

Victorian England Christmas revisited

Fund raised for Floating Hospital

HARUN UR RASHID

THE Grand Ball Room and the lobby outside at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel wore a curious look of the Victorian England on November 19 evening.

The occasion was the staging of the play A Christmas Carol by expatriate theatre group Dhaka Stage. Based on Dickens' novel of the same name, the play was a charity show organised by Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel to raise funds for the Lifebuoy Friendship Floating Hospital.

The story of A Christmas Carol is about a penny-pinching miser Ebenezer Scrooge, who cares nothing for the people around him and has particularly forgotten the spirit of Christmas and collects rent from the poor even on the Christmas Eve. He grants his employee a day off on the Christmas only for a four-hour extra work the next day.

Late on Christmas Eve, Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his business partner Marley, who died



A sequence from the play A Christmas Carol by Dhaka Stage

exactly seven years ago. Marley, a miser from the same mould as Scrooge, is suffering the consequences in the afterlife and hopes to help Scrooge avoid a same fate. Marley's spirit tells Scrooge that he will be visited by three spirits—the ghosts of Christmas past, present

and future—on that night and asks him to heed to what they tell him. The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge past events in his life: lonely Christmases brightened only once by his sister's love; the way his soft heart hardened after starting business; his lady love

whom he lost because he loved moneymore.

The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the happy family life of his underpaid poor assistant Bob Cratchitt. He also witnesses a party hosted by his nephew, Fred, where the guests mock the miserable

Scrooge. With the Ghost of Christmas Future, Scrooge visualises the possible fate of himself if he does not change himself: Cratchitt's young son Tiny Tim dies but the family remains united in their love for each other and the unadorned death of himself.

This finally changes Scrooge. His glorious reformation complete, on Christmas morning Scrooge sends the largest turkey and many wonderful gifts to his long-suffering clerk Cratchitt. He donates money to the poor and gives Bob Cratchitt a long-deserved promotion. And he spends the Christmas day in the company of his nephew whom he had earlier spurned.

The acting of the play was appreciable especially Jeremy Orton as Scrooge, Clive Ingleby as Cratchitt, Patricia Pearce as Mrs Cratchitt, Harry Gaskin as Tiny Tim were very good.

The set of the play was absolutely realistic using a lot of furniture. Produced by Mary Fitzgerald and Katy Hourston, the three-act play was punctuated by beautiful carols, under Teri Khan's direction, facilitating the set changes on stage. Sally Elliott's costume design added the last and vital touch of reality to the Victorian England environment of the whole play.

Directed by Penny Legg, this was her second directorial effort for Dhaka Stage. Earlier, she directed Dhaka Stage's latest production The Importance of Being Earnest.

Tête-à-Tête with Ronni and Moly

The creative duo who 'give space to each other'

The Daily Star's (TDS) Fayza Haq recently talked to Ronni Ahmmad, a well-known artist, and his wife Moly Siddiqua, an upcoming fashion designer, teacher and freelance writer. Ronni is a leading surrealist artist, who has had several solo and joint exhibits at Alliance Francaise. He is also an art critique. His band 'Lubricated goat' draws many music enthusiasts in the city. Moly is a fashion designer, short-story writer plus a teacher at a secondary school. Both are in creative professions, which could make for frayed tempers. But, as the duo explains, each gives the other sufficient space to grow and get ahead in their respective lines of work.



Excerpts from the interview: Moly on her career I'm entirely self-taught as a sari and dress designer for Shawdamin, my boutique. Ronni helps me with this work. He used to do a lot of the basic work before but now I have some assistants too. After our marriage, Ronni had to steer away from academia and go into a lucrative profession. He has had solo exhibitions of his surrealist paintings and drawings at the Alliance Francaise.

Getting to know one another Ronni Ahmmad: Years back, we met at a restaurant; some months later our parents gave their mutual consent to our marriage. Now you

see us with our two daughters, living contentedly in a joint family. We listen to music in our leisure time. We are happy that both of us have different pursuits: we give space to each other, which is essential. Role in each other's work Ronni: I interact with critics, architects, artists, poets, intellectuals, and exchange views with them. Moly gives her assent to all that and more. She doesn't mind socialising. I even have a band of my own and Moly encourages me on that front also. I naturally have addas too where

genres of songs are sung such as that of DL Roy. I enjoy reading books on art, fiction and travel, among others. I try to keep abreast not only with fine arts but all aspects of culture. Common interests Ronni: As I've said before, we paint and design together, which for me is both a profession and a pastime. Moly comes to the performances of my band, for which I write the lyrics. She says that she loves the drumming and strumming in these programmes. We try to encourage each other in every possible way.

