

Video

A comic tragic mime of human guinea-pigs
Deutsches Theater der Gegenwart showcases contemporary German thoughts on politics

SAIFUL ISLAM

THE Goethe-Institut Dhaka and Zahir Raihan Film Society jointly organized award-winning contemporary German plays featuring political doctrines. The four dramas, Endgame, the Kiss of Forgetting, The Art of Giving Service, The Devil's General, relatively of the same theatrical nature focus on the morose aspect of the contemporary German political lifeworld where only the lie reigns and man suffers.

Samuel Beckett's End Game exposes the characters to an austere light. And fixes them in front of the miseries incarnated by the flaws of political steps. We live in a sterile world and sometimes unreasonably we try to deny this fact which is enormous. Its enormity is larger than life. We are trapped in the spells



George Tabori -- director of Beckett's 'End Game'



Botho Strauss -- writer of 'The Kiss of forgetting'



Carl Zuckmayer -- the author of 'The Devil's General'

of the illusion. An illusion that cheats us relentlessly and creates a euphoria of hope hanging before us. Though we try hard to

ensnare the hope it always keeps its transitory nature. And

fleets whenever one tries to go near to it. David Hayman demands that End Game 'is impoverished in every sense, but dauntingly rich in implications and effects.' The effects are clear and palpable. The presentation is not opaque. It is really difficult to find a minute example of irrelevant and unnecessary part in the play. And Beckett's meticulous work was presented faultlessly in the video. The play does not go by a non-zigzag path. Mysteries are introduced and we are given leisure to taste that. Smaller examples of experience are put forward before the reader, they are not bullied by the aura of experience that Beckett wants them to taste.

The play has four major characters and two other supernumeraries a small boy and a woman who is dead. The important characters are Hamm, the servant son Clov, Magg and Nell.

It is The Waiting for Godot action, the more popular of this kind of canon that could be compared with the action of Endgame. Apparently it is a play of non-action. A sort of time waster mask is glued on each aspect of the play. It necessarily kills time. Christopher Marthaler and Stephanie Carp's The Art of Giving Service could be seen also as a time killing play with a few glimpses of unmixed laughter. Here laughter is thought provoking and soiled with, quite deliberately, slapsticks and bawdy jokes. Elements of vulgar volatile actions, as a form, focus on the vulgar ways of the political leaders. Their ways of nepotism and dirty ways of gaining their ends are compared with the childlike action of haggardly, unhealthy actors.

The play starts with a long speech, and ends with speech. Numerous speeches are interwoven in the course of the play all of them reiterating the

conventional political speeches that create colourful bubbles of half-truths. And the listeners listen ardently to them looking at the fumbling stumbling speakers. The way they practice the craft of delivering speech is clumsy, pointing towards the utility of listening to speeches when they steps down to the point of the speakers personal interest. The exploitation is ridiculed, and the race of politicians is satirized.

Botho Strauss' The Kiss of Forgetting, again, is a morose portrait of lifea rationalized presentation of polygamized sex-starved characters. The play of experimenting on the human puppets is presented ludicrously. Comically and tragically diminishing the human part of the characters and making them instruments of their palates.



Scene from the play 'Year Zero'

RECOMMENDATIONS

Painting exhibition

Art works of Bangladesh landscape done by an American artist, Sarah Sutro, is being exhibited at Divine Art Gallery at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the city. The exhibition is open for all from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. everyday till March 18.

First Solo

The inaugural ceremony of the first solo art exhibition by Farah Deeba Zaman, a student of East West University will be held today at 10:30a.m. at the university common-room (ground floor), Annex Building, EWU. Dr. Md. Farashuddin, President, Board of Governors of East West University will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest. The exhibition will continue till March 21.

Festival

To commemorate the completion of fifty years of Language Movement, Dhaka Theatre organises a series of programmes including Theatre Festival, Seminar, Village Theater Convention and Reception from March 16 to 22 at Mahila Samiti Auditorium in the city. A two-day seminar on the key notes like Art, Theatre, Poetry and Music will be held on March 21 and 22.

Saree display

A three day saree exhibition of Indian designer, Abha Dalmia starts in the city at Mayasir from today. Abha presents a large collection of traditional Indian sarees and the display is open for all from 10:00 a.m. to 8 p.m. on March 17, 18 and 19.

