

CULTURAL FEAS



Ekushey Boi Mela
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy premises
Date: February 1-28
Month-long book fair

Ekushey Cultural Programme
Organiser: Sammilito Sangskritik Jote
Venue: Central Shaheed Minar Premises
Date: February 9-19
Time: 4:00pm

Organisers: Sammilito Sangskritik Jote
Venue: Rabindra Sarobar Amphitheatre (Dhanmondi)
Date: February 15-21
Time: 4:00pm

Folk Musical Soiree
Organiser: Dance and Music Department of Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy
Venue: National Art Gallery
Date: February 5-8
Time: 6:00pm

Bangla Calligraphy Exhibition
Artist: Arham-ul-Haq Choudhury
Venue: British Council, 5 Fuller Road, Dhaka
Date: February 17-28
Time: 10:00am-8:00pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: In Quest of Truth and Beauty
Artist: Samarjit Roy Choudhury
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Bengal Shilpalaya, House no:275/F, Road no:27 (Old), Dhanmondi
Date: January 28-February 10
Time: 12:00pm-8:00pm

Bashonto Utshob
Organisers: National Bashonto Utshob Uddjapon Committee
Venue: Bakul Tola, Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University
Date: February 13
Time: 4:00am

Group Art Show
Title: Appointment 2007
Venue: Shilpangan, Road 3, House 26
Date: February 5-18
Time: 10:00am-1:00pm & 5:00pm-9:00pm

CD Launch
Title: Rupantor Gaan
Artistes: Shaheen Samad and Enamul Haque
Venue: Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum, Shahbagh
Date: February 12
Time: 5pm

Theatre
Play: Dakghor
Troupe: Swapnopal
Venue: Experimental Theatre Stage
Date: February 12
Time: 6:30pm

Play: Project 100+
Troupe: Palakar
Venue: Palakar Theatre Studio, 133, Natak Shorony, New Bailey Road
Date: February 8 & 9
Time: 6:30pm

The early days of his acting career were dis-

Folk music soiree at Shilpkala

A lukewarm second day



Abdul Kuddus Bayati, Dilruba Khan and Ainal Haque (below) perform at the programme

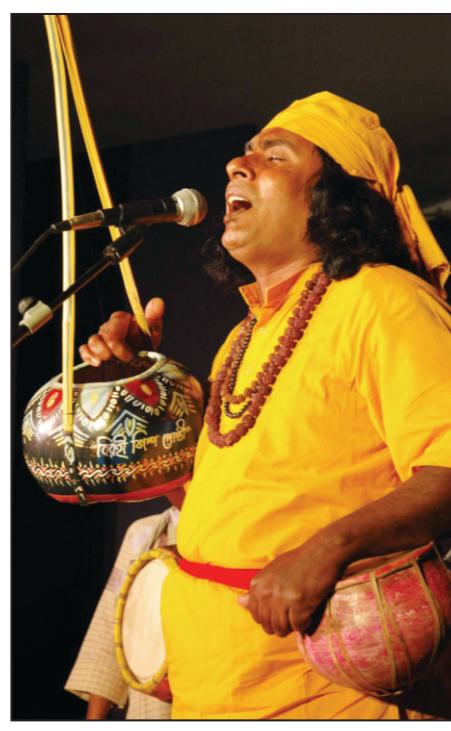
ERSHAD KAMOL

DIFFERENT folk music genres written by renowned bards like Fakir Lalon Shah, Pagla Kanai, Radha Ramon, Romesh Shill, Jasimuddin and others were rendered on the second of the ongoing folk music soiree at Shilpkala. Moreover, bayatis presented songs written and composed by them.

Like the previous evening, the event on February 6 began with a group presentation by the instrumentalists of Bangladeshi Shilpkala Academy (BSA). Supported by indigenous instruments such as *dhol*, *dholak*, *tabla*, *mondira*, *dotara* and harmonium, M Moniruzzaman played the lead on the *bansi*. The instrumental presentation of renowned bard Hason Raja's song *Matiro pinjirar majhe*, had a mystic ambience at the plaza of the National Art Gallery of BSA.

