

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Film Screening

Organiser: Bangladesh Film Centre
Venue: Bangladesh Film Centre, 160 Lake Circus (4th floor), Kalabagan
Date: August 1 & 2
Film: Metropolis by Fritz Lang will be screened at 5 and 7 pm.



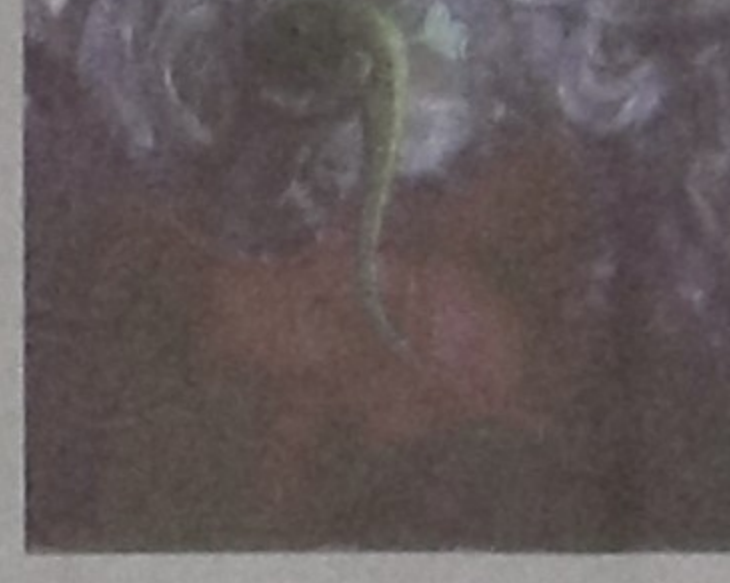
Photography Exhibition

Title: Shudhui Bangla
Organiser: Shudhui Bangla Photographic Association
Venue: Dnk Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (New), Dhanmondi
Date: July 31-August 4
Time: 3pm-8pm



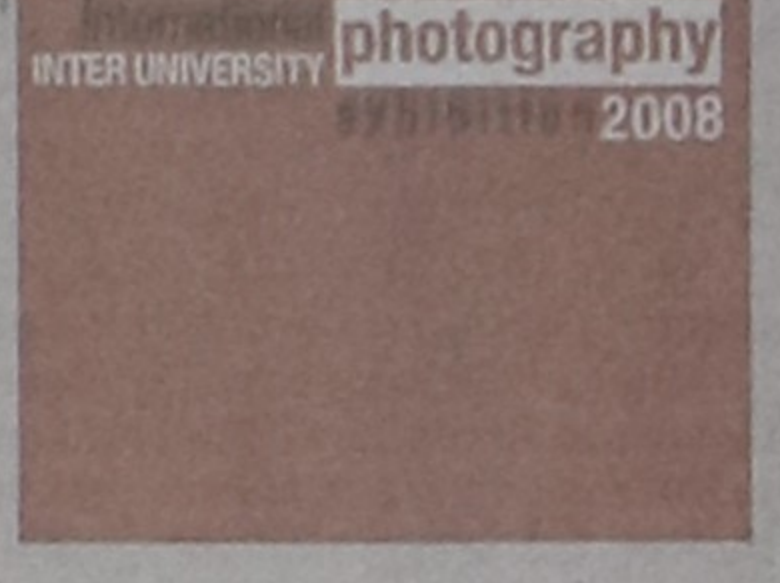
Solo Painting Exhibition

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)



Photography Exhibition

Title: International Inter University Photography Exhibition
Organiser: NSU Photography Club
Venue: National Art Gallery, BSA
Date: August 3-9
Time: 11am-7pm



"Rabindra Natya Utsab" in Chittagong starts tomorrow

Elaborate programmes chalked out

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Chittagong

A weeklong drama festival featuring plays and other creations of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore will begin here in the port city tomorrow.

Tiryak Natyadal, a leading theatre group of Chittagong, is organising the festival titled "5th Rabindra Natya Utsab" with a view to highlight Tagore's brilliance in different mediums.

