

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exhibition

April 5-10 'Earthen', an institute of three artists Debashis, Swapan and Shahadat Hossain, 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.

April 4-15 Shipigan is holding a special 12-day painting show by reputed painter Ranjit Das. The show remains open everyday from 10 am to 8 p.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.

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.

Exhibition

Reviving our roots in clay

Terracotta exhibition at Zainul Gallery-2

FAYZA HAQ

THE ceramic exhibition at the Zainul Gallery-2 by Debashish Pal, Swapan Paul and Shahdat Hossain is certainly fascinating. Swapan says, "I've done my Masters in ceramics and I have a family background of handling with clay as my father deals with clay statues for a living. We've done terracotta birds, fish, masks, 'lokhi shora' in which we have brought in various Hindu gods and other subjects such as mother and child, 'baul' and couple. We have 72 items in all. We have taken turns in moulding, painting and firing. I enjoyed doing the dolls best of all. Debashish says, "My MFA is in ceramics and glaze along with porcelain and earthenware. Our thoughts have concentrated on local folk designs and motifs. We often tend to ape the west and forget about our roots but my family dealing with clay for generations, I felt that we should revive our past and add our own interpretations to it. Shahadat says, "I've done my BFA in Ceramics from DU and want to revive this media too in a new way."

We see a pair of masks done in beige, green and red. Both wear crowns decorated with dots, circles, lines and triangles of different bright colours to give the effect of gems. The eyes are large, the eyebrows are thick while the noses are angular and long. The man has a moustache while both sport earrings. They represent royal characters from "jatra" and were originally inspired by African masks only these are much more delicate and pertain to our culture. Next we see a traditional clay doll with touches that our modern and original. More colours have been added to the conventional brick colour such as green, brown, red, orange etc. It has a little red and white blouse and a skirt with stripes, dots and flecks in green, black and white.

One of the "shoras" has Arabic calligraphy done in 3-D effect, with pictures of Madina and Mecca in colours at the bottom, done in the conventional green and black. Another one deals with "Shiv" and instead of giving him the conventional three eyes he has been given one. The god's



passion for taking hashish has been represented with a white "dhatura" flower in front. At the side is his three-pronged spear and at the top is a crescent moon which usually rests on the god's head. Snakes in the modern form, along with the blue sky and grass have also been included in the decoration. The god "Monosa" is the subject of another "shora" and here the traditional statue has been broken and reconstructed with a modern approach once again. There is a single



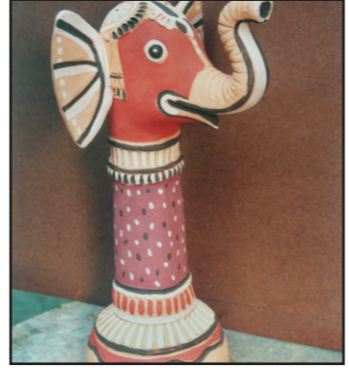
large eye with three snake heads on top. A lotus flower and a flattened leaf have been included in the composition. Raised dots, oblong shapes of green and red and semicircles of blue

representing snakes are found all around the eye and the oblong face in beige, white and black.

The goddess Durga has also been presented in a symbolic way with her ten hands being shown on two sides in modified geometrical forms. Her spear and her opponent, the buffalo, along with the lion, on which she sits, have been included in the form of the face rather than the entire conventional shapes. Her face is brown, touched with blue and white. Flowers and dots decorate the rest of the space. On top of another "shora" is the head of a "baul" with a scarf on his head. He has a beard and large protruding eyes. His face is seen from the bottom while he holds an "ek tara" in his hands and his fingers form a pattern. Flowers, a dragon fly and other elements of nature have been included. There are splashes of brown on black and etchings don on blue. A flute player is brought in another creation. Trees, fish and birds have been included in this 3-D representation with its blue centre. It is in shades of brown, beige and white. There is a circle too with dots symbolizing flowers. The flute is in the centre while the flautist's hands are raised above the surface. His head is presented in a geometrical form where the eye and nose can be detected.

"Romoni" or village woman, is seen in a sari and jewellery, holding a flower, is another composition which brings in the theme of waiting for one's lover. It is neatly done in blue, beige and white and on her top is included a sunburst motif. Six pieces of clay go to complete the composition. "Folk singer" is also on tiles and this has the musical instrument, the musician and his surrounding brought in symbols and simplified forms. "Youth" and "Man and Nature" similarly give the effect of murals.

