

RECOMMENDATIONS

Quamrul-er Ramonira
May 17-31

Entitled 'Quamrul-er Ramonira', a 15-day long painting exhibition of artist Quamrul Hassan will be held at the Shilpangan gallery in the city. The show is open to all from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

Calligraphy exhibition
May 17-June 04

A calligraphy exhibition with works of 24 renowned artists goes on at the lobby of National Museum in the city.

Group art show
May 15 to 29

The High Commission of India Cultural Centre presents a group art show featuring fifteen prominent artists from Chittagong at 754, Satmasjid Road, Dhaka. The show opens on May 15, which runs daily from 12 noon to 8 p.m.

Japanese film session
May 19-21

Rainbow Film Society has organised a three-day long Japanese Film Session, in association with Goethe-Institut. Filmshows start daily at 5:30 p.m. at the German cultural center auditorium. 'Andromedia' and 'Doubles' will be screened on May 19, 'Eikiden' and 'HIMITSU-Secret' on May 20 and 'The white collar worker' and 'KEIZOKU Unsolved cases' on May 21.

Photography on ship breaking
May 18-29

R. Laarsen, a photographer from Sweden and a teacher at Pathshala Photography School, holds a solo exhibition in the city on issues of ship-breaking in Bangladesh. Through his works, Laarsen raises questions those focus on various hazardous and harmful sides of the business including matters of environmental pollution caused by the breaking process.

Painting show
May 17-24

An exhibition of works of the country's old and young artists opened on May 17 at Gallery 21 (765, Satmasjid Road, Dhammond). The show remains open from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. everyday.

Theatre

Success and failure of a stage production

Aroj Choritamrita, theatrical version of a real-life situation, comes under scrutiny of a drama critic

SHAZEDUR RAHMAN CHANCHAL

Aroj Choritamrita is a Bangla stage drama that has been performed by numerous theatrical groups at various times in Bangladesh and India, during theatre festivals and on regular shows. The theme of the plot is based upon a real-life story that of Aroj Ali Matobbar, who hailed from a small village somewhere in or around the district of Comilla. The person has originally been a farmer who had no formal educational background yet Aroj tried, at his best, to learn alphabets, consumed news and information of global affairs in his brain and thus became a self-taught, financially solvent citizen of the country who could be followed as a model by others of his profession. Aroj Ali later on, became a writer.

Some five years back I watched Nandikar's Meghanath Badh in Calcutta, the Academy Mancho was full. Before going to make a critic on Aroj I like to cite a bit of that experience. Group leader Rudra Prasad Sengupta started his opening speech. He thanked audience for their presence in the auditorium instead of being prey of cable TV.

Calcutta is famous for lot of things especially for modern theatre practice. Dish culture sends second wave of death shivering through the spine of theatre. Like Rudra, other practitioners can also feel the chill by experiencing the engulfing paw of satellite entertainment. As now similarly in the '50s also it was a common saying that cinema was killing theatre, but theatre remained. Same thing is going to happen this time also; theatre is too powerful to diminish. In Dhaka after 97 local satellite TV station has sucked a great number of theatre and other live performers and technicians. Then it became difficult to make regular show as the group members are often busy with media schedules. So the doers has been withering not the audience.

First thing stuck me after seeing Aroj, though it is true with other stage play also that aesthetic and critical consideration can wait; it is enough to praise the capability to arrange a show in a country where not govt. has ever had any well

drawing room by cultural artificats; which spun over not only that particular performance but also overall condition of Bangladesh's theatre and his own career graph, my trouble has been multiplied because still I was unable to proceed. However, I was familiar with Aroj Ali's writings like other youth in the city with an atheist zeal, I also have my share with anti-religious literature with leftist slant. Anyway, I was not getting my old copy of 'Satyer Shadhan' a cheap paperback edition. That was the time of HSC, 1986. I do not know how but at that time through some mysterious assumption we accepted him as an eccentric and amazing anti-Islamic