The instrumental was followed by Zahir Alim's rendition of *dehottata* genre, titled *Porer jaga porer jomi ghor banayai ami ro*. Other renowned folk singers who performed on the second day were Dilruba Khan, Khogendra Nath Sarkar, MA Khalek, Dil Afroz Reba and others.

Dil Afroz Reba's performance of Pagla Kanai's song *Ore ghar bendhechhi shadher kamikar* was unique in the sense that Pagla Kanai's *dhuya jari* genre is on the verge of extinction. The soiree



gave the audience an opportunity to hear Pagla Kanai's *dhuya jari*. Dilruba Khan rendered popular folk song *Amar line hoia jay anka banka*. Khogendra Nath Sarkar's stentorian voice modulation during the song *Keno morish jol phele* touched the heart of the audience. MA Khalek performed Jasimuddin's popular song *Nishithe jaiyo phulo bon*.

The programme, arranged by Dance and Music Department of BSA including several solo folk singers and groups from different corners of the country, was widely appreciated. Among the catchy performances were those of seasoned singers such as Syed Golam Ambia, Afroza Begum and Shyama Sarkar. However, the inclusion of mediocre singers such as Bina Majumdar threw a damper on the programme. Both the audience and renowned singers criticised such inclinations.

However, the day's main attraction was a soulful performance of Abdul Kuddus Bayati and his troupe that drew applause from the audience. The choir presented three songs—*Atoro golap shoya chondan*, *Amar bondhur lagya go* and *Ki shundor ek ganer pakhi*. Other bayatis such as Ainal Haq, Shona Miah Boyati Alam Sarkar and Saleha Begum presented self composed songs.

ALL TIME GREATS

Sidney Poitier: The living legend

Sir Sidney Poitier, the legendary actor, has been in the news lately—more so one of his autobiographical books, *The Measure of A Man: A Spiritual Autobiography* (2000). On January 26, 2007 Oprah Winfrey chose it for her book club. The club is a segment of the American talk show *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, highlighting books chosen by host Oprah.

Poitier is a Bahamian American Academy Award-winning actor (film and stage), film director and activist. He has been dubbed a breakthrough star for his stellar performances, which defied racial stereotypes and gave a new dramatic credibility for African American actors in mainstream films in the western world. Who hasn't heard of Poitier's roles in films such as *A Patch of Blue* (1965), *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967) and *To Sir, With Love* (1967)?

Born on February 20, 1927, Poitier was a native of Cat Island, The Bahamas (though born in Miami during a mainland visit by his parents). The son of a dirt farmer, his childhood was mired in poverty. He had little formal education and at the age of 14 was sent to Miami to live with his brother, the aim being to forestall a growing tendency toward delinquency.

Coming face to face with the racial prejudices of that time, he resolved to find and create opportunities for his counterparts. At 18, he made his way to New York and did menial jobs. Shockingly, he slept in a bus terminal toilet. Putting in a brief stint in the Army as a worker at a veteran's hospital, he did some more menial jobs in Harlem.

The early days of his acting career were dis-

couraging. A spur of the moment audition at the American Negro Theatre was rejected so forcefully that he spent the next six months in overcom-

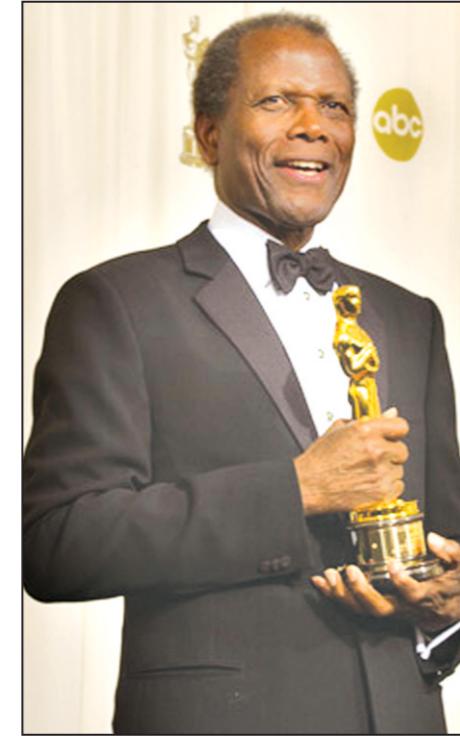
ing his accent and fine tuning his performance. A second try followed—with success this time. He was spotted in a rehearsal and given a tiny role in a Broadway production of *Lysistrata*—which bagged good reviews. By the end of 1949, his acting career picked up so much that he had to choose between leading roles on stage and an offer to work for Darryl F Zanuck in the film *No Way Out* (1950). The latter was a dramatic turning point for Poitier. Playing the role of a doctor treating a white American, he won notice and offers for more roles. This was a feather in his cap as the roles that came his way were more interesting and prominent than most African American actors at that time were getting.

