

Bangladesh Now

Photo exhibition on Drik's 18th anniversary

KARIM WAHEED

With temporary euphoria like a Nobel Peace Prize or seeming end to a political farce, the reality of "now" has most often been grim for Bangladeshis. Flood devouring everything, never ending violence, rights denied, bird flue, buried alive in mudslide, thousands losing their means of livelihood as bulldozers crush small stores, dirt poor rendered homeless again as slums are demolished...the list goes on.

At the exhibition titled "Bangladesh Now", images feature this reality, our "now". The exhibition was inaugurated on September 4 at Drik Gallery on the occasion of Drik's 18th anniversary, and will continue till September 13. Nurul Kabir, editor of *New Age*, inaugurated the exhibition.

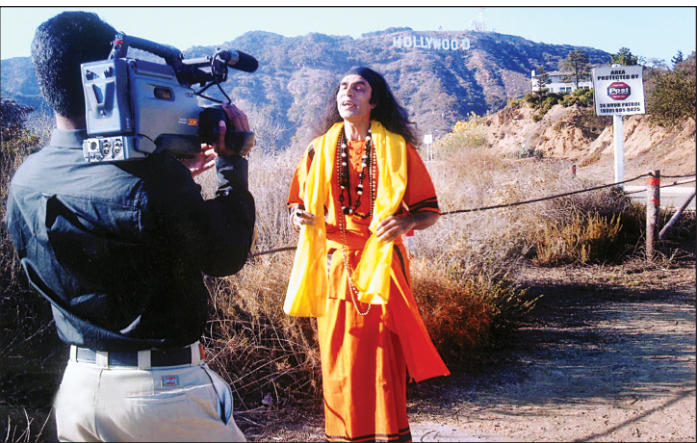
According to Shahidul Alam, managing director of Drik Picture Library Ltd, "Sure these images highlight the bleak reality but they are also about the relentless struggle of our people. Arrests in the night, the brutality of high prices and the daily grind of poverty are the realities that wear people down. But they are warriors. Despite the weight of unjust governance, despite the price they always end up paying, they still protest. And the photojournalists? When justice is compromised. When the poor are trampled under the march of 'reform'. When fear evokes



Abdul Kuddus Bayati on his recent US tour

ERSHAD KAMOL

Abdul Kuddus Bayati, who has popularised the indigenous performing art form *pala* to the urban audience in Bangladesh, is back after performing at concerts in the US. At the concerts, the artiste demonstrated the styles of traditional *pala* to the Bangladeshi community and Americans as well. Moreover, during his trip he made two music videos in Hollywood.



Making of Abdul Kuddus Bayati's music video in Hollywood

Opera loses a leading ambassador

Luciano Pavarotti, 71, who died on September 5, of pancreatic cancer at his home in Modena, Italy, combined a lustreous lyric tenor voice with a radiant and expansive personal charm to win the largest and most diversified audience ever accorded an opera singer.

Millions of listeners who never came close to setting foot in an opera house knew and loved Pavarotti through his countless appearances on television and in stadium concerts -- especially the spectacularly successful *Three Tenors* marathons with Plácido Domingo and José Carreras. The Decca recording of their first collaboration became far and away the best-selling classical album in history, with upward of 15 million copies distributed to date.

Connoisseurs acclaimed Pavarotti for his voice of surpassing sweetness, full and vibrant throughout its range, and for his warmly lyrical performances of standard Italian roles, such as Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Rodolfo and Caravadosi in Puccini's *La Bohème* and *Tosca*.

But Pavarotti also courted a popular audience with unprecedented zeal. And so Pavarotti made commercials for the American Express card, led New York's Columbus Day parade, clowning through the expensive Hollywood flop *Yes, Giorgio* and posed for press photographs with mountains of pasta.

The world was kept informed of Pavarotti's joie de vivre, his ebullient flirtations and his half-hearted struggle with his weight, which fluctuated between 250 and 350 pounds. At the peak of his career, he received more than 50,000 fan letters a year, and it was said that he never turned down a request for an autograph, a

picture or a kiss.

Some found the unrelenting onslaught of personal publicity distasteful, but it helped make Pavarotti the best-known and highest-paid classical artist of his time. And he could not be dismissed: Behind the huggy-bear, "I'm just a happy, regular overweight Italian guy who loves to sing" persona was a great and serious artist.

Luciano Pavarotti was born on October 12, 1935, in Modena, a city renowned for its love of opera.

