

Art within art

Photographs by Kamaluddin Kabir highlighting Bangladeshi theatre



KARIM WAHEED

HERE is the wizardry of light and shadows, well-crafted sets and most importantly highly expressive subjects -- any photographer's dream come true, yet not a photo session in the conventional sense.

Kamaluddin Kabir's ongoing solo photography exhibition, titled *Light and Discourse* features photographs of our theatre -- a tradition second to none that has thrived after the Liberation War.

The exhibition is being held at the Bengal Shilpalaya and was inaugurated on July 3. Noted artist Mustafa Monwar inaugurated the event; Wolfgang Vollman, UNESCO representative in Bangladesh was present as the special guest.

Professor S Manzoorul Islam writes, "A first look at Kabir's photographs convinces us of his power and passion, but also of his skill and his perceptive eye. Unlike most theatre photographs one comes across in the media, Kabir's pictures don't highlight the face of a performer. He rather focuses on the totality of presentation. He likes to take in the whole ambience of the stage and capture the drama, the dynamism and the depth of a particular moment."

"He aims at a particular composition that would reveal, even if metonymically, the gist of the whole performance. Kabir doesn't use flashguns or artificial lighting, but makes do with whatever light is available. Yet, one notices a strong contrast between light and shade that defines the core aspects of the performance in progress."

Kabir, a theatre activist, drama teacher, set designer and director of repute has been photographing stage performances, both in the city and in villages for over ten years. The photographs not only highlight urban theatre but also folk theatre performances, such as *Palagaan*, *Satya Pirer Gaan*, *Manshamangal*, *alpak* and more.

About his work, Kabir says, "At the end of any theatrical production, we are left only with memories of the stage. To get an overall impression of the production, documentation is a must. Theatre photographs reflect whether compositions were complete or not. Through photographs we can get a complete idea of the discourses delivered though movements on the stage. A photograph keeps the production alive even after years of its staging. Theatre photography should be encouraged and considered essential in the total theatrical culture."

More effective than words is one look at any of the photographs at the exhibition. Every image is bustling with life, energy and a brilliant display of light and shadows. All have their own stories to tell.

One look at the still from the popular production by Theatre, *Meraaj Fakirer Maa* (directed by Abdullah Al Mamun) and one gets the idea that the satire brings to light the game of manipulation in the name of religion.

A still from *Behular Bhashan*



Clockwise from left: Stills from *Maangula* (a Palakar production), *Golapjaan* (a Theatre Art Unit production) and *Behular Bhashan* (a Theatre and Music Department, Dhaka University production)

(directed by Syed Jamil Ahmed), a production of Theatre and Music Department, Dhaka University captures the noticeable indigenous art trend with the actors on aashon (a raised square space at the centre; surrounded by the audience on all four sides).

An image of *Kathaa '71* (directed by Debashish Ghosh), a Dhaka Padatik production, captures a stage with overpowering red lights creating a slaughterhouse-like image of torture and carnage during the Liberation War.

Kamalaranir Sagardighee, a *pala* performed by Islamuddin Palakaar highlights our rural heritage. Stills of *Binodini* (directed by Nasiruddin Yousuff), a Dhaka Theatre production, frame glimpses of Shimul Yousuff in her best emotive self as 'Mancho Kusum' Binodini Dasi.

But Kabir does not only focus on the stage. Some of his images highlight the audience. In his photographs the audience is not just onlookers; they are active elements in the total scenario of a theatre production.

The collection of photographs -- colourful, dark, enigmatic and poignant -- make for an outstanding exhibition with multifaceted purposes. The exhibition will continue till July 12.

Theatre Celebrating silver jubilee of Loko Natyadal

As part of the ongoing theatre festival arranged by Loko Natyadal, *Kanjush*, a translation of Moliere's satire, will be held at the National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) at 7pm today.

Two other plays, *Tasher Dosh* by Rabindranath Tagore and *Banglar Mukh* written by Liaquat Ali Lucky will also be staged today at 7 pm at the Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA, says a press release.



A scene from *Tasher Dosh*

50th staging of Shikhandi Katha



A dramatic scene from *Shikhandi Katha*

The 50th performance of Mohakal Natyasampradaya's current production *Shikhandi Katha* will be held at the Mahila Samity Auditorium on July 14. The event will also mark the 23rd founding anniversary of the theatre group.

Shikhandi Katha is a colourful representation of the life of hermaphrodites. Everyday joys, sorrows and frustrations of the hermaphrodite community are depicted in the play. The play is written by Anan Zaman and directed by Rashid Haroon.

TV watch Projapati Din: A mystery unravels



Sumaiya Shimu and Mahfuz in the TV play

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Drama serial *Projapati Din* is set to telecast from today on Banglavision. The serial is written and directed by Ferdaus Hasan and produced by V-Net.

The story unfolds through the mysterious disappearance of Titas, a

marine scientist. In course of time, tension builds up among his friends, Apu and Subarno. Gradually the mystery is resolved in the serial.

The serial features Bulbul Ahmed, Dilara Zaman, Mahfuz, Tarin, Litu Anam, Sumaiya Shimu, Ahsanul Haque Minu and others.

Projapati Din will be aired every Friday at 9:15pm.

Apurbo : The up and coming actor

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

"I'll continue working as long as I'm satisfied, the day I feel dissatisfied I will opt out." This new kid on the block with dark good looks and who knows how to speak his mind has stepped in the Bangladeshi showbiz to stay. Ziaul Faruq Apurbo aka Apurbo started his media career as the winner of 'Mr. Pantene You Got The Look' contest in 2004. Apurbo has done over 30 serials over the last six months, namely *Boi Jog Bou* = *Boibahik*, *Ghor Chhara*, *Romijer Aaina*, *Noshto Manush*, *Ghor Phera*, *Mohor*, *Ontomomo* and *Khunje Pao*, just to name a few.

