

Cinema

The Contemporary Russian film scenario

Zahir Raihan Film Society screens seven Russian films to mark its 16th founding anniversary

CULTURE DESK

ZAHIR Raihan film society will screen seven Russian films at the Russian Cultural Centre, to mark the 16th founding anniversary of the film society. These films will be screened in cooperation with the Russian Cultural Centre on May 16, 18, 19, 20.

Zahir Raihan Film Society, the country's leading film club, was founded in Dhaka on May 16, 1986. Since then, the Film Club has screened about 2000 films. 215 films were screened last year. The screened films include award-winning films from around the world. It also organises screening of classic films - both past classics as well as the contemporary ones. Retrospectives, special screenings on themes and countries are also organised. Seminars, workshops, publications on the theoretical as well as practical aspects of film art are included in its agenda.

The transition from socialist economy to market economy and the dismantling of the USSR created an unprecedented crisis in Russian film industry. The All Union Ministry of Cinematography (GOSKINO) was dismembered. The government is no longer financing the films. In the past, the state film financing had to undergo a strict censorship. Despite this strict censorship, the filmmakers used to get generous funds, which were enough for making a very good film. The number of film theatres in the Russian Federation has dwindled from 3,000 to 1,500 and continues to fall. The early 1990s enjoyed a production boom (300 films in 1991-92 alone). But recently, the figure has stabilised around 50-60 films per year. This is an alarming situation for the Russian cinema today. One doesn't have to go to the remote past to see the glorious days of the Soviet cinema which produced excellent films.

This films in the session will give an idea of the different trends in contemporary Russian cinema.

"Sisters" (2001; Col; 83 min.)
Director: Sergei Bodrov Jr.
(Screening: On Thursday, May 16, at 5:00 pm)

A slow but touching film about



SISTERS

survival in modern Russia. It's more about characters and issues than shooting the gangsters. The two sisters at the centre of the film - thirteen year old Sveta, poor and abandoned by her father, who longs to go off and be a sniper in the army, and spoilt eight year old Dina, doted on by her gangster father - represent two very different aspects of modern Russia: the old, poor but moral; the young, cynical and money-obsessed. Sveta lives in a shabby home with her grandmother. Dina gets to live in a lavish apartment with her mother, and goes off to violin lessons. An incident takes place and brings the sisters together... A very naturalistic performance from Oksana Akinshina and Katya Gorina makes this a fine, touching film.

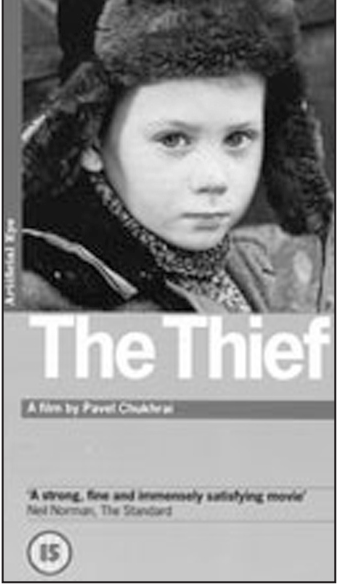
"Little Vera" (1988; Col; 115 min.)
Director: Vasili Pichul.
(Screening: On Thursday, May 16, at 6:30 pm)

This film, made during the waning years of the Soviet Union, is a marked departure from the "regular" Soviet movies of the day. It portrays the rebellion of the title character, Vera, a young woman coming of age. And the realities of things to come are already evident in the

soldier, but the relationship becomes rocky when Tolyan's true plans for the rooming house become clear. Tolyan is a thief without remorse, using everybody to get money. It starts them on a treadmill of flight that risks Katya's life, Tolyan's liberty and Sanya's trust. This entrancing story uses domestic dynamics as a metaphor for a political system that cannibalises its own people. Stunning performances from the main characters make this a memorable film.