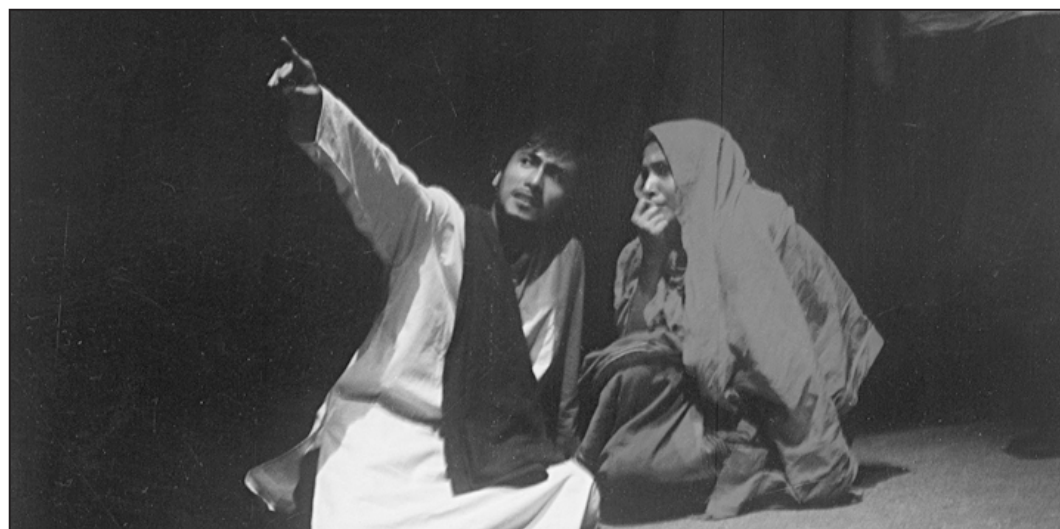
Brook classified theatre from his long drawn experience into four categories deadly, holy, rough and immediate. He condemned deadly theatre as ineffective and bourgeois, appreciated holy and rough but strongly advocated for immediate theatre.

This type of classification is possible among our native criticism of art specially theatre. Analogy here can be deadly, oily, scary and much more necessary but very much absent immediate criticism.

In this occasion, I am trying to make an immediate type of criticism. This ambition is the result of latest Natyakendra production on the controversial personality and life of Aroj Ali Matubbar. I was waiting to see its 25th show and then to write this after considering the impact on the floating time, but when I told this to Pankaj, light designer of the play; he simply cut me out by exclaimed that the production may not cross that much show. This is frustrating, I thought after seeing their first performance at Mahila Samiti auditorium that the play will be picked by so called civil society and a vigorous vibration of secularism at least in Dhaka city, but alas!

It rarely happens that you watch a performance and get into troubles; problem of assessing it; some-time feel to praise sometime to condemned and live under pressure until you change some of your preconceived notion about things. Natyakendra's new production Aroj Charit when I saw their first public show got me trapped into troubles. First thing occurred in me I perceive that I felt trapped to write a critic or like to explore an article from the base of that performance. From that desire one day I went to their rehearsal, before time. I was discussing informally with performers, lastly make an appointment with Tarik Anam Khan to have a chat with him.

Since I had a long discussion with him over a cup of tea in his apartment's carefully ornamented



A scene from the play 'Aroj Choritamrita'

man. This time I collected hard-bound Pathak Shamabesh copy of his collected works (part 1) and went through it, which includes writing by and on him. The impression I got is highly problematic one as in the post-enlightened era, science and reason is gradually suspect in the west itself. Aroj's wholehearted struggle was to establish rationality against religious believe. From Eastern point of view, which has not yet get any particular shape, the monopoly of science and reason over truth is in a much more way condemnable. Structuralist and post-structuralist studies have clearly shown that we are living in a complex post modern

(?) time zone where knowledge is not heavenly or innocent but from a Foucaultian perspective just like religion, art or capital engaged in all engulfing power mechanism.

