

RECOMMENDATIONS

Musical soiree

A musical evening will be held today at 6:45 p.m. at the Goethe Institut auditorium in the city. The evening will present Anil Kumar Saha, a classical singer, Rahim Zullah, a ghazal exponent from Australia and Muntareen Mahal, a performer of semi-classical song. The program is organised by Mahal Aminuzzaman.

Pottery show

First solo show of hand painted pottery by Sadia Hasin is being held at the Haseen Gallery, 13/A/2, Kamal Ataturk Avenue, Gulshan-2. Exhibition runs daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. till April 9.

Photography Exhibition

To commemorate September 11 tragedy and to pay tribute to the innocent victims, a photography show sponsored by The American Centre of the U.S Embassy, opens on April 7 at 6:30 p.m. at the city's Drik Gallery, House # 58, Road # 15/A, Dhanmondi. The show will be showcasing 27 pieces taken by renowned photographer Foel Meyerowitz from World Trade Centre site. Exhibition will stay open from 3 to 8 p.m. till April 20.

Art show

An art exhibition by artist Nisar Hossain is being held at the city's Gallery 21. The show ends today.

Solo art show

A solo art exhibition of Ronni Ahmmed is going on at the Alliance Francaise de dhaka art gallery in the city. The exhibition ends today.

Art show

An exhibition of recent paintings by Murtaza Baseer is now being held at the city's Gallery Shilparag, House # 15, Road # 16(new) at Dhanmondi. The show is open to all from 11:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. everyday till April 10.

Fashion

Capturing the mood of summer

Summer collection of saris put on display by Henry's Heritage at its Dhanmondi outlet in the city

TAWFIQUE ALI

**A**N exhibition of saris, delicately designed with seasonal colour and motifs in keeping with summer, opens at the Dhanmondi outlet of Henry's Heritage marking traditional celebrations and festivity of Pahela Baisakhthe Bangla New Year day.

This summer collection of saris mainly reflects the mood of New Year day and the seasonal colour, milieu and message of summer as well. Particular importance has been devoted to portray traditional and familiar Bangali *Alpona* (design) and motifs. Simple leafy, fish and bird motifs have found place against white background with red border. Brilliant colours and shades like red, green, orange, yellow and black enjoy a remarkable prominence in these works. Tangail cotton and *Kota* saris have been used as the base fabric to draw design upon and recreated with hand painted border, loose end and decorated body. Grameen Check compliments these saris as blouse piece



A Jamini Roy design on the fringe of a summer collection piece

fabric. The sari collection includes black sari with *Zardosi* border; yellow body with white border and

orange bordered green sari. Base colour of these saris is white to better suit the summer. A remark-

able feature of these saris is bright loose end designed with Jamini Roy's paintings and Bengal motifs.

In portraying Bengal motifs, outline of a design is prominent in brilliant colour with flat treatment. These motifs are made up of floral *Alpona*, fish, hand fan, birds and flowers with easily communicable appeal.

Henry's Heritage usually holds exhibition of its products to highlight particular season, occasion and festival of our cultural tradition. Such show tends to capture colour, mood and flavour of a season that it features. By representing mirth and festivity of seasonal and other occasions like Eid or *Pahela Baisakh* this sari exhibition aims at drawing fashion enthusiasts giving promotion to its sale.

"We arrange exhibition to serve two fold purposes one is to increase sale and the other is to promote our own cultural heritage through designs of traditional subjects," says Shahruk Shahid, owner and designer of the fashion house.



An anchal decorated with hand painted Bengal motifs



Simple leafy and floral motifs with decorated red border

Workshop

To groom new talents

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy conducts workshops on music, dance and theatre at district level

CULTURE DESK

**B**ANGLADESH Shilpakala Academy has started a fortnight long advanced training workshop from April 3 at its district office at Shatkira on vocal performance, tabla and other instrumental music.

The workshop is being conducted by a number of renowned artists and instructors capable in different fields of music.

Begum Rubina Ahmed conducting the vocal classes while instruction on classical dance and instrumental music are being provided respectively by Saj Ahmed and Mustafizur Rahman Chowdhury. Ilyas Khan and Laxman Acharya are assisting the instructors with instrumental performance.

A large number of young male and female artists have joined in the workshop.

A theatre workshop got underway from March 31 at Naogaon District Shilpakala Academy that ends on April 13. The chief guest of the ceremony, Syed Ali Nasim Khaliluzaman, Additional District Commissioner, formally inaugurated the workshop at 5 p.m. on the day.

