

Music

Harping on old chords

Shannoya, a cultural organisation revives spirit of old Bangla songs

HARUN UR RASHID

soon passed to the first part of the programme entitled 'Songs of Bechu Dutta: Decades 1930 to 1950.'

Singer Bechu Dutta is a remarkable name in the history of Bangla songs, especially in Bangladesh, as he was one among those who performed for the newly established first radio centre in Dhaka in the '40s. In his entire career, Dutta sang a lot of memorable songs from different genres of music: he sang classical as well as 'rapid' melodious songs, patriotic songs, Nazrul's songs, and also play backed in movies. Bechu Dutta died in Kolkata in 1991, and to pay homage to this unforgettable maestro, Shannoya dedicated the first part of its programme to him. It opened with 'Prothom jedin banchi' (The first day the flute played) including ten songs altogether and some selective parts from several others.

The programme was marked by a few changes to Shannoya's earlier presentations. As always, this time too, the entire production was designed and composed by Hedayet Hossain Moshed, organiser of the group. He also conducted the rehearsals and directed music for the programme. But this time, songs written and composed by Shannoya members have also been presented and it is declared that from now this will be maintained in future programmes.

The programme started with Shannoya's group song 'Shudhu gaan noy' (Not just songs) and presented a number written and composed by Hedayet Hossain Moshed, the group-leader. Then it

from different kinds of occupations of different times. Two songs were of the flower-selling women and the woodchoppers of the nineteenth century. Apart from these, songs of washing powder canvassers in 1960s, snake charmers of greater Dhaka, coachmen of Dhaka's horse-carts were presented. A very popular track from Bangla film 'Aakash o Maati' (The Sky and the Earth), 'Aamar kaachhe aachhe re bhai harek boot-polish' (I have got with me many types of boot-polish), achieved applause. Shannoya also informed the audience that another song of the boot-polishers, which, however, they did not have in their collection, was the first of its kind to be used in Bangla cinema in 1959.

In the third part of the programme, songs requested by the audience were presented. A devotional religious song of famous Rajani Kanta was performed besides several others.

The question-answer interludes were similarly enjoyable due to cordial interaction between Shannoya and the audience. This also points to the fact that there is still immense popularity of old Bangla songs among music lovers and that these people also had quite a sound knowledge of the history of songs in Bangladesh. It is from this part of the programme that we came to know that there actually was a song that had a line 'Ei din din noi aaro din aachhe' (These are not the



Hedayet Hossain Moshed answering to questions from audience

only days but a lot more to come) recently made famous by folk-singer Abdul Kuddus Boyati.

Established in June 1993, Shannoya has won the hearts of music lovers much ago. The audience-pact hall at the Public Library Auditorium points to the fact. Shannoya believe that they are the 'transport workers of music' as put by Hedayet Hossain Moshed. Extensive research work and a principle to stick to the originality of old Bangla songs help the group 'find the linkage between the vintage and the past', added Moshed. Shannoya aimed through its work to achieve three of its goals: to inform, to educate, and to entertain. Although they use modern music instruments like synthesizer, acoustic guitar and octopad, and often fuse western music with Bangla songs, they are always aware of retaining the original local elements of the songs. As a result, their productions always come up with a newly discovered dimension of the old songs.

Sponsored by Fujian, the programme ended with declaration of its next performance very soon.

Tribute

Recalling memories of an extravaganza of music

Renowned artist Ustaad Nasir Haider's first death anniversary held with various activities on 27th of July by various cultural societies

TAHERA YESMIN

COUNTRY'S noted artist Ustaad Nasir Haider was one of the rare and talented gems in the territory of our music world who died last year on 27th after remaining critically sick for a long time. To recall the contribution of this great Bangladeshi artiste, Sangeet Federation, Bangladesh Geetikobi Federation in Dhaka and Nasir Haider Sreeti Sangsad in Khulna, the home-land of the artist, arranged various activities including "milad-mahfi", discussion, food for the poor etc. on the occasion of his first death anniversary.

A multifaceted artist, Haider, who was a famous vocalist, music director, music composer and music trainer, started his career with radio in 1957 as a vocalist artiste and later joined the television in 1964 as a singer and music director.

