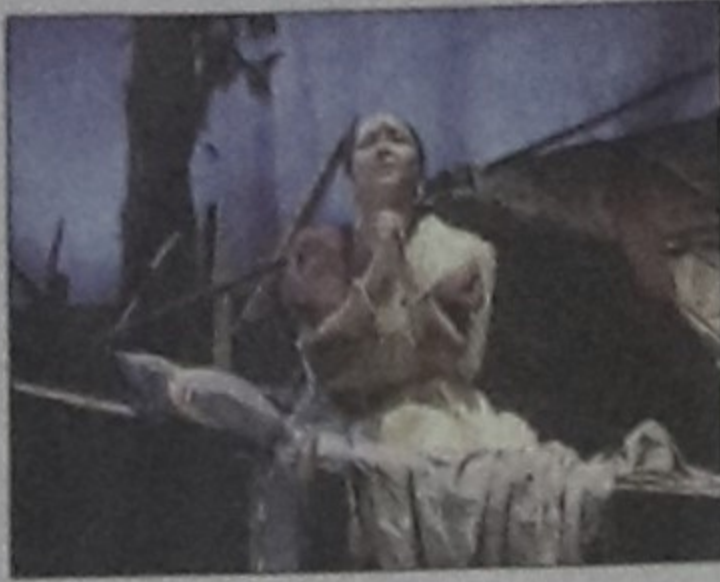


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Theatre

Play: Joboti Konyar Mon
Troupe: Dhaka Theatre
Venue: Experimental Theatre Stage, BSA
Date: July 30
Time: 7pm



Classical Music

Artists: Haripada Sutradhar (vocal), A. K. Chakravarti (vocal) and Mritunjay Das (flute)
Organiser: Shudho Sangeet Proshar Goshthi
Venue: SEL Centre, 29, West Panthopath
Date: July 31
Time: 7pm



Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Perception II
Artist: Subrata Das
Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: July 25-August 6
Time: 9am-12pm and 5pm-8pm (Saturdays 5pm-8pm)



African Film Festival '08

Organiser: Zahir Raihan Film Society
Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: August 1
'The Wind and the Lion' at 10am, 'Z' at 5pm and 'The Battle of Algiers' at 7pm



Discussion

Spirit of Iranian Film



A scene from Kiarostami's film *Where is My Friend's Home?* (top). Tareque Masud speaks at the programme, Moinuddin Khaled and Dr. M.R. Hashemi seated next to him.

JAMIL MAHMUD

At present Iranian film movement is considered one of the most nationalistic and artistic in the world cinema. Filmmakers like Abbas Kiarostami, Jafar Panahi, Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Majid Majidi have taken Iranian cinema to the world. Contemporary Iranian cinema has been known for its traits -- minimalism, nationalism, humanism and metaphors. Recently, Centre for Oriental Art in association with Iranian Cultural Centre (ICC), Dhaka arranged a daylong discussion on the topic "Spirit of Iranian Film" at the auditorium of ICC. Renowned Bangladeshi filmmaker Tareque Masud and Cultural Counsellor of ICC, Dhaka Dr. M.R. Hashemi gave

in-depth speeches on the topic. Art critic Moinuddin Khaled presided over the programme. In his speech, Dr. Hashemi went over the history of Iranian films. He said, "Iranian cinema is nearly a century old -- starting in 1900. In those days films were made in Iran to entertain the Shah, his family and to depict activities surrounding the royal family. In the history of Iran, the first feature film was made in 1932. Between 1932 and 1948, most Iranian films highlighted melodrama. A change happened in 1948, thought lasted only for a year. After that Iranian cinema again drowned in melodrama and it remained so until the Revolution in 1979." "Most of the Bollywood films at present remind me of the pre-

