



THE BEST ON STAGE

CHAMPAK NAGARER UPAKOTHA

And this time too, Dhaka University has won our hearts - and that's twice in a row - with its wonderful performance, Champaknagarer Upakatha, a play based on the mythology of the snake goddess Manasa.

The fantastic act made the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies of DU retain its crown. So, we called in the cast and crew, led by faculty member Kazi Tamanna Haque Sigma -- the director of this production.

Star Showbiz congratulates the team. But, will these young, bright people continue with theatre works after they graduate? Read on, to find out their goals and aspirations, their love for the theatre and their insecurities surrounding it.

THE PLAY

The mythology revolves around Manasa and her relentless adventures in trying to make Chand Saudagar her devotee. These 'adventures' took a toll on many people, making them suffer as Manasa battled through. The theatre performance focused on the stories of those people. The young, dynamic students brought a relentless spirit in their roles, hence making the perfor-

mance very animated, vibrant and lively.

FOR THE LOVE OF THE THEATRE

Why do people enrol in this department of Dhaka University? We ask this innocent question because, well, studying theatre is of course not an obvious or popular choice.

There is this notion that most of the students who are studying in such a department never saw this faculty as their first preference: you want to study in Dhaka University, and if you cannot squeeze through the competition to ensure a seat in one of those schools that are more in demand, you enrol in departments like that of Theatre and Performance Studies: you have to study in Dhaka University; it doesn't matter which subject it is.

Is that really so? A few among the performers candidly agreed. However, most of them claimed that they came in for the passion they have for theatre, or to take a different and unique path in life, whilst some said that even though they started off because they couldn't get enrolled in more 'desirable' departments, they eventually fell in love with theatre and now can't live without

As the name of the magazine suggests, we deal with the world of showbiz. However, it isn't just glamour and gossip we are after. From time to time, we cover theatre and arts as well. Case in point: Star Showbiz's pick of the best theatre production of the year, where we present you on what we believe to have been the most extraordinary theatre performance of a year. Last time, it was Chaka, a production made by Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, Dhaka University.

it. **PASSION, YOU SAY?**

It seems it is becoming a trend, that after you graduate, you will quit theatre and pick another career or maintain theatre only as a part-time. This has also reverberated in many performers of this play too. Just a small portion among them told that they want to pursue it as a lifetime goal.

After putting so much effort and dedication and bringing out such brilliant performances, what makes you give up on this world? If you are really passionate about it, why not continue it?

The students pointed out that managing your finances is a big challenge in this field. Having no other job as a monetary cushion and surviving only on theatre does not seem very alluring.

But we respectfully differ. Why enrol in such a school if you don't want to pursue this work afterwards? After all, the struggles related to this work are no secret. And there are struggles in every line of work, not just theatre.

LEAP OF FAITH

Therefore, Star Showbiz urges the department to motivate its students to retain this line this work

after graduation. Otherwise, the effort of the university and the government would seem rather futile. We also urge the students to reconsider their choices and pursue what they feel passionate about, instead of being swayed by negativities like financial issues. If you are really passionate about it, you have to make your own way, find your territory and excel at it; money and everything else will follow.

As for the play, Champaknagarer Upakatha, it has been a masterpiece. We would like to see more such brilliant works of art from these brilliant people - and not just in their student life but as graduates and established theatre personalities too!

CATCH THE UNCUT VERSION OF SHOWBIZ'S COVER INTERVIEW AND MORE ON RADIO SHADHIN 92.4 FM EVERY SATURDAY, 11 PM ONWARDS.

Interviewed by RAFI HOSSAIN & narrated by M. H. Haider

