

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

### Theatre

Play: Lower Depth  
Troupe: Department of Theatre and Music  
Venue: Natmandol, University of Dhaka  
Date: May 25-31 at 07:00 pm



### Fund Raising Concert

Venue: Gulshan Youth Club Ground, Gulshan-2  
Artists and Bands: Warfaze, Artcell, Aurthobin, Black, Yaatri, Fuad and Powersurge  
Date: May 30  
Time: 3:30pm onwards



### Film Screening

2nd session of African Film Festival '08  
Films: 20 documentaries by African filmmakers  
Organiser: Zahir Raihan Film Society  
Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhamondi  
Date: May 26-30, Time: 5pm onwards



### Theatre

Play: Chhayabrta  
Troupe: Shobdo Nayacharcha Kendra  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA  
Date: May 30  
Time: 7pm



## Rabindra-Nazrul Jayanti celebration by UODA

Sohrab Hossain, Kalim Sharafi and Ferdousi Rahman honoured

### CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Department of Music, University of Development Alternative (UODA) arranged a cultural programme to mark the birth anniversaries of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam at the National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on May 26. Students and teachers of Music Department, UODA rendered Rabindra and Nazrul Sangeet.

A brief discussion and an award giving programme was held prior to the music performances. Founding President of UODA, Mujib Khan gave the welcome speech.

UODA honoured Nazrul exponent Sohrab Hossain, Tagore exponent Kalim Sharafi and veteran singer Ferdousi Rahman for their contribution to Nazrul Sangeet, Rabindra Sangeet and Bangla songs respectively. In his speech Kalim Sharafi said, "I hope UODA's initiative will encourage wider practice of traditional Bangla songs."

Vice Chancellor of UODA, Professor Emazuddin Ahmed presided over the programme. After the discussion, Mujib Khan



Students and teachers of UODA perform at the programme

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

announced that UODA would introduce three scholarships for students, honouring Sohrab Hossain, Kalim Sharafi and Ferdousi Rahman soon.

The cultural programme started with a group rendition of the Rabindra Sangeet, *Bishua beena robye*. Students and teachers of the Music Department also rendered Rabindra Sangeet - *Jai tabo bichitra, Sharthok jonomo amar* and Nazrul Sangeet - *Nobin aasha jaglo jey reyaaj, Jhar jhanjay orey nishan* and *Na militey shadh*.



Award recipients (R-L) Ferdousi Rahman, Sohrab Hossain and Kalim Sharafi seen with the organisers

## Sydney Pollack, Oscar winner film director, passes away

Sydney Pollack, a Hollywood mainstay as director, producer and sometime actor whose star-laden movies like *The Way We Were*, *Tootsie* and *Out of Africa* were among the most successful of the 1970s and '80s, died Monday. He was 73.

The cause was cancer, said the publicist Leslee Dart, who spoke for his family.

Pollack's career defined an era in which big stars (Robert Redford, Barbra Streisand, Warren Beatty) and the filmmakers who knew how to wrangle them (Barry Levinson, Mike Nichols) retooled the Hollywood system. Savvy operators, they played studio against studio, staking their fortunes on pictures that served commerce without wholly abandoning art.

Hollywood honoured Pollack in return. His movies received multiple Academy Award nominations, and as a director he won an Oscar for his work on the 1985 film *Out of Africa* as well as nominations for directing *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1969) and *Tootsie* (1982).

*Michael Clayton*, of which Pollack was a producer and a member of the cast, was nominated for a best picture Oscar earlier this year. He delivered a trademark performance as an old-bull lawyer who demands dark deeds from a subordinate, played by George Clooney.

Pollack became a prolific producer of independent films in the latter part of his career. With a partner, the filmmaker Anthony Minghella, he ran Mirage Enterprises, a production company whose films included Minghella's *Cold Mountain* and the documentary *Sketches of Frank Gehry*, released in 2006, the last film directed by Pollack.

Apart from the Gehry documentary, Mr. Pollack never directed a movie without stars. His first feature, *The Slender Thread*, released by Paramount Pictures in 1965, starred Sidney Poitier and Anne Bancroft. In his next 19 films -- every one a romance or drama but for the single comedy, *Tootsie* -- Pollack worked with Burt Lancaster, Natalie Wood, Jane Fonda, Robert Mitchum, Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman, Meryl Streep, Tom Cruise, Harrison Ford, Nicole

Kidman, Barbra Streisand and others. A frequent collaborator was Robert Redford.

