

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Painting Exhibition

Artist: Javed Jalil
Venue: Exhibition Hall, Russian Centre of Science and Culture, H 510, Rd 7, Dhanmondi
Date: November 16-23
Time: 11am-7pm



Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Pata-Chitra
Artist: Raghunath Chakraborty
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (New), Dhanmondi
Date: November 14-21
Time: 11am-8pm



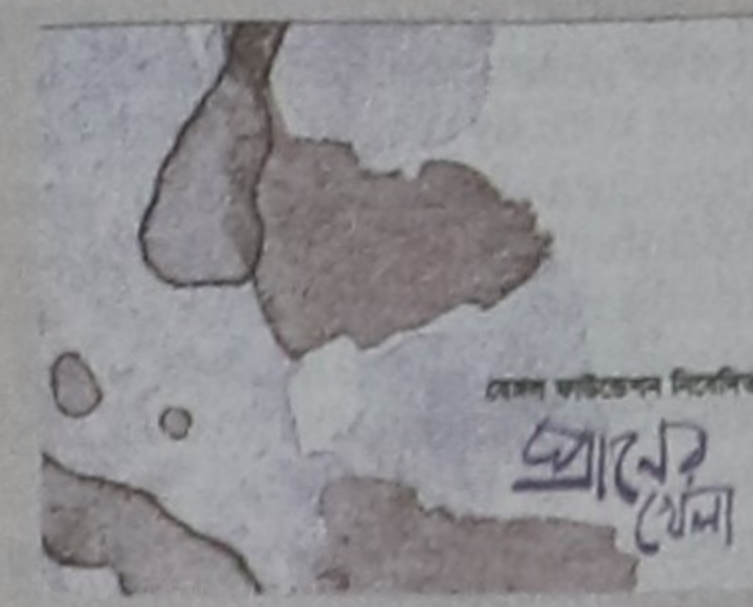
13th Asian Art Biennale '08

Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Osmani Memorial Hall and National Museum
Date: October 21-November 19
Time: 11am-7pm (Fridays 3pm-6pm)



Musical Soiree

Title: Praner Khela
Artists: Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury and Fahmida Nabi
Organiser: Bengal Shilpalaya, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi
Date: November 16
Time: 7pm



Bangladesh Gram Theatre Convention

Cluster celebrations draw enthusiastic crowd



PHOTO COURTESY: SAYED ASIF MAHMUD

Explosion of ideas—images from Bangladesh Gram Theatre Celebrations.



NADIA SARWAT

"Lathi khela", Lalon songs, "Gambhira", "Jum Nrityo", "Hoila gaan", "Kach Nrityo", "Nata pala", "kabigaan", and many more indigenous performances from different localities across the country along with classical songs, Tagore songs, recitation, discussion, film screening, performances from the plays by the theatre icon Selim Al Deen were highlighted at the day-night festival as part of the 6th national convention of Bangladesh Gram Theatre. More than 200 local representatives of the organisation participated at the event. Eminent cultural personalities of the country discussed on several issues at the meeting. The event was held at the premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on November 14.

An initiative by the late playwright Selim Al Deen, Bangladesh Gram theatre has turned into a movement to uphold the traditional art forms of the country. Throughout his life and through his works, Selim Al Deen fought to prove the idea wrong that Bangla Theatre started with the western concept of the media after the British colonised the subcontinent. Gram Theatre is an organisation that started with only one theatre troupe in a small village of Manikganj in 1981. In the last three decades, more than 200 organisations have linked up with Gram Theatre all over the country. Eminent theatre



personality Nasiruddin Yousuf is the president of Gram Theatre.

While enjoying the performances with great enthusiasm, the audience, especially the local representatives of Gram Theatre were also very much eager for words of wisdom from eminent cultural personalities. Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury was first to deliver a speech. On the topic "Colonialism versus the struggle of culture," he said, "Colonialism, or what we might say imperialism now, has capitalism at its core. As capitalism is a system that sees everything, even culture, as a mere product, any cultural activity cannot but move forward in direct conflict with capitalism."

Bringing in the reference of the idealistic 'Ariel', the historical character from the Shakespearean play "The Tempest" who seeks freedom through his cooperation with the master himself, Serajul Islam Choudhury said, "We have a middle class who dream of a better future by adapting to western culture. And there is the lower middle class who, like Friday of the novel 'Robinson Crusoe' by Daniel Defoe, just has a blind submission to all that is western. That is how colonialism works, by imposing its culture as a superior one. To counter this, we must cherish our own cultural heritage which is indeed, a good deal richer than that of the western culture."

Professor Choudhury's speech was followed by invigorat-

ing performances by bauls from Kushtia. They presented some celebrated Lalon songs such as "Sob lokey koy Lalon ki jaat," "Kanaar haat bazaar," "Kori mana kam chharena," "Amon manob shomaj kobey hobey srijon," and more.

Noted theatre personality Mamunur Rashid spoke on "Class struggle and Bangla play" next. "Historically, from the very beginning, Bangla plays were very much political. As a strong and popular public medium, our theatre has always reflected the life, struggles and dreams of the common people. The audience, on the other hand, always expect to see the marginalised people winning. Art cannot be that direct as it has the risk of being termed as propaganda. But class struggle has always been a major theme of most important Bangla plays," said Mamunur Rashid.

Ataur Rahman, Azfar Hossain, Nurul Kabir, Ayesha Khanam, Bhuiyan Shafiqul Islam, Lutfar Rahman Lebu, Dr. Abul Ahsan Choudhury and other eminent cultural personalities also spoke in between the performances by the artists. Two documentaries, "Ei Je Ami," a documentary on Selim Al Deen by Esha Yousuf and "Gothito Hoi Shunney Milai," by Fauzia Khan on Shimul Yousuf, were also screened at the event. The celebration ended with speeches from Nasiruddin Yousuf and Humayun Kabir, general secretary of Bangladesh Gram Theatre.

Jatio Rabindra Sangeet Shammilan Parishad celebrates Sharodotsab

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

November 14 was the last day of 'sharat', the third season of the Bangla calendar. On the day, Dhaka Metropolitan branch of Jatio Rabindra Sangeet Shammilan Parishad arranged a cultural programme titled "Sharodotsab '08" at the auditorium of National Music and Dance Centre, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Along with some exquisite dance performances, the programme highlighted songs on Tagore on 'sharat'.

The programme commenced with a dance performance by noted danseuse Sharmila Bandopadhyaya and her troupe. The troupe performed the dance with a group rendition of "Biswabina robey biswajan." Later the troupe performed three more dances including the cur-

tain closer.

Noted Tagore singer Iffat Ara Dewan rendered "Shakarun benu bajaye," "Aamar raat pohalo" and "Aaji sharat tapaney" performed by noted artistes Bulbul Islam and Mita Haque respectively earned plaudits from the houseful audience. Mita Haque also rendered "Bajilo kahar beena," after requests from the audience.

Elora Ahmed Shukla rendered "Amol dhabal paley," Laiza Ahmed Lisa, Azizur Rahman Tuhin, Shuma Rani and Ema rendered "Hela phela shara bela," "Hriday-e chhiley jegey," "Chhutur banshi bajilo" and "Jey chhayare dharbo boley" respectively.

The programme also featured several group songs, including "Alor amol kamol khani," "Aaj dhaner khetey," "Aamra bendhechhi kasher guchchho" and "Megher koley roud heshechhey."



Artists perform a group dance at the programme.

PHOTO: STAR

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