

Interview

"Putuler Itikatha" questions the institution of marriage

Adaptation of Ibsen's "A Doll's House" by Kamaluddin Nilu at Guide House

FAYZA HAQ

ABOUT "Putuler Itikatha," recently staged at the Guide House, Kamaluddin Nilu the director and translator, says, "In it one of the major issues is questioning the institution of marriage based on an unequal relationship between a man and woman and the lack of openness and trust. This is based

Nora's individual freedom is not presented as a goal in itself in the text, rather it is presented as prerequisite for her self-development and her ability to be something for others."

Kamaluddin Nilu continues to say, "During the development of the dramatic action, 'Putuler Itikatha' becomes increasingly optimistic in terms of the possibility that marriage

'Itikatha' has been made as an experimental and non-realistic production with a combination of dialogue, music and movement. The non-realistic approach has also been chosen in order to avoid an impression among the audience that issues dealt with in the play are relevant only in a particular setting. The aim has been to communicate with a broad audience through the creation of a linguistic group. The non-realistic approach is also manifested through the frequent movement of the characters during the dialogue. This movement is breaking the monotony of the dialogue and is expected to facilitate communication with the audience as their attention is thus more easily maintained.

He adds, "Black and white are used for the set as well as for the properties. This serves to underline the many important conflicts and contrasts in the play: the norms and values of society (as expressed through Helmer) in contrast to the individual quest for freedom (represented by Nora), the opposing ideal female characters as represented by Kristine Linde and Nora, the incompatibility between Nora - Helmer relationship as well as fundamental dichotomies as free/chained, open/hiding, human being/puppet."

He concludes, "Lights and shadows are used interchangeably throughout the entire production in order to underline the development of action lines and the psychological situation of the characters. The shadows also serve to express a central issue in the play, notably the dark and hidden. The black shawl is used in the third act as a metaphor for the marriage relationship. A small girl in the prologue may stand for Nora's childhood as well as for her own children. When the girl gives the tambourine to Nora, it should be understood as a symbolic act, implying that the new generation also suffers under the prevailing man-woman relationship and is encouraging Nora to become free."

Talking to the actors, one gathers that they enjoyed their roles intensely and were acting for the pure pleasure of acting. Rokeya Rafique, a fairly senior artiste who played the role of Kristine Linde, had taken part in four plays by Ibsen, having been on stage since '79. The four Norwegian plays include "The Enemy of the People", "Wild Duck" and "Peer Chan". She has acted in the popular play "Raja", as "Shurongama". She has also taken



The pensive mood underlying the theme of the play

part in many folk productions and she most enjoyed performing in "Taal Patar Shepai" and "Golab Jaan."

Rokeya says, "In my family I'm the only one who has opted for the stage but there are no objections from the home front. My sister used to act too at one time, but now she is overseas. I was not with any theatre institution but was on stage since I was 19. I have worked occasionally on TV some years back such as in Nazrul Islam's 'Mritu Khudha'. The plays are so well rehearsed that during the preparations the dialogue gets established in my mind and I'm quite confident when I appear before the audience. However, there is a pressure on the night of the premiere, because then we actually face the audience and should be able to communicate with the viewers' nuances. Everyday we relate with the director, while practicing, but this is something differ-

ent. With Kamaluddin Nilu, in particular, my interactions are superb. He gives us all a lot of his time without which a play cannot be a success."

Talking about the role of Kristine Linde, Rokeya says, "She is very realistic. She picks up only those emotions of life which are necessary and good for everybody. She helps Nora in many ways when she is in the fatal crisis, and tries her best to save Nora from the man who was threatening her with blackmail regarding the money that she borrowed when her husband had been ill. She has a positive impact on the heroine."

Tahmina Sharif, who played the lead role of Nora says, "I was a student at Theatre School and then worked with 'Nagorik Natangan' and now work with CAT for two years. Among the plays that I've done are 'Janatar Rangshala', 'Shoroma', 'Bikromborshi', 'Peer Chan', 'Raja' and now I'm doing 'Putuler Itikatha'.

