

## CULTURALFEAST

## Cartoon Exhibition

Title: Cartoon Against Corruption  
Organiser: Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)  
Venue: Dik Gallery, House 58, Road 15A (New), Dhanmondi  
Date: December 7-11  
Time: 3pm-8pm

## Art Exhibition

Title: Guernica: History of a Painting  
Organiser: Department of Spanish, University of Dhaka  
Venue: Zainul Gallery 2, Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka  
Date: December 7-9  
Time: 12am-7pm

## Solo Art Exhibition

Title: The Story of a Deceased Man  
Artist: Mahabubur Rahman  
Venue: Galleri Kaya, House 20, Road 16, Sector 4, Uttara  
Date: December 7-18  
Time: 11am-8pm

## Dhaka Book Fair 2007

Organised by: National Book Centre  
Venue: National Parade Square, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar  
Date: December 1-16

## Art Exhibition

Title: Nilun Kundu: The Creative Mind  
Artist: Nilun Kundu  
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Bengal Shilpaya, H 275/F, Road 27 (old), Dhanmondi  
Date: December 3-17  
Time: 12pm-8pm

## Exhibition

Title: Jhora Shishirer Gaan  
Venue: Nitya Upahar, 50, Aziz co-operative super market, 2nd floor, Shahbagh  
Date: December 1-10

## Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Entity-Sketches of Heritage  
Artist: Sajid-Bin-Doza Bonny  
Venue: Alliance Française de Dacca, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
Date: December 3-18  
Time: 9am-12pm & 5pm-8pm except Saturday (5pm-8pm)

## Solo Painting Exhibition

Artist: Shyamal Roy Chowdhury  
Venue: Art & Soul Gallery, Road 36, House 16, Gulshan  
Date: November 30-December 16  
Time: 11am-8pm

## JUNG:De

An Interactive Exhibition on German Youth Culture  
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, House 10, Road 9, Dhanmondi  
Date: December 6-12  
December 8  
Concert by the band 'BLACK'  
Doors open at 5:30, Concert starts: 6:00 pm  
(Tickets: Tk 50, all proceeds of the ticket sale will go to Sids victims)  
December 10-11  
5:00 pm onwards  
Film Screening: Youth in German Cinema (open to all)  
Daily Exhibition Hours:  
Sun-Thursday: 10 am - 8 pm, Saturday: 3pm. Onwards  
(Closed on Friday)

# Wither contemporary art in Bangladesh?

In conversation with Nisar Hussain, Towfiqur Rahman and Saidul Haque

FAYZA HAQ

DOES Bangladeshi contemporary art really reflect "sweetness and light", as Matthew Arnold claimed the essence of culture to be? It is believed that a lot of it is not from the bottom of the heart, and does not have a "soul pitch". It often aims at quick sale and is sometimes even gimmicky. Three leading artists of repute, Nisar Hussain, Towfiqur Rahman and Saidul Haque Juis talk about this subject over cups of tea at a residence in Dhanmondi. They discuss the Bangladeshi art scene from their angles in as much an unbiased manner as possible.

Nisar Hussain says, "One wonders what percentage of contemporary art is creative practice and how much of it is market-oriented. This is the common scenario all over the world. Most artists work to meet their financial needs. Creative practice is a personal matter. The true artist will not care so much for fame or financial gains during his journey through life. He will seek the truth rather than exposure."

"Some of Picasso's work, e.g. is termed as not so successful, but they contain the artist's honesty and involvement with the quest for truth. They reflect the depth of his creative drive. People listen to leading musicians but the real essence is sometimes lost on some. Similarly great art is not necessarily readily appreciated."



Nisar Hussain

Nisar Hussain says that a work of art maybe created with chemicals and that the onlooker might feel that the end result is something complex and well worth wondering about. To create attractive visual art is not difficult, he comments. Artists are striving to be trendy. Just as perfection is not easy for the artist so selecting high art is difficult for the connoisseur, he concludes.

