

## RECOMMENDATIONS



## Classical Music Concert

As a part of their South Asia Tour 2002, 'Ensemble Resonanz' a classical orchestra will perform at the Osmani Memorial Hall on January 24 at 7:00 p.m. The programme is organised by Goethe Institut (German Cultural Centre).

## Exhibition by Russian artists

Organised by the Russian Cultural Centre, Dhaka a show of contemporary art by Russian artists Poliakov Vasily and Persidskiy Konstantin is being held at the Exhibition Hall of the Russian Cultural Centre, House # 510, Road # 7, Dhanmondi R/A.

## Art show of three Bengali pioneers

An exhibition showcasing works of pioneer artists Zainul Abedin, Qamrul Hassan and S.M. Sultan-- of Bangladeshi art movement is being held at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts at Dhanmondi. This show is the second of a series presented from the collection of Abul Khair, chairman of Bengal Foundation. The exhibition will be open from January 12 to February 7, 2002 from 12 p.m. till 8 p.m. everyday.

## Group Art Show

The 45th Grand Group Art Exhibition of leading Bangladeshi artists organised by Saiu 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.

## 2nd solo exhibition

The 2nd solo art exhibition by artist Rezaul Hoque Liton is being held at the High Commission of India Cultural Centre (754 Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi). The exhibition will remain open for all from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. everyday, till January 24.

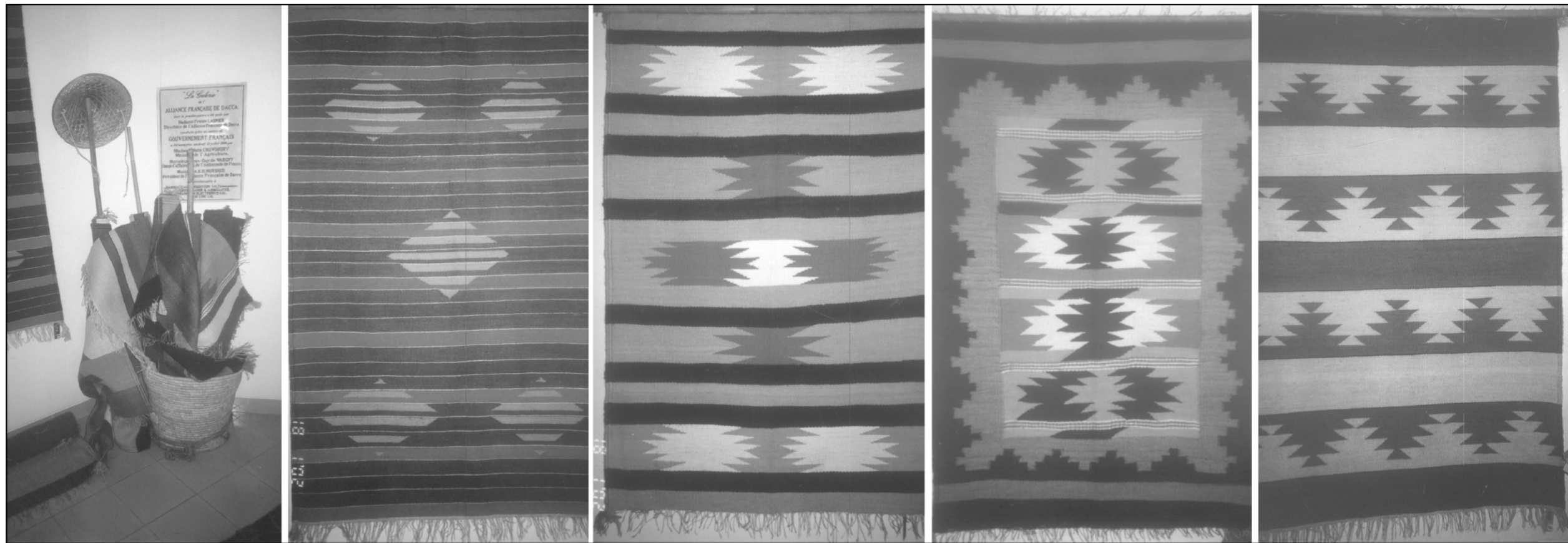
## Satranji Exhibition

A Satranji exhibition is being held at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. The exhibition will continue everyday from 3:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. till January 23.

## Exhibition

## To relive a dying tradition

Bibi Russell's exhibition of traditional rug or Satranji pulls large crowds every day at the Alliance gallery



Attractive colour and traditional design give a touch of elegance to the Satranjis

## AZIZ AMIRUL

THE elegance of the inimitable artistry of our folk culture could be gathered to a large extent through a visit to the ongoing exhibition of Satranji or traditional rug at the art gallery of Alliance Francaise in the city. The exhibition that comprised rugs and mats of 100 designs is a brainchild of reputed fashion designer Bibi Russell.

The show experienced a grand inauguration on January 17 as vocal artists from Rangpur attended the evening to render live performance of Bhawaiia, traditional wedding songs along with fine display of mats being woven by

rural skilled weavers from the same location of North Bengal.

