

The book conveys how Indian culture has been a perennial river of wisdom and in a way deals with the state of the nation in the last five decades. This complicated web is woven into a symphony and finds its conclusion on a philosophical note with a commentary on the nation's future and that of the world. The author also provides a comprehensive narrative of eye witness accounts of recent historical events apart from his interpreting history both ancient and contemporary. In short it is an amazing book on a wide variety of topics covering the tapestry of Indian society, written in a highly readable manner. Krishnaswamy's research paper on Culture as Political Phenomena presented at the Washington Institute of Values, USA in 1986, which is

reproduced in the present book, explores also the special relationship between society and cinema in India.

Talking of autobiographies one is tempted to see if Gandhiji's autobiography 'My Experiments with Truth' had any impact on Dr. Krishnaswamy, when he started writing this book. In the book he quotes a conversation with his wife where he says "I tried to impress on her that parents are really trustees of children – trusteeship assigned by God – and that we could pretend to be angry, but we should not really get angry with them at all. The pretention would keep us cool while conveying the intended message to the youngsters." The author goes on to say in his book how this concept was imbibed by them from Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography.

The desire to project a proper picture of India to the world was what inspired Dr. Krishnaswamy to start making documentary films. During his student days in New York, the screening of a prejudiced American documentary on India angered him so much that he vowed to make films reflecting the true culture of India. And so began his career of commitment in 1963. His wife Mohana joined him some years later in this pursuit, giving up a promising career as an Ayurveda scientist who was going to be recognized internationally for her pioneering research for combating cancer.

Dr. S. Krishnaswamy's father was the great film director K. Subramanyam, who can be considered as a father figure of Tamil cinema. Director K. Subramanyam's contribution was that he made socially relevant and artistically significant films and also provided visionary leadership to the Tamil film world and its members.

I am happy to note the themes of television films and serials made by Krishnaswamy Associates. The films on the Indian Renaissance between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and a serial on the role of Tamil Nadu in India's freedom struggle are outstanding and deserve our fullest praise. Krishnaswamy Associates has also made several biographical films on nationalist leaders like

Rajaji, Kamaraj, R. Venkataraman and C. Subramaniam. Biographical films on Ramana Maharishi and Swami Vivekananda will serve as shining examples of his film making capabilities for generations to come.

The Krishnaswamys have also made television serials based on both contemporary fiction and the ancient epics. Their important serials include the Hindi serial based on the Tamil twin epics Silappathigaaram and Manimegalai and Hindi serials based on novels and short stories of classic Tamil authors including the Gnanpeeth award winner Jayakanthan. They have made TV serials featuring over 100 classical dancers from all over India representing many styles of Indian dance.

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times and always with the same person. Mutual respect and a healthy dose of admiration and the ability to give and take are, I suppose, what make a successful marriage work. In the case of the author and his wife I notice that in addition to just living through life as husband and wife, the team work has also been remarkable. Surely, Dr. Krishnaswamy and Dr. Mohana Krishnaswamy stand out as an example for the institution of marriage, which is one of the pillars of our culture.

Indian culture has developed over more than five thousand years. It has overcome challenges in the form of invasions and wars, migration and intermixing of peoples and onslaught of science and trade and the penetration of thought processes from all over the world. The greatness lies in the ability of Indian culture to retain its identity overcoming all these challenges.

During the last six months I have noticed that Tamil culture represents the best of Indian culture in that it carries forward the inheritances of the past without contamination and confusion by only making the necessary corrections. That is why Tamil literature, Tamil dance and music and Tamil drama have gained a place of international recognition.

I am sure all of you are aware that Chennai was recently included in the Creative Cities Network of UNESCO for its contributions to music. Only two other cities, namely Jaipur and Varanasi are in the same league.

It is heartening that people like Dr. Krishnaswamy have held aloft the banner of Indian Culture. It has been their sense of pride about it and their understanding of the greatness of Indian culture that has made them do this. By producing documentary films reflecting the best examples of Indian culture Dr. Krishnaswamy and Dr. Mohana Krishnaswamy have made a contribution that will remain alive for many more centuries and be the inspiration for succeeding generations.

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Raj Bhavan, Chennai

23.04.2018

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