

Up close

"Acting is not mere pretence"

-- Bonna Mirza

MAHMUDA AFROZ

It is a cliché that women in the entertainment industry are beauty without brains. Bonna Mirza, one of the leading actresses in theatre and television today, certainly goes against that cliché.

Bonna joined the theatre group Desh Natok 16 years ago right after her SSC. "I always knew I wanted to be an actress. So I never even considered modeling or any other medium. I believe that each of us subconsciously or



consciously strive to attain a goal and ultimately end up achieving that in the long run. I wanted to be a journalist when I was young. However, subconsciously I wanted to be an actress and that's what I am today," she explains.

Growing up in Kushtia, Bonna's companions were mostly books. Unlike other children, she was not allowed to go out and play. Her father and uncle were staunch leftists, which had a profound impact on her views. Coming from a highly educated background, it is not surprising to see this dusky beauty completing her Masters from the Department of Theatre and Music, Dhaka University.

Gaining experience in theatre, Bonna joined the small screen in 1996 with Saidul Anam Tutul's *Shukher Nongor*. Since then Bonna has acted in hundreds of TV serials and has become a familiar face to the audience. However her passion is still theatre. In her own words, "People say theatre-acting is more challenging than TV-acting. I don't feel that way. Yes, theatre is demanding at times, but that's what makes it all the more interesting."

On her acting technique, Bonna emphasises on character realisation. "Many people think that acting is mere pretence. They couldn't be more wrong. To be credible, an actor has to emote

with a character and become that character."

Being in the number game doesn't appeal to this Virgo at all. She questions the whole process. "I don't even know how someone's acting can be measured. What is the scale for measuring the number one spot? Is it based on quality or quantity? Do we count the opinion of people from all corners of the country? All I believe in is delivering my best and that is enough for me."

Bonna never faced any obstacle from her family when she made the decision to take acting as a career. "My parents may not have approved of it but they never said anything against it. That's the way things work in our family. We have tremendous respect for each other's decisions and independence."

Bonna as of now is not thinking about joining the silver screen. But she does not rule it out completely. On where she sees herself 10 years from now, the actress says, "I don't know what will happen after 10 years but I do know that someday I want to go back to Kushtia. I want to go far away from the maddening crowd and try to live a simple life. I guess I will never be completely urban, nor will I ever be totally rural."

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Theatre

Swapner Bhuban: An experimental production



A scene from the play

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Today, People's Repertory Theatre, one of the few professional theatre troupes in the country, will stage *Swapner Bhuban*, a translation of Swedish playwright Staffan Westerberg's work. Directed by Mathius Lafolie, a Swedish director, experimental production *Swapner Bhuban* will be staged at Konchikancha Auditorium at 11 am.

Though the adult actors perform in the role of children in the play, the theatre performance is not a 'Grip Theatre'. The difference between the production style of *Swapner Bhuban* is different in the sense that

in the play, the actors do not imitate the way the children are perceived to speak which is one of the major aspects of Grip Theatre. However, a main feature of the play -- dealing with the world of children and child issues by the adults -- is similar to the Grip Theatre form.

Through the imaginary story of a child named August, *Swapner Bhuban* features the idea that we all dream of things, which have no relevance with reality. But, the fact remains that both adults and children find solace in dreams. Then, is it fair to treat a child as just a 'kid' or a growing adult?

Movie Watch

Hridayer Kotha: A quintessential love story

KHALID-BIN-HABIB

Mainstream film *Hridayer Kotha* is a contemporary love story, showcasing its ups and downs.

The film has been scripted and directed by SAHaque Alik. The story is

written by MA Shahid, while the songs are written by Gazi Mazharul Anwar, Amjad Hossain, Kabir Bakul and Jewel Mahmud. The movie hit theatres recently and is currently running nationwide.

The movie follows a vivacious

young woman named Adhora (Pumima) who is smitten by a young violinist named Anik (Riaz). Anik, however, is reluctant at first to reciprocate and tries to resist her advances. She literally throws herself in his way, woos him and he is left with little choice but to accept her declarations of love. Eventually the relationship flourishes and Anik realises he is in love too. There is a whole lot of laughs, and a lot of tender moments between the two, but things soon turn sour.

Ego, breach of trust and other negative elements creep in, disrupting their bliss. They start bickering over small things. Matters come to a head, when Adhora tries to prevent Anik from leaving for London to visit his ailing father. When that doesn't work, a distraught Adhora slips into a coma after popping sleeping pills. Ultimately things get sorted out and the duo gets together again.

The chemistry between the lead actors works. Actors Dolly Zahur, Tushar Khan, Dr Ejaz and Mannan Shafiq provide good performances. Moushumi does a cameo.

Unfortunately for the bulk of the discerning audience, the film falls short of meeting expectations. The film strains credibility like typical Bollywood and Dhallywood movies. In the last scene the doctors decide to take Adhora off life support after being in a coma for four years, and she is presumed dead. Anik rushes to her lifeless body and starts playing on the violin. Voila! The "deceased" Adhora is revived.



Riaz and Pumima in *Hridayer Kotha*

Buzz

'Murder' on small screen

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Noted actor Al Mansoor will be seen on the small screen in an upcoming single episode play *Murder*. The play is scripted by Rumana Afroz and directed by Rakibul Hassan.

