

Profile

Rafiqun Nabi: In search of truth and beauty

FAYZA HAQ

RAFIQUN Nabi, the internationally acclaimed master artist, sitting at the Bengal Gallery, asked to dwell on Athens, where he had his overseas education in his youth, said, that ancient Greece, once the hub of world culture, is still breathtaking and inspiring.

The city had a lot to do in inspiring him to accomplish the excellent prints that he has been doing over the decades. Confident and bursting with joie de vivre -- although then up to his neck with his last awe inspiring solo -- he spoke forcefully

on various aspects of fine arts, including his halcyon days at the Athens School of Art.

Speaking on Greece, Nabi said that philosophy, mathematics, medicine, literature, fine arts, architecture and every other aspects of western culture, had its roots in Greece. Nabi went there after the Liberation War (1971) through a Greek government scholarship. He was full of wanderlust, and high hopes of learning from the European museums and art scenario, studying under the famed printmaker, Gramatopoulos, who excelled in wood-cuts (the most complex genre in print-making).



Struggle, woodcut, by Rafiqun Nabi

Nabi learnt the know-how of gigantic woodcuts which require a steady stream of elbow grease. Its essence, however, is unique, says Nabi.

Coming back to Dhaka, he made prints that were unconventional and inspired our younger generation of artists. Asked to comment on the student-teacher relationship in his days with that which is found today, he says that nowadays there is some gap in this and one does not find the congenial scenario of yesteryears. "Teachers like Zainul Abedin, Safiuddin Ahmed, Quamrul Hassan, Anwarul Haque and Khwaja Shafiq Ahmed taught us more than the academic aspects of art: There was a much greater rapport. There was then the fervour of creating a new nation. The Art College, as it was known then, was a seat of culture, without doubt. Each teacher had his forte, and every one of them was charismatic. Nevertheless, the students of the Fine Arts Institute, DU, today have a fairly good time."

Dwelling on how Bangladesh compares with the rest of the sub-continent in the field of fine arts, Nabi expostulates that although we are a relatively small nation, we have not been surpassed by any, as we have our own way of exploring forms, textures, colours etc. "The names like that of Mohammed Kibria and Shafiq Ahmed are nonpareil. Within our periphery we are not outdone by any artist from any other neighbouring country, I



The Net, another woodcut work by the artist

believe. The Indian artists have more financial backing and exposure, I admit, but our artists have excelled in their respective mediums too."

As for Nabi's readership in cartooning -- there has surely been no other critique of the socio-political life in Bangladesh over the years. As regards his mastery over numerous mediums in painting, no other artist today has more subtle, incisive, and dramatic strokes or choice of hues.

Within the frame of Cubism Nabi expresses himself in Expressionism. However, his vision remains uniquely optimistic. "This is my compromise," he comments. He is a winner of numerous awards and accolades, both at home and overseas. He has been the director of the Institute of Fine Arts and is currently a professor of drawing and painting.

A journalist turned actor-singer Hasan Masood on his transition

NADIA SARWAT

He is a journalist by profession, but after the film *Bachelor* (2004), he became an overnight celebrity. If Mostafa Sarwar Farooqi's *Bachelor* has set a new trend in visual media, Hasan Masood is obviously the one to stir the audience with that trend. The movie also features his performance as a singer. This multi-faceted talent recently talked to *The Daily Star* (TDS). Excerpts from the conversation:

TDS: How did a journalist become an actor?

Masood: I was approached by Mostafa Sarwar Farooqi to play the role in February 2003. Acting in films is quite time-consuming and I was working at *The Daily Star* at the time. I spoke to the editor Mahfuz Anam who encouraged me take on the offer and accommodated with granting me a recreation leave for the entire year. Shooting started right away. The film was released a year later on February 1, 2004. Incidentally, I joined BBC the same day.

TDS: Why do you think the character 'Hasan bhai' is so popular?

Masood: Perhaps it is because people can easily relate to the character. I don't really act, I more



or less 'react'. I try to become the character I play, understand him, and react the way he would, given the situation.

TDS: Your first acting experience was not stressful?

Masood: Absolutely not.

TDS: Do you think it's necessary to have formal training in acting?

Masood: That's obviously very helpful. There are several different styles and forms, such as acting in

theatre, film, television and radio. Formal acting classes help to understand these forms, but it's not a must. Quite a few of world's greatest actors had no institutional training. I think it's important to learn with every role.

TDS: Have you considered taking acting as a fulltime career?

Masood: (Smilingly) Well, no. I am quite content with my career as a journalist. I enjoy acting a lot, but I

am proud to be a journalist above all. These two professions are very different from each other, and I don't want to lose my identity as a journalist. Acting will remain a part-time indulgence until I retire from journalism.

TDS: You have released your first music album...