The eventful ceremony was presided over by Abdul Matin, Member-Secretary of Naogaon Shilpakala Academy. Among others, Rafiqul Islam Reza, a reputed drama performer delivered some valuable comments on the cultural background of the region.

Abdus Salam, Assistant Director of acting and film wings of the Academy also delivered speech. That of Saidur Rahman Lipon, chief instructor of the workshop, followed his speech.

Forty students are participating in the workshop who belong to different theatre groups in and around Naogaon district.

Mostafa Zaman Abbasi, Director-General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy says, "Our academy, in its concerted efforts with other cultural organisations of the country, hopes to hold more such workshops in the days ahead to groom budding talents in various disciplines of culture across the country."

Theatre

Shotgun, Me and Myself

Cine actor & BJP MP Shatrughan Sinha takes to the stage, gets foppish. Charu Soni tries to make sense of the tomfoolery

**I**F it had not been for Tehelka, I would probably not have been here," said Shatrughan Sinha, cine actor and Bharatiya Janata Party MP, who made his stage debut with Pati, Patni Aur Mein at Delhi's five-star Taj Palace Hotel on Tuesday night. The applause, was not deafening but the august gathering including Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha former prime minister I K Gujral, Human Resource Development Minister, Murli Manohar Joshi, BJP MP Madan Lal Khurana, Congress MP Kamal Nath and PM Atal Behari Vajpayee's son-in-law Ranjan Bhattacharya, were obviously tickled enough to clap.

"Yeh hamari asli sanskriti hai", (this is our true culture) beamed Shotgun as he hugged a smiling Sinha after the play. The audience, that among others included (still stunning) Zeenat Aman in blue green chiffon outfit and BJP MP Vinod Khanna in brown-black polo neck graciously beamed back.

The two-hour play directed by Ramesh Talwar (who incidentally was Yash Chopra's assistant director in Kala Pathar), made some laugh and others cringe. Presented by a Delhi NGO, Prayas and sponsored by Videocon group of industries, it had none of the actor's sweat associated with such performers as Shabana Azmi or Naseeruddin Shah. What it had in plenty though was unadulterated Shotgun-*alia*.

Dubbed as a satire in Brechtian mould but hinging more on tomfoolery than acting, the play had Shotgun gunning - lamely and randomly - for one and all: "Laloo ji ne to Akhand Bihar (united Bihar) ko criminal akhand Bihar bana diya hai," he pounced. At another place, while referring to a downcast co-actress (Bhawna Balsawar) in the play, he pouted, "Arre Mamta ki tarah mook kyo phulai bethi ho" (why are you sulking like Mamta Bannerjee, the Trinamool Congress leader) "...tum Jayalalitha ki tarah waar karo" (attack as the AI-ADMK leader and Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu J Jayalalitha does). Which was later

followed by a call to Karunanidhi, in obvious reference to his midnight arrest last month, "Sab khatam ho gaya..."

Karunanidhi...over night." (All is over now K Karunanidhi [DMK leader]...overnight).

But this was not all. Shotgun's ad hoc banter (much like the hugely popular 1970s Pakistani show, Bakra Kishton Mein) also included a jeering reference to the Agra Summit as well. While Pakistan's President, General Pervez Musharraf was ridiculed for spending only \$400, that too at his ancestral home Nehar Haveli in Chandnichowk, the Indian PM's recent resignation drama, was pilloried with Shotgun's mock announcement, pout and all, that he too would resign (from the play), "Ab nahin sambhal jaata yeh sab..." ("I can't handle all this...[NDA criticism?]").

Call it Shotgun-*alia*, megalomania or a stand-up comedian act in the garb of a play, the two-hour performance was like a film awards nite skit - with Delhi's star-struck audience lapping up Shotgun's every gag with a gasp of incredulity, tinkle of diamonds and rattle of expensive silk. Centred round marital discord between Rakesh Bedi (as Prakash Champak) and Bhawna Balsawar (as Madhavi Rai) and their ready-to-help friend, Shatrughan Sinha (as Shatrughan Verma) the act spouted such tired gags as "You can either be 'happy' or 'married' but you can't be 'happily married' - ask Khurana sahib, he'll agree," or "Politics requires no qualifications...a person with 18 murders to his name can become a Minister of State, while a Cabinet Minister needs to notch at least six." Ergo,

All in all, a foppish show that should have read, "Shotgun, Me and Myself". Talwar's next play is with Pooja Bhatt. No points for guessing how that would shape up!

