

Past glory in frames

Photo exhibition on Balyati Palace

FAYZA HAQ

ONE of the best ways to document the exquisite grandeur of old buildings is to photograph them. Muktochokh, a photography club, has done and the outputs are on display at the ongoing exhibition at the Zoom Gallery of Alliance Francaise. The subject of the photos is Balyati Palace -- a compound that includes seven south-facing buildings stretching over an area of 16 square kilometres -- built by a local aristocrat between mid-nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Gobind Ram Saha, the head of the family was an affluent merchant towards the end of the eighteenth century; he and his descendants were known in the region as "zamindars".

One of the photographs, taken by Hasan, captures a section of the palace in a mirror of a motorcycle. In it one can see pillars, a veranda with balustrades with their details. The reflec-

tion also brings in larger sections of the building beyond. This fraction of the beauty of the seven buildings is admirable for the ingenious way the photograph has been taken.

Anisul Haq has taken a shot of the entrance of the palace. The photo also includes an old man in "dhuti", walking by with steady strides. The pillars hold up the statue of two lions with swinging tails. The surrounding trees, hedges and ponds have also been included in the photo through an arch.

Details of carvings of angels and snakes, as if they are protecting the palace, have been brought in Wasim Haider's work. Details of the interlacing flowers and branches have been framed in the shot. The surrounding massive pillars and mangrove trees have also been included in the composition.

Through a small three-cornered opening in one side of the palace wall is seen the image of a perched bird. One can see a part of a dome

too. This picture was taken by Haider Chowdhury.

A photo by Sohel brings in the shadow of a veranda, highlighting the intricate details of the metal and cement work. The coloured picture is quite pale despite the touch of pink and blue; in that it has a black and white effect.

Jashim Uddin's photograph shows photographers from another group working on the same project. This picture has been taken through an opening in the walls of the palace.

Focusing the frolicking light and shade on a ventilator is another interesting photograph that brings in the impression of a flower.

In what used to be the quarters for the domestic help, back in the palace's heyday, people from the neighbouring poorer sections now reside. Bricks are exposed as the plaster from the walls has fallen.

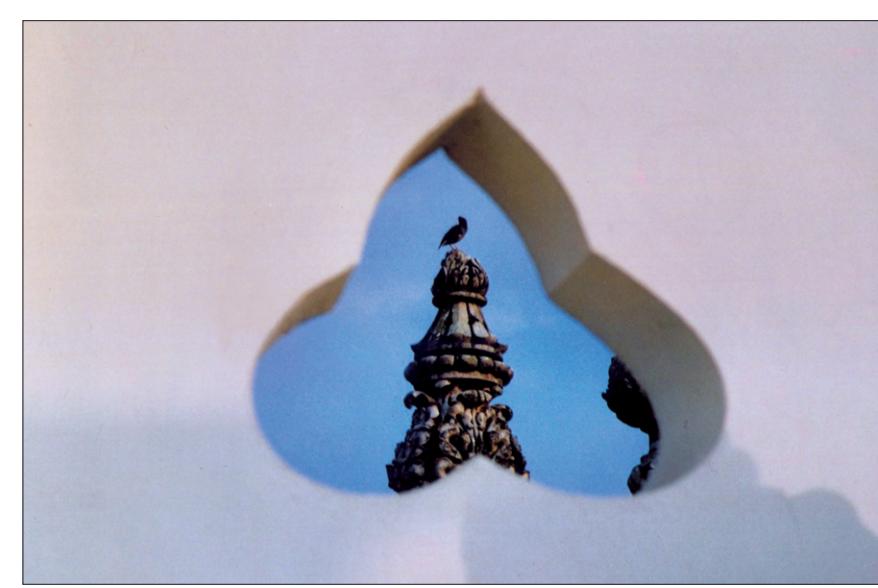
The photographs are sure to stir up the viewers' curiosity and satiate their aesthetic



senses. The exhibition ends today.



Photographs on display



The exhibition ends today.

'Platform', 'Shanki' and 'Jantob' staged

Three short plays by Ashish Khondoker

ERSHAD KAMOL

Three short theatre performances by Space and Acting Research Centre, Dhaka, were staged at Natmondal Auditorium, University of Dhaka, on April 29 and April 30. Written and directed by Ashish Khondoker, the common feature of these one-act experimental plays is an attempt to analyse the human psyche. Khondoker has tried to zoom in on the dark sides of human beings. His characters are usually lechers and self-contradicting; cruel yet cowards, realists but like to fanaticise, protest against oppression yet oppress others.

The first play *Platform* can be labelled as "theatre of absurd". Two characters -- a vagabond and a junior attendant of a station -- wait at a platform for a train, numbered 6065. Through 'stream of words', different aspects of the human psyche are highlighted in the play. Both characters hate their traits. The play ends with the characters rejecting the faulty social structure and waiting for the driver of the train who will lead them to a better place. However, they cannot find a person in real life who owns the qualities to be the 'driver' of the train. Who will change the system then?

Featuring the tragic story of a couple, the second play *Shanki* analyses the cruelty of oppressors. Love and passion appear as meaningless 'buzz words' in the



A scene from *Shanki*

PHOTO: STAR

play.

The last play *Jantob* presents the onslaught of finance capitalism.

The central character of the play is a brutal gangster who wants to rule everything at any cost.

As the director of the short plays, Khondoker's endeavour

deserves plaudits. Specifically, the play *Shanki* deserves a special mention. The required tension has been created successfully in the play. However, at times the director's way of presenting the dark sides of human characters might appear 'inappropriate' in terms of the Bangladeshi values.