Masood: I've been singing from an early age and I'd completed a 5-year course on Nazrul Sangeet from Chhayanat. *Hridoy Ghotito* is my first album, released on Valentine's Day last year. Marjuk Russel wrote all of the 10 songs, Sanjeev Chowdhury composed the tunes and Bappa Majumdar arranged the music. I would also like to pursue singing, even though it's difficult for me to make time.

TDS: Of all the roles you've played, which one is your favourite?

Masood: Has to be the lead character of the drama serial *Taxi Driver* which was aired on Channel 1 some time ago. The serial is being rerun now. The characters I was doing became a bit stereotyped after *Bachelor* and I think I overcame that with this role.

TDS: Future plans regarding acting?

Masood: I'd like to play some negative roles now.

Kanthasheelan's recitation programme at the Public Library

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

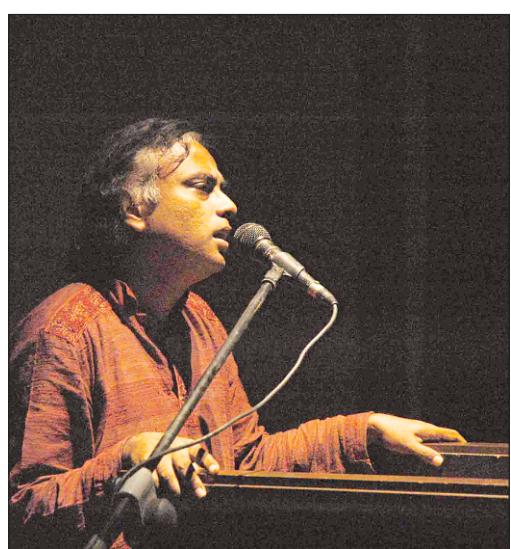
Recital organisation Kanthasheelan arranged a programme titled *Biponyo Manusher Pashey Darai* last evening at the Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium, Public Library. The programme was organised in aid of the flood victims. Recital artistes Meen Barkat, Golam Sarwar, Mohammed Nasiruddin, Zahirul Haque Khan, Azharul Haque Azad, Rais-ul-Islam, Naila Tarannum Chowdhury, Jharna Sarker, Azhar-un-Nabi Rana and Murtaza Sharif Pulak rendered performances in the event. The money earned through the programme will be given to the flood victims.

The evening started with Azhar-un-Nabi Rana's rendition of the poem *Neelkantha* by Premendra Mitra. This was followed by Murtaza Sharif Pulak's three recitations: *Rajputur* by Rabindranath Tagore, *Na Ram na Ganga* by Narendranath Chakrabarty and *Joniko pradhan shikkhoker uddehshey lekha Abraham Linkoner chithi* compiled by eminent litterateur Selina Hossain. His presentation of the last poem on Abraham Lincoln attracted the audiences.

Jharna Sarker moved the audience by her superb recitation of the poem *Foti Pagli*, taken from Neelima Ibrahim's most celebrated publication, *Beerangana Baluchi*. The soulful performance of Jharna, especially narrating the blood chilling torture by the Pakistani military, dumbfounded the audience.

Mohammed Nasiruddin rendered poems from Narendranath Chakrabarty, Buddhadev Basu, Mohitlal Majumdar and Shamsur Rahman.

Naila Tarannum's recitation, Bertolt Brecht's



An artiste performs at the programme

Mariferar and Ami ei sheimeye by Shuvadas Gupta were appreciated by the spectators.

Zahirul Haque Khan recited from Sabyasachi Deb's *Karma* and Ram Basu's *Bhoshon*. The programme ended with Golam Sarwar's presentation of *Neel Upahar*, a translation by Sunil Ganguly from the origin of Octavio Paz's poem.

Eid-special publication for children

"Ranggeen Phul" launched

Publication house Oitijhya's Eid-special treat for children, *Ranggeen Phul*, was launched at Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum recently, says a press release.

National professor Kabir Chowdhury, litterateur Abdus Shakur, Bashir Al Helal and chief executive of Oitijhya, Arifur Rahman Nayeem were present at the programme.

Kabir Chowdhury said, "I felt an excitement after receiving this issue of *Ranggeen Phul*; a feeling that took me back to my childhood when we used to read *Sandesh*, *Tapur Tupper* and other children's magazines."

"I was little hesitant to write for the children but now I'm glad to be a part of *Ranggeen Phul*," Abdus Shakur said in his speech.

Chief executive of Oitijhya, Arifur Rahman Nayeem explained the objectives of publication,



saying, "Very little is published for the children on the occasion of Eid in our country. Though this is aimed at children, it should appeal to adults as well."

Dhrubo Esh is the art director and cover designer of *Ranggeen Phul*. This collection includes write-ups by 107 writers.

