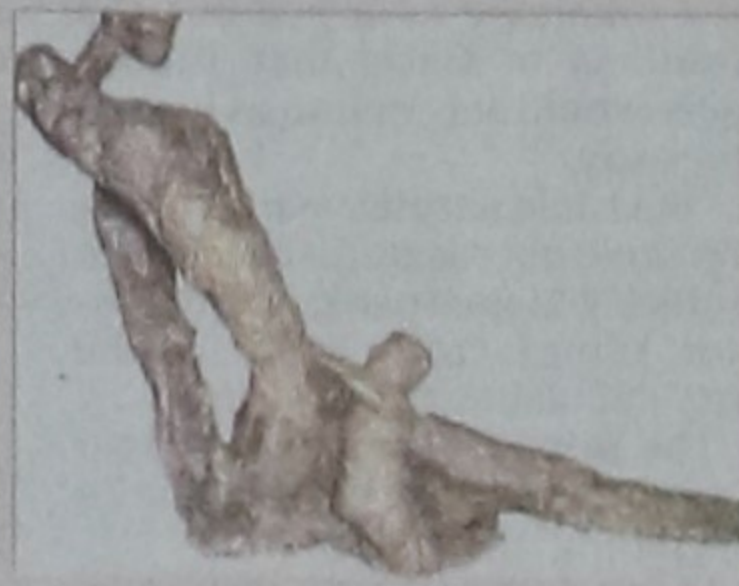


Street Theatre
Festival '08

Organiser: Bangladesh Patha Natak Parishad
Venue: Central Shaheed Minar
Date: March 1-7
Time: 4.30 pm onwards (everyday)

Solo Sculpture
Exhibition

Title: Rejuvenation of Womanhood
Sculptor: Habiba Akhter Papia
Venue: Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, DU
Date: February 25-March 2
Time: 12pm-7pm

Solo Painting
Exhibition

Title: Expressions of My Senses
Artist: Arif Al Karim Bhuiyan
Venue: Goethe-Institut, Bangladesh, House 10, Road 9, Dhanimondi
Date: March 3-12



Solo Exhibition

Title: Epitaph To My Soul
Artist: Biplob Biprodas
Venue: Radius Centre, Bay's Galleria, 57, Gulshan Avenue.
Date: February 29-March 15



"Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan": Celebrating a hundred years of Bangla songs

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate the last 100 years of Bangla music, the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) organised a musical soiree at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre on February 29. The massive event was a continuation of and last instalment of similar programmes, also titled *Shotoborsher Bangla Gaan*, held over the past two years. The function was attended by 1400 invited guests and included the crème of the cultural and social scene.

A total of 33 songs on the Divine, nature, romance, patriotism, as well as *adhunik* songs, were rendered by the A-listed artistes of both Bangladesh and West Bengal. In their ranks were Abdul Jabbar, Sabina Yasmin, Runa Laila, Shahanaaz Rahmatullah, Haimonti Shukla, Srikanto Acharjee, Mitali Mukherjee and Mita Haque.

Performances were also rendered by Dilruba Khan, Laisa Ahmed Lisa, Anup Barua, Mahiuzzaman Maina, Farhana Akhter Shirley, Zahir Alim and Ronti Das.

Md Mahbub-ur-Rahman, corporate banking head of HSBC, stated in his introductory speech that the original initiative had been taken to celebrate the centennial of our National Anthem, which Tagore composed in 1905. He also said that West Bengal's contribution to Bangla music is undeniable, and it is only fitting that the two parts of the old Bengal should unite on the same platform to celebrate the golden era of Bangla music.

Noted researcher and music exponent Dr Karunamaya Goswami applauded the endeavour. "Only by remembering and celebrating the past can the future generation learn from their predecessors and find their direction," he said.

Steve Banner, CEO of HSBC, Bangladesh, expressed his gratitude to everyone concerned and set off the concert by saying, "Gaaner aijon shuru hok."

The programme commenced with the National Anthem by the performing artistes, followed by an instrumental rendition of Tagore's *O Amar Desher Mati*. The function concluded close to five hours later with Srikanto Acharjee crooning *Meyeta amar shadher Bangla bhasha*. Some of the other



Abdul Jabbar



Shahanaaz Rahmatullah



Haimonti Shukla



Srikanto Acharjee

enchanting performances were Shahanaaz Rahmatullah's *Amar desher matir gondhey and Khola jaanlai*, Sabina Yasmin's *Mon jodi bhengey jai* and *O amar Bangla maa tor*, Haimonti Shukla's *Ogo brishti amar*, and *Ami shukhee holey*, Runa Laila's *Gaaneroi khaatai shworolipi*, and *Airay megh airay*, and Srikanto Acharjee's *Amai proshno korey*.