I've enjoyed all the roles. We have no problems as regards the financial backing as that is not our headache. What we get, i.e. Tk 3,000 is enough for our transport fare and we regard acting as a passion. My parents don't approve of my acting but my husband, Mohammed Salim, who has an audio-visual firm, has no objections.

"Nora is a simple young woman who loves her husband enormously and wants to help him in every way. But she has no freedom of thought and this is where the problem begins. I enjoyed all the sequences and coming to CAT I've learnt that acting is something to be enjoyed and it is not all 'acting for acting's sake'. My colleagues are wonderful to be and work with, and they are all punctual and hard working. We used to rehearse from 9am to 5pm regularly for two months and just before the premiere we would practice till midnight."

Kazi Anisul Haque, who played the part of Helmer says, "I have acted before in 'Raja' and there too I was anti-hero. I was earlier with the group 'Unoshilonashi' acting in plays like 'Edeshy Edeshy', 'Shat Gharer Kanakori'. I was with another group 'Nandonik Nattya Shompraday' which produced 'Sultaneer Shunduritey' and finally I joined CAT. I have performed in 'Bikromborshi' by Kalidas. I have taken part in about a dozen plays comprising of ten years. In 'Putuler Itikatha' I liked those sequences best in which I had the best interaction with my co-players."

Anis says, "My family used to object to my being an actor in the beginning but now they have got used to the fact that I'm a full time

actor with CAT. I feel I can prove myself on the stage. I enjoy playing the anti-hero parts which the directors have chosen for me going by my acting pattern, my body line and movements. I originally graduated from the Edward Vishwabidyalay College. Next I did a few workshops on drama, in the process of which I got selected by Kamaluddin Nilu, and with him I have a teacher-student relationship. We do face problems such as our income is not enough and we have to be basically supported by our families. Yes, performing at the Guide House is not as pleasant as our experience at the National Museum but the theatre hall conditions are out of our reach. Yes, there is 'channel' TV today, but there is a choice group who pay to come to the theatre. I have done some work for the TV too but I prefer the stage."

Shakil, who acted as Nils Krogstad, who appeared like a mysterious and evil man who repeatedly disturbed Nora, said "I play Kristine's early lover, and an old friend of Torvald Helmer, who later disowns him. When Nora needs money for her husband, I had lent the amount to her on interest. It was agreed that she would not inform her husband of this arrangement but would pay me off timely."

The play "Putuler Itikatha" is a remarkable Bangla version of "A Doll's House", with the inclusion of dance and music to keep the audience fascinated by the moves and musical notes, and just not the vital dialogue contained in the body of the play.



Tahmina Sharif and Munir Ahmed in a scene from "Putuler Itikatha"

on Henrik Ibsen's most complicated play 'A Doll's House'. My interpretation is motivated by two main factors: firstly, in addition to the main action describing the development in the relationship between Torvald Helmer and Nora and ending with Nora leaving the home for self-reflection in the real world. There is next the other action line in the play dealing with the development of another man-woman relationship, i.e. between Nils Krogstad and Kristine Linde. In contrast to the relationship between Torvald Helmer and Nora, which moves from union to separation, is this relationship between Nils Krogstad and Kristine Linde emerges from a real life situation, where both parties have their own individuality and where actions of the past are expressed openly and accepted by the other party as a fact of life. Secondly, Nora's statements in the dialogue with Torvald in the end of the third act deal with her relationship comes short of a real marriage, and Nora does, as I read the text, not say anything that should indicate that she has become opposed to marriage as such. Here it is important to note that

can be a positive social institution. This is partly achieved through a strong directorial action line in connection with the dialogue between Nils Krogstad and Kristine Linde, ending with Kristine's monologue in which she expresses happiness and excitement for their reunion and their new life. The optimistic flavour of the production is further seen in a new scene that I have added after Nora has left. In this epilogue, Helmer is standing extreme down stage right, beside the big circular chair, that previously in the play has been reserved solely for Nora, and the scene is presenting Helmer's illusion as he starts to realize that he had kept Nora as a caged bird and to dream about the possibility that Nora may come back."

