

Bangladeshi theatre goes overseas

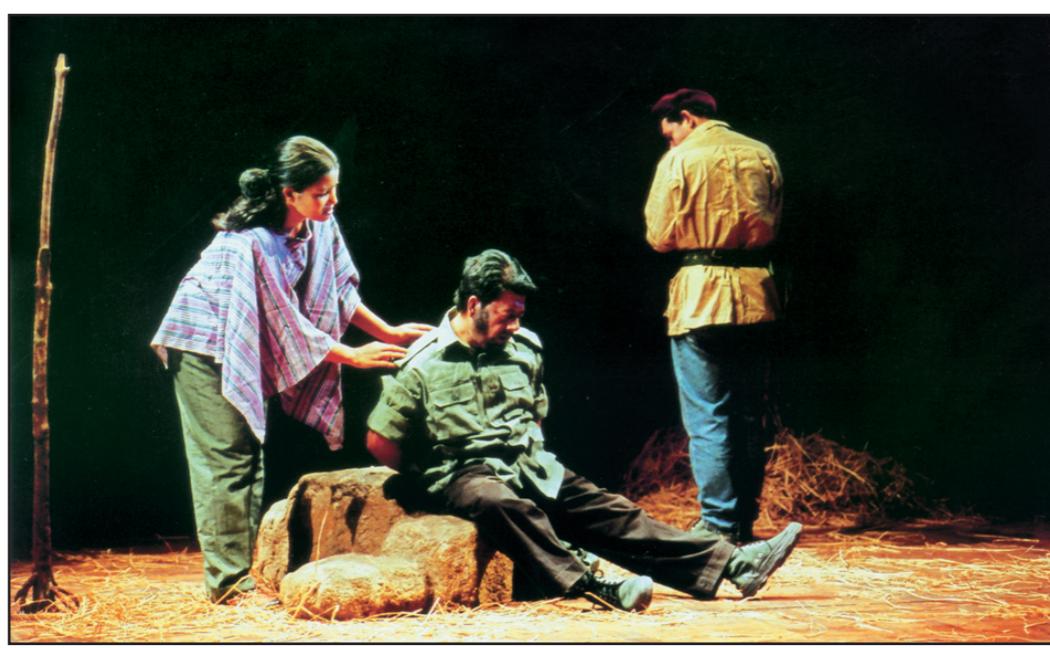
"Manush" and "Che-er Cycle" staged in Australia

ERSHAD KAMOL

WO productions of Bangla Theatre, one of the very few professional theatre troupes in Bangladesh, winged their way to Australia recently. Titled *Manush* and *Che-er Cycle*, the plays were staged in three metropolitan cities Down Under. Ausban, a non-profit Australia based company, invited Bangla Theatre to stage plays in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

In this connection, a six-member team, including Mamunur Rashid, Tushar Khan, Faiz Zahir, Tamalika Karmakar, Chanchal Chowdhury and Rublee Chowdhury, went to Australia. Both of the plays are written and directed by Mamunur Rashid and Faiz Zahir respectively.

The troupe staged one show each of *Manush* and *Che-er Cycle* in Canberra and Melbourne and two shows of each of the plays in Sydney amongst the Bengali community living in Australia. Said Rashid, "We received a tremendous response from the viewers. Though *Manush* deals with a serious issue—a conflict ridden society—



