

## THE WORLD OF ART

# Raza: a clinical detachment; Leyden, a pioneer art critic

S. H. Raza's whose exhibition was inaugurated this week at Gallery Chemould, went to Paris two decades back and settled down there.

I believe he was very much in the shadow of Walter Langhammer, one-time art director of *The Times* group. Later I remember a phase when his landscapes assumed a geometrical austerity typical of one who readily imbibes a Western influence. He has had enviable distinctions bestowed upon him in the past 12 years, including a visiting lectureship in the U.S., but I seem to have missed seeing his other exhibitions on return visits to this country.

There are more than 155 canvases on show (till April 27). The large ones are distinctive. *Black Sun* with its bold very personal colour scheme, is constructed typically of triangles, slabs and empty whites. In *Grey Landscape*

and his work, especially when on the canvas he is putting so much of the man within.

## Kopit's play

The Theatre Group's production of Arthur Kopit's *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad* is a director's play. Its finale is so traumatic, albeit not unexpected, that my impression is still that of a nightmare lit up behind a gauze curtain.

Initially the characters, led by the overpowering and perversely wicked widow, Madame Rosepettle, appear to step straight out of Ronald Firbank's delightfully fantastical, satirically light-hearted novels. Even the setting of a Havana hotel is apt. The widow's sojourn in the hotel, with all its bizarre twists of verbal irony and flourishes of practical joking, carries the hangover of her decrepit old husband's death. The corpse is hung in a closet in her bedroom, a secret preserve which reflects her warped sub-conscious.

## Anti-theatre

Kopit, in this aggressive piece of anti-theatre, projects basic human themes such as love, death and sin in a mock-serious light. Madame Rosepettle's Jonathan, an over-protected and apparently retarded type, is meticulously cultivated by a young bitch called Rosalie, while the mother herself briefly flirts with a lecherous old Commodore called Roseabave. These two parallel pairs are exploited for a ghastly parody of love, but there is distinct pathos not only in the son's subhuman attitude but also in the widow's perverse exploitation of both son and occasional philanthropist. The crescendo of suppressed passions develops into a horrific, class tornado of theatrical finality when the son accidentally murders Rosalie and then hangs himself.

It will take some time for this critic to unravel the symbols that are strewn through the play in the form of a carnivorous plant, a cuckoo screaming caution from a clock, a fish, etc. The first two were ingeniously manipulated. Indeed, Alyce Padamsee's direction was scintillating in its cleverness. The musical effects, especially in the *Time*-like re-staging of certain actions, in which they were matched by complementary lighting, were genuine—and it was refreshing to hear walzes along the way. These latter provided an obviously contrapuntal romantic atmosphere to set off the lugubrious nature of the so-called black comedy.

## Sophistication

If Kopit's play, in addition to being obscure, appears so unrelated to one's normal responses to life and theatre it is because of its highly literary sophis-

tication. The text, from my point of view, is a failure because one can see the playwright, tilting simultaneously at certain fashions in drama and at the grotesque side of human relationships.

Firbank's sophistication was lit by a jolliness of temperament; Kopit is nothing if not violently angry, often—it seems—at his own role as a dramatist and his enunciation by conventions of the theatre. In the last resort he is a brilliant talent who has yet to cool down and, therefore, reduces himself to ingenuously without range, satire without depth, verve without purpose.

In a slick production, I have no particular apt to commend above the rest. Although Razi Soodan, managing his put-on voice well in the role of a Jerry Lewis-like Jonathan, I wish he had not been burdened with this especially since Sylvester da Cunha as the doddering Commodore was also made to dissemble his voice similarly. The hotel bellboys were played with adequate mimic style by Alyce and Bubbles Padamsee and Soli Mehta. Sabira Merchant was tantalisingly dumb as Rosalie. Although Pearl Padamsee bore the brunt of the key role of Madame Rosepettle with her usual attack, I found her enunciation flagging in a few places. The production derived much of its vitality from her not unexpected identification with this curious role which, tangentially, did remind me of the mother in Tennessee Williams's *Suddenly Last Summer*.

The production was perfectly mounted and lit. But I still do not have our inevitable *Marat-Sade*, I wonder, whether it will not finally count as merely a bravura attempt.

