

RECOMMENDATIONS

Art Exhibition

A solo exhibition of artworks by artist Nazia Andaleeb Preema is being held at the DRIK gallery at Dhanmondi in the city. The exhibition continues till February 12, 2002. The exhibition is open for all everyday from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Thursday & Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Book Fair

Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela, a three-week long book fair at the premises of Bangla Academy is in progress. The fair is open everyday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Seventh Solo

The 7th solo art exhibition of artist Samiran Chowdhury is being held at Divine Art Gallery in Hotel Sonargaon. Samiran's 25 works in water colour, mixed media and acrylic are on display. The exhibition will remain open for the visitors from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. till February 16.

Drama Festival

Natty Utsav 2002, the national festival of drama is going on at the Mahila Samity auditorium in the city. A drama of a particular group is staged everyday at 6:30 p.m. The festival will continue till February 20 organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation.

Satranji Exhibition

A Satranji exhibition by Shafiqul Alam Selim is being held at WVA auditorium from February 8 till February 15. The exhibition will remain open for all from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. everyday.

Solo Painting

The first solo painting exhibition of Zakia Khan Chandana is being held at the Zainul Gallery of the Institute of Fine Art at Shahbagh in the city. The show will remain open for all till February 14 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. everyday

Art Exhibition

A 12-day painting exhibition by renowned artist Maruf Ahmed started at the Shilpangan Art Gallery in the city from February 7, 2002. The show will remain open for all till February 18, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. everyday.

Exhibition

Images from around the world

Photo exhibition showcases works from 32 countries at Alliance Francaise

FAYZA HAQ

PHOTOS from all over the world are being exhibited with a flourish at the Alliance Francaise gallery. "Auteur du Monde" includes pictures from 32 countries ranging from Turkey, India, Egypt to Italy, Denmark and France.

Edouard Boubat's "Inde" brings a saris clad woman with her flowing, embroidered robe blowing in the wind as she stands with her child on her hips and stares at the ocean waves in front. The details of her clothes, hair with bright ribbons and the child taken up with the vast bewildering scene are taken from the back.

Max Pam's "Nepal" brings hordes of people-- women, children and men of all ages gathered around what appears to be a place of worship. The pagodas have fascinating three tiered roofs held up by carved pieces of wood and there is more relief work in the rest of the details of the lentils, pillars, and windows. The milling, pushing and waiting crowd is brought in detail as regards their clothes and head gears.

Taking you to Israel is Georgy Lazarewski's "Israel" with two shadowy figures walking up a brick courtyard on which appears some object like the outspread wings of a large bird. In the backdrop is the opening of a brick building which is delicately illuminated with two strings of fairy lights. The enveloping atmosphere is dark and mysterious where one can barely make out the silhouettes of the walking figures.

Antoine Agoudjian's "Turkey" brings in a portside with barges, liners, flying sea-gulls, the great expanse of calm rippling waves and a crescent sign on a flag from a mast. The flying birds make a design on the clear sky with their long gray and white wings. The silent ships lend an atmosphere of adventure, while the single fluttering flag in the forefront stabilizes the composition.

Frouad Elkoury's "Lebanon" has a starry sky on the top half of the picture while the lower part brings in scenes of buildings, neighbouring trees and the road in front. The buildings appear imposing enough although they are no skyscrapers. The details of the arches, windows and balconies have been well captured while the shadow of the central building appears to fall on the street in front.

Russia has been portrayed by



Mahmud, Bangladesh

Stanley Greene as a tall dark building lit up with glow worm like light up windows. At the bottom of the building which has been taken at an angle is a lit up front brining in a waiting car in front of the porch. The rest of the photograph is a combination of shades of darkness and mystery.

Another portrayal of Russia is seen in Daniel Anizon's photo in which the barrack like buildings at the back appear as if they have been taken from some French Impressionistic painting, with the sweep of the clouds atop the pale gray sky. Two well clad figures, seen as black silhouettes, carrying baggage are seen in front of the idyllic representation of an industrialized



Frances Dal Chele, Algeria

A myriad of sun swept staircases with an adjoining section of a massive pillar, accompanying walls with the top of a palm tree to relieve the monotony is brought in Jellel Gatelli's "Tunisia". You can almost breathe the fresh warm air and feel at peace with such a scene of an empty inviting building which appears like a page taken from an architect's sketchbook.

The exotic beauty of a pagoda with a big structure atop many bell-shaped domes with trees at the front and back and details of architecture captured by the lens is Hien Lam Duc's "Vietnam". Modern specimens of transport is seen in front along with the tall palm tree which



Xavier Lambours, Germany

makes the photo more an everyday scene rather than simply a static portrayal of a stately place of worship.

