

Indigenous Performing Art Festival

Behula-Lakhindar's myth staged through 'Royani Gaan'

Artists perform Royani Gaan at the Experimental Theatre Stage

ERSHAD KAMOL

BANGLADESHIS are well acquainted with the legend of Behula-Lakhindar. Sri Sri Maa Manisha Mangol Samprada, a community living in Barisal, staged *Royani Gaan* (an indigenous performing art form that presents a tragic story in a melancholy tune through a nightlong

performance) based on *Padmapuran* at the Experimental Theatre Stage. The troupe put up the show as part of the ongoing indigenous performing art festival arranged by the Department of Theatre and Music of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Through *Ronayi Gaan* the troupe narrated the myth of Behula-Lakhindar composed by Bijay

Gupta some 600 years ago. The USP of *Royani Gaan* presented by the troupe was that the choir narrated the whole myth in a circular movement centring a square small space while the audience occupied the four sides. This was the first time women actors performed in the festival. The lead singer, Shubhashini Bikram, with three other women singers presented the

myth through music, dance, recitation and drama. Four male instrumentalists played indigenous instruments such as *kartal*, *harmonium* and *banshi*. Another male performer participated in the chorus. The tune of the music is highly influenced by *kirtan*. Sometimes the choir presented songs with rhythm and sometimes without. But the main attraction of the show was the incorporation of aesthetic sentiment during presentation by the lead singer Shubhashini.

As per the tradition the show began with *Bandana*. It was followed by an episode where the reason behind composing *Padmapurana* by Bijay Gupta was narrated. Till the marriage scene of Behula-Lakhindar in *Padmapurana*— Swapno Bari, Manoshar Janmo, Manoshar Bibaho, Manoshar Banobash, Rakhal Barir Puja, Chander Baad, Chhoy Kumar Bodh, Chander Durabosha and Lakhindarer Janmo—the performance was basically dance, recitation and music oriented. In the marriage scene, one artiste enacted the role of Lakhindar and another female actor performed the role of Behula. Dramatic presentation was evident from this part on.

As the troupe stage *Ronayi* all night long in rural areas, time and space limitation were the major obstacles faced by the troupe. Consequently, they had to cut short the performance using the narrative technique.

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Husain certainly has put his dot on the universe and inspired a new generation of painters.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent



MF Husain's self portrait
 clique of young artists who wished to break with the nationalist traditions established by the Bengal school of art and to encourage Indian

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ALL TIME GREATS

MF Husain puts his dot on the universe

At the ripe old age of 91, artist Maqbool Fida (MF) Husain still goes strong. Recently he held forth on his latest muse, actress Amrita Rao. "She has entered my canvas. I will construct an entire exhibition around her," says the prolific Husain of the *Vivah* heroine. A touch of his obsession with Madhuri Dixit? Comes the quick response: "Hum apke hain kau" was a fantasy while *Vivah* is quite realistic; it catches the heartbeat of a young woman in a small town. It is not a great film, it doesn't extend the language of cinema. It conveys the importance of good, clean-cut values, to audiences as well as to the carpenters critics."

Husain is no stranger to controversy. Once he was refused admission to the stuffy Calcutta Club on the grounds that his bare feet violated their dress code. Then in the late 1990s his work became embroiled in religious controversy to the extent that he was forced to flee India because of threats to his life. Apparently he evoked the ire of the diehard Hindus for his portrayal of Hindu deities in the nude. The paintings created in 1970, became an issue when they were printed in a Hindu monthly magazine in 1996.

Overseas Husain's art works continue to attract attention. The Peabody Essex Museum (Massachusetts, USA) is holding a solo exhibition of his paintings inspired by the Hindu epic, *Mahabharata*. The exhibition runs from November 4, 2006 to June 3, 2007.

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Beauty in beads

Nahar's display of ornaments

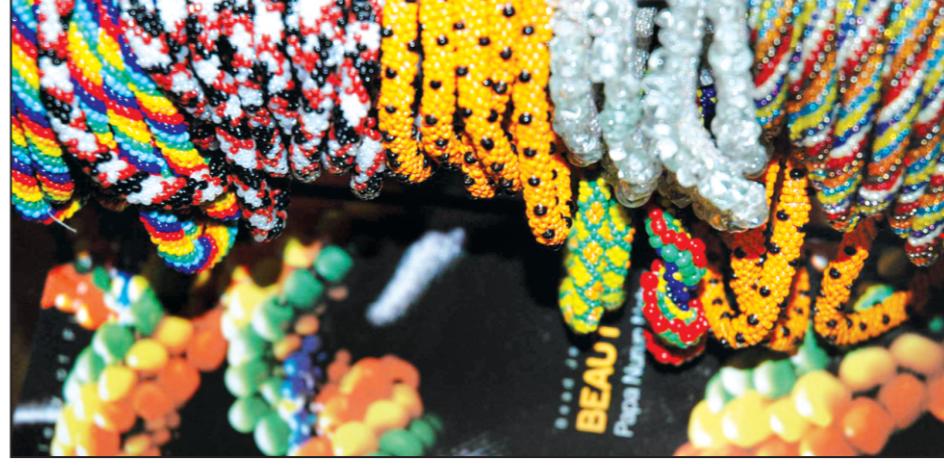
FAYZA HAQ

Nahar's footsteps."

