

CULTURAL FEAST

Book Fair

Title: Amor Ekushey Book Fair
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy
Date: February 1-28

Photography

Title: My World, My Future
Organisers: British Council, Dhaka and Map Photo Agency
Venue: British Council, Dhaka
Date: February 2-28
Time: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

ITI Theatre Festival

Organiser: International Theatre Institute Bangladesh Center
Venue: National Theatre Stage
Date: February 23
Play: Majh Rater Manushera, a Loko Natya Dal Production

Venue: Experimental Theatre Stage
Date: February 23
Play: Binodini, a Dhaka Theatre production

Venue: Mahila Samity Stage
Date: February 23
Play: Natyatroeyee, a Nagonik Natyasampradaya production

Solo Exhibition

Title: In Search of Affinity
Artist: Kazi Sayed Ahmed
Venue: Alliance Francaise Dhaka
Date: February 18-25
Time: 5-9pm

Title: SPAGAT: In two Worlds
Artist: Murshida Arzu Alpina
Venue: Bengali Shilpalaya
Date: February 16-28
Time: 12-8pm

Group Exhibition

Title: Appointment-2006
Venue: Shilpangan, Road 5 House 25 Dhanmondi
Date: February 11-March 3

Musical Programme

Title: 10th Orchestra musical evening
Organiser: Orchestra
Artist: Farida Pirveen
Date: March 03
Time: 6:30pm

Book Launch

Title: Shimanto Shangraho
Date: February 28
Time: 5:00pm
Venue: Post Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum

Rumana Omar Specialising in Bharatnatyam



An evocative mudra by Rumana Omar

KAVITA CHARANJI

STATISTICS and dance --At first sight it may seem hard to see how the two disciplines can go together. However Rumana Omar has struck a fine balance. An associate professor of medical statistics at University College, London she combines her academic career with a fervent passion for choreography and dance in the Bharatnatyam genre.

Though she does not depend on dance for a living, it is far more than a mere hobby. As she points out, "I treat dance professionally in the sense that I put in a lot of time in training--I practice four days a week." And why Bharatnatyam? "This dance form appeals to me because it has several elements such as beautiful eye movement, hand gestures (mudras), rhythmic footwork which combine with sculptured poses in the temples of South

India," says the articulate Rumana.

Among her recent milestones is a solo Bharatnatyam performance in mid-December at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, London. The solo was choreographed largely around abhinaya and an entranced audience watched as she slipped into the role of her character with complete ease. Hard to believe but Rumana doesn't speak a word of Tamil, while most of her items were, and continue to be, in this South Indian language. "The lyrics have to be translated for me. Coming from a different religion, I have to understand background material, which is quite a challenge. Apart from the language I also have to learn about Indian mythology so that I can effectively portray my character," says Rumana.

The talented danseuse began her training in dance (folk and kathak) with Anil Mitra and Shukla Sarker from Bangladesh. The latter taught her Bharatnatyam as well. Later when

she got a scholarship to do her Ph D in medical statistics in UK, she enrolled at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (the largest institute for Indian art and culture in Europe) so that she could learn Bharatnatyam. Her guru was and continues to be Prakash Yadagudde, one of the foremost exponents and teachers of Bharatnatyam in Britain. She has also received training in Bharatnatyam from Padmasree Chitra Visweswaran and Dr Saraswati Sundaresan, Chennai.

Rumana has crossed other frontiers as well. She has collaborated with western contemporary and ballet dancers to choreograph dance pieces. Among her achievements are a performance and choreography for the Edinburgh Festival in 1997 and 98. In 1997 she combined Bharatnatyam, ballet and contemporary dance to great effect. The following year she performed Recurrence in Edinburgh, which was a mixture of ballet and contemporary dance. Then there is her participation in the dance seasons of Sadler's Wells (one of the most prestigious dance venues in UK) and The Place (another premier theatre for contemporary dance) during 1996-1999.

Given Rumana's dedication to dance, awards have naturally come her way. In 1998 she received an award from the British Association of Choreographers and a bursary from Sadler's Wells. Apart from her acclaim by the UK media, she won recognition in Bangladesh when she staged a performance along with a dance troupe from UK at the Bangladesh National Museum in 2000. The philanthropic aim of the show was to raise funds for the Liberation War Museum in Dhaka. She has also performed in Connecticut and New York in 2001. Last August she gave a performance in Dhaka at the Russian Cultural Centre.