People are being drawn towards commercial art, says Towfiqur Rahman. There is something lacking even in the creative artist, he says. Those who go in for quick popularity are not being true to the visual language of art, he adds. "Contemporary art, in my opinion, is not yet fully established, looking at it objectively. It is not clear that even dedicated and motivated artists have been able to go into the



Towfiqur Rahman

depths of the truth, while presenting paintings or sculpture. Even from the global perspective, struggles are inevitable. It is in cases like the works of Zainul Abedin, Quamrul Hassan and SM Sultan that we get total dedication and products of a great measure of inspiration," he says.

"As we move on to abstraction, the struggle and depth of feeling and endeavour are sometimes somewhat missing. However, those who are simply selling their artworks are not to be ignored as their products too are artworks even though their concepts are nothing to really write home about. Their creations are simply like a facile colourful wall," Towfiqur Rahman concludes.

Speaking in the same vein, Saidul Haque Juis says, "What applies to our country goes also for the rest of



Saidul Haque

the world." Gallery art, museum art, 'contract art' and souvenir art which expatriates crave after - are variations of art, he says. In Bangladesh, he feels, souvenir artists sell in art galleries. Even in neighbouring Kolkata, he says, there is not such not such a confusion. Today, in Bangladesh, artwork that can decorate the homes find highest importance. Again, when the Shilpakala Academy came up, he says, folk art was promoted by those like Quamrul Hassan. SM Sultan worked from a village. Later, when the galleries mushroomed, the activities of the Shilpakala Academy saw a nose-dive while private galleries boomed. This ended in more confusion in the Bangladeshi art world, as he sees it.

The discussion was thought provoking and at times iconoclastic.

## Cinema hall trade in disarray up North

Thirty cinema theatres shut down in last five years

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinaipur

More than 30 movie theatres in Dinaipur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh, Jaipurhat, Nilphamari and Gaibandha have been closed down during the last five years and the rest follow suit as the cinema theatres are failing to draw audiences. This is due to absence of quality reels, copying of Indian films, high VAT and adding obscene footages, according to sources. The government is losing revenue from the trade as well.

According to the report of tax officials, the entertainment taxes of cinema halls have gone down by at least 40 per cent. Hall operators and owners said that the shortage of quality reels, which deter in only smaller number of audiences, along with rampant piracy, adding obscene footages with the homemade reels, high VAT (55% depending on their sale), high municipality taxes and maintenance costs of these halls forced to shutdown the halls as they failed to show quality films at their respective halls and losing audiences, according to cinema hall owners sources.

At least 115 theatres had been running in five northern districts of

which 30 have been shut down during last five years. The rest of 85 theatres are limping with old machineries and 10 more are expected to be shut down this year.

According to the District Information Office officials in Dinaipur, five out of 25 theatres have shut down. In Thakurgaon four out of 14, in Panchagarh three out of 14, in Joypurhat four out of 15, in Nilphamari three out of 17 and in Gaibandha seven of 30 cinema



One of the 30 theatres in North Bengal that has been closed

theatres remained closed for last five years.

While talking with *The Daily Star*, the cinema hall traders point out that the cinema hall trading in the region, which once entertained at least 80% people of the region, is now limping due to shortage of quality reels and government concept of high entertainment charge (55% depending on their sales) forcing them to add obscene reels with homemade cinema to

increase their earning these days.

Most elites and cultural personnel of these districts suggested implementing the existing laws increase monitoring on the hall operators. Besides they sought better cooperation of the Film Censor Board.

It is also learnt that many halls have closed down since the last two to three years in the region but at least 50 per cent video traders and two cable operators registered in these districts within the last five years.

The government should take steps to promote the tourism and entertainment industry across the region by slashing the entertainment tax on the industry. Meanwhile, film producers should come up to produce number of good reels. This in turn will generate the income, added Md. Parvez, owner of Modern Cinema Hall in Dinaipur.

Now the grim scene of this industry discouraging new investors of the region though four cinema halls have been built in Gaibandha in the last one year.

Another cinema hall operator in Thakurgaon said that he would shutdown his hall by the end of December this year due to the incurring losses.