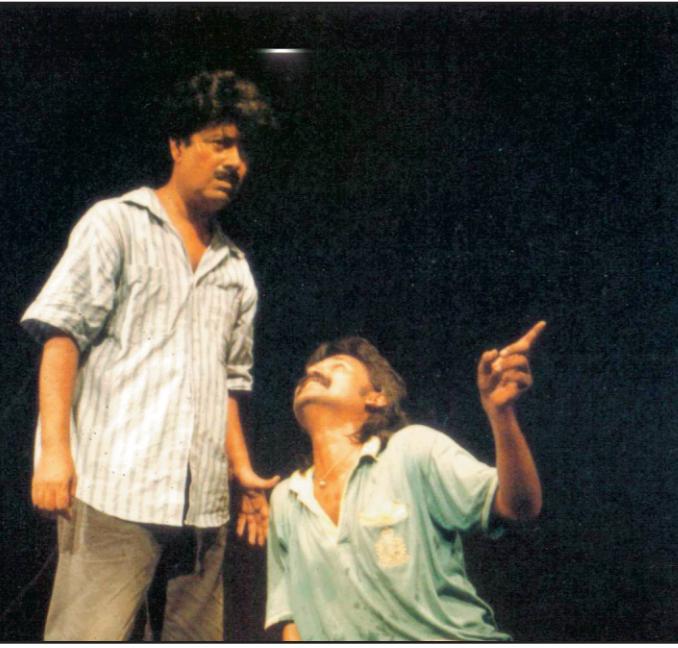
Mamunur Rashid (C) and co-actors in *Che-er Cycle* (Top) and *Manush*

— the presentation is comical. That's why we were confident about the

success of this light play amongst the viewers who live in hectic metros in Australia.

"However, we had doubts about the response to our current production, *Che-er Cycle*, as the play deals with a serious issue—the adverse impact of globalisation. Nevertheless it is encouraging that both the plays have gone down well with the audience. Many Bengalis turned up for entertainment, while a sizeable Australian audience was also present."

On the limitations faced by the group, Rashid said, "Manush is not our regular production. We remade the production for the trip. And the problem we faced during staging the play was that in case of the earlier version of the play, six artists performed 10 characters, but all of these artists except me went there. However, in Australia, four artists—Tushar Khan, Tamalika, Chanchal Chowdhury and I—handled all of the characters. Chanchal Chowdhury, Rublee and I performed in *Che-er*



Cycle."

Detailing the prospects for theatre in Australia, Rashid asserted that many Bangladeshi celebrities participate in cultural programmes for the Bengali communities living in affluent countries such UK, USA and others, but few theatre productions go to there. To quote him, "The head of Ausban, Golam Mostafa, an ex-theatre activist living in Australia, was the promoter of the current trip. That may explain his interest in taking theatre overseas for the entertainment of the expatriates. However, more such programmes should be organised along with the solo entertaining programmes performed by the celebrities. This will help introduce professionalism in theatre; it will also encourage theatre activists confronted by cross commercialism in the entertainment business in Bangladesh."

CROSS CURRENTS

TV play *Cross Road* on Channel i today

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Written by Aniket and directed by Ashraf Alam Ripon, the play *Crossroad* will be aired at 7:50pm today on Channel i.



The play stars Toni Dayes, Deepa Khondaker, Sumaiya Shimu and others.

Synopsis:

A government employee (Toni) marries the daughter of an affluent man (Deepa). Running into trouble in her conjugal life from the very start, Deepa's character leaves for Canada to complete her studies. In the meantime, Toni gets romantically involved with another woman (Shimu)—keeping his marriage a secret. Meanwhile, the wife's return sparks off tension.

Arjo and Shiropa are the children of noted artists Kanak Champa Chakma and Khalid Mithu.

Sumaiya Shimu and Toni Dayes in *Crossroad*

Young Bangladeshi filmmakers win accolades at int'l festival

Short films by two of the youngest filmmakers in Bangladesh, Arjo Sreshtha and Shiropa Poorna have won the 'Certificate of Merit' at the Reet Teens Film festival 2006, held in New York, US, according to a press release.

Eight year old Shiropa's short film, titled *5 Finger Puppets* is themed on how any one, even animals, should not be disturbed without any valid reason. The young one is also the script writer, set designer and music composer of the film.

Arjo's award winning film *Love and Responsibility* is based on his own experiences that narrate his sister's concern for him when he got ill once. This is Arjo's third work. He has also done the script writing, editing, cinematography and music composition for the film.

Arjo and Shiropa are the children of noted artists Kanak Champa Chakma and Khalid Mithu.



