

Nrityadbara: A kaleidoscopic journey

KAVITA CHARANJI

THE camaraderie between the five dancers was obvious as they engaged in bantering and even burst into a patriotic song *Dhano Dhanya Pushpo Bhora*. The dancers shared their experiences of last year and talked about their plans for the future. Though they are exponents of different genres and run their own dance schools and groups, they share a link as founder members of Nrityadbara, a premier institute of leading dance artistes of the country. The organisation is committed to explore and revive the dance heritage of Bengal.

Here's what the dancers had to say:

Minu Haque (Odissi), convenor of Nrityadbara and choreographer and teacher of Pallavi (Indian classical dance school):

The uncertain political situation has thrown a damper on Nrityadbara's programmes. Though our individual organisations have staged dance performances, we have had to alter our schedule. For instance, we had thought of a dance festival but had to change the plan because of the prevailing scenario in the country.

As for this year, we plan a three-day festival to coincide with our Foundation Day. Another dance drama on the anvil is *Hajartarer Beena*, based on Kazi Nazrul Islam's life. Then there is a piece based on a Selim Al Deen play, *Usha Ulshab*, which depicts the life of the Garos. There is also a possibility that we may stage Tagore's dance drama *Bhanu Singher Padabali*.

Dipa Khondoker (folk and creative), executive director of Dibya Cultural Group and performer, teacher and dance director at Shilpkala Academy:

Nrityadbara's six members have different styles but we come together in a blend. I also

have social commitment. I teach underprivileged and differently-abled children at Swid Bangladesh. In Dibya I also teach dance free of cost for such children. Altogether I have 50 disadvantaged and differently-abled children. Nrityadbara is a patron for this category.

Through my dance group I teach children afflicted by HIV/AIDS. I deal closely with an HIV/AIDS organisation called Bandhu Social Welfare Society mainly in folk. I accompanied several Bangladeshi dance artistes.



Clockwise (from centre-back row): Anisul Islam Hero, Dipa Khondoker, Munmun Ahmed, Minu Haque and Tamanna Rahman

The members of Nrityadbara have a mutual plan. Now on the anvil are three dance dramas on Nrityadbara's Foundation Day.

Anisul Islam Hero (Bharatnatyam and modern dance, director of Srishti Cultural Centre):

As chairperson of Bandhu, an NGO, I spearhead the organisation's HIV/AIDS prevention programme. Bandhu has called on Dipa to train its volunteers. This is an ongoing programme. On the cards for Nrityadbara and Bandhu is a fund

raising endeavour on January 14.

As for the coming year, a lot depends on the political situation and we will chalk out plans after the elections.

Tamanna Rahman (Manipuri, founder-director of Nrityadbara Dance School):

Looking to the future, we at Nrityadbara want to take up a research project to determine our existing dance heritage. As is obvious many of our traditional and unique dance forms have vanished over a passage of time. However, not much research has gone into this phenomenon. This research endeavour will take us to different locations and enable us to study indigenous dance forms such as Bou and Dhamail (Sylhet region), Jari (northern region; predominantly in Mymensingh area) and many others.

When it comes to Nrityam, we plan to choreograph a children's production. Also on the cards are workshops outside Dhaka to places such as Chandpur, Bogra and Chittagong. On another front, I plan to take our Manipuri dance repertoire to Rajshahi and other places. This will popularise the dance form out of Dhaka and is a part of an ongoing programme, which began in 2001.

Munmun Ahmed (Kathak, principal of Rewaz Performers' School):

Because of personal problems I have had to lie low over the last year. However, I did perform at several functions. For the new year, Rewaz will stage a programme at Shilpkala Academy. This is a fund-raising endeavour for my brother who has lost both his kidneys. Also we -- four of my students, singer Sujit Mustafa and I -- will have a programme in Glasgow, Scotland, early this year.

Movie Watch

'Pan's Labyrinth': Tiptoeing between reality and fantasy

After *Pan's Labyrinth*, Guillermo del Toro will never again be dismissed as a director of horror movies. The film is even in *Mimic* and *Hellboy* is confirmed in spades in his new work, a lock for an Oscar nomination as best foreign language film. Visually stunning, it meshes haunting images with a complex multilevel story about the enchantment of youth -- a time when fairy tales take on a reality that can shield children from painful truths -- and the unadulterated evil of fascism.

Whether intentional or not, *Labyrinth* bears a resemblance to Picasso's *Guernica*. Del Toro uses a similar palette -- the colour is so faded that some scenes appear to be black and white with shades of grey -- and his eerie mythical characters sport multiple eyes in unusual locations as on the famous mural. Most significantly, the strokes of two true masters are used to conjure up a horrific representation of the brutal, suffering and death during Spain's long struggle for freedom.