## Rudy von Leyden

I first came across Rudy von Leyden, tangibly, nearly a decade back when E. Alkazi of the Theatre Unit had arranged a symposium on his production of Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. The drama critic of *The Times* of India had not been very kind to it and, true to his nature, Alkazi came out with a fiery rejoinder in the columns of the paper. The symposium followed in this wave of self-defence on his part and, meaningfully enough, one of the participants was Shamali, then known as that rare phenomenon: a literary columnist fallen among journalists! Leyden and myself completed the piece, but I was in natural awe of my seniors despite the fact that I had many valid, if perhaps not original, points to make about Alkazi's approach to the Ibsen tragedy.

One looks upon Alkazi's heyday in the Bhubalabhi Memorial Institute with justifiable nostalgia. My first brush with Leyden at the symposium was a more or less formal one. His handsome towering figure, topped by a romantic blond crown, blended with his reputation as an industrial

executive and pioneer art critic to produce that feeling of awe. In my sub-conscious floated memories of his art reviews in *The Times* of India read in the pre-independence years when I myself, an adolescent, moved around the art galleries (probably there was only one in 1945-46) in the company of a journalistic colleague. Leyden's name used to crop up invariably in my conversation with this art critic who is now probably working in a match factory in Pakistan! Artists like Newton (who had then yet to adopt the additional flourish of 'Souza') and Raza were then raising their heads over the horizon, and in their talk, too, the only practising daily art critic of the time this central European who had made India his home long since before the war — used to have honourable mention.

In the late fifties, Leyden once gave a talk under the auspices of Alkazi's Theatre Unit on his impressions of art in Europe. He had given up reviewing art exhibitions for *The Times* but had kept in touch, and it was his practice to go on periodic holiday jaunts to Europe doing the rounds of the Continent's art galleries and museums. There is one detail of his talk which I remem-



Rudy von Leyden

ber to this day. He was expatiating on Rembrandt's David Playing to King Saul. In the painting, there is a lugubrious void — typical of Rembrandt's colour schemes — intervening between the figures of Saul and the juvenile instrumentalist. "That is the music," said Leyden.

## Touching farewell

Now this kind-hearted guardian angel of artists (and art critics too) if I may speak from personal experience is back in Europe — in Paris I believe — on a permanent holiday from India. Last week, there was a touching farewell dinner for him on the terrace of the Jehangir Art Gallery, a sentimental occasion on which artists of the city presented him with an album of self-portraits. One other detail from Leyden has stuck in my memory. Speaking that night, he described how he used to bicycle from the Cowaji Jehangir Hall — popular venue of exhibitions on those days — to the offices of *The Times* to hand in his reviews on the very night of the formal inauguration of his show. In my mind's eye, I could see a forthright Leyden, perched atop that two-wheeled modern contraption but in physique much like an Icelandic warrior; and, although, I do not at all remember his reviews at this distance of 23-24 years, I cannot imagine him with all sword and no scabbard!

Leyden represents an age that is long past. The whole centre of art activity, including prolific criticism, seems to be shifting to Delhi although Bombay still has many giants (in the creative field at least) to its credit. Art itself all over the world has grown more complex and, in transcending the barriers of convention, is changing shape out of recognition. Leyden had more sides to his career than I have sketched here.

If I have to describe a single outstanding feature of his personality, I would say that he never aged and this he did without, while being confronted by a radically changing art scene, taking up self-conscious postures. Beneath his gentility, there is deep understanding, a tradition of scholarship.

Au revoir, Rudy, and God bless you,

Dnyanesh



S. H. Raza

there is a bubbly texture offset by deep blacks and grey, squarish pools. *Red Earth* stands out with its bold, black slab at the bottom, while *Composition* has a rugged quality. Night is formed of grades of black and congenial sombre colours; the untitled no. 17, a more straightforward sketch in inky blacks, appears to be an inferior version. Raza manages the ornate garden-like lower half of no. 16 well, with a characteristic blue orb at the top.

In *Lake Palace* the essence of the theme is suggested by white spots submerged by a mysterious blue, and *Windows* is another expressive little masterpiece in bluish black.

## Suggestive colours

The small-sided *Trees*, *Lonely Tree* and *Panth* seem to be preliminary sketches for the larger *Summer* I. While the trio is interesting the latter work sports loud greens, yellows and reds. The colours are surely suggestive of the subject but they hark back to Raza's Langhammerday style.