Standing over six feet tall and somewhat athletic in his youth, Pavarotti excelled in soccer as a young man. He gravitated to opera as a profession and was good enough to qualify for voice training at Modena's Istituto Magistrale, which he said saved him from his



mother's attempt to make him into an accountant.

He taught elementary school and sold insurance while vying in opera competitions. Among his early instructors were Modena tenor Arrigo Pola, who sensed his brilliance and taught him for free, and Ettore Campogalliani in the city of Mantua. Pavarotti underwent intensive regimens on posture, spending six months alone on how to hold his jaw.

After several misses, Pavarotti won an opera contest in 1961 and made his debut that year as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. After years touring Europe, he made his American debut in 1965 with the Greater Miami Opera in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* when he substituted for another tenor at the last minute.

Pavarotti was renowned for the beauty and freedom of his upper register. "When singing high notes I feel like a show jumper before a two meters-plus bar," he once said. "Stretched to my limits. Excited and happy but with a strong undercurrent of fear. The moment I actually hit the note, I almost lose consciousness. A physical, animal sensation seizes me. Then, after it has been successfully negotiated, I regain control."

Pavarotti's last appearance at the Metropolitan Opera took place in March 2004. At the age of 68, he shepherded his voice carefully, singing quietly when he could and breaking up long phrases more eagerly than he used to. But he was still recognisable as Pavarotti -- the man with the lambent, sun-splashed voice, diminished by time and infirmity but still the most sheerly beautiful sound made by any tenor in recent memory.

Source: Internet

Abul Kalam Azad: A success story

New TV commercial features making of the renowned entrepreneur

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

In 2006 Banglalink launched three television commercials (TVC) featuring three characters and their struggle to change their lives as well as making impacts on their surroundings. The TVCs were hugely popular.

This year Banglalink is taking the "Din Bodo" concept to a new level by highlighting real individuals who took control of their destiny and in the process changed the lives of others. These will be stories of achievers who started from scratch and made benchmarks in their respective fields.

The first of these projects features the story of Abul Kalam Azad, head of Azad Printing and Packaging, Grand Azad Hotel, A to Z Computers and Education and Scan Builders. The TVC was launched yesterday at the Spectra Convention Centre.

Azad started his business with a cousin investing Tk 30 for a boat and traded coconuts. He came to Dhaka with no money, determined to start his own business. He sold his only assets -- his books -- and



Abul Kalam Azad

accumulated Tk 450, with which he bought posters from hawkers and started his own business of selling posters.

"I don't care how many mobile phones they sell through this advertisement. The youth of our country face immeasurable frustrations because of rampant unemployment, and I sincerely hope that my story will inspire them to

dream big," said Azad.

The TVC has been directed by Amitabh Reza Chowdhury. The team also includes Razeeb Hasan Chowdhury as the creative director. Music was done by Balam.

Through TVCs like this, Banglalink intends to inspire people to change their lives for the better and make a social impact in the process.

FAYZA HAQ

Study works of the students of Khulna Art College are being currently exhibited at Dots Contemporary Art Centre. They include paintings on nature and landscape, along with some experimental work. The realism brought in some of them -- often with an impressionistic effect -- is amazing.

Shashivushan Pal's paintings with their historical scenes in dark evocative colours have been included to lend interest to the display. One of them shows two factions of Indian armies from the past, fighting against one another, with horses and swords. The men have beards and moustaches and sport flamboyant turbans and flowing robes. A Victorian court scene is depicted with Hindu and Muslim Indians and British individuals from the 19th century.

Houses in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are brought in Kritibas Halder's *Paharia* a water colour in pastel shades. The hills in the background are presented in as soft mauve mounds with bamboo houses with thatched roofs and stilts and ladders to reach up to them. A large, bent tree is included in the forefront. The water colour



Par by Aditya Sundar Roy and Bishram by Nayan Day

Nature-1 is similarly a landscape pulsating with joie de vivre. The sky is a splash of emerald and jade mixed with gray and blue. The tree tops and expanse of grass are aglow with browns, grays and greens.

Haridash Mandal's *Nature*, done in pencil, is a neat portrayal of the countryside, complete with chicken, dogs, haystacks and banana trees. More trees, skies, patches of farmland, winding streams and rivers are included in the water colours by Moinuddin Moni and Mizanur Rahman. Mauve and purple sweeps bland with green and gray to form the foreground in Wahiduzzaman's presentation of *Nature*. Behind the people

and their homes are splashes of multicolours bringing in the sky.