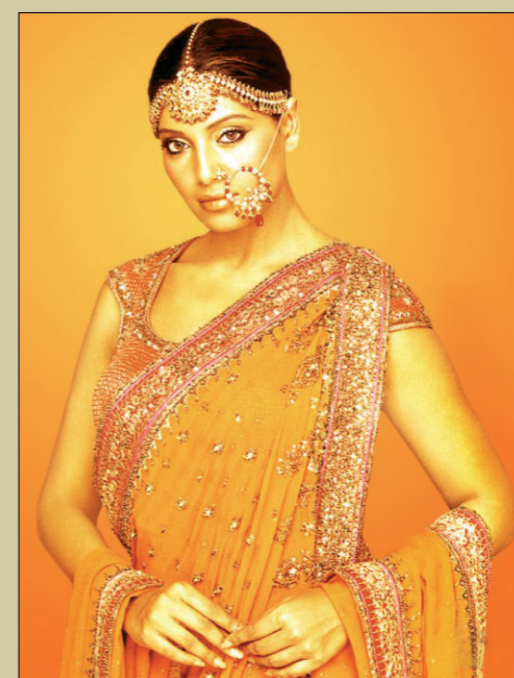
In the thriller *Zaman* (played by Al Mansoor), a middle-aged man, always suspects his much younger wife. One day he makes a phone call at his house and the domestic help informs him that his wife is in the bedroom with a stranger. This bit of information infuriates him and in sheer rage he orders the maid to shoot them. After a while, the girl informs him that the man has fled and his wife is dead; the corpse has been dumped in the pool. But *Zaman* has no swimming pool in his house. Confused, he once again makes a call only to learn that he dialled a wrong number. What happens next?

Elora Gowhar, Runa Khan and Lutfar Rahman George play other major roles.



Al Mansoor and co-artists in the thriller

Rituparno picks his 'Draupadi'



Bipasha Basu

Famed Bengali filmmaker Rituparno Ghosh is excited about his epic project *Draupadi*. The casting has already created a buzz in the industry.

Rituparno describes his *Draupadi* as a mixture of B R Chopra's *Mahabharat* and Peter Brooks' take on the Hindu epic. This version of *Mahabharata* would be narrated through the Pandava queen Draupadi, which would make the epic very "intimate, feminist and minimalist."

Because colour politics is very important in his *Mahabharata*, Ritu has deliberately chosen Bipasha to play Draupadi. "Three of the characters Krishna, Vyasa and Draupadi have to be dark complexioned," says the filmmaker.

The film will be made at an estimated budget of Rs. 8 crores.

Ritu wants regional actors to play the Pandavas. "That would make this a pan-Indian film. But for Dhritrashtra and Kunti I want Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi. Shabana has already agreed. All the Pandavas have to be tall and rugged."

Ritu says that the making of an epic comes with its price of "nerve wrecking excitement".

Source: Internet

A memorable unplugged concert in Chittagong



Ayub Bachchu (L) and Sunil Das at the concert

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Nescafe 3 in 1, the popular brand of Nescafe, held a concert at the Chittagong Engineering Institute campus recently. Unlike most other concerts, Nescafe 3 in 1 featured unplugged versions of popular numbers by leading rock musicians of the country.

Hours before the event, hundreds of music lovers thronged the venue.

The performers of the evening were Purba Pashchim, LRB,

Renaissance along with a group of 13 upcoming singers -- 'Campus Stars'.

Purba Pashchim took the stage first and the audience rocked with the rhythm. Later, 13 campus stars from different institutions in Chittagong performed the Nescafe theme song *Jeeboner aobhane shanne egiye jao*.

Renaissance entertained the audience with songs in Chittagong dialect -- *Aar barit jao tui aar barit jao* and *Nonaia nonaia kotha koi, ei mon kari loi*. Fans sang along

with *O nodire tui jash kotha re* and others.

LRB performed *Ek akash tara, Ural debo akashe* and their other familiar numbers. LRB also offered *Nilajona* -- a song yet to be released.

Joint performance by Renaissance and LRB wrapped the event. A treat for the audience was a jamming session, when violinist Sunil Das, Ayub Bachchu and Nakib Khan tried to outdo each other; it was a brilliant display of music skills.

'Supernova' finds its singer: Lukas Rossi



In the end, goth as much as rock won out in the finale of *Rock Star: Supernova*, as Lukas Rossi, the androgynous, spiky-haired Canadian wailer, beat other aspiring rockers.

After 11 weeks of swagger-filled performances, Rossi landed the job fronting the newly constructed band Supernova, a collaboration among veteran rockers Tommy Lee of Mötley Crüe, ex-Metallica bassist Jason Newsted and former Guns N' Roses guitarist Gilby Clarke.

It had come down to a battle among three contestants in addition to Lukas -- passionate Icelandic crooner Magni Asgeirsson; charismatic Aussie heartthrob Toby Rand; and the last woman standing, smoky-voiced powerhouse Dilana Robichaux.

Lee said that Lukas had, in fact, received the highest number of votes, which prompted the band to "listen to our fans."

Source: Los Angeles Times

6"x4

4"x3