

ENTERTAINMENT

Magic on the Podium

by Milia Ali

WITH the onslaught of Channel V and Zee TV clamoring our musical sense, Dhaka music lovers have been desperately searching for the answer to a key question: Is traditional Indian classical music a dead art — unable to capture audiences any more? Shubhra Guha with her recent dazzling appearances in Dhaka has provided us with an answer: classical music can still create magic and fire on the podium.

What is so special about Shubhra? Musically, she has full command over her subject, moving with ease from raga to raga — be it from Shudhkalyan to Desh or from Kedar to Gaur Malhar. Within minutes, she sets the mood of the raga by barely touching the notes of the lower octave, ("mandra shaptak"). Her mastery is such that she can mold the right combination of the notes in a swift turn or sweep through all the "srutis" (notes, half notes and quarter notes) of the octave with equal poise and dexterity. Just when the rendition reaches a crescendo and the listener is mesmerized by her intricate "bolbat" (combination of syllables and notes), Shubhra comes back to a standing note and holds it with a depth and intensity which can only be compared to a feeling of "coming home"

music is a "whole new world" and at the end of the performance the listener is left with a wanderlust.

after a prolonged period of dislocation. But technical perfection is not what makes Shubhra different and perhaps unique. Just as the real interesting things in life do not fit into an easily defined category, Shubhra's style is not confined by the Agra Gharana, which she is a part of. She has retained the flamboyance of the Gharana but has infused into it a sweetness and refinement which are entirely her own. Her singing, true to the style of the Agras, emanates tremendous strength and power — yet there is always an element of restraint so that technique never quite overrides expression. With her left arm soaring high and a dimpled smile across her face she is at times a defiant rebel and at other times a meditating yogi, as she transforms her music into an active, living art form that the listeners can relate to. When she sings "Jhanan jhanan jhana nana nana baje bichhwa", she expands, contracts and modulates each bol or syllable so ingeniously that one can actually hear different sounds: pattering raindrops, thundering clouds or just the sweet ringing of ankle bells. In short Shubhra's

Although thirty-eight-year old Shubhra has been enthralled Indian audiences for the last decade, her skills and talent were revealed to the Dhaka music enthusiasts during her first ever visit to Bangladesh only three months back. She has succeeded in recapturing the magic of her previous visit by her brilliant performances this time. Shubhra received her musical training from Sunil Basu who is a direct disciple of Ustad Fayaz Khan and Ratan Jankar. She has also taken music lessons from that late D T Joshi, who was an integral part of the Sangit Bhaban in Viswa Bharati University. At present Shubhra is a teacher of classical music in the Sangit Research Academy in Calcutta. Her devotion to music is demonstrated in the fact that she has taken a conscious decision to remain single and dedicate her entire life to music.

We, the music lovers of Bangladesh, would like to pay our tributes to Shubhra Guha by humbly recognizing the fact that we have very little to give in return for what she has given us: "Haar mana haar porabo tomar gole"

On Celebration of Two Hundredth Performance of Satghater Kanakori A Play that Entertains and Enlightens

by Obaidul Huq

The drama's laws the drama's patrons give

For we that live to please must please to live — so said Samuel Johnson about players of the theatre. So in the past our idea of the theatre was that of a place which provided amusement and entertainment to theatre-goers. But theatre now is looked upon by some as a people's court where important issues concerning the people are presented and discussed and the audience representing the people delivers judgments.

Noted playwright Professor Mumtazuddin Ahmed, who intimately knows the world beyond the stage-door, pleads a case in such a court with dramatic success. Known as *Satghater Kanakori*, the case has won the heart of a very large and sophisticated audience. The proof of its is evident from the widely known fact that the producers of the play planned to celebrate its 200th show on July 27. It is said to be the first original play to hold such a record.

It is quite apparent that the astounding success of the stageplay *Satghater Kanakori* is traceable to its story of absorbing interest, extraordinary performance by all the players major and minor alike, and skilful handling of light, acoustic set of cetera resulting in an excellent production as a whole. The perfect team work of the unit makes it a fast-moving play and lends credence to the



claim that unlike a novel, a static thing that one moves through, a play is a dynamic thing that moves past one.

