

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cinema

July 28-30
Chalachitram Film Society observes its 20th founding anniversary and arranges eleventh program of its ongoing series of events titled, 'A tribute to the great filmmakers of the century: A selection of films' in cooperation with Goethe-Institut, Dhaka at the institute's auditorium at Dhanmondi in the city. Five famous films from across the world are to be screened.

Fine arts exhibition

July 20-Aug 4
Renowned sculptor Rasa and his younger brother, Rajeeb Siddiky, a rising artist, hold a joint display of their creations of painting and sculpture at the 2nd floor gallery of National Museum in the city. The exhibition remains open to all everyday from 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Kazi Ananta's solo painting

July 22-28
Young artist Kazi Ananta holds his maiden art exhibition at the art gallery of the cultural center of the High Commission of India at Satmasjid road in the city. The exhibition remains open everyday from 3 to 8 p.m.

Print exhibition

July 19-28
Gallery 21 at Dhanmondi in the city presents a solo print exhibition of artist A. Rahman that continues daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Professor Mahmudul Haque inaugurates the exhibition and Nahas Ahmed Khalil stays present as special guest.

Children's painting

July 22-August 8
Entitled Wasservellen (Water world), an exhibition of paintings done by children from the schools of 'Shipi Sultan Pathshala' and 'Surovi' of Dhaka, takes place at Goethe Institut in the city from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. everyday except on Fridays and general holidays.

Exhibition on French artist

July 5-August 2
An exhibition of the works of French artist George de La Tour, observing his 350th death anniversary, continues at the Andre Malraux room of Alliance Francaise in the city. The exhibits include books on the artist and a majority of his famous works.

Theatre

Fun for children, thought for parents

Natyachakra's 'Home Alone', introduces Grips-Method in Bangladesh

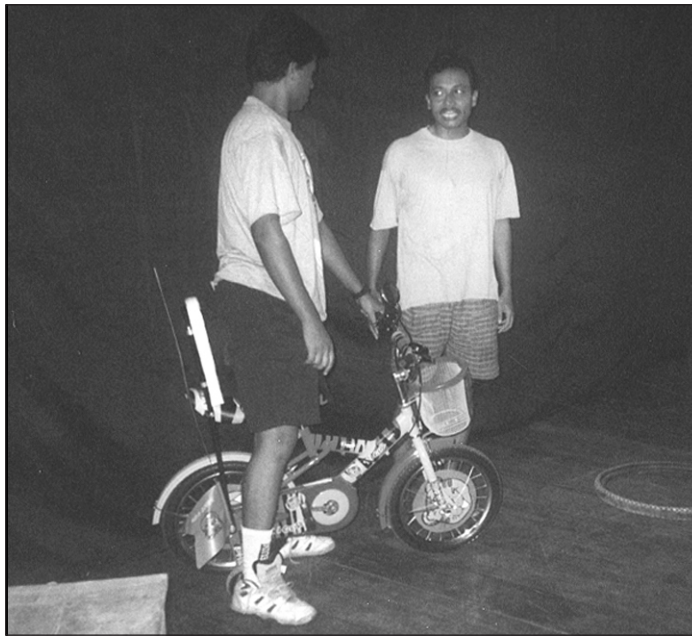
SAIFUL ISLAM

A well-known theater group, Natyachakra, presented its 25th performance of 'Home Alone', a theater in Grips-Method, at the Goethe-Institut, Dhaka. Written by Junaid Eusuf and directed by Debaprasad Debnath, the theater was a well-dressed assortment for both children and parents giving birth to bellyfuls of laughter.

Remarkable responses from children, the largest part of the audience, added life to the exceptional theatre performance where the actors who acted as children were adult established actors of Bangladesh. The Grips method demands the acting of the adults as children. The motive is to protest, in an artistic way, against the way the

children are taken in the family. They are often given strict instructions, and bullied to discipline. Grips looks for creating awareness among the parents and voices the demands of the children. 'We kept in mind the cultural difference of our society with the West and adapted the Grips method in a style that would surely reach its goal' added Debaprasad Debnath.