In *Summer* I the juxtaposition of the yellow and the green in the top half makes for a more cohesive impression because of the larger space used, but these paintings make one wonder whether, after all these years, the artist is still in two minds.

I can easily put myself in Raza's shoes. Landscape serves only for a take-off in his work, which is so much direct abstraction. I wonder whether, at the pinnacle of maturity, a pre-occupation with technique acts as a double-edged sword: "Where do I go from here?" one probably asks oneself. Raza is a major artist but, even in his near-monochromatic poetry, I spy a clinical detachment. Gaitonde apparently goes on painting one single painting but I find myself drowning in his acres. Is there something wrong with my reaction to ochres or to watered down blacks? I do not know. In the collages of Raza's Parisian wife, Janine Mongillat, one saw a *jote de vivre* identifiable with one's concept of her personality. Raza registers as a very committed, beautifully angry man. Well, it must be silly on my part somehow to see a bond between the man



Pearl Padamsee as Madame Rosepettle and Sylvester da Cunha as commodore Roseabave in Theatre Group play.



# corner

## hmir

same nationality as the Muslims of the rest of India. Political doctrines cannot be invoked to upset territorial adjustments arrived at on the basis of parliamentary enactments.

It is the writer's view that it is not possible to hope for an impartial and just solution of the issue under present conditions. The only solution that is conceivable is a partition of Kashmir along the present cease-fire line. The trouble, however, is that it is a solution that is not acceptable to the party that has turned the subject of Kashmir into an international dispute. And as long as this is so, the solution has no practical value, since Pakistan is the only party that matters.

The book is comprehensive and erudite, and the addition of the full text of all relevant documents which is given in an appendix makes it an indispensable work of reference.

## Historical setting

Mr. Sharma, whose qualification to write about Kashmir is unique, puts the subject in its historical setting in the second book under review. He takes the reader through the various stages of the dispute, the various methods adopted to find a settlement, and the many different solutions that have been proposed from time to time. He is factual and objective, and provides supporting evidence for his case from official documents whenever necessary.

He devotes a whole chapter to a discussion of the question of plebiscite something that is pertinent and appropriate, since most foreign criticism of India arises from an unarticulated conviction that India is committed to holding a plebiscite, that if a plebiscite did take place it would go against India, and that finally is the real reason why India is trying to wriggle out of what is regarded as a solemn undertaking.

Mr. Sharma shows how Pakistan herself recoiled from a plebiscite in the early days as a possible solution, when she had every opportunity for getting it implemented, and gives some convincing reasons why she did not want it at the time. He explains in some detail the over-riding elements that will condition any possible solution and says that he himself is in favour of the status quo.

This is probably the weakest part of the book, while his exposition of the inter-play of American, Russian and Chinese policies also seems somewhat sketchy. But the case as a whole is well argued, and as a statement of the Indian position it is hard to improve upon.

A. R. R.

## NOTICES

Scientific Research Foundation, Federation House, New Delhi.

The first volume presents a round-up of the size and performance of leading Indian industrial and trading concerns during 1965. The companies have been ranked according to sales. It also contains a list of the top 50 world companies and the top 20 companies in US, UK, West Germany and Japan. The second volume tries to make an assessment of the performance of State-owned undertakings and their contribution or otherwise to the national economy. While one may have differences with the conclusions, the data given should be found illuminating.

THE WORLD'S GREAT SPEECHES: edited by B. S. Sekhri; Paine Publications, 1767, Samuel Street, Bombay-9; Price Rs. 12

The book contains a good selection of some of the outstanding speeches from the earliest times to the recent period. They include Cicero and Burke, Abraham Lincoln and Lenin and Gandhi and Nehru. The subjects naturally cover a wide range, politics, war, democracy, and so on. It will be valuable not only to the aspiring orators but others who wish to spend their time usefully in digging the past.

## Publications received

THE MAHARASHTRA CO-OPERATIVE: Quarterly October 1967-January 1968, Editor Dr. W. C. Shrivastava, Sir Vithaldas Thackersey Memorial Building, 9, Bakhshouse Lane, Fort, Bombay-1. Price

# Marketing and advertising

## Growing rural market

By Twopeas

The great rural market of India. Manufacturers awake. Advertisers strike hard.

Two leading spokesmen of two different sectors, in two different platforms, spoke on identical terms about the growing rural market of India recently.

