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# Guide to the Mrinal Sen Papers 1959-2020



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## Descriptive Summary

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.SENM
<b>Title</b>	Sen, Mrinal. Papers
<b>Date</b>	1959-2020
<b>Size</b>	3.5 linear feet (7 boxes)
<b>Repository</b>	Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

**Abstract** Mrinal Sen (1923-2018) was a producer and director of the parallel cinema movement in India and Bangladesh. The collection contains papers and press clippings, including those about the damage to and restoration of his early films. Included in the collection are photographs, correspondence, and documents for Gita Shome Sen, an actress and wife of Mrinal Sen as well as some correspondence of his son, Kunal Sen. The documents and correspondence in this collection are written primarily in English and Bengali.

## Information on Use

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Sen, Mrinal. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

## Biographical Note

Mrinal Sen was born on May 14, 1923 in Faridpur, East Bengal, India (Bangladesh) to Dinesh Sen and Sarajubala (Tuli) Sen. He attended college in Calcutta (Kolkata) before working as a journalist, audio technician, and several other jobs. He made his first films in the 1950s and at that time he also married actress Gita Shome, who appeared in several of his movies.

He was active in the political issues of the time and many of the films he wrote, directed, or produced illustrate his political and social concerns. His films are largely known as realistic portrayals, usually of middle class characters, and some of his most famous films feature the city of Calcutta (Kolkata). The style of his films and the films of other contemporaries such as

Satyajit Ray became known as “new wave” or “parallel cinema” to contrast them with Bollywood films. His films achieved much acclaim both domestically and internationally and were shown in Venice, Cannes, and Berlin among other venues.

Sen and the films he made earned many international awards before he retired from filmmaking in the early 2000s. While filmmaking, he also served as an honorary Member of the Indian Parliament from 1998 to 2003.

Mrinal Sen died of a heart attack on December 30, 2018, in Kolkata.

#### Filmography:

- Raat Bhore (1955)
- Neel Akasher Neechey (1959)
- Baishey Shravana (1960)
- Punascha (1961)
- Abasheshe (1963)
- Pratinidhi (1964)
- Akash Kusum (1965)
- Matira Manisha (1966)
- Bhuvan Shome (1969)
- Interview (1971)
- Ek Adhuri Kahani (1971)
- Calcutta 71 (1972)
- Padatik (1973)
- Chorus (1974)
- Mrigayaa (1976)
- Oka Oori Katha (1977)

- Parashuram (1978)
- Ek Din Pratidin (1979)
- Akaler Sandhane (1980)
- Chalchitra (1981)
- Kharij (1982)
- Khandhar (1983)
- Genesis (1986)
- Kabhi Door Kabhi Paas (1986-87)
- Ek Din Achanak (1989)
- Mahaprithibi (1991)
- Antareen (1993)
- Aamaar Bhuvan (2002)

### **Scope Note**

The collection is divided into four series: Series I: Papers; Series II: Film and Public Career Documents; Series III: Photographs; and Series IV: Awards.

The documents and correspondence in this collection are written primarily in English and Bengali. The collection contains papers and press clippings, including those about the damage to and restoration of his early films. Included in the collection are photographs, correspondence, and documents for Gita Shome Sen, an actress and wife of Mrinal Sen as well as some correspondence of his son, Kunal Sen. Dated materials range from 1959 to 2020 with the bulk of the material dating from 1970 to 2002. Brief English summaries of Bengali documents in this collection are available. Please see Special Collections staff for more information.

### **Subject Headings**

- Sen, Mrinal, 1923-2018
- Sen, Gita, 1930-
- Sen, Kunal
- Motion picture producers and directors -- India
- Motion pictures--India--History

### **INVENTORY**

## **Series I: Papers**

This series includes passports, personal correspondence, and other assorted materials from Mrinal Sen, Gita Shome Sen, and Kunal Sen. The series is divided into four subseries: 1) Mrinal Sen Documents, 2) Mrinal Sen Correspondence, 3) Gita Shome Sen Papers, and 4) Kunal Sen Papers.

Subseries 1, Mrinal Sen Documents, includes writing and compositions, often photocopies, of movie ideas, speeches, and contributions to various monographs or newspapers. Also included are several old passports and information for events in which Sen participated such as a centenary celebration of Charlie Chaplain in 1989 and a visit to Calcutta [Kolkata] by Pete Seeger in 1996. This subseries contains materials or copies of materials dating from 1970 to 2012.

Subseries 2, Mrinal Sen Correspondence, consists of materials primarily dated from 1980 to 2018 and often present in the collection as a fax or photocopy. The subseries contains correspondence that documents some of Sen's activity as a film director, commentator, and a public figure, as well as his reactions to world and national events.