On his inclination towards the media, Apurbo says "I was working as a lecturer in Neural Institute of Management Information and Technology (NIMIT) and life was monotonous. I needed a change and that's when a photographer friend shot some pictures of me and just out of fun we sent it for the 'Pantene' contest. Luckily I got through the first round and miraculously ended up winning the title."

As a child Apurbo had always dreamt of being an architect. Interestingly, his mother thought her son would end up joining the Muslim

clergy as he would listen to the *Aazan* with awe and reverence every day.

Going back through memory lane, this 26-year-old believes he was an adorable child. During the Eid festivals he used to always help his mom with cleaning the house and utensils. However, with a mis-

chievous gleam in his eyes he talks about the time when he literally put their Iqbal Road house on fire. "As a child I loved playing with matches and fire. One day just out of curiosity I lit a tracing paper, which I assumed would be different from regular paper. Unfortunately my brother's jersey also caught on fire. The fire

further spread to the door, the storeroom and ultimately to the balcony. It was a complete mess," admits Apurbo.

While this Cancerian has many favourite artists, he does not believe in idolising them. "If I idolise someone I will want to be like him and end up copying him. In the bargain I will lose my own individuality" However he respects and is a huge fan of Humayun Faridce, Suborna Mustafa, Asaduzzaman Noor and Ali Zaker, among others.

When Apurbo is not acting he spends his time drawing and cooking. "I'm a fantabulous cook and cook the best potato dishes in town," he adds with a grin. During sleepless nights Apurbo has a habit of cooking his own meals, cleaning up the kitchen and then settling down with his pencils and art paper. "I won't leave the pencil until I have completed the drawing no matter how long it takes."

Regarding his future plans, Apurbo says that he doesn't believe in making long term plans and chooses to live in the present. He loves his work and expresses gratitude to Allah for all the blessings that have come his way.



PHOTO COURTESY: TUNIN HOSSAIN

Sophia Loren poses for Pirelli calendar

Italian actress Sophia Loren, 71, has become the oldest woman to pose for the celebrated Pirelli calendar.

The Oscar-winning star is one of five actresses to appear on the calendar's 33rd edition, due out in November. Naomi Watts, Penelope Cruz, Hilary Swank and France's Lou Doillon will also appear, according to reports.

Loren said she "had a lot of fun, like a young girl" posing for the calendar. The calendar is being shot by Dutch photographers Inez van Lamsweerde and Winooth Matadin.

Loren was born in 1934 and grew up in the slums of Naples. She started working as a model at the age of 14, and was ushered into acting by future husband Carlo Ponti.

In 1962, she won a best actress Oscar for her role as Cesira, a woman who flees Rome with her daughter during World War II, in the Italian-language film *Two Women*. She was also given an honorary Oscar for her body of work in 1991, calling her "one of the genuine treasures of world cinema".

Her films include *Marriage Italian Style*, *Yesterday*, *Today and Tomorrow*, and *A Special Day*.

Source: Internet



'Borsha Fair' pulls in crowd



A young visitor at the fair

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) organised a *Borsha* fair recently. The hand made products caught the eye of many a visitor. To quote one customer, "I go for the handicrafts; the products displayed here are cheaper and are also of good quality."

Shahana, a Dhaka University student, along with some of her friends, was also at the fair. "If I was buying this product from any other upmarket outlet the price would have been double," she maintained.

One young visitor to the fair expressed her eagerness to buy dolls. She had bought some but still wanted more. "All of them are so beautiful. I am completely confused which to buy," she said.

"The turnout is huge. It would have been great if the fair had been extended by two days," said Kabir a participant.

BSCIC organises four fairs every year: *Borsha*, *Shorot*, *Hemanto* and *Boshanto* -- named after seasons. It is the organisation's 27th such fair.

"BSCIC holds training courses all round the year and after completing each course we organise a fair. Almost 75 percent participants are our students," said Abdul Motin Bhuiyan, senior designer of the organisation. "The main purpose behind organising such an event is to provide the students with a platform to display their works," he added.

All together there were 64 stalls full of attractive handicrafts at the fair.

Talk show Shandhikhon on Channel 1

Shandhikhon, a new talk show on issues related to teenagers will be aired every Saturday at 9:30pm on Channel 1. Along with six teenagers, two guests (specialists) will partici-

pate in every episode. The programme, hosted by Tazin Ahmed, will hold discussions on everyday issues teenagers have to deal with and ways to resolve them.



Tazin Ahmed hosts the TV programme

Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna: A film on dysfunctional relationships

Karan Johar's upcoming *Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna* is one of the biggest Bollywood releases this year.

The film features an impressive cast of A-listers -- Shah Rukh Khan, Rani Mukerji, Abhishek Bachchan, Preity Zinta and Amitabh Bachchan. Bollywood rumour mills insist that the film is a copy of the dark Mike Nichols drama, *Close*.

The film is about two couples going through severe marital discord. The couples are played by -- Shah Rukh-Preity and Abhishek-Rani.

The couples are estranged, and interlinked -- their paths cross. And then there's Amitabh Bachchan, sharing some relationship wisdom as he wheezes from a hospital bed.

Kabhi Alvida..., a typically larger-than-life Karan Johar film, is supposedly packed with heavy dialogues, tons of melodrama, and overdone emotions galore.

The film is slated to release in August.

Source: Internet



(L-R) Shah Rukh, Preity, Abhishek and Rani in the film