

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exhibition

May 02-17 Alliance Francaise in Dhaka is hosting an exhibition of Dokra sculpture on rail platform, woodcut print works on rail boggy and paper cut installation on railroad.

May 09-23 The Bengal Tours Ltd. and Gallery Chittrak will jointly hold a painting exhibition by renowned artists titled Sundarbans: A Beauty in Silence from May 9.

Anniversary May 9 Bulbul Lalitokala Academy organises a musical programme commemorating the birth anniversary of Tagore today at 10:30a.m at the Wiseghat central auditorium.

Theatre May 15 The theatre group of Asim Das will present Moliere's 'George Dandin ou le Mari Confondu' on May 15 at 6:30p.m. at Alliance Francaise de Dhaka.

Exhibition May 22 - June 5 The inauguration of a painting exhibition by Kakoli and a sculpture exhibition by Reaz will take place at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka on May 22 at 6:00p.m. The exhibition will continue till June 5.

Music May 22 French musical evening at the Café La Veranda at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka.

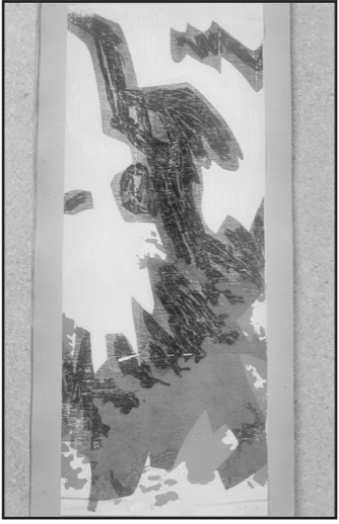
Exhibition

Dwelling in "dokra" and woodcuts

Matia Banu speaks about her exhibition at La Galerie

FAYZA HAQ

"WHEN I first went to Santiniketan I liked it very much. However, getting admitted I didn't like the academic course there. The Foreign Casual Course that I was doing was too easy going for my liking.



Woodcut

another form of my work which I did with pencil and paper. The woodwork too is based on my experiences on the rail line," said Matia Banu, who recently had her exhibition at La Galerie, Alliance Francaise.

Asked to comment on her teachers, Matia said, "I used to go the department quite seldom and did not take much help from the teachers. As my teacher I had Ram Das Karmakar, who taught me sculpture, who worked in a village two stations away from Santiniketan.



Sculpture in 'dokra'

the place for about four months in all. As I had completed my Masters course from Dhaka in the Print Department, I felt that I knew all the techniques and there was nothing new for me to learn there. My teacher at the department had been Nirmolindu Das. I preferred the teachers back at Dhaka like Safiuddin Ahmed and Mohammed Kibria when I had been a student in the '90s, beginning in 1986.



Sculpture in 'dokra'

Talking about why she had concentrated in woodcut, Matia said, "I had weakness for woodcut for a long time. I had learnt it at a workshop held by a visiting teacher, Karen Kuntz. Woodcut is easy to do at home when you don't have a studio and I was concentrating on this since 1994."

Touching on the subject of sculpture Matia said, "I learnt it only after I'd been to Santiniketan, working on brass. My work presents the everyday life around me at the station. I didn't stop at the big stations but rather the small ones which I found more fascinating. In one group of my 'dokra' work you see women cleaning and combing hair. There are the women going to and fro with weighty bags on their heads.

I found sleeping people and even mad men. There are then the hawkers which are inevitable in any Indian station as they go about selling everything from cups of tea to vegetables. I was a regular visitor to the stations and these vendors grew to recognize me. As I sat sketching they people returning home or sleeping at the station. There are then people waiting impatiently for a long time. At times a train might be as late as three hours. There are then the 'Sauntal' women carting potatoes to and fro side by side with men playing cards. Sometimes I'd even confront a caring newly married couple or performing actors in costumes bearing artificial weapons as I've shown.

"I'd never done sculpture before. I learnt to cast with mud, cow dung, wax and tar and this was like doing handicrafts and something that the family members of the people there made at home and sold at the numerous Indian fairs. The wax model is first made and the broken bits of brass are melted and poured into this. This is put in an oven so the metal shape takes place based on the mould when the brass melts and takes the place of the wax. The 'dokra' craftsmen take about ten minutes to make each figurine but it took me half an hour. In Orissa the wire moulding is done on machines whereas at Gushkora, near Santiniketan, where I learnt, it is done manually."