"Sydney and my relationship both professionally and personally covers 40 years," Redford said in an e-mailed statement. "It's too personal to express in a sound bite."

Sydney Irwin Pollack was born on July 1, 1934, in Lafayette, Indiana, and reared in South Bend. By Pollack's own account, in the book *World Film Directors*, his father, David, a pharmacist, and his mother, the former Rebecca Miller, were first-generation Russian-

directing. Lancaster steered him to the entertainment mogul Lew Wasserman, and through him Pollack landed a directing assignment on the television series *Shotgun Slade*.

After a faltering start, he hit his stride on episodes of *Ben Casey*, *Naked City*, *The Fugitive* and other shows. In 1966 he won an Emmy for directing an episode of *Bob Hope Presents the Chrysler Theater*.

From the time he made his first full-length feature, *The Slender Thread*, about a social work student coaxing a woman out of sui-

cide on a help line, Pollack had a hit-and-miss relationship with the critics.

But only with *Tootsie*, in 1982, did Pollack become a fully realised Hollywood player.

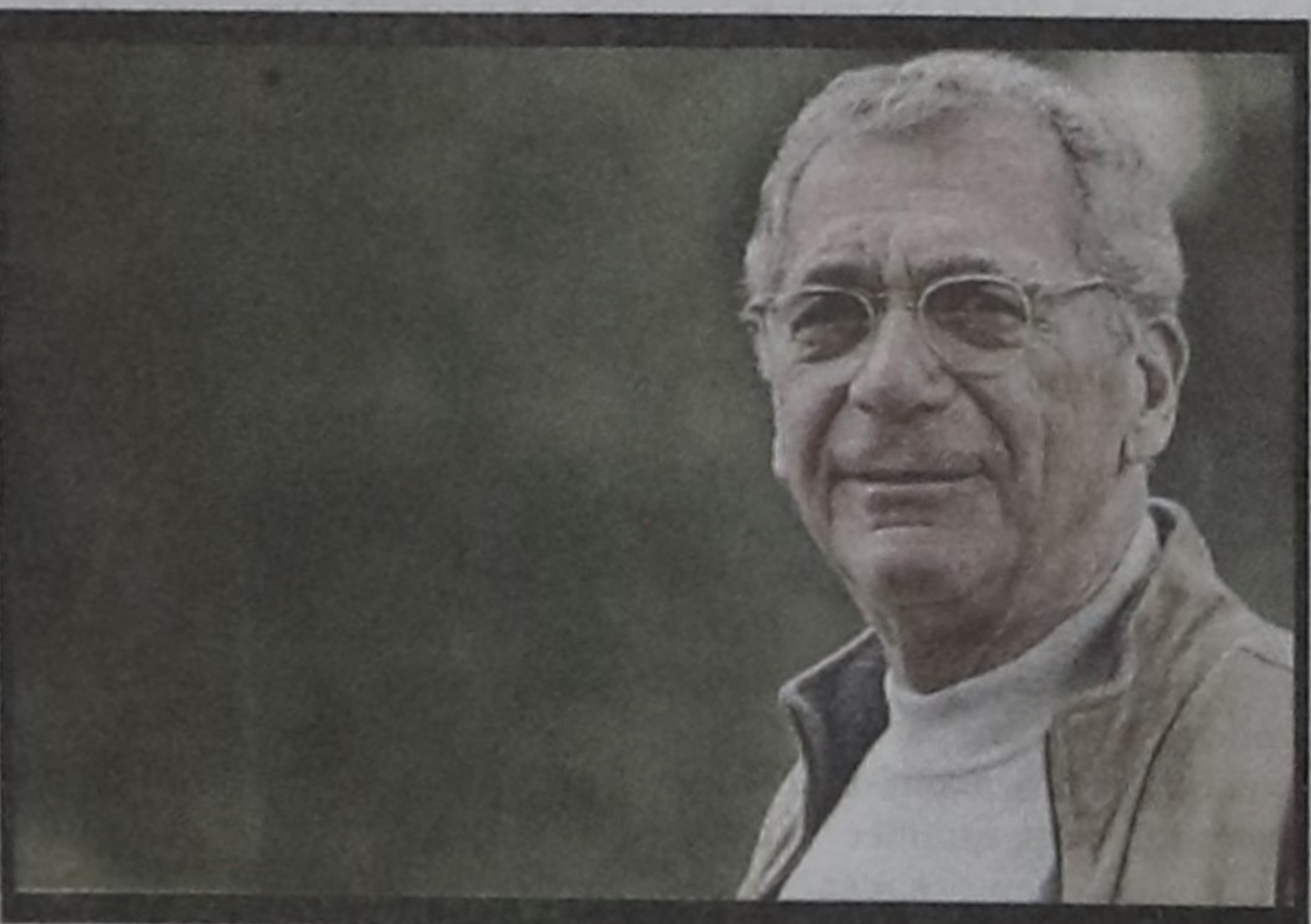
The film is a comedy about a struggling actor who disguises himself as a woman to get a coveted television part. *Tootsie* was a winner. It took in more than \$177 million domestically and received 10 Oscar nominations, including for best picture.