Renowned theatre personality Ramendu Majumdar is set to inaugurate the festival at the Theatre Institute of Chittagong (TIC) at around 6 pm tomorrow with a seminar. Noted social scientist and Vice Chancellor (VC) of Premier University, Dr Anupam Sen will chair the seminar.

Founding Secretary of Nagarik Natya Sampradaya and noted director Ataur Rahman is expected to attend the programme as well.

A reception would be accorded to three theatre personalities -- Ramendu Majumdar, Ataur Rahman and veteran theatre organiser of Chittagong Mahmud Hasan, said the organisers at a press conference yesterday.

Talking about the festival, Ahmed Iqbal Haider of Tiryak Natyadal



Chief of Tiryak Natyadal Ahmed Iqbal Haider (right) speaks at the press conference.

hoped that the event would help initiate a wave in the stagnant cultural arena of the port city.

Tiryak organised the first "Rabindra Natya Utsab" in Chittagong on August 6, 1995 and continued holding the festival annually till 1998.

After a long break the group has come forward again to arrange the festival with the hope that they can organise the event at national level

next time.

They could not organise the festival in the last few years due to financial constraint, Iqbal said.

Five local theatre groups will stage seven plays -- original plays of Tagore as well as adaptations of his works -- at the festival.

Though the event has been titled as a 'theatre festival', it will also include songs, dances, recitation, discussion, documentary

screening and slide show.

On the first day (Sunday), Tiryak Natyadal will stage the 156th show of their production *Bishorjon*, directed by Ahmed Iqbal Haider. Odissi and Tagore Dance Movement will present a composition directed by Prama Abanti on the same day.

Satyajit Ray's documentary on Rabindranath will be screened at 7 pm on August 4. Kalpurush will stage *Mrinaler Chithi* -- an adaptation of the story *Strir Patra* -- directed by Santanu Biswas.

The Folk Dance Group will perform a dance on August 5. Kathak Natya Shampaday will stage *Shasti* -- based on Tagore's short story -- directed by Ahmed Iqbal Haider.

Elaborate programmes have been chalked out to mark the 67th death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore (on August 6), said the organisers, adding that the programmes will be open to all.

Students of Raktakarabi will perform recitation and songs about monsoon titled in a programme titled *Kichu Bolbo Boley*, to be directed by Shila Momen.

Bodhan Abriti Parishad and Prama Abriti Sangathan will perform recitation. Students of Surangama Nrityangan and

Gurukul Nritya Academy will participate in the programme as well.

On that day, Tiryak will stage *Rathayatra*, directed by Ahmed Iqbal Haider.

On August 7, a slide show on *Chitrakar Rabindranath*, presented by Rezaul Karim Suman, will be held. A discussion on the same subject will follow. Professor Abul Mansur and artist Dhali Al Mamun will participate in the discussion.

Fame School of Drama and Music will stage *Mukrir Upaye* -- based on a short story by Tagore -- directed by Ashim Das.

An open discussion on Tagore's plays will be held on August 8. Moderated by Abul Momen, the discussion will be attended by Professor Bhuiyan Iqbal, Professor Tapan Joyti Barua, Biplob Bala, Munir Helal, Shantanu Biswas, Sanjeeb Barua, Alam Khorshed and others.

Tiryak will stage the 50th show of their production *Raktakarabi* later that day.

The festival will conclude on August 9 with a ceremony with Mahmud Hasan in the chair. On the concluding day Nandikar will stage the play *Goraye Galod*. Nataraj Nrityangan Academy will perform dance at the programme.