Kamaluddin Nilu adds, "In contrast to Centre for Asian Theatre (CAT)'s earlier Ibsen productions, it has not been considered necessary to adapt the play because it takes up issues that are of universal relevance, relatively unbound by time and space. However, in order to communicate more easily with all sections of the audience about these important issues, 'Putuler



A cavorting dance sequence from the play with the swish of silks and tap of slippers

RECOMMENDATIONS



New German Film Festival

On the inaugural day of the week-long festival of New German Cinema celebrating the 50th anniversary of Goethe-Institut in Germany and 40th anniversary of Goethe-Institut in Bangladesh, Zahir Raihan Film Society and Goethe-Institut Dhaka will screen three films today: "Effi Briest", "Left-Handed Woman" and "Rosa Luxembury". Venue: Goethe-Institut Dhaka, Road No 9, Dhanmondi. Time: 3.30 pm, 5.45 pm, and 7.45 pm respectively.

Duhshomoy: The Rape and Death of Shima Chowdhury

"Duhshomoy", a documentary video by Yasmin Kabir will be shown at the Liberation War Museum on June 9 at 5:00 p.m.

A discussion on the film and the case (including Yasmin who was raped and murdered in Dinajpur) will follow the film show.

Calligraphy

A calligraphy exhibition by 10 artists is being held at the National Museum Lobby.

The exhibition will continue everyday from 10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. till June 13.

Group Exhibition

A group exhibition by six front ranking artists of the country will start at the Bengal Gallery from June 8.

The artists are - Shafuluddin Ahmed, Mohammed Kibria, Kazi Giasuddin, Monirul Islam, Shahid Kabir and Shahabuddin.

Publication ceremony

The launching ceremony of Duswapner Khama Nei by poet Bely Shamsunnahar will be held at Biswa Sahitya Kendra on June 7 at 4 p.m. The ceremony will be followed by a musical programme.

TV GUIDE

EKUSHEY TV

- 12:00 Ekushey Middy
- 12:20 Bangla Film: Taka Ana Pai
- 2:40 Drishti
- 3:00 Ekushey Headlines
- 3:05 Drama Serial: Hakarbin
- 3:30 Amader Kotha
- 4:00 Chitrogeeti
- 4:30 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom
- 5:00 Circus Circus
- 5:30 Drishti
- 5:55 Ajker Potrikay
- 6:00 Ekushey Headlines
- 6:05 Classic Cartoons
- 6:30 Charidike
- 7:00 Deho Tori
- 7:30 Ekushey News
- 8:00 Drama Serial : Agun Laga Shondha
- 8:30 Serial : Choto Golper Shombhar
- 9:00 English Series: MacGyver
- 10:00 Drama Serial : Bondhuborashu
- 10:30 News: Simulcast from MTV
- 11:00 Ekushey Late Night News
- CHANNEL I
- 6:15 Drama: Vara Pumima
- 7:40 Nirbachoni Bhavna
- 8:00 Din Protidin
- 8:25 Business File
- 9:00 Special Prog on Eid-e-Miladunnabi
- 11:15 Drama: Vara Pumima
- 12:40 Nirbachoni Bhavna
- 1:15 Business File
- 2:00 Special Prog on Eid-e-Miladunnabi
- 3:00 Bangla Cinema
- 6:00 Reciting from Holy Quran
- 6:10 Sekal Vangar Gane
- 6:40 Anek Din Par
- 7:20 Drama: Harano Sur
- 8:30 I Tele Quiz. (Ques)
- 8:40 Sai Sur Sai Gane
- 9:15 Drama: Sampikto
- 9:30 I Tele Quiz (Result)
- 10:00 Drama: Eka Ekjon Episode-1
- 11:00 Bangla Cinema: Daial Mursed (Anwar Hossain/Suchanda)

