

: SPOTLIGHT

LAKSHMY VENKITESWARAN

Sen 'N' Sensibility



Vino Kutt

One of the connoisseurs of artistic cinema in India, Aparna Sen made her directorial debut with *36 Chowringhee Lane* more than two decades ago. As a yesteryear actress in commercial cinema, it is a surprise that she has never made a commercial film herself. "Nobody makes a film for it to fail. With all due respect to the movies I acted in, I was bored doing the same stuff and the reason I became a director was to make different movies. But, if I make a movie purely to make money, it would be like Bush going to war to make peace!" she quips. Have you faced any problems as a woman director? "Absolutely not! I think that's a very journalistic question and you journalists are disappointed when I say no. Our film fraternity is made out of some very strong people. If you

are sure about what you want and tell them what you need, and especially if the order is from the director, they'll do it with no questions asked. Only if you are unsure, you'll be in trouble." In almost all her films, Sen has never used the popular Bollywood stars. "I have never been lucky with stars. I'm comfortable working with my team of actors and why shouldn't I? They are committed, flexible in their dates and extremely co-operative." She abhors being called a feminist and says she has never had an identity crisis. "But I believe that women make much better bosses than men. We are more sensitive, and at the same time, we are stern when we have to be. And due to our experience with the men in our lives, we know to chide our employees without hurting their egos." Touché!