I think the satire upon autocracy attracted the audience most. The autocrat and his sycophants are held up to ridicule and made to look like clowns and clumsy characters. The play lampoons a society which has been depicted as a sad mother who is always unhappy because all her sons are useless citizens like valueless kowries with holes. The add to the mis-

eries of the peoples but she nourishes the timid hope that some day people will rise and things will take a turn for the better.

The play is a popular hit also because of the crisp and rich dialogues. The playwright uses words with surgical precision and his social criticism takes the form of comedy which becomes a creative force rather than produce merely frivolous farcical effects.

Professor Mumtazuddin Ahmed, a talented performer too and also a participant in what may be called new Theatre Movement in Bangladesh, can have the satisfaction that his *Satghater Kanakori* has been providing good entertainment and enlightenment to a large audience for such a long time.

The players also deserve come warm words of praise for their positive contribution to the success of the play.

Their lively performance never fails to entertain and please the audience, which is one reason why the audience keeps revisiting the show-house and the play gets such a long run. Its 200th show on July 27 on Mahila Samity Mancha, — perhaps Dhaka's Old Vic — was indeed a fit occasion for celebration as well as celebration.

Jewel's Jewellery

By Staff Correspondent

A comparison of magic can only be a magician's only a magician. And if the magician is Jewel Aich the comparison is limited to only Jewel Aich. Jewel again exhibited the intricacies of his art at the annual Award-giving ceremony of Bangladesh Film Producers Association held recently at the Sonargaon Hotel. Jewel conducted the two-hour programme with his usual flair of wit and art of magic. Jewel's presentations made the two-hour long programme pass in a flash. The guillotine number was no doubt the *tour de force*. Putting popular actor Humayun Faridi's head into the cutter, Jewel let time go by joking and in effect he was increasing the tension of the audience. The number with Faridi will endure in the memories of the audience present at the occasion.

