

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Theatre Festival**  
On 24th anniversary  
**Organiser:** Drishtipat Natyadal  
**Venue:** National Theatre Hall, BSA  
**Date:** November 10-11  
**Time:** 6pm



**Musical Soiree**  
Songs of Five poets  
**Organiser:** Nandan  
**Venue:** Ramesh Chandra Dutt Memorial Auditorium, Chhayana Sanskriti Bhaban  
**Date:** November 14  
**Time:** 6:30pm



## 13th Asian Art Biennale '08

**Organiser:** Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
**Venue:** Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Qasmi Memorial Hall and National Museum  
**Date:** October 21-November 19  
**Time:** 11am-7pm (Fridays 3pm-8pm)



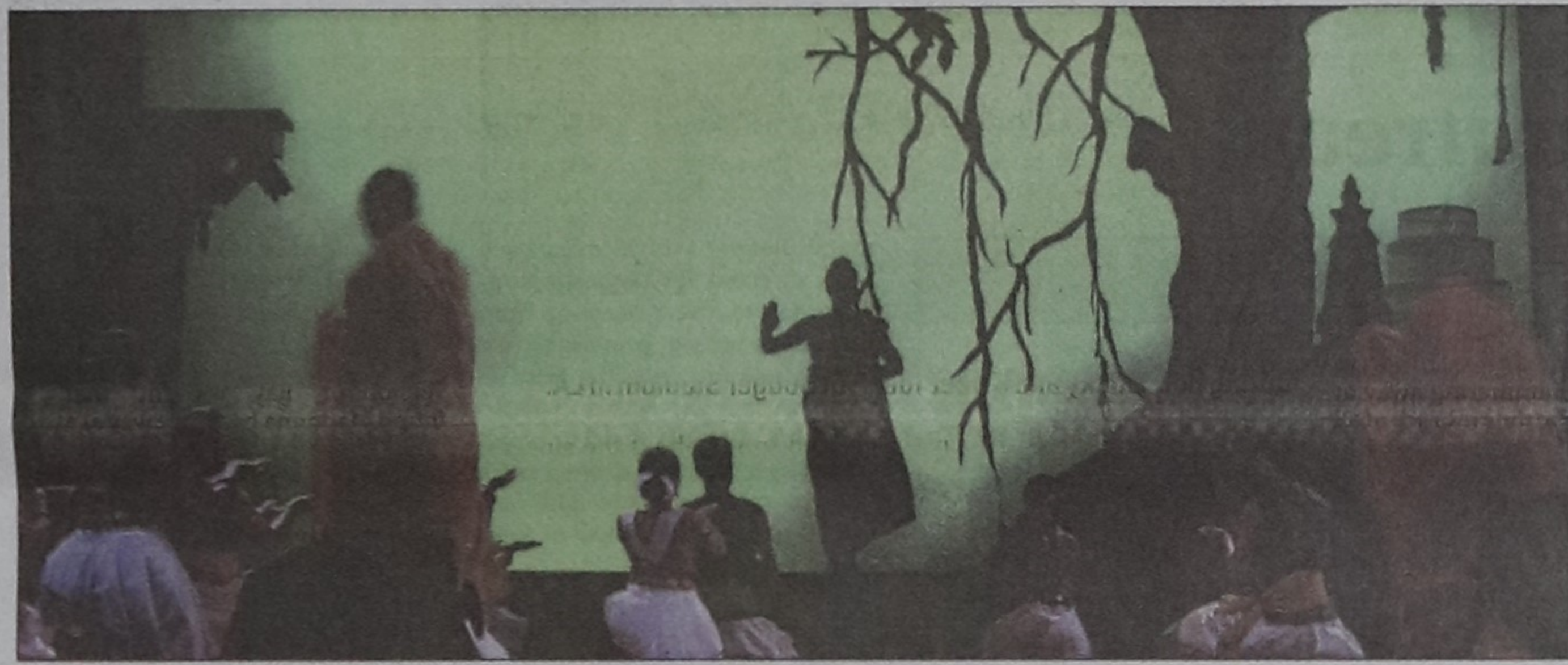
## Solo Art Exhibition

**Title:** Expression of Life  
**Artist:** Kamal Kumar Das  
**Venue:** Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU  
**Date:** November 10-15  
**Time:** 12pm-6pm



## A story of enlightenment

### Shadhona stages Hey Ananta Punya



Clockwise (from top-left): Warda Rihab, Lubna Marium, Tahmina Anwar Anika and others in the dance-drama "Hey Ananta Punya."

