

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cinema

Meghla Aakash, a full length feature film on awareness against HIV/AIDS has been released in different cinema halls of the city. With casts of two renowned Bollywood superstars Shabana Azmi and Ayub Khan, the film also features local stars like Moushumi, Punima, Shakil Khan, Amit Hasan, Ferdousi Majumdar, Shahidul Alam Sachchu and many other well known faces. It is an experimental production done by the organisation of FemCom, a N.G.O. The film is recommended for adults only.

Documentary

Premier show of Phoenix, a documentary on sculptor Ferdousi Priyobhashini will be screened today at 6 p.m. at the Russian Cultural center in the city. Eminent filmmaker M.A. Samad will inaugurate the show that will highlight on various incidents of oppression and torture done on Ferdousi Priyobhashini during the period of Liberation War. Nishat Jahan Rana, a young filmmaker of the new generation, produces the short film.

Solo exhibition

A solo art exhibition of Abdu Shakkor 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 energeise a wilting legacy. The exhibition will remain open for all from 12 p.m. to 8p.m. till March 29, 2002.

Sculpture exhibition

A weeklong sculpture and art exhibition by artist Nisar Hossain starts at Gallery 21 in the city from March 25. Sculptor Ferdousi Priyobhashini and painter Abul Barq Alvi will inaugurate the exhibition at 6p.m. on March 25.

Solo art

A solo exhibition of Ronni Ahmmed started at the Alliance Francaise de dhaka art gallery in the city. The exhibition remains open for all till April 5.

Music

A musical feast

Dhaka and Chittagong were treated to two nights of wonderful Indian classical music courtesy of a renowned vocalist and a master instrumentalist

EMILE CHABAL

ON Tuesday and Wednesday nights, the people of Dhaka were fortunate enough to enjoy two concerts by virtuosi of the Indian music scene. Having played the previous nights in Chittagong, Buddhadev Das Gupta and Shruti Sadolikar came to the National Museum Auditorium in Dhaka as part of a programme organised by the Indian Council

for Cultural Relations.

The double-bill started with a concert by the world-class sarod player Buddhadev Das Gupta. Known as one of the leading exponents of the instrument, he was trained in two different *gharana* or schools and was a disciple to several sarod maestros for over 38 years. During the two-hour concert he developed some magnificent themes on top of a variety of *raags* and songs.

The opening *raag* was around 45 minutes long and featured some highly effective improvisation. He kept the audience riveted by using a veritable plethora of different techniques. In addition to the single-note slides so common to Indian instrumental music, he would occasionally break into a form of strumming. Often, he gave his phrases direction simply by creating a percussive effect while playing the string.

In Debendrakanti Chakraborty he also had a partner worthy of the centre stage himself. After his introduction, 25 minutes into the opening piece, he accompanied Das Gupta with precision and delicacy.

Particularly dazzling was his ability to improvise yet always hit the end of the phrase with unflinching regularity. Moreover, he was able to make the tabla 'talk' by subtly adjusting its pitch while playing. In so doing, it was as if there was another instrument on the stage. It is hardly surprising therefore, that the sarod and tabla interaction was so intuitive despite the fact that communication between the two was kept to a bare minimum. Both the performers were joined by Sanjay Banerjee on tanpura.

By some extraordinary stroke of bad luck, the sarod's string broke just as the trio was reaching the end of the first *raag*. However, after a brief interlude to change the string, they reached an explosive and thoroughly satisfying climax.

The rest of the concert was made up of other *raags* and an adaptation of a Tagore song. All of these were performed with flawless musicality. In particular, two aspects are worthy of note. First, the original way in which Das Gupta shaped his phrases



Buddhadev Das Gupta

to increase intensity. Second, Chakraborty's absolute mastery of the tabla, which meant that he was able to strike the right balance between accompanist and soloist.

In a poignant speech after his performance, Das Gupta said that, though he came from this region, it had taken him until the age of 69 before he had been invited to Bangladesh. He was given a standing ovation. One can only hope that he returns soon.

The following evening was no less impressive. This time it was a quartet of Vishwanth Shirodkar on tabla, Anand Krishnaji Kunte on sarangi and Shruti Sadolikar as the vocalist. Prakash Arjon Shejwal on pakhwaj joined two-thirds of the

way through the performance.