Source: Internet

Cinema

Pratfall after the song-and-dance

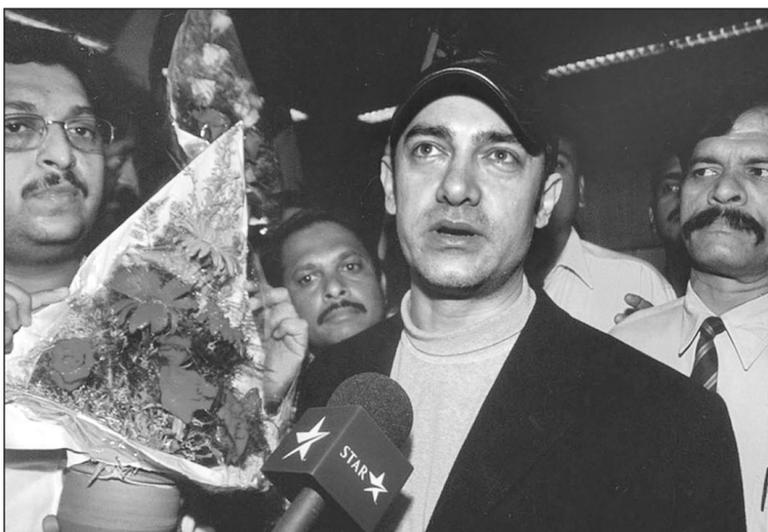
Indian film critics analyse the reasons for Lagaan's failure at the Oscars, and hit Shamyra Dasgupta with astute observations

**A**LL the conjecture and hoopla over the fate of *Lagaan*, India's entry for the foreign language section of the 74th Annual Academy Awards is now over. To be fair to the love's labour of Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan and director Ashutosh Gowariker, it did a lot better than most Indian films at the Oscars down the years, and reached the top five. Some people in the know even placed it in the top three. But eventually, *Lagaan* fell short by quite some distance. Some of the best-known film critics in India gave reasons for the debacle, ranging from the superior content of eventual winner *No Man's Land*, to lack of lobbying, though one of the respondents, Nikhat Kazmi refused to see how *Lagaan* could not win.

Kazmi told *tehelka.com*, "I think this was the right opportunity for Hollywood to change its outlook towards Indian cinema. This year, especially, saw a lot of doors being broken by Hollywood, and maybe they should have broken a third door, that of Indian cinema. The blind spot that Hollywood has towards Indian cinema could have been removed this time. To talk specifically about *Lagaan*, as far as I could see, it satisfied all the criteria that Hollywood looks for in movies. It qualified in terms of artistic brilliance, commercial success, compact and original storyline, everything. The Academy has also traditionally favoured the underdog, and not only was *Lagaan* the underdog, it showed the triumph of human spirit, something Hollywood always gives weight to. Even the winners this time around - *A Beautiful Mind*, *Monsters Inc*, *No Man's Land*, are all similar in essence."

Kazmi also said that the eventual loser is Hollywood, and not Indian cinema or *Lagaan*. She said, "*Lagaan* was also a politically correct movie, again something the Academy prefers. It has been a huge commercial success like I mentioned before. So I really don't see why it shouldn't have won. The sad part is that Hollywood still hasn't realised the importance of Indian cinema. The presence of Indian cinema today is so wide commercially that it is good for both Indian cinema and everyone else to recognise it."

Critic Aruna Vasudev, however,



Aamir Khan speaks on "Lagaan" to the press yesterday upon his return from Los Angeles

in spite of the obvious disappointment in her voice, refused to accept that *Lagaan* had done enough to succeed at the Oscars. She said, "The producers and distributors for *Lagaan* did a good job, but it's obvious that it wasn't enough. You have to promote your film in a really big way before the Oscars to come close. *Lagaan* made it to the top five, so it had done it's bit. But obviously not enough. There is a huge amount of lobbying involved, to succeed at the Oscars. I am very disappointed of course, because I really expected, and wanted *Lagaan* to win."