Snow, snow and more snow is seen in Eric Emo's "Denmark" which idolizes the dream of cool snow drifts with fish swimming beneath and straying snow bears and northern antelopes. Along with the heaps and sweeps of snow we see the graying sky with the calm sea level below it. In the centre is a dark rock which heightens the purity of the white snow all around.

A picture depicting the tops of a range of mountains is brought in Patrick Bard's "Mexico". There is a tiny human figure atop this group of

mountains surveying the scene like some lord of all that he surveys. Atop the range of rocky mountains is the clear sky with barred clouds.

Pictorial traditional writing is brought in Philippe Bordas's depiction of the Ivory Coast. Here a dark figure is seen before a blackboard writing down alphabets which almost look like hieroglyphics because of the drawing of human shapes in the quaint writing. This specimen of literacy is mind boggling.

A stark naked teenager with bow and arrow in hand, standing atop a delicate and dangerous fence is brought in Pierre de Vallombreuse's depiction of Indonesia. This primi-



Thomas Dworzak, Russia

tive stage of mankind existing in the 21st century is an amazing depiction of the contemporary man, hunting with primitive tools and walking about sans clothes.

A sailboat on the shore and four happy young men walking and dancing around in shorts brings in the warmth and joy of average life in Brazil in Henry Ray's picture. The boat appears like out of books of the past while the hopping and skipping youth bring in aura of uninhibited joy with the simple pleasures of life such as their playing on the sand, with the sea behind them.

The embracing and dancing couple in Isabel Munoz's depiction of Argentina brings in the fiesta mood with the woman's stiletto and twirling feather shawl to match her tangoing partner's bowler hat and formal suit. The peeling off walls in the background and the fascinated onlooker adds interest to the composition of the lens.

An exotic scene with just nature is seen in Jean-Paul Bajard's depiction of Nicaragua with the waving dancing tree top, the brooding hedges around, the splashes of river in front and a pale sky with some golden clouds behind.

Glady's depiction of the tribal woman covering her side against the wind is a moving portrait of a simple Mexican woman who appears barely clad even going by the view from the top. She has an ancient and traditional imprint on her palm and her eyes shows satisfaction with the simple life that is represented by the leaves that surround her.

Willy Ronis's depiction of Italy with the girl crossing a thin bridge shown like some silhouette while the rest of the picture is in shades of gray bringing in people and houses. The shadows on the water in front are like black wiggling lines as seen in some water colour.

In Ignacio Gomez Pulido's delineation of Colombo we see an intriguing picture of a hunched up native swinging by a tree branch seen against the still waves of the river. At the back are the clumps of thick rain forests.

A placid depiction of rural life with contentment and convention is the German scene by Xavier Lambours which shows an old farmer's wife on a crutch, feeding an eager calf. The background is dark while there is bright gleaming straw in the front.

An Algeria desert is seen in Frances Dal Chele's scene with a single pensive goat seen against the desert with its sand and rocks. At the side is the gleaming coppery face of a woman shrouded with clothes and decked with bright beads. Mankind and nature are seen in happy coexistence despite the heat and barrenness.

A happy young mother playing with her infant child against the background of a field with its fence and a bright pillow to support her is seen in Mahmud's depiction of Bangladesh. Happiness and contentment pervade the picture of simple country life.

Such a collection of photos from various corners of the world is a rare feast for the eyes.

Award

Britain gets new Pop Idol

AFP, London

A 23-year-old drama student woke up a superstar and pop heartthrob on Sunday after winning a television talent show that has gripped Britain for weeks.

Toast-of-the-tabloids Will Young was all but guaranteed a number one hit and months in the pop limelight after winning the final of Pop Idol, an 18-week TV show designed to manufacture Britain's next chart sensation.

Almost nine million people voted in the final showdown Saturday night, with Young singing his way to victory over rival Gareth Gates by 4.6 million votes to 4.1 million.

"I am absolutely ecstatic," said Young after the show. "It's something I have always wanted to do and throughout this competition it's just felt more and more right to sing. I am really ready for it."

Pop Idol was conceived in the wake of the Popstars show that produced manufactured band Hear'Say. They broke all records when they released their first single,



PHOTO: AFP

Pop Idol finalist Will Young from Hungerford, Berkshire, celebrates at the Fountain Studios in London, 09 February 2002, after being voted Britain's PopIdol.

Pure and Simple, last year but have since lost a band member amid rumours of personality clashes. Music industry experts are pre-

dicting that Young and even his beaten rival can look forward to instant success, though a long-lived music career may prove tougher.