So it will be misleading if we miss to situate our critical endeavor within the microphysics of power. Of course, Aroj was a praiseworthy person: his indomitable energy for the truth he realized was heroic but what we need to get rid off is eulogy. I must say rather poor eulogy. Eulogistic perspective makes a work of art monochrome and misses too much: shades, tones, and dimensions. Moreover, this pattern of personality cult breeds from Feudal Durbar literature

an alternative to religion and he was a (if I try my best to avoid simplifying him) liberal Marxist. If we take liberty of being suspicious, we may take some greater notice of his pathology against religion regarding his mother's burial consequence.

There is a serious problematic in the view of theatre not to shock audience, even if we take a softer stand than JBS, who proclaimed that audience should be shocked often to break their inertia. This view involved a mutual pass giving between doer and seer of theatre that we are doing and you are seeing so both of us are good. Problem lies somewhere else

question on his thought-scheme.

Aroj's standpoint was rationality and reason resultantly he was seeking secular ideals... so socialism alias communism is the only way for the mankind. Without this by the use of rocket, robot and the dreams of heaven and hell endeavor to develop the society is nothing but eyewash. Aroj Ali Matobbar collected works, 1, pathak shamabesh, 2000. All these are renaissance breed humanism's conceptual data's which are at present being challenged from multiple perspectives... After the fall of Berlin wall and dismantling SU, his socialist panacea is no more convincing. Asian societies are traditional, here formula of social change one cannot think sans religion: this realization got currency ever since Babri Mosque episode. Secularism, the essence of Aroj's thinking in South Asian societies, according to specialists, if want to succeed should have find some way with religion. The only way that secularism will succeed in south Asia is if both religion and secularism are taken seriously (T.N. Madan, Secularism in its place, Journal of South Asian Studies, Nov 1987). Leave Asia in west itself modernity/secularism is in confusion, it is mostly considered as an artifact of ideology rather than a tool of science. Edward Said's voice is even harsher, for him the project of modernity grew up with and serves as a tool of western imperialism.

The relationship of the scientific state of rationality looks curious in the light of M. Foucault's exposure of the unreasoning and authoritarian basis of much scientific knowledge and of recent work in the history of science which points to the significant role played in many major scientific discoveries, or 'revelations' by specific pattern of religious belief - not an absence of such belief (cited in D. Washbrook -). Beside this tradition seems to have undergone remarkable re-investigation from contact with modernity. Considering these global perceptual shifting and our sub continental historical division based on religious discrimination then the birth of Bangladesh and the present rise of fundamentalism all over the sub continent is substan-

tially enough to confuse anyone while presenting a person like Aroj Ali. Not only that, an alarming phenomena fear of fundamentalists involve here. Playwright Masum Reja openly exclaimed this dangerous state of affairs in Bangladesh where artists have no social political and state protection for the freedom of expression. Here politicians always shouting and shedding crocodile's tear for democracy but when some basic theme of democracy gets attack they fail to take democratic move. If it is so, is not more expected from artists that they would take risk because we have to seek truth even if it brings most discomfort, remember Nietzsche. Otherwise is it better, simply changing the subject as some people felt or something is better than nothing?

Fundamentalism is a historical crisis in the sub-continent. In pre-modern era, thinkers and visionaries devised some way to get rid off this crisis. If we take a glance to the Bhakti movement and sub-continental Sufism, we can see, they, unlike modernist view had found a third way; by not rejecting religions but assimilating and reforming those. At the same time, their thoughts satisfy mass's religious tendency and defy discrimination. The suppression and withering of those movements with the advent of so called modern time is not as simple as it generally recognized, their lies multiple currents of local and global manipulation of elite class as cause. Now if we like to escape the specter of religious crusade in South Asia and fundamentalist deprivation in Bangladesh we have to deal the subject more deeply and when it is a stage show we cannot proceed further without considering the politics of performance possibly included with the subject. My intention is not to condemn Natyakendra but just to show what a body of sensitive and controversial issues their performance brought fore and wish that Natyakendra will be able not to arrange 100th show of the play will make this performance a platform of vigorous debate on the issues discussed.

The drama was staged in Dhaka, recently.

