

International Museum Day '07 Museums: Universal Heritage

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MUSEUMS are non-profit institutions in the service of society and its development and are open to public, through acquiring, conserving and studying objects that explain evolution of a civilisation. Museums are the mirror of a nation, bridging the past with the present.

A museum is an institution for the preservation of objects which illustrate the phenomena of nature and the works of men, and the utilisation of these for the increase of knowledge. Museums signify mankind's achievements through exhibitions.

In 1977, at the International Council of Museum's (ICOM) 12th general assembly at Moscow, a recommendation was made for observing an International Museum Day, to be held on May 18 each year. The ICOM Secretariat recommended that member countries organise local events around or on the day. Since then the day has taken on such importance that in some countries, the celebration has been extended to a week or even a month. The ICOM head office decides the theme every year. The theme of this year's International Museum Day is "Muse-



A view of Bangladesh National Museum at Shahbagh, Dhaka

ums and Universal Heritage".

In every museum each object contains independent historic background and cultural heritage. It also creates a need for information. Museums directly and indirectly enlighten us on a range of subjects -- history, society, anthropology, ethnology, politics, religion, customs, folklore and more.

Museums can be run by the government or by different organisations, trustees or even by families. In Bangladesh there are different kinds of museums including The National Museum, Liberation War Museum, Fish Museum, Adibashi Museum and more. The working museums nationwide have formed a committee called 'Bangladesh Museum Council'.

Museums arrange multiple festivals and educational programmes. The museum staff, historians, archaeologists and museum enthusiasts are all set to observe the International Museum Day with seminars, discussions, rallies and publishing relevant articles and cultural programmes.

The author is the Secretary of Bangladesh National Committee of ICOM and is also the Registration Officer of Bangladesh National Museum



Gold coins from the Kanishka, Chandra Gupta and Kushan era (1st and 2nd century ACE) found in Comilla and Naogaon



A sculpture of Vishnu (from 11th/12th Century ACE) found in Rajshahi

'Aiching': A puppet theatre on Jhum cultivation

ERSHAD KAMOL

Jhum, the slash and burn method of cultivation is very popular amongst the ethnic minorities living at the Chittagong Hill Tracts. But, in these days a controversy has surfaced regarding *Jhum*: Is the method harmful for environment and ecology or not? It is true that after the *Jhum* cultivation the hill tract remains barren at least for a year. Moreover, because of the cultivation, deforestation occurs.

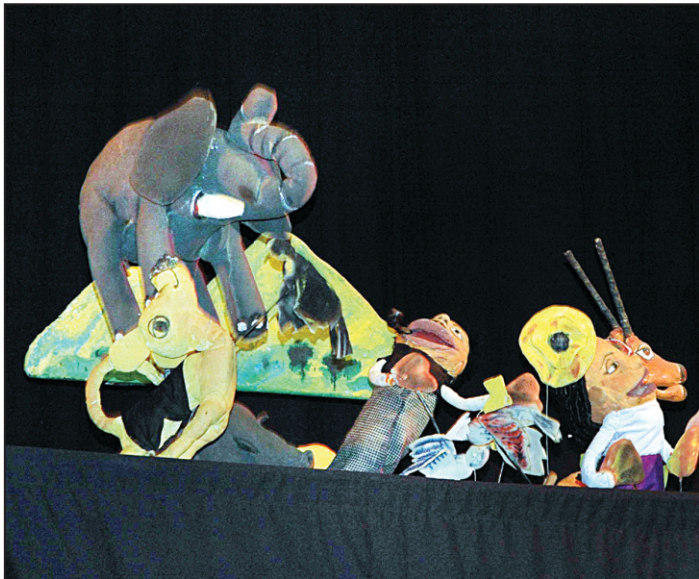
To address the issue, a message oriented puppet theatre titled *Aiching* was staged by theatre troupe Tongsuimah from Bandarban as part of the ongoing theatre festival arranged by the Department of Theatre and Film of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at the Experimental Theatre Stage on May 16.

Tongsuimah usually performs the puppet theatre at the remote areas of Bandarban.

Maintaining the familiar structure of educational TV shows for children such as *Meena*, *Aiching* -- a Marna girl -- urges her parents to plant trees after the *Jhum* harvest, so that the hill tracts do not go through deforestation.

As the subplot of the play, 'importance of paying attention to what children have to say' has been focused.

As *Aiching* is targeted towards the communities living in the hill tracts, to make the play appealing, entertaining performances are staged before the show. At the Experimental Theatre Stage the troupe staged three traditional performances: *Sangrai Dance* of the Marmas, *Horn Dance* of the Booms and *Jhum Dance* of the Tanchangas.



A scene from Aiching

'Thakey Shudhu Onadhokar' on Channel-i today



Sumaiya Shimu and Riaz in the play

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

In its slot of 'Savlon Birotheen Binodon', Channel-i will telecast the single episode play *Thakey Shudhu Onadhokar* today at 3:05pm.

