

CULTURAL FEAS

Debu Chowdhury speaks on ecstasy of rhythm

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

It was a treat watching Debu Chowdhury back on the mini screen – his magic fingers on the tabla. Debu, admired by musicians and eminent singers of the country has returned to Bangladesh from Europe and Canada after a hiatus of 20 years.

"Even though I was abroad for a long period, not a day passed by that I did not wish I was back home!" say Debu.

Debu's debut (excuse the pun) on the screen started when he was in college. In the documentary *Mukrir Gaan*, he was often seen at the back of the run-down truck that the troupe used to crisscross the war-torn country. When the musical troupe visited the camps, the young Debu with ruffled hair accompanied them with a *madol* or *khol* slung across his neck. Even at an early age, he was widely admired for his style and skill as an accompanist. That was only the beginning.

"As the Liberation War broke out, we crossed over to India from Chittagong. There we came in contact with the artists and organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra and the Liberation Council of Intelligentsia. A nostalgic Debu says, "Master filmmaker Satyajit Ray, novelist Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay and other prominent personalities would often come over to boost the morale of the freedom fighters.

"Once in Kolkata I trained under Pandit Radhakanta Nandi, the unrivalled accompanist in the 70s and '80s in Bengali songs. For six years I trained under him. His masterstrokes, his permutations and combinations, never failed to fascinate the listeners. The unique *tehtais* interspersed with variations inspired me greatly. That was what I tried to emulate."

After the Liberation War, he soon settled in Dhaka and joined the cultural circuit.



Debu Chowdhury during a performance

During his stellar career, Debu has not only worked under eminent music directors but also performed with legends such as Hemanta Mukherjee, Manna De, Satinath Mukhopadhyay and noted artistes such as Hoimanti Shukla to name a few. For over 15 years he worked almost exclusively with Runa Laila during her performances across India, Middle East and Europe. He has also performed extensively in UAE, USA and Canada with renowned musicians. A deputy

director of Little Orchestra, he organised several music concerts, headed by Ustad Mir Kasem Khan.

A recipient of several international accolades, such as the Asian Film Academy Award and the 9th North American Bangladesh Conference, he has also performed for the Queen Mother of England on the 250th anniversary of London Hospital, and for the Belgian Royalty at the Kings Palace.

"It will not be an exaggeration to

say that during 1974-86, I was 'fairly busy,' I believe, I recorded 8 out of every 10 of the playbacks at that time," smiles Debu.

According to him, music works in an amazing range of rhythm and fascination. The main features of a tabla performance is to express creativity to enhance the pleasure and joy in music. The legendary players always seemed to have this passion embedded deep within their souls. It is rhythm, which adds to a new dimension to music.

"After my long absence from the local music scene, it is heartening to see that numerous channels have lit up the screen.

"But there has been a drastic reduction in the number of good tabla players. At present there are not more than six to seven top grade commercial tabla players in our country. Low budget and use of synthesizers and keyboard have a 'synthetic' effect, distancing it from the natural lyrical tunes. Our music demands soothing tonal effects of flute, *sarod*, *sitar* etc. How can the electric instruments compliment that?" questions the talented player.

Maintaining a ritual of practicing two hours on the tabla every morning before recording sessions, Debu finds no alternative to commitment, practice and diligence. He goes to great lengths to choose his instrument carefully for each performance. At his home, his set of tablas customised for different concerts and scales simply bear testimony to his level of commitment.

His one wish is that the current trend of revitalising our culture once more sparks interest in the younger generation into his world of tabla. Once more may the country appreciate and sway to the tune of the fascinating rhythm.

'Paappunya': An adaptation of Tolstoy's 'The Power of Darkness'

ERSHAD KAMOL

Many of us are acquainted with Leo Tolstoy's five-act play *The Power of Darkness*, written in 1886, which was long banned in Russia. Apalling and gripping, *The Power of Darkness* is a depiction of society.

"Darkness" in the title points dually to night and to evil. As in many Greek tragedies there is a quality of darkness (a general lack of illumination); a dark spot on the landscape, evil emerges from this darkness. One crime leads to another, which eventually leads to a catastrophe. Until devastation can be perceived no more. This play is about ordinary individuals caught up in an extraordinary cycle of opportunistic self-loathing -- adultery, theft, murder, senseless violence, and infanticide.

The Power of Darkness is the

tragedy of sordid misery and dense ignorance. It deals with a group of peasants steeped in poverty and utter ignorance.

To make Tolstoy's tragedy more contemporary to the urban audience of Bangladesh, in *Paappunya*, the characters are not ordinary peasants but aristocrats.