Flowers are done here with photographic precision of the details of the petals and leaves. These are seen in the ruby-red hibiscus and the pale mauve morning glories painted by Romana Jahan and Shaikh Masud-un-Nabi. Other landscapes and river scenes have been delineated in Chanchal Biswas's *Royar Kuthi*, a water colour that delineates architectural constructions for the past and *Par*, which delineates boats with people with promising strokes.

Here too we see the works of some of the teachers. This includes Baby Sultana's woodcut print *From Nature-1*. This includes

abstract mingling of colours, forms and textures in blues, reds and browns, touched over with black. Other teachers' contribution includes *Loving Embrace*, a cement statue by Sheikh Sadi Bhuiyan. This has a couple seated next to each other with their arms clasped around each other. Heads have been excluded from the composition. Partha Protim's *Biography* in acrylic is an abstract in blue and red. Nayan Day's Bishram, a pencil sketch depicts a resting woman.

The exhibition speaks of the perseverance and talent of the young aspiring artists of Khulna.

The exhibition is on till September 12.



Soumitra Chatterji

Soumitra Chatterji on Banglavisian today

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Today's episode of *Banglavisian Café* will feature noted Indian actor Soumitra Chatterjee. The acclaimed actor, considered as a pioneering figure of the Kolkata movie industry, has acted in many films representing the golden era of Bangla cinema.

His first movie was *Apur Sansarin* 1959. He played the role of Apurba Kumar Ray in the movie.

Directed by the Satyajit Ray the movie remains a classic. Memorable performances by the actor in movies include *Teen Kanya* (1961), *Charulata* (1964), *Aranyer Din Ratri* (1970), *Soner Kella* (1974), *Devdas* (1979), *Gharey Bairey* (1984) and more.

Banglavisian Café will be aired live on Bangla -vision today at 3:15pm. The programme will be hosted by filmmaker Morshedul Islam.

Discussion and film screening

Digital Film: New technologies, new talents

AHSAN HABIB

A discussion on "Digital Film: New Technologies, New Talents" was held at Goethe Institut Bangladesh on September 6. Filmmakers Tareque Masud, Nurul Alam Atique, Mostafa Sarwar Farooqi, Wahed Tarek and Animesh Aich were the key discussants at the programme. Dhaka University Film Society and Goethe Institut Bangladesh jointly arranged the programme.

The discussants' focus was on

technological environment one has to consider while filmmaking. He said, "We need to renew our ideas on films in this digital age. The new generation with its new sensibility for new cinema will make greatest changes possible and perhaps digital technologies made that possible."

The diversity of content and changes in style of acting made possible by the introduction of digital film was the focus of Mostafa Sarwar Farooqi's speech. Accord-

the only route for many of the aspiring filmmakers. "Filmmakers are used to limitations; all kinds of compromises take place or you miss the moment. Of course, there are those who do not like making all the compromises and many, especially young talents, are not fortunate enough to get producers for their films. Digital film has opened a window of opportunity for such filmmakers," Atique said. "The digital technology has managed to decentralise filmmaking," he



Tareque Masud speaks at the event, Farooqi (C) and Animesh Aich seen next to him

PHOTO: STAR

possible consequences of digital filmmaking in Bangladesh. According to the discussants, digital film has created a more liberating space for filmmakers as it has created an opportunity to work regardless of the limitations. Whether the technology is weak in terms of depth and the sharpness of the image and the representation of movement can be adequate aesthetic substitute for the swirl of grain and the flicker from the projector that make 35mm such a medium for magic, were also discussed at the programme.

Tareque Masud focused on the

ing to him, our films have been stereotyped and the theatrical style of acting that is devoid of normalcy has been the dominating trend. "Digital filmmaking appears as a salvation. If we can cultivate this medium properly, digital film can provide an optimistic future," Farooqi hoped.

Nurul Alam Atique provided a historical perspective to explain why digital filmmaking has become so important for their generation of filmmakers. Referring to the absence of two generations of creative filmmakers from local film industry and the recent 'media boom', Atique saw the medium as

added.

Wahid Tarek insisted on effective artistic production rather than the format of the production. The audience also took part in the open discussion.

Prior to the discussion, five digital films, *Wicked Confession* (directed by Rajib Ahmed), *Script Writer* (directed by Kamruzzaman Kamru), *Shomporker Dana* (directed by Wahed Tarek), *Shelfali* (directed by Animesh Aich) and *Shunno* (directed by Ashutosh Shujon) were screened. Directors of the films exchanged views with audience after the screenings.