

Prospects ...

Musical Heritage

Signs of revival

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

To what extent is the younger generation attracted to our traditional songs? The spate of new albums of remixes would seem to suggest that there is a slow but sure rejuvenation of interest in folk music amongst the young listeners. And what about our Nazrul and Rabindra Sangeet? Are remixes around the corner? How does one revive their popularity?

Details of album sales could give us an idea of their relative popularity, but in its absence, we could depend on another reliable source - talking to the leading exponents of Rabindra Sangeet. Besides being familiar voices to millions, they also run some of the most successful training centres for their art and are well placed to feel the pulse of the enthusiasts.

Sanjida Khatun

Early '60s: A few friends had gathered at the house of Mukhlesur Rahman alias Shidhu Mia (eminent politician) and Shamsun Nahar Rose (parents of Bibi Russel), at Rankin Street in Old Dhaka. The couple lived in a house that had an L-shaped veranda, ideal for holding musical sessions.

On a moonlit-night, in the season of *Bashanto*, music lovers sat around a simple stage on the L-shaped veranda. As the flickering lights emanated from the small earthen lamps, it was none other than Ferza Begum and Fahmida Khatun who entranced everyone, to a medley of Nazrul and Tagore songs.

The night held a special significance. It was the first musical soiree held by Chhayanaut before it had begun its official journey in 1963.

The untimely death of prominent Tagore singer and trainer Zahedur Rahim in 1978, prompted the organisers of Chhayanaut, to evolve an ambitious plan. A regional competition was organised every year as a tribute, titled *Zahedur Rahim Smriti Parishad*.

With 45 branches all across the country, later known as the Shammilan Parishad, talented young singers flock every year from all corners of the country. The talent hunt steered by other organisations such as Shishu Academy and *Notun Kuri* hosted by BTV and the ongoing talent hunt *Bengal Bikesh* have all contributed tremendously to bring the latent talent pool to the limelight. This has worked as a platform and has motivated them to present the songs with perfection. With such a broad network of talent at work, I am optimistic about the future of our traditional music, particularly Tagore songs.

Papya Sarwar

Currently there are several music groups headed by prominent Tagore artistes such as Baitalik led by Tapan Mahmood, Shurer Dhara by Rezwana Chowdhury Bonyia,

Sur O Tirtha by Mita Huq, Sadi Mohammad's Rabi Raag and Geet Shudha, which I conduct myself. Many of us have trained at Shantiniketan. I have directly trained under legendary artistes such as Konika Bandyopadhyay, Nilima Sen, Subinoy Rai, Oshesh Bandyopadhyay, Shanti Dev Ghosh and others.

Rendering songs is more than merely following the notations; it means the addition of minute details such as emotion that makes each presentation special. While performing, I try to deliver the finer aspects of the songs that I have learnt during my days at Shantiniketan. I teach those minute details to a small group who mostly join after their

wheels of culture rolling.

Rezwana Chowdhury Bonyia

With the introduction of several TV channels, artistes have a wider scope than before. Tagore singers are now more performance oriented and professional. Even the scope to learn has expanded. Students now have easy access and come all the way from Chittagong, Bogura, Khulna and other places to learn the original notations from their teachers.

However, at times I feel, that the young generation is drifting away from the traditional genre. To avoid this trend we should eliminate rigidity while presenting traditional songs so that the younger audience is attracted towards the genres. Improvising musical accompaniment could be appealing to them and open newer heights.

When performing overseas, while I am always overwhelmed by the warm response, I can't fail to notice that the younger generation forms a smaller proportion of the audience. This is a bit disconcerting when you think about the continued popularity of the songs.

Tapan Mahmood

Artiste couple, Atiql Huque Chowdhury and Hamida Huque were the heart and soul of the Bulbul Lalitkala Academy in its formative stage.

The great dancer Bulbul Chowdhury established the Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts (BAFA) in 1955. This was a milestone as it was for the first time; different departments in Tagore and Nazrul songs, dance and classical music were set up in our country.

Currently, with over 5,000 students, BAFA is divided in four branches in the city. This is proof enough of the younger generation's enthusiasm for Tagore songs.

Apart from the traditional institutes, Tagore artistes run different music schools. Here the learners are students of colleges or universities. Even at the regular programmes held by different organisations, the listeners are mostly university students, who often outnumber the older generation. However, one must admit that there is shortfall of quality singers among the new generation.