Through the conversation between a stranger, a father and his offspring, *Paappunya* portrays a dark side of the society -- here everyone is greedy, hypocrite and fraud.

But, there are many flaws of the adaptation. If the target of the play is to satirise the contemporary society, the names of the characters should have resembled Bangladeshi culture, as opposed to using European names such as David, Peter, Mary and Joseph. Moreover, all of the actions take place in a Church, which is not

credible.

Director Alak Ghose's approach is realistic. He has successfully created a few of the 'conflicts' successfully, but many sequences needed to develop.

Parvez Ahmed has created a realistic ambience of a 'Church' with the replica of the Holy Cross -- at the centre of the backstage.

M Manzur Haider Chowdhury's light design -- intensely, use of symbolism and others -- need to develop.

Performance of the actors with exception of Nazma Khatun and Abdul Hadi were declamatory. They need to develop acting skills.

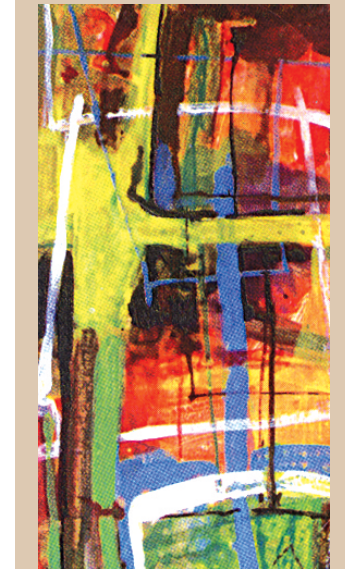
Nandikar staged *Paappunya* at the Experimental Theatre Stage on September 15 as part of the programme of staging theatre performances of the troupes from outside Dhaka.



A scene from the play

Painting & Drawing Exhibition of Quamrul Hassan

Title: Quamrul Hassan in Line and Colour
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Bengal Shipalaya, House 275/F, Road 27, Dhanmondi
Date: September 20-October 4
Time: 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm



Painting Exhibition

Title: Conventional Abstract
Artist: Abdus Salam
Venue: Dots Contemporary Art Centre, 191/A, Haque Tower, Tejgaon-Gulshan Link Road, Tejgaon
Date: September 16-30
Time: 11:00 am to 8:00 pm

Jean Luc Godard Film Session

Organiser: Jahangirnagar Film Society
September 17:
2:30 pm *Pierrot Le Fou*
4:30 pm *In Praise of Love*
6:30 pm *Contempt*
September 18:
2:30 pm *Slow Motion*
5:00 pm *Sui*
Venue: German Cultural Centre, House 10, Road 9, Dhanmondi

Woodcut Exhibition

Title: Impression of Mind
Artists: Mokkiesur Rahman & his group
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dacca, 26 Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: September 14-20
Time: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm (except Saturday; only 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm)

fan mail!

In our monthly *fan mail* section this month we turn the spotlight on veteran film actor **Razzak**. Readers are invited to send in questions by September 21 latest, with their full name, address/email at:

fan mail
Culture Page
19 Karwan Bazar
The Daily Star
Dhaka 1215
or
culture@thedailystar.net and
culture_dailystar@yahoo.com

Please note that the questions to be published will be selected by *The Daily Star*.



Adaptation of Mark Twain's story on Channel 1



(R-L) Afroza Banu, Jayanta Chattapadhyay and a co-artist in *Daanpotro*

Based on a story by the great American writer Mark Twain, the play *Daanpotro* will be aired in *Bishwasahitya Shambhar* series today at 8:15 pm on Channel 1, says a press release.

Noted filmmaker Abu Sayeed places Twain's story in a Bangladeshi setting with a simple and multifarious presentation. Rahad Abir is the scriptwriter.

Baharuddin, his wife Mili and children Maruf, Lini were leading a happy lower middle class life. Masudur Rahman, a childless

industrialist, appears to them as the god of fortune as he let them use his lavish house and wishes to give all his belongings to them after his death. Eventually Baharuddin and his family move into the house Rahman leaves them with. How the family, coming from a humble background get absorbed and lost in the world of over-indulgence is the message in the play.

The cast of the play includes Jayanta Chattapadhyay, Afroza Banu, Abul Kashem and others.

Generating awareness through plays

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

Bhumij Foundation, a local NGO based in Tala upazila, working for the marginalised people, has started an innovative cultural programme to generate awareness on social discrimination.

