

the pick of the crop

MR. GIRISH KARNAD, the Director of the Film and Television Institute of India, Poona, arranged a screening of the Diploma Films 1974, on the 1st and 2nd September in Bombay. In his brief introduction, Mr. Karnad said the Diploma films were characterised by two points: students made films on subjects which they would not normally be free to choose once they were out in the 'jungle' of the industry; and most of the themes stemmed from personal experiences and encounters the students had in real life. Mr. Karnad also said two films, **GENESIS** and **THE LADY ON THE LANDING**, would not be screened because there were objections that they directly or indirectly antagonise some friendly countries or living persons.

With the exception of a few, the thirteen films which were screened were lacking in impact and technical finesse. Most of the locales were boringly repetitive, but one of the graduate actors told me this was due to their limited budget.

PATHIK dealt with an old man reliving memories of his school and college days. The direction by **K. N. Sasidharan** and the sound by **K. Subramanya** were creditable.

THE F CYCLE had an unusual theme. **Benjamin Gilani** gives a good performance as a labourer who unearths a gem-encrusted pot. The subsequent scenes where he prospers and then comes to an impasse in his personal life, are all a day-dream, as the viewer discovers in the surprise ending.

Most of the films screened had meaningful themes but which failed to make a full impact because of the very abstract images they carried. In **COLUMBUS CHAPTER**



STILL FROM "AISA BHI HOTA HAI"

ANAHUT was simple and impressive in its treatment of a young convict who is given the chance to escape, but justifies his escort's humanity by surrendering himself to the Magistrate. The final scene, where the schoolmaster who was given the job of handing over the convict to the authorities, and who gives him the rejected chance of freedom, comes home to find the threat of retaliation scrawled on the blackboard, is stunning.

AISA BHI HOTA HAI, was one of the best films screened. With a familiar theme of murder and blackmail, the suspense was nevertheless cleverly built up, in Hitchcock style, to the courtroom climax. Director **Uday Shankar Panl** has done a superb job. **Vikram Sahu** as the husband who falls prey to his elaborate murder plot, performed creditably. Panl, the youngest Director to pass out from the Institute, promises to be interesting and innovative, on

the strength of this 'short' which was well-scripted.

MARICHAKA was a fine film, and **Tom Alter** and **Uliana Ivanova Yabukova** as the tourist couple who visit a Maharashtra village in a flashy foreign car, impressed. The camera shots were very good, and **ANIL KUMAR SEHGAL** deserves kudos for this.

Some of the graduates who showed promise and who should make the Indian movie scene are **Tom Alter**, **Benjamin Gilani**, **Anjali Paigankar**, **Vikram Sahu**, and **Rama Vij**. **R. K. Munir** should be complimented on his experimental film **AANKH JO KUCH DEKHTI HAI**.

The impression persists, however, that the students could have presented better performances whether in direction, acting or photography, what with their training and 'avant-garde' outlooks.

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