



BACK BEAT  
FILMMAKERS  
WEIGH IN  
ON THE USE  
OF AI IN  
ALTERING  
FILM CLIMAX  
P4

# 'Songs on OTT are more narrative-driven and less formulaic'

Niharika Lal

The last few years have seen some of the most loved songs and soundtracks emerge from OTT platforms. Over the past three to four years, streaming has radically shifted India's music landscape – creating a global audience not just for Indian series and films, but for music too. Whether it's a

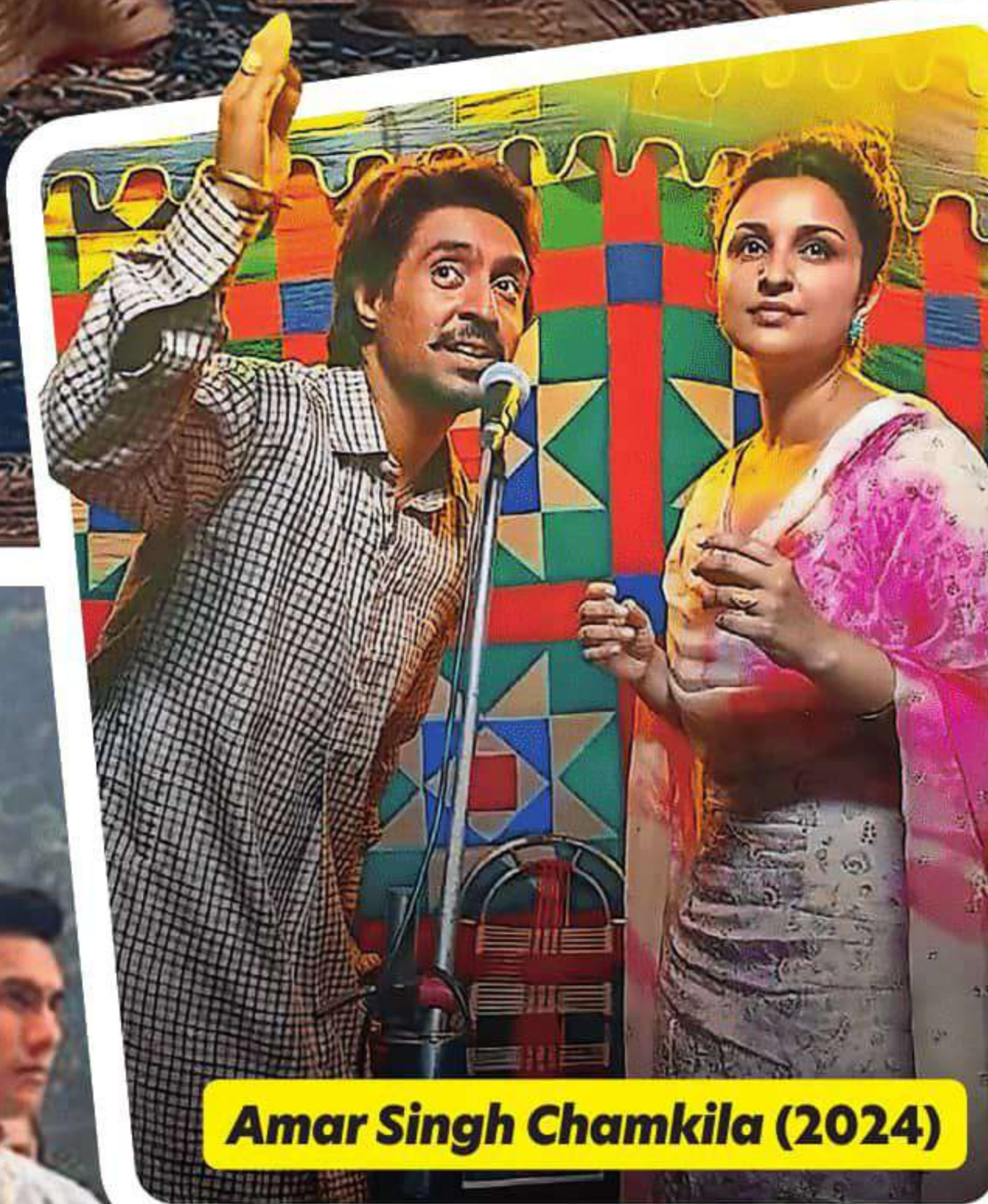


livesong in *Amar Singh Chamkila* (2024), a 17-track classical album in *Bandish Bandits*, or the grand compositions of *Heeramandi* (2024), original songs are being written into the scripts and built into the arcs. **'MUSIC CREATES AN EMOTIONAL BRIDGE TO THE STORY'** "What we're seeing is an exciting duality – Indian music is becoming more global and more grounded at the same time. There's an appetite for Indian soundscapes that are emotionally rich and nuanced," says Monika Shergill, VP, Content, Netflix India. She adds, "Music does more than entertain – it creates an emotional bridge to the story. For many, it's the first touchpoint with a title. It sparks curiosity, builds recall, and draws new viewers in."

CONTINUED ON P4



Bandish Bandits S2



Amar Singh Chamkila (2024)

What really excites me about today's music, especially through films and streaming platforms, is the freedom to explore. There's a shift happening – songs are becoming more narrative-driven, more emotionally nuanced, and less bound by formulas

