

*Chhayanat's homage to Tagore*

# An evening of melody

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

**F**RIDAY, May 19, 2006, Chhayanat, a leading cultural organisation and music institution of the country organised a musical soiree on the occasion of the 145<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Tagore. The programme was held at the Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum. Artistes of Chhayanat performed in the programme.

The auditorium was filled to capacity with some listeners standing to hear their favourite songs. There were also people gathered outside the auditorium, straining their ears to catch a note of the melodic voices that floated beyond the auditorium.

The function began with a combined performance by the artistes in their opening song, *He Notun*. Tuheen Azirul Rahman sang *Tomar hather rakhikhani bandho* with a depth of voice that won him a loud round of applause from the 300 plus audience. Aditi Mohsin with her melodious voice sang *Bujhechhi ki bujhi nai in taal Kaharba*. *Pran-e khushir toofan uthechhe* was performed by ATM Jahangir.

Other artists who entertained the audience were Biplobi Komokar singing *Bhubonjora ashonkhani*,



Artistes of Chhayanat perform at the musical soiree

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Shottom Debnath performing *Shoda thak aronde*, Mrittika Shohita Othoi singing *Bipul torongey* and Nilufor Jahan rendering *Amar mukti aloy aloy*, among others. There was

another combined performance midway through the programme with the famous song *Eedeen aji kono ghore go*. The programme ended with *Amar shonar Bangla* where the

artists as well as the listeners sang and stood in unison showing respect to our national anthem.

# Lively music and exchange of views

Contestants of *Bengal Bikash* make an impression



Contestants (L and R) take part in the pre-finals of *Bengal Bikash*

KARIM WAHEED

*Bengal Bikash*, the talent hunt organised by Bengal Foundation, has recently wrapped up its pre-finals. To introduce the contestants and update the media and music enthusiasts, an informal music soiree and 'adda' was held at Bengal Shilpalaya on May 19.

The judges outlined the selection process, explained the qualities an artiste should have and answered questions from the audience; the audience too provided feedback. Contestants introduced themselves and delivered lively performances.

Among the judges, Rezwana Chowdhury Banya, Shafeen Samad, Pramila Chakravarty, Fahim Hossain Chowdhury, Anup Bhattacharjee, Malay Kumar Ganguli and Khairul Anam Shakil attended the event.

Faheem Hossain Chowdhury said, "An artiste must be persistent



with practice. One should also concentrate on accurate pronunciation, apt emotiveness and certain style a song needs. Aspiring singers should also observe performances by reputable artistes to get an idea of nuances and details that breathe life into music."

Contestants taking part in the 'Tagore Songs' and 'Songs of Three Poets' (Atul Prasad, DL Roy and Rajniranjan Sen) categories then rendered songs. Kanta performed *Ke abar bajaye bansi*, an Atul Prasad song. Pial rendered a Tagore song, *Tumi robey nirobey*. Nilufor Jahan sang *Jodi tor hridjamuna*, another Atul Prasad number.

Pramila Chakravarty said, "One needs extra endeavour to master songs of DL Roy, Rajniranjan Sen and Atul Prasad." To the untrained ear, songs of these three poets may often sound somewhat like Tagore songs, but a skilled artiste can

highlight the individuality of these genres through his/her renditions.

Performances of Nazrul songs followed. Champa Banik rendered *Tomari ankhir moto*. Anisur Rahman performed *Nohey nohey priyo e noy ankhijai* and Sarah Naz Billah sang *Kano kandey poraon*. Audience and judges seemed to thoroughly enjoy the heartfelt performances.

Khairul Anam Shakil made a suggestion regarding the pace of songs. According to him, "Pace plays a key role in making a performance enjoyable. If a song sounds inaptly slow, an artiste should have the know how to pick up the pace with precision."

Contestants participating in the 'Folk Songs' category seemed to own the evening. The performances exuded passion and the charming lit that make our folk songs alluring. Halima Parveen rendered *Pora mon-er dukhno* and Tapan Kumar Mandal performed *Tarey haraye*.

Monowara Mona presented a moving rendition of *Poobali batashay*.

Tapan is a carpenter who works at Nitya Upohar at Aziz Cooperative market and has formal training in music. About his performance Malay Kumar Ganguly said,

"Training and practice is must for anyone who wants to be a singer. Without these one cannot retain musical/singing abilities."