The NGO has been organising a campaign featuring cultural programmes that include folk songs (*baul* and *jari gan*), plays and dance. Bhumij has already performed

such laudable programmes at the remote villages in Tala, Dumuria, Paikgachha and Shyamnagar upazilas.

A play titled *Palki* was staged by a group of artistes (members of the NGO in Dumuria upazila) on September 14 as part of the campaign.

The play depicted how marginalised people are deprived of basic rights and addressed how to resolve the issue.



Local artistes perform in the play *Palki*

Eva Longoria says no more TV after 'Desperate Housewives'

Eva Longoria says she's done with television after *Desperate Housewives* ends.

The 31-year-old actress said she loves the medium of television and the routine it provides, but *Housewives* will be her last series.

"I would never leave *Desperate Housewives*," Longoria told *The Associated Press*. "I love doing both (TV and film), but I would never do another TV show after *Desperate Housewives*."

Longoria, who plays saucy Gabrielle Solis on the ABC 'dramedy', can next be seen on the big screen in *How I Met My Boyfriend's Dead Fiancée*, due in 2007. She made her mainstream movie debut opposite Michael Douglas in *The Sentinel* earlier this year.

The third season of *Desperate Housewives* begins September 24.



Eva Longoria

Source: Internet

TV GUIDE

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 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15 am.
Telecast 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) at 8:20am, 7:00pm
Telecast 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.
Telecast of BTv News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
TARA BANGLA
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30pm, 7:30pm.
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.
Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 9:30 pm.
BBC WORLD
Every hour on the hour

BTv
08:30 Open University
09:15 Satellite Broadcast
12:05 *Shongbadpotrer Pata Thekey*
12:30 *Maa O Shishur Kotha Bansuri*
01:00 *Mati O Manush*
02:15 *Shokal Belar Pakhi*
02:40 Cartoon
03:30 Educational Programme
04:00 *Protidin Computer*
05:05 National TV Debate
06:10 Prescription
06:40 Tagore Song
07:30 *Nrityer Taley Taley*
08:35 *Protidin Bangladesh*
08:45 Drama Serial: *Maachh Konya*
09:25 *Swapno Shonar Gaon*
10:25 *Teknaf Theke Tetulia*
CHANNEL i
08:30 *Shokaler Gaan*
09:45 Public Reaction
09:50 *Grameenphone Tritiyo Matra*
11:05 Tele Prescription
11:30 *Hridoye Mati O Manush*
12:30 *Aj Dupure O Citycell Tarokothon*
01:05 *Ebong Cinemar Gaan*
01:30 *Shanghbadpotre Bangladesh*
01:45 Public Reaction

02:40 Selected Drama
04:05 *Amader Gaan*
04:25 *Sa Re Ga Ma*
05:30 FCT Business Talk
06:00 Music Plus
06:20 *Shamoiki*
07:50 Mega Serial: *Bhober Haat*
10:00 Drama Serial: *Bela Obelar Golpo*
12:00 *Grameenphone Alikeer Shongbad Potro*
ATN BANGLA
10:30 Talk Show
11:05 Drama Serial: *Hortoner Bibi Smitir Monikothay Shornaly Shadkalo*
02:30 Cultural Programme
05:10 ATN Music
05:45 Islamic Programme
06:20 Three Stooges
08:00 Drama Serial: *Khola Duar*
08:30 Drama Serial: *The New Shabuj Opera*
09:00 Drama Serial: *Nire Tar Nil Dheu*
09:30 Drama Serial: *Olot Palot*
10:40 Business This Week
ntv
08:35 *Ajker Shokal*
10:05 Animal Kingdom
10:30 *Natoker Gaan*
11:00 *Mon Amar Shondhan Kori Ki Kotha Tahar Sathey*

02:05 World of Arts
12:30 *Hoi Hullor*
01:05 *Muktangan*
02:35 Drama Serial: *Megh Bolechhey Jabo Jabo*
03:15 Drama: *Kaak*
04:25 *Apon Aloy*
05:10 *Din Darpan/ Ithasher Ei Diney*
05:20 *Apar Jigyasha*
06:20 *Shubho Shondhya*
06:50 *Medhabi Bangalir Galpo*
08:25 Drama Serial: *Ramizer Ayna*
09:00 Glamour World

09:50 Drama Serial: *Bibarno Bhalobasha*
11:25 *Dindarpan*
Rtv
10:00 *Aj Patrikay*
10:30 R Music
12:05 Talk Show
02:30 Islamic Programme
03:30 Drama Serial: *Modhyo Barti Antorago Alap*
04:20 *Gaan Ar Gaan*
05:30 *Ajker Bangladesh*
06:35 *Amar Desh*
08:00 Drama Serial: *Agantuk*

