

RECOMMENDATIONS

Solo Water Colour Exhibition

November 15-22
Artist S. Helaluddin holds a solo watercolour painting exhibition at Divine Art Gallery at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in the city.

Begum Selima Rahman, State Minister, Cultural Affairs, earlier inaugurated the exhibition with the presence of H.E. Hu Qian Wen, Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh and artist Mahmudul Haque who presided over the inaugural ceremony.

Leonid Meteor Shower Camp

November 19
A unique event that of meteor shower observation will be held after midnight, from 2:00 a.m. till before sunrise, upon the deck of M.V. Abashar, a cruise launch on river Shitalakhyia and Meghna.

The event is being organised by Bangladesh Astronomical Association and The Guide Tours Ltd. Interested persons are requested to contact at phone no: 0171-187555.

Photography

November 17 December 02
Dr. Pierre Claquin holds a solo photography show titled, 'Surviving Dreams: The struggling circuses of Bangladesh', at the gallery of Alliance Francaise de Dhaka in the city that remains open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. everyday.

Surya Utsav

December 29 January 02
Bangladesh Astronomical Association arranges one of its annual events, Surya Utsav (Sun Festival) as the organisation aims at showing the participants, several exciting matters including the first sunrise of the year 2003, cultural ceremony of the indigenous people of the area, Keokradang at Bandaban district, Pitra festival and observation of the night sky through telescope.

Interview

Angst-ridden young ones, with an avant-garde interpretation of life

John Osborne comes to town with Ashish Khondker's cast at Alliance Francaise

FAYZA HAQ

WITH a handful of young part time thespians, Ashish Khondker had recently brought John Osborne's masterpiece, "Look Back in Anger" (1956) to the stage enthusiasts at Alliance Francaise. This production will be presented in the city on a larger scale in the near future.

Talking about the plot of the play Ashish Khondker said, "since this is a well-known play even here in the city, as it is taught at various levels at the schools and the DU, and is still relevant although it was written after the world War 11. The action of the play takes place in the Midlands, UK. It deals with the social problems of the time in which it was set in. It describes the impact of the war on the man-woman relationships. They begin to develop their own individualities and are overtly aware of their own psyches and side by side come the anxiety, frustration and a crisis which could even be seen as socio-political one. The person, despite having family is portrayed as an individual with his/her own aspirations, failures and success. The post-colonial problems are included where the element of choosing one's own husband or wife surface with a bang. Capitalism does not necessarily help the people in England develop their own individuality without slings and arrows of life."

The protagonists are portrayed as sharing the accommodation due to the hip-pocket nerve. Thus there is the couple, Alison and Jimmy Porter, the latter being of 25 years but intellectually inclined, and the former coming from the upper strata of the then bourgeoisie. Meanwhile



Ashish Khondker with his cast of "Look Back in Anger"

Alison's father once belonged to Maharashtra's army in India, before 1947 is a misfit as he does not get the 'salaams' as a white man once got in the British Empire when had then waned drastically. He and his wife still belong to the Edwardian days, mentally i.e. when life had been cushioned with innumerable comforts.

"Meanwhile, Alison's tastes go after her own parents. She thus has problems of co-habitation with Jimmy, who originally comes from the working class. "Although he excels in music, having a jazz band of his own in his university days, he cannot always please or satisfy his wife. The reality is such that it prevents him from making a name for himself as an artiste. He is naturally disappointed and angry with the world around him. During the post marital days the honey has naturally

run out of the moon and discontentment has crept into their anti romantic mundane co-existence. As they cannot afford their every day expenditure they have taken in a boarder who originates from Wales. There is then a triangle in which Jimmy's love for Alison remains one which is that of an introvert and consequently he cannot communicate with his wife any longer. Whatever the third person, Jimmy's friend, Clife Lewis, does is not conscious and it is done spontaneously. Many women are a part of Jimmy's life, including the other young woman, who is helping him set up a pastry shop. However, this is not to say that Jimmy has no character as regards women. He represents energy for the aesthetic world. The other woman that he turns too is a human being whom he turns to just an individual whom he comes to for comfort and under-

standing in the absence of his own wife as he is isolated in his environment.

