

CULTURAL FEAST

Musical Evening



Artist: Sohrab Hossain
Organiser: Nazrul Institute
Venue: Nazrul Institute
House # 330-B, Road # 28(Old)
Dhanmondi
Time: September 22 at 4:00pm

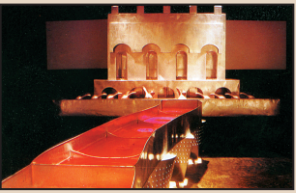
Theatre

Title: Ami Noi
Playwright: Manjure Maola
Group: Nagorik Nattyangan Ensemble
Venue: Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
Time: September 23 at 7:00pm

Exhibition



Artist: Rashid Choudhury
Venue: National art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Shahbag
Time: September 23- October 4, From 11:00 am to 7:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Fridays




Title: Clouds in Infinity
Artist: Hikmet Barutcuoglu (Turkey)
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F, Road 27 (Old), Dhanmondi
Time: September 23-29 from 12pm to 08pm
The display features Ebru (marbling) work of the Turkish

artist

Visual Art

Title: Water is Innocent!
Artist: Dhali Al Mamun
Venue: NK Bhattachashai Gallery, National Museum
Time: September 18-24 from 03pm to 08pm



03pm to 08pm

Documentary show

Title: Nijhum Deep
Organiser: Spectra

'My characters are down to earth'-Nargis

SHILPI MAHALANOBISH

NARGIS Akhtar is a versatile filmmaker. She has also made a few dramas, documentaries and promotional programmes. Plaudits came her way for her feature film *Meghla Akhash*. Apart from making films once a year, she busies herself with her



Nargis Akhter (sitting L) explains a sequence to (R-L) Shabnoor, Bobita, Diti and Mayuri

work of developing several advocacy and communication media materials for community-based fishery projects. Nargis is known for her female-oriented works. For instance, she has done a documentary on women involved in fishery resource management. This film is now being aired on

television. Nargis is currently interested in making TV dramas. She has made a few already, such as a recent drama for ntv, which will shortly be telecast. She has also made a telefilm for Eid. Her next film is *Char Shotiner Ghar*, which is now ready for the censor. She will start shooting for the film *Short Kate Borolok*, which is

social responsibility and am committed to my audience.' As for the element of glamour in her work, she says that while she values popular artistes, her characters are more down to earth.

Nargis was recently invited to Kolkata to attend a workshop with the slogan 'Make art, stop AIDS'. There were about 150 participants - films stars, filmmakers and other media personalities-- at the meet. Nargis took part in the workshop as a lecturer on the above subject.

Quite often technical personnel work smoothly with the director. There are rewards to such teamwork. As Nargis points out, 'When cameraperson, Mahfuzur Rahman Khan and I worked together, he added 10 percent to my film. Therefore, I would obviously want to work with him afterwards. While choosing artistes, makers have to be careful in promoting new talents as well.

As for cooperation from the artistes, Nargis says that 'Our artistes often have a habit of putting the directors into inconvenience at the last moment. This is no doubt very disturbing and puts a lot of strain on the director and the work is delayed in the process.

Nargis describes the exodus of people from the video media to filmmaking as a 'positive sign'. As she amplifies, 'The artistes have to come to terms with the environment in the media. They have to prove themselves through their work.'

Talking about her dual role as a filmmaker and woman, she says, 'I consider myself as a film-maker more than a woman.'

What is the downside or advantage of being a female filmmaker? To quote Nargis, 'There were times when I was not invited at the forums for artistes to exchange views. There are definitely barriers, but I believe I have earned respect through my work and positive attitude.'



ANISUZZAMAN'S NONPAREIL PRINTS

Reflecting urban existence

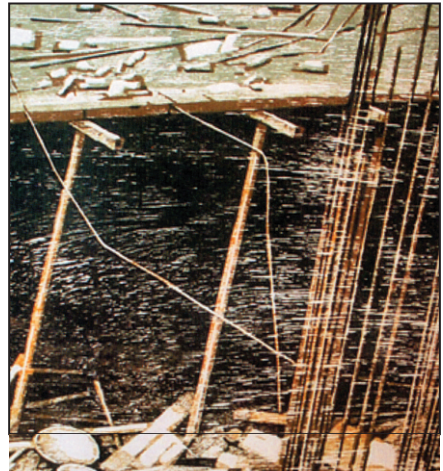
FAYZA HAQ

Anisuzzaman, an assistant professor at the Fine Arts Department of Dhka University, is currently holding an exhibition of his wood-cut prints at the Divine Art Gallery. At 32, he is a gold medal winner from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata (in the year 2000), India, and has won two Best Awards at Young Artists' Exhibitions, arranged by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. He has attended two workshops at Glasgow and London, and is scheduled to fly to Japan on October 4, to do his research on the print media in fine arts.

Asked how many awards he had won so far, Anis smiled modestly and said, 'I've won 17 awards so far. The latest one is the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant Award, this year, from Canada. My gold medal was for being 1st class 1st in my Masters in India.' Dwelling on why one should come and see his exhibition, Anis said, without hesitation, 'My work depicts modern urban existence in a subtle manner that does not hurt the eyes and yet transmits the necessary message.'

Everything presented on the various paper images are exact, definitely measured, and presented in a manner that one would like to stand and stare, despite being flummoxed by our everyday metropolis existence. Again the presentation is new in conception and presentation. Softness and subtlety in his work are his forte. The prints also drive home the point that urbanisation has not brought us peace despite the apparent development.

