

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, Purnima, 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.

Solo exhibition

A solo art exhibition of Abdu Shakoar 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 enliven a willing 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 which began on March 25, is going on at the city's Gallery 21.

Solo art show

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

Prize giving ceremony

Nestle Bangladesh Limited holds a prize giving ceremony at Bates Centre, House # 55, Road # 4/A, Satmasjit Road, Dhanmondi for 20 winner child artists who took part in a drawing competition entitled 'Draw dream; Win prize' at Russian Cultural Centre in the city.

Fashion

Muslin makes a come back

Rina Latif's spring summer 2002 collection earns accolade from fashion aficionados



NAFID IMRAN AHMED

If someone is passionately involved in re-popularising the lost muslin, it's Rina Latif. Her spring-summer 2002 collection at the Winter Garden on March 28 is a testimony to the wonders that can be achieved through muslin.

"There is so much you can do with muslin. It's such a romantic fabric, almost magical," says Latif, who did a course in fashion designing from Texas University after graduating from Dhaka Govern-

ment College. Rina proved her words. Working with hundreds of weavers and craftsmen she created her outstanding spring-summer 2002 collection with printing, embroidery and her awesome zardosi work on the fabric.

Rina's spring-summer 2002 collection started off with the 'white collection', a range of muslin saris and salwar-kameeze ensemble in white having bright white works on them. As the models walked down the ramp one after another the

beauty of these exquisite fashion wears revealed. Some of these white works in the *anchals* and dupattas were embellished with pure zari, sequins and mirror work. The men walked down wearing white panjabis in tissue and netted muslin fabric.

"Colour in muslin" was the title of the second queue. Rina's artistic talents are influenced by what she calls the "wonderful colours of the world." She loves nature and has a strong passion for flowers, a fact



which has been made apparent in this particular queue where she presented various colours in muslin and used block print and hand embroidery on them. One of the dresses was a combination of green, light green and white having lovely floral prints. Most of the dresses in this collection were either block or hand embroidered floral motifs escorted by a burst of wonderful colours such as red, blue, purple, oyster-white, pink etc.

Rina loves nature and has a strong passion for flowers, a fact,

which has been made apparent in almost all her creations, mostly in the third queue she presented floral motifs in soft pastels. Lime flowers on bright white body, white on pink and heavy golden embroidery on purple proves that the colours and motif Rina uses varies according to her mood and, of course, the season.

A beautiful golden butterfly on a greenish blue sari the following queue started off with a model wearing this exclusive wear. The speciality of this queue was that



most of the dresses had a big butterfly, bird or flower motifs as a point of focus on them. The men wore kurtas having heavy embroidery works in white.

Next Rina presented her bridal collection. Most of these works were done with zari and mirror work on different shades of pink, brownish red, black, purple and white, which bought out different flavours in the fabric.

Rina has fused the timeless muslin with mirpuri katan, silk and chiffon to create her spring-summer

2002 collection. The final queue of the evening, 'The Grand Finale' had it all. She also created an Indo-western fusion theme with jamdani.

As a first-time participant in Bridal Asia 2001, which was held in Delhi from September 29 to October 1, 2001 Rina earned appreciation for her collection of 150 different pieces. And now her spring-summer 2002 collection takes her to another height in the world of haute couture.



Models present designer Rina Latif's Spring-Summer Collection 2002 at Winter Garden of Sheraton on March 28



PHOTOS: ZAHEDUL I. KHAN

Interview

'It is like a mindgame'

Ad and documentary filmmaker, Mani Shankar's first feature debut, December 16. Aman Singh talks to the director to find out what provoked him to make the movie everybody is gung-ho about

MANI Shankar is visibly proud of his first feature debut, December 16. "Check out the special effects," he tells me. From what one can make out from a promo capsule, it looks impressive. Crafted at home, not Hollywood studios, where most Indian directors head, Shankar says it took a lot of hard work to recreate the kind of special effects that can compete with the best in the world.

Q: All this hype, why?

Let me start by telling you something very interesting and peculiar. This movie has a very coincidental relationship with tehelka. Through the movie, I have shown a somewhat similar investigative story to the tehelka expose last year in March. I am sure people will feel that we have tried to copy the tehelka expose, but the fact is that by the time this expose happened, we had finished shooting about 60-70 per cent of the movie.

