

Cinema

Jacques Tati's world of Mr Hulot

Zahir Raihan Film Society screens six films by Jacques Tati at the Alliance Francaise of Dhaka

SABBIR CHOWDHURY

JACQUES Tati is considered as the French Buster Keaton or Charlie Chaplin. He is the best French comic actor since Max Linder. As an actor and an auteur filmmaker, Tati has shown immense talent in portraying characters down to their essential comic details. The prolonged production of his films can be compared to those famous for multiple and meticulous takes of a single shot, like his compatriot Robert Bresson or Italian Michelangelo Antonioni. This



Jacques Tati, centre, looking through the camera

often led to belated making of the films which always exceeded the production deadline as well as the budget. In a career spanning over three decades, Tati only made six feature films and a few shorts! One of the features was made for the television.

Jacques Tatischeff, of Russian-Dutch-Italian-French descent, was born on October 9, 1908. His birthplace was Le Pecq in France. Though



Mr Hulot's Holiday (1953)

he received art training so that he could enter his father's art restoration and picture-framing business, he was drawn by sports, especially rugby which he played professionally.

He discovered his talent for entertaining at rugby club suppers, and went into music halls, where his speciality was a comic mime of sportsmen. He acted in several comic shorts in the 1930s, which included Watch Your Left (1936) by Rene Clement. He then acted in small roles in two films by Claude Autant-Lara in the mid-1940s. He directed his own short School for Postmen in 1947. This short feature impressed the audience as well as the producer so much that he wanted it to be expanded into Tati's first feature *Jour de fete* (Holiday, 1949).

Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot (Mr Hulot's Holiday, 1953) followed. The film saw the creation of a new comic hero Mr Hulot, who is



My Uncle (1958)

as distinctive and endearing as Chaplin's Charlie.

This was followed by *Mon Oncle* (My Uncle, 1958), *Playtime* (1968), *Traffic* (Traffic, 1971) and *Parade* (1974). The comic character Mr Hulot comes recurrently in his films. Tati says about his comedy, "At heart, Hulot is never aware of what's going on. Charlie, faced with a difficulty, something that impedes him, has ideas, finds a way out, modifies and interprets the impediment. Hulot never does anything intentionally, assumes nothing, constructs nothing."

In Mr Hulot, Tati created a gangling, awkward character whose peculiar gait and odd misadventures set him apart from the gadget-obsessed world around him.

Mr Hulot remained Tati's alter-ego in four of his six feature films. Hulot's universe is an island of sanity and warm humanity sur-



Traffic (1971)

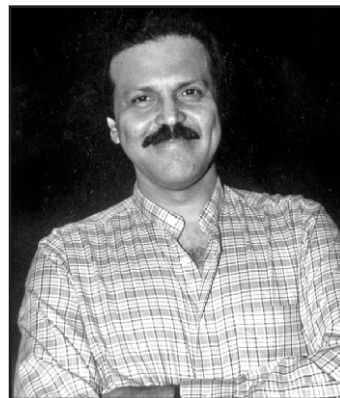
rounded by a sea of antiseptic modernity. Hulot dislikes modernity as did his creator Jacques Tati. An exclusive use of the long shot gives an unforced quality to the comedy, and shows the intimate relation of the comic character to his surroundings; in the same way, although dialogue itself is minimal, the soundtrack is rich in subtle absurdities. The originality and the unique quality of his work assured him of a leading position in the pantheon of movie comedy. Jacques Tati died in 1982, before realising his seventh feature film project *Confusion*, which he could not even start due to unavailability of fund or a producer!

Sabbir Chowdhury, a film critic and activist, teaches in the Department of English at Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka.

Happy returns...

I am very organised--Tarique

Well-known actor Tarique Anam Khan (TAK) recently spoke to The Daily Star's (TDS) Shilpi Mahalanabish on the occasion of his birthday today. Here are some excerpts from the interview.