'The unplanned jerrybuilding has always been my theme in all my artistic works in the recent past. The mushrooming of pell-mell high



Complexity 34, woodcut

rise buildings, along with problems of electrical wiring, over population, necessity of innumerable gas supply lines, filthy roads and highways have crammed our life. We are heading for heaven knows what in the apparently unplanned penchant for high-rise constructions. The *Complexity* series are thus my new endeavour,' Anis elaborated. The more recent works, seen at the exhibit, entitled *Image of Dhaka*, depict the same overwhelming scenario of countless iron rods, wooden planks, steel bars and scaffoldings.

Image of Dhaka-1, woodcut-2004, shows some iron bars, and some bits of stones included

in the composition. The backdrop is in black and beige. The road in front is gray and dull but nevertheless the picture somehow lends tranquility due to the fine lines and use of muted tones. In *Complexity-27* the angle of the subject is seen from a slanted angle. 'As the theme is the same, I try to vary the presentation of the composition by presenting the composition from different angles. As this is visual art, I have to maintain aestheticism,' Anis elaborates.

The windows of the vast apparently sophisticated constructions are done in mauve and gray. This is picturesque, as Anis has brought in the sky at the back in "barred clouds", one gently intermingling with another, in simple but confident sweeps of muted mauves and gentle emerald. However, the message is definite: that we are aiming at haphazard high-rise buildings but ruining the environment in the process. The simplicity, combined with subtlety, is undoubtedly admirable.

Talking about his experience as a student in Kolkata, India, and his guides and mentors in creating his unique vision, maintaining his own style and theme, Anis says that in India, he had been encouraged by Tarag Roy and Dipangar Das Gupta, who were teachers of the Department of Printmaking in Kolkata. In Bangladesh, it is his professors, who are now his colleagues and seniors, like Professor Mahmudul Haque, now Director General of the Bangladesh National Museum, Abul Barak Alvi and Rokeya Sultana, at the Fine Arts Dept in the recent past.

Anis' new exhibition is an eye opener. And a stop at the Divine Art Gallery is a must for the discerning viewer.

An art camp at Mianbari

A venue replete with history



The idyllic environs of Mianbari

An art camp was recently held at Mianbari, Ghorashal, about 50 minutes northeast of Dhaka. The participants had to cross the Sitalakkhya river to reach their final destination: the ancestral home of the well-known Kabir family.

In a brochure on Mianbari, the author Harold Rasheed pens some eloquent lines: 'Once out of the hustle and bustle of Dhaka, the relaxed pastoral countryside gently leads you out of crass urbanity into a rural world of its own.

Mianbari is a family estate dating back at least one hundred and fifty years to the days of yore. It is replete with history.'

Participants at the recent camp were artists, musicians and a poet. Their home for the next two days was the central house recently renovated to its original glory, complete with large, round supporting columns, front and back verandahs, huge bedrooms, colonial balustrades and two kitchens, one modern with gas and the other, where firewood or coal is still used.

'The whole ambience has a colonial flavour, not in just the architecture but specially so in the pastoral idyll of nature, well maintained and totally undisturbed by the outside world. Once within the compound, time stands still,' elucidates Rasheed.



(L) An art work depicting the gate of the Mianbari seen in the background; (R) Artist Kanak Chanpa seen at work

Anannya Naf: Tale of a river

AFSAR AHMED

Anannya Naf is a tale of an international river that draws a border between Bangladesh and Myanmar. In this 25-minute long documentary, A Masud Chowdhury captures the path of the river Naf and the lifestyle of the people and other animals dependent on it.

Naf has its sources in the Arakan Mountains and flows through the hilly areas of Myanmar and then into Bangladesh near Balukhali and runs into the Bay of Bengal. The Burmese people call the river *Nemrai* meaning the 'God's River'.

The film displays the footages of the magnificent nature on both sides of the river. The striking beauty of the tertiary hills just beside the river makes it more exquisite. In 24 hours, tidal bores occur two times in this river. *Perabon*, as the locals describe the mangrove forest of Sheora, Bain and other trees, creates illusions of light on the crystal clear water while chirping birds make the milieu more enchanting.

The Portuguese and the Mog pirates bloodied this picturesque river in the past. However, the dispute was settled during the reign of East India Company.

Palonkhali, Waikong, Meela, Khainpara, Jadimura, Shabrang and Dakkhin Para are the human habitations on the west bank of the Naf. Their life circles round this river. Naf is a sanctuary for varieties of sea fishes, as a result the rural denizens turn fishermen to eke out a living. The film shows how they fish with *Ghera jaal*--a special kind of fishing net. Because of brackish water, making salt is another means of livelihood.

Fifty six km long and 3km (average) wide, the Naf's last point of the bank is Badar Mokam. In the west, the Bay of Bengal and in the east the Naf make this a favourite haunt for the fishermen. The footages of red-army look alike red crabs and the seagulls' fishing spree are well worth watching.

While the film takes us towards the estuary of the Naf, an island named Shahpori Dwip comes in front. There is a saying that Pori Bibi, the wife of the Subedar of Bengal, hid on this island. The estuary of the Naf, an astounding creation of nature, and the ever flowing Naf, create an unearthly feeling.

The documentary is well watching for those interested in the mysteries of nature--and the gushing Naf in particular. Recently the film was screened at the Spectra Convention Centre.



Footage of the magnificent Naf River