EKUSHEY

- 12:00pm Ekushey Middy
- 12:30 Deshjure
- 1:00 Ekushey Headlines
- 1:00 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom
- 1:30 Documentary Programmed: Japan Video Tropic
- 1:50 Classic Cartoons
- 2:10 Nazrul Gitee
- 2:30 Drishti
- 3:00 Ekushey Headlines
- 3:05 Drama Serial: Kena Kata
- 3:30 Surer Prodip
- 4:00 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom
- 4:30 Wildlife on One
- 5:30 Drishti
- 5:50 Aiker Potrikay
- 6:00 Ekushey Headlines
- 6:05 Classic Cartoons
- 6:30 Deshjure Chalcitro
- 6:55 Ekushey Headlines
- 7:00 Toyota World of Wildlife
- 7:30 Ekushey Shongbad
- 8:00 Ekushey News
- 8:05 Drama Serial: Bondhon
- 8:30 Bangla Film: Baimanee
- 10:00 News: Simulcast From MTV
- 10:30 Bangla Film: Baimanee
- 11:00 Ekushey Late Night Shongbad

CHANNE- i

- 7:50 Morning
- 8:15 Boithoki
- 8:15 Discussion on World Cup Football 2002
- 8:30 Unhayan Manusher Jonno
- 9:00 Six Million Dollar Man
- 9:35 Amar Chobi
- 10:05 Young Out Look
- 10:40 Movie Soundtracks
- 11:10 Music Plus
- 11:50 Boithoki
- 12:15 Discussion on World Cup Football 2002
- 12:30 Unhayan Manusher Jonno
- 1:00 Six Million Dollar Man
- 1:30 Amar Chobi
- 2:00 Bengali Movie: Taka Paisa

Evening

- 5:05 Documentary
- 5:35 Roving Eye
- 6:10 Music Plus
- 6:50 This week's eye focus
- 7:15 Channel i News
- 7:50 Discussion on World Cup Football 2002
- 8:30 Gaaner Opare
- 8:55 Ispahani i Tele-quiz (question)
- 9:00 Channel i News
- 9:35 Shongbadpotre Bangladesh
- 9:45 Channel i Mobile quiz 2525
- 10:00 Musical programme
- 10:25 Ispahani i Tele-quiz (results)
- 10:30 Channel i News
- 11:30 Bengali Movie: Shikol

HBO

- 6:30 Dream House
- 8:15 Virtuosity
- 10:15 Magic In The Water
- 12:15 Accidental Meeting
- 2:00 Escape From LA
- 4:00 Space Jam
- 6:00 Clueless
- 8:00 Can't Hardly Wait
- 10:00 Get Carter
- 1:45 The Third Miracle
- 4:15 Mr Jones

STAR GOLD

- 7:00am Parvarish (Amitabh Bachchan, Vinod Khanna)
- 10:30 Kuch Yaddain Kuch Baatein
- 11:00 Geet Bahar
- 11:30 Ek Musafir Ek Hasina (Joy Mukherjee, Sadhana)
- 3:00pm Geet Bahar
- 3:30 Shradhanjali (Rakhee, Suresh Oberoi)
- 7:00 Geet Bahar
- 7:30 Monday Magic
- Hamrahi (Randhi Kapoor, Tanuja)
- 11:00 Bollywood News
- 11:30 Ankhen (Dharmendra, Mala Sinha)

BBC WORLD

- 6:00am BBC News
- 6:30 Asia
- 7:00 Today/Reporters
- 7:00 BBC New
- 7:30 Asia Today/Asia
- Business Report
- 8:00 BBC News
- 8:30 Asia

Today/Reporters

- 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 / Sports
- Today
- 1:00 BBC News
- 1:30 Euro Brief
- 2:00 BBC News
- 2:30 Hardtalk
- 3:00 BBC News
- 3:30 Correspondent
- 4:00 BBC News
- 4:30 Asia Business Report/World
- Business Report
- 5:00 BBC News
- 5:30 Hardtalk