TDS: Tell us about your theatre activities.
TAK: The drama *Match-maker* will be staged by middle of July. And alongside directing I will also be acting in the play.
TDS: How many of your TV dramas are now being aired?
TAK: Two mega serials—*Baj Pakhi* and *Shongshoy*. There are offers for a few TV dramas as well. If the plays are upto my liking, I will possibly take up some of them.
TDS: You have also acted in the big screen. What about your future plans?
TAK: I hope to act in the film *Joyjatra* directed by Towqir Ahmed.
TDS: Are you writing any drama?
TAK: Not at the moment. I will when I get the opportunity.
TDS: You work in different media—advertising, TV and stage drama along with films. How do you plan your schedule?
TAK: I am a very organised person and divide my time accordingly.
TDS: Do you want your son to be involved in the media in future?
TAK: He is more interested in working behind the screen. He may work in this media in future.

Small screen

Friends bid good-bye

51 million tune in for Friends finale

AP, New York

In the end, Rachel, Ross, Joey, Phoebe, Monica and Chandler had a lot of friends. An estimated 51.1 million people tuned in for the final *Friends* on NBC Thursday night, watching the crowd-pleasing story line of Ross and Rachel declaring their undying love for each other.

That makes it the fourth most-watched television series finale ever, behind *M-A-S-H* (105 million in 1983), *Cheers* (80.4 million in 1993) and *Seinfeld* (76.2 million in 1998), according to Nielsen Media Research. It was also the most popular entertainment program on television since the concluding episode of the first *Survivor*, watched by 51.7 million in August 2000.

Of more than 30,000 people to respond to an America Online poll, 77 percent said rekindling Ross and Rachel's romance was the perfect ending for the show.



A scene from the last ever episode of Friends

Tagore evening

Tagore through the lens of Ray

Rendition of Tagore's work at Spectra Convention Centre

AFSAR AHMED

Incorporating dramatised sequences from Gurudev's (as Tagore's disciples call him) life and archived images and documents, the unforgettable film maker Satyajit Ray captured this great soul of Bangali culture on celluloid. The 54 minute black and white documentary was made to celebrate Tagore's birth centenary in May 1961. Hence, this was an official portrait of India's celebrated poet; Ray consciously did not include any controversial aspects of Tagore's life. This rare piece of documentary film was screened at the end of the cultural programme organised by the Spectra Convention Centre to mark the 143rd birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, a great poet and prime mover of the 19th century Bangali renaissance.



Rokeya Prachi

Winner of the President's Gold Medal, New Delhi and Golden Seal, Locarno in 1961 and Special Mention, Montevideo, in 1962; this film depicts a skilful and richly life-affirming composition of the original footage and collage of still images. The film begins with the Nobel Laureate's childhood and adolescence—his private, domestic life. The sequences of young Tagore in his early ages are moving and lyrical. In Ray's words, "Ten or twelve minutes of the film are among the most moving and powerful things that I have produced". Gradually it unfolds his public life, emphasising the great political movements to which he contributed, which gradually led to India's independence. The original footage is drawn from the archived documents. However, a time span of 54 minutes seemed inadequate to describe the great poet.

The tribute started with the recitation of one of Tagore's patriotic song *Deshey deshey bhromi* and his prose *Shandhya o probhat* by renowned cultural personality Aly Zaker. He said about Tagore, "An artist, reaching such heights like Tagore, can prophesise the future." Then Sushmita Ahmed rendered Tagore's songs like *Shandhya holo go*, *Amar mon manena* and others. Acclaimed actress Rokeya Prachi gave a recitation from the poem *Banshiwala*. This was highly appreciated by the select audience.

Mita Haq performed Tagore's patriotic songs, such as *Tomari torey Ma shopinu e deho*, *Deshey deshey bhromi* and *Bertho praner aborjona* with her usual eloquence. Other romantic songs such as *Tomri ki keboli chhobi*, *Amar praner manush acche*



A still from the documentary

praney and, *Hridoyer ekul okul* were also performed at the programme. After the exclusive session of Mita, actor Litu Anam recited the poem *Ekjon Lok*. Seasoned theatre and TV actress Lucky Enam's exceptional performance portrayed the character of Nandini from *Rakta Karobi*. At the



Lucky Inam

end, the rare documentary on Tagore was shown. The occasion was conducted by singer Hasan Abidur Reza Jewel. Spectra's attempt to screen this documentary is indeed praiseworthy.