Yet juggling her twin callings--academics and dance--is by no means easy. "Being an academic in UK is very tough and demands long hours. To maintain my fitness for dance I have to train 10-12 hours a week. I manage that by curtailing my social life and working on holidays," says Rumana.

Now Rumana is abuzz with other ideas. She plans to hold a Bharatnatyam performance in Dhaka around August. She is also studying Carnatic music at the Bhavan to help her understand the rhythm and ragas. Having won the West already, it's time for a conquest of her compatriots.



ITI Theatre Festival '06 Theatre: Creating Space for Harmony

Theatre Festival begins with fanfare



Artistes of Nriyadhara perform a dance number at the inaugural programme

PHOTO: STAR

On February 21, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy premises were decorated with colourful festoons, banners and mural art. Artists turned up in large numbers for the inauguration ceremony of the eighth biennial theatre festival.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs, Begum Selima Rahman inaugurated the theatre festival. Manifred Beilharz and Jennifer Walpole, the ITI Worldwide Committee president and executive directors respectively were the guests of honour.

The inauguration ceremony began by observing a one-minute silence for the martyrs of our Language Movement.

In the discussion session pre-

sided over by Ramendu Majumdar, the president of Bangladesh Centre of International Theatre Institute, Ataur Rahman, Nasiruddin Yousuff and M Hamid delivered speeches. Discussants basically focused on the activities and achievements of the organisation. ITI Worldwide Committee president and executive director also praised the activities of the Bangladesh Branch.

Dubbing the ITI, Bangladesh Centre leaders as cultural envoys, State Minister Begum Selima Rahman in her inauguration speech expressed the hope that ITI would go from strength to strength.

After the speech, colourful dances were performed by the artists of Nriyadhara and

Nriyanchal. The dancers of Nriyadhara performed innovative dances, choreographed by Minu Haque, Aminul Islam Hiru, Kabirul Islam Ratan, Mun Mun Ahmed and Tamanna Rahman. Dancers of Nriyanchal performed classical dances, choreographed by Shibli Mohammad, Shamim Ara Nipa and Dr. Mahua Mukherjee.

Another attraction of the evening was Lalon songs rendered by singers from Kushtia.

On the other hand two plays--Aharkandal and Mandar-- a Janmasutra production and Parchyana production respectively were presented at the Experimental Theatre Stage.

Today's attractions: Natyatroyee, Binodini and Majh Rater Manushera

The Indian epic Mahabharata has spawned many adapted plays in Bangladesh. Nagarik Natyasampradaya will stage three adapted lyrical plays based on stories from the Mahabharata at the Mahila Samity Stage today as part of the ongoing theatre festival arranged by the International Theatre Institute (ITI), Bangladesh Centre.

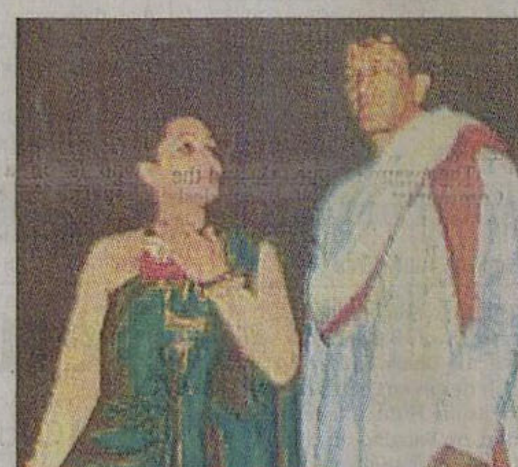
All of the lyrical-plays of Natyatroyee, adapted by Rabindranath Tagore from the Mahabharata, deal with a common issue--the fall of morality. And Tagore has his own interpretation of the adaptation.

Karna-Kunti Shangbad is the first drama of the trilogy. During the crisis when the Pandavas and Kauravs are face to face, the former's mother Kunti comes to Karna, whom she had left to secure her reputation. During Karna's evening prayer, Kunti comes and tries to bring about a compromise between the brothers. Then a conflict arises between the mother and son. What is more important: emotion or principle? Karna continues on his path of heroism and rejects his mother's request.

The second part of the trilogy is Biday Abhishap. Through the story of Debjani and Kach, the story of deception of a woman by her beloved is featured. When Kach refuses the love of Debjani, Aupsee Karim as Debjani failed to express emotion. However, in the romantic scenes she performed quite well. On the other hand, Gazi Rakayet needs to improve his skills in a lyrical drama.

