

Reviving Rashid Choudhury's art

Shilpakala Academy holds exhibition and brings out book on the artist

HARUN UR RASHID

FTER long 18 years since his death, an opulent display of colourful tapestries and paintings at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has once again upheld the uniqueness of artist Rashid Choudhury's talent and his unsurpassed contribution to the modern art movement in the country. Inaugurated on September 23, this twelve-day exhibition is one of the very few ones that have taken place after the artist's untimely demise.

The display contains a total of 133 art works including 48 tapestries. Besides, a book, titled *Rashid Choudhury* and written by Professor Abul Mansur, was brought out on this occasion. State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman inaugurated the exhibition and the book.

Rashid Choudhury was among the second generation artists, the first having been led by Shilpkarya Zainul Abedin, who helped establish the practice of art as well as the first art institutions of the country. While Zainul Abedin pioneered in practising art—considered an act of sin at that time, the following generations of artists gave it an impetus and made it popular among general people. Rashid also contributed a lot in spreading the practice of art outside Dhaka. He was the first teacher of Oriental Art department at the Art Institute founded by Zainul Abedin. Later he joined the newly established Department of Fine Arts at Chittagong University. He also initiated the



(Above) Shonar Tori (Golden Boat), tapestry; (left) Radha-Krishna 2, oil

Chittagong Charukala College and an art gallery named Kalabhaban.

Rashid Choudhury completed his graduation from the Government Institute of Arts (the present Institute of Fine Arts) in 1954. He spent two years (1956-57) in Spain on a postgraduate scholarship to study sculpture at Central Escuela Des Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid. However, Rashid was destined for something else yet: he spent four years (1960-64) in France and studied fresco and tapestry at the Academy of Julian and Beaux Arts. And this made him the pioneer in the art of tapestry in Bangladesh; and he has remained the greatest in the subcontinent.

Rashid Choudhury was a great teacher. 'Like the European instructors, Rashid never used to correct his students' faults; he would rather mark them and let the students correct them in their own ways,' reminisced artist Murtaza Bashir, a friend of Rashid. 'He was also a constructive critic,' Murtaza said.

The exhibition will run till October 4.

Inclination for the abstract art, which was a remarkable feature of Rashid's contemporary artists, can also be found in Rashid's artworks. 'But he was not a blind follower of abstract art: he just took the form of the style and used it to portray subjects from his own cultural background,' said Abul Mansur. Indeed, the tapestries of Rashid Choudhury depict subjects that are richly connected to the cultural heritage of the country. Tapestry works like *Ruposhi Bangla*, *Nabanno*, *Uthob*, *Shonar Tori* etc. project the epic grandeur of the rural Bangladeshi traditions. Western subjects like Adam and Eve also were his subjects for tapestry, but these characters too appeared in a background that is Bangladeshi in nature.

Besides tapestry and oil, Rashid has worked in rarely used mediums like gouache and tempera.

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Duratta: An example of sound movie



ERSHAD KAMOL

Based on popular writer Humayun Ahmed's story, the film marks an important change: generally, Humayun himself gives direction to his films, but this time the audience have got renowned Morshedul Islam behind the camera. In *Duratta*, through the story of three children—one from the elite society and the two other from slum areas—Morshedul Islam's screenplay depicts the loneliness of a child in a disciplined fashionable elite family. At the end of the movie, when the rich boy says good bye to his slum dwelling friends, Morshedul's symbolic use of a sweater is really superb.

However, the pace of the movie seems a little bit slower than expected. The train journey sequences could be a little less smaller. Morshed also could not manage well the last scene when the rich boy returns to his parents: performers lacked proper expression.

Subarna Mustafa and Humauna Faridy as the rich couple were very impressive. As a slum dweller child actor Amol also played well.

From the mid-1980s, the middle class viewers lost their interest to go to cinema halls to watch Bangladeshi films. One major reason behind this has been the lukewarm expressions of poor movies as well as vulgarity. In the last few years, Impress Telefilm has presented some enjoyable movies, which have drawn the middle class audience to the theatre halls. In line of that endeavour, Impress Telefilm premiered its latest production *Duratta* on September 23.

