

CULTURAL FEAST

National Zainul Festival 2004



Occasion: 50th Birth Anniversary of Shilpakala Zainul Abedin
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh National Museum and Bengali Foundation
Time: December 10-30
Schedule:

December 12-January 07
Special Exhibition of Zainul Abedin

Time: 11am to 7pm on weekdays and 3:00pm to 8:00pm on Fridays
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F, Road 27, Dharmadhi, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Bangladesh National Museum.

December 17-30
Handicrafts Fair

Time: From 11am to 7pm on weekdays and 3:00pm to 8:00pm on Fridays

Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

December 22-24
Folk Song Festival

Time: Every day at 6:00pm

Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Premises

December 24
Seminar on the life and works of Zainul Abedin

Time: at 9:30am

Venue: National Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Lecture & Musical

Performance

Title: Science Forms of Flattery: Blacks, Whites & American Popular Music

Artists: The Billionaires, American Cultural Ambassadors

Organiser: The American Center, US Embassy

Venue: Osmani Memorial Hall Auditorium

Time: December 22 at 7pm

Theatre festival

Organiser: Theatre Art Unit

Venue: National Theatre Stage at Shilpakala Academy

Duration: December 20 to 26

Date	Time	Play	Group
22-12	6:30	Nakchhabita	Anya Theatre
23-12	do	Brand	CAT
24-12	4:00	Dui Tange	Chupkasha (India)
do	7:00	Mrs. Soriano	do
25-12	6:30	Prapanchi	Natyakendra
26-12	do	Shonkranti	Aranyak Natya Dal

Sponsored by Uro Cola, Bengal Wares and Food Mart

Tickets available at Sagar Publishers, Theatre Corner and Pathok Shamabesh

Where nature reigns supreme

Colours of 'Mandi' people

AFSAR AHMED

From the madding crowd of Dhaka, a township at Sauria, Manikganj recently sparked with the resplendent cultural feast of the Mandi, a vibrant ethnic community struggling to keep their culture alive. Mandi, meaning human being, is an indigenous community, popularly known as Garo. The Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD) and a local NGO of Manikganj, Gono-Kalyan Trust (GKT) organised a workshop to promote the exchange of culture and rituals between the Mandis and the local people.

The three-day (December 19-21) workshop created ripples among the local people who had scant knowledge about the splen-

did culture of the Mandis. The high point of the workshop was a cultural show by the Mandis of Pirgachha and the local cultural enthusiasts.

SEHD's programme opened the window of opportunity for many local students to learn about the Garos who migrated to the northern part of greater Mymensingh from the Indian states of Meghalaya and Assam about 500 years ago. They are called Garos as they live in the Garo Hills. A few ethnologists, however, opine that the Garos are the offshoot of the Mongolian aborigines as there is a physical resemblance between the two.

The Garos, once the follower of the ancient religion Sangsarek, are mostly Christians now. Nature has an immense significance in the matriarchal society of the Garos which

was evident in every step of their dance and other performances.

Attired in traditional dress, *Dokmanda* in bright red, yellow and black combination and silver jewellery on forehead, ear, waist and toe, eight beautiful teenaged girls performed their traditional Jhum Dance- *Aa Ba Cha Aa*. The beats of *Dama* (drum) and *Aduri* (the horn made of ox-horn) were the traditional accompaniments with the dance. The dance sequence was a vivid depiction of the ancient cultivation practices of the Mandis. Clearing the jungle, sowing seeds and protecting the crops from the sparrows and preparing rice, and then getting ready for the festival *Wangala*-the dance had the minute details of the agriculture-oriented lifestyle of the



Mandis.

A dance item, titled *Dukrushua*, illustrated the intimate bond of the Mandis with the nature. Through the chirping of the doves, the sequence portrayed the friendly interaction of the birds with the sons of 'forest of Arden'. *Nomul Roa* was the tale of teenage girls and their joyous moments.

The highlight of the show was, however, the *Chambul Meshia*, the monkey dance. Two boys wore artificial tails on their back and literally whirled them by twisting their hips, mesmerising the crowd. This item amused the audience and sent them into fits of laughter. The local young kids were seen trying their best to perform the monkey-act!

After a romantic song, a lullaby dance titled *Bisha Dim Dim* depicted a Mandi mother trying hard to put her little baby to sleep. The local performances of songs and dances were performed during the intervals.

Philip Gain, director of SEHD, said, 'We have a colourful ethnic culture which needs preservation and popularising among the Bangladeshis. This venture is a minuscule effort out of eight such programmes to promote our culture.'

Narney Narney Methila meaning 'thank you' in Mandi language were the last words uttered by little performers to the audience at the end of the colourful interaction between the ethnic people and Bangladeshis.



A fascinating Jhum dance

SLIDE SHOW

Cities in motion displayed at Goethe

FAYZA HAQ

A photographic slide show was conducted for two days at the Goethe Institut. This was arranged by Claudia Riemke, a visiting architect, and was called *Cities in motion*. Riemke explained that it was a simultaneous presentation of city development in Berlin and Dhaka. She said that it was about living conditions in the two cities, especially in neighbourhood areas. They presented details, environment situations where we have our daily routine. Often these are only subconsciously perceived. This has been done in cooperation with the Department of Architecture of the University of Asia Pacific (UAP). We focus on architecture and town planning as well,' said Riemke.