HBO

- 6:30 Columbo : A Trace of Murder
- 8:30 Black Rain
- 11:00 Friday The 13th Part III
- 1:00 It Could Happen To You
- 3:00 The \$Treet 7 : Miracle On The Wall Street
- 4:00 Addicted To Love
- 6:00 Christina's House
- 8:00 National Lampoon's Vegas Vacation
- 10:00 Twister
- 12:15 Moscow On The Hudson
- 2:30 Black Rain
- 5:00 It Could Happen To You
- BBC WORLD
- 6:30 World Business Report
- 7:30 Asia Today Inc Asia Business Report
- 8:30 Asia Today/World Business Report
- 9:30 Asia Today/Asia Business Report
- 10:30 Holiday
- 11:30 Correspondent
- 12:30 Hardtalk
- 1:30 Predictions
- 2:30 Earth Report
- 3:30 Hardtalk
- 4:30 Click Online
- 5:30 Earth Report
- 6:30 Mastermind India
- 7:15 World Business Report
- 7:30 Holiday
- 8:30 Earth Report
- 9:30 Asia Today
- 10:30 Wheels
- 11:30 World Business Report/World Sport
- 12:30 Hardtalk
- 1:30 Talking Movies
- 2:30 World Business Report
- 3:30 Reporters
- 4:30 Asia Business Report/Asia Today
- 5:30 Asia Business Report/Asia Today
- STAR PLUS
- 6:30 Star Geetmala
- 7:30 Shrimati Sharma Ne Kehi Thi
- 8:00 Hit Ya Fit
- 8:30 Good Morning India
- 9:30 Fox Kids-Daily
- 10:30 Small Wonder
- 11:00 Maal Hai To Taal Hai Hera Pheri
- 12:00 Cincinnati Bublabbu
- 12:30 Hit Ya Fit
- 1:00 Tu Tu Main Main
- 1:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki Sanskruti
- 2:30 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi

- 3:00 Shagun
- 3:30 Shanti
- 4:00 Meri Saheli
- 4:30 Kaahin Kissi Roz
- 5:00 Telebrands
- 5:30 Hit Ya Fit
- 6:00 Small Wonder
- 6:30 Fox Kids Daily
- 7:30 Sanskruti
- 8:00 Tu Tu Main Main
- 8:30 Kalash
- 9:00 Kaahin Kissi Roz...
- 9:30 Kaun Banega Crorepati
- 10:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki
- 11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
- 11:30 Aaj Ki Baat
- 12:00 Shagun
- 12:30 Telebrands
- 1:00 Hit Ya Fit
- 1:30 Meri Saheli
- 2:00 Kaahin Kissi Roz
- 2:30 Ek Main Aur Ek Tu
- 3:00 Maal Hai To Taal Hai
- 3:30 Hera Pheri
- 4:00 Cincinnati Bublabbu
- 4:30 Kyunki Saas Bi Kabhi Bahu Thi
- 5:00 Shanti
- 5:30 Hit Ya Fit
- 6:00 Sanskruti
- STAR GOLD
- 10:30 Woodland Bollywood News
- 11:00 Geet Bahar
- 11:30 Love in Tokyo (Joy Mukherjee, Asha Parekh)
- 3:00 Woodland Bollywood News
- 3:30 Sargam (Raj Kapoor, Rehana)
- 7:00 Geet Bahar
- 7:30 Mangal Masti- Tarana (Dilip Kumar, Madhubala)
- 11:00 Woodland Bollywood News
- 11:30 Champakali (Suchitra Sen, Bharat Bhoshan)
- 3:00 Geet Bahar
- 3:30 Shrimati (Shyama, Nazir Khan, Johar)
- 7:00 Aapas Ki Baat (Raj Babbar, Poonam, Shakti Kapoor)
- STAR WORLD
- 6:00 Water Rats
- 7:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show
- 8:00 Home Improvement
- 8:30 Happy Days
- 9:00 Sabrina The Teenage Witch
- 9:30 Dharma & Greg
- 10:00 Chicago Hope
- 11:00 The Oprah Winfrey