Tête-à-tête with pop crooner

## "It was for the love of the audience that I came back": Mehreen

NADIA SARWAT

Mehreen became a female idol in the neo-pop genre in Bangladesh after her debut album *Anaari* (2000) was released. Her voice and singing style came like a breath of fresh air to the pop music lovers who were craving for this revival.

Simultaneously a host, news presenter and occasionally a ramp model, Mehreen was absent from the scenario for some time as she was going through the most special experience of her life, motherhood. However, she made a brilliant comeback with the video album *Tomar Jonyo*, released in the *Eid-ul-Fitr*. One of the songs, titled *Gonotontro* at once caught the viewer's attraction. Recently this versatile talented artiste shares her feelings with *The Daily Star*.

"*Gonotontro*, came totally from instinct. I think it's a kind of response to show that, we, the common people are not dumb; each of us has the social eye indeed," says Mehreen.

The concept of Music video is now an established one and Mehreen's new video album is a conscious effort to apply this concept in a thoroughly professional approach.

"I think people can connect with a song more if it is also presented visually. In the western countries, music video became an integrated part of a song since the early 80s. But, in our country, rarely any big budget music videos are made. *Tomar Jonyo* is a big budget album released by Impress Audio vision in which we tried to be perfect starting from the concept to the recording, location, shooting and all. I think every video of the album will be worthwhile."

Commenting on the contemporary music industry of Bangladesh, she said, "Now there is a trend to do lots of experimental works and many of them are brilliant indeed. There is newness in the entire industry, just like the *Boishakhi Jhor*. But a mutually respectable atmosphere, a symbiotic blend between the old and the new can help our music industry far more effectively."

About the recent tendency to do fusion folks, Mehreen explained, "Personally, I never dared to do what is termed as hardcore folk. For I consider myself as a city girl. I should not wear the clothes of a woman



Mehreen

from the country. I really think it's important to be someone from that setting to feel the spirit and produce it in the song."

She learned Tagore songs, Nazrul songs, and folk songs, mystic and modern music. She had learnt from *Ustad* Pulin Dey and Ferdousi Rahman. "To train your voice is something from which you can discover that you can do a lot of things with your voice. That's what I am always trying to do."

Mehreen conveys her gratitude and thanks to the audience who have been so supportive so far. "It's their love that I came back in the world of singing again. Now I feel more responsibility to give something better to my audience," she concludes.

## Mega Serial "Ak Jonomey" on ATN Bangla tonight



A scene from the serial

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Directed by Abdulla Al Mamun, the 250th episode of Mega serial *Ak Jonomey* will be aired on ATN Bangla at 9:20pm tonight

The plot of the serial follows the life of Rakib Choudhury, a famous cultural personality. Despite his fame, Choudhury is not contented with his personal life. He is a widower and his two sons are stranded in different problems as well. Ruby is Choudhury's favourite and successful student for whom he has an infatuation. At the end of the story, Rakib Choudhury is haunted by insufferable loneliness.

Cast of the mega serial includes Ferdousi Majumdar, Tarin, Chumki, Joya, Jitu Ahsan, Sabbir, Abdul Kader, Jahid Hossain Shovon, Jamal Uddin Hossain, Shireen Bakul, and others.

## Drama serial "Bachelor Dampoti" ends tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Drama serial *Bachelor Dampoti*'s last episode will be aired on Banglavisat at 9:30 pm tonight. Written and directed by Murad Parvez, the serial deals with funny side of family life.

After retirement Rashedul Haque settles with his extended family. As no bachelor was allowed, a young man and a woman in disguise of a couple rent the second floor of his house. They seem to survive all the hassles and surveillances of the landlord. But the situation become difficult as tension develops within the couple in disguise.

Tauquir Ahmed, Mir Sabbir, Ahsan Habib Nasim, Richi Solaiman, Bijori Barkatullah, Tanvin Sweetie, Sharmin Shila, Tanima Hamid and Sohana Saba are the main casts of the serial.