Revolution Iranian cinema," added Dr. Hashemi. About the history of post-Revolution Iranian cinema, Dr. Hashemi emphasised on the works of master filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami (1940-present). He said, "Kiarostami's works have been distinguished by his close observation of pre and post-Revolution context." Filmmaker Tareque Masud was the main speaker. Explaining the topic, Masud went over on the nationalism, infrastructure and political plot in Iranian cinema. He also spoke on how these things are emphasised in Kiarostami's films. Masud said, "An infrastructure developed since the beginning of Iranian cinema. Before the 1970s a lot of films were made in

Iran though those were not artistically up to the mark." One of the important factors in Iranian cinema is a film institute called "Kanun". Tareque said, "Kanun has an important role in Iranian film history because a number of short films were made by the young students of Kanun under the guidance of Kiarostami." According to Masud, immediately after the Revolution a lot of filmmakers were apprehensive of the Islamic government and either they fled abroad or quit filmmaking. But a positive change came about after Ayatollah Khomeini's statement on a film titled *Gav* (The Cow). Many believe that the "New Wave" of Iranian cinema emerged after

Khomeini's comment on the film. Masud also spoke on cultural exchange. He said, "It is noteworthy that a number of filmmakers and film related personalities of 1970s Iranian film graduated from the Pune Film Institute, and a certain influence of Satyajit Ray was observed in their works. Even Abbas Kiarostami was inspired by Ray's works." "Beside these, initiation of bank loan to make films and international collaborations -- especially with the French -- were instrumental behind the rise of Iranian cinema," added Masud. Masud concluded with the point that if we have to take lessons from Iranian films then we should observe how Iranian filmmakers use their folk art in the films.

In conversation

Nova: An emerging actress

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Farzeen Firoze aka Nova is an emerging TV actress. She embarked on the small screen in 2006 through Animesh Aich's Eid special play *Prem O Ghamer Golpo*. The play was aired on Banglavision.

"It was Animesh Aich who called me over phone with an offer to perform in *Prem O Ghamer Golpo*. At that time I had no acting experience. Moreover, the play was in the Sirajganj dialect about which I did not have a clue. So, initially I refused Animesh's offer. But with tremendous support from Animesh I could take on the task," said Nova, while talking about her beginnings in the media.

After that TV play, Nova performed in several single episode plays, tele-films and serials. Some of Nova's notable works are-- *Brishtir Phul*, *Shampadya Upapadya*, *Khujje Berai Tare* and *Kachhe Dure*. At present she is working in the daily soap *Doll's House* airing on ATN Bangla and mega serial *Mohanagar* airing on Banglavision.

Nova will appear soon in channel-1's popular drama serial *Dainik Tolpar*. In Nova's words, "I will appear as Monalisa, a rising model. Monalisa is in close touch with journalists from the newspaper *Dainik Tolpar*."

Apart from *Dainik Tolpar*, she is also working in Chayanika Chowdhury's two productions-- *Baishakh Theke Srabon*, a drama serial and *Jodi Chao Aami Roudra Hobo*, a single episode play.

Nova, who completed A-level recently, plans to focus on TV and her studies. When asked about whether she is keeping an eye on the large screen, Nova said, "At present I have no plans about venturing into film. Films are much tougher than TV plays. I think one should be well prepared before taking on film-acting."



Nova

"Love on the Inside"

Sugarland explores all shades of love with contemporary country music

After Sugarland's first two albums, singer Jennifer Nettles kept hearing how their records were good and all but somehow...not.

"They'd say, 'You sound so much better live,'" Nettles recalled.

So when she and musical partner Kristian Bush went to work on their third one, they had a mission: Capture the raw energy of their live shows.

The result: "Love on the Inside." A deluxe fan edition with five extra songs, including a remake of the Dream Academy's '80s pop hit "Life in a Northern Town," is out in the music market. The standard 12-track version comes out soon.

With more grit and less polish than their first two, the disc has a loose, soulful groove to it. The first single, the playful "All I Want to Do," was No. 5 on Billboard's country chart.

The duo has gained a good bit of clout since their 2004 debut, selling more than 4 million albums will do that. This time around they brought Nashville musicians down to their hometown Atlanta to record. They also co-produced the record and had more time to put it together. And maybe most important to what they wanted to achieve, they recorded everything live instead of cutting each part individually.