A filmmaker's affinity for literature and Rabindra Sangeet

In conversation with Tarun Majumdar

ERSHAD KAMOL, back from Kolkata

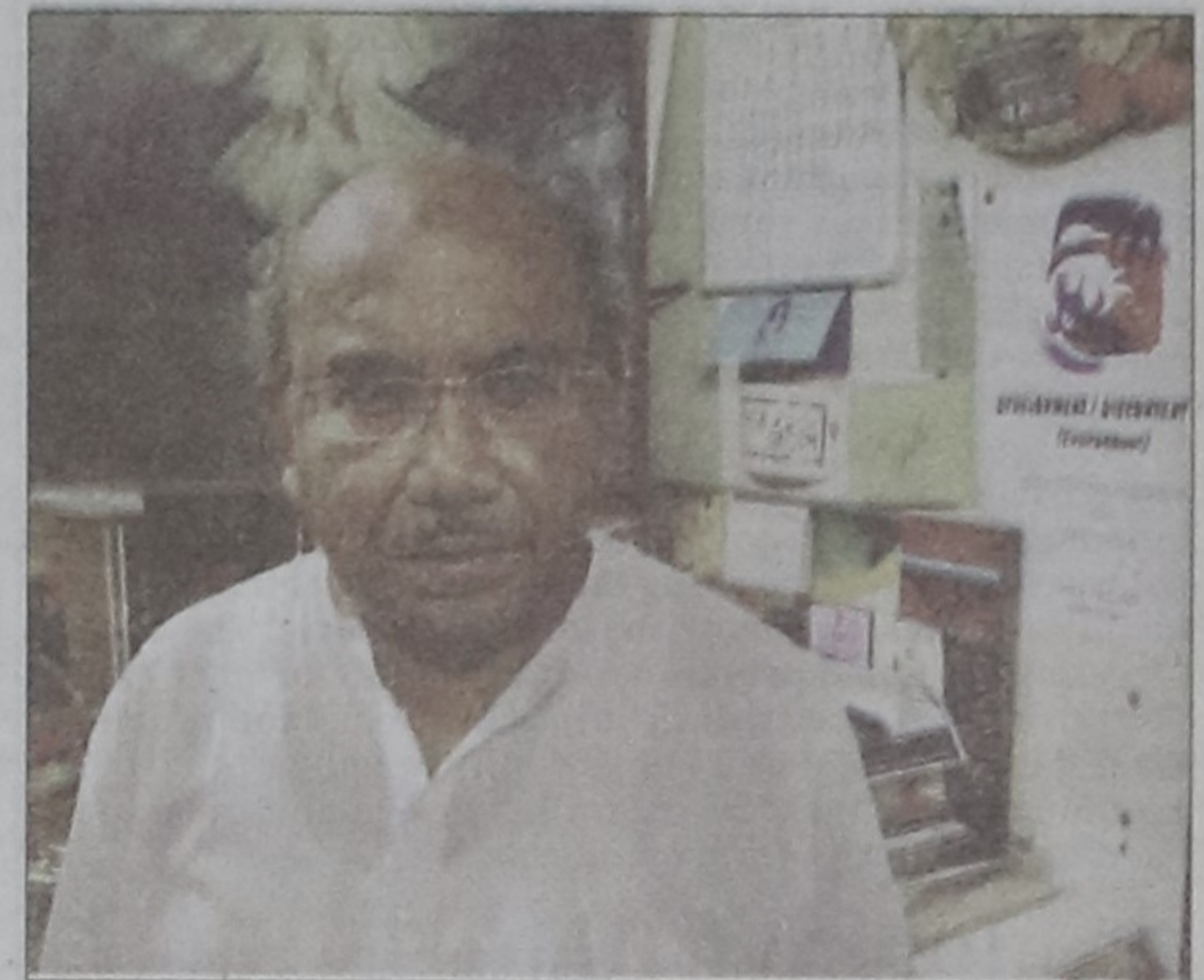
For his honest depiction of Bengali life and culture in films, Tarun Majumdar has achieved critical acclaim and popularity. Many of the films such as *Balika Badhu* (1967), *Phuleswari* (1974), *Ganadevta* (1979), *Shriman Prithviraj* (1976), *Dadar Kirti* (1980), *Bhalobasha Bhalobasha* (1985) and *Paroshmoni* (1988) were commercially successful and lauded by critics. He has consistently produced box-office hits for over forty years.

