

# Soovas Dutt: Undying passion for filmmaking

AHSAN HABIB

ANY account of Bangladeshi film history will not be complete without mentioning Soovas Dutt. He is one of those who have remained active in our film industry ever since its inception. He has made a good number of films that contributed greatly to the golden era of Bangla cinema. In a recent interview with *The Daily Star*, the veteran filmmaker talked about his entry into the industry.

Dutt started his career in the film industry as a commercial artist working in film publicity. He did the publicity for *Mukh o Mukhosh*, the first Bangla film made in the then East Pakistan. He designed the logo, poster and the title of the film. His publicity works for several Bangla and Urdu films earned him fame. Though the publicity job was an important aspect of his involvement with the industry, it was never enough. "There had always been creative impulses and inspirations, otherwise I would not be able to come so far."

In 1957, he had the opportunity to watch Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*. "I was greatly moved by the film. Though I had been involved in the industry for quite sometime then, it was a whole new experience for me. I wondered if Ray, also a commercial artist, could make such a film, why can't I? There's no harm in trying." This conviction led him to prepare himself for greater achievements. He started going to libraries and cultural centres including British Council and USIS as they had good collections of books on films and filmmaking.

After attaining considerable theoretical knowledge, he longed to put it to test. As no film institute was there, he had to rely solely on working in films. He requested S M



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Parvez, the editor of *Chitrani*, who was directing *Matir Pahar*, to allow him access to the sets so he could

practically learn the art of filmmaking. Parvez invited him to assist Hassan, the Indian art direc-

tor of the film. "It was an amazing thing for me to get an access to the Film Development Corporation (FDC)."

Dutt never thought of becoming a film actor. The young aspirant director offered his service as an assistant to Ehtesham who was directing *Ei Desh Tomar Amar*. Ehtesham offered him a role of a comedian in the film. And when the film was released, the new comedian became very popular. He acted in quite a few films including hits like *Rajdhanir Bukey* and *Chanda* before he came up with his first directorial venture in 1964. By the end of 1962, he decided not to "waste" his time in acting. "I could realise then I was going in a wrong direction. I am here to make films. I questioned myself where I was heading," he recalls the crucial period of his life.

Dutt's entry as a director is also quite remarkable. He made his first film *Sutorang* with a tragic end. "A lot of my acquaintances told me that people won't like a tragic film from a comedian", Soovas says. He can vividly recall the day when the film was released. Ehtesham accompanied Dutt to the *Mazaar* at High Court premises. They offered *munajaat* and spent the day in anxiety. The film was a huge commercial success and won an award at the South Asian film Festival in Frankfurt.

Dutt is a follower of Swami Vivekananda, "I have tried throughout my life to implement Swamiji's philosophies."

Dutt has directed 25 films so far. According to him he has distanced himself from the industry as "bad elements" have taken over. However, he is not pessimistic about the future, as he believes it to be a 'temporary' phenomenon.

# Amazing lines and colours in viscosity Kalidas' workshop on printmaking ends

FAYZA HAQ

Sounds of *dhol* and *shanaï* heralded the conclusion of Kalidas Karmakar's print workshop at Alliance Francaise Dhaka. The Japanese ambassador, Masauki Inoue, was the chief guest at the occasion. The products of the fortnight's progress were on display on the walls.

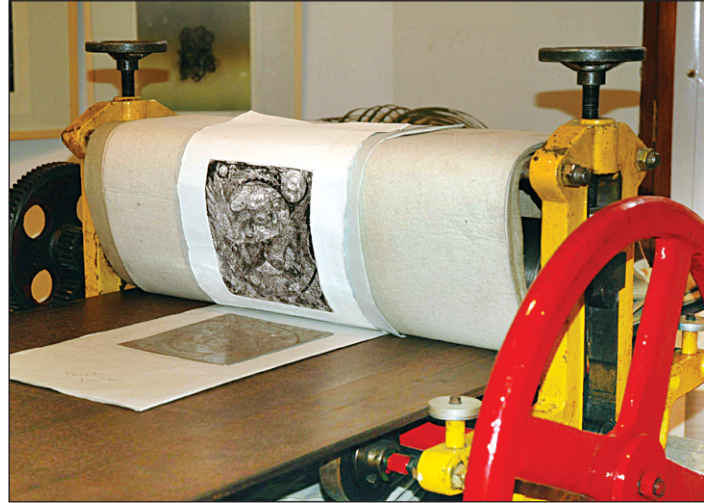
Rashid Amin, a well-known printmaker, had participated at the workshop. He says, "The viscosity technique is something that helps one make colourful work at one go. My subjects deal with escape from prevailing social problems. One has two elfin-like figures speeding in different directions and playing the horn. A dancing man, done in red, orange and green, comes in the next print. Floating figures are featured in his last print while bars of green and yellow brighten the image."