CULTURAL FEAST

Japanese Drum Concert

Title: Haguruma Performer: House of Haguruma Organizer: Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh & Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall Time: November 23, at 6:30pm

Lecture, Recitation & Musical Programme

Title: Influence of Mysticism in Bengali Poetry & Songs Organizer: Goethe-Institut Dhaka & Panchoshor Venue: Goethe Institut, House# 10, Road# 9, Dhamondi Time: November 21 at 6pm KG Mostafa will present the keynote paper and artistes from Panchoshor will perform in the poetry & musical session.

Documentary Show

Title: Le Mois du film documentaire Organizer: Alliance Française de Dacca Venue: Alliance Française de Dacca, 26 Mirpur Road Schedule: November 21 05:00pm Inauguration Programme 05:30pm Water is Happiness! Shahabuddin Liberation War in Arts 07:00pm The Long Wait - Novera

A chit-chat with Intekhab Fascination to drama

Intekhab Dinar, a TV and stage actor, began his career quite some time back. Recently, he spoke to the cultural correspondent of The Daily Star about his passion for acting. Excerpts from the interview:

Why is it that you always play the character of a 'good boy'. Is it the director's choice or yours?

No, this does not depend entirely on my choice. When I play a character successfully, I am offered similar roles for the next play. But there are times when I get to choose my own character. I have essayed different characters in the last two or three plays. I hope the audience liked them.

How did you come into acting?

It was after I had completed my HSC exams. One day my friends and I decided to watch a stage drama at Baily Road. Previously, I had a notion that stage plays are like the typical jatra shows. But after watching the drama Darpon by Nagorik Natya Shamprodai, I was fascinated and then I joined the group.

What is your first play on stage and on screen? How many plays



have you acted in so far?

Achalyoton and Gor respectively. Gazi Rakayet asked me to do the main character in the latter drama. I did not agree at first, as I lacked confidence. But somehow he helped me overcome my reservations. I have done almost 50 plays to date. Is acting your profession or are

you involved in other spheres as well?

I am a full time actor. Would you like to act in films? After having acted in Joyjatra, I am now willing to act in other films as well. But obviously the story line and character has to match my taste.

Ash to star in Rush Hour 3?

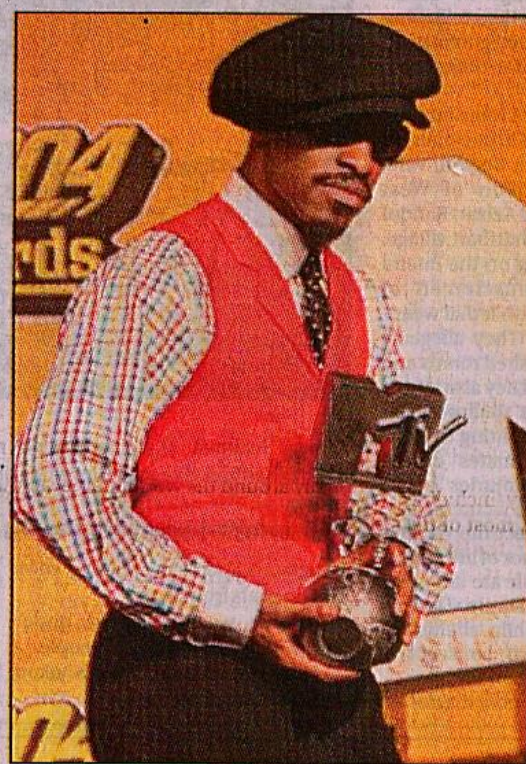
Aishwarya Rai may not be romancing James Bond just yet but the Bollywood beauty's trust with Hollywood continues.

