

CRITICAL MOVIE REVIEW

by

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পথের পাঁচালী (1955)

[ Song of the Little Road ]

As legendary film-director Akira Kurosawa once said, "Not to have seen the cinema of Ray means existing in the world without seeing the sun or the moon", Satyajit Ray's astonishing debut, completed in 1955, creates a wonderfully detailed picture of the Bengali village of Pather Panchali. In the post independence era, life in India used to happen in the villages. This movie is a timeless masterpiece, where there is no villain, no lead actor or actress — just a simple Brahmin Bengali family who struggle everyday to make ends meet.

As the movie progress, we get to hooked with Apu and Durga, the innocent teen children of Harihar. Their little activities of teasing each other, backing up each other when one makes mistakes, their fondness of each other and the way they share their love with their parents is something that makes you fall in love with the movie.

If we want to sit back and reflect on what we've achieved and lost, then this movie guides you through it. The struggle with poverty is overwhelmed by remarkable display of humanity, sheer realism, and nuances of bond of love, affection and simplicity.

In the later part of the movie, and I hope nobody can't help crying, after the death of Durga, the image of her mother wearing a tattered Saree fills every spectators' mind with great sorrow.

Ray was indeed a magician in film-making. His charismatic direction, cinematography, and more importantly the veena music in the background are beyond description. All the characters represent the village life flawlessly and helps us to understand how hard it is to live in the poverty.

This is just a brilliant piece in Indian cinema. A must watch if you are a Cinephile. Huge respect to all the teams involved in making this movie.

In the 1992 Oscars, Ray received the Honorary Academy Award for Pather Panchali.

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