

RECOMMENDATIONS

Painting exhibition

Art works of Bangladeshi landscape done by an American artist, Sarah Sutro, is being exhibited at Divine Art Gallery at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the city. The exhibition is open for all from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. everyday till March 18.

Festival

To commemorate the completion of fifty years of Language Movement, Dhaka Theatre organises a series of programmes including Theatre Festival, Seminar, Village Theater Convention and Reception from March 16 to 22 at Mahila Samiti Auditorium in the city. A two-day seminar on the key notes like Art, Theatre, Poetry and Music will be held on March 21 and 22.

German Theatrical Video Shows

Jointly organised by Zahir Raihan Film Society and Goethe Institute Dhaka, a four-day German contemporary theatrical video show takes place from March 11 to 14 everyday at 5:30 p.m. at the Goethe Institute Auditorium, Road # 9, Dhammendi R/A. Plays for screening includes 'Endgame' on 11th, 'The Kiss of Forgetting' on 12th, 'Year Zero Or The Art of Giving Service' on 13th and 'The Devil's General' on 14th March.

Film Festival

A Japanese film festival at the Institute of Modern Languages in the city, ends today. Four films are being screened with two shows, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., every day. The films are Tsuru, Faraway Sunset, Wild Daisy, Hearts and flowers for Tora.

Art Exhibition

Japan and Bangladesh are holding a joint art exhibition at the National Museum art gallery in the city. The exhibition will end on March 20 that is featuring works of renowned Bangladeshi artist Mohammad Kibria, those of Noriko Yanagisawa, a Japanese contemporary artist and works of Kazi Ghiyasuddin, a Bangladeshi artist who is presently based in Japan.

Solo exhibition

A solo art exhibition of Abdus Shakoor is being held at Bengal Art Gallery at Dhammendi in the city. The exhibition features recent works of the artist who is inclined to pause and look back, to lift the fraying mantle and energise a wiling legacy. The exhibition will remain open for all from 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. till March 29, 2002.

Theatre

A festival of future stars

A national drama festival is being inaugurated this evening at the Shawkat Osman auditorium of Central Public Library in the city, to be participated by 48 theatre groups formed by children from across the country

Aziz AMIRUL

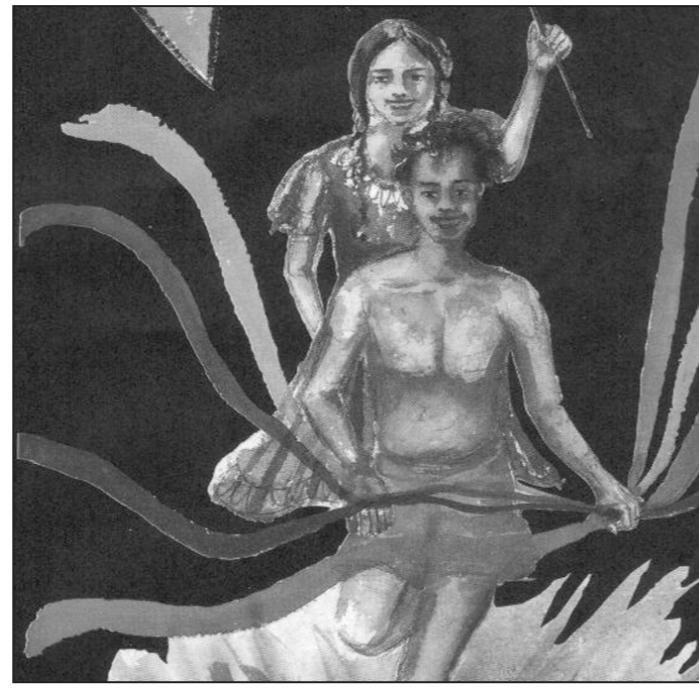
THE stage is fully set to inaugurate a highly important cultural fiesta, the 5th National Children and Youth Drama Festival 2002. The organizers, at Press conference held yesterday at the National Press Club, disclosed this.

Being a 12-day long affair, the festival kicks off this evening at the Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium in the city.

The drama festival will feature nearly fifty stage productions of young performers numbering up to 900 or more from towns and remote villages. People's Theatre Association, a private forum of theatre groups, is organizing the gala event.

