

# Festival for kids

The Little Festival did not disappoint. The three musicals that were staged held the attention of the audience all through.

MADHUMITRA SRINIVASAN

Children are an easily excited lot. Especially when they are out of school with permission and told to just enjoy themselves. But sustaining that excitement and interest for two hours is a difficult job that the artists at Little Theatre's "The Little Festival" did with ease. The second edition of this annual children's international theatre festival featured three musicals.

The first was a Little Theatre production "Ain't Outta This World" directed by B. Krishnakumar. In keeping with the title, the play had characters (read "aliens") from outer space crash landing on Earth packed in a memo-style object. The highlight of the play was the dance by the creatures from outer space dressed in neon costumes.

### Song and dance

The second musical was a Indo-Korean production that had 17 kids from Chennai, India and Seoul, Korea coming together to provide a visual treat. An Inko Centre and Theatre Social Collaboration,



THEATRE SEOUL: A gripping tale. PHOTO: S.S. KUMAR

"Heungdeu Nolla" through a Korean folktale had a universal theme. It's the story of two brothers at either end of the central yardstick — the mean and greedy Nolla and the kind-hearted Heungdeu — and their families. Nolla's only aim in life is to amass wealth even if it means to drive his brother and his family out of the house. This musical was an instant hit not just because of the colourful costumes, sets, catchy songs and dance sequences, but also because of the seriousness of the young actors who put up a splendid perform-

ance. The last musical was "Trot", a Theater Werkstatt Düsseldorf production from Germany. With just two adult actors and empty canvases for props, one wondered how was this could be children's theatre? But it proved otherwise. Narrating the story of Trot, an imaginary son of a painter, the two actors enacted, sang, danced, played musical instruments on stage and painted as well. With such multi-talented artists there was no need for more than two of them.

As "Trot" traversed the forest,

SANJANA DIVAKER,

P.S.B.E. - Nungambakkam

The Indo-Korean production provided a platform for cultural exchange. We went to Seoul, Korea, to rehearse with them and performed there as well. We even stayed in their houses. It was a lot of fun. I especially loved the music and dance part.



SRIGANAYATHI X, P.S.B.E.-K.K.

Nagar. After the last show at Seoul, Korea, some of us had a small party and ventured out into the streets at midnight with an adult. We danced, sang songs, played — all on the road. It was a very memorable experience. We even taught there a few words in Tamil and they taught us a little Korean.

LEE JAE WOON, 14 years

The experience of being in the production was fantastic. I especially loved the last scene when we all got together and danced. I loved the cultural exchange. I like the food here too — especially soup.



mountain, sea, desert and the North Pole, each white canvas came to life with colour. As actor Michael Habelitz painted the canvases on stage to portray the setting, Roderik Vandenstraeten would enhance it by providing the sound effects. Trot finally finds his way home after meeting interest-

ing characters along the way like a wise owl, an fakir and a giant.

The three musicals chosen to be staged at the festival stayed true to the term "children's theatre", offering their target audience an enjoyable artistic experience. Waiting to see what's in store next year.