Art Exhibition

Japan and Bangladesh are holding a joint art exhibition at the National Museum art gallery in the city. The exhibition will end on March 20 that is featuring works of renowned Bangladeshi artist Mohammad Kibria, those of Noriko Yanagisawa, a Japanese contemporary artist and works of Kazi Ghiyasuddin, a Bangladeshi artist who is presently based in Japan.

Solo exhibition

A solo art exhibition of Abdus Shakoor is being held at Bengal Art Gallery at Dhanmondi in the city. The exhibition features recent works of the artist who is inclined to pause and look back, to lift the fraying mantle and enquire a willing legacy. The exhibition will remain open for all from 12 p.m. to 8p.m. till March 29, 2002.

Fashion

Paris comes to Dhaka

The French Trade Commission in Dhaka holds Paris Spring/Summer 2002 Fashion Collection at a city hotel

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

THE time piece was reading 7:30 on the evening of March 14 as a large gathering of elites and fashion enthusiasts of all ages filled up the lobby floor in front of the ballroom at Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the city. The Paris Spring/Summer 2002 Fashion Collection, an 'Haute Couture' fashion show that was organized by the Trade Commission of the Embassy of France in Bangladesh was held at the venue.

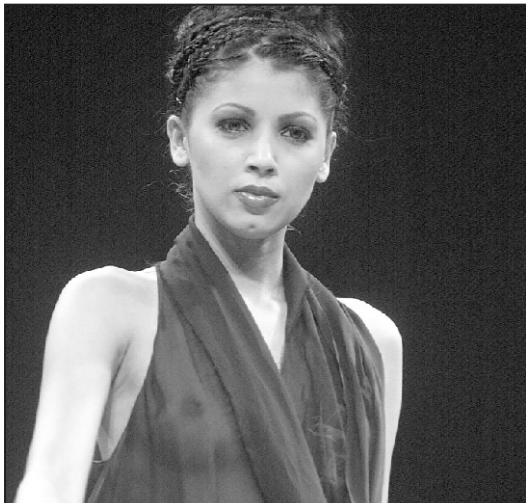
French, Indian and Bengali models all of who appeared on the stage attired in traditional nakshikantha sari, shalwar kameez and long dresses of pants and tops. Maheen Khan, Kuhu, Nasrine Karim, Anila Huq and Roxana Salaam, five local designers had their designed clothing in the show.

Evening gowns and party dresses of latest European style could be seen among the outfits worn by the models. World famous fashion designers whose designed dresses were displayed at the fashion show in Dhaka, included

Galliano, Emmanuelle Ungaro, Gilles Rosier, Kenzo, Pierre Balmain, Eymeric Francois and Jean-Louis Scherrer and Gres.

Since early November of last year, the organizers including Elizabeth Yearbury from French Trade Commission in Dhaka were busy preparing plans and schedules and two press previews were held at the Sonargaon hotel to inform the local pressmen of the proceedings.

Tickets were sold from the office of the Trade Commission at a rate of taka 3000 (single) and taka 6000 (couple). As rumors spread across



A gorgeously-dressed model steals the show

First half of the show included presentation of catwalk from



A model at the French fashion show appears in traditional sari

Asturo Tayama, Balanciaga, Dice Kayec, Dominique Sirop, John

the venue site, it was heard that some 650 tickets were released for the event while the sitting capacity at the venue was around 500.

Dinner was scheduled at 8:30 p.m. but the guests had to wait till 10 before they could satisfy their palate. Guests were seen standing in groups as the organisers were having trouble in providing accommodation to the large gathering.

At a certain stage, to make things easy extra tables had to be fitted in. Still many were seen leaving the ballroom, enraged and upset.

The main event of the catwalk that was originally scheduled for 10:00 p.m. started at around 11:15, bringing in disappointment and irritation among the guests.

British-American Tobacco and Emirates sponsored the fashion show.

Cinema

'A Beautiful Mind' subject denies anti-Semitism

AFP, Los Angeles

THE subject of Oscar-favourite film "A Beautiful Mind," Nobel laureate John Nash, has denied he was anti-Semitic amid a pre-Oscars row in Hollywood over the movie treatment of life story.

In an interview with US television's 60 Minutes programme to be broadcast Sunday, Nash -- who overcame schizophrenia to win the Nobel prize -- admits he may have said things while delusional that could be construed as anti-Semitic.

"I did have strange ideas during certain periods of time," Nash said according to excerpts from the interview released Friday by CBS television. "It's really my subconscious talking, it was really that, I know that now," said 73-year-old Nash, adding that he also heard voices.