– Mohit Chauhan

## Buzzstop

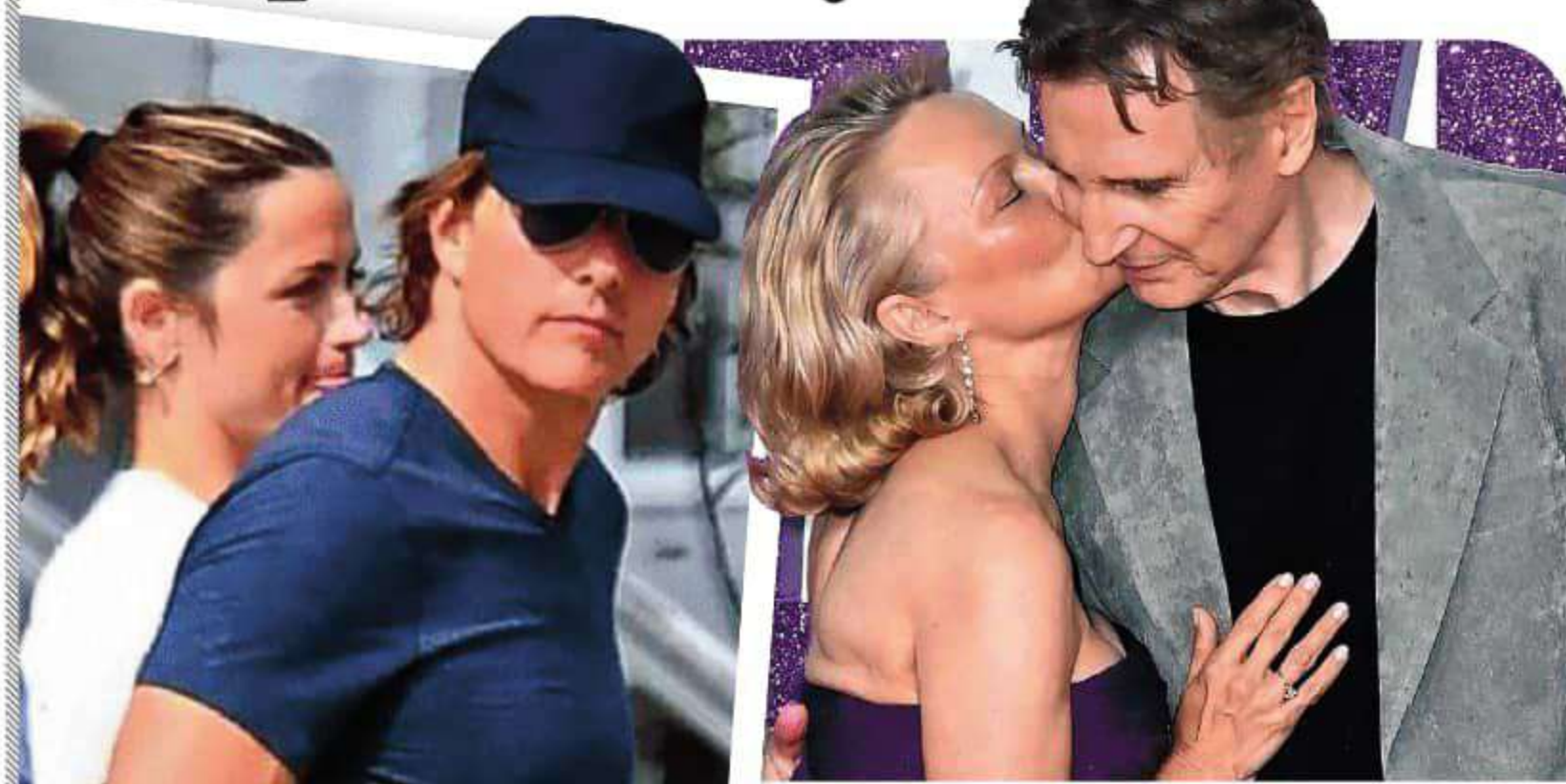
### COURT SEEKS RHEA'S RESPONSE TO CBI CLOSURE REPORT ON SUSHANT'S DEATH CASE

A Mumbai court has issued a notice to **Rhea Chakraborty**, seeking her response to the closure report filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in Sushant Singh Rajput's death case. The CBI submitted its closure report in March, clearing Rhea and all others named in the two FIRs.



PTI

## Are they dating? Definitely, maybe, reportedly



Liam Neeson and Pamela Anderson

In the past 24 hours, three celeb dating rumours have taken over the internet – Liam Neeson and Pamela Anderson, Justin Trudeau and Katy Perry, and Ana de Armas and Tom Cruise. While Ana and Tom appeared to confirm what had only been speculated until now with a hand-in-hand outing, newly divorced Katy Perry's dinner with ex Canadian PM Justin Trudeau was a pairing no one saw coming. Meanwhile, Liam Neeson (73) and Pamela Anderson (58) are reportedly "enjoying each other's company."



Tom Cruise spotted with Ana de Armas



Katy Perry spotted with Justin Trudeau

## Shekhar Kapur unveils first-ever AI-backed Indian series



Shekhar Kapur has stepped into the world of artificial intelligence with *Warlord*, an Indian science fiction series created entirely using AI tools – from concept development to character design and visual execution.

