

## CULTURALFEAST



## Closing ceremony of National Dance Festival

**Organiser:** Bangladesh Nritya Shilpi Sangshto  
**Venue:** National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy  
**Date:** April 29 at 6:30 pm

## Swadeshi Properties Nritya Utsab 2007

**Organisers:** Naba Nritya and The Embassy of the People's Republic of China  
**Venue:** Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Public Library, Shahbag  
**Date:** April 29- 'Surjumukhi Nadi' by BAFA  
 April 30- 'Kushumer Shapno' by Ballet group  
 May 1- 'Shonai Madhab' by Ami's Workshop  
**Time:** 5-9pm

## Theatre Festival

**Organiser:** Space and Acting Research Centre  
**Venue:** Natmondol, Dhaka University Campus  
**Date:** April 29-30  
**Time:** 7pm

## Ikebana Exhibition

**Artist:** Jonakay Mahmud  
**Venue:** Conference Hall of BNUC, BANBESIS Bhaban, Palassy-Nikhet  
**Date:** April 30

## Put on your dancing shoes

## SHARMILA BANDYOPADHYAYA

DANCE is the movement of the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing an idea or emotion, releasing energy or simply taking delight in the movement itself. In other words "Dancing is an elegant and regular movement, harmoniously composed of beautiful attitudes and contrasted graceful posture of the body and the parts thereof. One of the most basic motives of dance is the expression and the communication of emotion. People and even certain animals often dance as a way of releasing powerful feelings, such as sudden accesses of high spirits, joy, impa-

tience or anger.

For quite some years now dancers of the world have been celebrating 29th of April as the International Dance Day, as designated by the Dance committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI). The date commemorates the birth of Jean Georges Noverre, born in 1727, who was a great dance performer and a reformer of dance.

Every year a message from a well known dance personality is circulated throughout the world. The intention of International Dance Day and the message is to bring all the dancers together on this day, to celebrate this art form and revel in its universality, to cross all political, cultural and ethnic barriers and bring people together

in friendship with a common language- Dance. In 1995, an effort to unite dance, the International Dance Committee entered into a collaborative effort for the celebration of International Dance Day with World Dance Alliance.

It is usual for the Dance Committee of ITI to send out a message every year. This year's message has been penned by Sasha Waltz, an artistic director and choreographer. Sasha was born in Karlsruhe in 1963 in Germany. In September 1999, Sasha Waltz was named one of the artistic directors of Berlin's Schaubuhne am Lehniner Platz.

In the message she highlights the Universality of the language of dance. It goes as follows:

"One dances on birthdays, at weddings, on the street, in the living rooms, on the stage, behind the scenes. To communicate joy, sorrow, as ritual and borderline experience."

Dance is a universal language: emissary for a peaceful world, for equality, tolerance and compassion.

Dance teaches us sensibility, consciousness and to pay attention to the moment.

Dance is the manifestation of our being alive. Dance is the transformation. Dance locates the soul, dance affords the body a spiritual dimension.

Dance enables us to feel our body, to rise above, to go beyond, to be another body.

To dance is to participate actively in the vibration of the universe."



Sasha Waltz

Dancers in Bangladesh have been celebrating the International Dance Day for quite some time now under the aegis of the Bangladesh chapter of the International Dance Committee of ITI. For the last few years Bangladesh Dance Artiste's Association has been observing the day in grand scale. This year the annual Festival of the Association began on the April 23rd and will conclude on the International Dance Day 29th April. Dancers in colourful costumes from all over the country will come to Dhaka to join the rally in the morning and the programme at the National Theatre ( Shilpkala Academy ) in the evening.

The writer is a noted dancer and choreographer.