"The Barber of Siberia" (2000; Col; 180 min.)
Director: Nikita Mikhalkov.
(Screening: On Saturday, May 18, at 6:30 pm)

Set in the turn-of-the-century Russia, a passionate and epic love story about lost love, betrayal and the human spirit. 1905: Jane Callaghan (Julia Ormond), a once beautiful American, writes to her son, a cadet at the famous West Point Military Academy. Her memories take us back 20 years to when



she arrived in Russia to assist Douglas McCracken (Richard Harris), an obsessive engineer who needs the Grand Prince's patronage to sponsor his monstrous invention "the Barber of Siberia" - a machine to harvest the forests of Siberia. On



"A Cruel Romance" (1984; Col; 145 min.)
Director: Eldar Ryazanov.
(Screening: On Sunday, May 19, at 6:30 PM)

The film is based on the play "A Dowerless Girl" by the prominent 19th century Russian dramatist Alexander Ostrovsky. The beautiful Larissa Ogudalova, daughter of an impoverished, widowed, noblewoman living in a small town on the Volga, is madly in love with the handsome, singing, dancing, and bon-vivant Sergei Sergeyevich Paratov. He reciprocates the girl's feelings as long as it suits his purposes. Paratov keeps secret his engagement to another girl and just passes time with Larissa. At the climactic moment, when the girl is expecting him to explain himself, he leaves town to go inspect his estate. At the same time, Larissa is being proposed to by Karandyashev, whom she despises. What ensues is a classic case of seduction by the immoral Paratov and then the inevitable happens - betrayal and tragedy. Starring as Paratov is the famous actor and director Mikita Mikhalkov. The film won the "Golden Peacock" for Best Film at the International Film Festival, India, at Delhi, in 1985.

"A Forgotten Melody for the Flute" (1988; Col; 131 min.)
Director: Eldar Ryazanov.
(Screening: On Sunday, May 19 at 4:00 pm)

This is an enjoyable romantic comedy as well as a caustic satire on the bureaucracy of the post-Glasnost era. Leonid, a high-ranking bureaucrat faces a mid-life crisis when he becomes enthralled with Lida, a charming and spirited nurse. He makes awkward advances. She learns that his promising career as a concert flutist ended when his politically powerful father-in-law hoisted him on the ladder of bureaucracy. He is flustered when Yelena, his architect wife, finds out his affair with Lida.

"Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears" (1979; Col; 140 min.)
Director: Vladimir Menshov.
(Screening: On Monday, May 20, at 5:00 pm)

This is a melodrama about the life-stories of three girls. Three friends: Antonina, Liudmila, and Yekaterina, came to Moscow in search of their dream. Sharing a hostel room, they work and play together. Antonina soon marries a good man and settles down to raise a family. For Liudmila, Moscow is a sort of lottery, in which you have to pick the lucky ticket. She attempts to conquer the big city, but ends up a loser. The life of the third girl, Yekaterina, is a contemporary Cinderella story. She had her share of disappointments but did not despair. In 20 years, she built up a career and became the director of a big enterprise. A single parent of a daughter, she finally meets the right man, and after a long and bitter years of loneliness, finds true happiness. The film won the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in 1981.

"No Man's Land" (Bosnia; 2001; Col; 95 min.)
Director: Danis Tanovic.
(Screening: On Monday, May 20, at 7:30 pm)

Bosnia and Herzegovina during 1993 at the time of the heaviest fighting between the two warring sides. The two Bosnian soldiers, Niki and Chiki, wanders into the 'no man's land' and become the victims of bombing. This is a story that begs to be told a good representation of what has been a mysterious war halfway around the world in Yugoslavia. It is an immensely interesting film, dominated by the relationship between the Serb and the Bosnia, and even more, their two sides. The workings of the UN 'Peacekeepers' were also well represented in the film and in a very realistic and interesting way. The byplay between the Serb and the Bosnian was great, and the portrayal of the several different nationalities of the UN (of which English is the only common language) is well represented. The role of the press and media has been brilliantly satirized. It won the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in 2002.

TV GUIDE

BTV

Morning session

8:35 Aalor Pothey
9:00 Khabar
9:05 Cartoon
9:30 Sustha Thakun
10:00 The News
10:05 Krira Jagat
10:30 Natun Kuri
11:00 News Headlines
12:00 News Headlines
12:30 Closing

Evening session

3:15 Desher Gaan
3:20 Bangla Movie
4:00 Khabar
5:00 News Headlines
5:45 Pustithatha
6:00 Khabar
6:10 Cartoon
6:35 Prohgrame from Chittagong station

7:00 News headlines
7:05 Malancha
7:30 Drama serial
8:00 Bangla Bulletin
8:30 World Tele-Communication Day

9:00 News Headlines
9:05 Magazine programme
10:00 English Bulletin
10:25 Believe It Or Not
11:20 World Music Album
11:30 Khabar/The News
11:45 Closing