Tauquir Ahmed and Richi Solaiman in Bachelor Dampoti

## ON AIR

### PICK OF THE DAY



Phirey Dekha  
On Channel i at 10:00 pm  
Drama Serial  
Cast: Litu Anam, Ishita



Ice Age  
On Star Movies at 07:00 pm  
Genre: Animation  
Cast: Ray Romano, John Leguizamo

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

### News Bulletin

**BTV**  
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm.  
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm.  
News (English) at 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm.  
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

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

**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, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

**CHANNEL 1**  
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 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**  
09:05 National Cricket League  
02:15 Sissampur  
02:40 Bangla Feature Film  
05:25 National TV Debate  
06:25 Dasher Katha  
07:05 Amader Mukjudho  
07:30 Drama Serial: Baul Mon  
07:45 Bijo Amar Bijo  
08:35 Documentary  
Programme: Amar Bangladesh  
09:00 Drama: Nijer Kachhey Phara  
10:30 Poribesh Proshongho

**ATN BANGLA**  
09:15 Amader Nurul Huda  
10:30 Aktel Onyodishti  
11:05 Shathi Din  
12:15 Musical Programme: Shesh Okhkhur  
01:30 Documentary  
Programme: Prapok  
02:30 Bangla Feature Film  
05:00 Gram Gorier Khabor  
06:20 Gondhoraj Samsung Cine Aha  
06:40 Shai Shob Din Raatri  
08:00 Drama Serial: Atoknagor  
08:40 Drama Serial: Chor Kuthuri  
09:20 Drama Serial: Ek Jonomey  
11:30 Daily Soap: Dolls House  
12:00 Grameenphone Lead News

**Channel i**  
09:30 Shangbadpotrey

**Bangladesh**  
09:45 Public Reaction  
09:50 Grameenphone  
11:05 Titimistra  
12:30 Amader Aaina  
Citycell Taroka  
Kathan  
01:05 Ebong Cinemar Gaan  
01:30 Musical Programme: Sa Re Ga Ma  
02:40 Selected Programme  
03:05 Hridoyer Gaan  
03:30 Aktel Money Talk  
04:05 Educational  
Programme: F M Method  
04:50 Shoter Shondhaney  
05:30 Mukjudho Protidin  
06:00 Swaghaal Agami  
06:30 Odito  
07:50 Mega Serial: Ghar Kutum  
08:20 Drama Serial: Noulkadubi  
09:35 Hridoyer Mallo O Manush  
10:00 Drama Serial: Phira Dekha  
11:30 Live Drama Serial: Astey Astey Astey  
12:00 Grameenphone  
Ajker Shangbadpotrey

**Rtv**  
09:05 Drama Serial: Ebong Rohoshyer Golpo  
10:00 Children's Programme  
10:30 Protidin  
11:30 Gopshoo  
12:15 Drama Serial: Biddhashram

**ETV**  
08:00 Ekusher Shokal  
08:30 Mukto Khabor  
01:30 Bangla Feature Film  
05:15 Profikriti  
05:45 Ekusher Shondha  
06:10 Sms Maria

**BTV**  
01:00 Gaanchil Ei Din  
02:30 Bangla Feature Film  
06:00 Protidin  
06:35 Tarzan  
08:00 Drama: Swampiti  
Gathe  
11:00 Fashion Show: Look at Me  
11:30 News Watch  
12:00 Rtv Exclusive

**BANGLAVISION**  
06:30 Shoptaho Ghurey  
07:30 Desh Jurey  
08:30 Explosive  
08:30 Total Music  
09:30 Ekusher Shomoy  
10:30 Binodon Bishwa  
11:45 Reporter's File  
12:00 Ekusher Raat  
09:05 Children's Programme  
09:30 Sports Vision  
10:10 Agami Kontho  
11:05 Talk Show: Shamoy Oshomoy  
11:30 Media Bhubon  
01:00 X-Crime