CULTURAL FEAS

Exhibition

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

Title: Mianbari Ghorasal
Organiser: Art Collector
Venue: Art Collector Gallery, BNS Centre Shop: A-7-8, Sector 7, Uttara; Tel: 8915586, 8915297
Time: September 17-October 16

Artist: S Rafi
Venue: Alliance Francaise, House 26, Mirpur Road, Dhamrai
Time: September 23-October 10, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, on Saturdays from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Title: Clouds in Infinity
Artist: Hikmet Barutcuoglu (Turkey)
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F, Road 27 (Old), Dhamundi
Time: September 23-29 from 12pm to 8pm
The display features Ebru (marbling) work of the Turkish artist

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the

News Bulletin

BTV

News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am; 12:10 pm; 2:00 pm; 3:00 pm; 4:00 pm; 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am; 1:00 pm; 5:00 pm; 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 3:00 pm; 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

CHANNEL-i

News (Bangla) at 7:15 am; 9:00 am; 7:15 pm; 9:00 pm; 10:30, 12:15 am.
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

ATN BANGLA

News (Bangla) at 7:00 am; 10:00 am; 2:00 pm; 7:00 pm; 10:00 pm; 11:00 pm.
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.
Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 am; 1:00 pm; 11:00 am; 1:00 pm; 1:00 pm; 3:00 pm; 4:00 pm; 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

ntv

News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am; 12:00 pm; 6:15 pm; 9:30 pm.
News (Bangla) 7:30 am; 2:00 pm; 5:00 pm; 7:30 pm; 10:30 pm.
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

TARA BANGLA

NewsHeadlines(Bangla) at 5:30 pm; 7:30 pm.
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm.

ATN BANGLA

07:30 Bangladesher Hridoy Hote
09:00 Satellite Programme
12:15 Shangbadpoter Pata Theke
01:05 Weekly Drama
02:05 Online
02:30 Ta Ta Thai Thai: Dance Programme
03:00 Live Cricket Match
06:00 Desh Janapad
10:25 Taknaf Thake Tatulia
12:05 Satellite programmes
09:45 Tritiyo Matra
10:45 Na Bola Kotha
11:30 Din Choley Jay
12:00 Chithi Pelam
12:30 Aj Dupurey O
12:30 Citycell
12:30 Tarakakothon (Live)
01:00 Ebong Cinemar
01:25 Public reaction
01:30 Bangla Film: Abhiman (Shabana, Razzak)
04:00 Banglar gaan
04:30 Dekhar Gaan
05:00 Shonar Gaan
05:45 Sa Re Ga Ma
05:45 Sharif Melamine
06:10 Music Plus
06:45 Drama Serial: Kalo Meye
07:50 Drama Serial: Dr. Mahataber Swapno
08:25 Drama Serial: Boyosh Jakhon
09:35 Hridoy Mati O
10:00 Drama Serial: Amader Chhobi

10:30 Annodrishtee
11:15 Deteyo Bakte
11:50 Mega Serial: Mohona
12:30 Musical Programme
01:05 Dekhe Noyon Melia
01:35 Chaloman Desh Business Show
02:30 School Bela
03:10 Drama Serial: Shirsho Bindu
03:45 Uro Cola Saat Rang
05:10 Shurer Madhuri
06:20 Tom and Jerry
08:00 Drama Serial: Kajjar Ghate Agni Utshab
08:30 Drama Serial: Kalo Phor o Aranno
09:00 Drama Serial: Lal Neel Beguni
09:30 Drama Serial: Baba Chanchalokar Marmla
12:20 Bangla Film: Zeed
08:00 Ajaker Shakal
08:30 Monihar
09:00 Shapta Khabor
09:30 Expedition To Animal Kingdom
10:05 Natoker Gaan
11:00 Dhakar Cinema
12:30 Ronger Manush
03:15 Pepsi Music Express
03:40 Drama: Shei Lokti
04:00 Drama: Shei Meyeti Ar Shei Machhitr Golpo
04:25 Drama: Shei Lokti Itihaser Ei Diney
05:15 Arijit Jiggesha
06:20 Shubho Shondhya
06:55 Shongkrishi ei Shoptaho
08:15 Drama Serial: Tin Purush

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06:55 Shongkrishi ei Shoptaho
08:15 Drama Serial: Tin Purush