Gandharir Abedon, the final and major part of the trilogy, introduces the conflict between truth and relationships. In this part, central character Gandhari, the Kauravs' mother, raises her voice against the injustice of her sons.

Ataur Rahman directs Natyatroyee.



Aupsee Karim and Gazi Rakayet in a scene from Karna-Kunti Shangbad

Dhaka Theatre will stage their latest production Binodini at the Experimental Theatre Stage as part of the theatre festival arranged by ITI, Bangladesh Centre. Binodini is based on the autobiography of legendary 19th century Bangalee actress Binodini Dasi. Nasiruddin Yousuff directs Binodini.

Moreover, Loko Natya Dal will stage a postmodern production Majh Rater Manushera at the National Theatre Stage. Liaquat Ali Lucky is the director of Majh Rater Manushera.

BY ERSHAD KAMOL



PHOTO: STAR

Of pseudo identities and globalisation

Indian film wins warm reception at Berlin

John and Jane, a documentary based on Indian call-centre employees on the frontline of globalisation by Mumbai director Ashim Ahluwalia, has made waves at the 56th Berlin Film Festival. The film ran to full houses at four screenings in the festival's Forum section. The irony was that it was rejected at the Mumbai International Film Festival in Ahluwalia's hometown.

Intensive research has gone into the film. The director shot the film over a period of three years. The film follows the lives of six Indian call-centre 'agents' trying to sell Americans everything from cheaper phone calls to emergency medical supplies.

The film's protagonists take on the names of John and Jane and work nights to cater to the demands of a distant market. "I began making this film in 2002, when nobody had heard of call centres. All I knew was that there was going to be considerable technological advancement and everybody was supposed to make a

lot of money," Ahluwalia said in an interview. Amplifying on the film's theme, Ahluwalia said, "For me the film is really about what it means to be an Indian in the 21st century. I didn't mean to make a portrait of the middle class, but they represent the direction India is going in."

The Berlin Film Festival features around 360 films from 56 countries.

Source: AFP



A scene from John and Jane

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



Chithi

On ntv at 09:50pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Fazlur Rahman Babu, Enamul Haq

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

News Bulletin

BTV
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 9:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm.
CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15am.
Teletext of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11pm.
News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm.
Teletext of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 a.m, 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 1:00pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.
ntv
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 6:15 pm, 9:30 pm.
News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm.
Teletext of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
TARA BANGLA
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm.
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.
Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 8:30 pm.
BBC WORLD
Every hour on the hour

BTV
09:25 Shastwato Jibon
09:35 Open University
10:00 Satellite broadcast
12:30 Shasthahitya
01:00 Monar Kotha
02:15 Kholley Kholley Computer
04:00 Rookothar Deshey
04:30 Ei Dhaka Shei Dhaka
05:05 Prottyashar Alo
05:30 Dhruvadi
06:35 Jiboner Alo
07:05 Grantho Bhobon
07:30 Egiye Cholar Pothey
07:50 Ekuash Amar Ahonkar
08:35 Protidin Bangladesh
08:45 Weekly Drama: Shesh Porjanto Tomakoty Chai
10:25 Teknal Theke Tetulia
10:30 Apnar Shastha
ATN BANGLA
08:45 Jononi Jonmohumi
10:30 Onnodishdi
11:05 Drama: Nibir Timir: Andhokar
12:20 Bangla Feature Film: Dushhu Chhole Mishli Meye
03:45 ATN Rannaghar
04:20 Shundor Jiboner Jonyo
04:45 Ispahani Pure Snax
05:10 Quiz Time
05:10 Purakirit Bangladesh
05:45 Islami Sawwal O Jobab (Live)
06:20 Prapok
08:00 Rock Link
08:30 Drama Serial: Perani Siren
09:00 Drama Serial: Hortoner Bibi
09:30 Drama Serial: Britto
10:35 Char Dayaler Kabryo
CHANNEL-i
09:30 Shongbadpotrey