**KARIM WAHEED**  
A quiet cultural revolution was taking place at the Jorasanko Tagore house in Calcutta in the winter of 1927. For the first time in the history of subcontinent, young women from middle class families were staging a public performance. To shield the young performers from a possible public outrage, the farsighted Tagore included himself in the cast. "Notur Puja" made history in more ways than one.

"Shadhona" -- a centre for advancement of South Asian music and dance -- staged an adaptation of "Notur Puja" at the National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on November 9. Directed by Warda Rihab, the production employed Manipuri and a blend of classical, folk and martial dance forms of eastern India and Bengal.

The dance-drama goes back to the formative years of Buddhism. As men and women responded to Buddha's call to embrace the 'Eightfold Path,' Ajatshatru ascended the throne of his father, King Bimbisara of Magadh. The latter had

renounced his noble rights to pursue nirvana through the rites of Buddhism. Ajatshatru's mounting hunger for power contradicts Buddha's doctrines of peace and forgiveness. The King bans all forms of practice of the faith. The Queen Mother is left in a dilemma; she is drawn towards the message of love, and at the same time is inconsolable as her family is rendered broken.

The court dancer Sreemati abandons her dancing bells and jewellery and resolves to embrace the new faith in the midst of this chaos. The path to enlightenment is pres-

aged by Sreemati, an unyielding seeker of eternal love and beauty, as she makes the ultimate sacrifice for her belief.

Possessing regal, graceful and evocative Manipuri dance moves, Warda Rihab dons the role of Sreemati with utmost conviction. The stealthy stances that define Manipuri dance gel well with the devotion in Buddhism.

Rihab is currently doing her B.A. in Manipuri dance at Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. Among her gurus are Sharmila Banerjee, Tamanna Rahman,



Belayet Hossain, Kalavati Devi, Prof. C.V. Chandra Shekhar and Binibavati Devi. Rihab has also trained in 'Pung' (Manipuri 'mridanga') and 'Thang Ta' (Manipuri martial art).

The young dancer, however, was overshadowed at times by the veteran danseuse Lubna Marium (general secretary of Shadhona) as the Queen Mother, Lokeswari. It's difficult to shrug off the latter's presence: each expression -- be it fury or despair -- is projected remarkably on the canvas that is her face.

In the brief role of Princess Ratnavali, Tahmina Anwar Anika was a revelation. It's no surprise that this prodigy won the 1st prize in 'Kathak' at the 2008 National Dance Competition organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Marking Rihab's debut as a dance director, "Hey Ananta Punya" deserves accolades. However, if it's evaluated based solely on its virtues, the production could have been better. Certain dancers in the group sequences did not seem ready at all. Perhaps, the director and the producers would offer an even better production next time around.

## Bangladeshi short film on a street child to be screened in Tehran



A scene from "Park-er Jibon."

A short film featuring a glimpse into the life of a child flower vendor will be screened at the 13th Tehran International Short Film Festival, says a press release.

The film, "Park-er Jibon," has been directed by Shahiduzzaman Badal and produced under Dhaka

Photographic Institute.

The festival begins tomorrow and will continue till November 17. "Park-er Jibon" is among 82 short films from across the world and the only entry from Bangladesh to be screened in the International category.

"Park-er Jibon" features an underprivileged child and his family. Every morning the family goes to a park. The child sells the flowers and goes home at dusk. The film is five minutes and thirty-four seconds long.

## TV Watch

### Mayur Bahon on Channel 1

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

TV serial "Mayur Bahon" will be aired tonight on Channel 1 at 8:15 pm. The cast includes Shampa Reza, Azad Abul Kalam, Tomalika, Intekhab Dinar, Sumaiya Shimu, Shams Sumon, Mir Sabbir, Rahmat Ali, Tushar Khan, Lutfar Rahman George, Khairul Alam Sabuj and Afroza Banu.

The plot revolves around the inhabitants of the village Basantapur. The village is like any other, and the people there are quite simple yet unique. At the centre of the story, is a club, which organises a play for the villagers.

Young and old alike, work to produce a successful play, which reflects the simple dreams of the villagers. The story is marked with several incidents such as the



A scene from "Mayur Bahon."

people of Basantapur in search of a female artiste for their play. Written by Pantha Shahriar, the serial is directed by Rulin Rahman. The serial is aired every Monday and Tuesday.