For some time, we were totally shocked and stunned at the coincidence. I mean, I felt that here we are showing this on the screen and someone there has actually done it in reality! It was amazing!

Anyway, the movie is an investigative story where the challenge is an invisible enemy and the soul is perseverance. The whole team is faced against an incredibly intelligent and faceless enemy who is resourceful and tactful. It is like a mindgame, where the investigators have to guess the plan and chalk out what the enemy will do next and how. While the whole concept and storyline is extremely absorbing and scientific, we have taken great care to make it easy viewing. The movie is intricate but, at the same time, it does not follow any

formulaic pattern. It throws you into reality, chaapaak!

Q: Were you inspired by the tehelka expose and the techniques tehelka used?

No, there is no connection with tehelka. We started shooting in May-June 2000, and the tehelka expose was in March 2001. Nevertheless, it was nothing less than a shock at the coincidence of my concept and tehelka's.

Q: Who conceptualised the movie?

It is my story, my script, I am the director, and the special effects have also been conducted by me. This is like pulling my own collar up but that's how it is.

Q: Is it based on personal experience?

You see, terrorists and scriptwriters have open minds, they are the most creative people around. When 9/11 happened, the Pentagon had asked moviemakers to tell them how the terrorists would react in the future, precisely because of this reason. It is only the army that has a nuts-and-bolts mind.

While the backend of the movie is that mayhem can be smuggled into the country from Russia, the front face of the movie is Dalai Street and white-collar crimes. I have made documentaries for the government in Kashmir about the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and then I was also there during the Mumbai blasts. Did you know the RDX that blew up Mumbai was smuggled in from the Mumbai coast? All this information helped me conceptualise the movie.

Q: I see in the four-minute clip you just showed that there is a heavy dose of special effects...

Yes, I have personally headed a five-member team in



this and introduced these special effects. These include 3-D graphics, holograms and digital plastic surgery that has made Danny and Gulshan (Grover) look 30 years younger. Then there are things like the trajectory of a bullet coming from behind and going through the body of a person and out from the front. Techniques that are very zealously guarded by the people in America and other places. They told me, 'Give us \$50,000 million and take the technology,' and, of course, we did not have that kind of money. So, we have done all this indigenously...and I think, we have succeeded.

Q: The title, December 16, has the throb of a war movie...

No, it is not about war. It starts with Pakistan surrendering to India over the Bangladesh issue on December 16, 1971. And then it continues from there into an investigation by the revenue intelligence service. It is a mind-game thriller. It exists at the street level as well as at the cerebral level.

Q: Did the plot require you to

know the ways of the Indian army?

Not the army. See, I'll explain: a movie must have style and content, if it doesn't have even one of the two, it either becomes boring or is useless. There should be a blend of both resulting in a subliminal punch. The viewers' reactions and emotions must be played upon. Their head must be satisfied before their heart is.

Q: Does it have any connection with the attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001?

None at all. That was a tragedy for Indian history, and although we have made a promo with that, there is nothing in the movie regarding that, because by that time (the attack took place) we were in the dubbing stage.

What I was, and am, concerned about is that the nation is continuously under a credible threat of these white-collar crimes that lead to other things.

Q: How did you decide on the cast?

My story is so huge, so big, that I did not want big Bollywood stars to hijack and eclipse it. If I wanted, I could have roped in big names, but I purposely did not want to do that because I want people to see my movie for the story, not for the star. It is so movie-centric that it overwhelms.

Q: Why did you choose Danny Denzongpa? He's been off the big screen for such a long time...

He is dynamic and has the look that I needed for the movie. I am sure he will win some "Best Actor" award this season for the work he has done.

Q: And Dipannita (Sharma)?

I wanted a female who looked "macho-sexy" and that is

what I found in her. She is tough and, at the same time, she has a soft heart capable of falling in love. She gives the look of "don't-mess-with-me-or-else" with her tall height and supple body. But she also is feminine.

I have always said that my movie has no heroines, just heroes and there has been no gender distinction in the shooting of the movie right from the beginning. She is a woman, agreed, but she can do everything a man does, and some dirty things that even men can't. I didn't want any other already cast heroine, to avoid a preset image.

Q: Is India ready for sophisticated techniques like the ones you have used in the movie? Wouldn't it isolate a large section of Indian populace ignorant about gizmos? Or is this movie aimed at the international market?