A varied range of bright and dark colour combination, with the introduction of rich patterns of flower, birds and other natural elements put a touch of pure refinement to the displayed rugs. Some of the pieces possessed deep red centers with contrasting shades of black borders while a few were found of bright blue pallet mixed with attractive colours of yellow, orange or deep green.

'The present display here at the Alliance Francaise is the second of its kind, the earlier one being the maiden exhibition some 18 months back during inauguration of this art gallery', mentioned Bibi while

briefing this correspondent on different aspects of the event. 'The previous exhibition featured around 200 designs of Satranji but this time we are introducing 100 fresh and exclusive patterns of colour print', Bibi adds. A special feature of the item remains in the fact that every single Satranji on exhibit contains cent percent jute as its ingredient of production.

Mohammad Idris, a retired Deputy Chief designer of Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC), at present a working partner in Bibi's projects, carried on with detailed disclosure of information upon the near-extinct handicraft product of rural Bengal. The art of weaving Satranji was

a routine affair since the last several centuries among the simple, laborious villagers of the North Bengal districts especially of the village Nishbetganj in Rangpur. For a present day layman enthusiast of the item, it has become a matter of great surprise to observe how skillful were those uneducated yet dedicated weavers, who, without any direction or supervision created fine, intricate designs solely out of their sophisticated imagination. In the days of medieval era, Satranjis were usually used as floor mats in Mehfis and parties, strictly controlled within the aristocratic society.

Since the later half of the previ-

ous century, production of rural handicrafts lessened to a great deal mainly due to modern technological advancement and hence brought misery to the fate of Satranji, as well. But, as felt by Idris, prompt initiatives from some of the recent designers have surely created a new hope in the endangered industry of mat weaving.

Idris, a seemingly ardent promoter of the product, further observed that through attempts of revitalising the Satranji industry, they are trying their best to provide new lease of life to the golden fibre of Bengal. Jute, the main ingredient of Satranji would certainly receive boost in production and quality, once sufficient demand for prod-

ucts like Satranji could be created in the local and foreign markets.

As mentioned by Bibi Russell, the colour combinations of the displayed rugs were absolute culmination of traditional approach, not a single one composed from book. The alterations made by the designers' team were in the designs, those too, slightly modified in certain areas, majority being artistic ideas of the rural craftsmen.

Price of a single Satranji ranged between taka 500/- and 750/- depending on size and shape. Three sizes, those of 3x5', 4x6', and 10x12' are available at the exhibition site yet any size and shape could be availed through order of requirement. 'After resumption of

the second exhibition of my Satranji products, people are simply loving the item and it is my firm belief that the day is not far away when the traditional floor and wall mat or Satranji would find its original place in the lives of the orthodox Bangali community', rounded off Bibi before attending some guests. 'Besides creating new options in the segment of interior decor, our attempt to revitalise this dying industry would in addition, help alleviate rural poverty to a large extent'.

The exhibition is open till January 23, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. every day at the Alliance gallery.

## Cinema

## Lalsalu clears censor

## CULTURE DESK

LALSALU, a feature film of alternative nature, is all set to hit the silver screen. Based on one of the most celebrated novels of contemporary Bengali literature, written by Syed Waliullah, the cinematic version is a fine production from top filmmaker Tanvir Mokammel.

The Censor Board has recently issued clearance certificate to the novel-based feature film that was the sole obstacle for its late release.

The Premiere show of Lalsalu will be held in the city on third week of February and a tentative date in this regard has been fixed on the 16<sup>th</sup> of next month.

The synopsis, in short, features a considerably large number of character among whom the figures of Majid, Jamila, Rahima, Awal Pir and those of several other names come under limelight to reign and influence the entire plot.

The settings of the story happen to reveal some marshy rural district of the country during the mid-40's. Majid, a very poor bearded Maulana arrives at the village, to be a complete stranger among the innocent yet superstitious inhabitants.

With his religious appearance



Muinira Yusuf and Tamanna in a scene of Lalsalu

and behaviour, the fake Majid manages to take control of the villagers' psychology, hence begin his exploitative commercial busi-

ness of Pirism. Majid, one day, declares an old, dilapidated grave of an unknown person behind the bamboo forest

that to be of some famous Pirs'. Unaware villagers, nervous of superstition, accept the mysterious theories of Majid and turn into

obedient disciples of the mazar-oriented bearded Maulana.

Soon Majid finds himself amidst wealth and property when he decided to marry Rahima, a robust, middle-aged peasant woman. Within months his lustful urges force Majid to bring a second wife, this time, a beautiful teenager, Jamila.

Majid carries on with his ritualistic recitation of holy verses beside the grave, he claims to be a 'shrine'. Villagers regard him as their guardian angel except the intelligent Jamila who smells something fishy of her husbands' actions. Final part of the film bring cruel downfall of the hypocritical Majid, initiated by his nemesis in the form of Jamila.