"Muktijuddho Protidin": Daily show on Liberation War

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The daily programme *Muktijuddho Protidin*, aired on Channel-i, reached its 180th episode recently. The programme, highlighting the Liberation War, began on March 7 this year and is expected to run up to December 16. Day to day events and major combats during the war are brought into light in the programme.

A team of researchers -- led by Major (retd) Shamsul Arefin -- including Wasim Ahmed, Shahidul Hasan Lincoln and Mustafa Ratan, was formed three months ago for conducting the necessary exploration.

Eminent cultural personality and Freedom fighter Nasiruddin



Yousuff hosts the show pro-

duced by Raju Alim. Renowned individuals who have actively participated in the war are interviewed in the programme. Unheard stories and eyewitness accounts are narrated. So far, Selim Al Deen, Abdur Razzaq, Tofael Ahmed, Rokeya Sultana, Mamunur Rashid, Rashed Khan Menon, Murtaja Baseer, Dr. Atiur Rahman, Mayeedul Hassan, Aminul Haque Badshah, Badruddin Umar, Ayesha Khanom, Raisul Islam Asad, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, KM Shafiullah and Sultana Kamal have appeared in the show as guests.

Muktijuddho Protidin is aired daily at 4:05pm.

ON AIR

PICK OF THE DAY

New Zealand v Pakistan
On BTB at 5:05pm
Semi Final
Live from Cape Town

Bachelor Dompoti
On Banglavision at 9:45pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Tauquir Ahmed, Bijori Barkatullah

BANGLAVISION

11:40 Media Bhubon
10:50 Rupantor Golpo
11:30 Gauner Kotha
Kothar Gaan

STAR MOVIES

01:00 X-Crime
02:30 Vokab
02:40 Drama Serial:

BOLLYWOOD

12:25 Bolly V - Star Plus
12:30 V Trailers - Star Plus
12:55 Bolly V - Star Plus
01:00 Shaka Laka Boom Boom

ETV

08:00 Ekusher Shokal
08:30 Desh Jurey
01:30 Drishti
02:00 Bangla Feature Film

STAR PLUS

03:15 Banglavision Cafe
04:15 Citycell Din-er
04:30 Ebong Classer Bairey
05:30 Islamic Programme

STAR WORLD

01:30 Final Cut
03:05 Jerry Maguire
05:20 The Ringer
07:00 Rundown, The
08:50 Starship Troopers 2:
09:00 My Name Is Earl
09:30 Yes Dear
05:00 Monk

NATIONAL

06:00 The Office (Us)
06:30 Ghost Whisperer
07:30 Tna Xpllosion
08:30 Kyle XY
09:30 Ugly Betty
10:30 Day Break
11:30 Brothers & Sisters
12:30 Kyle XY

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

News Bulletin

BTB
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55am, 12:10pm, 2:00pm, 3:00pm, 4:00pm, 7:00pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 1:00pm, 5:00pm, 8:00pm.

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15am.

ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00am, 10:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 11pm. News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm. Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00am, 10:00am, 11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:30pm, 7:30pm, 10:00pm, 12:30am.

BANGLAVISION
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 2:00pm, 6:00pm, 7:15pm, 10:30pm. News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00am, 12:00am, 4:00pm. News Headlines (English) at 8:05pm.

Rtv
News (Bangla) at 10:15pm, and 12:15am.

ntv
News (Bangla): 7:30am, 12:02pm, 2:00pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm, 1:00am

ETV
News (Bangla): 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 11:00pm

BTV
08:45 Esho Gaan Shikhi
11:15 Documentary Programme/ Nobo Digonto

11:30 Shukhi Porbar
01:00 Quiz

01:30 Mati O Manush
02:15 Sisimpur
02:40 Bangla Feature Film

05:05 ICC World Twenty 20
09:15 Drama: Smile Care
10:30 ICC World Twenty 20

12:15 Bangla Feature Film
03:45 Shobor Jonno
04:20 Khotomey Quran
05:00 Gram Gorji Khobor
06:20 Hamd Nath

08:00 Mega Serial: The New Sobuj Opera
08:40 Mega Serial: Laal Neel Beguni

09:20 Mega Serial: Ek Jonomey
11:30 Drama Serial: Doll's House

12:00 Grameenphone Lead News

09:30 Selected Programme
11:05 Selected Programme

06:00 Protidin
06:35 Tarzan
11:00 Look at Me

12:30 Citycell Taraka

ATN BANGLA
10:30 ATN Commentary Box
11:05 Shabt Din
12:15 Bangla Feature Film
03:45 Shobor Jonno
04:20 Khotomey Quran
05:00 Gram Gorji Khobor
06:20 Hamd Nath

08:00 Mega Serial: The New Sobuj Opera
08:40 Mega Serial: Laal Ne