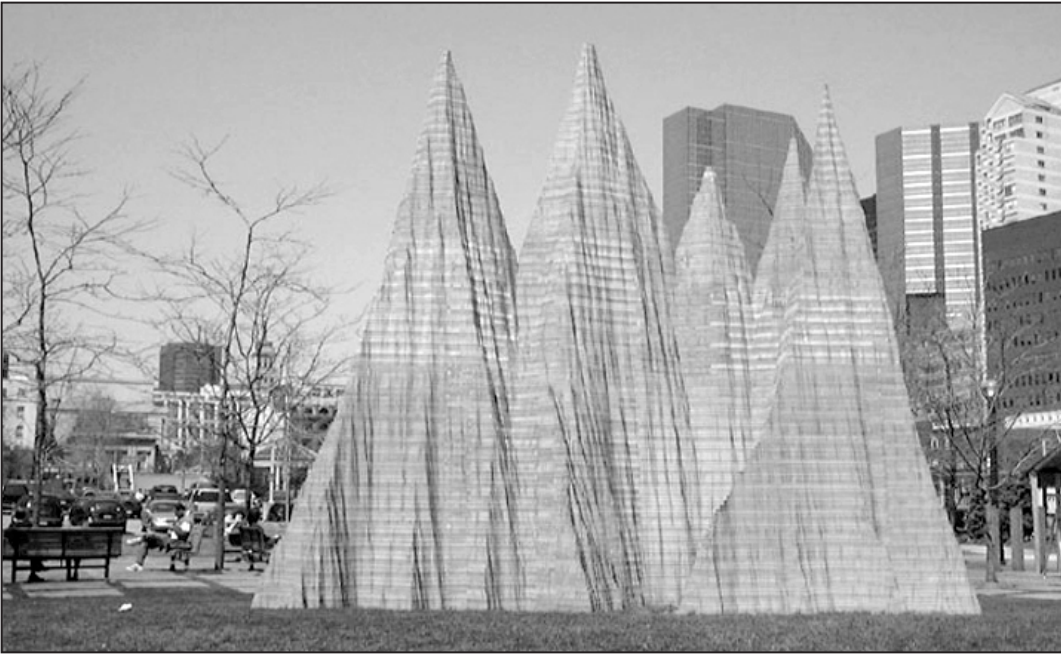
I was expecting this question! We showed the movie after its completion to a very select audience, and in the interval the people protested and asked me why the interval was just after 25 minutes. In actuality, the interval was, as normally it is, after 70 minutes, halfway down the movie. So, you see the effect? After the end of the movie, the most important thing is the expression left behind on the audience's mind. A film cannot be quantified and broken into pieces.

The audience is far more intelligent than we think. The selective audience to whom we showed the movie broke into a sweat when they saw the weapons system 30 years ago and how it is hacked in the computer. All this goes to show that we have made the movie simple.

Source: Internet

Art

Kapoor enigma at Tate's ultimate void



An outstanding work by Kapoor

HIS protruding curves grace Downing Street, he was once commissioned to drape giant tarpaulins over Naples and Newcastle, his work sells for millions, and he meditates in order to avoid the British artist's standard quest to "become a pop star".

Now the Indian-born, British



artist Anish Kapoor faces his biggest challenge: to create the third gigantic sculpture installation in the Tate Modern's series of £1.25m commissions for its vast Turbine hall.

Kapoor is known for his enig-

matic stone and steel forms and "void" pieces that capture the "weirdness" of empty space. But the usual worry associated with filling Tate Modern's unique space have already set in.

Juan Muñoz, the late Madrid-born artist, whose 500ft work of ghostly elevators, trapdoors and



Another stone work stairways last graced the hall, spent a year working out how to fill the chasm left by Louise Bourgeois's inaugural giant spider and tower sculptures.

Kapoor said yesterday he had already spent two months

considering the project in his empire of work spaces, stoneyards and foundry - where he works a nine hour day on £ 1m blocks of raw marble, steel and powdered pigment. A recent commission for the British Museum great court - a 10m-high steel cylinder with mirror finish - needed a 10 ton crane to shift it.

"The turbine hall space is extraordinary and jolly difficult," he said. "It is a problem to configure that space - with a bridge in the middle of it. I don't like to work with messages, in fact I run from the idea of having a message, but I want to address the idea of the audience's access to that great space."

"The public is definitely going to be surprised. This will be something that you have never seen from me before."

The complete work will be unveiled in October.

Source: Internet