Pollack reached perhaps his pinnacle with *Out of Africa*. The film, based on the memoirs of Isak Dinesen, paired Meryl Streep and Robert Redford in a drama that reworked one of the director's favourite themes, that of star-crossed lovers. It captured Oscars for best picture and best director.

Among Pollack's survivors are two daughters, Rebecca Pollack and Rachel Pollack, and his wife, Claire Griswold. The couple married in 1958, while Pollack was serving a two-year hitch in the Army.

In recent years, he increasingly sounded wistful notes about the disappearance of the Hollywood he knew in his prime. "The middle ground is now gone," Pollack said in the fall 1998 issue of *New Perspectives Quarterly*. He added, with a nod to a fellow filmmaker: "It is not impossible to make mainstream films which are really good."

Source: The New York Times



Americans who had met at Purdue University.

Pollack developed a love of drama at South Bend High School and, instead of going to college, went to New York and enrolled at the Neighbourhood Playhouse School of the Theatre. He studied there for two years under Sanford Meisner, who was in charge of its acting department, and remained for five more as Meisner's assistant, teaching acting but also appearing onstage and in television.

Pollack had appeared on Broadway with Zero Mostel in *A Stone for Danny Fisher* and with Katharine Cornell in *The Dark Is Light Enough*. But he said later that he probably could not have built a career as a leading man.

Instead, Pollack took the advice of Burt Lancaster, whom he had met while working with Frankenstein, and turned to

## Nazrul Jayanti celebrations in Sylhet

### IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

On the occasion of 109th birth anniversary of our National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, different organisations and institutions arranged discussions and cultural programmes featuring music, recitation, dance and more last Sunday.

Sylhet Nazrul Parishad organised a daylong programme at the M. Saifur Rahman auditorium in the city's Rikabi Bazar. Noted artiste Himangshu Biswas formally inaugurated the programme. A discussion headed by Abdul Quaiyum Mukul was held. District Organiser of Shishu Academy, Mahub Zaman Chowdhury; Convener of the Sammlita Natya Parishad Sylhet, Mahub Ahsan Chowdhury; cultural activist and litterateur Shamima Chowdhury and General Secretary of Sylhet Nazrul Academy, Mushfaque Ahmed spoke at the discussion.

The cultural programme featured group renditions by artistes of Nazrul Academy, District Shilpakala Academy, Nabarun Shilpi Goshthi and Dwaitoswar,



Artistes seen with the guests

PHOTO: STAR

Sylhet. Contests were held on recitation, Nazrul Sangeet, drawing on the theme "Nazrul", and dance. A daylong photo exhibition on "Nazrul" was also held at the venue.

Another discussion was arranged at the same venue in the evening with the acting mayor of Sylhet City Corporation Azam Khan as chief guest. Deputy Commissioner of the Sylhet Metropol-

itan Police, Israil Hawlader and General Secretary of Chhayanat, Khairul Anam Shakil were special guests. Amirul Islam Babu chaired the concluding programme. Dances were performed by the artistes of Nriyashaili, Sylhet. Aminul Islam Chowdhury Liton and Shamima Chowdhury recited poems of Nazrul. Khairul Anam Shakil and expatriate artiste Rony Prentis

presented Nazrul sangeet.

Nazrul Sangeet Shilpi Parishad organised a programme titled "Nazrul Pather Jatra Pathik Chhalao Abhijan" at the Zila Parishad auditorium in the evening. Veteran artiste Bidit Lal Das formally inaugurated the programme. A discussion, chaired by Himangshu Biswas, was held as part of the programme. Cultural activist Bijon Roy, Chief Executive Officer of the Zila Parishad, Maniruzzaman and Dr. Abul Fateh Fattah spoke at the discussion. The speakers expressed the view that Nazrul is a poet who belongs to the world. His rebel spirit provides the inspiration to take a stance against all evils and injustice. He had many identities -- poet, warrior, writer, journalist, novelist as well as a social reformer, they noted. Later Nazrul Sangeet were rendered at the programme.