Film critic Zia-us-Salaam put down the reasons for *Lagaan*'s loss to two specific factors. First of all, he said, "*No Man's Land* was obviously far ahead of the other contenders in terms of merit. Also, *No Man's Land* scored over *Lagaan* in terms of topicality. It dealt with the topic of war and its ill effects. It is a global issue today, and Bosnia-Herzegovina is a war torn country. That makes the film a very relevant one. To top that, it was undoubtedly a well-made film. On the other hand, *Lagaan* deals with colonialism,

which is an irrelevant topic today."

Vasudev also, in fact, lauded the Bosnian film directed by Danis Tanovic. She said, "The Bosnian film *No Man's Land* was brilliant in that it had treated the subject of the birth of a new country in an extraordinary manner. Not only that, it had already won the Golden Globe award, and had been promoted heavily in the US for the past six months."

Coming back to Salaam, the second factor, according to him, that caused *Lagaan* to trip at the final hurdle was that "*Lagaan* is full of songs and dances. Now, as far as we Indians are concerned, it's fine. But the West is not used to a song break every 20 minutes or so. That breaks the momentum of the film for them."

Bollywood has made some forward movements over the past few years. Commercial fare has been the biggest draw in American theatres, and some Indian films have received critical acclaim as well. Salaam admits that Bollywood has to do a lot more hard selling to be able to establish itself more firmly in America. But for that, he says, "Of

course, if Bollywood has to sell itself abroad, it has to do so on its own terms. We can't manufacture a film for the Oscars every year without any songs and dances. Songs and dances are an integral part of Indian cinema, and if Bollywood has to be marketed abroad, it has to be with songs and dances. I believe that the songs and dances in *Lagaan* might have caused it to lose, but that is not reason enough for us to make non-Bollywood movies for the non-Bollywood audience."

Admittedly, *Lagaan*'s performance, in spite of the eventual failure, was quite creditable. It was only the third Indian film to be nominated for a best foreign language film at the Oscars, and though the statuette remains out of reach, the effort is laudable enough. Lots of people believe that *Lagaan* was hard done by, and lots believe that we have to do a lot more to come close to contention. But for the moment, it's another long wait - till the next edition of the Oscars - the 75th - to see if an Indian name makes the top of the list.

Source: Internet

Art

Million pound price tag

Maev Kennedy

**I**N 1955 a businessman bought an elaborately decorated Dutch cabinet - and was promptly felled by the collecting bug which had already infected his father and grandfather.

Dutch old master paintings and drawings, impressionist and 20th century European art, silver and porcelain, furniture, and a library of superb books, clocks and jewellery followed in a torrent which became the largest collection of Dutch art ever to come to auction.

Anton C R Dreesmann's collecting passion was described by a Christie's expert yesterday as "an insatiable curiosity".

It ran from masterpieces by Rembrandt, Van Gogh, Goya, Degas, Monet, Cezanne and Picasso, to curiosities like an early 19th century Swiss automaton of a white mouse, valued at up to £80,000. The whole collection, of over 1,300 works of art, will be auctioned in five separate sales, in two cities, together estimated to realise at least £15m.

Highlights of the collection will be exhibited in London, Paris, and New York before the sales at Christie's in London and Amsterdam later this month.

Dr Dreesmann's grandfather was Anton Dreesmann, born in Germany, who worked in his uncle's drapery shop in Holland and went on to found the department store chain Vroom and Dreesmann, a



Skaters on the ice by Hendrick Avercamp, one of the works to be sold

household name in Holland.

He was a collector on a comparatively modest scale, but his son, Willem, built up a spectacular collection, offered to the city of Amsterdam on his death in 1954 - and turned down by the city council.

That decision was bitterly regretted six years later when the collection was scattered at auction and the Rijksmuseum had to pay dearly to acquire some of the key objects.

Dr Dreesmann resisted the family craving until the age of 32, when he bought the cabinet. Between then and his death two years ago, he bought passionately, across an epic range: Japanese netsuke, Dutch silver, engraved glass, marine and river paintings, Chinese porcelain, modern art, Louis XV furniture, snuff boxes and miniatures, added to items from his father's collection, including an 18th

century Dutch clock, estimated at up to £120,000, which stood in the hallway of his childhood home in Amsterdam.

Christie's Amsterdam chairman said the sale commemorated "a passionate collector". Noel Annesley, chairman of the fine art specialist group, said such a wide ranging vision was rare in modern collections.

Source: Internet

Music



Jamil Ibrahim, Ulka Hossain and Sabina render popular Bangla songs at a soiree organised by cultural committee of Jatiya Press Club recently