

CULTURALFEAST

Screening of Satyajit Ray films



Films: Pather Panchali, Aparajito, Apur Sansar, Agantuk, Kanchenjunga, Charulata, Asani Sanket, Jana Aranya, Aranyer Din Ratri, Hirak Rajar Deshe, Shakha Prashakha and Ghare-Baire
Organiser: Rainbow Film Society
Venue: Sufa Kamal Auditorium, National Museum
Date: April 23-25
Time: Daily at 11am, 2pm, 4pm and 6pm

Organiser: Goethe- Institut Bangladesh in cooperation with Children's Film Society, Bangladesh
Date: April 26, May 31
Venue: Goethe- Institut Bangladesh auditorium
Time: 4:00pm

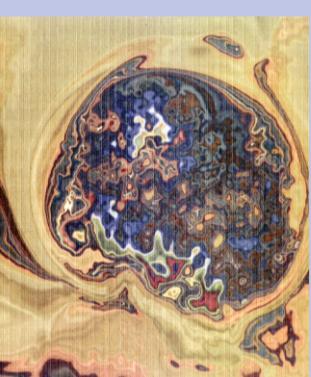
Loko Oitija Prodorshoni: Kantha

Organiser: Liberation War Museum
Venue: Liberation War Museum
Date: April 20-29

Ikebana Exhibition

Artist: Jonaki Mahmud
Venue: Conference Hall of BNCCU, BANBESIS Bhaban, Palasya-Nikhet
Date: April 30

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: The Forms and Poetry of Nature
Artist: Akash Ghosh
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, House 275/F, Road 27 (old) Dhanmondi
Date: April 21-May 5
Time: 12pm-8pm



Artist: Rabi Khan
Organiser: Alliance Francaise La Gallery
Date: April 26-May 2
Time: 9am-5pm

Photography Exhibition

By the members of Muktachokh, Pathshala, 2007
Title: Balyati Prashade
Venue: Alliance Francaise Gallery, Zoom, 26 Mirpur Road, Dhammondi
Date: April 20-May 3
Time: Saturday-Friday 9am-12pm, 5pm-8pm

Portrait of an esraj player

Ekram Hossain speaks on his art

ERSHAD KAMOL

The 200-year-old instrument *esraj*, a combination of *sitar* and *sarangi*, was found in the east-central India, particularly in Bengal. *Esraj* is mostly used as an accompanying instrument in Rabindra Sangeet. It is also played solo as well as an accompanying instrument in North Indian classical music, mostly in the Vishnupur gharana.

A staff artiste of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, AFM Ekram Hossain, is one of the very few *esraj* players in the country. Besides playing classical recitals at concerts, based on lucid ragas such as *ragesree*, *desh* and *khamaaj*, Ekram plays *esraj* as an accompanying instrument with commercial music, Rabindra Sangeet, and dance. *Nupur* and *Nritiyanchal*, composed by Ekram, are the only available albums in the country for *Kathak* dance at present. Ekram has played both *esraj* and *tabla* in the albums. Moreover, as a member of the government delegation he has showcased his skills in *esraj* overseas several times.

Recalling his early career, Ekram said, "Music runs in my family. I took my first lesson in music from my father Mohammad Saad Taqir, a *tabla* player of Radio Khulna. He insisted that I learn string instrument, as he thought *tabla* players have less scope in the country. Then I went to Ustad Shamim Sarkar to learn *esraj*. From then



Ekram Hossain

production of Tagore's popular play *Raktokorobi*, directed by Mustafa Monwar. Subsequently he joined Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy as an *esraj* player in 1979.

Ekram faced several ups and downs, which left him utterly confused and he had little option but to take a temporary break as an accompanist.

"Unfortunately, the popularity of *esraj* has been steadily declining. When I went to learn more on the instrument from Ustad Phuljhuri Khan, he discouraged me by saying that *esraj* players have no future in the country. And he suggested that I shift to some other instruments. That's why I gave up *esraj* and leaned towards *tabla*. As a *tabla* player of the government delegation I've travelled to many countries.