The story of the play revolves around a young man working for a company that explores for minerals in Cox's Bazar. The young man is a mineral expert and is always on the lookout for valuable resources. He becomes disappointed when

the company discourages him in his research. As the story progresses he gets acquainted with a female co-worker. In time they become close. But one day the researcher decides to leave the country for overseas.

The play is written and directed by Ferdous Hassan. Riaz, Sumaiya Shimu, Lutfur Rahman George, Shahidul Alam Shachchu and others have played the central characters in the play.

'Amra Korbo Jai' on ATN Bangla reaches 208th episode

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

ATN Bangla will air the 208th episode of *Amra Korbo Jai*, a programme featuring a group of energetic youngsters engaged in journalistic adventures.

Each episode features news for children, conversation with a prominent personality, 'Desh Bidesh Bhromon' -- short feature on historic places and a special event featuring underprivileged children.



A scene from Amra Korbo Jai

Cannes' glittering 60th edition opens

Norah Jones makes acting debut at the festival

Cannes celebrated its 60th edition last Wednesday by inviting a screen newcomer to open the film festival: singer Norah Jones, playing a heartbroken lover in a role that forced her to cry on command and spend hours smooching co-star Jude Law.

Their movie, *My Blueberry Nights*, by director Wong Kar-wai, was the first screening in an 11-day fete of cinema, parties and deal-making.

The festival has an extra dash of glitter this year: Stars slated for appearances include George Clooney, Sharon Stone, Brad Pitt, Leonardo Di Caprio, Al Pacino and Angelina Jolie. Movies on Cannes' line-up range from *Ocean's Thirteen* to Michael Moore's *Sicko*, to films from Russia to Mexico to South Korea.

Jones wore a strapless midnight blue gown, and Law and Wong wore black sunglasses, as they climbed the red carpet. Other stars at the premiere included China's Gong Li, India's Aishwarya Rai and France's Juliette Binoche. Diane Kruger (*Troy*) was the first German to open the ceremony, where American director David Lynch (*Blue Velvet*) screened a surreal film short set in a movie theatre.

Cannes strives to achieve just the right blend of Hollywood glitz and international art-house films, and the opening night movie certainly fit the bill.

Hong Kong director Wong (*In The Mood for Love*) is a Cannes favourite, and *My Blueberry Nights* is his first English-language movie. Besides Law and Jones, the cast includes Natalie Portman, who plays a Nevada girl on a gambling streak; David Strathairn, in a terrific turn as an alcoholic policeman; and Rachel Weisz as his unhappy wife.

Jones stars as a New Yorker who hits the road on a curative cross-country trip after being dropped by her boyfriend. She had never acted before, but Wong heard her sultry voice and knew he had a role for her.

"Basically, when you listen to her voice, without even seeing her face, you can have a kind of a story out of it," he said.



Jude Law and Norah Jones at the 60th Cannes Film Festival last Wednesday

Jones said she was terrified when they shot her first scene.

"I remember the first take we did, my voice was really high," she said, finishing her sentence with a squeak. "I was just terribly nervous, and Wong came over and patted me on the back and I relaxed a little."

But Wong said Jones grew more at ease over the shoot. She impressed him in a scene where he asked her to cry. "We rolled the camera and she cried, and after that I said, 'Well, it's great,' and she said, 'Do you want one more?'" Wong said.

The movie's turning point is a kissing scene in a diner, with Law licking drops of ice cream from Jones' lips as she sleeps. Jones said Wong had very particular ideas about what he wanted. "We

shot it a long time," Jones said.

The actors hadn't seen the movie yet as they walked down the red carpet. Earlier in the day, it garnered muted applause at a showing for critics.

Cannes was founded in 1939 as an alternative to the Venice Film Festival in Mussolini's Italy but almost as soon as it opened, the festival was cancelled because World War II broke out. Cannes did not get going in earnest until the 1950s.

The festival is looking back at its glamorous history this year with a photo exhibit on the beach. There's Cary Grant in black tie, Natalie Wood and Warren Beatty hailed by paparazzi and Kim Novak in a limousine, with raindrops sparkling on the window like diamonds.

But the celebrations are more than just nostalgia. For a feature-length homage to the movies, it commissioned 35 shorts from directors including Wong, Roman Polanski (*The Pianist*), Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu (*Babel*), the Coens (*Fargo*) and Wim Wenders (*Wings of Desire*).

Oscar-winning director Martin Scorsese (*The Departed*) has been enlisted to give a master class on moviemaking.

Pacino, Clooney, Pitt and Matt Damon will promote threequel *Ocean's Thirteen*. DiCaprio brings his environmental documentary *The 11th Hour*, and celebrity super couple Pitt and Jolie will appear: he for *Ocean's Thirteen*, she for *A Mighty Heart*, in which she plays the widow of murdered *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.

Those films are screening out of competition, as is *Sicko* by Moore, whose *Fahrenheit 9/11* won the top prize at Cannes in 2004. But his look at the US health care system is sure to be one of the festival's most talked-about movies. The US Treasury Department opened an investigation into a trip Moore took to Cuba accompanied by a group of ailing September 11 rescue workers during the film's shooting.

