Drama in Bangladesh — Part

RAMA has been the evolution of a creative and artistic expression innate in man and society, since ages untold. From the open amphi-theatres of the Greeks, to the pagan and miracle plays of old England, uptil the Shakespeare theater and Broadway, it has not all been a big roller-coaster ride as it might seem to us sitting in the audience. For drama to arrive as, above all, a form of entertainment, from religious dogmatism and medical didacticism, has required a

course finance. In our country, drama, on stage, on before the camera, is Bombay, failed miserably and of a different dimension altogether. More than just entertainment, it usually tends to provide a means for social understanding and political awareness. I do not think it would be libelous to suggest that drama rarely gets what it justly deserves in Bangladesh. For the uneducated lot who form the majority- going into cinema halls and jatras, and who ironically form more of an audience before the television rather than the people who employ them, the essence of the subject matter being portrayed, is lost. The educated mass is nearly always too busy chasing business ventures, attending meetings and going to dinners; the children are in the realm of Ninja Turtles and the busy housewife somehow makes time to relax before the sereen - with a Hindi movie. Yet, in the world of Star TV Hollywood, Hindi films and MTV, drama, in Bangladesh has survived, appreciably. Overwhelming credit should go to dedicated playwrights,

great inflow of inspiration.

innovation, encouragement,

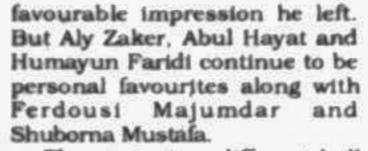
technical progress, and of

directors, producers and a team of extremely talented acting personnel whom one can easily boast of. With a lineup like Humayun Faridi, Abul Hayat, Asaduzaman Noor, Aly Zaker, Shuborna Mustafa, Ferdoust Majumdar etc, it could be sufficient to take on the world. One should not even begin to compare them to Bangladeshi movie stars huge, melodramatic females, either sobbing away, or trying to shake the earth with euphoric thumping (pathetic

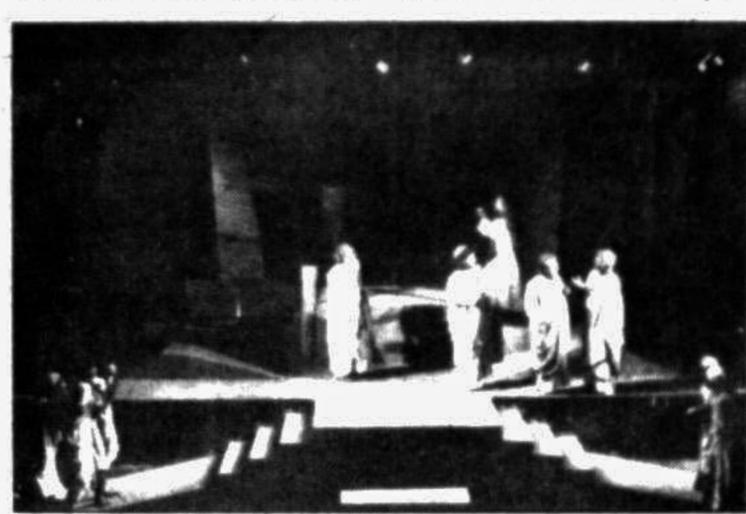
all the same) and weird males with a gory sense of dressing, oscillating between the earth and the villain's head in midair, ten times per secondi The big screen has tried to ape become ludicrous. On the other hand, the small screen has continued to provide us with such memorable events as 'Shokaal Shondha', 'Ayi Shob Din Ratri, 'Bohubrihe' and of course the unforgettable 'Ayomoy', 'Shongshoptok' was an intense drama, with Humayun Faridi at his best (and that in itself is a lot) and Ferdousi Majumdar in a characteristic powerful and awesome role. Romjan and Hurmott have become indelible characters almost like lago and lady Macbeth have 'Oyomoy' was a class apart. The biggest tragedy was that it had to end. I think it was the only Bengali serial for which people left their VCRs running had they been forced to attend a dinner party. Abul Hayat and Asaduzaman Noor gave magnificent performances: in fact the latter's portrayal of character has come to be known as the 'Mirza mood'. Truly fantastic, Shuborna Mustafa made a late entry but did not lose time to show her talents. Indeed she by Sabah Moyeen

overshadowed the rest sometimes. Sara Zaker was prefect for her role. When 'Oyomoy' took the bow, it was standing ovations all the way, to perhaps the most impact causing Bengali drama of our time. .

Comedy too has not lost its essence on the small screen. 'Bohubrihi' was a masterpiece.