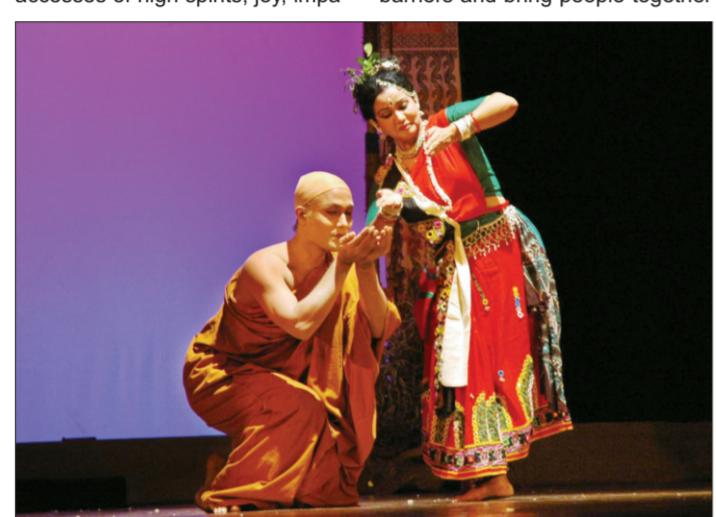


PHOTO: STAR

Sharmila Bandyopadhyaya and Abdur Rashid Shapan in Chandalika

## In praise of dance

Exponents of different genres share their thoughts on celebrating International Dance Day with The Daily Star



**Anisul Islam Hero**, a Bharat Natyam dancer, speaking on International Dance Day, says that Nritayadhara is performing a dance for the students and parents of SWID Bangladesh. Some of the differently-abled children will be participating too. Some Japanese dance students, living in Bangladesh and learning under Hero will perform too.

"To mark this occasion Bangladesh Dance Artists' Association are performing in Dhaka and some other major cities from April 23 to April 29." He adds, "Being a dancer I'm proud that we can bring dance to the ordinary people. It is a big achievement for us indeed when dance is performed on TV and the stage."

Asked if many male dancers are coming up to perform, Hero says that many of them are today making a living out of it and so male dancers is a common phenomenon.



**Munmun Ahmed**, a Kathak dancer, adds that they were hoping to take out a procession to mark the day but as all the schools are open they couldn't manage it. "There is a lecture demonstration programme on Kathak in the evening before the closing programme at Shilpkala. Later on, at 7:30 pm there will be a dance festival by Anisul Islam Hero's students at the Public Library," Munmun says. Her final remark is that it feels great that there will be a major focus on dance today.

**Tamanna Rahman**, an exponent of Manipuri dance, talking about her participation for the day says, "For all dancers this day has a special significance. And it is a pleasure that we are able to celebrate it with dancers all over the world. I myself will be having a live interview on one of the private channels. The evening at Shilpkala Academy, at National Art Gallery, will be a gala occasion too. Many groups from outside Dhaka will be coming for the occasion. In conclusion I'd like to add that dance improves life both physically and mentally and I hope the guardians of children will encourage them to come forward to learn dancing."

The danseuse with an intellectual turn  
In conversation with Lubna Mariam

## KAVITA CHARANJI

"Art is all about introspection and introspection has to start with the artiste. The minute art comes from the heart, then it is all about creativity," says cerebral danseuse Lubna Mariam who has devoted the last few years to the study of Indian aesthetics. "One way of seeking and realising unity is through creativity and creation where mankind can reclaim its rightful harmony with nature and within its own folds," she adds, talking about her search for Creative Unity.

As general secretary of Shadrona, A Centre for Advancement of South Asian Music and Dance, she seeks to promote classical music and dance of this subcontinent. The organisation has the mandate to organise dance productions, festivals, workshops and lecture demonstrations as well as facilitate cultural exchange between Bangladesh and India.

Though she has not been performing for a year—in her words she is hard pressed for time to practice—she has spent many hours in search of the right dance genre. From her early training in the early 1960s in an avant-garde style of dance at Bulbul Lalit Kala Academy, she later trained in Bharatnatyam and Manipuri. Then she found her calling in 'Rabindra Nitro', a fusion of dance styles. Among the teachers who have inspired her along the way are Poornima Ghosh, principal choreographer and dancer with the Shantiniketan Ashramik Sangha (an alumni association of Vishwabharati) along with Shantibala Saha.

Much accolades have come her way. In 1977, she bagged the Shresto Nitro Shilpi award by Bangladesh Television. Later in 2003 she won the Bulbul Chowdhury Puruskar by the Bangladesh Dancer's Association.

Among her formidable achievements are her inspired interpretations of Tagore's 'Bhanushinger Padavali' and on to central roles in 'Shyama' and 'Maya'. She has also been a key member of cultural delegations to several countries.