HBO

08:50 Astrelia Bangladesh Cultural Friendship Show
11:25 Dindarpur
08:00 Aajker Shakal
08:30 Monihar
09:00 Shapta Khabor
09:30 Expedition To Animal Kingdom
10:05 Natoker Gaan
11:00 Dhakar Cinema
12:30 Ronger Manush
03:15 The Devil's Own
9:30 The Master of Disguise
11:15 The Truman Show
12:00 All The Queen's Men
1:45 Afis 100
Years...100 Movies
11:00 Sheena
11:30 Clifford
9:30 Van Wilder: Party
12:30 The Messenger: The Story Of Joan Of Arc
11:00 Good Girl The

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STAR MOVIES

11:30 Ripley's Believe It Or Not!
12:30 The Ticket
1:00 Mister Johnson
2:45 Hollywood One On One
3:15 About A Boy
4:55 The Jackal
7:00 Liberty Stands Still
8:35 Behind Enemy Lines
10:30 Night Of The Living Dead
12:00 All The Queen's Men
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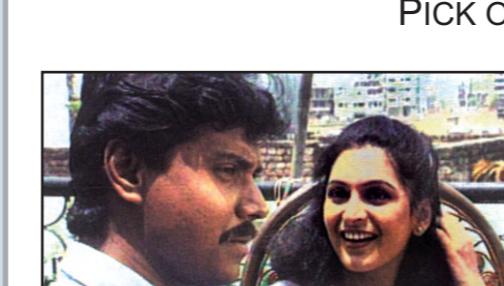
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PICK OF THE DAY



Doctor Mahtaber Shwapno
On Channel i at 7:50 pm
Drama Serial



BIRTH CENTENARY OF PABLO NERUDA

Remembering a poet of love and people

PABLO Neruda was once referred as the 'Picasso of poetry' and treated the greatest poet of the twentieth century in any language. On the occasion of this Chilean poet's birth centenary (observed on July 12), Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies organised a discussion programme and screened a film titled *Il Postino* (The Postman) on September 23 at the auditorium of Bishwa Shahitya Kendra.

Neruda wrote his poems in Spanish and love and politics were his most favourite subjects. He is among the most translated poets of the world. 'But translation is just like the other side of a carpet which is never the same, and to have the real flavour of Neruda one must go through his poems in Spanish,' opined Salimullah Khan, one of the speakers at the programme. 'He was a bourgeois modern poet in his early life and later transformed into a communist. He craved for communism but at the same time he longed for luxurious life too,' Salimullah said.

From the 1940s on, Neruda's poems reflected the political struggle of the leftists and the socio-historical developments in South

A scene from the movie *Il Postino*

America. He also wrote love poems. His love poem collections, such as, the youthful *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* (1924), are tender, melancholy, sensuous, and passionate. In 'material' poetry, loneliness and depression immerse the author in a subterranean world of dark, demonic forces. And finally there is Neruda's poetry of common, everyday objects, animals, and plants, as in *Odas Elementales*. These trends correspond to various aspects of Neruda's personality: his passionate love-life, the nightmares and depression he experienced, his commitment to a political cause, and his ever-present attention to details of daily life,' Salimullah Khan elaborated.

After the discussion, Muhammad Habibur Rahman recited his own translation of Neruda's poem *Obligations of a Poet*, which he entitled *Kobir Daay*.

The film *Il Postino* is a moving story of a postman seeking courage to express his love as well as a greater purpose of life through the help and influence of an unlikely figure, the world-renowned poet Neruda looking for political exile in the postman's small village. Directed by

Michael Radford, in this Italian movie with English subtitle, Massimo Troisi plays the shy postman who strikes up an unlikely friendship with the exiled Chilean poet played by Philippe Noiret. Through Neruda's example and tutelage, the hero learns to think of his Italian fishing village in lyrical terms, as well as how to talk to women and even find the strength to take his political stands.

By the end of the movie, through the postman's humility, honesty, kindness, courage, and spiritual rebirth and ascension, everyone, like the famous poet, witnesses the emergence of a greater heart and inspiration.

Despite the brilliance of the film, the programme marked some noticeable drawbacks. It started by an hour late with some of the discussions mentioned on the card still absent. Even the spelling mistakes of *Jonmo* and *Udajapon* on the backstage screen were eyesores to many. Organisers should not arrange programmes that lack proper respect to the great personalities.

By Afsar Ahmed