The exhibition has taken a joyful leap into reviving our terracotta heritage. Another attraction are the reasonable prices.



Legend

Quamrul Hasan

The painter behind the rhythm of Brotochari Nrittya

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

ONE fine morning during our music lessons at Chhayanaut there was excitement and whisper everywhere. We were to have a special guest and have some sort of a dance lesson at the beautiful gardens of Paribagh. Dance lessons? Since we took only music lessons, this seemed very unusual. Possibly Chhayanaut was planning for something new this year, we thought.

So, a group of 25-30 boys and girls of all ages gathered at the lush green gardens of Paribagh on a bright sunny afternoon. For those who remember Paribagh back in the '70s without the present World Bank office, this was a perfect spot, with neatly trimmed garden and greenery all around. As we waited impatiently we craned our neck to get a better look to see who was coming towards our group. As was natural for young girls and boys our hearts were in our mouth when we saw none other than the legendary painter Quamrul Hasan coming towards us.

Of course we knew he was a maestro in the world of art, but today we were to have a glimpse of the other side of his life that many of us didn't now and many still don't.

Quamrul Hasan, a man of great stature, was very humble, friendly and charming. As we gathered around him, he explained to us about the dance lessons we were to have from him. But first he gave us a small background about it.

We were to learn the Brotochari Nrittya. It was not the typical dance form depicting joy, sorrow, or festive moods. These dance forms carried a definite message for the society.

During the British rule of India, few families valued the idea of education. Gradually with industrialization and economic prosperity, few families began to feel the need for education even amongst girls. Women were so long confined to household chores and lived in a protective shell. The society as a whole was closeted. It was a time when women read novels of Sharat Chandra or Bankim in extreme secrecy.



Quamrul Hasan: The legend

A handful of girls who were blessed with such opportunity championed the spirit of education and culture. They were very soon exposed to the world outside their courtyard.

The editor of Begum magazine Begum Nurjahan and vocalist Husna Banu Khanum in the annual function of their school taught the girls to dance out

of sheer imagination. This was so because they had no formal training themselves in this art form. Quamrul Hasan, a young man with a group of other progressive men, at that time felt the need to sow the seeds of nationalism and thereby capture the minds of the young generation through a definite social binding. This is how the Brotocharyandolon started.

Eminent artist Quamrul Hasan pioneered this art form in the region and organized the Muslim youth in the pre-partition period. The young boys dressed up in casual dresses simply put a head band, a gamcha on their waist and had two sticks on their hands.

Small groups of girls also gathered at the roof tops with their guardians along with them. Clothes were hung at the sides so that they were not visible from other roof tops. Here the girls learnt the simple forms of dance known as brotochary dance and sang songs with simplest wordings known as brotochary songs. It was amazing how social and cultural movements gained immense popularity in the simplest form of physical work-out and songs.

The brotochary dance form, encouraged the young people to be patriotic, non communal and most importantly develop a sense of physical fitness and

mental strength. As soon as the drums began to beat, the groups formed a circle and sang the brotochary songs and danced away. The stances were very simple and similar to the luddy dance of Panjab. The songs contained simple but powerful messages to unite the people against oppression. These simple art forms had a profound and explosive impact on societal thought. This gained momentum and inspired social awareness amongst people of all walks of life.

While we were all in a trance listening about the background of the dance, Quamrul chacha as we called him, put a gamcha on his waist, tied a head band and slung a madol around his neck. And lo! The magic was cast. We took two sticks each and tied a head band and a sash on our waists. We began to dance to the tune of Shobey chol aye kheli bir nittter keli meaning let's dance to the music with heroism, or Chol kodaal chalai khabo khiir malai meaning, lets not waste any more time and work and eat cream and good stuffs there after. We felt our heart racing to the beat of the madol.

TV GUIDE

Table with columns for Channel-i, HBO, STAR MOVIES, AXN, and ATN BANGLA, listing programs and times.

Table with columns for HALLMARK, STAR WORLD, STAR PLUS, and STAR SPORTS, listing programs and times.

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS section featuring a book review for 'Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2' and a 'PICK OF THE DAY' featuring an advertisement for Boomerang.

Table listing programs for STAR PLUS and STAR SPORTS, including titles like 'Hit Filmein Hit', 'Taaza Hits', and 'Sangeet - 20 M'.

Table listing programs for NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC and ADVENTURE ONE, including titles like 'One Life In The Desert', 'Croc Chronicles', and 'Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet'.

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