Pan's Labyrinth begins in 1944 after the country's civil war has ended with the defeat of the Republican forces aiming to preserve democracy. A delicate 12-year-old, Ofelia (the intense young Spanish actress Ivana Baquero), distracts herself during a long car ride by reading



Ivana Baquero (R) and co-actor in the film

about an ill-fated princess. Ofelia is on her way to an uncertain future. Her father was killed in the war, and her mother has hastily married Captain Vidal (Sergi López) and is heavily pregnant with his child.

When mother and daughter arrive in the northern countryside, where Vidal heads the

fascist militia fighting off guerrilla attacks, Ofelia immediately spots a labyrinth. A kindly housekeeper (Maribel Verdú) tells her to keep away from it, but the warning only ignites her interest.

Del Toro and cinematographer Guillermo Navarro's imaginations run wild creating a muddy netherworld overgrown with moss for Ofelia to enter. These scenes are breathtaking in their originality and spookiness. The creatures are menacing along with welcoming, led by a 7-foot-tall faun who promises the youngster royal status if she carries out three tasks. Handing her an instruction book that turns out to be blank, the pages soon begin dripping blood. A children's film this is not.

Baquero exquisitely captures Ofelia's confusion over what is real and what isn't, at once seeming wise beyond her years and incredibly childlike. Her dark eyes reflect the pain caused by a war in which she's lost a loving father only to have him replaced by a brute.

Although *Pan's Labyrinth* relies heavily on special effects, including the computer-generated kind, one is never aware of them. Del Toro, who wrote the story, has created a special universe. The spell it casts lingers long after the final reel.

Source: Internet

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

News Bulletin

BTB

08:10 Desher Gaan
08:30 Esho Gaan Shikhi
09:05 Shomapti
11:15 Bangla Feature Film
03:05 Tele Film: Bhakte Hobey

06:10 Drama: Aakasher
Neel Shimanay
Brishti

08:35 Drama: Chhuye
Dilam Tomakey
Tekhnaf Theke
Tetulia

10:20 Drama: Akasher
Shomapti
Brishti

12:45 Shathdin

02:30 Bangla Feature Film:
Chirodini

05:00 Gram Gorjer
Khobor

05:30 Grameenphone Nari
O Rajniti

06:20 Gondhoraj

Samsung Cine A Ha

08:00 Drama Serial: Jol
Porey Pata Norey

08:40 Drama Serial: The
New Sabuj Opera

09:20 Mega Serial: Ek
Jonomey

Channel i

08:30 Shokaler Gaan

09:30 Shangbadpore
Bangladesh
Public Reaction
09:50 Tritiomatra
12:30 Citycell Taroka
Kathan
01:05 Ebong Cinemar
Gaan

01:30 Shangbadpore
Bangladesh
Public Reaction

01:45 Public Reaction

04:05 Amader Gaan

04:45 Sa Re Ga Ma

06:00 Drama

07:50 Drama: Phapor

09:35 Drama: Salam
Baburchi

08:35 Aajker Shokal

09:00 Duronto Dash

10:05 Band Show

10:30 Aktele Hip Hip Hurrah

01:05 Muktagon

02:35 Ki Kotha Tahar

03:15 Shatey

03:15 Drama: Bhul Phool

04:25 Amra Dujon

05:15 Din Dorpon/Ithasher

09:30 Chokh Mele
Dekhi

05:20 Alokpat

10:00 Cartoon

10:30 Bangla Feature

Film

12:30 Gaaner Khata

03:30 Drama: Shokhi

05:15 Expression

09:10 Final Round:
Closeup1 Tomakei

06:30 Top News
Khujchhey

Bangladesh'06

11:25 Din Dorpon

CHANDEL 1

06:00 Saaj Bala

06:30 Top News
Khujchhey

Dhorey

07:00 Bishwa Jurey

Shath Din

03:45 Bangla Feature Film:

Matir Moyna

08:15 Drama Serial:
Shunney Boshobash

09:00 Shondhi Khoney

09:30 Drama Serial:
Ei Diney

10:00 Godhuli Belay

10:30 Bangla Feature

Film

12:30 Gaaner Khata

03:30 Drama: Shokhi

05:15 Expression

12:00 Golu Ke Goggles

12:25 Bolly V - Star Plus

12:30 V Trailers - Star Plus

12:55 V First Day First

Show-Starplus

01:00 Musafir Hoon Yaaron

01:00 Kabhi Khushi Kabhi

Dhoom

01:55 V First Day First

Show-Starplus

02:00 V Trailers - Star Plus

02:25 Bolly V - Star Plus

02:30 Kalash

03:00 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii

05:00 V Trailers - Star Plus

05:25 V First Day First

Show-Starplus

05:30 Krishna Kathaiyan

06:30 Mickey Mouse And

Friends

07:00 The Legend Of Trazan

07:25 Bolly V - Star Plus

10:30 FIFI Club

Championship

11:30 Rolling Stones In Rio

12:30 In The Womb:

Animals

02:30 Monkey Business

Drama

03:30 Explosive Force

04:30 Going To School In

India

05:00 Nat Geo Junior

05:30 Big Bang

06:00 Nat Geo Junior

06:30 Crash of the

Concorde