The story of the theatre 'Home Alone' seems apparently simple. Two families were presented side by side; two children having different up-brings are juxtaposed. A society is talked about by mirroring two families. Rickie, a school-going boy, lives with his father who is a very busy man. Though he tries to pass as much time with the child as possible, the absence of the mother is felt strongly. The young boy always prattles and wants to have as much as fun possible. He is



'Home Alone' speaks against social inequality

frightened of going to bed alone but has to, as his father wants him to.

Another family living in the slum by the building passes its days in misery. The mother works in houses and the boy Kala, of relatively the same age as Rickie, collects scraps. Though he wears tattered clothes and is starved, his curiosity and imagination makes life easier. As he plays in the same park where Rickie plays, they become friends. Rickie's father buys him a football and two books though at first he does not want his son to play with a street urchin. Kala's mother is also shocked when she learns that her son is having regular visits to the rich boy's house. She comes in search of her son one day and beats him near the other boy who is quite upset to see the harshness.

Rickie's father stops her and urges her to leave the boy so that he can play with his son.

The way the two children become friends, the fact that a boy living in an apartment alone cannot fly a kite but the street-boy can and the street urchin's unfamiliarity towards an expensive chocolate are some of the things which are normal. Lively performances and

carefree humor present these apparently trivial things which are quite important for a child. An idealized view of society is presented where the rich and poor walk hand in hand and a deprived but rich boy takes care of a beggar.

A bedroom of a child, some toys scattered carelessly on the bed and the floor, a window and green leaves of a tree peeping through it--these are the very few things that are used to create a set. Sometimes even a curtain is drawn, and scraps and a half-eaten apple are kept before a placard that announces the presence of a school. The laudable work of the whole team of actors, director and those in charge of light and music creates a drama using those very apparently useless components that seem as real as the drama of life. A story of two small families has raised issues that seem to be problems of Bangladesh that cannot be eradicated. Issues like poverty, nutrition, class-division, and unemployment are talked about in a way that does not mar the pristine joy of two children.

Of life, ethics and ego

Dhaka Padatik stages premiere of its 'Jatri', at Mahila Samity auditorium in the city

AZIZ AMIRUL

DHAKA Padatik, a renowned and popular theatre group of the country, stages the first performance of 'Jatri', its latest production, written by Shamim Ahsan and directed for stage by Aminur Rahman Azam. 'Jatri' has been provided sponsorship for the year 2001 by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh.

As the plot unfolds, two separate streams of incidents take their own courses in individual style while at a particular stage both the situations meet at a single point and culminate into a broad theme.

Passengers, who represent a commoners' world and possess all sorts of worldly qualities, reach a railway station where they wait patiently to board the earliest train. Close to the passengers is a malnourished, old man who seems to release foul odour from his unwashed body that creates irritation and discomfort to the passengers. At the same time, at a different setting, a wealthy industrialist, Jafar

Ahmed, faces employees' union leader Masud and exchange angry words. As time passes, other labour leaders get enraged and jealous of Masud's leadership traits. Jafar Ahmed fails to convince Masud and with the help of rival union leaders, assassinates Masud.

A large group of workers carry the corpse of Masud to the railway station where others wait along with the old man. None of the passengers, except the old man, show interest in carrying the dead body in the train. Masud's former lover,

Shikha is also seen among the waiting passengers. The passengers begin a strong altercation with the old man and attempt to beat him up. At this point, Masud's soul wakes up and thus brings surprise and fear among those who refused to carry his body with them. Masud walks close to the old man and speaks with him about something, while the passengers maintain a considerable distance.

At last the train comes and the passengers try to board in a hurry. Just at this moment, the station master arrives and informs that no one except Masud is eligible to

board the train. They have to wait till a second train arrives at the station the next morning. The passengers, quite disheartened, search for their ticket and, to their horror, find something different. Their bags contain pieces of black paper instead of tickets - the report card of their past activities in reality. Each and every passenger now realizes his respective deeds and in fear of an unfortunate fate, begs the old man for mercy. But to their extreme disappointment, the old man, possibly symbolizing the conscience of every mind, vanishes into the thin air.

Forces of good and evil stand face to face while symbolic interpretations help the audience to realize and understand aesthetic values and moral impeachment of humanity. The theme of the play, in which a free use of structural form is observed, reminds all in a strong way, the mortal features of the human being and also of the fateful consequences of uncontrolled lust, love, passion and desire of the middle class as well as that of the upper strata society.



A scene from 'Jatri'

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