Along the way, Poitier picked up many an award. His part in the film *The Defiant Ones* (1958), gave Poitier his first Academy Award nomination as Best Actor. Five years down the line, he picked up the Oscar for *Lilies of the Field*, the first African American to win for a leading role. Other successes were *A Raisin in the Sun* (1961), and *In the Heat of the Night* (1967).

Some of his films had a distinct social message. Take his roles in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967) and *To Sir, With Love* (1967) were landmarks for breaking through social barriers imposed by the colour of skin. Today, while he has reduced his acting commitments, he stands tall in the American cinema of the 20th century.

Charged with first-degree murder, she is sentenced to life imprisonment, where she befriends

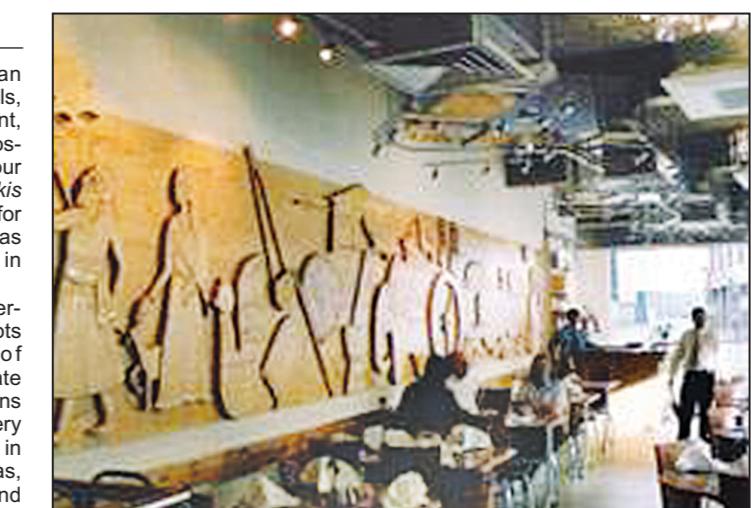
Composed by Cultural Correspondent



Aishwarya Rai with co-actor in the film

she learns English.

Moved by her story, the cell-mate asks her stepbrother, Edward



A mural by the artist on display

exhibit. Here, once he presented a 3-D *palki*, arranged by the Tower Hamlet Council and organised art competitions of children from five schools also. In this workshop the young artists painted subjects taken from everyday Bangladeshi life along with topics of other European migrants. After documentaries on different themes, the children settled down on subjects like Eiffel Tower, Japanese girls, rickshaws and Bangladeshi boats plying on rivers. The paintings on silk were later converted into flags and fluttered at the festival amidst fun and fanfare. Most of the participating young ones, were Bangladeshi migrants, says Nickel. Sitar Fusion itself is based in Bethnal Green, London.

Nickel makes set designs for Channel S in London for programmes like *Sur-Jalsa*, *Kotha*, *It's our day* and *Neither extreme*, which can be viewed in Bangladesh too, he says. He has also done the

set design for Bangla TV, on occasions. Back in Bangladesh, Nickel worked for several TV channels before he left for better prospects in London in 2001. He has done his MFA from the Department of Fine Arts, DU, with teachers like Maran Chand Pal and Syed Talukdar, in the Ceramics Section.

As it is difficult to work with clay in UK, Nickel has also gone in for making large murals for Bangladeshi restaurants in London for a regular living. The first section of the mural deals with a Bangladeshi village beauty seen walking along the banks of a river; next is a folk motif composition with an elephant, flute, cart wheel and a *kula*.

