

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Exhibition

Title: The Limitless Luminosity of Lines
Artist: Saifuddin Ahmed
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi
Date: June 23-July 13
Time: 12pm-8pm



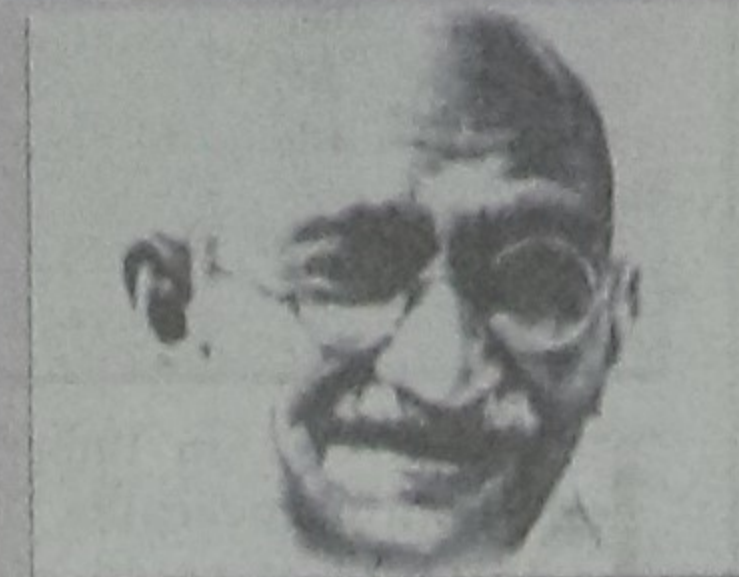
Exhibition

Title: Bhijey Hoya Ashay Megh
Featuring: designs by artists Hashem Khan, Qayyum Chowdhury, Dhrubo Esh and others
Venue: Gallery Nitya Upohar, Aziz Cooperative Super Market, Shahbagh
Date: July 5-24
Time: 10am-8pm



Discussion

Topic: Khadi Uddyogor Darshon
Organiser: Nitya Upahar
Venue: Gallery Nitya Upahar, 50, Aziz Super Market, Shahbagh
Date: July 13
Time: 5pm



Musical Programme

Title: Srotar Ashor
Artists: Chandana Majumder, Shamin Shathi Islam, Nirjhor Chowdhury and Alakananda Subrita
Organiser: Chhayarat
Venue: Chhayarat Sangskriti Bhaban
Date: July 17, Time: 7:15pm



GUNIION SANGBARDHANA

Citibank honours Sohrab Hossain



Sohrab Hossain receives his crest from Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Mamun Rashid (next to the artiste) also seen in the photo

KARIM WAHEED

Sohrab Hossain would always be remembered as one of the artistes who upheld and popularised Nazrul Sangeet in the post-Partition East Bengal. Credited for supreme renditions of Nazrul's creations, the singer-exponent

also trained a generation of talented artistes. Citibank NA Bangladesh honoured this octogenarian artiste as part of their annual "Gunijon Sangbardhana" programme on July 11 at the Radisson Water Garden Hotel.

This was the fifth instalment of the initiative. Prior to Sohrab Hossain, Citibank honoured

Feroza Begum, Sanjida Khatun, the late Nilufar Yasmin and Farida Parveen.

Mamun Rashid, Citigroup Country Officer, said, "Citibank believes in nurturing the local culture and heritage. The aim of this initiative is to celebrate the excellence of these veteran artistes who have made immense



Saadi Muhammad and Fatema Tuz Zohra perform a duet

contribution to our cultural arena." Nazrul researcher Professor Rafiqul Islam labelled Sohrab Hossain's voice as "a gift from God."

"Very few artistes can maintain a youthful tenor for ages. Sohrab Hossain's singing still sounds exuberant with youthful expressions. The voice I heard in 1948 hasn't deteriorated," Professor Islam said.

"The style of Nazrul Sangeet that is popular today in Bangladesh is perhaps best demonstrated in Sohrab Hossain's singing. I remember in 2000, I had the

opportunity to accompany Feroza Begum and Sohrab Hossain to West Bengal -- to attend the Nazrul centenary. An audience of 5,000 eagerly waited at Shantiniketan to hear the two legendary artistes sing. Sohrab Hossain started singing. Shantideb Ghosh, who was 90 at that time, came over and requested him to sing *Ke bideshi bon udashi*. That was a memorable event," added Professor Islam.