The stage, is a different ball game altogether, one with which we are not all, well acquainted. There is much more



Shakespeare's "Coriolanus" performed by Aranya

Aly Zaker has endeared himself to the public nation wide, as, perhaps the first universal 'mama' (although, I hear he gets provoked at being categorized as such) he prefers to be known more for his stage work rather than his television star status. Abul Hayat and Asaduzzaman Noor gave proof of their versatile talents. The latter twosome make a pair par excellence whether they act rivals or, the part of a nutty professor and his awed disciple. I am perhaps a little partial towards Mr Noor, because I once had the opportunity of interviewing him for a school magazine, and have not yet recovered from the very

freedom of expression, since the substance does not have to be conveyed to the audience via media; on stage this accrues face to face. As a result, plays which are dramatized are usually very political or satirical in thematic value. Consequently, the government has been reluctant to help. Different drama groups such as Nagarik, Dhaka Theatre etc, together form the Group Theatre Federation (there are a great number of groups forming this one entity). Each face certain common problems - finance is hard to come up with, and props, renting an auditorium, sound and lighting, costumes printing out tickets etc all

need to be paid for. The auditorium is usually nothing more than a dark, dingy, mosquito infested community centre converted to stage plays. People who visit them are few and nearly always a set crowd of theatre goers, (there are exceptions) with an avid interest in drama. The actors and actresses who perform on stage are not different from the ones who act on small screen, but they usually do not get paid for stage work. Yet, enthusiasm on their part is not lacking and this must be attributed to their firm dedication and love for acting. With the majority, acting is not their main profession, but a love which they have nurtured and taken pains over (a hobby sounds too frivolous). Many pursue other careers quite diverse from act ing. About Hayat is an engineer, while Aly Zaker is the successful entrepreneur of an advertising firm. Nevertheless, despite the difficulties, what appears on stage is powerful intense and impact causing There is a dire scarcity of playwrights. Whereas Dhaka Theatre has its own playwright many of the other groups have to depend on translations and adaptations. Several dramatists who write plays for television are not comfortable with the stage. Shakespeare, Irwin Shaw and Ibsen provide a good source, but the favourite continues to be the prolific German playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956). Brecht's determined effort to divert the epic theatre from conventional theatrical illusions to social and ideological themes (for leftist causes) has served as a overpowering inspiration for Bangladeshi producers and directors.

Part II next week

Miracle

by Judith G. De Costa

that she would look like a

speck and the only way he'd

know it was her would be by

one the sound of her voice.

and calling his name. Other

times he'd be looking into this

deep, empty well and there

he'd see these two large, glis-

tening eyes and hear her voice.

Tonight, he was standing in

the middle of this large, bare

room and was surrounded by

the sound of her voice! (always

her voice) accusing him of

cheating her, hurting her,

treating her as badly as Jake

had, and he had kept spinning

around and whispering "No,

no". He was startle in to wake-

fulness when all of a sudden

the voice stopped and the si-

and filled him with an ache to

be with her. He found himself

wanting her like he'd never

wanted anything in his life. He

cursed himself for leaving her

with that stupid, flimsy alibi

about a business trip was even

the bliss of inga's company

sudden. He wanted to go to the

window and shout out Susan's

name but then he remembered

that she was miles away. He

had to get back to her imme-

diately or else she'd hate him

for life, and that was some-

thing he could not bear too

think about. Inga couldn't care

less about his coming and go-

ing. She would find him gone

and simply wait for him to

come back. Only this time, he

wouldn't be coming back, and

besides there were plenty

"Woody wood pecker?"

more from where he came.

"Hello"

"Guess who!"

Richard felt exultant all of a

worth it? No way!

His heart went out to Susan

lence hit him like a blow.

filled with misery and longing

USAN waited and waited for him to call Until she felt like screaming and scream she did, so much so that her whole apartment reverberated with the sound of the high-pitched sound. She felt useless and weary- the only thing she would do would be to replay those golden moments with Richard in her mind. Where had they gone? For that matter, where had he gone? . . .

Richard woke up with a start and sat in the middle of his bed, streaming with sweat. He'd been having the same recurring nightmare about Susan for the past six nights. She seemed familiar to him -like a relic from the long gone past. Then again everything fell that way when he was with his Swedish Venus, Inga. He had thought Inga was the one to make him happy when they'd met, but somehow, she was

Then he'd met Susan and finally found a woman he could both love and respect. But sadly, since lately, he was beginning to love her less and respect her more. She was like the teacher in grade school on whom he'd had an enormous crush who was a figure of respect, rather than fascination. So he'd come back to Inga because... what? Susan was a little too old fashioned for him? Poppy cockl

Gradually he felt a feeling of immense guilt creep over him. He felt like a little boy who'd been caught stealing his Dad's liquor-filled chocolates! Then there was this nightmare too. Susan would be standing at the end or this tunnel, so far away asked Susan, recognizing Richard's voice instantly. "Not even closel"

"Where are you calling me

"The airport. I could begin to tell you how awful I feel for being so neglectful here, or I could have a shower and then come over to your place and do

"Hmm," she said. "Suppose you started here and finished off at my place?" "Tyrant! I'll see you in an hour or two." And he was gone.