Dwelling on the woodcuts, Matia said, "The entire work is based on the railway stations and the scenes that you see there. I dealt with scenes in 27 different bogies. I took a figure or a theme and so presented each compartment. I dealt with card players in those prints that have purple tints in them. Those with the yellow colour deal with the sunlight falling on the window panes which is very welcomed in winter. Those with pink splashes brought in the relaxed mood in the sleepers where people travel for days together. The ones that deal with the women's section with the feuding female voices have red splashes along with

An exhibition of our very own rural culture

Handicrafts displayed by the Bangladesh Homeworkers Women Association

NOVERA DEEPTA

S HILA was sewing on her own and was deeply concentrating on her needle and cloth. This 25-year-old woman earns about one thousand taka per month and leads a life along with her three children. Her husband died in an accident a few years ago. She appeared quite shy to talk and was hesitant to speak about her remuneration. She said however that if she worked hard she would get more money, and that the payment is negotiable.

Bangladesh Homeworkers Women Association (BHW) wants to promote the goods made by these workers like Shila, who work in making handicrafts under the association, for the national and international market.

An exhibition of handicrafts by the workers of BHW collected from all over the country, was recently held at the Drik Gallery in association with Home Net Bangladesh. The exhibition continued for five days. Among the products of the exhibition there were Nakshi Kantha, cushion cover, embroidered dress, bed cover, pillow cover, sofa back, yoke, hat, saree, processed dry flower, different showpieces made of cloth, bamboo, leather, wood and other materials. And most importantly it should be mentioned that the price



Nakshi Kantha the traditional hand made quilt of Bangladesh attracts the enthralled eyes.

of these goods were offered at half the price available in the market. The products on display are a proof of the creativity inherent in the womenfolk of our country who have had little access to any formal training or education. All of them, right from the laboriously detailed Nakshi Kantha, the brightly embroidered cushion covers and table cloths, the trendy looking dress materials and sarees to the meticulously-made dry-flower arrangements have been created over months of hard work by a number of women working singly

or in groups. The General Secretary of BHW, Dilruba Anguri said that BHW firmly believes that their motto, 'My home my workplace' is an idea that will help combat the future labour and economic problems faced by the country. If the government can equip and fund every home as a workplace, unemployment caused by closure of factories can be dealt with effectively and thereby the country's economic downslide can be prevented.

She added, 'Although the home-based workers are working hard and earning a living, there is no specific government policy for these homemakers. So, they are deprived of the facilities available to the factory workers in the country. There is no unemployment in this sector and everybody is earning from 500 to 3000 taka every month. Our objective of this exhibition is implementing one way of marketing policy. And we are confident that the government will agree with us and make a policy for the cottage industry workers.'

Dilruba said with joy that the workers would be very inspired if the policy is implemented and they will produce more of their goods and will be economically solvent.



The members of the Three Star Womens Association working on embroidered bed covers.

Corrigendum

The article titled 'A proposal for Tagore Institute' published in the Culture page of our May 8 issue was written by Prof. Rajib Humayun. The author's name was inadvertently left out from the article. Also the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was mistakenly mentioned as 144th, which actually is 142nd. We regret the errors.

TV GUIDE

Table listing TV programs for BTV and Channel-i, including titles like 'Opening Announcement', 'Shubhechha Nin', 'Khalid Dula', etc.

Table listing TV programs for ATN Bangla and Tara Bangla, including titles like 'Islamic Prog', 'ATN Bangla News', 'Drama Serial: Hada-ar-Bhudar', etc.

Table listing TV programs for SONY and STAR PLUS, including titles like 'Amrit Varsha', 'The Simpsons', 'Knight Rider', etc.

Table listing TV programs for STAR GOLD and STAR WORLD, including titles like 'Geet Bahar', 'The Simpsons', 'An Audience with Ricky Martin', etc.

Table listing TV programs for NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, including titles like 'Wild Island', 'Zookeepers Food For Thought', 'Wild On The Set', etc.

Table listing TV programs for ANIMAL PLANET, including titles like 'Wild Rescues', 'Croc Files/Croc Hunter Diaries', 'Animal Planet Safari', etc.

Table listing TV programs for DISCOVERY, including titles like 'Wild Discovery Lion of The Americas', 'Globetrekker Nepal', 'Health in the Air', etc.

Table listing TV programs for ESPN, TEN SPORTS, and STAR SPORTS, including titles like 'Wrestling Apple Crush', 'English Premier League Highlights', 'Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour Singapore', etc.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

Final Impact: Nick, former world champion in kick boxing, discovers Danny, who just became light heavy-weight champion of Ohio. Danny is very ambitious to become world champion, so Nick offers to train him.

PICK OF THE DAY

Rush Hour: Realizing that the FBI and their by the book tactics may be unsuccessful, the Chinese consul recruits the aid of a loyal Hong Kong inspector to help rescue his kidnapped daughter.