"But, only a few years back, renowned composers like Shujeo Shyam, Mohammad Mannan and Maksud Jamil Mintu encouraged me to continue playing *esraj*, saying better days are ahead for the musicians. And now I feel that I've wasted my time playing *tabla*, leaving *esraj*. Nowadays I'm busy in the commercial field."

As Ekram has no mentor, he practices *esraj* while listening to recitals by Indian gurus. However, he is doing some experiments. To quote him, "If, the mike of gramophone is added with the *esraj*, it produces a sound similar to that of a *shehnai*. I recreate the *taar shahnai* in this way."

onwards I began to play both the instruments – *tabla* and *esraj*."

In 1974 Ekram joined Radio Khulna as an *esraj* and *tabla* player. Ekram

Later, in 1978 he joined the transcription service of Bangladesh Betar as an *esraj* artiste. Ekram played *esraj* in 1978 in the BTV

PHOTO: STAR

Birishiri Upojatiyo Cultural Academy in dire straits



Dancers from ethnic communities perform at the academy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

The aim of Birishiri Upojatiyo Cultural Academy in Netrakona is to preserve and promote the traditions and cultures of the ethnic groups in greater Mymensingh region.

Birishiri is a small rural area near Durgapur upazila headquarters. It is a centre for cultural, religious and educational activities of the Garo and Hajong peo-

ple. The academy was established in 1977. Birishiri is about 45 kilometres from Mymensingh and 20 kilometres from Netrakona. Durgapur and adjacent Dubaura and Kalmakanda upazilas have a sizeable population of ethnic groups – mainly Garo and Hajong.

According to the research officer of the academy, Sreejan Sangma, the academy stretches over three acres of land. The main centre is a two storied building. There is an auditorium adjacent to

the main centre. A spacious auditorium with all modern facilities and 1000 seats is quite impressive in a remote area.

The ground floor houses the office. There is a separate rehearsal room for artistes. A spacious room is used as an archive of artefacts. However, due to inadequate funds, new books cannot be procured for the library, adds Sreejan Sangma.

The academy offers a three year-course on ethnic cultural

activities – namely traditional dance, songs, drama and folk festivals. There is provision for twenty students to get admitted in each session.

However, the academy is mostly understaffed and regular activities are hampered due to financial constraints.

Birishiri Cultural Academy which strives to work as a platform for ethnic arts and culture desperately needs attention of the concerned authorities, says Sreejan Sangma.

Musical soiree

An evening of Tagore songs by Nandan

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Cultural organisation Nandan, recently arranged a special musical programme featuring Tagore songs.

The programme, dedicated to the memory of Tagore exponent Waheedul Haque, titled *Dhora de drishir bondhon-e*, was held at Chhayanat Sangskruti Bhawan.

Renowned Tagore singer Sadia Muhammad and promising singers

of Nandan performed in the programme. Farzana Rahman Boni, Sushmita Golam, Saiful Islam, Suraiya Moazzam, Mahmudur Rahman, Anjuman Ferdousi Kakoli, Tanzina Parveen Toma, Tamanna Khan and Neelotpal Shadhyia rendered a variety of songs. Nishat Jahan Rana recited poems by Tagore in between the songs.

Songs rendered at the programme included *Tomaro modhuroo roop, Jey torye pagol boley, Jibon jokhon shukaye jaye, Ami jeney shuney bish korechhi paan, Prokhor tonopo tapey, Chokher joler laglo jowar* and more.

Sunil Kumar Sarkar played keyboard while Giasuddin was on the violin, Mritunjay Majumdar was on tabla and Nazmun Alam played mandira.

It was Nandan's 15th programme.