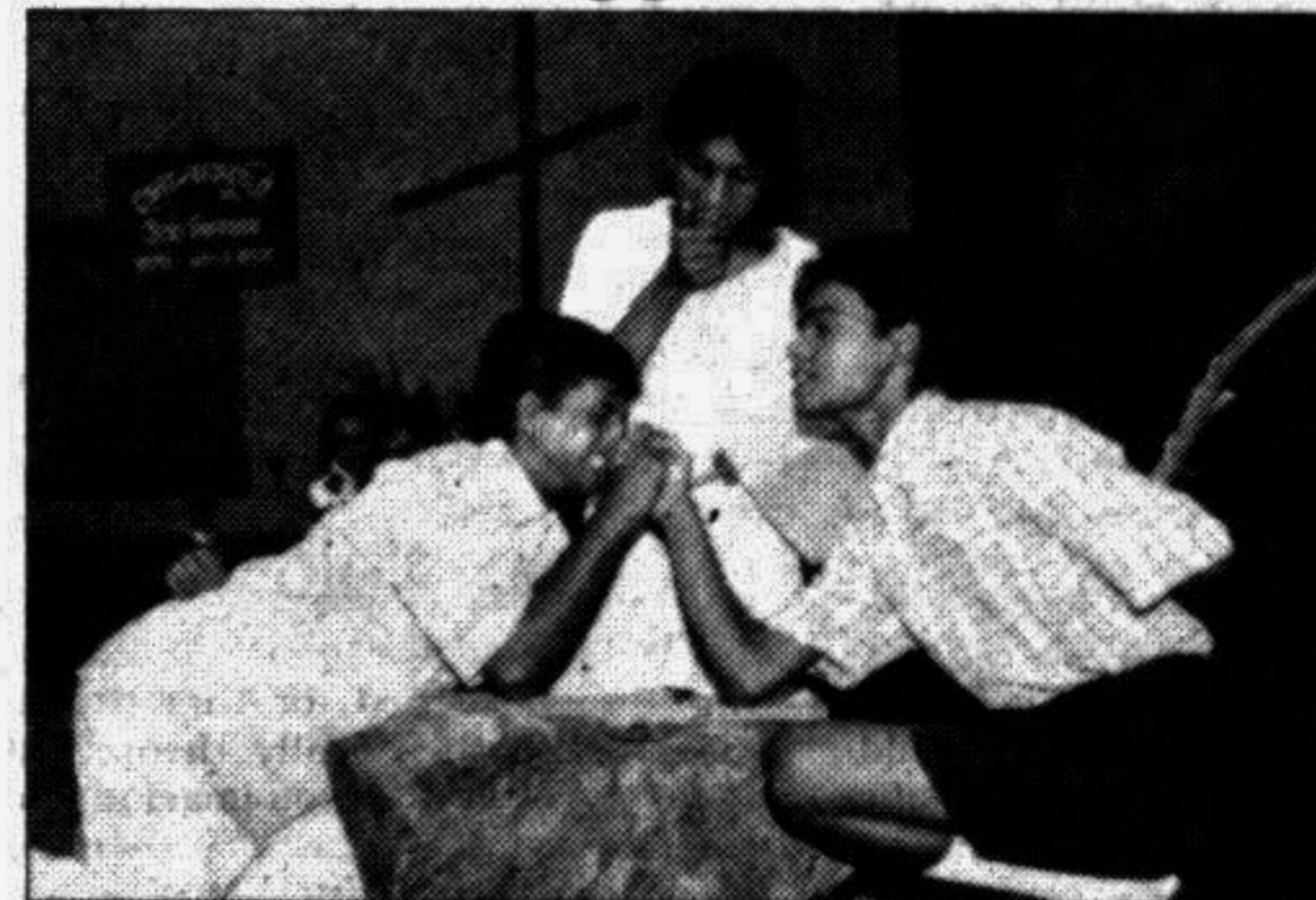


Khudiram as Symbol of Struggle for Freedom

By Staff Correspondent

SOMOMOY, one of the country's front-ranking cultural organisations, staged its new production *Ekattorer Khudiram* (The Khudiram of 71) recently at the Mahila Samity auditorium. With the staging of *Khudiram*, the group's 23rd production, Somoy starts its programmes to mark the 25th anniversary of the War of Liberation. *Khudiram*'s next show will be staged on August 4 at Guide House Auditorium.

Somoy's programmes to mark the anniversary of our Liberation War was inaugurated on July 20, by Swadeshi movement veteran, Debendranath Ghosh while E Deputy Chief of Leader A K Khondaker Bir Uttam, Chairman of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation Nasir Uddin Usuf were present as special guests. Mannan Hira, the author of the play, and Peejush Bandopadhyay, the director of



the play, were also present at the ceremony. Debendranath in his inaugural speech welcomed the zeal and enthusiasm of the new generation to capture the spirit of the War of Independence.

Playwright Mannan Hira wrote in the folder published in connection with the staging, "Khudiram is a symbol of struggle — a rebel. We have achieved independence today

only because of the sacrifices of many Khudirams. Khudiram is not a character here. He is the symbol of many unsung heroes, their courage, their determination, their belief for an independent and sovereign land. Khudiram represents the heroes of our wars of independence over the history from the colonial rule to the war of 71."

Viewing Video

by Lenin Gani

SYLVESTER Stallone is back. He plays the tough comic book law avenger *Judge Dredd*. Dredd is revered as a man who prides himself on upholding the law with utmost dedication. But even these credentials are not enough to convince a court that he has been framed for the murder of a high-standing government official. He is found guilty and sentenced.

Dredd's partner (Diane Lane) convinced foul play has been committed attempts to piece together vital clues that were over-looked during the initial investigation.

To her horror she discovers that Dredd has a brother (Armand Assante). Later she confronts Dredd with the revelation and that he could also be the actual killer considering the murder weapon could only respond to a *Judge's* command. He tells her that although they trained together at the police academy now there was bad blood between them.

On way to the penal colony, Dredd runs into a familiar face — Roy Schneider, a small-time criminal who had earlier arrested.

One thing leads to another and the 'odd couple' after escaping forge an unlikely partnership. From then on wards both men are involved in some pretty hair-raising situations.

Ultimately it's brother versus brother with Sly finally coming out on top.

Drop Zone is a skydiving action picture in which Wesley Snipes is a US Marshall investing the death of his brother a fellow-marshall killed during a daring skyjacking by a group led by Gary Busey. The group stage what appears to be a failed

rescue bid of a computer genius the two marshalls were escorting.

