PRODUCTION HISTORY

The planning and completion of Kalpana took four years. It was shot entirely in Gemini Studios at Madras. Uday Shankar, a tireless teacher, personally trained every bit-player to dance.

For a first (and only) film by a dancer who also plays the lead role, Kalpana shows an amazing grasp of cinematic form. Uday Shankar's accurate compositions and use of movement within them are breathtakingly original. Here dance is not a mere addition to the other attractions of the film but it is integrated into the very fabric of what is almost a new cinematic form.

The film ran for 25 weeks in Calcutta, but failed elsewhere. Audiences found it too esoteric, too abstract. Furthermore, in the narrative sections Uday and Amala's performances did not carry much conviction. Untrained as actors, they were both further limited by some language problems (the film being in Hindi while they were both Bengalis).

The film affected Uday Shankar deeply – his career never regained its former glory. But today, over 60 years later, Kalpana stands out as an extraordinary achievement, a unique celebration of the dance form in the history of cinema.

RESTORATION NOTES

Kalpana has been digitally restored by the World Cinema Foundation at Cineteca di Bologna/L'Immagine Ritrovata laboratory using a combined dupe negative and a positive print held at the National Film Archive of India.

The combined dupe negative was badly damaged and marked by lines, tears, dirt, dust, white marks and poor definition. The restoration required a considerable amount of both physical and digital repair in order to recover the beauty of faces, movements and costumes, and to reduce the aforementioned issues. The original sound was digitally transferred from the combined dupe negative. Digital cleaning and background noise reduction was applied.

The restoration has generated a duplicate negative, new optical soundtrack negative for preservation as well as a complete back-up of all the files produced by the digital restoration.