Sadolikar was trained in the *Jaipur gharana* musical tradition and is currently working with Ustad Alladiya Khan. She has become one of the foremost champions of Indian classical singing as well as other styles such as *tumris* and *ghazals*. Judging by Wednesday's performance, it is easy to see why.

As before, the group began with a long *raag* in a traditional style giving ample scope for enlargement of the basic theme. Sadolikar was every bit as good as her instrumental counterpart had been the day before. Her soaring lines often pushed the amplification system to its limits and, again, the direction she gave to her phrases was a joy to listen to.

Though the tabla playing was more straightforward and less subtle than the day before, it was nevertheless charismatic enough to provide a sound backing. Kunte's sarangi also did a fine job in following the vocalist's demanding melodies.

The second half of the evening was devoted to a selection of devotional and love songs rendered into a *raag* style. She has recently been awarded a fellowship to study the difference between her local Hindu songs and the mainstream *raag* tradition and one of the pieces she chose was related to this project.

Throughout, the interaction between the players was exemplary, even if Sadolikar stole the show with her rich voice aug-

mented only by a light vibrato. Her performance richly deserved the applause it was given by the spectators.

The surroundings too, were well chosen. The auditorium at the National Museum was pleasantly air-conditioned and the seats were comfortable. Amplification was adequate and well balanced.

The two concerts proved to be an excellent advertisement for Indian classical music and showed that is perfectly possible to appreciate this type of highly complex music without understanding every one of its technical intricacies. Perhaps the best thing to say is that these concerts were deeply musical. That is enough.

TV Drama

A comedy of special zest

Diprovision holds press show of a comedy serial in the city

TAWFIQUE ALI

SATSA *Satattar*, a television comedy serial, was screened at a gathering at WVA auditorium in the city on March 19 that comprised pressmen of different national dailies and weeklies, performers of the drama, playwright, producer, patrons, director and technicians. Diprovision, a TV package programme marketing house, arranged the event to exchange views on the drama, with the concerned invitees. An informal welcome address by the playwright and performers focused on different features of the serial.

Plot of the play evolves around its central theme dealing with the confrontation between universal human relation and the mechanised modern civilisation. Forkan Ali falls in love with Nina daughter of a middle class family. Her friend Sina has a friendship with a wealthy young man Yakub. In this play, possession of a car is a mark of social status of its owner. Yakub owns a car but Forkan does not. Nina's father imposes a precondition that the man who wishes to marry his daughter has to possess a car and a diamond ring.

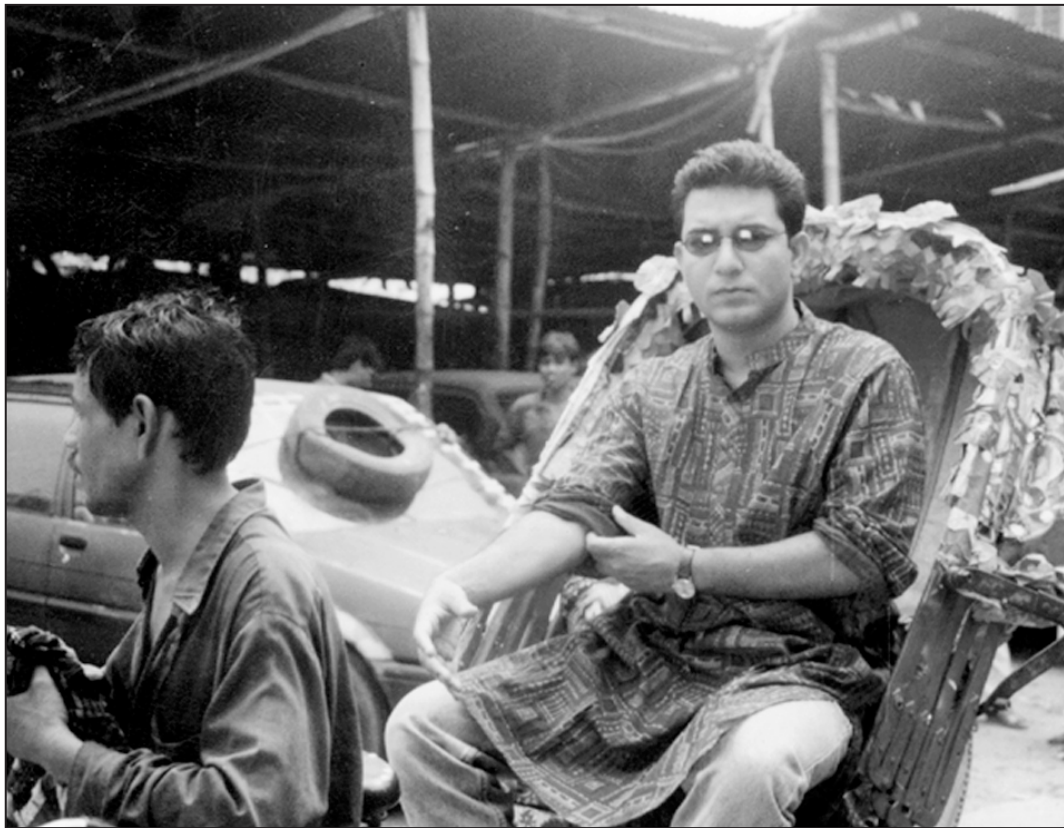
Forkan desperately seeks to buy a car but can not afford it. At last he borrows money from his