Subseries 3, Gita Shome Sen Papers, consists primarily of handwritten correspondence on the original papers, primarily dating from 1972-1996. Also included in this subseries are a bank account ledger book, her old passports, and a photocopy of a news article about her career as an actress.

Subseries 4, Kunal Sen Papers, consists primarily of correspondence from 1991-2019 by and to Mrinal Sen's son, Kunal Sen. Many of the papers are letters of condolence on the passing of his father in 2018. Also included are an undated address composed by Kunal Sen and some fragments of research drafted for his father.

### **Subseries 1: Mrinal Sen Documents**

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 1**

Mrinal Sen, compositions, speeches, film proposals, book chapters, 1970-2012

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 2**

Charlie Chaplin centenary event, 1989

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 3**

Pete Seeger visit, 1996

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 4**

Cartoon portrait of Mrinal Sen, color photocopy, undated

#### **Box 1**

##### **Folder 5**

Mrinal Sen passports, 1971-2003

### **Subseries 2: Mrinal Sen Correspondence**

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Mrinal Sen correspondence, 1980-1999

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

Mrinal Sen correspondence, 2000-2018

**Subseries 3: Gita Shome Sen Papers**

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**

Gita Shome Sen correspondence, 1972-1996

**Box 1**

**Folder 9**

Gita Shome Sen photocopies of press clippings, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 10**

Gita Shome Sen passports, 1982-2003

**Box 1**

**Folder 11**

Gita Shome Sen account ledger, 1971-1983

**Subseries 4: Kunal Sen Papers**

**Box 1**

**Folder 12**

Kunal Sen speeches, compositions, copy of the 2019 obituary for Mrinal Sen read out to the West Bengal Assembly, c. 2007-2019

**Box 1**

**Folder 13**

Kunal Sen correspondence, 1991-2019

**Series II: Film and Public Career Documents**

This series contains press clippings or photocopies of press clippings, copies of the screenplays, and promotional materials, primarily for Mrinal Sen's films dating from 1976 - 2020. The series is divided into three subseries: 1) Press Clippings, 2) Film Scripts, and 3) Promotional Materials.

Subseries 1, Press Clippings, is comprised of press clippings dating from 1976 to 2020, primarily photocopies, from various publications around the world in which Mrinal Sen was interviewed or his work was mentioned. Also included are some published pieces written by Mrinal Sen.

Subseries 2, Film Scripts, contains a few original scripts as well as translations of the scripts for films from c. 1976-1989, primarily into French or English. Films include Khandhar (The Ruins), Annweshan (The Search), Mrigayaa (La Proie), Ek Din Pratidin, Portrait of an Average Man, Ek Din Achanak, and The Funeral. Most of the scripts are photocopies or reprints, possibly for subtitles or dubbing.

Subseries 3, Promotional Materials, consists of a single folder of programs, flyers, and ticket stubs, and other ephemera for Mrinal Sen's films and other public events from c. 1976 - 2010.

### **Subseries 1: Press Clippings**

**Box 1**

**Folder 14**

Press Clippings, 1960-1979

**Box 1**

**Folder 15**

Press Clippings, 1980-1985

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Press Clippings, 1986-1989

**Box 2**

**Folder 2**

Press Clippings for Genesis, c. 1986-1988

**Box 2**

**Folder 3**

Press Clippings for Genesis, c. 1986-1988

**Box 2**

**Folder 4**

Press Clippings, 1990-1994

**Box 2**

**Folder 5**

Press Clippings, 1995-1999

**Box 2**

**Folder 6**

Press Clippings, 2000-2005

**Box 2**

**Folder 7**

Press Clippings, 2006-2009

**Box 2**

**Folder 8**

Press Clippings, 2010-2012

**Box 2**

**Folder 9**

Press Clippings, 2013-2017

**Box 3**

**Folder 1**

Press Clippings, 2018-2020

**Box 3**

**Folder 2**

Press Clippings, undated

### **Subseries 2: Film scripts**



**Box 3**

**Folder 3**

Khandhar, scripts and translations, c. 1984-1989

**Box 3**

**Folder 4**

Annweshan, undated

**Box 3**

**Folder 5**

Mrigayaa, c. 1976

**Box 3**

**Folder 6**

Ek Din Pratidin, c. 1980

**Box 3**

**Folder 7**

Portrait of an Average Man, c. 1984

**Box 3**

**Folder 8**

Ek Din Achanak, c. 1989

**Box 3**

**Folder 9**

Genesis, c. 1986

**Box 3**

**Folder 10**

The Funeral, undated

**Subseries 3: Promotional Materials**

**Box 3**

**Folder 11**

Promotional materials, c. 1976-2010

**Series III: Photographs**

This series contains photograph prints of Sen, his family, and his work.