India's dynamic Minister of Commerce, Mr. Dinesh Singh, addressing the annual general meeting of the Bharat Chamber of Commerce in Calcutta recently urged business men to develop the rural market as an important sector of the country's economy with great potentialities. This, he said, would justify the demand for less Government interference in business.

Another spokesman of the private enterprise, Mr. B. Mitter, the driving force behind the Andrew Yule Group and many more companies, inaugurating a three-month advertising training course in Calcutta, the first of its kind in India, referred to the growing prosperity of the rural population in India and called for the "fostering of an entirely new mass market for a very wide spectrum of consumer goods and a revolution in marketing goods for low-priced manufacturing articles."

Mr. Mitter called upon the advertising profession in India to actively help in creating that market for the industrialists.

Mr. Mitter added that if the task was tackled with imagination, the response could be almost unbelievably encouraging.

Stressing the vital role of advertising in the growth of the country's economy, Mr. Mitter said, "Advertising needs people of vision and determination. It needs people who can apply themselves to mastering the specialised techniques which have met with such striking success in the developed countries of the world. It needs people in India who have the creative imagination to adapt these techniques to the Indian scene."

Except a few hard hitting marketing firms, few have taken this seriously.

Here is a great opportunity and a great challenge.

## Training in advertising

Thirty young men and women, engaged in advertising, or planning to take up advertising as a career, are participating in the three-month advertising training course, just started in Calcutta.

The course sponsored by the Advertising Club of Calcutta has the support of the Regional Committee of the Indian Society of Advertisers, and the Advertising Agencies' Association of India.

The Directors of the course are Mr. Subhas Ghosal, Manager, J. K. Datta, Manager, P. & Co., and Mr. Sanat Lahiri, Publicity Manager, Dunlop India.

The course will be addressed by leading experts in marketing and advertising from all over the country.

## Press pulls in most

Significant increases in spending on both press and television advertising was seen in March, in the United Kingdom. Preliminary figures from the "Statistical Review" show that Press advertising during the month was some 12 per cent. higher than in March last year, at £16.6m., while television spending was 11 per cent. up on the same month last year, at £12.4m.

The total for the month, at £29m., was 12 per cent. higher than March, 1967. So far this year total spending on both media has been some 12 per cent. higher than in the same month last year. The March figures also suggest that the spending on press advertising is rising.

Much of the overall increase can be attributed to heavy campaigns

being carried out by tobacco and petrol companies.

## Five fragrances from 5 bouquets

Always pioneering and always first with many new ideas, Hindustan Lever has another bouquet of surprises. Sandalwood, Spring, Rose, Jasmine and Carnation are the fragrances now you can choose from the Himalaya Bouquet Talcum powder range. Cleverly promoted too.

## Twinkle jelly

A new treat for the family to eat, is Twinkle Jelly, made by Rallis India. An announcement claims that the Twinkle Jelly contains gelatine specially imported from France and essential health-giving proteins.

## Railways and unity

Let the trains run on time. Let the commuters in the cities not get stranded. Let the holiday makers reach their destinations. These and hundreds of other problems, which face the public, are the responsibility of the railways. What are the Indian Railways doing? They should have actually explained this during the Railway Week. Instead, time and money is wasted in a railway promotion on an abstract subject like unit and integration.

## A merger

The manufacture and distribution of National Ekco, and Pye radios and transistors have been brought together by the merger of General Radio and Appliances and National Ekco Radio and Engineering Co. Ltd. In a promotion making this announcement, that GRA is now a division of the National Ekco, customers are assured of quality products, backed by excellent service.

## Rubyfoam

Ruby Rubber Works have a rubber foam marketed as Rubyfoam. This is widely promoted by press advertising.

## 500th office

It is an impressive record for a private bank. The Punjab National Bank has just completed 73 years of service. This was celebrated by their opening of the 500th branch at Bhatinda, in West Bengal, supported by a national promotion.

## Famous twins

It is this kind of advertising which brings in bad name for advertising. Bengal Lamps, in their current promotion, caption their ad saying "Bengal Lamps and Bengal tigers are the famous twins." Let us for argument sake concede this. The ad continues, "This famous lamp is the leader of all the lamps produced in the country." Now, what about the other famous make? Ridiculous claims. Let us stop this.