Will I ever understand him?

She wondered. She had been

it at leisure."

waiting for him to get back so eagerly that now that he was back she couldn't believe it! Susan understood that Richard was hers for keeps the minute she heard his voice. If he had to leave me, he would have done so when he was gone and sent me some stupid letter with some stupid explanation. Or worse, he wouldn't have written anything! But, he's back and he called! I feel awful for neglecting you, she thought to herself. He felt awful because I wasn't by his side, or just talking to him! He honestly missed me! Susan felt jubilant in her triumph and confident, oh so confident that Richard had confirmed that she was the leading lady in his life. Devil may care what he has to say, she thought, sure that what ever it would be it was not going to be good bye. Tonight was going to be a night to celebrate. Richard had come back home and so had

"I was beginning to lose faith in miracles, Richard" she said aloud to the empty room, "but thank heaven I didn't lose faith in you!"

Urge for

by Sonia N Ahmed

mansion that looms in front of

me and a kaleidoscope of

scenes appear. All mixed up,

some of them of the present-

the bright, lights, the laughter

and the clatter of crockery.

Another scene which is of an-

other time where everything is

the same but there is another

trating, I keep on wondering

why I feel so alone. I have ev-

erything one could desire, so

why this nerve-racking loneli-

ness? Only at times like this I

feel that some in-born power

surges within me and hints at

something. That something, if

I can only grab it, I believe is

the remedy to this sickness of

bance in the air and my sur-

roundings, I look about-there

isn't anyone. I think it's my

state of mind that's making me

like this. Again I can feel a

rustle in the air. I look into the

darkness and a pale, tear-

stained face appears. I stare

into the hollow eyes-they seem

to be an abyss of despair, I feel

Continuously blowing bub-

When we use it, we throw it

away but when it is not used,

we keep it at the head of a

Answer: A crab

Suddenly, I feel a distur-

The loneliness I feel is frus-

girl like me lost.

The room is full of people, the lights have all been lit, people are wandering about all over the house, yet I feel all alone I feel as if I am in solitary confinement why do I feel like this? I guess its a feeling within me, something that always possesses me, something I can't get rid of unless I find my destination.

I am totally oblivious of my surroundings, everything picture seems to be of another time. There the setting is the same, I can sense it is this very house, but no one is there, only me, in dark solitude.

"Well my girl, your parents have hosted a nice housewarming party, haven't they?" I snap out of my reverie as I hear the General's booming

"Yes they have," I answer "have you had your tea? Oh look! I think that's my father looking for you."

Saying this I abruptly move away, I, surprised at my own strange behaviour. I quietly slip out into the garden. The air smells of blooming rose buds and the dark sky hangs above me like a heavy blanket, soft and warm. But there it is again whenever I feel at case my

mind is averted to that other like staring into them forever, Surprisingly, I am unafraid, it dimension where I feel that is as if I had been waiting for frustration. The atmosphere this moment my whole life. It feels stifling. I take a look at is the house and its past that the external view of the huge

> happy atmosphere. She seems to move her mouth but I can not hear anything. However, I felt as if were floating in dark space, into eternity. My mind races, I visualise the girl who has endured so much pain. She has worked in this house, served a kind master and mistress, yet like me had experienced this same loneliness. But why us of all people? We were both well

has created that lonely, un-

off in our own ways. "It's the will of God," she responds.

We both feel the loneliness of other children of our age. We feel their struggle to live, their frustration and distilusionment. We feel insecure because of their insecurity.

Everything suddenly goes black. I feel as if I have reached the end of a long journey. I am left with a feeling of ... loneliness? No-not that, that has gone. Something else has replaced that. I jumped up, my mind starts working actively. That girl has lived with loneliness, she wasn't able to fight it off, she didn't have the power to. But I don't have to, so I can get rid of my loneliness, frustration and hopelessness and that would be by helping others get rid of theirs'.

Unwanted Fate by Rehan Chowdhury

(Class VIII)

As I sat under the palm tree, my memories recalled the past. Only last year, I was a quick and active boy of 13. Then my mother died and a new mother came, causing me, to be a runaway.

Surrounding me was the eternal turquoise-blue sea and the golden sand. The sea-breeze blew gently on my face taking the grains of sand for a ride while the high tides came one after the other. The water looked young and fresh; just the way a 13 year old boy should

It was twilight now. The sky was purplish-orange. The gulls, seeing that night was about to intrude, flew about swift and freely searching for a place of rest.