Nurun Nahar said, "Jewellery has been a passion from my childhood. When I was a girl, my father gave me a Sindhi beaded necklace and I treasured it until I finally lost it while travelling in Boston. I've done many courses in beads such as African Zulu and Red Indian specialities. I've studied with Martha Forsythe and Eve Peterson. I've a team with 30 people to help me with my bead work which I began in 2005."

There were necklaces with African colours of blue and red as well as contrasting black and white. Earrings came in the shape and colours of pineapples and Zulu stars. There were necklaces with triangles of blue and gold. Hanging pieces in orange and blue were Latin American in flavour. Earrings with shocking coloured pompons were also in evidence. Snake designs were there to be found along with more formal necklaces with turquoise and pearls. Native American and tribal African colours and motifs were seen everywhere.

Elements of folk art have been combined with modern flavours in Nurun Nahar's creations. The designs are detailed and imaginative. "The jewellery is not just to adorn but to rekindle aesthetic pleasure," the artist says.



(Clockwise) Models display eye catching bead jewellery and a few selected items

CULTURAL FEAST

Music Festival

Organisers: Centre for Education, Creative & Performing Arts, UNESCO Dhaka

Venue: Shaheed Zia Auditorium, Bangladesh National Museum

March 5

Classical, semi-classical and instrumental

Time: 6:30pm

March 6

Folk and Lalon

Time: 6:30pm

Street Theatre Festival 2007

Organiser: Bangladesh Patho

Natak Parishad

Venue: Central Shaheed Minar premises

Date: March 1

Time: 4:30pm

Musical Soiree

Organiser: Chhaynat

Venue: Chhayayan Sangskriti Bhavan,

House no-72, Road no-15/A

Dhamondi, Dhaka

Date: March 1

Time: 6:30pm

Bead Jewellery Exhibition

Organisers: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts

Venue: Bengal Café, House no-275/F, Road no-27 (Old), Dhamondi

Date: February 24- March 2

Time: 12:00pm-8:00pm

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'Amar Chhobi' on channel-i

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT
A magazine programme *Amar Chhobi*, highlighting information about the country's film industry, will be telecast on Channel i at 6:20 pm tonight. The episode deals with the eminent actors, directors and musicians who passed away. The show also features video clippings from latest movies along with the last interviews of the artistes. An Impress Telefilm Ltd production, the show is directed by Shamim Alam Dipen and Shafiuzzaman Khan Lodi.



Nagorik Natyangan staged the 100th show of *Janotor Rangoshala* on February 27 at Mahila Samity Stage. The play is an adaptation by Mojibur Rahman Dilu from Bertolt Brecht's musical theatre, *The Threepenny Opera*. *Janotor Rangoshala* was premiered in 1996. After its 75th performance, Nagorik discontinued the show. Later it was staged under the direction of Dr Enamul Huq. Litterateur Selina Hossain was the chief guest at the 100th staging of the show.

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



Article Thirty Nine
On Banglavision at 9:10pm
Talk Show
Host: Dr Asif Nazrul



Cape Fear
On Star Movies at 10:15pm
Genre: Thriller
Cast: Robert De Niro, Nick Nolte

BTB
11:15 Cookery Show
11:40 Angora
12:05 Maa O Shishur
CHANNEL i
09:30 Shangbad Potre Bangladesh
09:45 Public Reaction
09:50 Grameen Phone
10:00 Shukhi Poribar
10:25 Children's Drama
10:40 Esho Gaan Shikhi
03:05 Cartoon
04:00 Esho Computer
12:30 Cittell Tarakakothon
01:05 Ebong Cinemar Gaan
10:00 Shangbadpotre Bangladesh
01:45 Public Reaction
02:00 Tirthy Matray Apni
05:30 Ityadi
06:40 Jibon Alo
07:00 Shangita
07:20 Shomoyer Shanglap
08:30 Prolidin Bangladesh
08:40 Drama of the week
10:30 Musical Programme
BANGLA
09:20 Drama Serial: Shokal Shondha
07:50 Special Programme
10:30 Talk Show: Aktel
03:45 Onnyodishit
11:05 Aj Kaal Porshu
12:15 Bangla Feature film
03:45 ATN Rannaghari
04:20 Shundor Jiboner Jonno
05:10 Documentary Programme
05:45 Islami Sawal O
06:20 Musical Programme
08:00 Drama Serial: Shokal Shondha
10:10 Desher Pathay
10:45 Chaitali Jochonay
08:40 Drama Serial: Koto Chena Koto Ochena

09:20 Drama Serial: Chhayamukh
09:30 Shangbad Potre Bangladesh
11:00 Stundawgs
11:30 Dangerman
12:30 Adventures With Geoff Mackley
13:00 Feast India
01:00 Finest Hotels In The World
02:30 Friends
08:00 Seinfeld
08:30 American Idol
10:00 According To Jim
10:30 Crumbs
11:00 8 Simple Rules
11:30 Fashion House
AXN TV
10:30 Numb3rs
11:30 Ultimate Guinness World Records
12:00 Rockface
01:00 Ultimate Guinness World Records
02:00 The Ultimate Fighter
03:00 24 (Season 4)
04:00 Pensacola
05:00 Ultimate Guinness World Records
05:30 Rockface
06:30 Amazon
07:30 Numb3rs
08:30 Alias
09:30 Ripley's Believe It Or Not!
10:30 Fear Factor
11:30 Guinness World Records: 50 Years, 50 Records
12:30 Paraya Dhan
STAR PLUS
09:00 Bolly V - Star Plus
09:15 V Trailers - Star Plus
09:30 Kumkum - Pyara Sa Bandhan
10:00 The Sun
02: