

The Friday, November 19, 1993

With Colour Section

Afternoon

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DESPATCH & COURIER

Rs. 1.50
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IT'S A BONANZA!

● **ALLADIN XTRAVAGANZA**, An Ace Productions presentation, directed by Raell Padamsee, opening tomorrow at Sophia Bhabha.

THERE'S a fairytale with a difference coming your way. It's Alladin Xtravaganza. And it's updated. There's the MTV Monkey and a washing machine, symbols of today's high-tech tune up. It's a fun-danza bonanza written by Bubbles Gursahani & Rehaan Engineer, presented under the Ace Productions banner which is committed to the promotion of 'live entertainment'.

The production has stemmed from The Little Actor's Club, giving children an opportunity to get up

scene of Michael Jackson and Madonna — all landing in Bombay with Alladin and his MTV Monkey! There are plenty of crazy characters and lots of fun ahead! I mean with names like mother Twanky and the Emperor of China, and Smokey the Dragon...

The show premieres tomorrow 4.30 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. at the Sophia Bhabha Theatre.

—K.R.



■ Ambika Sanjana

were on stage in a big way, which is great!

"It's the first time workshop kids will be going up on the professional stage to sing and dance and act," says Raell Padamsee, referring to this her latest musical extravaganza for and by children — and adults too, not least among whom we have Cyrus Broacha, Kavita Sahni and Neville Godiwala.

"The whole play is geared towards self-expression and non-conforming," says Raell, "it's very important for children to set their imaginations free and express themselves without any major restraining and constraining factors."

So here we have the classic tale of Alladin alongside the contemporary

Indian Express
THURSDAY DECEMBER 2 1993

A modern fairy tale

Aladdin Xtravaganza

Dir: Raell Padamsee



CHILDREN really have plenty going for them these days, with yet another kid's show. It's the story of Aladdin — but not quite! There's a difference.

In the first place, it's updated, with a rather hep Aladdin (Vishal Dhandia) and his friend Danny, the MTV monkey (Advait Hazrat). We have Aladdin's mother, Widow Twanky, played by Kavita Sahni, who's a thoroughly modern laundress, washing machines and all. We encounter Emperor Fat Hakka Noodle Chow Mein (Kunal Vijaykar)

and his daughter So Shy (Anjana Sanjana). And, of course, where would Aladdin be without the Genie of the Lamp, a cool cat guy played by Cyrus Broacha.

The main value of the play was the fact that it gave the youngsters of Raell Padamsee's Little Actor's Club a chance to act on the professional stage. The play also had a very ingenious set, designed by Mita Bhagat and executed by Rehmatali and Sameer of Showbiz which allowed for numerous changes of scenery with fluent ease. There were dances (choreographed by Veena Dhandia), mood lighting, and a liberal use of smoke machines which enveloped one and all.

Kamala Ramchandani

The Friday, August 5, 1994

Afternoon

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■ A scene from Alladin Strikes Again

By Kamala Ramchandani

● **ALLADIN STRIKES AGAIN**, directed by Raell Padamsee, presented by the Little Actors Club.

THE Little Actor's Club run by Raell Padamsee and her group

have put on a bi-lingual follow up on Alladin, he Strikes Again, in Bombay this time. He has heard that the magic lamp plus genie are here, and where the lamp goes, there goes Alladin, followed by wicked Uncle Abanazer (Kunal Vijaykar), and Aunt Uggles (Kavita Sahni).

has changed 65 teachers in one month, and Cyrus Broacha is the 66th. "In all the schools I have taught, discipline is important, and I teach it twice a day, daily," says this harmless 'Hitler', — there's a certain irony there! — "I will teach you to love, not to destroy." His pupils seem to be particularly destructive,

aspiring to be Terminator 2 or Scientists who will destroy the whole world. The message of love and sharing is, however, brought home to them by Aladdin.

Post Interval, Cyrus Broacha takes over as compere, and ends up in Bollywood — after a string of Party Quirks a la Clive Anderson — and all the goings on. Broacha himself has many avatars. Here he is a Bollywood Biggie Director, encouraging the ridiculous, evoking the Indian film set-scene: "Look into the camera, it's a very emotional scene, I want emotion, I want passion, I want everything; a very romantic scene!" Second time round the dialogue goes like this: "Imagine you are near a lake, she is running away from you... Ole ole... Lights! Camera!"

The major difference between this production of Alladin and its predecessor was that the accent this time lay more on the children, which is all to the good. There were plenty of them up there onstage, and they were enjoying themselves under the spotlight. And smoke machines were used to the minimum!

All-in-all the kids in the audience seemed to have a good time at what was basically a 'bash'. They perched on the end of the stage and had to be repeatedly coaxed back to their seats by Broacha. But the storyline was loosely structured, and Vishal Dhandia, who definitely has the makings of a fine little actor, could have been given more scope in the lead role.

But let's face it, Children's theatre for and by children is where the action's at

REVIEWS

THEATRE

BASICALLY A BASH!