Nobody not even Snipes' own superior believes that somebody could survive a jump out a plane from 29,000 ft. Snipes is forced to resign but is determined to unravel the mystery.

Snipes enlists the help of gorgeous Yancy Butler who teaches him the rudiments of skydiving. Unfortunately it takes up much of the film.

Meanwhile Busey is busy getting ready to pull off another grand caper. This time during the Fourth of July celebrations he plans to steal the codenames of key Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agents for a client from the organisation's computer. But he didn't count on resistance from Snipes and Butler to really spoil the party.

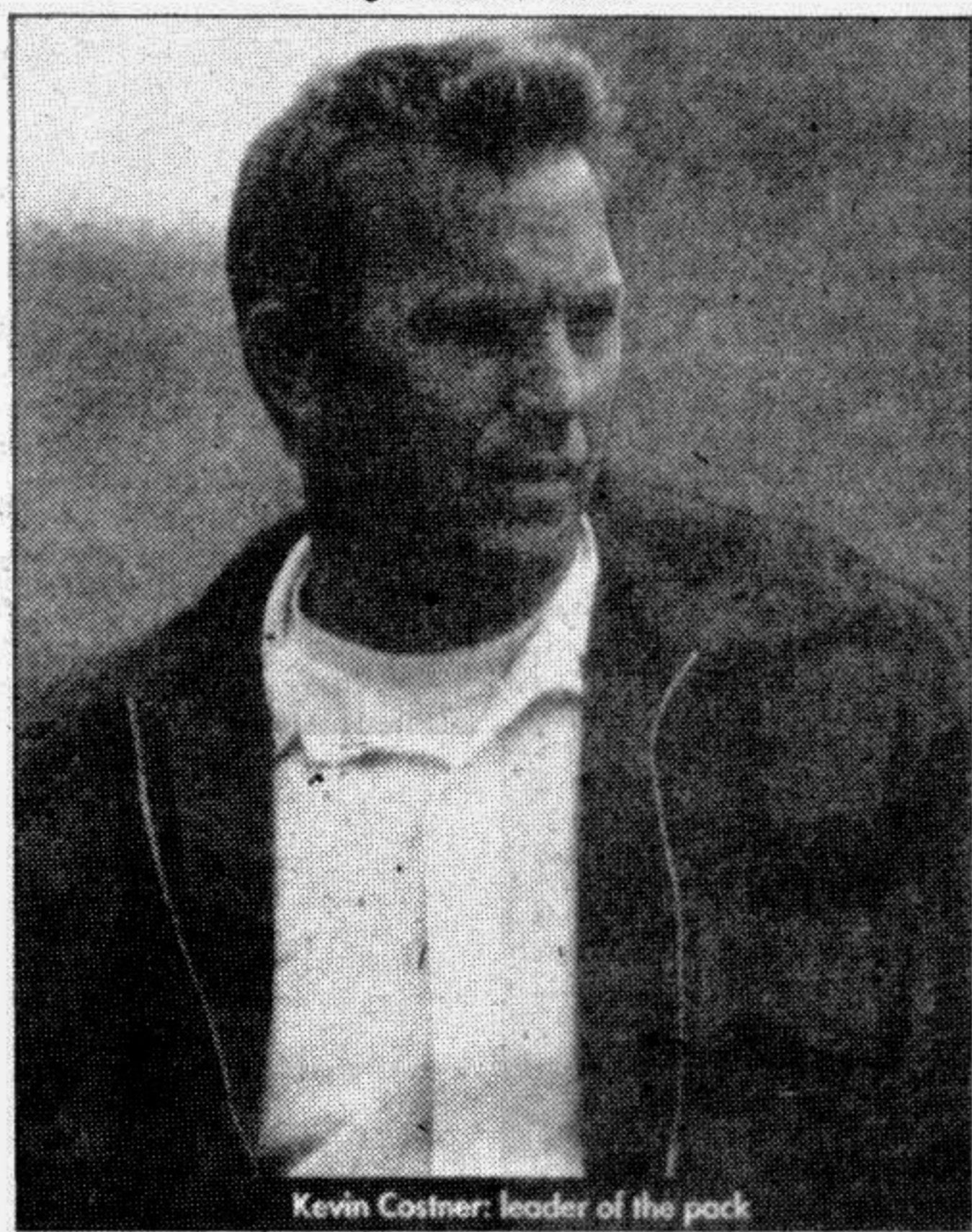
ENGLISH		
NAME	TYPE	CAST
1. First Knight	(Act/Adv)	Sean Connery/ Richard Gere
2. Last Gasp	(Thriller)	Robert Patrick/ Jonna Pacula/ Mini Craven/ Vyto Rugins
3. Crimebroker	(...)	Jacqueline Bisset/ Masaya Kato
4. Illegal in Blue	(Rom/Thriller)	Stacey Dash/ Dan Gauthier
5. Operation Golden Phoenix	(Action)	Jhal Merhi/ Lori Avedon/ James Hong
6. King of the Ring '95	(WWF)	
7. Ponchontas (Walt Disney Prod)	(Animation)	