During pre-Liberation days, Kalim Sharafi, Sanjida Khatun, Fahmida Khatun, Zahedur Rahim, Rakhi Chakravarti and others were among the handful of eminent artistes. Ifat Ara, Iqbal Ahmed, myself and others formed the next batch of young performers. Soon came Papya Sarwar and Kaderi Kibria followed by Bonyia, Sadi Mohammad and a few others from Shantiniketan who enlivened the scene.

It is time for a fresh flow of talents to preserve Tagore's timeless compositions.



Sanjida Khatun

initial training in different institutions.

The expiry of the copyright restrictions on Tagore's creations has left the songs open to interpretation and different styles of rendering. A handful of artistes have experimented with newer varieties. However, the majority of listeners, young and old, have responded poorly to any such undesirable change. It is obvious that preserving and propagating the purity of Tagore's original writings and notations would remain unimpeded. It has always been the young generation, which has enlivened the music scene. Now, it is for us to give something in return to keep the

TV channels

What's in store?



A scene from *Sheola*, directed by Ferdaus Hasan



Afsana Mimi

ERSHAD KAMOL

Package TV plays have evolved into an industry in Bangladesh. Many directors, playwrights, actors and technical hands have taken it as their sole profession. Last year, a good number of mega serials, drama serials, tele-films and single-episode plays were aired on several TV channels, including BTV, Channel-1, ATN Bangla, ntv and the newcomer, Rtv. This year three more TV channels such as Channel-1, Banglavision and Baishakhi will begin regular transmission.

To gauge several artistes' expectations from these TV channels in the new year, *The Daily Star* engaged them in a conversation. Here's what they had to say:

**Ferdaus Hasan:** Playwright-director Ferdaus Hasan is a popular name in TV plays. Hasan's mega serials such as *Sheola*, *Shompurna Rangin*, and *Hartoner Bibi*, aired in different channels in 2005, have won plaudits from the viewers.

On the eve of new year Hasan says, "I'm making several tele-films and mega serials for different TV channels in 2006. Rtv has aired the tele-film *Aporichia*, directed by me, as part of the official launching programme on December 26. I have made tele-films for the coming Eid-especial arrangements of BTV, Channel-1 and ntv. I intend to give a spectacular finish to the ongoing serials - *Shompurna Rangin* and *Hartoner Bibi*. I believe it is the key requisite of a maker to maintain both quality and quantity."

"I hope that the newly established TV channels will create more opportunities for the talented artistes to prove their potential," adds Hasan.

**Afsana Mimi:** She is a popular actor-director of TV

plays. Her on going mega serial *Kachher Manush*, aired on ntv, has received wide accolades. Moreover she is making programmes, including TV plays, talk shows and fashion shows for different TV channels.

On the new year's eve Mimi hopes that the satellite channels will play a vital role in shaping the package TV play industry. In her words, "I hope that the TV channels opt for professional directors rather than occasional ones, during selection of programmes. If they proceed with their current policies, it will be harmful for the growing package TV play industry, which is the bread and butter to many people. I also visualise the satellite channels jointly establishing an institute to train actors, directors and technical hands to improve the standard of TV programmes."

**Shahiduzzaman Selim:** Besides being a noted actor, Shahiduzzaman Selim is also one of the most popular TV play directors of recent times. His production *Rangghui* was one of the most talked about mega serials in 2005. On his plans for next year, Selim says that he is making three mega serials for three newly formed TV channels: *Agunuk* for Rtv, *Gauro Chandrika* for upcoming TV channel Banglavision and *Nakol Poshak* for the forthcoming Channel-1. Moreover he is planning to make tele-films and single-episode plays throughout the year.

He says, "I hope that the new TV channels will provide quality technical facilities which will encourage directors to make cutting edge productions."



Shahiduzzaman Selim



Papya Sarwar



Rezwana Chowdhury Bonyia



Tapan Mahmood

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



**BBC Bangladesh Shanglap**  
On Channel-1 at 8:00pm  
Dialogue regarding different issues of Bangladesh



**Romijer Aaina**  
On ntv at 8:20pm  
Drama Serial  
Cast: Shoeb, Tinni

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

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) 11:30 pm.

**CHANNEL-i**  
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15 am.  
Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

**ATN BANGLA**  
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11pm.  
News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm  
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

**TARA BANGLA**  
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30pm, 7:30pm.  
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.  
Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 9:30 pm.