STAR PLUS

- 7:30 Hum Saath Aath Hain
- 8:00 Aatma
- 9:00 Hit Filmlein Hit Sangeet
- 9:30 Fox Kids Daily
- 10:30 Small Wonder
- 11:00 Maal Hai To Taal Hai
- 11:30 Meri Saahil
- 12:00pm Shanti
- 12:30 Hit Filmlein Hit Sangeet
- 1:00 Kora Kagaz
- 1:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki
- 2:00 Bhabhi
- 2:30 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
- 3:00 Shagun

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

STAR WORLD: 7:00 & 10:00 p.m. *Dharma & Greg*. Hippiedom and blue-blooded snobocracy. Dharma and Greg. No one thought anyone would want to watch a serial about "one totally happy couple". But there you go... *Dharma and Greg* has managed to become a total hit, and one of ABC's top-rated primetime shows. In tonight's episode, Greg fouts out as part of his wife's New Age softball team.

AXN: 9:30 p.m. *Commando*. Colonel Matrix has retired and is living with his 10 year old daughter in the country. His Daughter is kidnapped to assure that Matrix will kill the president of a latin American country to allow the return of a dictator. Matrix escapes off a plane flight and has until it lands to rescue his daughter. Matrix must follow the clues he has and solve the mystery in time.

EKUSHEY: 7:00 p.m. *Toyota World of Wildlife* This episode features list of endangered species across the globe. Illegal poachers are continually threatening wild creatures and birds, around the world, to extinction. In the valley of Sindh, excavators found a locket where there were some inscribed prints of fish, wild creatures, etc.

PICK OF THE DAY



Get Carter
On HBO at 10:00 p.m.
When Frank Carter ends up dead, his brother Jack (Stallone, Cobra, The Specialist), a hired-killer, is here to investigate his death. Help from the LAPD isn't forthcoming, so Jack goes trailing for clues himself, and finds himself knee-deep in the seedy underworld of LA's gambling and porn industry, and gets acquainted with its nasty players, including his old nemesis Jeremy Kinneer.