The rare interview came amid a dispute in which the makers of "A Beautiful Mind" -- a favourite for the best picture Oscar to be bestowed on March 24 -- have been accused of leaving out distasteful details of Nash's life.

The film is based on a book by Sylvia Nasar which describes his alleged dislike of Jews, homosexual encounters and adultery at certain times of his life.

Universal Studios, which produced the film, was furious that a spotlight had been turned on the fact that those details had been omitted from the film, just Oscar voting was ending.

Executives hinted that the sudden media focus was part of a smear campaign and said producers had set out to make a drama inspired by Nash's life, not a bio-pic.

Universal's fears that the furore may hurt the film's Oscar potential stem from a similar row

about the historical accuracy of its 1999 film "Hurricane," which ended up losing out on the best picture and best actor nods.

That picture, about beleaguered boxing champion Ruben Carter, starred Denzel Washington.

Even star Russell Crowe came out fighting on behalf of "Mind" earlier this week in comments which echoed Nash's remarks.

"This is not about a film but about a person," Crowe told a luncheon of Oscar nominees on Monday.

"To quote things he might have said, you have to think of who he is and the period of his life when this happened. This is a fellow that was getting messages from aliens from the New York Times," he said.

Universal feared that the row could damage the Oscar potential of "A Beautiful Mind," which is nominated for eight statuettes including best film, best actor for Crowe, who plays Nash, and best director for Ron Howard.

Nash's wife Alicia, who stood by his side through his harrowing journey from eccentric mathematical genius, to delusional schizophrenic to Nobel economics prize winner, meanwhile denied he was gay during the 60 Minutes interview.

"I've known him since I was 20 and that's just not true. I should know," she told 60 Minutes.

John Nash also revealed that his son, Johnny, also suffers from schizophrenia and said that his concern for the boy may have helped him to recover partially in the 1970s and 1980s ahead of his 1994 Nobel win.

"It's possible. It's almost as if a demon might have passed from one host to another," he said.

Art

Is this the smile of 'The Tigress'?

Richard Starnes of Edmonton Journal looks into the mystery of Mona Lisa: New theory suggests world's most famous face belonged to a courtesan and revolutionary

A leading historian claims to have solved international art's most enigmatic mystery -- the identity of Mona Lisa. Magdalena Soest is convinced art's most famous face belongs to Caterina Sforza, a beautiful, promiscuous Italian courtesan who was nicknamed The Tigress.

Soest, a respected 56-year-old German art historian, spent a decade trying to unravel the true identity of the young woman whose haunting face was turned into the world's most recognizable face by Leonardo Da Vinci 500 years ago.

The German artist and consultant says Mona Lisa is the Duchess of Forli and Imola, who had been born the illegitimate Caterina Sforza. She says Leonardo used a portrait of the duchess that had been painted by the Italian master Lorenzo di Credi.

Germany's largest daily newspaper, Bild Zeitung, has published pictures of the two paintings side by side, pointing to obvious likenesses. Soest says she became convinced after undertaking detailed studies of the nose, lips, hair and bone structure of the two faces.

Until now, the most popular theory had been that the enigmatic beauty was a young Florentine woman named Monna Lisa, who married the well-known figure Francesco del Giocondo in 1495 and came to be known as La Gioconda.

Now art historians are taking serious notice of Ms. Soest's research.

Certainly it holds more credibility than other theories suggesting Mona Lisa was a prostitute, transvestite or even Leonardo himself in drag.

Who is the latest addition to the fascinating lore of the Mona Lisa? Caterina Sforza was born in 1462, the illegitimate daughter of the Duke of Milan, and became a legendary figure in Renaissance Italy.

Engaged at the age of nine, she was 15 when she married Girolamo Riario, a nephew of Pope Sixtus IV.

The pope, who gave the couple



title to the cities of Forli and Imola, died in 1484. This prompted the Duchess and her husband to lead troops in storming one of Rome's greatest citadels, the Castel Sant'Angelo, in a fruitless effort to install their candidate as the new pope.

The duchess -- more a leader than her husband -- succeeded in capturing the citadel but was forced to surrender 13 days later.

The couple retreated to their lands at Forli and in 1488 the duke

was killed during a revolt. The duchess and her children escaped.

During her life, she married three times, had 11 children and was reputed to have taken countless lovers. She even spent a year in jail after plotting to poison Pope Alexander VI. She was 46 when she died in 1509.

Source: Internet

Table with 4 columns: Date, Time, Drama, Production. It lists the schedule for Dhaka Theatre Utsav from March 16 to 22.