Bengal Bikash stands out in the current fad of talent hunts for its commendable efforts to discover artistes who have taken the less lucrative path of traditional Bangla songs. This talent hunt, unlike others, does not claim to "make stars". Hopefully this endeavour will be appreciated and the aspiring artistes will secure a promising future.

*Ibsen Commemoration '06, Bangladesh*

# Bansi Kaul: A theatre director with a unique approach

Bansi Kaul is an eminent theatre director and designer, who has developed a new idiom and performance language. He was the professor of extension programme at the Delhi-based institution, National School of Drama (NSD). Besides NSD, he has served as the visiting theatre professor within different institutions in India. He is the founding president and director of the troupe Rang Vidushak. The play *Gappu Gope Gapanggmdas*, an NSD Repertory production, directed by him was recently staged in the Ibsen Commemoration '06, Bangladesh festival.

Bansi Kaul's in-depth research into sociology and performing art forms has been the impetus for a unique direction style, incorporating elements such as narratives, indigenous performing art forms, rural games, modern dance and others. As Kaul said, "My approach to direction has changed over time. Initially I used the folk theatre forms; nowadays, I like to incorporate the energy of folk forms in terms of blockings, colours, images, compositions, music, design and other elements in theatre."

"I like to raise my voice against the disorders of the society through love and entertainment, as to me, these are the last weapons of protest. And I call it 'theatre of clown', which aims to glorify love. I like to analyse the critical world from a clown's point of view. I analyse a certain situation to open the eyes of the audience and enable them to react in their own ways to the particular situation. Nobody will be interested if scenes from daily life are presented in theatre. However, if unseen or unknown elements are

portrayed, the audience's perspective will be widened."

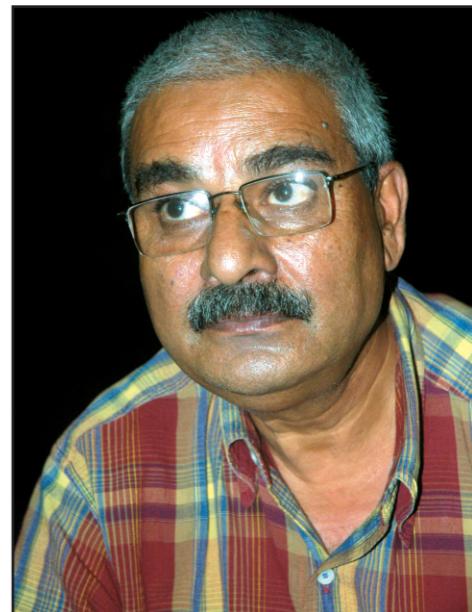
He further added that music is a component of his direction. Nowadays, he likes to direct plays based on the stories from mythology, folktales, fables and others.

What is the motivation behind using indigenous performing art forms in theatre? Kaul said, "India is a vast country, with diverse cultures and landscapes. I travelled different corners of the country and the diversity as well as power of these performing art forms motivated me to present these forms aesthetically in my compositions. It happens when one comes from certain values and traditions and when one opts to experiment to create new things at the larger level, that is the motivation. And the forms I have selected for my directorial compositions, such as rural sports, street acrobatics and others, were not considered as performing art forms a few years back. My intention is to incorporate these colourful events in the theatre."

Interestingly in Kaul's compositions, while different actions occur in a single scene, they are interwoven, however, each are interweaving.

What's the reason? Kaul said, "Watching the festive mood of the fairs in the rural areas, I have decided to capture the festivity and rhythm of life on stage."

Bansi Kaul praises the endeavour of the younger generation in theatre. He said, "In comparison with our days, the younger generation faces far more difficult problems. Overcoming hurdles such as media aggression, rising living costs and socio-political turmoil, they are doing



Bansi Kaul

PHOTO: STAR

outstanding theatre."

Plays directed by Kaul have been staged in different countries. He has also presented research papers seminars in Asian and European countries. Moreover, he has won awards from Central Government as well as Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh State Governments in India.