CULTURAL FEAST

Monthly musical soiree by Srijon



Solo Art Exhibition

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

Title: Cryptic Reality
Artist: Abdus Sattar Taufiq
Venue: Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University
Date: April 30-May 6
Time: 11am-8pm

Grand Group Art Exhibition

145 artworks by renowned Bangladeshi artists
Venue: Saju Art Gallery, F/40-41, D.C.C. North Super Market 2nd Circle, Gulshan
Date: April 28-May 28
Time: 9:00am to 7:00pm (Friday closed)

Photography Exhibition

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

Farzana Mili sings at the programme

PHOTO: STAR

Srijon, a cultural organisation arranges a musical soiree titled *Pholey Asha Diner Gaan* every month. Srijon's musical programme on April 30 was held at the Begum Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum. The evening began with an instrumental presentation, Tagore, Nazrul and folk songs along with classic songs of yesteryears followed the recital.

A solo sitar performance by Manik Khondoker was directed by Syed Meher Hossain. Talented young artist Nirjhar Chowdhury rendered two Tagore songs -- *Chokhey amar trishna* and *Shokhi*.

The event wrapped up with two folk songs -- *Pora moner dukkho* and *Shujon bondhure* -- performed by Halima Parveen.

Group Theatre Forum Festival '07 begins in Chittagong

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

A remarkable number of theatre festivals are taking place all over the country. After the 23-day National Theatre Festival in Dhaka, a ten-day Group Theatre Forum Festival '07 begins today at the port city Chittagong. Members of Group Theatre Forum, a platform for the theatre groups who stage shows at the Shilpakala Academy, Chittagong, are the participants at the festival.

Plays to be staged at the Group

Theatre Forum Festival '07 are: *Satyandha*, *Dur Rajor Swapno*, *Sampannaiya*, *Koroti*, *Ekti Obastob Galpo*, *Madhuchakro*, *Dayebhar Galpo*, *Pagla Ghor*, *Chhayabrita* and *Chander Amobosha*.

Avijit Sengupta, secretary general of Group Theatre Forum informed, that eminent theatre personality of Chittagong, Rabiu Alam will inaugurate the festival and M Hamid, chairperson of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation, will be the special guest.

Today, Tirjuk Natya Goshthi will stage Rafiqul Quader Rubel's play

Satyandha. The play brings out the grim reality of the contemporary social milieu where there is hardly any reason for glee.

Though one may be distressed by the current social turmoil, not many effective initiatives are undertaken by the masses. The play features corruption that prevails in every sector. Through fragmented stories, the play highlights disorders in the education system, law and order, politics and other spheres in the society.

Satyandha is directed by Sayeed Hiru.



Actors of Tirjuk Natya Goshthi in *Satyandha*

PHOTO: STAR

Ikebana by Jonaky Mahmud



Ikebana by Jonaky Mahmud

PHOTO: STAR

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

A daylong exhibition featuring floral arrangement in the Ikebana style by Jonaky Mahmud, a student of Dosokai School, Dhaka was recently held at Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU) Conference Hall. The event was organised by the National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh (NAUCB).

Thirty-four aesthetic creations by Jonaky featured a combination of flowers, bamboo shoots and local fruits -- mango, jackfruit -- along with paddy sheaf in vases.

"Ikebana" is a Japanese term that refers to the art of flower arrangement. Considered to be a stimulus for the brain, Ikebana, to the true enthusiast, is much more than a sheer arrangement of flowers and stems.

Malama Meleisea, UNESCO Country Representative in Bangladesh inaugurated the event. Also present at the occasion were Takashi Asai, first secretary, Japanese embassy; Mahabubuddin Chowdhury, secretary general,

(NAUCB); Jagul Ahmed Chowdhury, chief editor, BSS; Zeenat Barkatullah, director, Shilpakala Academy and Rehana Munni, assistant secretary, UNECSO National Commission. Gias Kamal Chowdhury, president, (NAUCB) presided over the event.

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TV GUIDE

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

News Bulletin

BTV
09:05 *Shomapti*
11:40 *Deshor Gaan*
12:05 *Ma O Shishur*
12:30 *Swapno Shonar Gaon*
01:30 *Mati O Manush*
02:15 *Musical Programme*
02:40 *Selected Programme*
03:05 *Cartoon*
03:30 *Educational Programme*
04:00 *Amader Angina*
04:30 *Musical Programme*
05:05 *Children's Programme*
05:30 *Anushilon*
07:00 *Quiz*
08:30 *Protidin Bangla-desh*
08:35 *Drama Serial: Shongshotok*

ATN Bangla
06:00 *Akter sams Dorodori*
06:20 *Amar Chobi*
08:30 *Talk Show*
09:15 *Drama Serial: Shokal Shondha*
10:30 *Talk Show*
11:05 *Drama: Chaka*
12:15 *Bangla Feature Film*
03:45 *Shundor Jiboner Jonno*
04:20 *Cooking Programme*
05:10 *Amader Joto Kotha*
05:40 *Islamic Programme*

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15am.
ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11pm. News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm. Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 am, 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 1:00pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00pm, 6:00pm and 8:00pm.
CHANNEL 1
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 6:30pm, 7:30pm, 10:00pm, 12:30am
BANGALVISION
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 2:00pm, 6:00pm, 7:15pm, 10:30pm. News Headlines (Bangla) at 9:00pm. News Headlines (English) at 9:05pm

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