



A boost to self-esteem from Dhallywood

ZARIN REZWANA

Bangla films have a strange reputation. But when you come to think of it, the questionable Dhallywood films have the uncanny ability to lighten up a bad mood. After all, we deserve bits of wild imagination and alternate universes sometimes.

YOUR PROSPECTIVE SOULMATE

Regardless of the fact that you get roasted all the time by your friends when your crush comes around, after the right dosage of a *Bangla chhayachhobi*, you might develop the confidence and think that you have a chance with them. Come on, after watching the heroines fall for a raging city don who wears pink lipstick, or someone who can make a hole in the ground by

stomping on it whilst knowing the current state of our sewage system, you're still going to have better chances, don't you think?

THE HEADLESS CHICKEN DANCE MOVES

There are times when we want to be alone – (a) when we are in the depths of our despair, and (b) when we are happy to the point of dancing. That's because, at our happiest, our brain goes haywire, and as the music starts, we become the dancers we never knew we were. However, if you have ever caught yourself in the mirror and felt like an idiot, don't give yourself a hard time. Just remember the times the protagonists enter a romantic dance number. One look at the scene and you'll start

to feel like a professional dancer, because even on national television, happiness knows no limits; it also does not know choreography but who knows, love in the air may cause allergic reactions that cause the actors to dance this way.

THE MAKEUP

Do you feel bad because even after watching numerous tutorials, you do not know the exact sequence of how cosmetics are used? Well, as clichéd as it may be, chin up, and walk out with pride, because the makeup expertise reflecting on the cinema screens are evidence of how the most important things in life do not involve using concealer in the right way. On a different note, even before you think you can pull off a very conspicuous red toupee

with yellow eye shadow, remember that you cannot give Lady Gaga a run for her money.

THE OUTFITS

Down memory lane, are there pictures of you wearing neon pink pants? Or of the out of place emo hair style that hid half of your face? However it may have looked, and whatever it may have been, please know that you learned from your mistakes, and that you're on the right track. Pledge your sympathies to the villains of the film so that even they find the correct way of dressing out of the most awkward costumes once they get out of jail at the end of the movies. God help us if someone then makes a spin-off to it called "Keeping up with Kallu Mastan".

Dunkirk isn't just a "war film". It's great cinema.

ZOHEB MASHIUR

Dunkirk is a brilliant film about war, though it is not a "war film" in the traditional sense of the term. War movies are often for rah-rah patriots, but the Battle of Dunkirk was not a victory or a glorious last stand. It was a retreat.

The film shows courage and grace under pressure but is ultimately about an army who were in an unwinnable position. And so it is a movie that also happens to be about trying to stay alive, about trying to escape. It is not just for history buffs or Anglophiles, its themes have a universal appeal. Its very human story, unusual topic for a summer blockbuster, and – of course – its writer-director make it worthwhile for anyone to check out.

It also happens to be excellent. The story of the film deals exclusively with the battle from the British perspective, which is forgivable. In typical Nolan-esque fashion it is a non-linear narrative. Three different story threads are played roughly in parallel, depicting three different aspects of the battle over different timeframes that eventually merge together to create a single timeframe. The first story is told from the perspective of a young British soldier (many of our readers are older than this character) and depicts the battle on the beach, spanning a week. This sequence is genuinely harrowing. The German army had stopped advancing on the trapped soldiers, instead choosing to pick them off slowly using their air force. The British had nothing on the beach that could effectively fight back against the



planes, and so we see periodic and inevitable slaughter. Bombs are dropped. Shells are fired. Ships are sunk by prowling submarines, taking fleeing soldiers and wounded men down to watery graves. Characters we follow can and do die suddenly.

The second timeline deals with the last day of the evacuation. After the British navy decided to reserve the bulk of its warships for the final defence of the UK, Dunkirk's soldiers were rescued by hundreds of civilian ships pressed into service. We follow the small crew of one such private ship as they sail into ever increasing danger. This is one of the more psychologically complex passages, dealing with themes of duty and wrestling with

the horrible effects of PTSD. Most thrilling of all, and masterfully intercut between the other two stories is the flight of a squadron of three Spitfires who try to clear the skies of German planes attacking the ships and the troops on the ground. Limited by their fuel, they can only fly for an hour. The dogfights resemble an elaborate game of chess, fortunes turning on a dime. It's a treat to follow, especially with the wide angle cameras capturing the wide skies and oceans in a way we just haven't seen in these films before.

A big part of the tension of the film (apart from the sound design) is how it uses shifts in perspective to create twists in the tale. Events you see take on new

significance as you see another character's story. The way the film builds a certain expectation or convinces the audience of an outcome, only to turn it on its head later is consistently refreshing and never feels artificial. At no point in the script does it succumb to Spielberg-style sentimentality.

It is, in short, well worth the two hours and few hundreds of Taka it'll cost you at the theatre. Do catch it on the big screen while you have the chance. You'll want that big surround sound too, trust me.

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