AI will create more human-like stars. Actors are going to be just actors, because AI will create stars going ahead. And I can create a star using AI and have my copyright

– Shekhar Kapur at Waves in May

### A collaborative storytelling ecosystem

As reported by *Variety*, Kapur's vision extends far beyond traditional storytelling. He plans to make the series' production design and characters available for others to use, creating what he calls "a rainforest of ideas." Users can adapt elements from *Warlord* for their own projects, with the stipulation that they pay one cent per use and make their creations open source for others to build upon. "The whole idea is that great stories can become their own platforms," Kapur says, adding, "They don't need to be hosted by another platform."

@khushikapoor



Khushi Kapoor

## ACCEPTANCE VS CONTRADICTION

# Cosmetic tweaks are Gen Z's latest obsession

Toshiro Agarwal

In a recent interview with us, actress Khushi Kapoor spoke about undergoing cosmetic procedures. "Yes, I have changed my looks. I don't think going under the knife for your looks is such a big deal. I am going to live my life the way I want to," she said. Kylie Jenner, too, spoke about her breast augmentation on social media in June. In doing this, the young celebs inadvertently opened Pandora's box, highlighting Gen Z's thoughts on cosmetic procedures. While the generation champions acceptance in every form, the rising trend of getting cosmetic procedures done deflects from that core belief.

