

# Galileo Deserve More by Manohar Khushalani

PIONEER FRI MARCH 5, 1993

## Galileo deserved more



### FOOTLIGHTS

Manohar Khushalani

Galileo by Act One

The profile Act One, put up yet another new production, Bertolt Brecht's *Galileo*, as one of the productions in the festival of plays at Shri Ram Theatre that took place during the Engineering Fair.

*Galileo* is Brecht's deeply felt poetic tale based on the life of Galileo Galilei, the Italian mathematician, astronomer and physicist who made several significant contributions to modern scientific thought. His

struggle to establish truth, especially that which is proven through science, has been an inspiring tale. In fact his pioneering work in gravitation and motion, combining mathematical analysis with experimentation, makes the world refer to Galileo as the founder of modern mechanics and experimental physics.

Without jumping with events and facts, Brecht has reinterpreted history from his own radical viewpoint. Using his didactic approach he lays stress on religious bigotry and the attempt of it's proponents to dominate man's thinking.

Brecht's play begins with the viewpoint and how it changed perceptions. As the first to use this instrument to study the skies, Galileo collected evidence that proved that the Earth revolves around the Sun and is not the center of the Universe as had been thought before, closer to findings of the disre-

spected Copernicus and Brahe.

The Aristotelean professors, seeing their vested interest threatened to take a united stand against him, which could use the fact that there were contradictions between Copernican theory and the scriptures. They obtained support of the Dominican preachers, who felt motivated from the pulpit against the imping of mathematics and severely denounced Galileo in the impetuous but his laughable utterances.

Piyush Mishra, who played Galileo, was able to break away from his usual style of acting, and gave a highly concentrated and fully worked out interpretation to this new and unusual role. However, even with the departure, his approach was stylized and individualistic. It therefore stood out from the production itself which had been designed much more informally than the usual Act one productions.

N K Sharma, as the director, attempted to produce a proper Brechtian show, and laid greater stress on the chorus. This proved fruitful since the most impressive aspect of the production was the chorus, which sang well, and moved in unison. Acting, an area which is supposed to be Act One's forte was weak in this play, so one imagining except for Piyush.

A few people, like Kamlesh Vasistharam and Anita Lal stood out in the chorus for their intensity. The black body suits belied the expectations they raised in terms of the actors using more body language. Whereas in a street play, actors use get away with shows, with the scrutiny of stage lights they stick. Despite this lapse, the use of religious symbols of sceptres and bibles, designed as the backdrop of the two Cardinals, added to the setting by their visual appeal.

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# A Feisty show in Punjabi by Manohar Khushalani





# A review by Alka Raghuvanshi of Dario Fo's *Can't Pay Won't Pay* Directed by Manohar Khushalani

This is a clip of a theatre review published on 1st January 1990 in **Times of India** by the well known Critic and writer **Alka Raghuvanshi**. The review is of **Dario Fo's 'Can't Pay Won't Pay'** Directed by **Manohar Khushalani** for **Theatre Union**. This play was part of a festival on Women sponsored by **Trade Fair Authority of India** and performed at **Manzar Theatre** in **Pragati Maidan**.