Recently, in an interview to an American television host, director Brett Ratner expressed his desire to cast Aishwarya in his next film Rush Hour 3. Ratner said, 'I want you to tell me who the most beautiful actress in Bollywood is so that I can cast her as Chris Tucker's love interest! When the name of Aishwarya was mentioned, Ratner said, 'That's the one. That's the girl I want. Next time she's in Los Angeles, I want you to introduce me.' Rush Hour 3 is scheduled for release in August 2005.

A copy of the recorded interview was being sent to Ash's Hollywood agent Simone Sheffield. Simone said, 'At the moment, there is nothing to talk about because we have no script. However, Aishwarya must first read the script and like it, especially her character, then there must be an official offer made by the producers. If the dates work out and all is acceptable by both parties, then the producers will make the formal announcement to the press.'

Source: Internet

OutKast win at MTV Europe Awards



OutKast led the race with five nominations

BBC ONLINE

US hip-hop duo OutKast have capped a year of award glory with three prizes at the MTV Europe Music Awards on November 18 at the Tor di Valle hippodrome in Rome. They won best group, best video and best song for hit Hey Ya! after getting five nominations.

R&B singer Usher won best male and best album for Confessions, while UK rock band Muse were named best alternative act and best British artists.

OutKast will add their awards to the four they won at the US MTV Awards in August and three Grammys in

February. Not only was Hey Ya! one of the biggest global hits of last year, but OutKast have been widely acclaimed as one of the most exciting and innovative acts in music. Their double CD album Speakerboxxx/The Love Below, which saw Andre 3000 and Big Boi each produce one disc, was hailed as the album of 2003 by many critics.

Also competing for best group had been the Beastie Boys, the Black Eyed Peas, D12 and Maroon 5. And Anastacia, Britney Spears, Maroon 5 and Ludacris had been on the shortlist for best song.

OutKast did lose out in the contest for best album--which was won by Usher, another award favourite. Usher, who performed a duet with Alicia Keys, also beat off competition from Justin Timberlake, Jay-Z, Nelly and Robbie Williams to take the best male crown. He had four nominations going into the ceremony, with seven artists nominated in three categories.

Bminem's group, D12, were surprise winners in the best hip-hop category, beating the Beastie Boys, Jay-Z, Kanye West and Nelly.

Rapper Eminem opened the show with a performance of his songs Losh and Just Lose It, for which he was joined on stage by a crowd of children.

The Black Eyed Peas, who had a global hit with Where is the Love?, picked up the prize for best pop act, beating Anastacia, Avril Lavigne, Robbie Williams and Britney Spears.

Britney Spears was named best female. Alicia Keys, Anastasia, Avril Lavigne and Beyonce Knowles had featured alongside her in that contest.

Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington described their prize for best rock band as 'quite an honour' while Muse said their win for best alternative act was 'a real surprise for us'. Muse were also named best UK and Ireland act, ahead of Franz Ferdinand, Natasha Bedingfield, Jamelia and The Streets. Referring to the fact that winners of 11 of the 12 main awards were from the US, Muse singer Matt Bellamy said: 'There needs to be more European bands.'

Hosted by hip-hop artist Xzibit, the 11th annual awards featured performances from the Beastie Boys, who entered the stage on bicycles and skateboards, No Doubt singer Gwen Stefani being lowered from a giant clock and Nelly doing a duet with Pharrell Williams.

TV GUIDE

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

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

News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00 am, 7:15 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30, 12:15 am. Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

ATN BANGLA

News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm.

Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

ATN BANGLA

News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm.

ntv

News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 6:15 pm, 9:30 pm. News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm.

TARA BANGLA

News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm. Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.

BBC WORLD

Every hour on the hour

Table listing TV programs on various channels (BTV, CHANNEL-i, ATN BANGLA, ntv, Tara Bangla, BBC World, ntv) with start times and program names.

PICK OF THE DAY

Promotional image for 'Holes' featuring Sigourney Weaver, Jon Voight, and Tim Blake Nelson.

69 On Channel at 9:35pm Drama Serial Cast: Jaya Ahsan, Marjuk Raussell, Anom Biswas Writer: Anisul Haque, Director: Mustafa Sarwar Faruque

Table listing 'Pick of the Day' programs: Cats & Dogs, Home Alone 4, STAR GOLD, STAR MOVIES, STAR AWARDS, STAR WORLD, DISCOVERY.

Table listing TV programs in three columns: National Geographic, Animal Planet, and Discovery.