friend Soifal to buy a car. Soifal too has an affinity for Sina. Forkan employs a driver named Elahi Bhorasha, as he himself can not drive the car. Elahi Bhorasha is very cunning and a fraud. Different technical faults of the newly bought car later on indicate Forkan's helplessness and causes humour. Nina's father imposes a new condition on his daughter's marriage when Forkan visits him. Forkan seeks help from his aunt in this regard.

On the other hand Forkan terminates his driver, being annoyed by his activities. Soifal manages to get back his ex-loved one from Yakub. Nina's father settles her marriage with another man. While dejected with this shock, fortune laughs at Forkan. A billionaire buys Forkan's car with a high price to send it to an old car exhibition. Forkan buys a brand new car with the money and goes to marry Nina.

While conducting the programme, noted performer Tareq Anam Khan, on behalf of Diprovision called upon the pressmen to extend promotional cooperation to the striving theatre movement. "And as such country's theatre movement would progress bringing about well being to the society", said Anam.

Selim Al-Din, the playwright,



Toukir plays Forkan Ali

reflected on the play's technical and thematic aspects and how its production got underway. "In respect of form this play is of narrative stream.

The concept has become a familiar one in the theatre but I have tried to experiment the form in television. This kind of comedy form is quite new for television. Though full of comic elements, I have infused an under current political message in it. Elahi Bhorasha is an important character that reflects the political satire and serves my purpose of hinting at political hypocrisy. My another objective in this play is to capture a certain middle class day-dreaming group of the country and nature of their dream, which can pose a threat in peoples' lives", he said.

This plot was experimental also for its young director Yousof Hasan Aurka who said, "I was quite tensed with the

venture but confident. Selim Al-Din is directly my theatre teacher whom I requested to give me his play for production. At the out set I was apprehensive about whether I would be able to suit the play, full of excessive narrative, to the audience. Despite my apprehension my determination, was that, in case it happens, I would lose in a bigger challenge."

Toukir Ahmed plays Forkan Ali in the comedy.

Speakers on the occasion appreciated his adeptness in playing a comic character so consistently.

Toukir made his response saying, "we enjoyed a lot during the play's shooting. But after having read the script I was rather confused. I could not make out its message on the first hand. Gradually I got involved more and more with its subject matter. It's a comedy of

different stream in which there is a political message.

Bipasha Hayat plays the character of Nina. Her comment on the play was. "It's pretty interesting. Its political message is not apparent. Me too was confused about it in the beginning. On repeated and careful attempt one can unfold its inning meaning and multifasion interpretations."

Welcome address was followed by a special screening of the comedy's 4th and 5th episodes to provide the guests with a glimpse of the production. The comedy serial is currently being aired on Bangladesh Television. While summing up the programme, Tareq Anam regretted that quite often this state-run TV channel fails to adhere to its schedule on various pretexts causing us to suffer loss.