Nazia Andaleeb displayed her work -- dry point, etching and viscosity -- inspired by the techniques taught by Kalidas. One of her works is abstract and deals with impressions of a face. Next there is a female face along with figures of animals, with lines, and sketches and the last print has a female figure that has been turned into a lotus. "At the workshop I

learnt printmaking -- in which a lot of lines are used -- which I'm sure will help my career," says Andaleeb, "I hope to combine oil painting with print in future."

Tariq Zaulfikar, another upcoming artist, says, "The viscosity technique is something that helps one make colourful work at one go. My subjects deal with escape from prevailing social problems. One has two elfin-like figures speeding in different directions and playing the horn. A dancing man, done in red, orange and green, comes in the next print. Floating figures are featured in his last print while bars of green and yellow brighten the image."

A print by Proshanto Karmakar shows Buddha meditating, placed on a giant lotus. Birds are included in the same composition. "The entire world needs to meditate, such is the prevailing situation today," says Proshanto. Green and orange dominate his work. The dove of peace has been brought in another creation and



here too the artist has harmony in mind. Nagarbashi Barman, another artist, has brought in fish, nets, harpoons, boats and the sea in his work. Dry point and etching have been used in his black and white and sepia works.

Qamruzzaman's print brings in

drawings of worms, owls, vultures and human bodies that appear to be stitched at the back. "I bring in not-so-pleasant images to reflect the topsy-turvy political situation in the country," the young artist says, "I've brought in the nude figure too as I believe that's how nature intended man to be." He has worked in dry point and viscosity.

Imran Ali in his prints tries to reflect his belief that humans have evolved physically but so much mentally. He has created figures within figures, one intermingling with another, in his effort to depict evolution of man.

Afroza Sultana depicts a conglomeration of dragonflies; insects that she has been fascinated with since childhood. This is in dry point and in black and white. Her other image features masks, which Afroza believes is an integral part of our culture. Works by Sadia, another aspiring artist, deals with the bourgeois women's hang-up with beautiful garments and jewelry.

Abul Barq Alvi, professor at the Institute of Fine Arts DU, commenting on the prints, says that the work, done in a brief period proves that the young artists can do well, given needed motivation and guidance. Hashem Khan, acclaimed artist too had high praises for the workshop.



PHOTO: STAR

A demonstration of printmaking (top), musicians perform at the workshop

# HSBC launches second volume of 'Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan'

KARIM WAHEED

To celebrate the last 100 years of Bangla music, the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd (HSBC) in Bangladesh held a musical soiree at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Dhaka in February 2006. The colossal event was attended by who's who in the social and cultural scene. Encouraged by the massive response from music enthusiasts in the country and to preserve the songs presented at that event, HSBC recorded the performances in three CDs. The collection titled *Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan* was launched in May, last year.

This year in February, HSBC organised another musical soiree on a grander scale (also titled *Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan*), a continuation to last year's initiative. Featuring 42 songs back-to-back by A-listed artistes including Shahnaz Rahmatullah, Sabina Yasmin, Mitai Mukharji, Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna, Mita Haque, Syed Abdul Hadi, Samina Chowdhury, Bashir Ahmed, Ram



PHOTO: STAR

(L-R): Mustafizur R Khan, Md Mahub-ur-Rahman, Steve Banner and Dr Karunamaya Goswami at the album launch

Kanai Das and several others, the evening pulled in around 1200 music lovers. Channel i will air the programme in May.

On April 11, HSBC launched the second volume of *Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan* at Bay's Galleria. The Album is collection of 4 CDs and includes all 42 songs performed at the programme held in February 2007.

At the album launch, Mustafizur R Khan, head of Marketing and Public Relations, HSBC Bangladesh said, "Recording live performances while ensuring the quality of sound is challenging; the credit goes to Tanvir Alam (sound engineer) and Bengal Music Company Ltd for technical assistance."

Md Mahub-ur-Rahman, corporate banking head of HSBC, hoped

that music enthusiasts would enjoy reliving the golden era of Bangla music.

Steve Banner, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh said, "HSBC is committed to promote the local culture and heritage. The *Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan* concerts and albums are part of that initiative."

Dr. Karunamaya Goswami, noted researcher and music exponent said, "History records the evolution of music in this part of the world goes back 1,100 years but the last century in particular is the most significant period in our music. Kudos to HSBC for organising these impressive programmes and bringing out albums featuring classic Bangla songs. Hopefully their endeavours will continue in bigger and better ways."

According to HSBC, while the limited edition album will not be available for sale, complimentary copies will be made available to customers who take out new personal instalment loans between April 15 and May 30, 2007.