"You're hearing the songs in the moment with the energy of everyone playing together," Nettles said.

The record is rooted in the Georgia music scene where Nettles and Bush cut their teeth in the wake of alt-rock heroes R.E.M., the Indigo Girls and B-52s.

Sugarland has never claimed to be a traditional act. They have a pop and rock sensibility about them that fits well with contemporary country.

As with their last album, they wrote or co-wrote the songs. But this time the pace was more laid back.

"We allowed ourselves the time to rewrite as we saw fit," Bush said. "The sophomore album was written more or less in about two weeks if you added up all the days we actually wrote. This one we stretched over an entire year."

The dozen tracks on the regular release deal mostly with love -- from new love ("We Run") to tragic love ("Joey") to lost love ("Genevieve").

Bush, 38, said the idea wasn't to make a "pansy Valentine album."



Jennifer Nettles and Kristian Bush of the country music group Sugarland during a performance.

but to explore the three-dimensional nature of how people experience love.

"It's not just romantic love," said Nettles, "not 'Let me tell you about my boyfriend.' It's not puppy love, although there is some fun and levity on this record."

That's most obvious on "Steve Earle," a clever salute to the colourful singer-songwriter and the women who've inspired him. Nettles, 33, sings, "Steve Earle, Steve Earle, please write a song for me."

The two teamed with Country Music Hall of Famer Bill Anderson to write "Joey," a modern take on 1960s teen tragedy songs.

The album closes with "Very Last Country Song," a ballad that ponders if everything were perfect and lovers didn't fall out of love, there'd be no more country music.

If anyone is looking for hints of Nettles' recent divorce, they can find them. She split with husband Todd Van Sickle, an Atlanta entrepreneur, this year.

"It's in the understanding of loss and pain and in the stories and specific songs," she said. "And at times it's a metaphor."

Bush said a big part of Sugarland's appeal is their songwriting.

"I believe that an artiste has an ethos that attracts a fan. Ours is

intricately woven into our need to express ourselves as songwriters," he said. "I also think you try harder, connect deeper and play better when you wrote the song you are singing."

Sugarland broke onto the charts as a trio, but Kristen Hall left the group before the second album, leaving Nettles and Bush to carry on as a duo.

Their last record, like their debut, sold more than 2 million copies.

"I think they have such a good sense of themselves," said Anderson, the Grand Ole Opry star who co-wrote "Joey" with them. "They know who they are and they have a good vision for where they want to go with their music. I think they've just made an awful lot of good moves in their career."

Nettles said she and Bush are learning as they go. But from their records she can see a clear evolution.

"On the first one we knew we were good songwriters, but we didn't know we were good country songwriters. It was almost like a stab in the dark. With the second it was 'Can we keep this up, or was it a fluke?' With the third one we're saying 'Yes, we can, so let's expand.'"

Source: Internet



Artiste Binu Ahmed sings at a solo musical programme held at the Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum recently. Cultural organisation Aamra Surjomukhi arranged the programme to celebrate the monsoon. At the programme, Binu Ahmed rendered Rabindra and Nazrul Sangeet, folk, patriotic songs as well as classics from yesteryears.

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Sonu Nigam to perform in Bangladesh



Popular Indian pop singer Sonu Nigam is going to perform in Bangladesh for the first time. Sonu will be performing live at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre on August 7, says a press release. The event is being organised by Fire Works Events and Intersped Activation. Sonu Nigam is equally popular among the elderly, middle aged and young music enthusiasts in the sub-continent. Tickets will be available at all Etcetera outlets from August 1.



Members of cultural organisation 'Gayokee' perform at a musical soiree held recently at the WVA Auditorium, Dhanmondi. Among the members, Sabiha Gulshan, Sharmeen Murshid, Pinki Shah, Mahbulul Haque, Rifat Rashid and Rituraj performed at the programme. Durba Chowdhury was the music director of the programme.