# Delhi's National School of Drama present *Gappu Gope Gapanggmdas*

On May 19, the Delhi-based National School of Drama (NSD) Repertory staged *Gappu Gope Gapanggmdas*, an adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's well-known play, *Peer Gynt*. The play was staged at the National Theatre Stage as part of the ongoing international theatre festival titled 'Staging Ibsen in Asia'.

This theatrical work raises the eternal question: Who am I? In the play, acclaimed Indian director Bansi Kaul—much like a master painter's huge canvas—features diverse images and a powerful social message. His directorial compositions visualise different scenes in a particular sequence, to narrate the story of the central character, the bohemian Gappu.

Like the original text, the presentation of the adapted play is also full of images and not at all realistic; a large part of the action is the dramatisation of the imaginings of the main character Gappu.

Gappu's story narrates the colourful journey in search of the ulterior meaning of life and existence in the Indian and universal context. Gappu's urge to leave the mountains in search of adventure and wealth, has a contemporary ring. He is devoid of morals or convention—going so far as to seduce the bride at a wedding, set up a new cult in the desert and attempt to become king of the trolls. And at a different stage of the voyage he comes face to face with crime, treachery, love and emotion. Finally he realises that



A scene from the play

happiness lies not in materialism, but rather in love and compassion.

Using different colourful indigenous performing art forms, rituals, customs, games and sports of different parts of India, Bansi Kaul has effectively portrayed Gappu's travails. His masterful directorial

cal sequences are that of when Gappu meets imaginary trolls in the desert, complete with the traditional music of Gujarat and elsewhere.

A huge horizontal platform with a depressed area at the middle is used backstage to create the ambience of a rustic house in the hill tracts. Apart from the mountain scenes, the set is covered. Parag Sarmah's light design is simple but effective.

The NSD Repertory artistes displayed excellent team work. They were well suited to their roles and gave credible performances. Their body language and voice modulation were praiseworthy. The versatile Sameep Singh portrayed the varied stages of Gappu's life—from a spontaneous youth to a decrepit old age. Nasreen Ishaque as Amma, performed well in the role of a caring rural mother. And Dakshina Sharma as the pure and innocent Shanni gave a wonderful performance, particularly in the final scene when Gappu rests his head in her lap to take shelter from the cruel world.

On the same day, at the Experimental Stage Kanthashilan staged *Karigor*, an adaptation of Ibsen's *Brand*. Khaled Khan is the director of *Karigor*.

by Ershad Kamol

## TV GUIDE

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

BTB

09:05 Open University

10:00 Satellite Programme

12:15 Shongbadpotro

ATN BANGLA

10:30 Onyodrishti

11:05 Drama Serial: *Ek Jonome*

12:30 Shasto Tathyo

01:30 Protashor Alo

03:05 Banshori

03:30 Amader Ranna

04:00 Shapto Shur

05:00 National TV Debate

06:10 Geetanjali

07:00 Mati O Manush

07:30 Drama Serial

08:45 Drama Serial:

09:25 Drama Serial:

10:25 Teknaf Theke Tetulia

10:30 Pratham Antora

Shongbadpotro

ATN BANGLA

10:30 Onyodrishti

11:05 Drama Serial: *Ek Jonome*

12:15 Gandharaj Samsung

Cine Aha

12:15 Adibashi Jonopod

12:50 Smriti Monikothae

01:30 Shornali Shadakalo

02:30 Drama Serial: *Nirob Koshoto*

03:10 Drama Serial: *O Amar Chokhnu Nai*

03:45 Shapla Shaluk

04:20 Music Box

04:45 Ispahani Pure Snax

05:10 ATN Music

05:45 Islami Sawal O

Jobab (Live)

06:25 Three Stooges

08:00 Drama Serial: *Khola Duar*

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

09:00 Drama Serial: *Nirey Taar Neel Dheu*

09:30 Drama Serial: *Ek Akasher Swapno*

10:40 Business This Week

12:30 Aj Dupurey O

Citycell Tarokothon (Live)

01:05 Ebong Cinemar

Gaan

01:30 Shangbadpotrey

Bangladesh

01:45 Public Reaction

02:40 Selected plays of Humayun Ahmed

03:30 Born to Play

04:25 Amader Gaan

05:30 Business Talk

06:00 Music Plus

09:35 Shanchita

10:00 Drama Serial: *Bela Obelar Golpo*

12:00 Ajker

PICK OF THE DAY