The period covered by the music was from 1905 to 2005 and contained some of the most renowned

and inimitable classics of Bangla music. The lyricists whose work were covered were Rabindranath Tagore, DL Roy, Rajanikanta Sen, Atulprasad Sen, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Premendra Mitra, Shalil Chowdhury, DL Roy, Rajanikanta Sen, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Komol Das, Jaitleshwar Mukherjee, Anisul Haque Chowdhury, Pulok Bondhopadhyay, Gazi Mazharul Anwar, Khan Ataur Rahman, Abul Umra Md Fakrudin, Masud Karim,

Gobindo Haldar, Muhammad Rafiquzzaman, Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal, Nazrul Islam Babu, Pradip Mukherjee, Lilamoi Patro and Kingshuk Chattopadhyay. The compositions were of Rabindranath Tagore, D.L. Roy, Rajanikanta Sen, Atulprasad Sen, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Komol Das, Gupta, Shalil Chowdhury, Abdul Ahad, Raja Hussain Khan, Hemanto Mukhopadhyay, Jotileshor Mukherjee, Shatinath Mukhopadhyay, Satya Saha,

Shubol Das, Khan Ataur Rahman, Alauddin Ali, Manna Dey, Anup Bhattacharya, Azad Rahman, Anwar Pervez and Muhammad Shahnawaz.

Channel 1 is expected to telecast the concert around Pahela Boishak. When asked if it would be a regular annual event, Mustafizur R Khan, head of Marketing and Public Relations, HSBC, replied, "Certainly. The theme will change, but the focus will remain on Bangla gaan."

Shubol Das, Khan Ataur Rahman, Alauddin Ali, Manna Dey, Anup Bhattacharya, Azad Rahman, Anwar Pervez and Muhammad Shahnawaz. Channel 1 is expected to telecast the concert around Pahela Boishak. When asked if it would be a regular annual event, Mustafizur R Khan, head of Marketing and Public Relations, HSBC, replied, "Certainly. The theme will change, but the focus will remain on Bangla gaan."

Folk Music Festival '08 ends
Traditional art forms of southern and eastern part of the country displayed

ERSHAD KAMOL

The three-day Folk Music Festival '08 featuring the diverse traditional performing arts of various ethnic groups ended at the Bangladesh Asiatic Society (BAS) premises on February 29. BAS arranged the festival as a part of the 'Bangladesh Cultural Survey' project conducted by the organisation and is being documented.

In the course of the morning sessions, researchers presented papers on folklore, pointing out the different genres of the traditional music of different areas -- a brief introduction to the genres and names of the troupes and leading artistes performing the art forms. Moreover, a list of the aging and extinct art forms have also been included. Besides, the researchers in the seminars offered the recommendations to preserve the traditional art forms.

Traditional artistes presented the different genres of performing art forms in the evening sessions.

On February 29th morning, nine research papers were presented at four seminars. The research papers presented on the last day were, 'Folksongs of Chittagong Division' by Mohammad Ishaq; 'Folksongs of Greater Chittagong District' by Malik Sobhan; 'Folksongs of Greater Noakhali District' by Shafiqur Raheem Chowdhury; 'Folksongs of Greater Comilla District' by Mahibur Rahim; 'Folksongs of Sylhet Division' by Mahfuzur Rahman; 'Folksongs of Greater Sylhet District' by Deepankar Mohanto; 'Manipuri Folksongs' by Hamom Tanubabu; 'Folksongs of ethnic groups of Chittagong Hill-tracts' by Shogata Sharma and 'Folksongs of ethnic groups of Bandarban District' by Sheikh Golam Sarwar Jahiruddin.

Ten troupes performed in the evening session of the programme. The event began with staging of the Manipuri Moithy community's folklore. They staged two *Jagos* (a traditional performance in dance-music form featuring the myth of Khoma-Khoibi duo). Moreover, they presented a part of *Khubak Oishey* (a kind of ballad). The presentation of the indigenous performing art forms of Manipuri Moithy was enjoyable.



Kala Miah (standing) and Mujib (with violins) perform a Maljora at the festival

The colourfully clad Manipuri Bishnupriya community presented a Manipuri classical dance titled *Rash*. Though *rash* is a nightlong performance, the artistes presented three fragments of the art forms.

The Chakma community performed their traditional *Olidagani Geet* (a kind of lullaby), *Barmas* (love songs featuring a man's longing for his fiancée), and *Ganguli*, a kind of ballad. Though the *Ganguli* is usually of a long duration, the narrator with the acoustics of their traditional instruments such as *bela* (two-string violin), *dhudak*, *shinga*, *gengrong* and *bansi*, presented a part of the art form.

Artistes of Tripura community performed folk songs depicting the emotion of love. The Bommi community presented their traditional dance and music.

Except the traditional *Chay* (an indigenous performing art form of the community) performance, the love songs presented by the Marma community need more research to determine whether the art forms represent their tradition or are composed for the entertainment of the urban audience.

With the western music compositions Camong and his troupe (a representative of Rakhain community) performed three dance pieces light dance, umbrella dance and butterfly dance at the folk music

festival. They also staged a performance featuring their *Sangrai* festival.

Shukkur and his troupe from Cox's Bazar performed folk genres of the district such as *Hailla Geet*, *Shampan Majhir Gaan* and *Jhinukbalar Nrityageet*.

