

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exhibition

April 5-10 'Earthen', an institute of three artists Debashis, Swapan and Shahadat, holds a Terracotta Art Exhibition at the Zainul Gallery of the Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University. The show continues up to April 10 from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m.

April 4-8 Artlinks organises a solo of digital painting by New York-based artist Masud Ul Alam. The exhibition remains open from 3 to 8 p.m.

April 6-9 North South University Photography Club (NSUPC) will hold an art exhibition in Room 100 at BTA Tower, North South University. The show remains open from 11a.m. - 6p.m.

Book Fair

April 2-15 'Shrabon'-a literary publishing house, holds an amazing book fair at its stall at the Aziz Super Market, to protest the ongoing US-led war against Iraq. The book fair is open until April 15.

Film

April 6 The Embassy of the Republic of Korea will screen a Korean film titled 'The Fool King on April 6 as a part of their monthly film show. The show will take place at the Korean Embassy Auditorium (4 Madani Ave., Baridhara) at 5p.m. The film is subtitled in English. Enquiries may be made at 881 2088-90 (Haque).



Dhaka Longitude Latitude

April 6-8 An informal fine art exhibition will be held at House No. 57, Flat # 1, Road 13A/2, Dhanmondi, Dhaka. The exhibition will include musical performance, performance art, installation art, interactive art, photography, sculpture, painting and film screening. Inauguration at 5p.m.

Exhibition

Soul pitch of a young tribal artist

Keya Chakma's exhibition at Russian Cultural Centre

FAYZA HAQ

KEYA Chakma, with the encouragement from the well known artist Kanak Chandra Chakma, put up an exhibition of her work at the Russian Cultural Centre recently. The pristine life of the simple people in the Hill Tracts was captured



Keya Chakma,

for eternity in the oils and the water colours.

If one wanted to be acquainted with the peace and harmony of the untouched life in the Hill Tracts of Chittagong, one had just to see Keya's paintings. They brought in the tranquil atmosphere and the peace loving simple people with a decisive impact. One saw the colour and harmony around and felt all was well with the world. In "Morning light", oil on canvas, there was the portrait of a girl in yellow, red, green. Her blouse was a sweep of red while her "pinong" was a blue splash. In the background was brought the sky, high bushes, trees and a river in flecks of blue, white, green with touches of red. "Making wine", oil on canvas brought in people at work, one bending down to the earthenware round vessel while a man bent over to help. The man was in grey while the woman was in beige. They were bare bodied with simple garments at the bottom, with the women flaunting silver jewellery in their ears and feet. They were complete in shades of grey, green and white.

One found more figure work in two Mru women done in oil on canvases. The women were gathering food in their baskets and they bore heavy silver jewellery on their wrists, arms, ankles and waist. They had donned small wrap around skirts in red and black

and had flowers in their hair. Keya explained that the women had just returned from the forest having collected food in the "jhum" cultivation and were putting away the food that they had gathered in baskets. The background was orange, green and blue while in the foreground one found shades of brown, green and beige. The impact was impressionistic as in all of Keya's works.

"Landscape-2", oil on canvas there were two figures, one a barely clad boy and a woman in blue and yellow "pinong" and blouse. They are gathering and carrying wood pieces and in the background are the huts on stilts on the mountains surrounded by tall trees bearing green and blue leaves. In between the grass was a path leading to their home. "Rest", oil on canvas, showed a woman in brown and blue and she had a heavy circular necklace as well as ear hoops and bangles. Her bright clothes contrasted with the muted browns and beige of her body. The backdrop brought in the hills and huts in sketches of brown, red and black. The sky and the greenery were done in green and blue along with orange. The grass in front had been brought in simple splashes of yellow and brown.

Another depiction of the idyllic life in the hill Tracts is "Mru women", oil on canvas which brought in a standing woman in short skirt, with heavy



jewellery complementing her flowing black hair. Her body was suggested by rectangles of green and orange, flecked with white while the background that encased her in shades of blue, grey, red and yellow touched with grey all over. Along with that could be seen "Going to work", oil on canvas, where one saw a young woman balancing on a bamboo pole and carrying a basket at the back. Her dress was in shades of red, black and grey. She wore bangles like the rest and her face was lit up with yellow while her body was green and grey.

Keya Chakma has tremendous potentiality going by her first solo exhibition: all she needs are necessary opportunities.



Dance

Folk culture of India Grace in motion

SUDHAMANI REGUNATHAN

AS the dancers throw up their hands towards the sky, the drums beat louder and exuberance transcends human imagination. The colour and vibrance of such a dance is descriptive of almost any part of India. Travel into the dense forests on the upper reaches of the Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh or sit by the rocks and boulders of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, hold your breath as you watch it in Tamil Nadu or join the fun in Gujarat, folk dances are captivating and infectious in their vigour and spontaneity.

