

Exhibition

Reviving an oriental craft

An exhibition of traditional satranji held at the Drik Gallery

TAWFIQUE ALI

SATRANJI is a traditional art adored in the royal courts of the East. Made of either fur or jute or cotton, satranji had (still has) manifold uses. Very primarily satranji used to be a material to prevent cold spreading on the palace floor. Muslims have carried satranji as prayer rugs with them wherever they have travelled. An important use of satranji was that it used to be sent to kings as tributary offerings. Above all, as a decorative item spread-out satranji on the floor or hung on the wall bears testimony to users' aristocracy, sense of art and sign of good taste.

Originated in the regions of Persia, Caucasus and Central Asia during 6th to 4th century B.C, satranji tradition has existed thousand years in these parts of the world. It is considered as one of the most ancient forms of weaving existing today.

During the Mughal dynasty in the Indian sub-continent, Emperor

Akbar used to admire this handicraft highly and decorate his palace with it. For last couple years Safiqul Alam Selim a private entrepreneur dealing in handicrafts at Rangpur has been endeavoring to promote satranji in the country. He has been exploring market for this traditional craft-work suiting the contemporary taste.

The 4th exhibition of satranji, held at the Drik Gallery on November 11-17, is an outcome of Selim's effort to popularize and re-establish a craft gone out of vogue for a long time. Selim has so far convinced the weaver families at Nishbetganj to revive this indigenous craft industry. He undertook the motivational efforts to unite craftsmen and women, train them up and provide them with raw material. The result is a silent forward movement of a satranji industry and the birth of an artisan community at Nishbetganj know as satranji village.

Selim has so far held four shows of this traditional product. Public

response to the satranji so far is indicative of a bright prospect of this traditional craft. "We neither can lose or let our enterprise flop. In which case the whole community would be demoralised and disappointed causing the traditional craft suffer a deadly setback. To keep a heritage alive, we cannot afford a failure in any way," stated Selim.

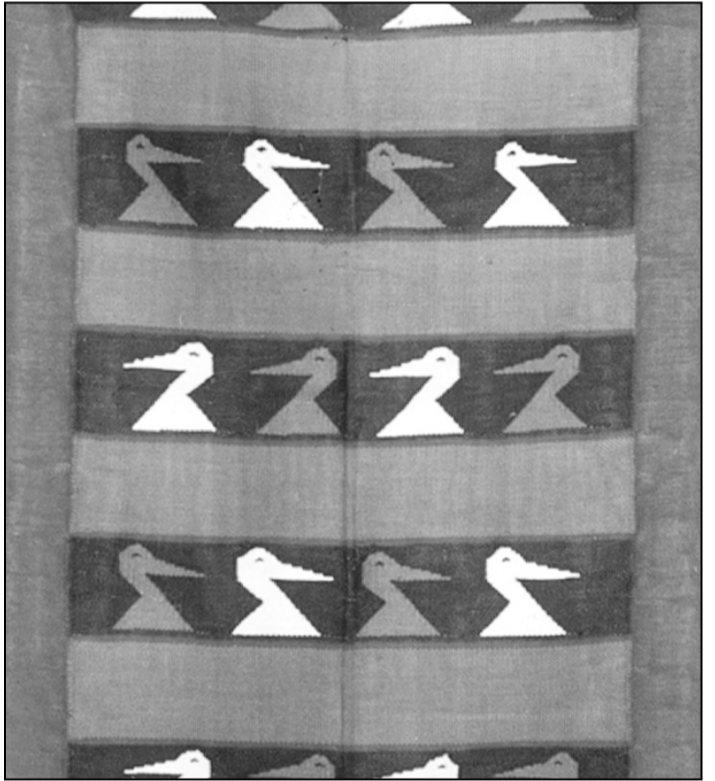
A huge turnout of buyers and visitors at the show was noteworthy. "This time the number of buyers are greater than the casual visitors. It seems the visitors in the last exhibition have turned out to be buyers in the fourth show". While talking about the objective of his latest show, Selim remarked, "By now I am convinced that there is a market for satranji and it would only expand in days to come. As consumers' response is pretty encouraging, now I intend to open a display and sale centre of satranji."

Hakim Mian, who is the master supervisor of the team of satranji workers, is hopeful about setting up

of a big sale centre in the capital. Raw materials used for weaving satranji are wool, cotton and jute. Cotton satranji was on the high demand in the exhibition. British historian Hunter's record shows that satranji named Pilpa or Hatipaya was very popular. Among other designs Jafri, Itkhali and Latai were equally famous. Hatipaya design is named so because an impression of an elephant foot is woven up in this kind of satranji.