EKUSHEY

2:00pm Ekushey Headlines
2:05 Potriyak Weekend
2:15 E Shoptaher Bishsho
2:35 Classic Cartoons
3:00 Ekushey Headlines
3:05 Bangla Film: Banglar Comando

5:30 Gillette Sports
6:00 Ekushey Headlines
6:05 WWF Smackdown
6:55 Ekushey Headlines
7:00 Mukto Khobor
7:30 Ekushey Shongbad
8:00 Ekushey News
8:05 Anondo
8:30 Ekushey Live
9:00 Shukrobarer Natok: Bandhob

10:00 News : Simulcast from BTV
10:30 Surma Parer Gaan
11:00 Ekushey Late Night News
11:30 Ei Shoptaho
12:00 Ekushey Headlines

ATN BANGLA

5:45 Islamic Prog
7:00 Islamic prog : Sundor Jeebaner Jannee

7:35 Film based prog. : Cine Music
8:00 ATN Bangla News
8:25 New Singer
Musical prog. : Agomony

9:00 Drama: Ghotok
9:35 Talk show : Samokalin Prosongo

10:10 Reporting prog : Prekha Pot
11:50 Islamic prog.
12:00 ATN Bangla News
3:30 Bengali feature film : Buker Dhon

6:07 Children prog : Cholo Gan Gai
6:45 Viewers opinion prog : Motamot
7:00 ATN Bangla Evening News
7:35 Musical prog:
8:10 Musical Prog: Harmony
8:45 Magazine prog: Tasmary Kechokhon

9:20 Drama : Abashese
10:00 ATN Bangla News
10:45 Bengali Feature Film: Mohaganzam

11:30 ATN Bangla News

BBC WORLD

6:00am BBC News
6:30 World Business Report

7:00 BBC News
7:30 Asia Today/Asia Business Report
8:00 BBC News
8:30 Asia Today/World Business Report

9:00 BBC News
9:30 Asia Today/Asia Business Report
10:00 BBC News
10:30 World Business Report

11:00 BBC News
11:30 World Business Report

12:00pm BBC News
12:30 World Business Report/Sport Today

1:00 BBC News
1:30 Talking Movies
2:00 BBC News
2:30 Hardtalk
3:00 BBC News
3:30 Money Prog/Panorama

4:00 BBC News
4:30 Asia Today/World Business Report

5:00 BBC News
5:30 Hardtalk

HBO

6:30 Accidental Meeting
8:15 Guardian
10:00 Double Platinum
12:00 Double Jeopardy
2:15 House on Haunted Hill
4:15 The Flintstones
6:00 Escape From LA
8:00 Turbulence 2: Fear of Flying
10:00 Black Rain
12:30 The Flintstones

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

STAR MOVIES: 7 p.m. *Turbulence 3*. Slade Craven the rock superstar and reigning king of "Death Metal" music has planned a farewell concert unlike anything the world has ever seen: He'll be performing onboard a 747 jumbojet as it flies from Los Angeles to Toronto. In a first for the internet and the TV industry, the entire spectacle will be broadcast live on the web music network ZTV. Murder and mayhem take over as the flight is hijacked by a sadistic fan, who randomly starts killing anyone who gets in his way. Proving to be the ultimate white-knuckle flight for the passengers and millions of web viewers, the aptly named Flight 666 continues off course and toward imminent disaster.

HBO: 10:00 p.m. *Black Rain*. Being an international crime thriller, the film stars Michael Douglas as Mike Conklin, a New York detective under investigation for corruption. When yakuza hit man Sato kills two American mobsters in New York, he's extradited to Osaka to face trial, with Conklin and Charlie Vincent as his escorts. Mistakenly turning over their prisoner to Yakuza disguised as police, Conklin and Vincent realize, after running down some blind alleys, that they have no chance of finding Sato in the unfamiliar city and enlist the services of Japanese desk cop Masahiro "Mas" Masumoto.

PICK OF THE DAY

Dark Asylum
On HBO at 12:30 a.m.
In this wind-me-up-tighter-than-a-corkscrew thriller, a female psychiatrist working with an infamous serial killer "The Trasher" (Drake, Durango Kids) finds herself locked in the asylum after dark. If trying to unlock the lunatic's mind is her mission in life, she'll get her chance finally. While the outside world is safe, she isn't. Now the madman will get to do what he does best while in incarceration.

