



DIDI CONTRACTOR

aka Delia Kinzinger | Born 12 'Oct 1929-Mineapolis USA | Died - 5 July 2021 Sidbari Dharamsala

She was deeply influenced by the work of famous american architect Frank Lloyd Wright & his organic architecture philosophy. she was married to Narayan Ramji Contractor a civil engineer from erstwhile bombay. A close freind of Iconic singer Kishore Kumar. As her 1st project she designed a small cottage for stalwart of Indian cinema actor n friend whom she knew as papa ji Prithvi Raj Kapoor which later became Indian Film Industry's Avant-Garde Prithivi Theatre in Bombay, The maharana of Mewar Bhagwat Singh commissioned her to repurpose interiors of the famous Udaypur lake palace where James Bond Movie Octopussy was shot. She also designed the sets of "The Guru" a merchant-ivory film starring Michael York. It was a visit to Andretta in 1974 on an invite by Prithviraj Kapoor, that made Didi choose Himachal Pradesh as her home. Andretta is a village and an artists' colony in Himachal Pradesh, which was established in the 1920s, by environmentalist and Irish theatre artiste, Norah Richards. She moved to the beautiful himalayan kingdom, The blessed land of HRH Dalai Lama, Dharamsala HP. Over a period of nearly 30 years, Didi designed and constructed dozens of mud buildings in Kangra, trained and empowered numerous local craftspeople, and imparted her knowledge to hundreds of architecture students from across the country. Some of her most prominent buildings include the Nishtha Rural Health & Education & Environment Centre At Sidhbari Dharamsala run by Dr Barbara Nath Wiser. Dharmalaya Institute for Compassionate Living in Bir for eco-social entrepreneur Mark Moore and the Sambhaavnaa Institute of Public Policy and Politics in Kandbari for public interest lawyer Prashant Bhushan. There were two of the documentaries made on her, didi contractor- Marrying the earth to the building by Swiss filmmaker Steffi Giaracuni and Shabanam Sukhdev's "Earth Crusader" commissioned by the films division ministry of I & B Govt. of India.



Didi designed sets of Ivory-Merchant Film the Guru - 1969



James Bond movie Octopussy was shot at Udaipur Lake Palace repurposed by Didi - 1983



Actor Kabir Bedi and DIFF Director Ritu Tenzin visiting Didi



Raman Siddhartha getting her book signed by Didi



Didi passed her legacy to her favourite student Naresh Sharma



Didi receiving her Wade Asia Lifetime Achievement Award - 2017



President of India awarded Nari Shakti Puruskar - 2019 India's highest Civilian Award



Raman Siddhartha & Manjula Narayan Blessed by her legacy as Kosen Rufu being her final project - 2019.