

“A lot of architects worldwide know about Chandigarh. It’s like a pilgrimage point for any young architect.”

Manu Rewal on his documentary, Le Corbusier in India

interviewed by Amitabh Revi and Nidhi Razdan on **N.D.T.V. , 22.07.01**

Why did you choose architecture as the theme?

Well, first of all, there are very few films on architecture. I was born in a family where everyone is an architect. So it was a natural choice in a way. But I was also quite curious about it. I had done a lot of theatre, a lot of studies on art, so I got interested in it when I came back after my studies in Europe.

Your latest project in India—Le Corbusier in India, could you tell us more about that?

Actually, I had done a series for Doordarshan at one time and one of the films was on Chandigarh. It was a half-hour film and it didn’t quite satisfy me, because in a half-an-hour film, you can’t really go much in depth. I thought I could go to France and see what they had over there, about this whole experience of Corbusier in India. And it was a very important thing, because that was his most important work, and it’s not very well known outside India and within India also, it’s not very well known. So, I thought it would be nice to get into it, and it was really interesting.

Many people would say architecture is a very passive and dull subject. How do you make sure that your documentaries are different and in fact, make architecture more appealing and eye-catching

Well I look at it from different angles; from the point of view of the user, from the point of view of the architect, from the point of view also of the symbolic value of a building for everyone. For example, in the buildings in Chandigarh, it was the capital city; we had the parliament, which has to represent democracy. And how do you represent democracy ? Le Corbusier found a really original solution for that problem and I think it’s been an inspiration for architects ever since. A lot architects worldwide know about Chandigarh. It’s like a pilgrimage point for any young architect. The solutions

he gave were brilliant. But we don't know about it, and that's why I made the film, because it's good that people get to know about these things. We live within architecture; architecture is around you and yet we don't see it. And it influences us in many ways, may be unconsciously we feel it, but if we are conscious about it, then its value increases even more.

And how conscious are you about the fact that most, if not all your films make an entry into film festivals. How important is that for a film ?

I think it's very important, because first of all, from an artistic point of view, you get to see other filmmakers' work. And if it is international, it's even better, because then you have perspectives from different countries and different ways of the making films and then from a business point of view also, it's very important because you realize that in some countries, there are big television companies which are giving a lot of money to their film makers to do these kind of films, and in other countries, you have to scrounge for the money So having international contacts can help you.

Mr. Rewal , thanks very much for joining us

Manu Rewal, interviewed by Amitabh Revi and Nidhi Razdan on N.D.T.V.
22.07.01