

Exhibition

Linking Asian and Pacific nations in a cultural bond

Tenth Asian Art Biennale opens today

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT THE biggest art event of the country starts a month long journey in style today. This was told at a press conference prior to the grand event, held yesterday afternoon at the first floor of the newly constructed national art gallery 'Chitrasahala' at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy...

event that would continue till February 8, 2002.

Three different venues featuring some 561 works of art done by 379 artists of the world will be cynosure of attraction for art lovers of the country. The art gallery of 'Chitrasahala' at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will be displaying the works of Bangladeshi artists while the other two venue-galleries at National Museum and Osmani Memorial Hall will exhibit works of rest of the participating countries.

The mega-exhibition, held regularly since 1982, is being participated by 42 countries, the highest so far. Renowned artists and sculptors from Asia, Africa and the Pan-Pacific region will give this exhibition a truly global affair.

With an increase of eight new entrants from that of the previous meet, this year's Biennale features artists from countries such as Australia, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bhutan, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, The Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine,



Female figure is a recurrent subject for Asian painters

The Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Bangladesh.

Having the largest contingent, Bangladesh features 174 artists with 198 works of painting, sculpture and installation. Fourteen renowned local artists' work will be displayed as special invitation category.

Three special exhibits of the event would be awarded with a grand prize, each with a prize-money worth Taka one lakh. A five-member jury board includes Professor Jin Shangyi from China, Professor Emmanuel Torres from Philippines and Hassan Bourkia from Morocco and two from Bangladesh, Professor Mohammad Kibria and Professor Aminul Islam. A few other special awards would also be given at the Award presentation ceremony today.

As part of the exhibition, a two-day seminar titled 'Indigenous art: traditions, identity and challenges', will be held at the Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium at the National Museum on January 10 and 11.

Book Fair

A book lovers' congregation

Dhaka book fair enters its second week

AZIZ AMIRUL

DHAKA book fair has been a perfect gift for the city's book lovers. Inaugurated by the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at the venue of National Parade Ground in Tejgaon, the fair came as a refreshing event after the month of Ramadan.

The two-week long fair has once again provided the book lovers and bookworms to browse and buy the titles of their choice. An only international book fair in Bangladesh, the Dhaka Book Fair generates tremendous enthusiasm among the general readers. The presence of a big crowd at fair every day belies the general claim that the size of the readers in the country is shrinking.

With 108 stalls representing different local and foreign publishing houses, the organisers of the fair seemed more than satisfied. 'Ticket sales' of approximately Tk. 22,000 on Friday last only was an indicator of a large reading public.

'Reading habit among the community members have definitely improved over the last few years. We are highly pleased of the visitors' courtesy as they are welcoming our arrangement through payment', mentioned Shafiqul Islam, Deputy Director of National Book Centre, well-supported by Suhita Sultana, a research officer of the same organisation.

This year's book fair has featured several special arrangements one of which has been the three-day meeting and dialogue between reputed authors and visiting readers. The author-reader interaction that continued from January 3 till January 5 has turned out to be the best attraction, so far, of the entire preparation.

School debate, recitation, musical soiree and seminars on various aspects of reading among the public made the festival, one of superior standard. The fair presented a debate yesterday afternoon among students of higher secondary on a topic -- 'Modern technology is hampering the reading interest'. January 9 till 11 will feature three seminars on book



Stall of Bangladesh Shishu Academy attracts big crowds every day

reading at 4:30 in the evening. Entitled 'Hundred years' library', a discussion-based event would be held at 3:30 pm on January 12 where representatives of 14 different ancient libraries of the country are to attend.

The fair venue has simply become a wonder spot both for

readers and authors as well for the publishing houses. Over the past few days any regular visitor could observe a massive cross-section of people swarming in with a wide variety of demand on books and literary publications, on a diverse range of topics and themes. 'It is a blessing for us that this



Books of cooking, gardening and other household affairs find place in the Japanese stall

year the venue is spacious otherwise it would have been a truly difficult matter regarding accommodation', observed Jakir Ibne Solaiman, a publisher from Saschanda Prokation. 'An irritating issue lies in the fact that a particular publisher has to sell his very own published books with a strict ban against him from selling books of other publications', added Jakir.

This correspondent met Shamsun Nahar, author of Bhalobashar Nilduar, a collection of poems by the female poet has created considerable sensation among the young readers of love themes, beside the stall of Saschhanda.

Stalls from Iran, India and Japan have pulled a major section every day and especially, the Iranian pavilion sponsored by the Embassy in Bangladesh could be regarded as a star attraction in the middle of the festive venue. Inclusion of multimedia based audio-visual unit seemed to bring elation in the whole atmosphere. A large number of book connoisseurs, visiting various stalls, were found asking for fictions by more of the regional authors like Shirshendu and Sunil Humayun Ahmed's latest novel Neel Manush, published for the fair topping the bestseller list.

Among the juveniles, horror classics and fictional publication of detective plots created amazing stipulation, various comic serials being the other specialised category of demanding books among children and the pre-teen members who formed a major proportion of the visitors.

'It seemed that this year the fair has managed to achieve considerable success in terms of organising ability as well in pulling crowds to the superb site', stated Abul Hashem, a regular and enthusiastic visitor of fairs and festivals. 'Here I found books on horror topics to be the most popular, both among young and adults in addition to a great demand for topics related to love themes, specially those of fictional types', commented Hashem before heading towards the exit as dusk was spreading her veil all across the bustling ground. The book fair continues till January 15, from 2 pm till 8 pm every day.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Nrityanchal Festival 2002

Nrityanchal, a front ranking organisation in the country to institutionalise dance as a popular form of art, is organising a five-day long dance festival from January 10 to 14 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy Auditorium. January 10, 6:00pm. Inaugural Ceremony and Dance-drama 'Mohua' at the Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium.

Sculpture show

A group sculpture show is now being held at the gallery of National Museum at Shahbagh. The show showcases recent work by Hamiduzzaman, Ivy Zaman and Rowan Aziz. Open to all, the show runs till January 15.

Art show of three Bengali pioneers

An exhibition showcasing works of pioneer artists Zainul Abedin, Qamrul Hassan and S.M. Sultan-of Bangladesh art movement opens at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts at Dharmadani on January 12. This show is the second of a series presented from the collection of Abul Khair, chairman of Bengal Foundation.

Asian Art Workshop

Bengal Foundation will hold a three-day art workshop involving the participants and delegates of the 10th Asian Art Biennale at BRAC Centre, Rajendrapur on January 14 at 12:00 p.m. The workshop will be inaugurated by Fazle Hassan Abed, chairperson of BRAC as chief guest while noted artist Shafiqul Islam and Professor Anisuzzaman will be present as special guests.

Group Art Show

The 45th Grand Group Art Exhibition of leading Bangladeshi artists organised by Saju Art Gallery is now being held at its gallery space at Gulshan, North Super Market 2nd circle. The month-long show, open to all, will run until February 7 from 10 am to 8:30 pm barring Fridays.



Large, colourful installations depict creativity of modern Asian artworks

TV GUIDE

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