

Abstractions in pristine white by Ali Akbar



Ekti Bangladesh (left) and Ghurey Firey Bangla by Ali Akbar

FAYZA HAQ

Ali Akbar, based in USA, has studied in California College of Arts and Crafts and South Eastern Oklahoma State University. "The knowledge of the contemporary western painting scene that my teacher Brad Cushman introduced me to totally changed my concept of the art-form. I also got more familiar with acrylic," says Akbar.

works at Kaya Gallery in Dhaka.

At this moment, Akbar said, he is journeying in a landscape after his father passed away. After the death Akbar expressed his feelings for his father on canvas. The artist says he felt his father's presence in shades of white. This is the point of beginning of the white landscapes that he has created. He plays with titanium white and zinc white. Akbar has done a series on the landscape of Toronto -- a place he found amaz-

ing. In the paintings he has used three basic colours -- blue, red and yellow. The sky is an arch of varied colours while the snow is a mass of white abstraction. This series is justifiably called "Toronto".

"War and peace" brings in an imaginary landscape. This is a view of a group of flying white birds seen against the snow. In the mass of white is the depiction of the sky, ground and water. The work reflects both conflict and calm. Akbar has

used white as the dominant hue as he feels that this is the source of energy. "I go in for abstracts for I think these are what our final thoughts may resemble," he says.

A series of three mixed-media paintings, "Ekti Bangladesh" brings in the map of our country, seen behind cascading colours. The land mass looks like a burst of white light behind bars of colours. Acrylic, enamel, texture gel, sand and air brush have been used in them. In one of the paintings the viewer finds the map in a fairly realistic form. The map appears again in another work, in a semi realistic image, and purely abstract in the last one.

Professor Sara Cardona says that Akbar's paintings are landscapes of dreams and longings. They are real places where his soul journeys. His paintings oscillate; expanding and contracting through layers of colours -- each associated with the time and space his mind occupied at that moment. "Eventually this physical process resembles breathing," she says. "Like the body inhales and exhales to stay alive, the paint expands and contracts until it reaches a physical form that represents an interior landscape of the artist's spirit."

Akbar has had group and solo exhibitions in Dallas and Dhaka.

The exhibition ends on June 15.

"Swopnodanay" goes to Shanghai Film Festival

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Swopnodanay, directed by Golam Rabbani Biplob and produced by Impress Telefilm Ltd, will have its Asian premiere at the 10th Shanghai International Film Festival. The festival is scheduled to start from June 16.

The film has been selected for screening in the "Asian New Talent Award" category. Ten films have been selected in the category. *Swopnodanay* is the first Bangladeshi film, to be screened at the prestigious festival.

Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Impress Telefilm Ltd, and Rabbani will attend the festival as special guests.

Swopnodanay follows the lives of a few individuals living in a remote village in the Northern part of the country. The protagonist Fazlu (played by singer Mahmuduzzaman Babu) is a peddler. One evening he returns home with a used trouser for his son. While washing the trouser, Fazlu's wife (Rokeya Prachy) finds some foreign currency in the pockets. The family

gets over-excited at the possibility of acquiring a sizeable amount of cash. Fazlu and his pal Siraj (Fazlur Rahman Babu) roam around the rugged locales of 'Barendra' on a beat-up motorbike, trying to exchange the foreign currency for Taka. Greed surfaces and the central characters -- Fazlu, his wife and Siraj -- start weaving their individual dreams. Desire and deception change the relationships forever.

The film will be premiered soon in Bangladesh.



Mahmuduzzaman Babu and Rokeya Prachy in Swopnodanay

Underexposed talent needs tapping

KAVITA CHARANJI

gender equality, child rights and non-violence. In the course of their two-hour weekly session they will get to peruse newspapers, magazines, books and play games.

The bright-faced girls dance and sing to a patriotic song called 'Eito ritu gorar desh'. It is hard going to zero on just one or two talents but for reasons of space *The Daily Star* talked to one young girl who showed promise in the arts.

Mukta is abreast of the cultural world of Bangladesh; she has been an avid watcher of *Closeup 1* and is a great fan of singers such as Nolok, Rajib, Beauty and Salma. As for the future, she aspires to go to university and continue to dance and sing.



Mukta dances at the Brac School

A student of Class VII in Mohakhali Modern School, Mukta dances as she peers sing. Her forte, she says, is folk dance though she also likes singing. The visitor gets to see her sing *Ek tara tui desher kotha bol re ebar bol*. Later, she burst into a ghazal, *Allah amar rab*. One marvels at the talent of the young girl despite the limitations she faces -- her father has a poultry business, while her mother tends to the family of two daughters and one son. Her school, says Mukta, provides no dance classes. At the most she dances on special occasions, at the ADP sessions and on weddings. Nevertheless, dance is a passion for her. "I love the bright, pretty costumes, the joy of dance and the therapeutic qualities of dance," she says, adding that her parents have encouraged her in her pursuits.

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Tonight's episode of Aloye Bhubon Bhora features noted human rights activist and executive director of "Manusher Jonno" (an organisation that promotes good governance and human rights), Shaheen Anam. Hosted by Aly Zaker, the talk show will be aired tonight at 9:35 on Channel-i

Detail of the new computer model of ancient Rome shows the steps on the back side of the Caesarian Rostra, or speakers' platform, in an image released June 11, 2007. *Rome Reborn*, the largest simulation of an ancient city ever made, was unveiled last Monday showing the city within the Aurelian walls at its peak in 320 AD, under the emperor Constantine when it had grown to a million inhabitants

"Lil' Bush": A cartoon take on the US president

AP, New York

Like most political satire, *Lil' Bush* pinpoints the logical extreme of real life.