Main casts include Raisul Islam, Munira Yusuf, Chandni, Aly Zaker, Towkir Ahmed, Rowshan Jameel, Chitralakha Guha, Amirul Haque Chowdhury, Masud Ali Khan, Tamanna Yasmin Tithi and others.

A bold protest and means of awareness against fundamentalism, Lalsalu is directed by Uttam Guha. Anwar Hossain took responsibility of the video unit while music direction has been done by Syed Shabbab Ali.

## Music

## A folk fiesta

Folk Music Festival 2002 begins at National Museum

## NAFID IMRAN AHMED

A folk music fiesta titled 'Folk Music Festival 2002' started on January 19 at the National Museum auditorium. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has been organising this festival since the last ten years to uphold the rich cultural heritage of folk music in Bangladesh. Begum Selima Rahman, State Minister in charge of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, inaugurated the festival.

Shafi Kamal, a director of

over by Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. 'As far as I know,' said Dr. Ashraf Siddique, 'there were 122 types of folk music in Bangladesh. But most of them got lost in time and now we have only 50 of them.' He also mentioned about the abundance of Moromi singers in every village all of whom should receive proper recognition. In his speech the chief guest recalled many memories of the Liberation War of 1971 when he was with late President Ziaur Rahman. 'It was our dream

famous folk tunes. Featuring Gaibandha's traditional hospitality a dance drama was too, staged. 'Loke Bole Amar Ghore Naki Chand Utheche' with his powerful voice Arif Dewan came next. The audience loved his performance and encouraged him.

After the performance of Arif Dewan and his team the solo performers of the evening came one by one and took the audience through a very entertaining folk musical ride. The solo performers of the evening were Nadira Begum, Indromohan Rajbongshi,



A folk dance by artists of Gaibandha

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy gave his welcome speech. 'In the near future we hope to reach the rural community by holding this festival in villages', said the Minister while in her inaugural speech. 'We have to rediscover and preserve the ancient music of our country.'

Lt. General (Retd.) Mir Showkat Ali (Biruttam) was present as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony while reputed folk researcher Dr. Ashraf Siddique was present as special guest. The inaugural ceremony was presided

to establish a folklore institute in Bangladesh, so that we can preserve the rich cultural heritage of the country and the forthcoming generations get the chance to know about them,' said Mustafa Zaman Abbasi while talking at the ceremony.

'Chilo Dosh Koti Manusher Prane.', was the first song performed by Akbar Ali and his team from Kushiia that received high appreciation from the audience. The 'Folk Music Orchestra' featuring the musicians of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy played some

Dilruba Khan, Kiron Chandra Roy, Hafizur Rahman, Fakir Alamgir, Onima Mukti, Jahir Alim, Ashraf Udas, Chandana Majumder, M A Khalek, Piyal Hasan and Fakir Shahabuddin.

As a part of the 'Folk Music Festival 2002' a folk evening featuring different types of folk music was held today at the same venue. A musical performance by the 'Baul's and 'Boyati's will be held tomorrow at 6 at the same venue. The festival will come to an end on January 22.

## Award

## Nestle spots budding writers

Story-writing contest of Nestle ends through award distribution ceremony

## CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

OUR powder milk help in strengthening intellectual aptitude of children besides assisting them to grow in physique', the promotional theme of world-renowned powder milk brand 'NIDO' proved realistic on completion of their award-distribution ceremony on January 11, of an earlier story-writing competition among children.

Twenty school children from across the country were selected as awardees from a preliminary competition that was held in 2001 and sponsored by NIDO and newsmagazine Weekly 2000. The initial competition of last year was divided in two groups, one for students of class II till class IV while the second group comprised of students of class V and class VI.

The contest received a tremendous response with an accumulation of over 2000 entries from participants. The topics were 'Travelling far accompanied by mother' for the juniors and '20 years from now...' for



The winners of the NIDO story-writing contest

the seniors. Eminent intellectuals Showkat Ali, Shahadat Chowdhury, Imdadul Haq Milon and Mainul Ahsan Saber discharged responsibility of judgement by selecting 10

stories from each group. These stories were later on published in the 2001 Eid issue of Weekly 2000.

The recent award-giving ceremony was the concluding part of the

entire series of events. Selina Hossain, a Director of Bangla Academy attended as Chief guest and Jerry Base along with members of the Jury Board was present as

## Special guest.

A student of class III, Athoi Nilima from Herman Meiner School and College stood first from the junior group and Tamalika Rahmatullah, a student of class IV from Junior Laboratory School and College snatched the top position of the senior group.

Winners of the three top positions from both the groups received prize those included bi-cycle, camera and binocular. The fourth and fifth spot holders were encouraged with consolation gifts. However, all the 20 finalists received crests and certificates.

The speakers of whom included the distinguished guests expressed their thanks and gratitude to the organisers for holding such a unique event over a span of two years. The management of Nestle Bangladesh Ltd, the parent organisation of NIDO, expressed their intention of holding future programs for the cerebral development of children.