Songs composed by bards of Comilla were presented by Firoz and his troupe.

Jalali and his troupe from Sylhet presented *Maljora*, in which two bayatis debate on the stage on different mystic issues. And the debate, set to music on the 'reason behind creation of human beings' by Kala Miah and Mujib, was impressive.

The presentation of *Dhamail* (an art form featuring entertainment related to marriage) by 76-year old Romjan Boyati and his troupe also deserve plaudits.

Ishak and his troupe from Chittagong presented *Maijbandari songs*, *Kobiguan*, *Punthi Gaan* and others. The audience got an authentic taste of *Punthi Gaan*.

The last troupe to perform at the festival was Dulal Acharya and his troupe. They presented indigenous art forms such as *Bhaitaila Geet*, *Bela Gaan* and *Ulla Gaan*.

Though a research paper was presented on 'Folksongs of Greater Noakhali District', no performance of the folklore of the region was presented.

Tête-à-tête with the actress

Ghor Kutum's Gauhar: Khushi in the real life

NADIA SARWAT

She may not be a well recognised figure on the cultural circuit, but plays a popular role in the drama serial *Ghor Kutum*: that of the shrewish Gauhar. No wonder then that Shahanaaz Khushi has often been questioned as to whether she resembles her character off screen.

Her response? "I often answer in the positive because that is what people want to hear. If I say no, I am met with disbelief," said the smiling actress to this correspondent.

"In the play, my brother-in-law (ATM Shamsuzzaman) forces me into marriage with a professional thief (Fazlur Rahman Babu). At one level, I despise my husband for what he is. However, at another level, I truly love him though I never let him know how I feel. I even take up cudgels with those who bad-mouth him. Mine is a multi dimensional, highly emotional character and I love the role," she added.

Though she has become more visible over the last one or two years, she is not a newcomer to acting. She has been a regular theatre activist since 1994.

"I became acquainted with Arannyak Natyadal after my marriage to Brindaban Das; he was with the troupe then. I still remember Mamunur Rashid saying to me 'Boibahik Surey, you are a member



Shahanaaz Khushi

of our troupe now, when I first met him after my wedding. For eight years, I never missed a single day at

Arannyak till I became a mother." Later, she joined Prachyanat and is one of the founder members of

the group. At that stage, she was not attracted to the small screen. In her words, "I was serious about the

stage. I was disinterested in television as the form vastly differs from theatre acting. Moreover, those days it was a bit difficult to bag an important role on the screen. There was only one TV channel and the directors did not want to take the risk of casting newcomers. I had a brief appearance in drama serial *Shilpi*, directed by Mamunur Rashid, and that was all."

According to Shilpi, the second innings of her acting career was the result of a collaboration with director Salahuddin Lavlu. Under his direction she acted in *War-rant*, *Dholer Badyi*, *Kedara* and other works. Her recent success in *Ghor Kutum*, where she plays one of the three sisters, has inspired her to seriously contemplate regular roles in the TV medium.

However, she would like to refine her acting skills. "Another obstacle I face is to restrain my emotion while I act. When you are on the stage, you can give vent to your emotions. However, to have control over your emotion is an important aspect on the screen. Basically, I am very sentimental and often get emotional while acting. Sometimes this helps but it can be troubling. However, I want to learn to give my best on the screen," Khushi concludes.

Ghor Kutum, the popular serial is aired on Channel 1 every Friday and Saturday at 7.50 pm.

Surshaptak celebrates 8th anniversary

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate its eighth anniversary, cultural organisation Surshaptak arranged a colourful cultural programme at the National Music and Dance Centre of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on February 29. The programme featured Nazrul Sangeet, classical and dance by the members of the organisation.

Prior to the cultural programme, a brief discussion was held. Noted Nazrul singer Ferdous Ara, also the founding director of Surshaptak, presided over the programme.

Litterateur Abdus Shakur was the chief guest. In his brief speech Abdus Shakur said that the students of Surshaptak were fortunate to learn music from an artiste of Ferdous Ara's stature.

In his brief speech Nazrul exponent Sudhin Das said, "My wish is that Surshaptak will continue to promote the best of Nazrul Sangeet in our country."

Former Secretary Syed Margub Morshed was the special guest. Anil Shaha, instructor of the classical song department of Surshaptak, gave the welcome speech.

Ferdous Ara handed over memorial crests to Sudhin Das, Abdus

Shakur and Margub Morshed. The cultural programme started with the group rendition of a devotional song *Dao suorja dao dhorja*. Members of the organisation also rendered *Raga Basanta*.

Noted dancer Sohail, Riya and their troupe performed a group dance with the song *Anjali loho mor*. Keya, Tahsin Jannat and Shoshi rendered a Raga-based song *Prothom pradip jalo*, a ghazal *Ajkey shadi* and a *shyama sangeet* titled *Shyam tumi jodi radha hotey*.

Noted Nazrul singer Shaheen Samad rendered *Jhilmil jhilmil* as a guest artiste.



Artistes of Surshaptak sing at the programme