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| 3:30 Kasautii Zindagi Kay | 4:00 Kavita | 4:30 Kaathin Kissii Roz | 5:00 Meri Saheli | 5:30 Hit Filmlein Hit Sangeet | 6:00 Small Wonder | 6:30 Fox Kids Daily | 7:10 Aaj Ki Baat | 7:30 Bhabhi | 8:00 Hum Saath Aath Hain | 8:30 Krishna Sharma ca | 9:00 Kasautii Zindagi Kay | 9:30 Des Mein Nikla Hoga Chand | 10:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii | 11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi | 11:30 Kaahin Kissii Roz | 12:05 Aaj Ki Baat | | | |
| 3:30 Winfrey Show | 4:00 MacGyver | 4:30 Nash Bridges | 5:00 Bugs | 5:30 The Oprah | 6:00 Winfrey Show | 6:30 Worlds wildest Police Videos | 7:00 Caroline In The City | 7:30 The Bold & The Beautiful | 8:00 Hollywood Squares | 8:30 Family Ties | 9:00 Baywatch | 9:30 The Simpsons | 10:00 3 rd Rock From The Sun | 10:30 Star News Asia | 11:00 Friends | 11:30 King of Queens | 12:00 Everybody Love Raymond | | |
| 9:30 King of Queens | 10:00 Dharma & Greg | 10:30 Everybody Love Raymond | 11:00 Frasier | 11:30 Boston Public | 12:00pm | 1:00 Anywhere But Here | 1:30 Operative, The | 2:00 Tom Sawyer | 2:30 Queens Logic | 3:00 Intern, The | 3:30 Jack | 4:00 Thank God Its Friday | 4:30 Fatal Instinct | 5:00 End Of Days, The | 5:30 Operative, The | 6:00 Turbulence 3 | | | |
| 9:30 Horse Tales | 10:00 Animal Hospital | 10:30 Bettersea Dogs Home | 11:00 Animals Planet Safari | 12:00 Monday Connections | 1:30 Killing for a living | 2:30 Jeff Corwin | 3:30 K-9 to 5 | 4:00 Wild on the Set | 4:30 Animal Hospital | 5:00 Croc Files | 5:30 Animals A-Z | 6:00 Lords of the Animals | 7:00 Battersea Dogs Home | 7:30 Natural Neighbors | 8:00 Monday Connections | 9:30 K-9 to 5 | 10:00 Shark Gordon | 10:30 Animal Planet Safari | 11:30 Natural World20 |
| 9:30 Animals | 10:00 Really Wild Show | 10:30 Born Winners Kite | 11:00 Buck Staghorn's Animal Bites | 11:30 Extreme Machines II | 12:00 Travelers II | 1:30 Planet's Funniest Animals | 2:00 Really Wild Show | 2:30 Born Winners Kite | 3:00 Buck Staghorn's Animal Bites | 3:30 Extreme Machines II | 4:00 Travelers II | 4:30 Planet's Funniest Animals | 5:00 Really Wild Show | 5:30 Wild Discovery | 6:00 Discovery Civilisation | 6:30 Classic Discovery | 7:00 On the Inside In the Mind of Criminal Profilers | 7:30 Ancient Warriors | 8:00 Those Who Dare |
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- 8:00 Really Wild Show
- 8:30 Wild Discovery
- 9:30 Travelers
- 10:30 Discovery Civilisation
- 11:30 Classic Discovery
- 12:30 Wedding Story
- 1:30 Wild Discovery
- 2:30 Planet's Funniest Animals
- 3:00 Really Wild Show
- 3:30 Born Winners Kite
- 4:00 Buck Staghorn's Animal Bites
- 4:30 Extreme Machines II
- 5:30 Travelers II
- 6:30 Planet's Funniest Animals
- 7:00 Really Wild Show
- 7:30 Wild Discovery
- 8:30 Discovery Civilisation
- 9:30 Classic Discovery
- 10:30 On the Inside In the Mind of Criminal Profilers
- 11:30 Ancient Warriors
- 12:00 Those Who Dare

- 1:30 Koi Apna Sa
- 2:00 Choti Maa Ek Anokha Bandhan
- 2:30 Gharana
- 3:00 Basera
- 6:30 Nickelodeon On Zee
- 7:00 Nickelodeon
- 8:00 Kitne Kool Hain Hum
- 8:30 Kammal
- 9:00 Koshish... Ek Aashaa
- 9:30 Baazi Kiski
- 10:00 Koi Apna Sa
- 10:30 Choti Maa... Ek Anokha Bandhan
- 11:00 Tu Kahe Agar
- 11:30 Tum Pukar Lo
- 12:00 Gharana

- 7:00 Shayola
- 7:30 Kichu Smriti Kichu Gaan
- 8:00 Patibimba
- 8:30 Ek Akasher Niche
- 9:15 Chena Mukh Shari Kapurush
- 9:45 Talk Jhaal Misti
- 11:00 New In Bengali
- 11:30 Guest House
- 12:00 Shayola
- ZEE MUSIC**
- 6:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 7:30 Sizzlers
- 8:00 Music Box
- 8:30 Best of the Best
- 9:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 10:00 Hit Mix
- 10:00 Taaza Maal
- 12:00 Dil Se
- 12:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 1:30 Music Box
- 2:00 Jharokha
- 2:30 Tara Rum Pum
- 3:30 Hit Mix
- 4:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 5:00 Dil Se
- 5:30 Hit Mix
- 6:00 Music Plus
- 6:30 Artist of the Fortnight
- 7:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 8:00 Music. Com
- 9:30 Sizzlers
- 10:00 Compact Disc
- 10:30 Jharokha
- 11:00 Music Box
- 11:30 Phoren Maal
- ZEE CINEMA**
- 7:00 Ikke Pe Ikke
- 7:30 Mahachor
- 10:30 Janta Hawaldar
- 1:30 Phagun
- 5:15 Cine News
- 6:00 Priyatama
- 9:30 Cine News
- 10:00 Jigar