The last panel brings in a scene from our historical past, with a regal lady playing with a spotted deer, while the king looks on with satisfaction.

Nickel's endeavour to use his artistic knowledge and know-how is admirable.

In conversation with Nickel

Projecting Bangladesh to Londoners

FAYZA HAQ

Mohammad Shamsur Rahman Nickel works on wooden murals, painting and event management, which involves pageants with costumes, masks and symbols of our culture like actual rickshaws, *palkis* (sedan chairs) and *kulas* (used for winnowing rice). This Nickel does as an expatriate artist working in London and its suburbs. The aim, he says, is to renew interest in Bangladeshi cultural roots among young migrants of Bangladeshi origin, and creates interest among adult Europeans based in and around London. Every year there are about 15 festivals in London and its periphery areas, namely *Baishakhi Melas*, Brickland Festivals and Lord Mayor Shows (2004 and 2005), among others. An expert in art and crafts, working for an organisation called Sitar Fusion, Nickel represents Bangladesh.

In the Lord Mayor Reception Show, in particular, there are about 100 pavilions, in which five migrant communities like France, Germany and Italy are invited to perform and

Mohammad Shamsur Rahman Nickel

Movie Watch

'Provoked': True story of a battered woman

The much talked about Aishwarya-starrer film *Provoked*, directed by Jagmohan Mundhra is all set for international release.

The film was premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in April last year and was highly praised by the international media. *Provoked* also opened the 2006 IIFA Film Festival in Dubai.

Based on a true story, *Provoked* follows a Punjabi woman, Kiranjit Ahluwalia, living in London. Unable to bear the brutality and repeated rapes by her alcoholic and abusive husband (Naveen Andrews), Kiranjit (Aishwarya Rai), a housewife and mother of two, sets him on fire before unintentionally killing him. Her retaliation followed 10 years of systematic abuse. What caused her to flip on that fateful evening might be that he had pressed a hot iron against her.

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Charged with first-degree

murder, she is sentenced to life

imprisonment, where she befriends

her cell-mate, a wealthy white woman named Veronica Scott (Miranda Richardson), from whom

Foster (Robbie Coltrane), a highly respected queen's counsel to file her appeal.

Her case comes to the notice of a group of South Asian social workers running an organisation called Southall Black Sisters. They bring her plight to the attention of the media by organising rallies to gather public support for her freedom.

She is ultimately freed by the judicial system in a landmark case called "Regina vs. Ahluwalia" (1992), that redefined the word 'provocation' in the case of a battered woman.

She was reunited with her children and was subsequently given an award by the Prime Minister's wife for her crusade against domestic violence.

Rai stars in an intense deglamoured role very similar to that in *Chokher Bali*, a film much appreciated by the international audience.

Source: Internet

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



Ekhon E Shomoy
On Channel i at 9:35pm
Talk Show hosted by Farzana Brownia
Tonight's guest Abdullah Abu Sayeed and Aziz Khan



Shokal Shondha
On ATN Bangla at 8:00pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Ahmed Reza Rubel, Tazin

10:00	Drama Serial: <i>Bishkhoy</i>	09:00	Drama Serial: <i>Diner Ghotona</i>	08:35	Drama Serial: <i>Dokhinyayon</i>	11:55	Bolly V - Star Plus	01:30	Wild Discovery
09:30	<i>Shoropan</i>	09:30	<i>The One</i>	09:20	<i>Article Thirty-Nine</i>	12:00	V Trailers - Star Plus	02:30	Detective Stories
11:25		11:00	<i>Akar Ekar</i>	12:25		12:30	Golu Ke Goggles	03:30	Animal Camera
							07:30	Zach's Ultimate Guide	
							07:30	Africa Week	
							07:30	Himalaya With Michael Palin	
							07:30	Stunt Junkies	
							07:00	Stundaws	
							10:30	Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii	
							10:30	Wild Discovery	
							10:30	Planet Earth	
							10:30	Meerkat Manor	
							10:00		