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- STAR MOVIES: 7:00 p.m. **Runaway Bride**. Richard Gere plays a sophisticated New York City reporter who is fired for writing a libelous article about a woman who jilted three men at the altar. However, once he gets to know this "man-eater", played by Julia Roberts, he falls madly in love with her.
- EKUSHEY: 8:00 p.m. **Agun Laga Shondha**. Episode 6: Local grocery shop owner harasses Mohiuddin Master for his dues. Hearing this Chapal tears apart the shop and threatens the shop owner. Master does not like it and falls ill.
- EKUSHEY: 8:30 p.m. **Choto Golper Shombhar: Adu Bhai**. No matter what, Adu Bhai does not stop trying. Adu Bhai is a student of class seven. He is married and has a son who studies in class seven too. Every year his son passes the exam, which he does not.
- STAR WORLD: 12 midnight **Law & Order: Special Victims Unit**. Nocturne: A beloved neighborhood piano teacher is suspected of being a sexual predator who takes advantage of his innocent young students.

PICK OF THE DAY

- 11:00 Hollywood Remembers
- 11:30 Blame It On Rio
- 1:30 Hollywood Remembers
- 2:00 Something Short Of Paradise
- 4:00 Total Recall
- 4:30 Terror Squad
- 6:30 Mississippi Burning
- 9:00 Hollywood Remembers
- 9:30 Code Of Silence
- 11:30 Blame It On Rio
- 1:30 Something Short Of Paradise
- 3:30 Original Sound Track
- 4:00 Terror Squad
- 6:00 Total Recall
- 6:30 China Moon
- ZEE MUSIC
- 8:30 Original Sound Track
- 9:00 Code Of Silence

ZEE CINEMA

- 9:00 Kuch Lamhe Kuch Nagme
- 9:15 Top Of The Tops
- 9:45 Movie Fare
- 10:00 Karamyogi
- 1:00 Cine News
- 1:15 Madhyantar
- 1:30 Izzatdaar
- 5:00 Darpan
- 5:15 Weekend Cinema
- 5:45 Film Time
- 6:00 Andaz Apna Apna
- 9:45 Chatpati Chat
- 10:00 Tara Tum
- 10:30 Meraa do Anmol Ratan
- 2:15 Kuch Lamhe Kuch Nagme
- 2:30 Qatil
- 5:30 Chehren
- 5:45 Film Time
- 6:00 Locket
- ALPHA BANGLA
- 6:30 Ananda Nagarer
- 7:00 Foot Ball
- 7:30 News in Bengali
- 8:00 Aalaap

News Bulletin

- 9:05 Bharat Bhraman
- 9:30 Kichu Smriti Kichu Gaan
- 10:00 Saregama
- 11:05 Fillers
- 12:05 Phoren Maal
- 12:35 Shabab
- 1:05 Zee Music Box
- 1:30 Jharokha
- 2:00 Hit Pe Hit
- 3:00 Artist Of The Fortnight
- 3:30 Tararum
- 4:30 Phoren Maal
- 5:30 Sizzlers
- ZEE TV
- 6:15 Yaadon Ke Pal
- 6:45 Old Is Gold
- 7:00 Bhakti Geet
- 7:30 Jagran
- 8:00 Morning Zee
- 8:30 Nickelodeon
- 9:00 Nickelodeon
- 9:30 Guldasta
- 10:30 Filmi Chakkar
- 11:00 Babul Ki Duayein Leti Ja..
- 11:30 Ek Nazar
- 12:00 Aashirwad
- 12:30 Sangini
- 1:00 Dastaan
- 1:25 Jhalak
- 1:30 Manzilein Apni Apni
- 2:00 Chandan Ka Palna Resham Ki Dori
- 2:30 Amanat
- 3:00 Gharana
- 3:30 Yeh Dil Kya Kare
- 4:00 Kaisa Kahoon?
- 4:30 Ankahee
- 5:00 Nickelodeon
- 5:30 Nickelodeon
- 6:00 Ek Nazar
- 6:30 Banegi Apni Baat
- 7:00 Compact Disc
- 7:30 Ek Nazar
- 8:00 Apun To Bas Vaike Hi Ja..
- 8:30 Babul Ki Duayein Leti Ja..
- 9:00 Basera
- 9:30 Chandan Ka Palna Resham Ki dori
- 10:00 Aanchal Ki Chaon Mein
- 10:30 Gharana
- 11:30 Yeh Dil Kya Kare
- 12:00 Kaisa Kahoon..?
- 12:30 Aashirwad
- 1:00 Saregama
- 2:00 Dastaan
- 2:30 Ek Nazar
- 3:00 Tower House Feature