**STAR PLUS**  
09:30 V Trainers - Star Plus  
10:30 Bolly V  
12:30 V Trainers - Star Plus  
12:30 Bolly V  
01:00 Prithviraj Chauhan  
01:55 Bolly V  
02:00 V Trainers - Star Plus  
02:25 Bolly V  
02:30 Annu Ki Ho  
03:00 Gayeewah Bhai Waah  
03:00 Bidaai  
05:00 V Trainers - Star Plus  
05:25 Bolly V  
05:30 Kunwara  
06:30 Nach Ballye 3  
09:30 Prithviraj Chauhan  
10:00 Baa Bahoo Aur Baby  
10:30 Star Vol Chhote Ustada  
12:00 Santaan  
12:30 Bolly V

**STAR MOVIES**  
08:30 Prince & Me II: The Royal Wedding  
10:15 Lucky Number Sleev  
12:00 The Perfect Catch  
01:45 Vip Access  
02:15 Baby's Day Out  
03:55 The Green Mile  
07:00 Ice Age  
08:25 Waterworld  
10:45 Jaws  
12:50 Punch-Drunk Love  
09:30 V Trainers - Star Plus  
09:55 Bolly V  
10:00 V Trainers - Star Plus  
10:30 American Dragon: Jack Long  
11:00 101 Dalmatians  
11:25 Bolly V

**STAR WORLD**  
09:30 Ncis  
10:30 The Bold And The Beau Iful  
12:30 The Knights Of Prosperity  
01:00 Travel Asia  
01:30 My Wife And Kids  
02:00 According To Jim  
03:00 Criss Angel Mindbreak  
03:30 Hey Paula  
04:00 The Knights Of Prosperity  
04:30 Yes Dear  
05:00 Monk  
06:00 The Office (Us)  
06:30 Ghost Whisperer

**THE HISTORY**  
09:30 Da Vine's World  
10:30 1964 Chevy Impala  
11:30 The Grand Design  
12:00 Deadly Doctors  
12:30 Shutdown  
01:30 Cities Of The Under world  
02:30 Ancient Rome  
03:30 The Aircraft Carriers  
04:30 Great Britain  
05:30 Diana: The True Story

**THE HISTORY**  
07:30 Tna Xplosion  
08:30 Kyle Xy  
09:30 Ugly Betty  
10:30 The Black Donnellis  
11:30 Shocking Behavior  
Caught On Tape  
12:30 Kyle Xy  
09:30 Sharks: At Risk  
10:30 Python Attack  
11:30 Deadliest Snakes  
12:30 Spacemen  
01:30 Naked Science  
02:30 Spain  
03:30 Mad Labs  
04:30 I Didn't Know That  
05:00 Ana, Bill, Banjo  
05:30 Big Bang  
06:00 Sable Island  
06:30 Situation Critical  
07:30 Planet Carnivore  
08:30 Head On!  
09:30 Air Hijack  
10:30 Life On Mars  
11:30 Lockdown  
12:30 The Living Edens

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**Radio Foorti 88.0 FM**  
07:00am Hello Dhaka (Apu)  
11:00am Amar 88.0 (Nusrat)  
03:00pm Dhaka Calling (Sakib)  
07:00pm Fuad Live (Fuad)  
11:30am Back to Back music  
**Radio Today 89.6 FM**  
07:15am Good Morning Dhaka (Biplob)  
07:45am Today's Happy Moments  
08:45am Shokaler Khabor  
12:00pm Fatatati Adda (Nudrat & Sayli)  
01:45pm Dupurer Khabor  
04:00pm U-tum (Tania)  
06:45pm Shondher Khabor  
08:00pm Tobe Tai Hok (Sayem)  
09:45pm Raater Khabor  
11:45pm Moddho Raater Khabor  
12:00am Today's Happy Moments  
12:10am Raaf Vor Gan (Nirob)  
06:30 Hefner  
08:30 Sadat  
10:30 Biography  
12:30 Hefner  
**ZEE STUDIO**  
10:00 Mystery Men  
12:30 Hidalgo  
03:30 The Curse Of The Jade Scorpion  
05:45 Father Of The Bride  
08:00 Hollywood Reporter  
08:30 Chaplin Repeat  
09:00 Double Team  
11:00 The In Laws