"A fourth charter, Helena, later steps into the scenario along with the young aspirants, and she used to be Alison's friend at one time. She happened to work in a travelling theatre company. Even though the relationship between Alison and Helena used to be what we see in our own suburbs which we know as 'chaya maya' and they had their secrets in each other's pockets, after Allison's marriage the situation changed drastically and Helena comprehended Jimmy's pulse beats as his own wife couldn't and had reverted to an Ibsen's Nora's ("A Doll's House") act of apparent desertion. A type of bondage develops between Helen and Jimmy, who, says at one point, that the people who died in the 30s and 40s had made a tremendous sacrifice which had a purpose which was missing in the post war generation. It is only natural that what ensues is that the two then live together. He complains, at one point, that there is no socio-political or economic development and declares his generation to be one of total frustration and futility. In the interim period, Helen's psychological level is such is somehow on par with that of Jimmy. In the finale Alison returns because Jimmy cannot really begin life afresh with his newly founded amorous interest. She had felt a child within her through Jimmy, according to the original script, which symbolizes the step to new hopes and aspirations. However the child does not see the light of day. In the last sequence Helen disappears from Jimmy's life.

"Earlier, the mother-in-law had tried to play mother to Jimmy but failed even though she had once invested the money for Jimmy's bakery in the Midlands. She, in turn, had entered the scene with the excuse that she had just arrived in UK and had no accommodation in the Midlands as she wanted to be near the place where she had



Jimmy (Farhad Hossain) and Clife (Abdullah al Mamun) in a scene from the play

invested her savings. "

"Thus the play is both romantic and anti-romantic. Many conflicts take place in the domestic drama and yet amour survives through all the slings and arrows. Jimmy's dialogues naturally stress on the theme of the play and one can read this as being very relevant to our own present society where an artiste is often discredited and misunderstood: it is not necessary that even a very talented artiste will be lauded in Bangladesh today. Jimmy is a misfit even though he comes from a good family and one would think that such a person would be automatically accepted by those around him. Around him hypocrisy prevails as Alison's mother had a hard time accepting Jimmy just because he did not belong to the upper echelons of his society. Following the essence of this play many other plays have been

written since then: such is its impact. This play is therefore a cue point after which the ornamental character of British theatre subsided and one should say that Osborne opened new avenues in the theatre and cinema world with decisiveness."

Khondker added about the making of the play, "Osborne's Look back in Anger" is very relevant for our own social contemporary urban living. I felt a deep connection with society secretive contents which matched those found in Osborne's play. This play presentation was conceived gradually. I felt that everywhere human instincts control them or convert them in some manner. In reality there is a biological machine in the play that crosses cultural boundaries and has the same essence. One must comprehend the universal scenario and

comprehend the dream-like slow progress of the play where every-one tries to achieve his own individual identity. In the play each character attempts to achieve his own individual identity and they continue their struggle with fixed rules of their own. The play carries a global message that human relation in capitalism in socio-economic isolation. The message of the play conveys love, passion, illusions and discontentment. Here east meets west in the play where Jimmy Porter is the angry young man who is unable to reconcile himself to his environment and to the people around him."

Speaking about his cast, Khondker said that it included Forhad Hossain Shawon, Ashish Khondker, NM Abdullah Al-Mamun, Nizam Zahana Chowdhury Liton, Hazar Sultana Kochi. Shama Islam Khan Shawon, Mohammed Amin and Sayedul Islam Shopon. It was brave of Khondker to have presented Osborne's interpretation of life, a play of such gravity, with a handful of part-time and inexperienced non-professionals. His earlier environmental plays have won many accolades and he hopes to make play on Lalbagh Fort, when and if he gets permission from the authorities. Khondker is trained in the theatre world from the National School of Drama, New Delhi, India, and has been teaching acting for the last 10 years. His perennial problems remain the lack of funds and the backing of patrons. The cast belonged to his "Space and Acting Research Centre" (SARC) which is a well-known theatre organization based in Dhaka and founded in 1991. It is involved with contemporary theatre practices, research and performance according to both oriental and western cultural anthropology.

TV GUIDE

Table with TV channel logos (BTV, ALPHATV, CHANNEL-i) and their respective program schedules for the day.

Table listing program highlights for various channels including BBC News, Europe Direct, and other news and entertainment programs.

Table listing program highlights for ZEE CINEMA and ZEE TV, featuring movies like 'Frankie & Hazel' and 'Long time dead'.

Table listing program highlights for STAR MOVIES and STAR SPORTS, including 'Excess Baggage' and various tennis matches.

Table listing program highlights for STAR WORLD and STAR PLUS, featuring 'World's Wildest Police Videos' and other entertainment content.

Table listing program highlights for NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC and other channels, including 'Ng Explorer' and 'Toyota World Of Wildlife'.

Table listing program highlights for STAR GOLD and STAR PLUS, featuring 'Bollywood Beats' and 'Hit Geet'.