HINDI		
NAME	TYPE	CAST
1. Humse Hai	(Action)	Prohlu Deva/ Nagma
2. Coolie No 1	(Action)	Govinda/ Karishma Kapoor/ Kader Khan
3. Takkar	(...)	Sunil Shetty/ Sonali Nasiruddin Shah
4. Papi Devata	(Rom/Act)	Dharmendra/ Jeetendra/ Jaya Pradha/ Madhuri Dixit
5. Dance Party	(Action)	Raman Tikha/ Raymon Gomez

Source: Film Fair Video and other clubs.

"I'm Not Zen-like..." An Interview with Kevin Costner

By John Horn



Kevin Costner: leader of the pack

EXCERPTS from an interview with Kevin Costner about his starring role in "Waterworld".

Q: If there's a common denominator in your last three films ("Wyatt Earp", "A Perfect World", "The War"), it's that you played characters that clearly had more appeal for you than they did for the audience.

A: The 'W' movies — not for women. I think they do work. I think "A Perfect World" made money, and I'm sure "The War" is going to make money, because they're smaller budget movies. ... But then there's another measuring stick we have, and that's a stick that I cannot be a part of. Don't get me wrong

like you got finals tomorrow, and you have to pull an all-nighter. You gotta do it.

Q: Do you think people have it out for you? Is that part of why the movie got the media attention it received?

A: I don't know what I've done to people. I don't know if they have it out for me. Usually, when somebody has it out for you, it's like you've done something to them. So I can't trace my life and find what I've done to anybody, do you know what I mean? I'm capable of self-examination, and I haven't done anything.

I've, maybe, failed in a marriage, when people thought a guy who has everything maybe shouldn't have his marriage fall apart. But most people have a life, and they understand what that pain is about. And people who look really closely know that people don't have perfect lives. I've had a blessed life, and in a lot of instances I felt like my life was perfect. But it's not perfect. Things didn't turn out perfectly. It's a life.

Q: How do you think the film will be remembered?

A: I hope the film will be remembered as a really great action movie that stretched the genre a little bit. The genre has been getting lazy. I think we go for the cheap laugh. We blow up a building and somebody has a cute line about it — a quip. ... When (the Mariner) throws her off the boat, when he hits her in the head with a paddle: those things can generate a smile. You go, "Wow. That's who this guy really is."

I had to fight the mentality of the studio: "To love Kevin Costner, you can't be that way. You can't just hit somebody like that," I said, "I think that's wrong. I think he's actually very generous. She didn't wake up floating. She just woke up with a knot on her head."

Q: And how do you fear it will be remembered?

A: I can't say. I made up my mind that I liked the movie when it was over. I'm not zen-like, but I have that satisfaction. ... — AP

TELEVISION Arabian Nights

ALLAHADIN AND THE MAGIC LAMP: Allahadin confesses his love for the princess to the genie of the magic lamp. Allahadin also makes aware the disparity between both of them. The princess is the sky and he is the earth — and they can never meet.

Qayamat Gin gets emotional and decides to make the most Royal Palace for Allahadin.

In the middle of the desert, a magic palace is built by the king of all genies. And Allahadin is frown resting in the hands of the Qayamat Gin to this wonderland. Allahadin and his mother gaze in astonishment at this change of fortunes and fate.