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Governor, Bangladesh Bank handed the crest from Citibank to Sohrab Hossain.

Speaking at the programme, Dr.



Samina Chowdhury sings at the programme

Ahmed made an interesting observation. "Esho hey Baishakh has sort of become the *Nabo Barsho* celebration anthem. *Oi natun-er ketan ore, kal Boshekhir jhor*, a Nazrul Sangeet apt for the occasion, is submerged in a medley of numerous songs, failing to achieve the level of interest it deserves. Something to think about for the artistes and organisers."

The veteran artiste expressed his gratitude to the organisers and made an appeal. "There are many artistes who sing on the radio and TV but their names are lost in the oblivion once they are off air."

Many artistes have to endure ailments alone; sometimes they don't receive the proper treatment. I would like to request the Governor of Bangladesh Bank to set up fund for these artistes so that they get the proper care they deserve."

The governor listened and towards the end of the programme an announcement was made that "according to Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed's suggestion, Citibank NA Bangladesh has decided to allot Tk 1 lakh for further treatment of the artiste."

The musical section of the programme started with Rawshan

Ara Shoma and Rahat Ara Geeti -- daughters of Sohrab Hossain -- singing Nazrul Sangeet *Gul bagichaye bulbuli* and *Hey priyo amarey debo na bhulitey* respectively.

Saadi Muhammad's musical homage to Sohrab Hossain included Rabindra Sangeet -- *Mon-e ki dwidha rekhey geley*, *Jokhon porbey na mor payer chinho* and *Krishnokoli*.

Fatema Tuz Zohra's offering of songs included Nazrul Sangeet -- *Bedona bibhol pagol-o pubali paban-e*, *Shaan ashilo phirey* and a brilliantly executed *Naach-er nesha-e ghor legechhey* (in *Jhumur* style).

Saadi Muhammad and Fatema Tuz Zohra also sang a duet -- *Shur-ei jhor jhor jhorna*.

Samina Chowdhury's repertoire of *adhunik* songs at the programme included *Phool photey phool jhorey*, *Oi jhinuk photashagor belaye* and her overly popular signature number *Kobita porar prohor eshechhey*. On request from the organisers and audience, the artiste did a cover of *Tumi jey amar kobita* -- a song popularised by her father, Mahmudunnabi. The event wrapped with Samina's vivacious rendition of the song *Amar majhey nei ekhon ami*, from the soundtrack of the film *Ranikuthir*. *Baki linash*.

Aromatic Gold Dhaka Fashion Week '08

Black, white and elegant gray



Models sizzle in feminine grace on the penultimate day of fashion week at Dhaka Club.

ZANNATUL LAMEA

With rich content and context, day six of Aromatic Gold Dhaka Fashion Week 2008 drew its curtain with high extolment from the audience. Tootli Rahman's ensembles displayed thematic segments of saris with models clad in softer shades of lilac, lime green, black and white. The queue created a spellbinding effect with muslin, tissue, silk and satin saris bordered with silver shimmers and glittery sparkles, matched with

fashionable stilettos.

Humaira Khan of Anokhi showcased her lavish *shalwar kameez* line-up in shades of ebony and ivory. Lighter shades with ornamental embroidery contrasting base colours of the *kameez*, the long sleeves with narrow *churidar* and windy *dupattas* worn as veils, mesmerised the audience. The ebony line up was coupled with semi-transparent georgette *kameez* in silver and golden shimmer shades and narrow trouser-fold *shalwars*. Deep cut, halter necked *kameez* designed with

glittery *kolka* motifs complimented with crepe *dupattas* and *churidar* created a fusion of glitz and grace. Chiffon and georgette were the fabric richly used in this collection to add to its concept of glamour.

Once again, Jatra showcased its splendid collection inspired from architectural heritage of Dhaka, past and present.

The event presented by Marico and organised by Tupa and Associates ended with a grand finale on July 12 at Dhaka Club.

PHOTO: ZAHEDUL KHAN

Rabindranath Tagore's love of travelling

Seminar at Goethe Institut

Commemorating Tagore's introduction to the European literary scene in the early twentieth century as a major poet of the then British India, Tagore Society, Bangladesh for the second time organised the International Tagore Poetry Recitation Day at the Goethe Institut's Dhanmondi auditorium recently. This year's programme was organised in collaboration with Meghdut, Goethe Institut, Bangladesh and Bangladesh Cultural Forum, according to a press release.