Tarun Majumdar was born in 1931 in Bogra (now Bangladesh). His early films were credited to 'Yatrik', the screen-name of the director trio: Tarun Majumdar, Sachin Mukherji, and Dilip Mukherji (until 1963, after which each began working separately). As 'Yatrik', the trio created classics such as *Chaoua Paowa* (1959), *Polatok and Kancher Suarga* (both released in 1963).

Many of his films are adaptations of literature. These include adaptations of classics by Bimal Kar, Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay, Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay and Tarashankar Bandyopadhyay. On the *raison d'être*, Tarun Majumdar explains, "For bold themes, I make films based on literature. I differ with directors who in the name of experimentation make non-narrative cinema."

"To me a film must draw the audience, as the medium is for the masses. I believe if the film is not commercially successful, it's not 'good', as the audience always go for good movies," he adds.

A common trait in his films is the ample use of Rabindra Sangeet to convey a range of emotions.



Tarun Majumdar

PHOTO: ERSHAD KAMOL

According to the filmmaker, "Is there better lyric and tune than Tagore's creations in this part of the world? For me, Rabindra Sangeet are perfect as playback for my movies. Audience also seems to like the use of Tagore's songs in my films."

Many leading actors of the Tollygung-based film industry including Mousumi Chatterjee, Debashree Roy and Tapas Pal made their debut in films directed by Tarun Majumdar.

The director says, "Besides working with renowned actors such as Uttam Kumar, Suchitra Sen, Madhobi Mukherjee and others I've always wanted to work with fresh talents. Which is why I've given break to many new actors."

Starting from the mid-'90s, for almost a decade Tarun Majumdar gave up filmmaking. In 2003, he

made a comeback with *Alo* -- based on a story by Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay. This film received both critical and popular acclaim and turned into a blockbuster. Later he made *Bhalobasha Anek Naam* (2006).

On his hiatus from the industry, Majumdar says, "The 'erosion of values' of the people involved with our film industry forced me to stay away. During that gap, I made documentaries. Hoping for better days, as some talented youngsters have emerged in the scene, I decided to make a comeback."

For his contribution to films, Tarun Majumdar has won several awards including the Indian National Film Award for Best Popular Film for *Ganadevta* (1979). Majumdar also won a Golden Lotus in 1979.

Elizabeth Taylor in hospital but said "fine"

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Dame Elizabeth Taylor is hospitalised but doing well, a spokesman for the Oscar-winning screen legend said last Thursday, contradicting tabloid newspapers reports that she was in poor health.

"Ms. Taylor is fine. The rumours which began in England about her health are dramatic, overstated and untrue. Her hospital visit was precautionary. She will be returning home shortly," her Los Angeles-based spokesman Dick Guttman said in a statement.

"At present, she is surrounded by family, friends and fabulous jewels," the statement concluded.

A report on the Web site for the *National Enquirer* said Taylor, 76,

was put on a life-support machine after suffering congestive heart failure. The report cited "a friend" and was picked up by Britain's *Daily Mail*, among others.

Guttman said he did not know where Taylor was being treated. No further details were available. Taylor began her Hollywood career as a teenager in films such as *Lassie Come Home* and *National Velvet*. She won Oscars for best actress in 1966's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and 1960's *Butterfield 8*.

She was nominated for Oscars three other times and in 1992 was given a humanitarian award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which gives out the Oscars.



Elizabeth Taylor smiles as she arrives for A.R. Gurney's play *Love Letters* at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles on December 1, 2007.

Oscar Bangladesh Committee formed

Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies (BFFS) has formed a nine-member "Oscar Bangladesh Committee" to select a Bangladeshi film to compete in the Best Foreign Language Film category at the 81st Academy Award, according to a press release.

Producer and President of BFFS, Habibur Rahman is the chairman of the committee. Other members of the committee are: Sanwar Morshed, convenor of the Advisory Committee to the Bangladesh Film Producers Association; Shawkat Jamil, president, Bangladesh Film Directors' Association; Abdul Latif Bachchu, president, Bangladesh Chalachchitra Grahak Samiti; Abu Musa Debu, president, Bangladesh Film Editors' Guild; Mirza Abdul Khaleque, general secretary, Bangladesh Chalachchitra Pradarshak Samiti; actress Rokeya Prachi and film critic Professor Abdus Selim.