PRINCESS LOVES: Allahadin, dressed as a prince, Allahadin with the help of his friend Qayamat Gin lands up in the Royal Garden of the princess.

Allahadin realises that she has still preserved the love sword with stains of the lovers' blood. The princess is actually in love with

Allahadin. The lovers meet and accept each other's love.

The Gin is happy at this all.

MOTHER ACCEPTS THE PRINCESS: In sheer excitement Allahadin and the Gin dance around the mother. Allahadin hugs her and lifts her in the air in sheer joy. Mother wants to know the truth behind this laughter and merriment.

Finally she learns of the love of her son for the princess. And realizes how Qayamat Gin has made this match possible. She accepts the princess as Allahadin's bride to be.

The question is how to make this possible — Qayamat Gin smiles in confidence.

Episode 28 on BTV today (Friday) at 8:30 pm.

Crystal Maze

Episode 27 on BTV (today) Friday at 9:05 am.

Dark Justice: "Deadline"

When Jake McAllister (William G Schilling) goes free on a murder charge, Judge Nicholas "Nick" Marshall (Bruce Abbott) vows to get justice.

The path he follows leads him to the very outspoken and opinionated television commentator, Lloyd Pressman (Victor Brandt), who secretly arranges the death of anyone who disagrees with him. McAllister was often hired to kill people for Pressman, but when he tries to blackmail Pressman, Pressman kills him instead.

Nick decides to use his friend Kelly Cochran (Janet Gunn) to lure Pressman into revealing his criminal nature. She claims to be a private in-

vestigator who wants to bring Pressman new information for his TV show. In particular, Kelly mentions a big money drug deal that's about to take place.

Pressman falls for Kelly's trick. With a hidden video camera, Kelly records Pressman using cocaine. Pressman's television viewers get quite a show when Kelly submits the revealing footage to the local news channels. When the police come after him, Pressman literally goes off a cliff in his attempt to avoid the law.

On Sunday (30.7.95) at 9:00 pm on BTV

Time Trax: "Almost Human"

Dr Mordecai Sahmbi (Peter Donat), an evil scientist from the 22nd century who escaped into the present, constructs a lifelike android that is an exact double of his arch-rival, fugitive retrieval specialist, Darien Lambert (Dale Midkiff). He plans to have the android kill Darien, then impersonate him so that Darien's superiors from the future will not send back another officer to replace Darien. The android transmits and receives information from Sahmbi's headquarters, and Sahmbi believes it is totally loyal to him.

The android attacks Darien, knocking him unconscious. When Darien regains consciousness, he and the android are on top of a cliff. The android is studying him so that he can perfectly imitate Darien. By talking to the android, Darien learns of Sahmbi's plan. He also discovers that when Sahmbi replicated Darien in the android, he included Darien's moral sense of right and wrong. Darien's computerized companion, Selma (Elizabeth Alexander), projects images of Sahmbi's despicable past, including the murder of Elissa, the only woman Darien ever loved. Although the android cannot feel emotion, it feels a new sense of empathy with Darien.

However, the android's loyalty to Sahmbi is still strong. Unable to withstand

Sahmbi's command, it battles Darien. Darien throws it off the cliff but climbs down and carries the barely functioning android back to his room. Besides feeling a strange pity for his double, Darien knows that it can lead him to Sahmbi.

At great risk to his life from electrical shocks, Darien repairs the android. Darien is not aware that Sahmbi can still control it. Sahmbi tricks Darien by ordering the android to tell Darien where Sahmbi is. Darien believes the android is helping him and goes to Sahmbi's headquarters. Not knowing that Sahmbi is planning a trap, Darien pretends he is the android. Sahmbi allows Darien to enter his office, then prepares to kill Darien.

However, the actual android arrives and convinces Sahmbi that it should complete its mission. Sahmbi proudly hands a gun to his creation, but the android points it back at Sahmbi. Sahmbi quickly dives out of the way and escapes. As one of Sahmbi's henchmen shoots at Darien, the android throws itself between them, absorbing all of the bullets. Darien is saved, but the android is damaged beyond repair. Darien thanks the expiring android and escapes from Sahmbi's compound.

On Wednesday (2.8.95) at 9:00 pm on BTV.