08:50 *Wide Angle*
09:20 *Antarango Alap*
10:45 Rtv Exclusive
BANGLAVISION
08:35 *Shuvo Shokal*
09:00 Cartoon
09:30 Drama Serial: *Krishno Phokho*
10:00 *Bangla Feature Film*
02:30 Drama Serial: *Tarik Ali Hadari*
03:00 *Amar Ami*
03:30 Drama Serial: *Shukher Kanta*
04:00 *Shomoy Ashomoy*
04:30 *Projapoti Din*
05:00 *Shamey Nirbachon*

05:30 *Cinebit Shada Kalo*
08:05 *Magno Caitanney Sish*
09:20 *Apar Agami*
09:50 Drama Serial: *Urochithi*
SONY
09:30 Chart Busters Movie Based
10:00 Music Mantra Music
10:30 Man Mein Hai
11:00 *Vishwas Spiritual*
11:30 *Man Mein Hai*
12:00 *Vishwas Spiritual*
12:00 CID Thriller/ Horror
01:00 Fear Factor Reality Based
11:30 Fear Factor Reality

02:00 Based
Palak Dikhla Jaa
Omnibus Dance
Contd. Contd.
03:30 Maitnee - Viraasat Movie
06:00 Contd. Contd.
06:30 Music Beats Music
07:00 Music Mantra Others
07:30 Chart Busters Movie Based
08:00 Current Bollywood Movie Based
08:30 Blockbuster - Saathiya Movie
11:00 Contd. Contd.
11:30 Boogie Woogie Dance
STAR PLUS
09:30 Krishna Kathaiyen
10:30 Instant Khichdi
11:30 The GreatIndian Laughter Champion
12:30 Hero Honda 12th Annual Star Screen Awards
04:00 V First Day First Show- Starplu
04:30 Musafir Hoon Yaaron
05:30 Brandy and Mr. Whiskers
06:00 Buzz Light Year of Star Command
06:30 Viraasat
08:30 Saibaba
09:30 Prithviraj Chauhan
10:00 Baa Bahoo Aur Baby
11:00 Thodi Si Zameen
11:30 Thoda Sa Aasma Kaboom

HBO
10:45 Shutterpeed
12:30 Silver
02:30 Last Action Hero
05:15 Adam Sandler's Eight Crazy Nights
06:45 Premonition
08:30 Beyond Borders
11:00 Hitch
01:30 Silver
STAR MOIVES
08:45 Live Children And It
10:15 Home Alone 2: Lost In New York
12:15 The Triangle - Ep. 03
01:45 The Devil's Own
03:40 If Only
05:20 Elektra
07:00 Beauty Shop
08:45 Wedding Date
STAR WORLD
09:30 Hogan's Heroes
10:00 Get Smart
10:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
12:30 Riminal Minds
01:30 Law & Order: S.V.U.
02:30 Ne Tree Hill
03:30 Cis
04:30 Boston Legal
05:30 Hollywood Shootout - Ep. 48
06:00 Travel Asia
06:30 Baywatch Hawaii
07:30 The Simpsons
08:00 Wonderfalls
08:30 Prah Winfrey Show
09:30 Rendezvous With Simi Garewal

10:30 Riminal Minds
11:00 Law & Order: S.V.U.
NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
09:30 Untamed
10:00 Wild Safari
10:30 Wild
11:30 uper Croc
12:30 Extreme
01:30 Ultimate Adventures
02:30 at Geo Wild
03:30 The Living Edens
04:30 at Geo Reveals
06:30 Wild Safari
07:30 Leopards of Bollywood
08:30 Tremors
09:30 MegaStructures
10:30 // Attack on London
12:00 Air Crash Investigation
DISCOVERY CHANNEL
08:30 Wild Discovery
09:30 Discover India
10:30 Terror Strikes
11:30 Courage Under Fire
12:30 Runway Moms
01:00 Yummy Mummy
01:30 Wild Discovery
02:30 Building the Biggest
03:30 Days that Shook the World
04:30 Wild Discovery
05:30 How do they do it?
06:30 Need for Speed
07:00 Great Cars
07:30 Wild Discovery
08:30 Discovery's Biggest Shows
10:30 Night Safari
11:30 Blueprint for Disaster

PICK OF THE DAY



Khola Duar
On ATN Bangla at 8:00pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Khalil Ullah Khan, Dolly Zahur, Diti, Litu Anam



Beyond Borders
On HBO at 8:30pm
Genre: Drama
Cast: Angelina Jolie, Clive Owen