Shiropa Poorna

Shiropa Poorna is a young filmmaker from Bangladesh. She has won several awards for her short films, including the 'Certificate of Merit' at the Reet Teens Film festival 2006 in New York. She is currently studying film at the University of Dhaka.

Arjo Sreshtha

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Lionsgate is picking up Cruise/Wagner-produced remake *The Eye* out of turnaround from Paramount and is in talks with Jessica Alba to star and French directors David Moreau and Xavier Palud to direct. According to *Variety*, the film will shoot this winter.

The Eye is a thriller about a corner transplant recipient who sees disturbing images in the mirror that send her on a quest to find out what happened to the eye's previous owner. The original was made in Hong Kong by Thai directing brothers Danny and Oxide Pang.

Tom Cruise and Paula Wagner persuaded Paramount to buy the remake rights in 2002 and got close to making it there with Renée Zellweger. When Zellweger dropped out, the project lost its momentum and the studio put it into turnaround.

Alba is in talks to make *The Eye* her next picture after the *Fantastic Four* sequel. Moreau and Palud, who last directed the French thriller *Illes*, will make *The Eye* their first US picture.

Source: Internet

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Source: Internet

ATN Bangla turns 10

Special programmes on the TV channel

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of ATN Bangla, the channel is set to telecast special programmes on July 14 and 15. Here is a roundup of the upcoming programmes.

July 14, Friday

Bangla

The feature film directed by Shahidul Islam Khokon will be premiered at 2:45 pm. The film is based on Ahmed Chhoda's novel *Ongkar*. Popular artists Shabnur, Mahfuz, Humayun Farid, Wahida Mallick Jolly and others play the major roles. The film is set against the backdrop of the mass upsurge in 1969.

Amra Korbo Jai

The special programme on child rights and child entertainment will be telecast at 6:20 pm.

ATN Taroka Taroka Taroka

A cultural programme and award giving ceremony of *ATN Taroka* will be telecast live at 7:30 pm from the Plenary Hall of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Twenty contestants from the talent hunt will perform in the programme.

July 15, Saturday

Pala Gaan

The special programme on Baul songs will be telecast at 8:30 am.

Nabin Mela

The special programme for children hosted by



Scenes from special programme *Tarokader Adda* (Top) and the film *Bangla*

Ananya Bonik and Mehedi Hasan will be aired at 9:15 am.

Akhono Akash Neel

The tele-film featuring students of BUET will be aired at 10:30 am.

Shagor a carefree young man is more keen on *addas* (chatting) and hanging out with his friends than concentrating on his studies. Shagor hits off with Binu who is studious and very responsible. The film follows the budding relationship between the two. Popular actress Aupi Karim, who graduated from Buet and renowned actor Dr Enamul Haq, a professor at the institution, have done cameos in the telefilm.

Dujanai

The special musical programme will be aired at 1:30 pm.

Akono Bhor Hoy

Written by Ahmed Yusuf Saber the tele-film featuring Eshita, Soma, Tarik, Swapan, Nayon, and Insan will be aired at 2:40 pm.

Special Musical Programme

Ten *ATN Taroka Tarokader Taroka* (music) contestants will perform in the programme. The programme will be aired at 5:45 pm.

Tarokader Adda

Renowned personalities from different fields: Asaduzzaman Noor, ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon, Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud, GM Kader, Dr Atiur Rahman, Shamol Dutt and Fatema Tuz Zohra will participate in the programme. *Tarokader Adda*, hosted by Barrister Tania Amir, will be aired at 8:00 pm

Moner moto gaan

Solo musical performance of Eva Rahman will be aired at 9:00 pm.

Monsoon medley

Rain in Bollywood films

From memories of *Barsaat mein* to the contemporary *On the roof in the rain*, rain songs have been an integral feature of Indian film music. Good old-fashioned flirtatiousness, romance, passion, mourning, solitude — the monsoon says it all. Sometimes characters singing and dancing get drenched in rain even if the song itself does not have the word 'rain' in it.