Subseries 1, Filmmaking Photographs, contains film stills, photographs used in location research, and photographs of Sen and the film crews and actors on locations or sets, c. 1959-2002.

Subseries 2, Personal and travel photographs, contains photograph prints from Sen's travels as well as photographs with family members and other unidentified people, almost all undated but most probably date from 1960-2005.

**Subseries 1: Filmmaking photographs**

**Box 3**

**Folder 12**

Short films, Baishey Shravana, Punascha, Aboseshe, Protinidhi, Neel Akasher Neechey, c. 1959-1964

**Box 3**

**Folder 13**

Matira Manusha and Akash Kusum, c. 1965-1966

**Box 3**

**Folder 14**

Bhuva Shome, c. 1969

**Box 3**

**Folder 15**

Ek Adhori Kahani, c. 1971

**Box 3**

**Folder 16**

The Interview, c. 1971

**Box 3**

**Folder 17**

Calcutta 71, c. 1971-1972

**Box 3**

**Folder 18**

Padatik, c. 1973

**Box 4**

**Folder 1**

Chorus, c. 1974

**Box 4**

**Folder 2**

Mrigaya, c. 1976

**Box 4**

**Folder 3**

Oka Oorie Katha, c. 1977

**Box 4**

**Folder 4**

Parashuram, c. 1978

**Box 4**

**Folder 5**

Ek Din Pratidin, c. 1980

**Box 4**

**Folder 6**

Aakeler Sandhane, c. 1980

**Box 4**

**Folder 7**

Chalchitra, c. 1981

**Box 4**

**Folder 8**

Kharij, c. 1982

**Box 4**

**Folder 9**

Tasveer Apri Apri, c. 1984

**Box 4**

**Folder 10**

Khandhar, c. 1984

**Box 4**

**Folder 11**

Genesis, c. 1986

**Box 4**

**Folder 12**

Kabhi Door, Kabhi Paas, c. 1986-1987

**Box 4**

**Folder 13**

Ek Din Achanak, c. 1989

**Box 4**

**Folder 14**

Mahaprithibi, c. 1991

**Box 4**

**Folder 15**

Antareen, c. 1993

**Box 5**

**Folder 1**

Amar Bhuban, c. 2002

**Box 5**

**Folder 2**

Research Photos, undated

**Box 5**

**Folder 3**

Working stills, mostly undated, c. 1955-2002

**Box 5**

**Folder 4**

Photograph stills from Ten Days in Calcutta by Reinhard Hauff, c. 1987

**Subseries 2: Personal and Travel Photographs**

**Box 5**

**Folder 5**

Portraits of Mrinal Sen, mostly undated, c. 1970-2002

**Box 5**

**Folder 6**

2nd International Film Festival in Dhaka, 1993

**Box 5**

**Folder 7**

Travel photos South India, 1964 and Tashkent, Moscow, and Helsinki, c. 1965

**Box 5**

**Folder 8**

Sochi (Russia) and "location hunting", undated

**Box 5**

**Folder 9**

Photos with others, undated, c. 1955-2010

**Box 5**

**Folder 10**

Photos with others, undated, c. 1955-2010

**Box 5**

**Folder 11**

Photos of Gita (Shome) Sen, undated

**Box 5**

**Folder 12**

Oversized prints, undated, c. 1955-2010

**Series IV: Awards**

This series contains medals and trophies awarded to Mrinal Sen.

**Box 6**

Laceno D'oro weighted plaque, April 8-14, 1975

**Box 6**

Premio di Selezione for Calcutta '71, Plaque on velvet mount from the 33rd Film Festival, Venice, 1972

**Box 6**

Auguste & Louis Lumiere - Cinematographe, short metal trophy on green marble base, undated [c. 1995?]

**Box 6**

Padma Bhushan medal in wooden case, c. 2005

**Box 6**

Blue velvet case containing a metal for the Ordre des Artes et des Lettres (Republique Francaise), c. 1985 and the Award of Friendship medal (From the Russian Federation, written in Cyrillic, numbered 5809), c. 2000

**Box 7**

Gold Hugo Award trophy for The Ruins/Khandhar from the Chicago International Film Festival, 1984

**Box 7**

Bronze Hugo Award trophy for Kharij from the Chicago International Film Festival, c. 1983 (plaque is missing, information supplied with a note)