## Shamol's focus on composition

TAKIR HOSSAIN

Akhtaruzzaman Shamol belongs to the category of promising painters of Dhaka. He did his masters from UODA on graphic design. In recent years, the institute has produced a number of budding artists. Shamol demonstrated his talent and creativity at an early age and that persuaded him to go for higher studies in graphic design -- a delicate, complex and time-consuming medium.

Shamol's prime concern is composition. Fish is one of the main subjects on his canvas. He has tried to focus on various images of fish. Weak and vulnerable, fish can be associated with the current socio-economic and political crises. An aware painter, Shamol believes an artist should have some commitment to his/her motherland. From that belief, he has concentrated on the theme. The thickness of colours, various sprinkled compositions and delving into aesthetics are some of the features in his works. His experiments with forms, shapes and compositions have been done primarily in acrylic, oil and pen sketches.

Shamol's canvas looks lively and dynamic as his colours and compositions are intense. He feels that the colours can translate one's feelings and emotions. Human forms are absent in his works. Various scattered shapes, dotted and overcast imagery, and subtle lines have replaced them. Shamol tries to maintain continuity in his work. But he should take care of space on his canvas.



Paintings by Akhtaruzzaman Shamol

Space is closely related to composition. The young artist should avoid certain objects, which take up a lot of space in his compositions. Yellow, red, crimson, Prussian blue, cobalt blue, ash,

white and some other colours have been delicately used in his works.

Akhtaruzzaman Shamol's solo exhibition is now on at Zainul Gallery-2.

## Shurer Pankti

### Nayeem Harun's debut album

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Singer-composer Nayeem Harun maintains a low profile in the music scene. This however, should change with his debut album "Shurer Pankti," which was released recently under the aegis of Fahim Music Centre. Recently the singer-composer talked to The Daily Star about his album, and passion for music.

"Shurer Pankti" features twelve songs including "Jyotsna," "Nakkhatrer raat," "Oboni," "Biroho akash," "Jaladhi" and "Jey matitey." The songs belong to the 'adhunik' and patriotic genre. Harun himself has composed eight of the twelve songs while Sheikh Jasim has composed the rest.

Most of the songs have been penned by Harun. Among the songs, "Oboni" is an adaptation of a poem by Shakti Chattopadhyay. On the song Harun said, "I am an admirer of Shakti Chattopadhyay. This particular poem truly inspired me."

One of the highlights of the album is instrumental. Veteran musicians including noted violinists Sunil Chandra Das and Almas Ali; flutist Bari Siddiquei; Firoze Khan on 'sitar' and Yousuf Khan on 'sarod'.

"It was tough to involve them as they are all busy artistes," said Harun.

Harun did not get a chance to take music lessons from an early age. However, it's his passion for music that explains his foray into



Nayeem Harun

the culture scene. He said, "Initially my family members didn't know that I was working on a music album."

Harun has an affinity for classical music. In his words, "I don't consider myself a well-trained musician; I'm a keen listener. I deeply admire Ustad Belayet Khan's music."

"My passion for music has grown over the last few years," he added. Harun began taking music lessons a decade ago and over the last couple of years has trained under classical artiste Sumon Chowdhury.

Harun is optimistic about his debut album. At present he is working on his next album.

## Nicole Kidman to play transsexual in period drama

Nicole Kidman as the world's first post-op transsexual, married to Charlize Theron? You bet.

The Australian actress will star in and produce "The Danish Girl," based on the true story of Danish artists Einar and Greta Wegener. Their marriage took a sharp left turn after Einar (Kidman) stood in for a female model that Greta (Theron) was set to paint.

When their portraits become wildly popular in 1920s Copenhagen, Greta encouraged her husband to adopt the female guise. What began as a harmless game led Einar to a metamorphosis and landmark 1931 operation that shocked the world and threatened their love.

Anand Tucker ("Shogun") is attached to direct the feature, adapted by writer Lucinda Coxon ("Wild Target") from David Ebershoff's 2000 Viking bestseller. His debut novel of the same name is a fictionalised account of the Wegeners' true story.

Pre-production has begun on the indie film, but no details on a



principal photography start date have been disclosed. Both Kidman and Theron earned their best actress Oscars playing lesbian characters, in

"The Hours" and "Monster," respectively. Additionally, Kidman is attached to play Dusty Springfield in a biopic about the bisexual English singer.