

#PERSPECTIVE

WE ARE DALI WHY NOT VELASQUEZ OR WARHOL OR PICASSO?

Money Heist has become one of Netflix's most popular non-English shows airing in May 2017 with its new season premiering on 3 September. Some trademarks of the show include the song *Bella Ciao* by Manu Pias and of course, the iconic red jumpsuits and the Dali masks. So what do the masks and red jumpsuits mean?

Revolution and resistance are key themes in the show. The heists are symbolic of resisting the money-centric institutions and making a statement against a capitalist regime. The Salvador Dalí masks are symbolic of resistance and national pride which resonates throughout. Dalí is undoubtedly the most prominent figure of the early 20th century's Surrealist movement, a movement which sought to disrupt the norm. His work and use of symbolic motifs, unusual techniques seeking inspiration, signature flamboyant dandy dressing style, rebellious academic career, are some attributes of artists which had disrupted social norms and conventions. Dalí also often articulated opinions which caused provocation — when he expressed an unusual infatuation with Adolf Hitler, the far left leader of the Surrealist group Andre Breton, quickly expelled him from the society. Being involved in further scandal, Dalí was soon a social outcast and rejected by his family like our bank robbers.

But why Dalí and not any other artist?

Although the Surrealist movement is usually associated with France, Dalí himself was Spanish and had spent quite some time living in Spain. Like all Surrealist art, Dalí's work was inherently rebellious in that it delved into the metaphysical realm of art and the human consciousness. His audacity and rebellious attitude towards art and politics set him apart. Just like the robbers and their red jumpsuits in *Money Heist*, Dalí has become a symbol for revolution.

The red jumpsuits in *Money Heist* are also heavily symbolic. The colour red is bold and often associated with resistance. Being the color of blood it also bears symbolic connotations of violence and passion. Red flags are also commonly associated with revolutionary movements in real-life and in fiction — for example, in *Les Misérables*. In the series, the professor, the mastermind who calls all the shots, states in season 1 that the group is not merely targeting the Royal Mint for the money but it was

an act of "resistance" against "the system." From the very beginning of the show, the robbers' ethos has always revolved around an element of revolution and resistance.

The colour red also bears national weight. The Spanish identity is a compelling aspect of *Money Heist* which makes the series appealing to international audiences. Red is associated with Spain for a myriad of reasons — it is one of the country's two national colors. Folklore suggests that this red in the Spanish flag comes from its national sport of bullfighting. Red is also the color of Spain's signature spices, saffron and paprika. Taking all these connotations into account, the red jumpsuits celebrate the Spanish identity but also stand against the unequal capitalist system.

With the previous season ending on a cliffhanger, part one of *Money Heist* season 5 begins at a breakneck pace, packed with heart-thumping action, shock and awe. If the entire



season keeps the same flow, the finale season of the show is bound to be explosive. In the world of *Money Heist*, time has not only slowed down, but also appears to be frozen. The shots fired in season 4 are now reaching their targets.

Though the first two episodes do not really reveal much about Alicia's motive for pursuing the Professor, we should expect some major surprises. The women are receiving more space in the series with Lisbon now calling all the shots. We still do not know how the new characters — Berlin's son Rafael, Sagasta who is leading the attacking army, and Tokyo's dead boyfriend Rene, will weave into the story. With our bank robbers now more professional and confident, part two releasing on 3 December will only bear more dimension and action.

By Puja Sarkar
 Photo: Collected



#WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Enough with the sexist remarks!

Sexism in a patriarchal society is scattered in amounts, large and small, which eventually create a profound impact little by little. It is like that unwanted drizzle of rain on an otherwise perfectly sunny day.

Incidents of sexism occur unexpectedly, in an instant. But that one moment, one comment, is enough to build agony in a person's mind, which eventually translates into spite. Women are burdened with this negative energy that continues to build up unless channelled out.

It is often difficult to resonate with these statements unless one has been in the receiving end of such remarks.

Unfortunately for women, it something we tend to face every other day in any given setting — at the bank, at the doctor's chamber, at the airport, and the list goes on.

Sharing a recent incident where I was going about my day and expecting to receive my hard-earned pay-check from an international source, I called the bank to know the reason behind its delay. In an instant, my excitement turned into anguish as I was questioned, quoting Mr Banker, "Who sends you money from abroad, does your husband reside there?"

What gives the right to an unknown

serviceperson to go forward with this unnecessary query? Under what rationale does he expect me to answer this question? Why does he automatically assume that women are typically reliant on their partner for finance? Aren't women capable and independent enough to earn on their own, especially in this era?

This incident may seem trivial, but it is just one drop in the ocean. Women everywhere are thrown into the face of such situations more often than we can approximate. It is not the matter of just "one incident," but that last straw which finally breaks our bubble of positivity and

politeness.

We are captivated in a spiral of toxic masculinity that pervasively resides in our ecosystem, where the more we try to dodge such adversities, the more they chase us, constantly challenging our patience. And several women alike echo this sentiment.

While we unanimously dream of a day where we can call sexism a thing of the past, alongside, we work collectively towards enervating dogmatic stereotypes of female subjugation deeply embedded in a patriarchal society.

By Fariha Amber