

## Document Citation

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# Kanchenjunga

1962 102 min. Color Rental: B

Directed, screenplay, music and title paintings by Satyajit Ray; photography by Subrata Mitra. With Chhabi Biswas, Karuna Banerji, Nilima Roy Chowdhury, N. Viswanathan. Bengali dialog with English subtitles; also some English dialog.

For his first film in color, Ray created a leisurely drama of the modes and manners of an upper class family from Calcutta, who are vacationing in Darjeeling, the hill-station resort city in the Himalayan mountains. The intellectual conflicts within the family and the suppressed antagonisms between the generations are cleverly delineated, with an almost Chekhovian scrutiny. The atmosphere of the area is utilized as a force which subtly affects every character and his responses. The

autocratic father of the family represents the intractable domination of British culture over his generation. He has been a successful industrialist who, somehow, has always ignored the humanistic needs of his children. His wife's personality has been stifled; his son has become a libertine; his eldest daughter is trapped in an embittered marriage, and his youngest daughter is trying to bolster the courage to defy her father's marriage-choice.

On the final day of the vacation, a picnic is arranged, and each member of the family walks his own route to the destination. Through chance meetings with unexpected people, or private conversations that tear open the pretensions and hypocrisies that have



bound them, the characters reach newer awarenesses, with symbolic children and the mountains as silent, omniscient witnesses. *Kanchenjunga* is Ray's most creative and detailed look at contemporary India's cross-cultures. (AJ)

Albert Johnson  
(35mm prints are available for rental)