TV GUIDE

News Bulletin

BTV
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm.
CHANNEL-i
Breakfast News 7:15 am, 9:00 am
News (Bangla) at 7:15 pm, 9:00, 10:30, 12:15 am.
Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm.
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
TARA BANGLA
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm.
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.
Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 9:30 pm.
BBC WORLD
Every hour on the hour

BTV
07:30 Bangladesher Hridoy Hote
09:00 Satellite programme
12:15 Shongbad Potrer Pata Theke
12:30 Health Bulletin
01:05 Ananda jharna
01:30 Shilpo o sahitya
02:05 Computer round
02:30 Grastha bhubon
03:35 Drama
04:05 Lekha para
04:30 Open University
05:05 National Television School debate
05:45 News for children
05:55 Samakalin Arthonoeti
06:10 Nazru programme
06:35 Dance show: Nitritr taale taale
07:05 Children's theatre
07:30 Drama: Aalo chayya
08:30 Drama
09:30 Drama: Hoyto tomar jonn
10:35 Rangdhanu
CHANNEL-i
09:45 Tritiya Matra (Tagore Special)
11:30 Ekanno borti
12:30 Chithi Pelam
12:30 Sharey teen tala
01:00 Ebong Cinemar Gaan
01:30 Sangbadpatrey Bangladesh and public reaction
02:00 Bangla film: Rajar bhai badshah (Moushumi/Rube)l
04:00 Bangla songs
04:30 Toyota Wild Life
05:00 Sa Re Ga Ma
06:10 Music Plus
06:45 Drama Serial: Jahu Dewan

07:55 Drama Serial: *Keboli Raat Hoya Jay*
09:35 Thief of Baghdad
10:00 Drama Serial: *Juboraj*
ntv
08:00 *Aajiker Shakal*
08:30 *Jhankar*
09:00 *Khabor Deshey Deshey*
09:30 *Museum Around The World*
10:02 *Hello Music*
10:30 *Dhakar Cinema: Money Rekho amay*
02:30 *Zoo Adventure*
03:05 *Drama Serial: Teen Purush*
04:15 *Medhabi*
05:10 *Ithasher Ei Diney*
05:40 *Apnar Jigyasha*
06:20 *Shubho Shondhya*
06:50 *Khaboray Shondhyay*
08:10 *Drama Serial: Sporshey Bairey*
08:50 *Sunsilik Apshora*
09:40 *Drama Serial: Abasheshe Propat Dindarpan*
HBO
8:15 Simon Sez
10:00 Shaft
12:00 Center Stage
2:15 My Bloody Valentine
4:00 Head Over Heels
5:45 The Ladies Man
7:30 Striking Distance
9:30 Charlie's Angels
11:30 The Screaming Room: Dracula Goes to Hollywood
12:00 Three to Tango
2:00 Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai
4:15 Center Stage

ZEE CINEMA
9:30 Jaan Tere Naam (Rohit Roy Farheen)
1:00 Mother Special: Masoom (Omkar Kapoor Inder Kumar, Ayesha Jhulka)
5:30 Daud (Sanjay Dutt Umilla)
9:00 Laadla (Anil Kapoor Sridevi)
MGM
9:00 Manny & Lo
11:30 Fever
2:00 The Telephone
4:30 The Last of The Mohicans
5:00 The Leading Man
9:30 Monday Everyone Says I Love You
11:30 Life is Beautiful

DISCOVERY
10:30 Classic Discovery: Secrets of the Buried Armies
11:30 Colour of War: Slow to Anger
12:30 Fashion Street: Super Models
1:30 Baby Stories: Baby Richey
2:00 Fat Free: A lot to Lose
2:30 New Detectives: Patterns of Guilt
3:30 Wild Discovery: Tracking Deadly Vipers
4:30 Schlensing: Physical Science in Action
5:00 I Love My Music
5:30 Globe Trekker: Venezuela
6:30 Martial Arts: Kung Fu Business
ANIMAL PLANET
10:30 Animal Planet Showcase: Biggest Nose in Borneo
11:30 Wild Encounters: Body Parts
12:30 On the Edge: Lion Crawl
1:30 On the Edge: Out of Balance Down Under