Theater

Dhaka celebrates drama festival

National Theater Festival 2002, a three week long theatrical drama fiesta is halfway through with successful staging of plays since February 1

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

WITH the arrival of the month of February, theatre lovers are having a great time, being able to spend evenings at the Natak Para of Bailey Road in the city. A three-week long National Theater Festival started from February 1, 2002 with staging of drama at the auditorium of Mahila Samity.

Titled "Nattyoo Utsav 2002", the festival has so far presented 12 stage dramas to the audience since the day of inauguration. A number of theatre groups from Dhaka have already staged their productions at the festival along with presentation of performance from groups, outside the capital. The festival is jointly organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation and Bengal Foundation. It may be mentioned that the National Street Drama Festival, a similar event of the same hosts, ended its weeklong duration on February 7.

One of the highlights of the festival is the arrangement of **Natty Jalsa**. A special cultural event is held every evening after the completion of the public staging and is participated by theater artists and other unit members of the groups.

A drama of a particular group is staged every evening at 6:30 p.m., which will continue till February 20, the last day of the festival. Tickets are available at the venue before the show.

11 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Shubochon Natya Sangshad, Dhaka	Tirthankar
12 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Nagoril Natya Shampraday, Dhaka	Roktokorobi
13 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Theater (Arambagh), Dhaka	Sadi Shirajer Pala
14 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Shondhani Natyachakra, Sylhet	Goni Mia Ek Din
15 Feb	10:30 a.m.	Video Theater	
Mohabbarat	6:30 p.m.	Desh Natak, Dhaka	Nitya
Puran	6:30 p.m.	Podokkheb, Gaibandha	Bahe Nidhua Pathar
16 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Bogra Theater, Bogra	Bogra
17 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Dhaka Theater, Dhaka	Na Noiramoni
18 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Drishwapat, Dhaka	Chop, Adalat Choltchey
19 Feb	6:30 p.m.	Monchomukut Natya Sham	Shingkranti
20 Feb	6:30 p.m.		

Movies

Schizophrenic genius and hobbits lead as Oscar frenzy climaxes

AFP, Los Angeles

AFTER weeks of frenzied speculation, maneuvering and costly advertising blitzes, Hollywood's Oscar season is set to climax Tuesday with the announcement of this year's Academy Award nominations.

"A Beautiful Mind" and fantasy flick "The Lord of the Rings" appeared to be the front-runners in the hard-fought race to win Tinseltown's highest kudos, along with plush musical "Moulin Rouge" and family drama "In the Bedroom."

But apart from the four films that have emerged as the strongest contenders for the 2002 Oscars, the pundits are still battling to predict which of the 244 other hopefuls might make the coveted nominations list.

"The only sure favorites for

multiple nominations are 'A Beautiful Mind' and 'Lord of the Rings,'" said Los Angeles Times film critic Richard Natale.

"Moulin Rouge" and 'In the Bedroom' come in next, but after that the line-up becomes far more murky," he said.

The four films have all been enormous critical and box office successes and have also done well at many of the dizzying brouhaha of Hollywood awards ceremonies that lead up to the Oscar nominations.

Of the 248 films eligible for nomination in 24 categories, only 112 will win nominations -- which not only boost the box office performance of the high-budget pictures but can also propel the nominees to global stardom.

Psycho-drama "Mind" will go up against the hobbits and ringwraiths of the 270 million-dollar film version



A Beautiful Mind

of J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" for the most nominations, pundits said.

They will be joined by "Moulin Rouge," Australian director Baz Luhrmann's attempt to revive the Hollywood musicals of old, starring Nicole Kidman, and low-budget

family drama "In the Bedroom."

Other hopefuls vying for nods include 1930s murder mystery satire "Gosford Park," acclaimed Somali-based combat thriller "Black Hawk Down," southern US racial drama "Monster's Ball" and drama "Memento."

Some 5,739 members of the

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences were eligible to cast their ballots -- closed last week -- for the nominees for the cinema industry's most prized honour, the golden Oscar statuette.

Other hopefuls include Denzel Washington, for his role as a crooked cop in "Training Day," and Gene Hackman, for his portrayal of an outcast father in "The Royal Tenenbaums."

Trailing Spacek in the best actress category are Nicole Kidman for "Moulin Rouge," Halle Berry for "Monster's Ball" and Briton Dame Judi Dench for "Iris," the story of novelist Iris Murdoch.

Among the foreign-film contenders are France's "Amelie" and Bosnia's "No Man's Land," while a new animation category is likely to feature "Shrek" and "Monsters, Inc."

Beauty can be an obstacle in Hollywood: Halle Berry

AFP, Berlin

HALLE Berry, star of the Berlin film festival contender "Monster's Ball", said Saturday her beauty had often been as much an obstacle as an aid to getting roles in Hollywood.