The association is carrying on regular activities of drama and theatre movement with children as it is doing the same with groups of adult performers. Hundreds of children's theatre groups have been established with cooperation and guidance from the Peoples' theatre association. Liakat Ali Lucky is the Secretary General of this organization.

The child performers of Bangladesh are not only exhibiting their talents inside the country but also doing well in events abroad, mentioned Liakat Ali. 'Children's drama is relatively a new concept in our cultural arena, but soon the day



would arrive when the young performers would be given appropriate recognition and honour by the general audience. In the Western countries, child performers' groups are receiving enormous support and training from the concerned authorities which would probably be a reality for our children too, in the near future', Liakat added.

The forthcoming festival will include screening of video films, puppet shows and publication of daily bulletins from its press center, which will be erected at the venue of Central Public Library.

Theatre performance will begin everyday from 5:30 p.m. and will continue till late evening. The schedule will change on Friday with



commencement of drama at 10:30 in the morning.

On the opening day, events will start from 4:00 p.m. with a colorful rally of children. The huge procession will end before 5 p.m. when the opening ceremony will take place at the premises of Central Public Library. Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman will be present as the Chief guest. Sarah Zaker, Chairperson of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation, Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam and Ali Ahmed, both being advisors of Peoples' Theatre Association will be present. A cultural ceremony to be performed by Dhruvoda Kala Kendra and Peoples' Little Theatre Shishu Sangeet Dal, will follow the opening formalities.

'Amira Shobai Moncho kari Noto nondone phutbo...', a song written and composed by Likat Ali Lucky will be rendered at the venue. The special attraction of the festival will be the performance of a drama titled Bipoder Bondhu to be presented by Tokai Natty Dal, a group formed by street kids from a slum of Mohammadpur area. Incidentally, this would be the last

drama of the 5th National Children and Youth Drama Festival, to be staged on March 22 at 5:15 p.m. at the Shawkat Osman Memorial auditorium.

Three special awards will be given in categories for the best performing group, the best director and the best dramatist.

Tickets will be available at taka 5/- for a child and taka 10/- for an adult. The festival ends on March 22 with a cultural event to be participated by child artists of national standard.

Peoples' Theatre Association is working for the welfare of the country's drama circle for over a decade. Three of last four arrangements of the festival were held in joint collaboration with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and I.T.I. Bangladesh center.

The association has so far held numerous drama workshops for the children in different venues outside Dhaka. The Association is trying their best to promote this medium of performance in every corner of the country.

Movies

Oscar favourite "A Beautiful Mind" centre of anti-Semitic

AFP, Los Angeles

SCAR favourite, "A Beautiful Mind" was Friday at the eye of a media storm over the makers' decision to leave out controversial themes of the hero's life story, including alleged anti-Semitism.

The film starring Australian Russell Crowe in the role of real-life schizophrenic maths genius turned Nobel laureate, John Forbes Nash, is favoured by many for the best picture Oscar.

But just 10 days before the ballots for cinema's most prestigious awards were due to close, producers' Universal Pictures have found themselves defending their

she told the daily. "But a 73-year-old man who has gone through hell and who agreed to entrust us with his life shouldn't have to go through these attacks."

She said it was "shameful" to take statements made when Nash when he was suffering from delusional schizophrenia out of context.

The latest media battle over the film follows and earlier industry brouhaha over the makers' decision not to portray Nash's homosexual encounters and adultery which Nasar laid out in her book.

But the studio has been at pains since before the film's release to stress that "A Beautiful Mind" was never intended to be an accurate bio-portrait, but was instead an



artistic film "inspired" by Nash's life.

But the timing of the latest attack on the picture comes at a bad time when studios are spending millions of dollars in advertising campaigns to bolster the image of their films in the hope of swaying Oscar voters.

"A Beautiful Mind" is nominated for eight Academy Awards including best film, best actor for Crowe, best director for Ron Howard and best supporting actress for Jennifer Connelly who plays Nash's wife Alicia.

The Oscars will be handed out at a ceremony in Hollywood on March 24.



