

## Document Citation

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**- hana-Aranja**  
**(The Middleman) //**  
**(INDIAN-B&W)**

**Karlovy Vary, July 27.**

Ray release and production. Written and directed by Satyajit Ray. Camera (black and white), Soumendu Roy. No other credits available. Reviewed at Karlovy Vary Film Fest, July 10, '76. Running time, 122 MINS.

Boy ..... Pradio Mukerji  
PR Man ..... Utpal Dutt  
Girl ..... Lily Chakavarti

Satyajit Ray pursues his prolific career. Only intermittently shown in the West lately, except for festivals, he now continues his probing of modern social problems, and, in this case, growing corruption. However pic is slow to get going but it finally hits its stride to transcend a tale of a young man caught up in business to make a moving state-

ment about this subject as well as indications of a growing generation gap in a sort of black comedic mold.

As such, pic is more for special situations and fests but again attests to Ray's fine insights into the human psyche and his poetic elan that avoids sentimentality and achieves universality. It is also a sort of bow to the forthright American social films of the thirties.

He uses pushed coincidence as when the hero slips on a banana peel to meet an old friend who gives him a job and when a girl he needs to appease a buyer turns out to be the sister of a friend who is doing this to help support her family.

The young man is from a good family fallen on hard ways. The father can no longer understand things and finds himself estranged from his children. Pic abounds in adroit characterisations, especially a high pressure pr man imitating Americans and a kindly company accountant.

Somewhat bitter over a biased professor downgrading his high marks, he finally takes a job with a company that handles products for others and takes a commission on it. A big account is held up. But he enlists the self indulgent pr man who finds the man is religious, has an invalid wife and would probably give the order if provided with a woman.

There is a hectic search for her among bordels and clubs until one is found, the aforementioned sister of a friend. Here the film hits its epiphany as she denies her identity and he finally gives in and delivers, gets the order and cheers up his father in telling him he has the order as he conforms with the corruption around him.

Ray gets fine performances as usual and has a perky humor enveloping this simple tale of a young innocent caught up in the ways of the world. A simple tale that is rich in observation and revelation and confirms Ray's standing if perhaps not as effective as some of his other work. Technically right with fine, sharp b&w lensing. —Mosk.