A seminar on "Nazrul in Sylhet" was also held at the Shahid Solaiman Hall last Sunday evening. Principal of Madan Mohan College, Ataur Rahman Pir attended the seminar as chief guest while eminent writer-journalist Abdul Hamid Manik was the main speaker.

## Afroja's tableware with a distinction



### Ceramic ware by Afroja

### CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

It is so much more interesting to have coffee or tea in a handmade ceramic mug rather than in the commercial counterparts. Similarly the artistically inclined in Dhaka often treat their friends to evening tea and snacks in ceramic tableware. Afroja Chowdhury recently had a solo exhibition of her ceramic ware and terracotta wall hangings at Zainul Gallery and managed to sell half of her creations. "The pleasure lies in getting viewers and appreciation for one's works," says Afroja.

Afroja dedicated her work to her teacher Abdul Sayeed Talukder. She said she was able to have the exhibition only because she had the backing of her family who did not object to the long and odd hours that she spent in her work. She says, "I've tried to bring variations in the

shape and colours of the tableware. I've done teapots, jugs, mugs, fruit sets, vases etc.

"It has not been so easy to complete my work. When I carry them to be fired many miles away to Tongi, the items are sometimes spoilt in the process of transportation as the items are of soft clay. The oven in Tongi belongs to BISICIC," says Afroja. "The colours I use are of oxide which come from abroad and are sold in Old Dhaka, behind Mitford Hospital. Again, when we put the glaze, I'm not sure what colours will come ultimately. I'm like an expecting mother who doesn't know what the baby will ultimately turn out to be."

Afroja has kept her shapes simple and has brought variations in her bright, scintillating colours. In one of the tea sets there are brown, yellow and blue swirls. The fruit sets have the form of a fish with mouth and tail done in an abstract manner. It is done with reddish brown

and dark brown. A tea-set has flowers done in relief work. Another is a black tea-set with waves of yellow.

The framed terracotta wall hangings include outsized flowers -- one being burnt sienna, the other black and the other yellow ochre. Again there is a piece that contains flowers and leaves, done in an abstract manner while yet another contains a massive butterfly. One bears a perched owl while the other is the repository of curling and winding leaves and stems. This is done in the smoked fire system. An abstract flower is another attractive wall-piece. Folk designs have also been utilised to bring in forms.

"It is the neat and environment friendly work of the late teacher Talukder that made me go into ceramic in the first place," says Afroja. The exhibition ended recently.

## Nazrul birth anniversary observed in Pabna

### AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR, Pabna

The National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's 109th birth anniversary was celebrated recently in Pabna. A discussion and cultural programme were held in Pabna Town Hall premises last Sunday evening to mark the occasion. Ekushey Book Fair Celebrating Committee, Pabna was the organiser.

Mohammad Zakir Hossain, convener of Ekushey Book Fair Celebrating Committee, Pabna chaired the discussion. Principal of Pabna Law College, advocate Azizul Haque; Dr. Sarwar Jahan Fayaz; advocate Abdul Aziz; Mohammad Saidul Haque and Sultan Ahmed were present at the function.

The speakers were of the view that Kazi Nazrul Islam had composed songs of romance and



Singers perform at the programme

PHOTO: STAR

rebellion equally well. His verses, they said, inspired the masses in the sub-continent to launch a

movement against the British Raj and promote equality and communal harmony.

He brandished arms in one hand and the flute in other. He wrote *ghazals* and *Shyama Sangeet*. He was a votary of human rights, they said, adding that Nazrul is famous for his poems, songs, dramas and novels. They also pointed out that Nazrul's literary works demanded a greater readership.

Later, a colourful cultural programme was staged. Nazrul Sangeet, poems and a dance were staged. Artistes of AFA institute, a local cultural organisation and local artistes were the performers. Asraf Hossain Robi, Nasima Ashraf, Abul Hashem, Shankar Das and Dr. Habibullah led the cultural programme. The artistes' repertoire included romantic, rebellious and religious songs. Prominent cultural activist Shadhin Majumdar conducted the programme.