**Resumé**

**Gajra Kottary**

Gajra was born in Delhi and educated at the Convent of Jesus and Mary and Lady Sri Ram College. She topped the post-graduate course in Journalism at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Delhi, in 1988, and worked briefly as a journalist, at ***The Statesman*** in Delhi and later at the ***Magna*** group. She contributed to several of the country’s newspapers and magazines and also wrote on developmental and women’s issues for ***CHOICES*,** the magazine of ***the United Nations Development Program.***

Gajra debuted as an author in early 1996 with her first collection of women-centric short stories titled ***Fragile Victories,*** followed by another compendium, ***The Last Laugh***. Her debut novel ***Broken Melodies*** was published by ***HarperCollins India Publishers,*** India in 2011, simultaneously with its Hindi translation ***Bikhre Sur.***  Gajra subsequently co-authored her first original Hindi novel, ***Kora Kaagaz***.

Gajra’s second novel ***Once upon a Star*** was released in December 2014 and the third ***Girls Don’t Cry*** was released in June 2017 by ***HarperCollins India*.** The last two have also been released as audio books by the well-known agency ***Storytel***. She has also written two original audio books for ***Storytel,*** one called ***The Perfect Switch***-which released in March 2019 and another which released in February 2020 called **“#Couple Goals”,** voiced by **Soha Ali Khan.** She is currently writing a 10 episode original audio series in Hindi for the same company, scheduled to release in mid 2021.

Gajra’s next is her first non-fiction book called “***Healing at the Movies ”*** co-authored with Ridhi Sarda and to be released in early 2021, published by ***Hay House Publishers.*** Another one, which categorises as historical fiction, is the story of ***Buddha Retold*** to be published around the same time ( mid 2021 ) by ***Hachette India.***

Gajra had stepped into the audio-visual world in the year 1999, by being script associate with ***Mahesh Bhatt*** on a film called ***Ye Zindagi Ka Safar*** and then entered the world of television when she wrote the story and screenplay of the serial ***Hamare Tumhare*** for ***Vishesh Films***, telecast on ***Zee TV.*** This was followed by another weekly serial ***Panaah on DD 1***, followed by her first long running daily of 668 episodes- the award-winning ***Astitva – Ek Prem Kahani,*** telecast on ***Zee TV*** in from 2002-2005***.***

Her next major writing assignment was, to develop the story of the nation’s popular and acclaimed daily television serial ***Balika Vadhu***, on ***Colors****,*from 2008**,** forwhich she completed writing 2,167 episodes on April 12th 2016. The serial was then entered as the longest running Hindi soap on Indian Television in the Limca Book of records 2016. It is a serial that highlighted and took a clear stand against many social evils existent in Indian society, starting with child marriage and has been listed as one of the most iconic shows of all time on Indian television.

Gajra has also written the story for the 55 episode mega historical television serial ***Buddha*** telecast on **Zee TV** in 2013, currently available on **Netflix, produced by Buddha Pictures*.*** She has written many other acclaimed shows including ***Jyoti***, ***Godh Bharai***, ***Ghar Ek Sapna*** and ***Ek Veer ki Ardaas – Veera, Satrangi Sasuraal etc.***

Gajra turned creative producer for two finite shows which were telecast between 2016 and 2017 on ***Zee’s*** ***Zindagi*** channel, called ***TV Ke Uss Paar*** and ***Khwaabon Ki Zameen Par***. The latter was based on her story. Another show based on her concept and story completed its season 2, telecast on ***Voot*** in July 2019, after its successful run on ***Colors.*** It was called ***Silsila…Badallte Rishton Ka.***

Gajra has also written the story for the second season of the serial ***Baarish,*** produced by ***Alt Balaji,*** whichreleased in April 2020. She is currently working on the story for a period digital series to be produced by a major film production housefor ***Netflix***.She currently has on air, a show called ***“Molkki” on Colors at 10 pm*** for whichhas done the theme and broad story, and which isproduced by ***Balaji Telefilms.*** She is also doing the episodic story, along with Ridhi Sarda***,*** for a show called ***Janani*** on a channel called ***Ishara TV*** starting March 1st 2021,which is part of the ***Epic TV group*** along with writing three of her forthcoming novels.

Gajra has won all the major writing awards for television, multiple times, including the ***Indian Television Academy Award, RAPA award, Indian Telly Award, Apsara Award*** and the ***Global Indian Television’s Best Writer Award.***

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