Satranji designs are usually very simple in nature. The artisans depict such designs and motifs, which are quite familiar to them and to the rural people as well. Sober and tasteful colours used in satranji suit artistic taste of its admirers. Satranji is called Kelim in Turkey and Durry in South India.

With the growing popularity, satranji or rug, a lost traditional craft in this country is making its way to regain its own ground after a long passage of time.



Asatranji with duck motifs



Artisans engaged in weaving satranji at the village Nishbetganj

Concert

Music close to nature

Dhanmondi amphitheatre opens with Wizard Showbiz's concert



Wizard Showbiz performs to a captive audience at the inaugural show of the newly constructed amphitheatre at Dhanmondi

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

THE renovation of Dhanmondi lake changed the total outlook of the lake and added more colour to it. The Dhanmondi Lake Amphitheatre, just beside the bridge on Road 8 is an additional attraction to the lake's beauty. The renovation work for the lake has almost come to an end. Meanwhile, the opening of the lake's amphitheatre took place on November 15. For the first time an open-air concert was held at the Dhanmondi Amphitheatre.

Organised by Wizard Showbiz, dedicated to promoting the music of the younger generation, four bands performed at the concert. They were Shironamhin, Monitor, Vikings and Nova.

The show was scheduled to start at 4:00 p.m. but the strike delayed it for an hour. The first band to perform was the rising stars Shironamhin. With the number *Ei Muhurte*, a song by Mohiner Ghoraguli, Shironamhin filled the amphitheatre premises. Next they performed one of their own number, *Shuvro Rongin*. The

audience enjoyed their different musical composition. Another song by Mohiner Ghoraguli *Akash Choran* and *Kishore Kumar's* famous number *Shei Rate's* jazz version was next. The crowd liked their performance and the amphitheatre premises began filling up. With the song *Dil Ki Doya*, a song by late Paban Das Baul composed by famous French musician Sam Mills the enthralling performance of *Shironamhin* came to an end. The audience wanted more form them but more bands awaited the stage.

The next band was Monitor. After the soft numbers of Shironamhin they presented the audience with some hard numbers such as *Ami Eka*, *Bhalobasha Kokhono Hashay Kokhono Kaday*, *Anita*, *Boro Eka* and many more. The audience enjoyed their trendy performance.

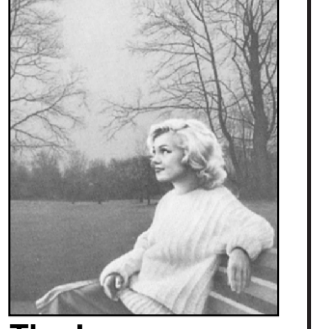
Next came the band Vikings the winner of "Benson & Hedges Star Search 1999". They started off with the number *Din Joto Dukkho Toto*. The audience greeted them on stage. One after another Vikings rocked the Dhanmondi amphitheatre with the numbers *Tumi*

Kotha Dao, Bon Jovi's *You Give Love a Bad Name*, Ki Pele *Ashbe Tumi*, *Dishari* and Bon Jovi's *Its' My Life*. The audience loved their performance. This memorable performance by Vikings came to an end with the number *Jiboner Kolahol*.

The last band to perform at the concert was Nova. It was quite a long break for the band. They began with their famous number *School Polatok Meye*. The audience enjoyed the song and cheered them. Nova continued with the numbers *Padma Pare*, *Swapna Rongin*, *Biye Dhum*, *Ghrina* and *Thikana*. The crowd danced along with their music. With Ricky Martin's *Living in Lavidaloka* Nova pulled the curtain to the concert.

The best part of the show was the natural beauty that one enjoys while sitting at the amphitheatre. Overall the inauguration of the amphitheatre was extraordinary. Wizard Showbiz is going to organise a big concert next January. Lets hope that this concert will also be a successful one like the previous one.

RECOMMENDATIONS



The Lesson
The centre for Asian Art stages Eugene Ionesco's *The Lesson*, translated in Bangla by Saidus Saklaen and directed by Mejrema Reuter, today at 7 in the evening at Natmandal Auditorium of the Dhaka University.

Art show
A group art exhibition by Zahid, Shamim, Kakoli and Safin has opened at The High Commission of India cultural centre, 754, Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi. The show runs everyday from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. till November 29.

Crafts and fashion works show

A Crafts and Fashion Works Exhibition is now being held at the Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, Shahbagh, Dhaka. The show will run till November 30.