**BBC WORLD**  
Every hour on the hour

CHANNEL i

09:45 *Trilipi Matra*  
10:30 *Tele Prescription*  
11:30 *Hridoye Mati O Manush*

12:30 *Aj Dupurey O Citycell Tarokakothon*

01:00 *Ebong Cinemar Gaan*  
01:25 *Public Reaction*  
01:30 *Shangbadporey Bangladesh*

04:00 *Bashundhara Amader Gaan*

04:45 *Sa Re Ga Ma Janala*  
05:30 *Music Plus*  
06:00 *Chhaya Jhankar*  
06:30 *BBC Bangladesh Shonglap*  
08:00 *DRockstar*

09:35 *Drama Serial: Bela Obalar Golpo*  
10:00 *Drama Serial: Bela Obalar Golpo*

**ATN BANGLA**  
10:30 *Anyadrishi*  
11:05 *Drama Serial: Ek Janamey*

11:35 *Gandharaj Samsung Cine Aha*

12:15 *Adbashi Janapad*  
12:50 *Smritir Monikothay*  
01:30 *Shornali Shadakalo*

02:30 *Drama Serial: Ghunpoka*  
03:10 *Mega Serial: O Amar Chokkhu Nai*

04:20 *Music Box*  
04:45 *Ispahani Pure Snax Quiz Time*

05:10 *Rock Link*  
05:45 *Islami Sawal O Jobab*

06:25 *Three Stujece*  
08:00 *Drama Serial: Jol Porey Pata Norey*

08:30 *Drama Serial: The New Shabuj Opera*

09:00 *Drama Serial: Nirey*

09:30 *Taar Neel Dheu*  
*Drama Serial: Ek Akasher Shopno*

10:40 *Business This Week*

**ntv**  
08:35 *Aajker Shakal*  
09:30 *Borsho Ghurey Bishwa Jurey*

10:05 *Around The China*  
10:30 *Natoker Gaan*  
12:05 *World Of Arts*  
12:30 *Hoi Hullor*

01:05 *Muktangan*  
02:35 *Drama Serial: Kachher Manush*

03:15 *Bhalobasho Mor Gaan*  
04:25 *Putulnaach*  
05:10 *Dindapan*  
05:20 *Apnar Jigyasha*

06:20 *Shubho Shondhya*  
06:50 *Agraz*  
08:20 *Drama Serial: Romizer Aaina*

09:20 *Musical Programme*  
10:00 *Siddiqua Kabir's Recipe*

11:25 *Dindapan*

STAR MOVIES

10:50 *Sin Eater, The*  
12:30 *Picture Perfect*  
02:15 *Robocop 3*  
04:00 *Trauma*  
05:45 *Finding Forrester*  
08:00 *Mxp: Most Xtreme*

09:30 *Primate*  
09:30 *Underworld*  
11:30 *I, Robot*  
01:30 *Born On The Fourth Of July*

03:50 *The Whole Ten Yards*  
05:30 *Haunted Mansion, The*  
07:00 *The Village*  
08:50 *League Of Extraordinary*

11:25 *Gentlemen, The*

STAR GOLD

01:20 *Kuch Hit Kuch Super Hit*  
01:25 *Ek Tha Raja*  
04:10 *Shikhar Ki Jung*  
04:40 *Kuch Hit Kuch Super Hit*

04:45 *Joshilaya*  
08:25 *Shikhar Ki Jung*  
08:55 *Ghar Ho To Aisa*  
12:30 *Outer World of Shah Rukh Khan*

02:00 *Hera Pheri*  
05:15 *Hulchul*  
08:30 *Lakshya*

STAR PLUS

11:00 *Meri Mrs Chanchala*

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11:00 *Meri Mrs Chanchala*

STAR WORLD

09:30 *Hogan's Heroes*  
10:00 *Get Smart*  
12:30 *2005 The 33rd American Music Award*

03:30 *Dr Ramesh Richard*  
04:00 *Friends*  
04:30 *Swarovski Fashion*  
07:00 *Rocks For The Prince's Trust*

08:00 *Yatra*  
08:30 *Honda12starscreen bestofscreen1*  
09:30 *Saibaba*  
10:30 *Baa Bahoo Aur Baby*  
11:00 *Shanno Ki Shaadi*  
11:30 *Shararat - Thoda Jadu Todii Naz*