Riemke is very familiar with the Dharmadhi area, which has been

focused on. This is her fifth visit to Dhaka. She came in 2000 as a freelance architect working with Saiful Huq. Then she prepared an exhibition on architecture with Goethe Institut and again for the Design and Technology Centre (DTC) in Banani. Riemke said that the people here are not familiar with the daily routine of Berlin and Dhaka and vice versa as Berlin and Dhaka are far apart. She wanted to show the similarities and the differences, in matters such as dealing with household garbage and how people spend their leisure hours. 'What we know in Berlin about Bangladesh is very little. We have concepts of the flood, famine and poverty and not necessarily anything more than that. In Bangladesh when you talk of Berlin, people think of the Reichstag, the German parliament building.'

Asked if she had to spend a lot of

time, money and energy doing the project, Riemke said that it took two years, and she needed support of the Goethe Institut. She did the documentary work in Berlin on her own and is here with eight students of UAP Dept. of Architecture. The students in Dhaka took the Bangladesh pictures and they were the result of a workshop. They had been guided and prepared by Riemke. Armaan Chowdhury and Nurul Rahman Khan helped her, in turn, in her choice of students.

'People in major cities relate to an inestimable number and variety of impressions of the urban environment. As we move through our neighbourhoods, organising our daily routines and living our everyday lives, we are using/using up/misusing the city/along the way a lot of different impressions result from our environment, both positive and negative, which have

an effect on us,' said Riemke.

'One of the purposes of the project is to encourage confrontations with the city environment, which we simply accept without actively perceiving. This process of moving through cities will produce a range of sensations, from harmony to destruction, emptiness to congestion, amusement to sadness, creativity and neglect.'

'By simultaneously documenting the daily routines of people in major cities on different continents, this project will also examine the relations between people and cities in a wider, global context. In some ways the impressions one gets from the public spaces of Berlin are unique, yet this project will show that they are also comparable to those of Dhaka,' Riemke added.

This exhibition will be on the Internet until April 2005.

Theatre Art Unit

Jugopurti Natya Utshob '04



Inauguration ceremony of the festival

ERSHAD KAMOL

Theatre Art Unit's weeklong drama festival was inaugurated at the National Theatre Stage on December 20. The festival got off to a good start with brilliant drum beats and dance performance by Sharmila Bandyopadhyaya and her troupe along with Sachin Dev's song *Aami Tagdum Tagdum Bajai*. Former Chief Justice Habibur Rahman was the chief guest while Sayeed Ahmed was the special guest of the ceremony.

In her welcome speech, Rokeya Rafiq Baby, the chief of Theatre Art Unit as well as the convenor of the festival, said 'Our objective is to stage

quality plays. The festival is a joyous occasion to be shared with the audience.'

Subsequently, Mohammad Bari announced the names of the pioneer theatre personalities such as Momotaz Uddin Ahmed, Ramendu Majumdar, Abdullah Al Mamun, Mamunur Rashid, Ataur Rahman, Aly Zaker, Nasiruddin Yousuff, Bachchu, Selim Al Deen, M Hamid, Ferdousi Majumdar, Sara Zaker, Shimul Yousuff, Hem Chandra Bhatyacharya, Khondokar Golam Kader, Mahiuddin Lulu and Mazed Rana. The troupe honoured them for their contribution to the neo-theatre-movement in post-

Liberation Bangladesh.

Later, the theatre personalities shared their experiences in theatre with the audience.

Sayed Ahmed read a written speech on the play *Golapjan*. Justice Habibur Rahman said, 'It is remarkable that besides the theatre personalities of Dhaka, the troupe has also honoured theatre personalities at the district level.' He added, 'In Bangladesh, the continuation of collective work like theatre for so many years is an appreciable effort.'

Theatre Art Unit's weeklong drama festival, titled *Jagi Ananda Bhairabi*, is dedicated to the memory of theatre personality late SM Solaiman.



Theatre personalities seen with Former Chief Justice Habibur Rahman (4-L) and Sayeed Ahmed (5-L) at the opening ceremony

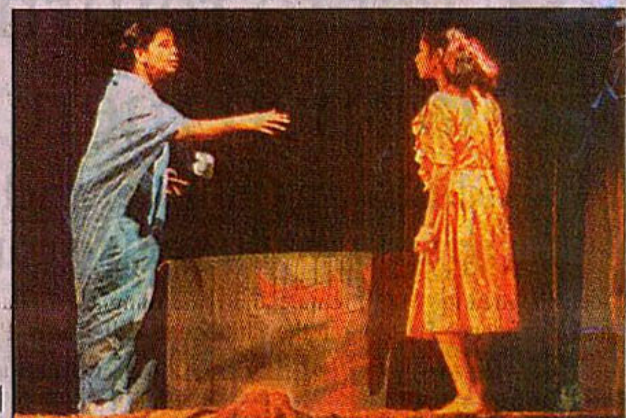
Nakchhabita: A tale of conflict

Monoj Mitra's social play *Nakchhabita* deals with the impact of conflict between politics and family relationships. After many years Janaki returns to her ancestral home at Mohonpur. This house has a historical background in connection with the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. Now, Janaki wants to manipulate the goodwill of the house for the coming election. Then a new conflict arises among the kith and kin.

