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Author(s)	Gene Moskowitz
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Pratidwandi (The Adversary) (INDIAN)

Venice, Sept. 7.

Priya Films release of Nepal & Ashim Dutta-Priya Films production. Directed by Satyajit Ray. Screenplay, Ray, Sunil Ganguly; camera, Soumendu Roy; editor, Dulal Dutta; music, Satyajit Ray. Reviewed at Venice Film Fest, Aug. 26, '71. Running Time: 100 MINS.

Siddhartha	Dhritiman Chatterjee
Keya	Jaysree Roy
Tunu	Devraj Roy
Sutapa	Krishan Bose

Satyajit Ray won the grand prix, when there were awards, at the Venice Fest in 1957 and had part of a two sketch pic here some years ago with "The Coward." His new pic marks a return to the more important Western fests and shows him in good form with his humanistic, unsentimental insights into youthful problems on the background of the problems of India.

Ray here treats a timely theme though it still has his timeless manner of character rightness, gentle but probing narrative and poetic underpinning as he aptly displayed in his noted Apu trilogy. Here he shifts to the city for his tale of a young man whose education was stopped by the death of his father when almost through medical school and his attempts to find a job, cope with personal and family problems and the political, social and family problems and the political, social and economic aspects that affect him, although he is not a committed revolutionary or politically active.

His Apu trilogy benefited from a cumulative power though each was a full entity in its own right. Here he uses sudden visuals from the past as they shape the present, plus the use of negative for his dreams and more traumatic things that lead to making up the background and character of the protagonist. Ray reveals he has adapted these methods without any slavishness or copying and they work into his film about youthful adaptation in an overpopulated country, not to mention the generation gap, revolutionary outlooks and problems that are indigenous but finally universal.

There are some talky segs and perhaps the poetic grace and throbbing life force that inhabited his early triumphs are only intermittently surfaced here. But they are enough to make this one of his best films in some time.

However its muted style, refusal to be explicit about sex, politics

and poverty (though the film transcends this to show a man in action and living to reveal needs and decisions sans didactics or overindulgence, it is clear where Ray's sympathies lie) slant this more for offshore fest, school, cinematheque and some specialized spots where careful handling placement and the Ray name should find it a following.

Ray also supplies a fine, reserved musical score that never intrudes and again shows flair in his handling of his players, especially the young women whose desires, hopes and instinctively right behavior counterpoint the groping but tender disposition of the main character who does revolt at one interview where many are kept waiting in a stifling big room without enough seats. Nicely graded lensing also helps. So Ray shows himself reflecting more modern aspects of Indian life as well as his more general human comedy lines up to now.

Mosk.