CONTINUED ON P3



I haven't changed every single thing about my face

## #TalkingPoint

### Gen Z's on a glitzy quest for 'eternal youth'

3.4%

Increase in cosmetic surgery procedures globally among Gen Z, in 2024

76%

Gen Z women agree that maintaining their appearance is a key priority

51%

Gen Z men have dedicated beauty and grooming routines

₹340 crore

Anti-ageing market size by 2033, fueled by Indian Gen Z

Injectables are often seen as a shortcut, but without a proper skincare foundation, results are short-lived

— Dr Ajay Rana, dermatologist & aesthetic physician

### Prejuvenation: Gen Z's secret to staying youthful

(According to Mastermind Behaviour Services, Mintel Research, IMARC)



Kylie Jenner



# Can self-worth be built through needles?



Shruti Haasan

Shruti Haasan on fillers and getting her nose fixed: It hurt, but if I could make it prettier, why wouldn't I?

Many bring pictures of influencers that have been edited to look like the features they want to copy. This trend shows how digital edits set unrealistic beauty standards, which is why it's so important to get professional help to set realistic, natural-looking goals

— Dr Pradeep Kumar Singh, head, Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery at a Gurugram-based hospital

## Social media— the new mirror

Social media plays a huge role in this shift. Filters have blurred the line between real and retouched, creating a kind of beauty ideal that feels both aspirational and achievable with a little help. On the condition of anonymity, a 24-year-old woman who recently got lip fillers, shared, "I didn't do this to impress anyone. I just wanted a bit of fullness. It wasn't a big deal for me." She's not alone, as most of her friends have either considered it or have had something done already. In cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru, it's no longer a taboo, but a choice. However, not everyone is jumping in on the trend yet. "I haven't done it yet. Maybe someday, I will. But I don't feel any less because I haven't," said Asfi Javed, a 25-year-old Mumbai-based influencer. Is this wave of quiet cosmetic tweaks just about appearance? Experts say that it's often about control and not just vanity. Dr Ajay Rana, dermatologist & aesthetic physician, and founder-director of a cosmetology and aesthetic medicine training institute, added, "There's been a noticeable trend among those in their early 20s. Many are influenced by social media filters, celebrity culture, and the desire for instant results. They want to look natural with glowing skin, minimal texture, and defined features without looking overdone."

## Beyond The Botox: India's Growing Potential For Aesthetic Surgeries Propelled by Gen Zers

Gen Z is saying 'yes' to Botox and plastic surgery

CONTINUED FROM R 1

### From filtered faces to real-life fillers

Not too long ago, cosmetic procedures like Botox and lip fillers were kept under wraps and mainly reserved for celebrities or the uber-rich. Today, the story is different. Scroll through Instagram or catch a conversation in a cafe, especially among Gen Zers, and chances are that you'll hear words like Botox, fillers, jawline, and lip flips tossed around casually. "They don't see these procedures as big changes, like the older generations. However, too many procedures can make you look unnatural. So, before getting any, it's important to get healthy advice, set realistic goals, and make sure that your overall health is a priority," said Dr Pradeep Kumar Singh, head of Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery at a Gurugram-based hospital.



Lip enhancement didn't fix me, it just helped me stop fighting the mirror. I didn't do it for trends or validation. I did it because I finally chose to show up for myself, the way I've always wanted to

— A 24-year-old, who didn't want to be named



Cosmetic treatments aren't about vanity — they're a quiet response to a world that constantly says, 'You're not enough.' It's less about chasing perfection and more about wanting to feel seen, safe, and accepted

— Dr Malini Saba, psychologist and advocate for women and girls



### More than skin deep

What's raising concern is how early Gen Z is getting exposed to cosmetic tweaks, and it's this balance between acceptance and autonomy that's at the heart of this growing trend. Psychologists share that this new norm may be masking something deeper. "Fixing your face is seen as self-care. But underneath that is a discomfort... Self-worth can't be built through needles and filters. If it could, we'd be seeing more joy. We're seeing more anxiety, comparison, and disconnection," said Dr Malini Saba, psychologist and advocate for women and girls.

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