## Special TV Programmes on Pahela Baishakh

On the occasion of Pahela Baishakh TV Channels will air special programmes, including TV plays, magazine shows and musical programmes. A roundup of the special programmes on April 14:

### ATN Bangla

From 6:00 to 8:30am ATN Bangla will air *Baishakhi* celebrations live from Rabindra Sarobar, Dhanmondi. At 11:10am *Elorey Baishakh*, a dance



A scene from Baishakher Adda

programme, will be aired. At 12:15pm musical programme *Shurer Madhuri* will be aired. At 12:45pm *Baishakher Dhol*, a programme for children will be broadcast. *Baishakher Adda*, a talk show featuring cultural personalities will be telecast at 1:15pm. Telefilm, *Ebong Tahara* will be aired at 3:15pm; cast includes Shahiduzzaman Selim, Tarin, Litu Anam and others. At 8:00pm *Jokhon Shob Alo Nibhey Jaye*, a single episode TV play will be aired; Tarin and Mahfuz Ahmed are in the lead roles.

### Channel i

At 6:00am Channel i will air Chhayanat's *Baishakhi* celebrations live from Ramna Park. At 9:45am a special episode of the popular talk show, *Tritimatra* will be telecast. At 12:30pm a special episode of *Citycell Tarokakathan* will be aired. Bangla feature film *Shajghor*, based on a literary



A scene from Esho Baishakh

work by Humayun Ahmed, will be telecast at 2:30pm. The cast includes Manna, Moushumi and Dighi. A special episode of *Hridoye Mati O Manush*, titled *Farmer's File-3*, will be aired at 9:35pm. At 10:00pm game show *Esho Baishakh* hosted by Farzana Brownia will be aired. The programme features Akhi Alamgir, Kaniz Almas, Emdad Hossain, Monalisa, Shojol, Chayanika

Chowdhury and others.

### Banglavisión

At 6:00am musical programme, *Nobo Anondey Jago* will be aired. Dance programme *Ek Pahela Baishakh* will be aired at 12:10pm. A single episode TV play *Baishakhi* will be aired at 2:35pm. The cast includes Tauquir Ahmed, Bijori Barkatullah, Dolly Zahur and others. At 5:00pm dance programme



Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna (C) and Nirmolendu Goon (R) in Amar Ami

*Shombhashon* will be broadcast. At 8:05pm a single episode TV play *Habumiya Matir* will be telecast. A special episode of *Amar Ami* featuring Nirmolendu Goon and Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna will be aired at 9:20pm.

### ntv

At 4:05pm *Dhanshiri Noditir Parey* will be aired. *Ganey Ganey Baishakh* a musical programme will be aired at 4:45pm. At 5:20pm talk show, *Bodley Jahchey Gram* will be aired. At 9:00pm tele-film *Anonto Prodeep* will be telecast.

### Boishakhi

At 2:00pm *Loko Utshob* will be aired. At 8:30pm *Dhruamel*, a programme



A scene from Shonai Madhob

featuring *Manipuri mridongo* dance, will be aired. At 10:30pm dance-drama *Shonai Madhob*, based on a story from *Mymensingho Geetika*, will be aired. Produced by Amy Rahman, the programme features performances by Aminul Islam, Belayet Hossain, Dulal Chandra Saha, Amy Rahman and others.

## CULTURAL FEAST



### Nobobarsho Boron

**Organiser:** Chhayanat  
**Venue:** Ramna Batamul, Ramna Park  
**Date and Time:** April 14, starts at 6:00am

### Nobo Borsher Gaan

**Organiser:** Bengal Foundation  
**Venue:** Bengal Shipalaya, 275/F, Road 27, Dhanmandi  
**Date:** April 13,  
Patriotic Songs-- 6:15pm  
Songs of Five Poets and Kirtaan--7:15pm  
Classical recital on Sarode--8pm

**Date and Time:** April 14  
Golpo Ghar and Puppet Show --11am  
Rhythm Instruments --6:15pm  
Folk songs --6:30  
Songs of Five Poets and Recitation--7pm  
**Date:** April 15  
Classical music (vocals)--7pm  
Classical music (instrumental)--Violin--8pm  
Songs of Five Poets--8:30pm

**Organiser:** Shurer Dhara  
Two hundred and fifty years of Bangla songs  
**Venue:** Lalmatia Girls high School  
**Date and Time:** April 13, at 6:30



**Organiser:** Wishish Shilpi Gosthi  
**Venue:** Bhasani Street, Narkelbithi Chottor, Shishu Park premises  
**Date and Time:** April 14, starts at 7:00am

### Mask Festival

**Organiser:** Prakritojon Projonmo  
**Event:** Barsho Bidaye  
**Date and Time:** April 13, starts at 9:30am  
**Venue:** Natmandol Auditorium, DU  
**Programme:** Chamunda and Koyeliya Naach, punthi paath and drama