Exhibition

Soul-searching artistry with esoteric appeal

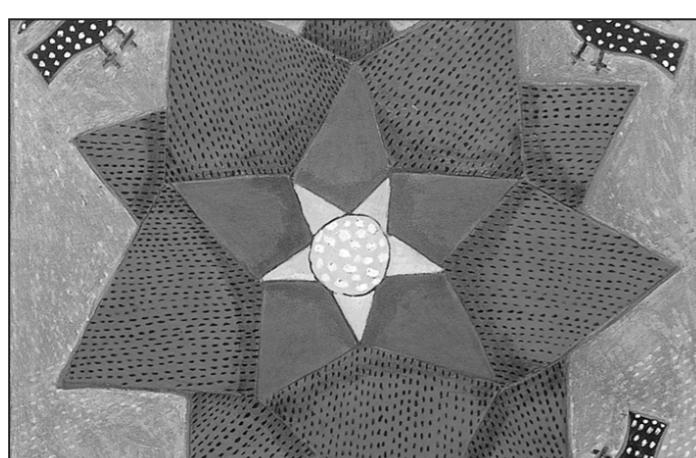
Abdus Shakoor Shah's solo exhibition at the Bengal Foundation

FAYZA HAQ

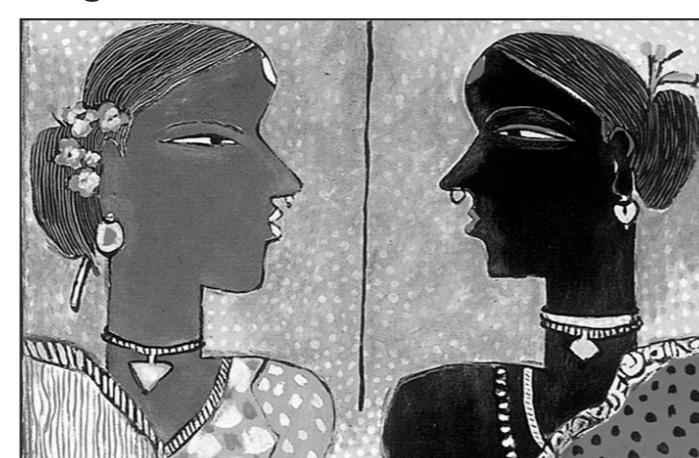
BDUS Shakoor, whose solo exhibition is on at the Bengal Foundation gallery, learn print-making, sculpture, ceramics and graphic design. He also studied painting where Rashid Chowdhury encouraged him to experiment. Having studied under KG Subramanian, he was inspired by the "Revitalist Group" which enriched his technical knowledge and the use of indigenous elements in contemporary art. In the 80s Shakoor did some tapestries and murals with stylized forms. In the 90s he began to experiment with folk ballads of Mymensingh, specially the "Mahua" and "Malua" love idylls being his central focus. He uses their script or calligraphy stylistically, which includes figures of birds and animals so that he combines the elements with subtlety. He stresses on basic colours like red, yellow and blue. The forms and figures have a flat 2-D effect. Yet his linear work do not keep out the plasticity of live figures.

Shakoor has been influenced by the styles of Jamini Roy, Qamrul Hassan, Gujrati Jain miniatures and "Pata" paintings of Bangladesh. The result of his combining the style of "Gazir Pata" give the impact of folk art to his work. Apart from parrots and peacocks, elephants, bulls, tigers, cats, serpents and crocodiles are used in his motifs.

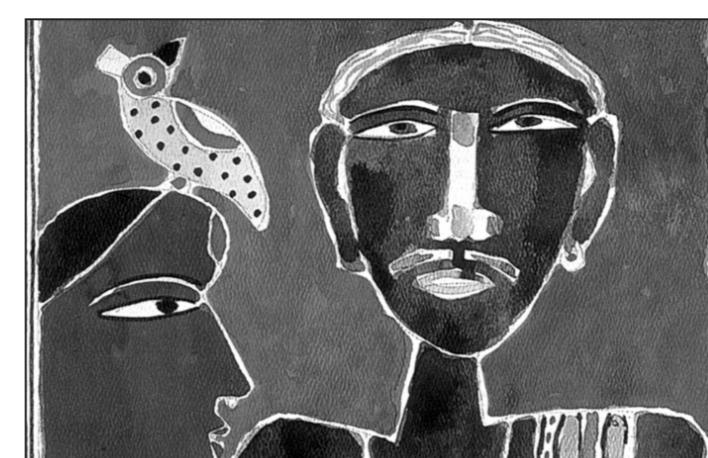
Shakoor's "She and Rupabaty", oil on canvas has two women facing each other on done in black and the other blue but both being beautiful creations. The women have flowers in their hair, earrings, nose rings and necklaces of dainty proportions. One has a blue blouse with dots to match a sari with delicate red stripes and pink dots while the other has a



Tradition: Oil on canvas--2000



She and Rupabaty: Oil on canvas--2000



Nadarchand and Mahua: water colour--2000

and birds cry while my son goes away after a chat. We've sold our cattle to assuage our hunger."

Shakoor's "Tradition", water colour, has a huge black cow with pale blue dots circling its body. Around it are alligators and birds in black with the bird being dotted with its red beak and head. Other animals and birds are sketched into the pale mauve background with outlines in burnt sienna. The accompanying strip of gold on top bears the words, "Mohua says, 'Don't stop me from going to the river side along as the wives of the five brothers are going their separate way."

In another oil on canvas labeled "Tradition" we see elephants presented in different shapes and colours along with a human being and some crocodiles. The images are in a panel with one image below the other, with different types of backgrounds, ranging from yellow with dots to pink with dashes and stripes. Here the main painting is held on a background of pink and white containing motifs of sunburst, birds, elephants, crescent shapes and other soft forms. Another such piece contains leopards in black, white and yellow ochre put among black palm trees with exaggerated leaves. The background is vermillion with more motifs and calligraphy at the top and bottom a blue line outlines the canvas as in most other paintings.

Abdus Shakoor Shah, born in Bogra in 1947, did his post diploma in fine arts from MS, India. He has had over ten solo exhibitions at Japan and Bangladesh. His group ventures include ones in Germany, USA, Italy, Pakistan, Canada, UK and Bangladesh.

Interview

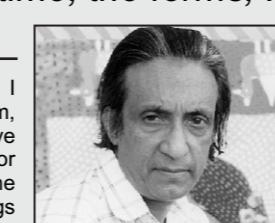
Shakoor's rural canvas gurgling folklore

'I have used oil for the very first time, the forms, I believe, are stronger'

SAIFUL ISLAM

ABDUS Shakoor works on folk themes. Though I was influenced by painters like K. G. Subramanian, Jamini Roy, Qamrul Hassan, Gujrati Jain, I have always wanted to be true to my heritage' says Shakoor modestly adding 'at least in some of my earlier works the influence of the west is palpable.' Perhaps, his paintings from the very beginning of his career bear the smell of the swamps and marshy lands of the rural Bengal. They always point towards the mixture of beige and asha combination identical to the dust of Bangladesh, always stamped on the background of bold colours. His eighth solo presented by Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts showcases Shakoor's odyssey into the myths and legends of this fertile land.

'I have deliberately placed one male of stout look amidst village women, sometimes they are three in number, sometimes they are seven, this, of course, purveys a numerical impact. I wanted to emphasize on the ratio, one-man dominant over a number of females'. The tragic story of Mahua,



Abdus Shakoor

an immortal folk tale on love, inspires many of Shakoor's paintings. And we can still relate that tragedy with the tragedies of Srimi, Fatema, and many others. Thus the brush of Shakoor paints the real life, and makes these tragedies immortal.

'You might have noticed the presence of snake and reptiles in my work. Snake is not our foe, though many believe this animal to be a symbol of evil, but it is harmless and beautiful to me. The animals like elephant, tiger, and birds are elements of our nature and in many ways they are very close to our tradition. They are used to supply the motif. So, like many other painters Shakoor goes to nature for elements. We do not find the sinuous muscles of Sultan's characters here, Shakoor's are ordinary looking, dark complexioned village folks. They deck their buns with flowers, their nose-rings are ordinary grass-flowers, and they are like the beautiful Kamala, endowed with atavistic urge. Their lives are as simple as the simple brook that bubbles by every Bangladeshi village. Shakoor's easel stretches itself over rural remote Bengal and his brush goes into the texture of the contours of our country.'