



Ritwik Kumar Ghatak

The Pioneer of Bengali Art Film

Ritwik Kumar Ghatak was one of the best Bengali filmmakers renowned for his thorough depiction of Bengali society in his films. His films tell the story of the day to day struggle of common Bengalis and their lifestyle. The messages he placed in his films made him more of a social activist and theorist than a filmmaker. During his career he made only eight full length films and a few short films and documentaries. Ghatak also wrote stories, poetry, plays and essays on film. His commentaries on film have been part of scholarly research on filmmaking. We remember this great personality on his 39th death anniversary.

- Ritwik Ghatak was born on 4th November, 1925 in Dhaka in East Bengal (now Bangladesh)
- He moved with his family to Calcutta during the Bengal famine of 1943
- The Bengal famine of 1943 and the partition of 1947 had great influence in his works
- In 1948, Ghatak wrote his first play *Kalo sayar* (The Dark Lake) and participated in a revival of the landmark play *Nabanna*

- Ghatak entered the film industry with Nimai Ghosh's *Chinnamul* (1950) as an actor and assistant director
- In 1952 Ghatak completed his film *Nagarik* which is considered as a major breakthrough in the Bengali film industry
- It was actually the first art film in the Bengali cinema but deprived of that honour as it was released 24 years later
- *Ajantrik* (1958) was Ghatak's first commercial movie and the first Indian movie to portray an inanimate object (a vehicle) as a character

- Ghatak's most renowned works are *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (The Cloud-Capped Star) (1960), *Komal Gandhar* (E-Flat) (1961), and *Subarnarekha* (Golden Lining) (1962)
- After the release of *Subarnarekha*, he was barred from making feature films for a decade
- Ghatak's epic movie *Titash Ekti Nadir Nam* was financed by a Bangladeshi producer
- *Jukti Takko Aar Gappo*, an autobiographical film, was his last creation

- Ghatak also taught at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)
- He wrote 50 essays and articles on filmmaking
- Ghatak received many awards in his career, including Best Director's Award from Bangladesh Cine Journalist's Association
- This great personality breathed his last on February 6, 1976 at the age of 50.

— MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

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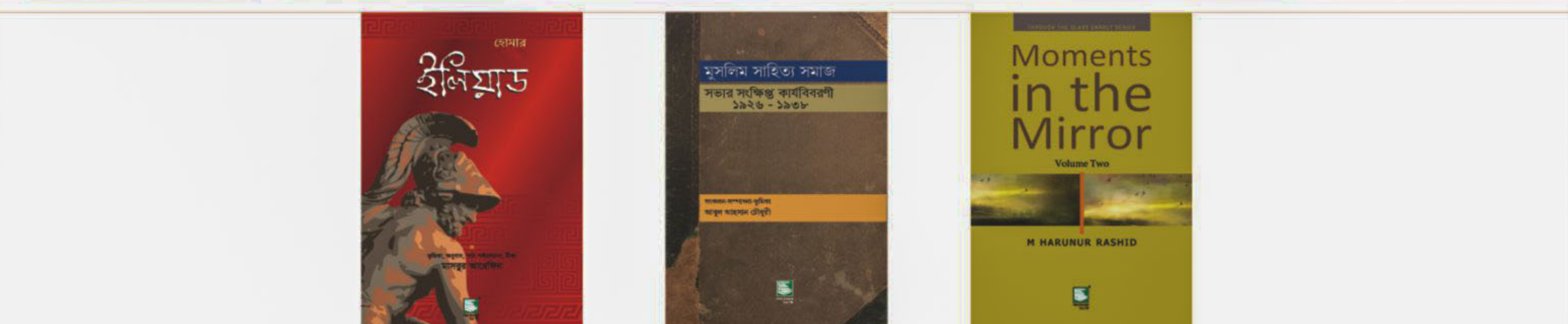


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9669555, 01841234612, 01841234609 pathak@bol-online.com www.pathakshamabesh.com