During the liberation war of Bangladesh a gramophone record containing two songs about the war written and directed by him was brought out in April, 1971 while he was working as an assistant director at Radio Pakistan, Karachi. As a result the then Pakistan government seized the record and put him into jail on April 30, 1971 where he underwent through inhuman torture.

Haider then escaped from jail and returned to Bangladesh through India. After that, he started to work with the Bangladesh Betar as an assistant director. But later he quit Betar and joined Sundarban Govt. College where he served as a professor of Bangla. At the same time, he started to work both in Betar and TV as a vocalist and music director. He also occupied himself with

composing new music and training of new musicians.

The trainer of some renowned singers of present music, Ustaad Nasir Haider had a great educational background in music. He did Masters from Dhaka University in 1960 and graduated on Classical Music from Morris College of Lucknow, India and obtained a diploma on choir music and dancing from University of Hawaii, USA.

During his life time this eminent artist created many unforgettable compositions. Some of them are "Gorai gari chole", "Amar anki roilo bandhur pane chaiya", "Tumi ki amar koltha bhabchho", "Roilam tor pirer ashaay" etc., which were extremely popular at time and are still valuable because of their incomparable melody and lyrics.

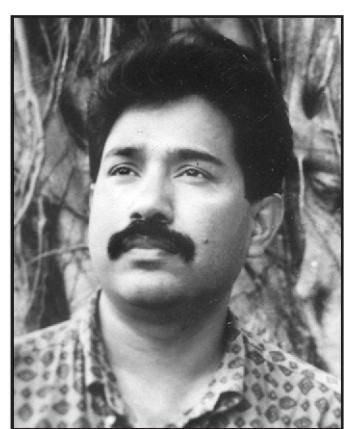
In spite of having various limitations, Nasir Haider always worked for the development and expansion of our music and art. For this, he recorded 40 songs by the pioneering poet and musician Kazi Nazrul Islam after translating them into Urdu during his stay in Pakistan. He also served as a trainer at Nazrul Academy, I, Karachi.

Ustaad Nasir Haider also worked as the music director in the films "Iradha" and "Kath Putli", released in Pakistan in 1968 and in the film "Apon Jon" in Bangladesh. Later, to avoid the duplication of the other culture's melody, this great artist stayed far away from the directing of the music in the films.

Haider, a devoted artist always tried to do something revolutionary to our music. In addition to this, he started the work of jingles for the radio and television. Ustaad Nasir Haider, the creator of many golden songs and the trainer of many emi-

nent singers, always remained neglected by the world and passed away because of the financial inability to continue the dialysis.

Anniversary



A film maker turns 41

Birth day of Dildar Hossain to be celebrated today

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

ANS celebrate an alternative film movement-activist and writer Dildar Hossain's 41th birth anniversary today. Dildar is the editor of Film Bangladesh and chairperson of Bangladesh Film Movement, Bangladesh Film Critics Society, Bangladesh Short Film Directors' Society and Bangladesh Film Reporters Society. Apart from that he has been directly associated with a number of theatre and cultural bodies. He has made alternative films like 'Ekjan Muktiyoda', 'Dhaka Tokai' (Jointly), 'Ekti Projonna' and 'Ekjan Noor Hossain'. Tele-films like 'Aamar Bangladesh', 'Aamar Ekush' and 'Chokh' are also made him. 'Audrishe Bairita' and 'Parajibi Pathchari' tow poetry collections go to his credit. He contributes to film and cultural festivals at home and abroad.

Children's painting

July 22-August 8

Entitled Wasserwelten (Water world), an exhibition of paintings done by children from the schools of 'Shipi Sultan Pathshala' and 'Surovi' of Dhaka, takes place at Goethe Institut in the city from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. everyday except on Fridays and general holidays.

Exhibition on French artist

July 5-August 2

An exhibition of the works of French artist George de La Tour, observing his 350th death anniversary, continues at the Andre Malraux room of Alliance Francaise in the city. The exhibits include books on the artist and a majority of his famous works.

French artist

July 20-August 4

An exhibition of

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