New Chapter in Afghan Theatre

With Files from Pajhwok News Service

The Afghan National Theatre Festival this year. Featuring 49 plays staged in Kabul, Mazar-i Sharif, Kandahar, Herat, Jalalabad, Khost, Baghlan, Shibergan, and Kunduz, the theatre productions told the stories of the effects of civil war. Some were optimistic and some pessimistic. Generally, authors and directors adopted realist and symbolic styles of presentation. Plays, generally based on dialogue used pantomime as well.

Performed in front of more than 6,000 people in 2003 in Kabul, the play ‘In the Mirror’ - a joint production between Exile Theatre (Afghan) and Bond Street Theatre (American) - was nominated the Best Production of the Festival.

‘In the Mirror’ utilized a unique, creative, and stylistic method that was physical, pictorial, and non-verbal. The play depicted violence and oppression under four different political regimes in the past two decades in Afghanistan. Each period was performed using a different genre. The cast used body movements, mime, dance, martial arts, and acrobatics to convey the content of the play. This style is more dynamic and stylistic rather than a narrative dialogue based play.