8:30 Ardhangani
8:45 Yaadein Radio Ceylon Ki
9:00 Nickelodeon
9:30 Nickelodeon on Zee
10:30 Hum Paanch
11:00 Hudd Kar Di
12:00 Amanat
12:30 Evergreen Moments of Antakshari

1:30 Sansaar
2:30 Gharana
3:00 Aaj Ka Arjun
6:30 Nickelodeon On Zee
7:00 Nickelodeon
8:00 Apna Apna Style
8:30 Jai Santoshi Maa
9:00 Saanijhi
9:30 Jeena Isi Ka Naam Hai

10:30 Sa Re Ga Ma Pa
11:30 Tejaswini
12:00 Gharana
12:30 Koshish... Ek Aashaa

ZEE MUSIC

6:30 Hit Pit Hip
7:30 Sizzlers
8:00 Music Box
8:30 Dil Se
9:00 Sizzlers
9:30 Hit Pit Hit
10:30 Hit Mix
11:00 Music Plus
12:00 Dialogue
12:30 Hit Pit Hit
1:30 Music Box
2:00 Jharokha
2:30 Tara Rum Pum
3:30 Hit mix
4:00 Hit Pit Hit
5:00 Dialogue
5:30 Hit mix
6:00 Music Plus
7:00 Compact Disc
7:30 Hit Pit Hit
8:30 Taaza Maal
9:30 Sizzlers
10:00 Dil Se
10:30 Jharokha
11:00 Music Box
11:30 Phonren Maal

ALPHA TV

6:00 Mayurakshi TumiBangla

6:30 Half Chocolate
7:00 Shayaola
7:30 Aalaap Bengali Spl
8:00 Mon Niye
8:30 Gaan Unltd
9:05 Bharat Bhraman
9:30 Anya Bhuvan
10:00 Bhawanipurer Chatujjera
10:30 Bhalobasa Mandobasha
11:00 Mayurakshi TumiBangla
11:30 Gaan Unltd
12:00 Jhara Samayer Uapakatha
12:30 Chena Mukher Shari

1:00 Kono Ek Din
1:30 Ek Akasher Niche
2:00 Pratibimbo
2:15 Bengali Feature Film
5:00 Gaan Unltd
5:30 Football
6:00 News in Bengali
6:30 Mayurakshi TumiBangla
7:00 Shayaola
7:30 Monniye
8:00 Pratibimbo
8:30 Ek Akasher Niche
9:10 Chena Mukh Shari
9:55 Kono Ek Din
10:25 Encounter
11:00 News in Bengali
11:30 Chena Mukhachena Manush

12:00 Shayaola
ZEE CINEMA
7:00 Tara Rum
7:30 Yeh To Kamaal Ho Gaya
10:30 Tu Nagin Main Sapera
1:30 Zindagi Zindagi
5:15 Making of a Legend
6:00 Kabhi Na Kabhi
9:15 Cine News
9:30 Ikke Pe Ikka
10:00 Deewana Mujhsa Nahin

ANIMAL PLANET

7:00 Wild Rescue

7:30 Animal X
8:00 Twisted Tales
8:30 Planet's Funniest
9:00 Crock Files
9:30 Breed All About It
10:00 Animal Hospital
10:30 Battersea Dogs Home
11:00 Animal Planet Safari
12:00 Wild and Wonderful Friday
1:00 Nature by design
2:00 The Making of Supersense
2:30 Animal Doctor
3:00 O'Shea's Big Adventure
3:30 Animal X
4:00 Twisted Tales
4:30 Animal Hospital
5:00 Croc Files
5:30 Animal A-Z
6:00 Fit for the Wild
6:30 Battersea Dogs Home
7:00 Wild Rescue
7:30 Animal Doctor
8:00 Animal Planet Safari
8:30 Weird N Wonderful Friday
9:30 Wild on the Set
10:00 Wildlife Emergency
10:30 Animal Planet Safari
11:30 Killing for a Living

DISCOVERY

7:30 Crocodile Hunter
8:30 Wild Discovery
9:30 Travelers
10:30 Friday Showcase
12:30 Girl Meets Hawaii
1:00 Romantic Escapes
1:30 Wild Discovery
2:30 Crocodile Hunter
3:30 Truth or Scare
4:00 Let's Dance & Eat
4:30 Journeys to the Ends of the Earth
The Lost of City of Gold
5:30 Travelers
6:30 Crocodile Hunter
7:00 Wild Discovery
8:30 Friday Showcase
10:30 War Zone
11:30 Secrets Great Conquerors