"Chhotobela Borobela" on ntv tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Single-episode play *Chhotobela Borobela* will be aired tonight on ntv at 9 pm. Written by Ratan Pal and directed by Wahid Tareque, the cast of the play includes Asaduzzaman Noor, Sara Zaker, Shahriar Shuvo and others.

The play follows Russell, a restless youth studying for his A levels. His parents, Parvez and Zerin live separately. Russell lives with his father and is in love with his classmate Suzanne. Russell's recent activities start to concern Parvez. After a violent squabble with his father, Russell decides to live with his mother. Being extremely worried about Russell, Parvez calls Suzanne. This infuri-



Asaduzzaman Noor and Sara Zaker in a scene from the play

ates Russell further. Though Zerin does not know about all these, she senses that something is wrong with her son. But Russell decides to keep his distance with his mother.

Exhibition

Call to save mankind and nature

FAIZA HAQ

A weeklong joint exhibition of artists is being held at Shilpangan from August 1. The display includes the paintings of Jamal Ahmed, Mohammad Yunus, Biren Shome, Ranjit Das, Maksudul Ahsan, Javed Jalil and others. Special attractions are the works of Monirul Islam and Farida Zaman. Muted and dignified, the works bring in various subjects and styles, all of which deal with life in Bangladesh.

In Biren Shome's "Parrot seller" one encounters an overwhelming use of green to bring out the artist's love for nature. The bird seller, the red billed parrots and the background behind are all awash with emerald. This also brings out Biren's concern for the

preservation of nature. In another painting one sees a woman freeing parrots from their cages. The homely village woman in her orange sari is just as attractive as the birds she is giving a new lease of life in the open. The subjects are done with simple, flat strokes and conventional acrylic colours on canvas.

Maksudul Ahsan's mixed media art on paper uses ink, acrylic colours and screen print hues to introduce his "Black" series. His non-figurative work stresses home the fact that today we are surrounded by socio political problems all over the world. "We have little care for the next generation, so mindless are our destructive activities," says Maksud. His presentation of the aggressive black bull in serigraphy, done with line work and chalk, is also a representation of harmful, aggressive elements working around us. A number of black, grey and beige geometrical forms that remind us of rusting iron and burnt clay, help present his theme of destruction and despair. Even the single green leaf included in the composition of a painting has been eaten away by insects.

Chandra Shekhar brings in ruin of the beauty of the past. The artist shows how the centuries old *Choto Kattrra* in Old Dhaka is in shambles today. The ancient arches, pillars and windows are being marred by high-rise buildings at the back and harum-scarum rush of commerce in front. Symbols of horses are carefully included in the composition.

Ranjit Das' "Man and horse" series depicts the strength and beauty of nature, where the powerful horse and pretty woman share the canvas space, one blending into another. A portrait of a female figure is



Khepa-5 by Maksudul Ahsan (top) and *Love and Affection* by Anukul Mojumdar.

brought in grey, while the face of a horse is suggested in the distance. Horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines are brought into play. Intricate calligraphic writings are also included. In two other paintings, Ranjit glorifies the land and water masses of our *chars*. Dilapidated houses and moored boats are included in the composition.

Monirul Islam's abstractions bring in the landscapes of Chandpur. Monir has played with space, using lines, rectangles, circles, curls and dots to present the purity of nature around us. Eggshells and stone dust have

been included too to lend variation in texture.

Farida Zaman too works on her memories of the untouched beauty of harmony and peace of the Bangladeshi countryside. Her preoccupation with the women and their love for birds are brought in.

Equally mind-boggling and fascinating are the figures and line work by Javed Jalil. "I basically focus on lines," says Javed. "Here I wanted to express the mechanical aspects of life. I introduce figures which belong to the 21st century with its futuristic aspect."



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