A look at some of the most memorable 'rain songs' in Bollywood movies:

Pyar hua iqrar hua (Shri 420)

Possibly the most iconic image that springs from Bollywood's sepia-toned past is that of Raj Kapoor and Nargis under an umbrella.

In *Shri 420*, director Raj Kapoor positioned the monsoons as a natural backdrop for the romance between a shy schoolteacher (Nargis) and a good-hearted tramp (Raj Kapoor). Romance unfolded in the scene in which they go from sharing a cup of *chai* to sharing an umbrella while singing to Shailendra's simple lines.

Kapoor's rain-lashed scene further added to the depth of feeling. This Lata-Mangeshkar song captured the Cupid-like role played by monsoon.

Umad ghumad kar aayi re ghata (Do Aankhen Barah Haath)

The monsoons besides stimulating budding romances for city folk, also holds special significance for the farmers.

In the V Shantaram epic (*Do Aankhen...*), the arrival of the monsoon is celebrated by a

reformist man with a mission (*Shantaram*), a woman (*Sandhya*), two untidy kids and 12 convicts because it means they can reap a good crop of vegetables from a barren land.

Ek lauki bheegi bhaagi si (Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi)

The seductive potential of rain songs is well exploited in Indian cinema, and who makes a better visual in a soaked sari than the ever-radiant Madhubala? In this whacky comedy (*Chalti Ka...*), she played a rich girl whose car breaks down on a stormy night near a mechanic's (*Kishore Kumar*) garage.

The mechanic can't resist flirting outrageously and pretty soon he is crooning to the sneezing-and-scoffing beauty in his smooth, rich voice.

O sajna barkha bahaar aye (Parakh)

Salil Chowdhury's orchestration captured the rhythm of trickling rain. There is a reason why Lata Mangeshkar always picks *O sajna barkha bahar...* as one of her favourites.

Besides the excellent sitar pieces rippling through the song, what added to this number's appeal is the visual of a young, de-glamoured yet gorgeous Sadhana eloquently watching the rain from under a canopy.

...Yeh mausam aur yeh duuri (Roti Kapda Aur Makhaan)

The idea of a rain song as a siren call arguably reached its peak with Zeenat Aman's sensuous moves. Actor-director Manoj Kumar played the sorely tempted boyfriend who can't afford to be with the object of his affection (Zeenat) in the rain, as he has to appear for a much-needed job interview.

Zeenat's drenched look and unruly sari set a trend that is followed by actresses to this date; be it Sushmita Sen or Aishwarya Rai.

Megha re megha (Lamhe)

Yash Chopra's filming of this song captured the traditional Indian greeting of the monsoons. There's the quintessential mango orchard, Sridevi and her friends frolicking around a swing — like mythical nymphs in some classic painting. Lata's voice in the *Shiv Hari* song was counterbalanced by Ila Arun's rustic crooning to achieve a heady mix.

Rimjhim rimjhim (1942: A Love Story)

Just as a young, freshly scrubbed Manisha Koirala collected the raindrops in her sari and splashed Anil Kapoor with them in this number, the audience too felt the refreshing appeal of the song.

The film's music set the highpoint of its era. Javed Akhtar's rich lyrics were much appreciated. And, of course, this was RD Burman's swan song. Fittingly, the maestro had a memorable monsoon melody in his last offering.

Bhaage re man (Chameli)

The under-utilised Sandesh Shandilya spins a delicate melody that reflects the state of mind of a young Mumbai sex-worker (Kareena Kapoor). The city's torrential downpour brings unexpected joy to the streetwalker's life and she takes full advantage of it, splashing around in her famous red-and-blue sari. The song captures her feeling of being ecstatic. She loses herself to the experience and mocks her new acquaintance (Rahul Bose), who prefers to stay dry.

The song ends with an unforgettable image of Kareena prancing joyously towards an unknown future — letting the audience know that even the most ill-fated of God's creations take time off from their miseries to enjoy the rain.

Compiled by Karim Wahed