Alfred Hitchcock Retrospective

Zahir Raihan Film Society, in collaboration with Indian High Commission in Dhaka, has organised a fortnight long Alfred Hitchcock Retrospective. The Birds, starring Tippi Hedren, Rod Taylor & Jessica Tandy will be screened today at Indian High Commission Auditorium at 6 in the evening.

Fashion

A colourful apparel show by Altamira, a fashion gallery, is now being held at House # 1, Road # 2, Dhanmondi. The show, open from 10 a.m to 10 p.m. everyday, runs till December 14.

TV GUIDE

Table with TV channels and programs: BTV, CHANNEL-i, BBC WORLD, STAR GOLD, STAR PLUS, ESPN.

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

EKUSHEY: 7:00 p.m. *Deshjurey*. Today's episode features bisexual community, Jute bag of Nilfamari and eventful life of Farsat Ali of Habiganj.

PICK OF THE DAY

Mercy On HBO at 10:00 PM Dorothy's all made-up and stripped down to nothing. Only trouble is, she's dead. Her body's been bizarrely and brutally mutilated. Looks like she won't be going out on a date tonight. The only evidence sexual paraphernalia and pictures of victims engaged in kinky activities with a masked man. But who is he?

STAR MOVIES

6:15 Going Home 8:00 Blair Witch Project 9:30 Just One Night 11:00 Phantom Menace 1:15 Finders Fee 3:00 Joy Luck Club 5:15 Pitch Black 7:00 Hurricane 9:30 Perfect Murder 2

CHANNEL TV

7:30 [V] So Long Gone 8:30 [V] Jumpstart 10:30 [V] Hit Machine 12:30 [V] Jungli Jukebox 1:00 [V] FDFS 1:30 [V] Hit Machine

SPORTS

8:00 Soccer World Cup Phase 2, Matchday 7 9:00 Sportscenter Hindi 9:30 World Cup Mix 10:30 International Beach Soccer Beach Soccer Worldwide Acapulco, Mexico Spain @ Portugal 10:00 Western Union World Football 10:30 Cricket Programming Super Selector December Launch 11:30 Sportscenter Hindi 12:00 English Premier Football League English Premier Football League 3:30 Sports Unlited 4:30 Grand Slam of Golf Pga Grand Slam of Golf 2001 Kauai, Hawaii Day Two 8:00 Sportsline Tonight

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ZEE CINEMA

6:00 Feature Film 9:00 Kuch Lamhe Kuch Nagme 9:15 Tara Rum 9:45 Movie Fare 10:00 Feature Film 1:00 Chatpati Chat 1:15 Madhyantar 1:30 Feature Film 5:00 Darpan 5:15 Making Of A Legend 5:45 Film Time 6:00 Feature Film 9:15 Cine News 9:30 Ikke Pe Ikka 10:00 Feature Film 1:45 Tara Rum 2:15 Kuch Lamhe Kuch Nagme 2:30 Feature Film 5:30 Chehren 6:00 Music Plus 7:00 Aalaap 7:30 Tara Rum 8:30 Hit Pe Hit 8:30 Ek Palake 11:00 Dil Se 11:30 Music Box 12:00 Music Plus 1:00 Hit Pe Hit 1:00 Jharokha 2:00 Jharokha 2:35 Pyaar Mohabbat Etc 3:05 Tara Rum 4:00 Hit Pe Hit 5:00 Music Box 5:30 Hit Mix 6:00 Artist Of The Fortnight 6:30 Music Plus 7:30 Hit Pe Hit 8:30 Dial M 9:30 Music Box 10:00 Sizzlers 11:30 Jharokha 11:35 Phoren Maal 12:35 Shabab 1:05 Music Box 1:30 Jharokha 2:00 Hit Pe Hit 3:00 Dil Se 3:30 Tara Rum 4:30 Phoren Maal 5:30 Sizzlers

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ALPHA TV BANGLA

6:00 Shesh Prashna 6:30 Tritiyu Purush

HALLMARK

12:00 The Ranger, The Cook and a Hole in the Sky 2:00 Katts and Dog 3:00 The Ranger, The Cook and a Hole in the Sky 5:00 Sesame Street 6:00 Wildflower 8:00 Walter And Henry 10:00 Lonesome Dove: The Series 11:00 Side by Side 11:00 Sliders Season IV 2:00 Sesame Street 3:00 Clifford 3:30 Caillou 4:00 Lonesome Dove: The Series 5:00 Star Trek: Voyager 6:00 Sliders Season IV 7:00 The Good Fight 9:00 Star Trek: Voyager 10:00 Survival on the Mountain