## Instant tea

Instant tea which failed to catch the public imagination when it was launched by the Nestle some years ago, in the United Kingdom, is likely to be in the shops again before the end of the year.

The major tea companies are experimenting with a number of formulae, and Brooke Bond, the market leader in packaged tea, is expected to launch an instant tea brand in the U.K. The company has been a pioneer in Monmouthshire for instant food products — including instant tea — and plans production by the autumn.

Lyons, which holds about 12 per cent. of the packet tea market, is also experimenting with an instant product. A spokesman for the com-

pany said that though no plans for a launch date were decided, the market was being closely considered.

The Co-operative Tea Society, another major tea retailer, is also believed to be planning to enter the market. The Society is reported to have been carrying out tests with the Cadbury's on a blend of instant tea and powdered milk. Cadbury's Marvel instant milk is already a market leader in its field. The Ceylon Tea Co. is also believed to be experimenting with an instant product based on green tea.

It is not known yet whether Nestle and Brooke Bond would launch instant tea in India. It may be recalled Tata Finlays made an attempt to market instant tea with little success.

## Perils of Nivea

If the reported bid by Unilever, the Anglo Dutch giant, to take over the Cadbury's and Nephew materials, the famous Nivea products, now made in India by Smith and Nephew (India) Private Ltd., may be manufactured and marketed by Hindustan Lever, Elastoplast is also one of S & N's products.

## Another Glaxo catch

Glaxo Group Ltd., which owns the Glaxo Laboratories of India, is reported to have acquired the controlling interest of Farley Infant Foods of Plymouth. Glaxo had recently acquired British Drug House.

## Ovaltine winners

The first prize of Rs. 5000 has been shared by five winners for the Ovaltine Contest, the results of which have just been announced. Ten people shared the second prize, while the third prize was shared by sixteen contestants.

## Benson India

Mr. H. H. Choksi, as the Chairman, heads the new Board of the Benson operations in India, which has become an Indian company. The youthful and energetic Mr. J. W. Hawthorne, with wide international experience, will head the day-to-day operations as the Managing Director.

Announcing this, Benson says: "We have therefore, the best of both worlds, closer identification with India together with the advantages derived from being a significant link in an international organisation."

The other Directors are His Highness the Maharana of Dantia, Mr. P. N. Sharma, Mr. R. B. Austin, Mr. V. K. Trivedi, Mr. A. Tripathi, Mr. S. P. Mehta, and Mr. S. R. Vakil.

Good luck and good wishes!

## Panchang and fairs

"How much does it cost in publicity to collect lakhs of people at a religious fair in India?" An American tourist asked this question to an official of the Ardh Kumbh Mela Management Committee recently in Hardwar. He had heard that nearly 10 to 15 lakh pilgrims were expected to attend the fair.

The official answered: "It does not cost anything. A panchang costing 50 paise is enough to publicise the Fair."

## Cinderella in the Sky

Satellite-to-home broadcasting of radio and TV programmes is now technologically feasible. An economical system that would revolutionize education as well as communication could be in place within five years. However, such news is not greeted with enthusiasm by a number of powerful members of the communication industry. In a recent issue, "Fortune" magazine takes a probing look at these operators and their reasons and why, for the past two years, efforts by electronics and aerospace manufacturers to develop direct satellite communication facilities have been quietly thwarted by government agencies.

## Sputnik

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been numerous talks, and fittings to and fro of Ministers and officials on one side, and the so-called underground (but really quite "above-ground") Nagas on the other, between New Delhi and Manipur-Imphal. None of these talks has had any effect, after each one the Nagas have reiterated their demand for independence, while we have tried to gloss over this unpleasant fact by nebulous verbiage.

Meanwhile, our men are being kidnapped, ambushed or killed, with monotonous regularity; while we talk of our army's "sweeping operations" and the like. The Mizos had a

## Management of smalt industries

Continued from Page 5, Col. 5

Extension Training Institute (SIET, Hyderabad) and the National Productivity Council (NPC). It is, however, necessary to establish a close coordination between these various agencies.

## Three types

There are three types of courses conducted by the CSIO through the network of Small Industries Service

is an acute shortage of teaching personnel with adequate qualifications and experience to cater for the growing requirements of small industries.

Besides the above, the Institution of Work Study and the All India Management Association also provide some training facilities in management. Lately, private management consultancy firms have also come up but small entrepreneurs are unable to secure their services being expen-