Source: Internet

Shawkat Osman's death anniversary observed

AHSAN HABIB

On the occasion of the ninth death anniversary of acclaimed writer Shawkat Osman, a memorial programme was held at Bishwa Sahitya Kendra on May 16. Shawkat Osman Smriti Parishad arranged the programme.

Chaired by Professor Bulbon Osman, the programme was attended by Professor Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, renowned painters Hashem Khan and Rafiqun Nabi, peers and family members of the writer. Former foreign secretary, Wali-ur Rehman was the chief guest at the programme.

The speakers discussed Osman's commitment to the society, especially his untiring struggle against communalism, fascism, autocracy, fundamentalism and his involvement in the movement to bring the war criminals of 1971 to justice. The discussants portrayed him as secular, open minded and an advocate of democracy who throughout his life remained true to his principles.



Artist Rafiqun Nabi speaks at the programme

The speakers recollected many incidents related to him and elaborated on his boldness. His contribution to generating social and political awareness through artistic but clear and straightforward messages in his works was also highlighted. Yafes Osman, son of Shawkat Osman, recited some of his satirical verses.

The organisers declared that a Shawkat Osman Trust has been formed which will provide scholarships to talented underprivileged students regularly. They stressed the need to keep alive the legacy of Osman through educating the young generation by familiarising them with his works.

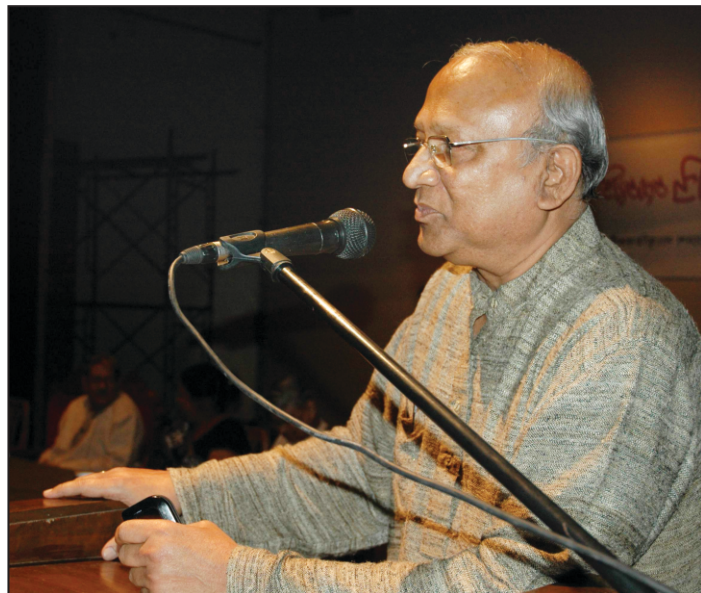
Discussion on Tagore at Public Library

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To mark Tagore's 146th birth anniversary Bangladesh Shangkritikormi Shongho held a cultural programme and a discussion on May 16 at Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium, Central Public Library.

The discussion was presided over by noted dancer Rahija Khanam Jhunu, president of the organisation. Professor Anisuzzaman was the chief guest. Noted theatre activist Ataur Rahman, dancer Amanul Haque and former secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Najmul Ahsan Chowdhury were the main discussants.

In his speech Ataur Rahman said, "With time we are able to get a better understanding of Tagore in a wider perspective. With his celebration of nature and his ability to provide a new meaning to human existence, he is becoming more important in our lives everyday." Other discussants focused on the immense contribution of Tagore to the fields of music, dance, painting



Ataur Rahman speaks at the discussion

and theatre.

The discussion was followed by a cultural programme. Upcoming singers Samina Shelly, Irina Sultana, Madhusri, Sudeshna,

Shimul, Mithila and Anik Basu rendered some popular Tagore songs. Shahidul Islam Babu directed the dance performances.

Tondrahara Nayan Amar A compilation of Hasina Momtaz's songs

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Seasoned artiste Hasina Momtaz has been a familiar name in our music arena since the '60s. An enlisted singer of radio and TV since their inception in this country, Momtaz has several hummable tunes -- mostly *adhunika* -- to her name.

Laser Vision has released an album, featuring some of Momtaz's popular *adhunika* songs. The compilation, titled *Tondrahara Nayan Amar*, includes songs composed between 1967 and 2003.

Fourteen songs by noted lyricists and composers of the country make the album a perfect choice for those into easy listening. The album including songs like *Tondrahara Nayan Amar* by (written by Masud Karim and composed by Samar Das), *Na Jee Na* (a semi-classical number composed by Apul Mahmud), *Dhoop-er Moto Puriye Gelam* (written by Gazi Mazharul Anwar), *Pholey Asha Din* (written by Gazi Mazharul Anwar and composed by Satya Saha), *Shotti Holeo Tumi* (composed by Lucky Akhand) and more, is like a trip down memory lane.

