

EDITORIAL

If I want to hang out with my friends or just go outside to spend some time on my own, I don't have a lot of options. In most cases, I would visit a coffee shop or a restaurant. Sometimes, I might even drop by a friend's place and spend a few hours with them on their rooftop.

However, the more I think about it, the more absurd it seems.

Does this city really lack public spaces to the point where our only option to spend some quality time outside is at a restaurant or a friend's rooftop?

Dhaka doesn't have too many parks or open public spaces. I, and many others, have only these limited options to choose from when we want to spend some outdoor time. Life would've been a lot different if only we had more choices. But given the current situation of the city, it seems that asking for such public spaces is a luxury, one that Dhaka can't afford.

– Faisal Bin Iqbal, Sub-Editor & Digital Coordinator, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

ANIME



Sonny Boy is the best of what anime has to offer

AYAAN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

In today's anime industry, commercialised shows crunched out solely for generating sales and making money are the norm. Thankfully, *Sonny Boy*, an anime original directed by the lauded director Shingo Natsume, is breaking said norm.

Sonny Boy tells the story of a class of 9th graders who suddenly go adrift in perpetual nothingness. Some of them start developing supernatural abilities and, in the absence of adults and authority figures, various conflicts over dominance and power start arising.

The show is unconventional, to say the least. It features an almost elegiac narrative that's rich in philosophical ponderings and values that feel more akin to short stories from famous western authors rather than anything close to its contemporaries. However, the main hooks, so to say, for this show are the subtly-included idiosyncratic storytelling and cultural touchstones.

The story of *Sonny Boy* is not told in a linear fashion. It's not an anthology either. Instead, every episode starts with a different piece of the same narrative, jumping forward in time with no regard or care for the loose ends from the preceding episodes.

This forth and beyond may create a disorienting feeling among viewers, but the show was intentionally made to do so. It is supposed to be obtuse in nature. The themes involved in the narrative are neither simple nor do they have clear answers, which is a big part of *Sonny Boy*'s charm. The various open-ended conclusions scattered through its 12

episodes are masterfully crafted to be confusing yet fitting at the same time.

While this configuration rubbed off a lot of viewers in the wrong way, I feel that it stands out to be one of the strongest points of the series. This narrative choice of incomplete and unanswered storylines seems to be deftly implemented to provide the audience with what seems to be nothing more than a glimpse of certain moments and milestones in the characters' lives. This somewhat generates a feeling of enchantment as if the characters shown have lives of their own which continue far beyond the scope of the series.

On a production level, the show speaks for itself. Breath-taking visuals, art, and animation that are far more realistic and surreal than most modern anime make it an instant standout. An eccentric soundtrack of synthesizers, indie rock, and deadpan silence manages to complement the vivid landscapes and grandiose scheme of things in a way that is almost unheard of in shows from the last decade.

Sonny Boy cleverly utilises everything that anime, as a versatile creative medium, has to offer. It adopts a clear direction from the very beginning, and the amount of passion that went into this project is as clear as day. While the anime cannot be called a timeless classic yet, it will most definitely be remembered as a unique spectacle for years to come.

Remind Ayaan that he should be studying for his SSC examination at ayaan.shams@gmail.com



A	B
After Dark	Secret Love Song
Mr. Kitty	Little Mix
Missing You Today	Indian Rain
Public	Colonial Cousins
Out of My Mood	Where To Find Me
gate 문	New Rules
The Man Who Can't Be	Should I Stay or Should I
Moved	Go
The Script	The Clash

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