Documentary

On the life of a soldier

Premier show of Phoenix, a documentary, to be held today in the city in which Ferdousi Priyobhashini, a war daughter and sculptor narrates her dreadful suffering in captivity during the '71 war

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

PREMIER show of Phoenix, a documentary film on the life and activities of sculptor and Liberation war victim, Ferdousi Priyobhashini, will be screened at Russian Cultural center auditorium in the city. The show will be held on March 23 at 6 p.m. and to be inaugurated by M.A. Samad, an eminent film producer of the country.

In the documentary, done by Nishat Jahan Rana, a young filmmaker, Ferdousi spreads out in intricate details, the horrifying story of her life in front of the audience. She narrates about the inhuman incidents and describes the way she was tortured in the alien camps during the War of Liberation in 1971.

Ferdousi, after the liberation of the country, has told her real-life tragic stories to many but it was Rana, the lone person, who was inspired to create a fine documentary on the life of the suffered heroine.

On inquiring about the title of the film, Rana says, "Theme of my film is that in resemblance of the mythological bird, Phoenix, Ferdousi manages to reincarnate again and again, with renewed energy only to fight against all hardship and ill-treatments of the society. Here lies the success of giving such a name to my documentary'.

The filmmaker further says that through suffering and immolation,



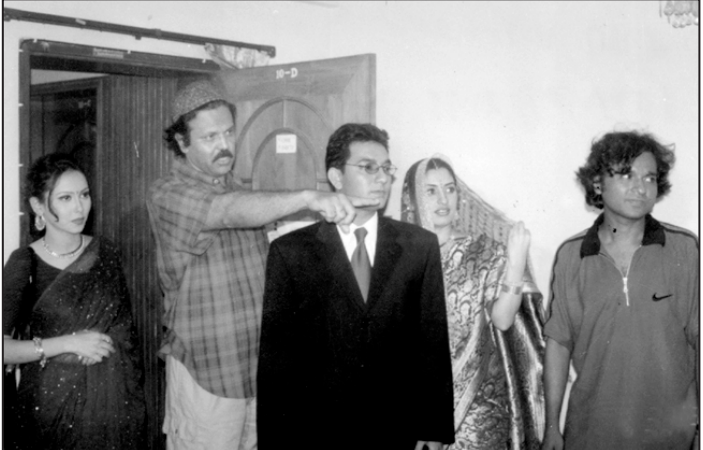
Ferdousi Priyobhashini

the sculptor regains new life and fuelled-up spirit. Phoenix likes to portray the unpleasant episodes of her life in her carvings and creative installations. Each and every structure has its own dimension, style, outlook and ornamentation.

'Phoenix' has been filmed on 28 mm reel through the lenses of eminent videographer Pankaj Palit,

Mosharrarf Hossain and Peter Bockwill. The documentary has filmed on Betacam format.

Shafiqul Islam performed the animations while Tariq Hossain was in charge of editing. Sheikh Sadi Khan, a renowned music maestro of the country, composed the background music.



Naila, Tareq Anam, Toukir Ahmed, Bipasha Hayat and Pavel (L to R) appear in a scene from Satsa Satattar

Liberation War Museum turns six

Liberation war museum has drawn up weeklong elaborate programmes to mark its 6th founding anniversary and 31st Independence Day beginning on March 21. Below is the programme schedule.

March 23: at 6:30 p.m. at Museum's Cafe Theater

. Banglar Gaan (Music of Bengal) by Shubir Nandi to be followed by dance performance by Nitrom Dance Troupe under the direction of renowned dancer Tamanna Rahman.

March 24: at 6:30 p.m. Sunday at Museum's Cafe Theater

The Chayanaout cultural group will present gongs.

March 25: at 6:30 p.m. Monday at Museum's Cafe Theater

Lightning of Candles in remembrance of the martyrs of the dark night of 1971 when Pakistan Army began the massacre of Banglaeas. Poetry recitation by leading Poetry Recitation Groups.

March 26: at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Museum's Cafe Theater

People's song by Protul Mukhopadhyaya, original singer and lyricist of the well known song 'Ami Banglar Gan Gai. Ami Banglar Gan Gai...'