Of course it needs no explanation to support the statement that every region or small community in India has its own dance form. Devised and choreographed to suit local practices and lore, this form of joyous expression is unrestricted both in participation and content. Yet, one can discern a common rhythm through all the folks of India!

Folk dances can be broadly classified into the occupational dances, seasonal dances, martial, devotional and ritualistic dances. Generally every society has a share of all these types of dances, with some overlapping which becomes inevitable. For example the dance at a wedding may be both ritualistic as well as devotional. A pre-harvest dance will be both seasonal and occupational. It may even be ritualistic. But the essence of the matter is that folk dances too have their significance, greater than a sheerly impulsive jig!

They also have an important role to play in communication and functioning as records of history. Take the Adis, the largest tribe in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, for instance, relate the story of their ancestors. A careful record of the songs can reveal their entire history. The same is true of the Kunbi songs and dances in Goa. The oldest settlers in Goa, the Kunbis, tell the tradition of their land in their songs. The best example is the 'Gigi Pada' dance of Karnataka. It involves a question and answer session between the men's and women's teams too.

Occupational dances generally

depict the entire process of harvest or hunting as the occupation of the people may be. In Nagaland, for instance, the dancers in leaps and jumps are forever simulating a hunt and how they capture the wild animal. It is said therefore that even a child will be able to defend himself from a wild animal because he has seen the dance. On their other hand in Tamil Nadu, the dance describes the process of harvesting.

On a full moon night in the month of February-March, when spring is just there, go to Manipur and you will be thrilled to see the dance called 'Vasanta Ras' celebrating the season. As the gentle swaying captivates you, switch to another scene in the south. In Kerala, particularly at the end of March, the 'Velakali' dance is performed. Hear the war cry as it finds men performing this martial art with swords and shields; they are telling the story of the victory of good over evil.

If it is a story that you want to hear then you could go to Maharashtra and watch the 'Pouda' or the 'Dasavata'. 'Pouda' is a terms and sure enough it is the story of a hero that is told to you.

'Dasavata' is the story of the great epic 'Mahabharata'. 'Yakshagana' of Karnataka tells of mythological stories just as 'burra katha' of Andhra Pradesh.

Watch closely as this tribe of Arunachal tells a story. The earth and sky were lovers and they loved each other very much. Of them was born their son, a bison. The bison ('mithun



in local parlance) got so jealous that he tossed the two apart. And each time the earth rose to join her lover, the sun came shining out and the shy maiden stopped short. That is how mountains came into existence.

Another fantastic similarity one finds in the content of the stories. Even though folk dances belong entirely to the people and not to the scholastic tradition, one finds the exchange of ideas between different parts of India has been constant and at all levels. Take one epic like the 'Ramayana' and you will find so many versions of it that it is amazing. Each version is adapted to the people of that region and therefore presented in folklore similarly. Even in Buddhist communities one finds a similar story. Along with the story comes the symbolism which too is retained intact through the length and breadth of India. Mythological figures are identified with a particular area completely and so some difference in the story told becomes inevitable.

Stories, as one can see can be religious, explain nature or deal with history and even social themes. Religious themes are generally aimed at appeasing a deity and that is why we

find in all the regions of India a dance devoted to Kali or Durga. Sometimes she is worshipped as Draupadi since Draupadi is also considered to be an incarnation of Shakti, that is Durga. The regional variations given an interesting insight into the surroundings of the people, their climatic conditions as well as their eating habits!

Drop the inhibition and join the dance if you really want to get a feel of the local rhythm. It is easy to pick up. Generally there are specific formations of the dancers. They are in a ring with the 'sutra' (story teller) in the centre. This may be varied to find one ring of men and another of women. Semi circles and concentric circles are other formations. Another interesting formation is the linear one where they may be in a single file or facing each other as in the bamboo dance from Mizoram.

At once striking in the diversity is their costume. Folk dances are always performed in the traditional attire of the people... and that again is common to all folk dances. The joy and celebration of life is perhaps the most common feature of all and their expression of it, the most diverse of it all.

Source: India Perspectives.

TV GUIDE

Table with BTV channel listings including News Headlines, Shasthathalya, Khabar, and various entertainment programs.

Table with ATN BANGLA channel listings including Islamic prog, ATN Bangla News, and various entertainment programs.

Table with 10:30 Special Talk, 11:00 ATN Bangla News, and 12:00 Bengali feature film listings.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS section featuring 'Over the Top' and 'Striptease' with descriptions and cast details.

PICK OF THE DAY section featuring 'Striptease' with a detailed description of the plot and cast.

Table with 2:00 Dark Asylum, 4:00 Batman & Robin, and other program listings.

Table with STAR WORLD listings including J.A.G, Billboard Us, and various international programs.

Table with 9:30 Fim World Motorcycle Championship, 12:00 Formula One, and other sports listings.