Translation of excerpts from Rabindranath Tagore's *Geetanjali* was read at a gathering of European writers at the Hampstead residence of English poet Rothenstein in 1912. Among others, renowned Irish Poet W.B. Yeats was present at that gathering. In the same year in November the India Society published the English Translation of *Geetanjali*. Tagore received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Eminent writer and traveller Hasnat Abdul Hye delivered the keynote paper on this year's theme "Rabindranath Tagore's Love of Travelling." Eminent litterateur



Shama Rahman (C) sings at the programme

Professor Syed Mohammed Shahed, Director General Bangla Academy and noted playwright Professor Abdus Selim shared their views on the paper as designated discussants. As the special guest, Professor Bazul Mobin Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Independent University, Bangladesh lauded the initiative of Tagore

Society, Bangladesh in promoting Tagore's life and works in a befitting manner.

As the programme began, a song was performed by Asim Dutta and Sunanda. *Mangal Pradip* was jointly lit by the keynote speaker Hasnat Abdul Hye and convener of Tagore Society, Bangladesh, Mosud Mannan. In his speech,

Mannan shared the goals and objectives of the society with the audience and also explained the reasons behind observing International Tagore Poetry Recitation Day on an annual basis.

Artists Nahar Jamil, Fahim Hossain Chowdhury and Sham Rahman rendered a number of songs in line with the theme of the day and the current season *Barsha*. Guest reciters included Aly Zaker, Shimul Mustafa, Naim Tarannum Kakoli, Mikhail Bludnov (Russian Embassy), and Cao Yanhua (Chinese Embassy).

Meghdut performers included Dr. Rashid Hyder, Dr. Farzan Ahmed, Saumitra Dev, Syed Muttakillah, Sumsuddoha Moushumi Mortuza, Morshed Mannan, Dr. Nuzhat Amir Mannan, Sajid Akhand, Kaz Dinar Sultana and Mosud Mannan.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Afzal Hossain Khan, President of Bangladesh Cultural Forum.

An informative bulletin was also published on this occasion edited by Sarkar Ashraf.

Still magic: Rushdie's "Midnight's Children" voted Best of Bookers

Salman Rushdie's epoch-making novel *Midnight's Children* is the best-ever winner of the Man Booker prize, according to a public vote. Rushdie ran away with the award, created to celebrate the prize's 40th birthday, with 36 percent of readers, out of nearly 8,000, selecting *Midnight's Children* from a shortlist of six. The work -- the fantastical tale of Saleem Sinai, born at the stroke of midnight precisely at the moment India gained independence -- won the Booker in 1981. It also won the "Booker of Bookers" in 1993 -- another special award commemorating the 25th anniversary of the creation of the prize.

If Rushdie's victory was predictable, it was also deserved, according to the judges who drew up the shortlist for the Best of the Bookers. *Midnight's Children* arguably "defined" the Booker in the 1980s, he said.

"*Midnight's Children* 'made' the Booker prize, and made it the index of literary fiction," said Mullan. "No one really knew who Rushdie was -- it was his second novel -- and no one expected it to win. And though people knew what magic realism was, no one had read an English novel like this before. When it won, suddenly it looked as though this prize could identify vivid new developments in English fiction." The other books on the Best of the Booker shortlist were Pat Barker's *The Ghost Road* (1995); Peter Carey's

London, and one of the judges who drew up the shortlist for the Best of the Bookers. *Midnight's Children* arguably "defined" the Booker in the 1980s, he said.

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Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1974); and JG Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973). *Disgrace* came in second in the voting, followed by *Oscar and Lucinda*, *The Ghost Road*, *The Siege of Krishnapur* and finally *The Conservationist*, always the dark horse on the list.

According to Mullan, the value of the Best of the Bookers is wider than its simple identification of a single winner: "It looks at what qualities of books survive the fashion that gives them their temporary celebrity."

Rushdie has recalled how *Midnight's Children* was conceived as he was working in an advertising agency, dreaming up slogans such as "naughty but nice" for cream

than Cape, it was sent out for a reader's report. "The author should concentrate on short stories until he has mastered the novel form," it rather dampeningly read. Fortunately the second reader, Susannah Clapp, now theatre critic of the *Observer*, was more positive.

Although not registering on the scale of controversy sparked by Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, the book did cause him to be threatened with an action for defamation by Indira Gandhi. The case was settled before it came to court.

The other panel members who drew up the shortlist were Victoria Glendinning, chair, and Mariella Frostrup.