Anya Theatre from Kolkata stages *Nakchhabita* today at the National Theatre Stage at Shilpakala Academy.

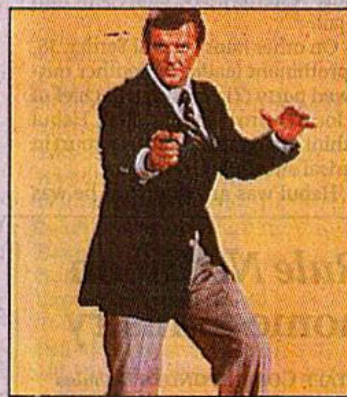
Nakchhabita is directed by Bivas Chakrabarty. Sanchayan Ghosh is the set designer while Tapas Sen is the light designer of the play.

Susmita Hati, Krisna Datta, Sujit Mukhopadhyay and others perform in the play.



A scene from the play

Now, James Bond turns Santa



Ex-James Bond Roger Moore will have to shed his image of the suave British spy and adorn the garb of Santa Claus in a cartoon to promote the children's charity, Unicef, according to *The Sun*.

Moore, who has performed the role of 007 in seven films stretching over a period of 12 years, agreed to collaborate with animation duo Olly Smith and Dan Chambers to make the hilarious flick, *The Fly Who Loved Me*, after seeing other cartoons they had made about him.

'He was such a good sport and really good humoured. He is the

most lovely man to work with,' Smith was quoted as saying. The pair was so inspired after hearing about his work for the UN children's charity that they decided to make the flick 'to spread a bit of festive joy'.

In the flick Roger will appear as Father Christmas who has a crisis when Rudolf is too injured to pull the sleigh on Christmas Eve.

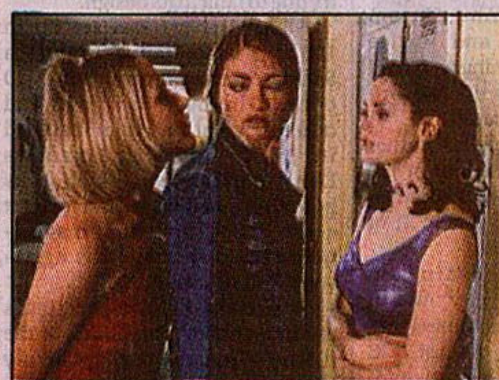
Between 1962 and 1998, there have been 20 Bond movies. Moore's first movie as Agent 007 was *Live and Let Die* in 1973 and his last was *A View to Kill* in 1985.

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



Nari Gharey Bairey
On ntv at 6:55pm
Programme on women issues
Hosted by Mehazad Galib
Produced by Alamgir Hossain



Jawbreaker
On HBO at 7:45pm
Genre: Comedy / Crime
Cast: Rose McGowan, Rebecca Gayheart, Julie Benz
Directed by Darren Stein

13:00	Karaoke	5:00	Maan	2:30	Oprah Winfrey	6:00	Mutants-Part 3
16:00	Khuda Gawah	5:30	Hil Filmehi Hit	3:30	Bold And Beautiful	6:30	Seven Wonders of the
20:00	Prem Deewan	6:00	Sangeet-20 M	4:30	Hollywood Squares	7:00	Industrial World, Zero
23:45	Badal	6:30	Shaadi Number One	5:00	Whose Line Is It	8:00	Hour
		6:30	Fox Kids		Anyways		Drama On Discovery
		6:30	Hello Dollie		Miami Vice		Can Prayer Heal?
		6:30	Kasauti Zindagi Kay		The Simpsons		Great Crimes and Trials- I&II
		6:30	Sanjivani - A Medical		Home Improvement		Global Treks Treks
		6:30	Boon		Friends		Mystery Hunters
		6:30	Kahaani Ghar Ghar		Just Shoot Me		Lockness/Whooper
		6:30	Kil		Third Watch II		Junkyard Wars Deep
		6:30	Kasauti Zindagi Kay		Baywatch		Sea Dive
		6:30	Kabhi Bhui Thi				Wild Discovery
		6:30	Kahin To Hoga				Cheerful: Cat In Crisis
		6:30	K-Street Pali Hill				Unsolved History
		6:30	Kesar				Supernatural Close
		6:30	Saanthi				Encounter
		6:30	Kyunki Saas Bhi				Wild Encounters Grizzly
		6:30	Kabhi Bhui Thi				Connection
		6:30	Kahin To Hoga				
		6:30	K-Street Pali Hill				

2:30	Ornah Wintley																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																		</
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