Artistes of Nandan perform at the programme

PHOTO: STAR



Kitab Ali Boyati performs 'Ghatu Gaan' at a programme on folk art forms that are on the verge of extinction. The programme was organised by Prothom Alo Bondhushobha in Tangail recently



The newlyweds – Aishwarya and Abhishek – accompanied by Amitabh and Jaya Bachchan along with a few close ones made a flying visit to Tirupati after the wedding to gather further blessings, this time from the shrine to Shri Venkateshwara in the seven hills at Tirumala, the second most popular religious site in the world. Amitabh Bachchan came to the temple to seek blessings just before the Aishwarya-Abhishek wedding on April 15, and apparently donated Rs 51 lakhs

TV GUIDE



PICK OF THE DAY

ICC World Cup 2007
First Semi Final
On Btv at 7:15pm
New Zealand v Sri Lanka
Live from Sabina Park, Jamaica



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11:15	Undercover Brother	10:30	Sports Disasters 4
12:45	Method	11:30	House (Season 1)
STAR WORLD			
09:30	The Oprah Winfrey Show	12:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
10:30	My Wife And Kids	11:30	Colours of India
11:00	The King Of Queen	10:30	Extreme Weapons
11:30	Grey's Anatomy	11:30	Extreme Machines
12:30	Still Standing	12:30	Baby It's You
01:00	Frasier	01:00	Runway Moms
01:30	Prison Break	01:30	African Week
02:00	Oprah Winfrey Show	02:30	Detective Stories
03:00	The Bold And The Beautiful	03:30	Mythbusters
04:00	General Hospital	04:00	Will India Week
06:00	Less Than Perfect	06:00	Million 2 One
06:30	The Simpsons	06:30	Everything You Need to Know
07:00	Cheers	07:30	Deadliest Catch
07:30	Friends Sr 8	07:30	African Week
08:00	Seinfeld	08:00	Spiritual Nation
08:30	Falcon Beach	08:30	Baby Story
09:00	The O.C.	09:00	Deadliest Catch
10:30	Prison Break	10:30	Spiritual Nation
11:30	Fashion House	11:30	Baby Whisperer
DISCOVERY CHANNEL			
09:30	Colours of India	09:30	Mega Builders
10:30	Extreme Weapons	10:30	Extreme Machines
11:30	Extreme Machines	11:30	National Geographic
12:30	Baby It's You	12:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
01:00	Runway Moms	01:00	Colours of India
01:30	African Week	01:30	Extreme Machines
02:00	Detective Stories	02:00	Extreme Weapons
03:00	Mythbusters	03:00	Extreme Machines
04:00	Will India Week	04:00	Colours of India
05:30	Million 2 One	05:30	Extreme Machines
06:00	Everything You Need to Know	06:00	Extreme Machines
06:30	Deadliest Catch	06:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
07:30	African Week	07:30	Colours of India
08:00	Spiritual Nation	08:00	Extreme Machines
09:00	Baby Story	09:00	Extreme Machines
10:30	Deadliest Catch	10:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
11:30	Spiritual Nation	11:30	Colours of India
STAR SPORTS			
12:30	Guinness 9 Ball Tour	12:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
02:00	Irb Sevens World Series	02:00	Colours of India
02:30	Spanish Football League	02:30	Extreme Weapons
03:00	Tna Archive (Wrestling)	03:00	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
04:30	International Motorsport News 20	04:30	Colours of India
05:30	Tna Archive (Wrestling)	05:30	Extreme Weapons
06:30	Hitz (Cricket)	06:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
07:30	India's Best With Sunil Gavaskar	07:30	Colours of India
08:00	Debutants	08:00	Extreme Weapons
09:00	Remember The Titans	09:00	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
09:30	Cricket Crazy	09:30	Colours of India
10:30	Tna Archive	10:30	Extreme Weapons
11:30	Spirit Of Yachting - The Racers	11:30	Guinness World Records: Primetime (Season III)
12:00	Fei World Cup Jumping Qualifiers	12:00	Colours of India
ESPN			
12:30</td			