

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Kanchenjungha</b>
Author(s)	Robert B. Frederick
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	1966 Aug 20
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Kanchanjungha, Ray, Satyajit, 1962

## Kanchenjunga (INDIAN-COLOR)

Edward Harrison release of a Satyajit Ray production. Directed and written by Ray. Features Chhabi Biswas, Karuna Banerji, Nilima Roy Chowdhury, Arun Mukherjee. Camera (Eastman Color), Subrata Mitra; film editor, Dulal Dutt; sound, Durgadas Mitra; musical arrangement, Ray. Reviewed at Bonded Film Storage, N.Y., July 20, '66. Running Time, 102 MINS.

Indranath Choudhuri	Chhabi Biswas
Labanya	Karuna Banerji
Anil	Anil Chatterjee
Anima	Anubhe Gupta
Shankar	Subrata Sen
Tuklu	Indrani Singh
Monisha	Nilima Roy Chowdhury
Bannerji	N. Viswanathan
Jagadish	Pahari Sanyal
Ashoke	Arun Mukherjee
Shibsankar Roy	Vidya Singh

Although "Kanchenjunga" is the first attempt at color by Indian director Satyajit Ray, it displays a command of tints that suggests much research before attempting an entire feature. Actually, the film was made several years ago and is only now being released in the U.S., as the primary attraction of a "Festival From India" at N.Y.'s Lincoln Center. It will then be put into general release by distributor Edward Harrison.

As the title suggests, the setting for Ray's film is in the foothills of the Himalayas, in the hill station of Darjeeling which has served as a refuge from the summer heat for the more affluent citizens of Calcutta for many years and is also a center of the tea-growing area of India. The tiny town, perched high above the tea plantations, is overshadowed by the surrounding Himalayan peaks, particularly Kanchenjunga, third highest in the world.

The entire action of the film takes place during one afternoon, during the last day of the stay of a wealthy Indian family. The summer is ending, mists creep up the mountainside and K. is more often than not wreathed in clouds. While the members of the family of Sir Indranath Choudhuri stroll about, hoping for a last glimpse of the great peak, their individual stories are enacted. Ray crosscuts back and forth, but easily and with no sense of interrupting a tale, from the father, a relic of the dominating, patriarchal, playing-at-God school, to his youngest daughter, committed by him to a marriage for which she has no heart; to the older daughter, already trapped in

such a relationship and confronted with proof of adultery by her husband; to his son, a spoiled, aimless youth whose principal pastime is the pursuit of females.

Ray, ever the keen observer and reflective commentator on life in contemporary India, never creates as human portraits when he deals with the upper classes, however, as he did so beautifully in the Apu trilogy. This could be intentional, something of a comment in itself, but is too consistent a pattern.

Sometimes his political comment backfires. The father, a relic of British-rule days (his title, his defense of British customs, his "cricket" preference), is meant to be the villain of this sketch on changing Indian family life but, as portrayed by Chhabi Biswas, he's a delightful curmudgeon, an evident old opportunist who has twice the appeal of the gushy, independent example of modern youth (Arun Mukherjee) (God help India if this is tomorrow's leader), who falls in love with younger daughter (Nilima Roy Chowdhury).

Some story aspects get a bit mawkish—the strained relationship of the older daughter and her husband is patched up through their love for their small daughter; a "wiser, more idealistic" older man, brother-in-law of the industrialist, mostly beams, tsks-tsks, and stays out of the way. N. Viswanathan as Bannerji, man-most-likely-to-succeed and papa's selection for younger daughter, is excellent as a stuffy type who does want the girl but gets impatient at her indecisiveness. Just by seconds, he walks out on her before she drums up the courage to say no.

Ray's guidance and Subrata Mitra's Eastman Color camerawork make the film a visual delight. The continuing perambulations of the family's various members enables the tracking camera to wander over the extremely photogenic village. Mists gather to turn the colors into subtle pastels, then drift away to allow the sun to highlight bright, but never vivid, pictorial settings. Always suggested, but never shown until the last few frames of the film, is the brooding dominance of K.

Within the framework of the versatile filmmaker's work (Ray not only directed and produced the film, he also wrote the screenplay from his own original story and, as usual, arranged the music), "Kanchenjunga" rates as, visually, one of his very best. If, dramatically, there's a coldness about it that isn't entirely mountain air. Effective, but at first a bit disconcerting, is his having the "upper class" Indians use a mixture of English and Hindi, sometimes in a derogatory sense, sometimes to express a thought not quite at home in the Indian mind.

Robe.