Far from hanging up her shoes and calling it a day, Lubna has spent the last few years in studying Sanskrutider the aegis of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). First she trained under Dr Radhavallabha Tripathi of Dr Hari Singh Gour University, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, India and then with Dr C Rajendran of the University of Calicut, Kerala.

Recently, Shadrona produced two dance dramas at the National Theatre Stage 'Bhanushinger Padabali', a Tagorean dance drama and 'Badol Borishone', a compilation of Nazrul's monsoon songs. The former was staged by a group called Bhavana and the latter by Nrityanjali.

Plans are afoot to produce a folk dance drama in the



PHOTO: STAR

Lubna Mariam in a graceful stance

narrative theatre style based on Jasimuddin's 'Beder Meye'. Shadrona is also gearing up for a musical festival around November or December.

Another interesting project is a South Asian media initiative. The programme aims to promote linkages between SAARC countries and was launched at the recent SAARC summit in New Delhi.

Lubna a firm advocate of South Asian cooperation, says, "When we think of ourselves as South Asians, it helps us to emerge from our national pigeonholes. This is an era of regionalism. You have the EU, ASEAN, so why not a cohesive Southasia?"

The bottom line of Lubna's endeavour is to showcase Bangladeshi dance talent. "Where else do you have a nation full of young dancers?" she questions.

## Cultural evening by Ekmatra

## MAINUL HASSAN

Ekmatra, a welfare organisation for underprivileged children held a discussion programme and cultural evening at National Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy (BSA) on April 27, marking their third founding anniversary.

The organisation was founded in August, 2003 by some students of DU, with a dream to help the street children. Currently they are running a rehabilitation centre called Anonodo. The children at the centre are mainly street children whose parents have deserted them. The members of Ekmatra locates the children and gives them shelter at the centre.

The evening was inaugurated by Quamrul Hassan, ndc Director General, BSA. The programme was divided into three sessions. The first session featured a discussion on the role of youth in social development. Professor Dr Najmul Ahsan Kalimullah, Chairman, Department of Public Administration DU; Professor A FM Yusuf Haider, Pro Vice Chancellor, DU and noted film maker Tareq Masud

spoke at the event. Prior to the discussion the website of Ekmatra was launched by Iftekharuzzaman, Executive director, TIB.

The discussion was followed by a cultural evening. A high point was the presentation of Bharatnatyam dance by Japanese performers.

The Japanese dancers Shinto Rie, Nagaoka Michiko, Mitsunaga Kazue

and Tsuruda Yuki staged two performances—'Puspanjali' and 'Jyotiswaran'. They have been receiving their dance lessons from Anisul Islam Hiru.

The children of the rehab center performed group songs and dance. A short documentary on the achievements of Ekmatra was also screened.



PHOTO: STAR

Eager students of Bharatnatyam

## TV GUIDE

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

## BTV

08:40 Bishwa Protidin

09:05 Shomapti

11:15 Drama

12:30 Swapno Shonar Gaon

01:00 Maa O Shihur Kotha

01:30 Mati O Manush

02:15 Laukik Bangla

02:40 Cartoon

03:05 Educational

Programme

03:30 Shobor Jonno Cinema

04:00 Angona

04:30 Selected

Programme

05:05 TV debate

06:40 Tagore Song

07:05 Shamprotik

Proshongo

07:30 Nritter Talei Talei

08:30 Protidin Bangladesh

08:35 Drama Serial:

Shukh Shur

10:30 Selected

Programme

ATN BANGLA

04:05 Crikalk Bishwa Cup

02:30 Talk Show:

Onnordishti

11:05 Smile Show

12:15 Shushno Thakun

01:30 Shornali Shadakalo

02:40 Independence Day

Debate Competition

05:00 Gram Gonjer

Khobor

05:10 Documentary

Programme

05:45 The Sword of Tipu Sultan

Three Stooges

08:00 Drama Serial:

Outdoor

08:40 Drama Serial: Nirey

## Channel i

09:20 Taar Nil Dheu

Drama Serial: Pichhutan

08:30 Shokaler Gaan

Shangbadpore

Bangladesh

09:45 Public Reaction

Grameenphone

Tritiromatra

11:05 Apollo Tele Pre-

scription

03:30 Shobor Jonno Cinema

12:30 Citycell Taroka

Kathan

01:05 Ebong Cinemar Gaan

01:30 Shangbadpore