

Dwarkadas N. Sampat (1884-1958) *Kohinoor Film Company*

In 1920, *Sampat* founded the Kohinoor Film Company, and went on to become a legend. Not least because he had a pet tiger! He introduced wooden sets, doing away with the painted sceneries of the past.

He made 98 films between 1919-1929. Some of them:

In 1920 - *Vikram Urvashi*.

The film starred *Leena Valentine*, who was billed as the 'blue-eyed fairy of the screen.' During intermission, *Valentine* would appear on stage!

In 1921 -

- *Anusuya*.

The actress *Sakinabai* appeared nude in the film, but the censors allowed it!

- *Bhakta Vidur*.

The film was banned in Hyderabad (Sind) because the protagonist bore a strong resemblance to *Mahatma Gandhi*. The District Magistrate of Karachi ordered the ban, saying "it is likely to excite disaffection against the government and incite people to non-cooperation."

In 1923 - a fire at the studio destroyed negatives of the company's films. However, artistes and technicians were most cooperative and Eastman Kodak willingly granted further credit for raw film stock.

In 1924 - *Kala Nag*.

In 1925 - *Handsome Blackguard*.

In 1926 - *Telephone Girl*.

With the advent of sound, the studio faded into history

SOURCE

So Many Cinemas.

Author - B.D. Garga

Publishers - Eminence Designs Private Limited.

Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema.

Author - Ashish Rajadhyaksha and Paul Willemen

Publishers - Oxford University Press.