Film

- 5:45 News In Hindi
- CHANNEL [V]
- 7:30 [V] So Long Gone
- 8:30 [V] Jumpstart
- 10:30 [V] Hit Machine
- 12:30 [V] Jungli Jukebox
- 1:00 [V] FDFS
- 1:30 [V] Hit Machine
- 2:00 [V] Colossal Chaos Countdown
- 3:30 [V] Hit Machine
- 4:30 [V] Hotline
- 5:30 [V] Very
- 7:30 Hit Machine
- 8:00 Grade Films
- 9:00 [V] Hit Machine
- 9:30 [V] Jungli Jukebox
- 10:30 [V] FDFS
- 10:30 Hit Machine
- 11:00 Late Night
- 12:00 Hit Machine
- 12:30 So Long Gone
- 1:00 Hit Machine
- ANIMAL PLANET
- 6:30 Animal Doctor II
- 7:00 The Aquanauts
- 7:30 Amazing Wilds II
- 8:00 Really Wild Show
- 8:30 Animals A-Z
- 9:00 Petcetera
- 9:30 Zoo Life With Jack Hanna
- 10:00 Animal X
- 10:30 Madison's Adventures I
- 11:00 Skippy
- 11:30 Petersburg USA
- 12:00 Horse Tales II
- 12:30 Animal Planet Safari
- 1:30 Champions Of The Wild II
- 2:00 Living Dangerously I
- 2:30 K-9 to 5 Season II
- 3:00 Judge Wapner's Animal Court
- 3:30 Monkey Business III
- 4:00 Emergency Vets I
- 4:30 Rolf's Amazing World of Animals I
- 5:00 Animal Doctor II
- 5:30 Animals A-Z
- 6:00 O'Shea's Big Adventure II
- 6:30 Really Wild Show
- 7:00 The Aquanauts
- 7:30 Vets In Practice-Season II
- 8:00 Tuesday Trauma
- 8:30 Wildlife Emergency II
- 9:00 Velvet Claw
- 9:30 Animal Planet Safari
- 10:30 Natural World
- 11:30 Vets in Practice-Season II
- 1:00 Tuesday Trauma
- 1:30 Velvet Claw
- 2:30 Animal Planet Safari
- 3:30 Natural World
- 5:30 Champions Of The Wild II
- 6:00 Living Dangerously I

SPORTS

- 6:00 Hockey Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis (if necessary)
- 6:30 Women'S Preview/Basketball Wnba Basketball New York, Ny Usa Sacramento Marc New York Liberty(S)
- 8:30 Sport News/Sportscenter Hindi(L)
- 9:00 Billiards Premier Snooker League Premeier Snooker League 2001(T)
- 11:00 Golf US, Women's Open Golf Champs US Women's Open Golf Championship Southern Round(R)
- 1:00 Cricket Ecb International Cricket The Npower Test Series Manchester, England Pakistan @ England 2nd Test, Day 5, Highlights(S)
- 2:00 Sportscenter (S)
- 3:00 Hockey Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis (if necessary)
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- 11:00 Golf US, Women's Open Golf Champs US Women's Open Golf Championship Southern Round(R)
- 1:00 Cricket Ecb International Cricket The Npower Test Series Manchester, England Pakistan @ England 2nd Test, Day 5, Highlights(S)
- 2:00 Sportscenter (S)
- 3:00 Hockey Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis Nhl Playoffs-Stanley Cup Fianlis (if necessary)
- 4:00 Billiards Premier Snooker League Premeier Snooker League 2001(T)
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