Take its title character. *Lil' George Bush* is a pushy if none-too-swift lad making mischief with his pals from Beltway Elementary: *Lil' Condi*, *Lil' Cheney* and *Lil' Rummy* (pint-size versions of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Vice President Dick Cheney and former Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld).

Another thing: *Lil' George* resides in the White House.

This new *Comedy Central* cartoon show does take *lil'* liberties with the truth. For instance, *Lil' Bush* is set in the present, yet George H.W. (not current president George W.) Bush is the nation's chief executive. And though *Lil' Cheney* mutters in an indecipherable growl, his practice of biting off the heads of live chickens has no basis in real life.

On the premiere, *Lil' George* and his chums go to Iraq in hopes of tracking down some good news about the war to cheer up his dad for Father's Day.

But once they arrive, where will the kids look?

"Right here: Baghdad!" says *Lil' George* between explosions. "It's got 'Dad' right in it!"

The episode's other tale finds *Lil' George*, inexperienced with the opposite sex, betting his friends he can get a girl to kiss him. "What about me, *Lil' George*?" says *Condi*, who suffers from an unrequited crush on him. "Yeah," says *Lil' George*, as oblivious as always, "you can be on the bet, too."

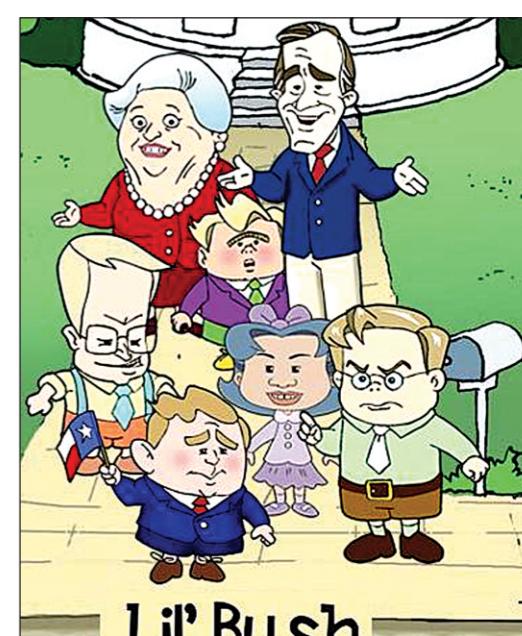
Created by Donick Cary, whose credits include writing for talk show host David Letterman and a stint on *The Simpsons* as writer-producer, *Lil' Bush* is "this fantastical Bush World bridging the two Bush presidencies, where anything can happen."

"Now that I've gotten inside *Lil' George's* head, I really like the guy," adds Cary. "He's got nuclear weapons and little-kid emotions!" Indeed, when *Lil' George* is left by

Dad unsupervised in the Oval Office, he launches nukes at schoolmates *Lil' Hillary* (Clinton) and *Lil' John* (Kerry).

Although Cary thinks D.C.'s political scene resembles a class of rowdy 10-year-olds, he contends the man who inspired *Lil' George* is better suited than most to a show like *Lil' Bush*.

"Somehow, this president that we have lends himself to thinking in a simplistic, cartoonish fashion," Cary says. "He's always been about sound bites, one-word answers, move ahead, act from the gut."



Lil' Bush

TV GUIDE

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

BTB

08:45 Bishwa Bichitra

11:15 Drama Serial: Shong

Shopok

CHANNEL-i

12:05 Ma O Shishur Kotha

12:30 Selected Programme

01:00 Moduchhanda

01:30 Shukhi Poribar

02:15 Sisimpur

02:40 Quiz Quiz

03:05 Cartoon: Bananas in

Pakkhik Barfa

04:00 Shondha Matoli

04:30 Hjol Tornal

05:05 Abhijatri

05:30 Selected Programme

06:10 Pakkhik Barfa

06:40 Shondha Matoli

07:00 Mati O Manush

07:30 Otiijer Chalchitra

08:30 Protidin Banglades

08:35 Agun Jhara Shondha

09:05 Drama Serial:

Shopnoloker Chabi

09:30 Talk show

10:30 Mithoskriya

11:00 Shur Tongro

10:00 Drama Serial: Nishidho

Borobhum

10:30 Talk show: Aktel

11:05 Talk show: Meet the

press

12:00 GrameenPhone Ajker

Shangbadpotro

ntv

08:30 Ajker Shokal

Chokkor

08:55 Gane Shure Taruney

09:30 Notun Chibori Gaan

03:10 Drama Serial:

Bhalobashor Rang

03:45 Shapla Shaluk

04:20 Cooking Show

05:20 Islamic Programme

06:20 Thakur Mar Jhuli

08:00 Drama Serial:

Noyonara

08:45 Drama Serial:

Bohemian

09:20 Musical Programme

11:30 Musical Programme

12:00 GrameenPhone Lead

ETV

08:30 Chondrey Chondrey

Desh Jurey

09:45 Drama Serial: Neer

11:30 Ei Shomoy

08:30 Cinema Cinema

08:55 Frankly Speaking

09:30 Science workshop

10:05 Chirontoni

10:30 Shabditor Alo

05:30 Shoyong

06:35 Deshjirey Shonglap

07:00 Drama Serial: Dibidho

07:30 Rupantor

11:30 Amar Ami

08:00 Kichhu Kotha Kichhu

09:45 Drama Serial: Neer

11:30 Ei Shomoy

08:30 Shubho Shokal

09:00 Apran Jigyasa

09:30 Amar Kotha Tahar Shatey

10:00 Bangla Feature Film

08:15