STAR GOLD
8:30 Sghitfilm
9:00 Parampara
12:30 Mahaveera
4:00 Sghitfilm
4:30 Jung
8:00 Startoons Countdown
8:30 Pratikar
12:00 Sghitfilm
STAR PLUS
8:30 Shaka Laka Boom Boom
9:00 Fox Kids
11:00 Meri Saheli
11:30 Samnewali Khidki
12:00 Tanha
1:00 Kasautii Zindagii Kay
1:30 Kunkum-Pyara Sa Bandhan
2:30 Bhabhi
3:00 Kesar
3:30 Kabhi Aaye Na Judai
3:30 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
4:00 Yatra
4:30 Kahiin To Hoga
5:00 Kaahin Kissi Roz Series
5:25 Series
6:00 Samnewali Khidki
6:30 Fox Kids
7:25 Series
7:30 Kunkum-Pyara Sa Bandhan Series
7:55 Highlights (T)
8:00 Shaka Laka Boom Boom

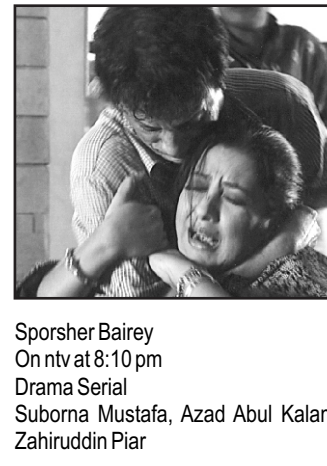
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
9:30 Adventure Challenge
10:30 Built For Destruction
11:30 Dogs With Jobs
12:00 Toyota World Of Wildlife
12:30 Hornets: A Sting In The Tale
1:30 Croc Chronicles S2
2:00 Wildlife Diary
2:30 Built For The Kill
3:30 Slith:The 7th Deadly Sin
4:30 National Geographic Special
5:30 Wildlife Detectives
6:00 Hayden Turner's Wildlife Chall
6:30 Dogs With Jobs
7:00 Toyota World Of Wildlife
7:30 Spidan:Secrets Of The Turtle
8:30 Croc Chronicles S2
9:00 Wildlife Diary
9:30 Built For The Kill
10:30 Time Of The Elephants
11:30 National Geographic Special
STAR SPORTS
10:30 Ladies European Tour - Aami Women's Australia Open New South Wales Australia Highlights (T)
11:30 Tennis Telecom Italia Masters Rome Italy Highlights (T)
12:30 English Premier Football League 2003/04

ESPANOL
2:30 Manchester United Vs Chelsea (T)
3:30 Super 12 Rugby 2004
4:30 Brisbane Australia Queensland Reds Vs Nsw Waratahs Round Race Day Barcelona Spain Spanish Grand Prix(R)
5:15 Formula One World Championships Barcelona Spain Spanish Grand Prix(R)
7:30 Chequered Flag: Formula One Barcelona Spain Spanish Grand Prix(R)
8:00 Sportsline (L)
8:30 Spanish Football League (R)
10:30 Sportsline (R)
11:00 Hitz (R)
11:30 The Story Of The Uefa European Football Championships Euro 1984(T)
12:00 Kiarna's Flex Appeal (T)

PICK OF THE DAY



Charlie's Angels



Sporshey Bairey



My Sister Sam

STAR MOVIES
2:30 Animal Planet Showcase: Apes
3:30 Pet Nation
4:00 Pet Nation
4:30 Pet Nation: Fetch
5:00 Pet Nation: Siberian Husky
6:00 Pet Nation: Saluki
6:30 Pet Nation
7:00 From Cradle to Grave: In The Company of Crocodiles
8:30 On the Edge: Lion Feeding
9:30 On the Edge: Sympathy for the Devil
10:30 Animal Planet Showcase: The Heart of a Lioness
11:30 From Cradle to Grave: Call of the Wolf