The American actress told reporters after the screening of the gritty drama about interracial love and redemption that her striking face and statuesque figure had at the times kept directors from seeing her talent as an actress.

"It's caused an obstacle for me to work around," Berry said when asked about her appearance.

She said she had had to "beg" Swiss director Marc Forster for her role in "Monster's Ball", in which she plays an impoverished waitress whose husband is on death row and has often tried to act against type.

"The great thing about this role is I got to kind of leave my physical self," the former beauty queen said. Berry, who made her breakthrough appearance as a prostitute hooked on crack in Spike Lee's "Jungle Fever", said she has tried to walk a fine line between using her beauty to gain attention and proving she has more to offer.

"Anytime I really truly wanted to overcome that stereotype, thank God, luckily I've been able to. It has been a help because I do get to play both sides of the fence. As an actress, and especially as a woman of color, it's been sort of like my secret weapon."

Asked about her preparation for the "Monster's Ball" role, which required lengthy and graphic sex



Halle Berry

scenes with co-star Billy Bob Thornton, Berry said she had not done any particular physical preparation.

"I didn't work out or anything like that," she said. "If anything I was kind of waifish."

Berry is to star in the next James Bond film, tentatively called "Bond 20".

She said she would welcome the change in pace from the intense drama of "Monster's Ball," one of 23 films vying for the prestigious Golden Bear prize for best film, to appear at 007's side.

"That's the beauty of it for me is that I can go from a movie like 'Monster's Ball' that is so reality-based and then go and do a movie like 'James Bond' that is so fantasy-based."

The Berlin film festival runs through February 17.

US director Robert Altman to accept lifetime achievement award in Berlin

AFP, Berlin

THE Berlin film festival pays homage to US director Robert Altman Sunday with a Golden Bear prize for lifetime achievement and a gala screening of his latest film, the period mystery "Gosford Park".

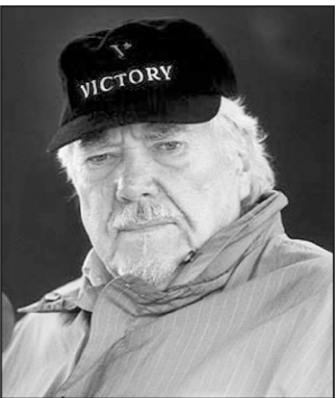
The maverick filmmaker, renowned for ensemble pieces such as "MASH," "Nashville" and "Short Cuts", will accept the statuette with his wife Catherine.

Known for his keen social criticism infused with human empathy and rich characterization, Altman has won devoted fans among critics and audiences who relish the swirling subplots and biting dialogue of his films.

Altman has never won an Academy Award and fiercely protects his distance from the Hollywood movie machine, which he savagely skewered in his hit 1992 satire "The Player".

"Gosford Park", winner of this year's Golden Globe award and co-produced by Altman, presents a stellar British cast in an "Upstairs, Downstairs" style comedy of the classes peppered with a murder mystery.

Altman, who will turn 77 on February 20, remains true to form in exposing the cruel underbelly of baronial luxury of the 1930s while blurring the seemingly impenetrable lines between the gentry and the servant classes.



Robert Altman

Stars including Maggie Smith, Kristin Scott Thomas, Helen Mirren and Emily Watson take delicious advantage of the acerbic dialogue and allow even those left scratching their heads at the tricky plot and dozens of characters to just enjoy the fun.

The son of a successful Kansas City insurance salesman, Altman entered filmmaking by way of failed stints as a salesman and inventor after World War II, in which he served as an Army fighter pilot.

After a string of industrial films, documentaries and commercials, Altman eventually gained a name as a screenplay writer in Hollywood.

His first directing jobs were in television, including a handful of episodes of the Western series "Bonanza".

But it was his third feature "MASH", a tragicomedy about the Korean War which audiences quickly understood as an attack on the US engagement in Vietnam, that won the Palme d'Or in Cannes in 1970 and sealed his reputation as an American director of considerable talent and vision.

David Thomson, author of "A Biographical Dictionary of Film", called Altman "the American Renoir" in an article for the New York Times in June 2000, describing some of his films during the 1970s heyday of American cinema as "as good as any made in this country".

The director of more than 30 films is also credited with fueling the movie careers of stars including Shelley Duvall, Keith Carradine, Lily Tomlin, Jeff Goldblum and Sally Kellerman.

Many critics considered the 1993 feature "Short Cuts," a contemporary drama based on the writing of American short-story author Raymond Carver, to be Altman's last great film.

But the veteran director has remained prolific into old age, with surprises such as the widely acclaimed "Gosford Park" up his sleeve.

"Gosford Park" is appearing out of competition at the Berlin festival, which runs through February 17.