Bangladesh
09:45 Public Reaction
09:50 Tithyanatra
11:05 Special programme
12:30 Aaj Dipurey O Citicell
Tarakakotho
01:05 Eborng Cinemar Gaan
01:45 Public Reaction
02:40 Citycell Mevha Bikash
03:05 Hindoye Mati O Manusher Daak
04:05 Bashudhara Amader Gaan
04:25 Chhinitra Prasthita
04:45 Sa Re Ga Ma
05:30 RC Tones and Tunes
06:00 Music Plus
06:30 Amar Chhoboi
07:50 Drama Serial: Akashi Rongor Rummil D Furi
08:20 Drama Serial: Shampuro Rangin
10:00 Drama Serial: Pothey Jetej Jetej
ntv
08:35 Aiker Shokal
09:00 Siddiqua Kabir's Recipe
09:30 Abin O Jibon
10:05 Chalochitro Kotha
11:30 Bangla Feature Film Muktagangan
01:05 Quiz Time
02:35 Drama Serial: Labonyaprobha
03:15 Kichhu Kotha Kichhu Gaan
03:50 Drama Serial: Amador Anondo Bari
04:25 Shepla Kuri Contest 2005
05:15 Dindarpan
05:20 Smriti Janalao
05:20 Shubha Shondhya
06:50 Biz Week
08:25 Drama Serial: Kachher Manush

09:10 Barighar Thikthak
09:50 Drama Serial: Chithi
11:25 Dindarpan
12:10 Shangskriti Ei Shaptaha
Rtv
06:30 Desher Gaan
06:45 Rtv Ajkey
07:30 Hindoya Shur Ashey
07:45 Shukhi Thakum Deho
08:00 Mon-e Jugalbandi
11:30 Grahshaili
12:00 Drama Serial: Borol Paarol Shital Gaon
01:00 Shurey Shurey Poth Chola
02:30 Shoto Proshno
03:30 Aiker Bangladesh

04:00 Drama Serial: Bondhujugal
05:00 Human Nature
06:00 Amar Desh
06:30 Rtv Exclusive
06:35 Alor Oitthi
08:00 Drama Serial: Biyer Golpo
08:50 R Ranna
09:20 Drama Serial: Kals Kottor
10:50 Drama Serial: Bhoror Swapano
09:30 Rambo 111
11:30 Taking Lives
01:30 Sleepy Hollow
STAR MOVIES
10:15 Urban Legend
11:55 America's Prince: The John F Kennedy Jr. Story
01:30 Snatch
03:15 Small Soldiers
05:10 Quick And The Dead
07:00 Armageddon
09:30 The Clown Payday
11:15 Monster Island
12:50 May
STAR PLUS
12:25 Film Topper
12:30 Hit Filmlein Hit Sangeet

11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
11:30 Kahin To Hoga
12:00 K. Street Pail Hill
STAR WORLD
12:30 Charmed
01:30 The A Team
02:30 Oprah Winfrey Show
03:30 Bold And Beautiful
04:30 General Hospital
05:30 Desperate Housewives
06:30 The Simpsons
07:00 The King Of Queens
07:30 Friends
08:00 Seinfeld
08:30 American Idol
10:30 Less Than Perfect
11:00 The Drew Carey Show
04:45 Doc Eureka
05:00 Serious Arctic
05:30 Planet Wild
06:00 Snake Wranglers The
06:30 Storm Stories
08:30 Megastructures
09:30 Frontlines Of Construction
10:30 Air Crash Investigation S2
STAR SPORTS
12:30 Ice Cricket World (R)
01:00 Bangladesh Vs Sri Lanka 3rd Odi 2nd Session(L)
05:00 Extreme Programming
05:30 Wild Spirits 2006 (T)
06:30 Cricket Classics
07:30 Caribbean Kings; England Vs West Indies (T)
08:30 Cricket Classics Close Encounters (R)
08:30 Bangladesh Vs Sri Lanka 3rd Odi Highlights (S)
10:00 Sportscenter India Sportscenter Update (T)
10:02 Cricket Classics Drawd: The Wall (R)
10:30 True Xplosion (R)
11:30 Sportscenter India Sportscenter Update (T)
11:32 Australian Open 2006 Sponsored By Kia Motors In Association With Carnier Melbourne Australia (T)
10:30 Sportscenter Sportscenter India (R)
TEN SPORTS
12:00 Hockey: Pakistan v India
01:00 Great Centuries
03:30 Volvo Race
04:30 Caribbean Classics
04:30 Dubai Horse Racing Preview Show
05:30 Watsons Water Challenge
06:30 WWE: The Bottom Line
07:30 Trans World Sports
08:00 Portuguese League H/Ls
08:30 Athletics World Show 06
10:00 Hockey: Pakistan v India
10:30 European Tour Weekly