05:00 *Travel Asia*  
06:30 *Baywatch Hawaii*  
07:30 *The Simpsons*  
08:00 *Parkinson*  
09:00 *Oprah Winfrey Show*  
10:00 *Life As We Know It*  
11:00 *The Kumars At No. 4200*  
12:30 *Parkinson*

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

09:30 *Walking With Lions*  
10:30 *Backyard Science*  
10:45 *Doc Eureka*  
11:00 *Serious: Desert*  
11:30 *Backyard Science*  
12:00 *Serious: Desert*  
12:30 *Wildlife Diary*

01:00 *Mission Udaan*  
01:30 *Unlocking Da Vinci's Code: The Full Story*  
03:30 *National Geographic Special*  
05:30 *Tsunami: The Day The Wave Struck*  
06:30 *Extraterrestrial*  
08:30 *Protecting The President*  
09:30 *Seismic Seconds*  
10:00 *Mission Udaan*  
11:00 *Extinct*  
11:30 *Elephants Of The Kilimanjaro*

**STAR SPORTS**  
09:00 *Malaysia Airlines Football Extra (L)*  
10:00 *Tna Xplosion (R)*  
11:00 *Dakar Rally 2006*  
11:30 *Euromilhoes Dakar Day 2 Highlights(S)*  
11:30 *Best Of Wimbledon 2005 Andy Roddick Vs Thomas Johansson Men's Singles Semifinal(T)*

01:30 *Wimbledon Classics*  
02:30 *Justine Henin Vs Monica Seles Wimbledon 2002*  
03:30 *Ladies' Qf Highlights(T)*  
04:30 *Gillette World Sports 2005 (R)*  
05:30 *Icc Cricket World (R)*  
06:30 *Dakar Rally 2006*  
07:30 *Euromilhoes Dakar Day 2 Highlights(R)*  
08:30 *Cricket Classics Close Encounters (R)*  
09:30 *Walking With Lions*  
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10:45 *Doc Eureka*  
11:00 *Serious: Desert*  
11:30 *Backyard Science*  
12:00 *Serious: Desert*  
12:30 *Wildlife Diary*

08:00 *Programming (Hindi)*  
08:00 *Sachin Tendulkar Programming (Hindi)*  
08:30 *Sachin The Legend - His Story (Hindi) (R)*  
09:00 *Australia Tour Of England*  
10:30 *Australia Tour Of England Rewind: Npower Test Series Birmingham, England England Vs Australia 2nd Test, Day 4, Highlights(R)*  
10:30 *Australia Tour Of England Rewind: Npower Test Series England Vs Australia 4th Test, Day 4, Highlights(R)*  
12:00 *Samsung Superskills Final(R)*

**ESPN**  
06:30 *Nfl Primetime (L)*  
06:58 *Nfl Football Oakland, Ca Usa New York Giants Vs Oakland Raiders (L)*  
10:00 *Icc Cricket World (R)*  
10:30 *Cricket Classics Indian Legends (T)*  
12:30 *Final Score (R)*  
01:00 *English Premier Football League 2005/06 Manchester United Vs Bolton Wanderers (R)*  
03:00 *Tri-Series In England The Natwest Series Australia Vs Bangladesh 2nd Odi, Highlights(R)*  
04:30 *Uefa Champions*

07:30 *Sportscenter Weekend (T)*  
07:35 *Tri-Series In Zimbabwe Videocup Cup India Vs New Zealand 5th Odi, Highlights(R)*  
09:30 *Sportscenter Week In Review Sportscenter Year In Review (R)*  
10:00 *Australian Open Rewind : Australian Open Presented By Kia Melbourne, Australia Serena Williams Vs Sania Mirza Women's Singles Third Round(T)*  
11:00 *Cricket Classics Dravid: The Wall (R)*  
11:30 *Australia Tour Of England Npower Test Series Birmingham, England England Vs Australia 2nd Test, Day 4, Highlights(R)*

TEN SPORTS

09:33 *The Unforgettables*  
10:33 *WWE Specials :Armageddon*  
01:30 *The Unforgettables*  
02:30 *SAFF Championship:(Final) India v Bangladesh*  
04:30 *Nelson Mandela Invitational*  
05:30 *WWE Heat*  
06:30 *The Tour Down Under*  
07:30 *World Rally*  
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