Everything around me, was just as it should have been. The warm golden sand tickled my feet. The only smell that reached which inserted my nose was that of the salty sea-waters. I grasped a handful of sand and let it run through my fingers. Suddenly, I felt

Soon, nightfall conquered the twilight. It was a full moon night. Every thing quietened ted down. The waves stopped racing, the wind decided to stop blowing and the branches of the nearby trees stopped swaying. Everything was peace-

STAB PROFILE

Larry Mullen 'Jnr' of U2

Full name: Laurence Joseph Mullen - Larry Date of birth: 31/10/61 Born: Dublin Lives : Dublin Marital status: Single First hit: "Fire"

Did you know: · Larry only added the 'Jnr' to his name in 1984 when his father, also called Laurence, kept getting his son's enormous tax demands!

Larry is a fully-trained blackbelt in karate but he doesn't practice as much as he used to because now he's more interested in fishing and motorbikes. U2 are called 'The Jacks' in

Another Ireland. affectionate term for the band is 'the boys' eg "Haven't the boys done great, eh, who'd have credited it?"

On their 1987 US tour, U2 booked themselves into ho-

As I lay on my back, I

I sang to myself. I began,

Then I wished that I

looked at the night sky and

suddenly saw the first star

star-light, star-bright, I

wish, I may, I wish, I might,

get the wish I wish tonight."

could be happy and gay like

the sea, active like the

wind, independent like the

sea-gulls... if only... they

would come true!

of the night, emerging.

whetstone, icis as pipestone, gemstone and firestone". U2's first ever London



concert was at the Half Moon pub in Putney. Nine people turned up.

Recently during the worldwide Zoo Station tour, Larry was suffering from severe cramps in his hands after performances and was told by doctors that he might have to give up drumming!

No More by Trishna Dear mother, dear father, look at me and

See the change, I'm no more the child I used to be. That child in me no more plays with a I'm no more, mother, to be kept under your shawl. That small field is no more my

playground to play, But now its the whole wide world I'd rather say. I no more bug you for bedtime stories or toys, And I no more come crying to complain about the naughty boys. I don't hold your hand during every step I take,

Not your footstep, but I follow my heart for decisions I make. The world has changed and so have I, See it for yourself and you too won't

I've grown up and to my childhood have said goodbye, But those days, were the sweetest and I don't know how they passed

or why. Dear mother, dear father, look at me See the change, I'm no more the child I

used to be. Now I'm no more the baby in the cradle who cried, But I've grown and soon will leave you, I'll become a bride.



By Shahed Chowdhuri ROBERT THE DUCK Sorry, but I'd rather prewould like to have Excuse me fer you having a T-shirt for \$ 10! 7- shirt for my nephew here!

Riddles Arrogantly walking side-

It has a leg, but no thighs It has a head but no face Answer : A mushroom

It comes it goes It does nothing but blows Answer: Wind blowing the

With eight feet carrying a

Frighteningly wielding two scissors

Answer: An anchor Picture

Here is a new picture quiz. Can you guess what it is? The Answer will be given next week.



QUIZ (LUB



Here are this week's quiz questions. Please send in answers by next Thursday. If you get all of them right, you may win a very attractive prize!

- Q1. Name the saint who is believed to have introduced Christianity in India in about 50 A. D.
- What is known as Cleopatra's Needle? Where was Napoleon born? In which year was Martin Luther King assassinated? Name the only country having a double triangular
- shaped flag. Where is Adam's Bridge? Which star is nearest to Earth?
- What is 'Dutch courage'? Which place is called the key to the Mediterranean? Q10. Which is the world's biggest library?

Answers to August 29th's Quiz Club

Con Chaney Bangkok Napoleon's army Cuttle fish Charles Persault February 15, 1950 Geneva Kikuyu

Prof. T H Bullock

Inability to concentrate

What is Royal Enfield? The place where the Queen keeps her chickens. * * *

Did you hear about the man who drove his car off the edge of a cliff to test the air brakes?

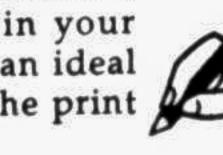
Which letter of the alphabet sounds drunk? The wobbleyou. * * *

Who sews and eats spinach? Popeye the tailorman.

Madam, your husband has just been run over by a steam roller. Slip him under the door, will you? I'm on the telephone.

A pilot was talking to his passengers before take-off. "Sit back and enjoy the trip," he said. "If anything goes wrong you will know immediately as the co-pilot will start to scream hysterically."

Fill out this form and send it to us, and you will be a member of the Rising Star Club. Send in your writings, illustrations, and cartoons. It is an ideal opportunity to express yourself through the print media.



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