

## 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: Walking the Painted Pavé  
Artist: Sunil Kumar  
Venue: Alliance Française, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
Date: Nov 21-Dec 4  
Time: 9am-12pm and 5-8pm (Saturdays 5-8pm)



### Graphical Art Exhibition

Title: cOGIO eRGo SuM  
Artist: Sunnyur Rahman  
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (new), Dhanmondi  
Date: November 18-22  
Time: 3pm-8pm



### Punk Rock Concert

Organiser: Echoes Production House  
Troupes: Nulltarif (Germany) and Black (Bangladesh)  
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, H 10, Rd 9, Dhanmondi  
Date: November 24, Time: 6:30 pm



## Indigenous art gets a contemporary makeover

Raghunath Chakroborty's 'pata-chitra' exhibition at Drik



'Pata-chitra' by Raghunath Chakroborty

KARIM WAHEED

colour.

Yellow is never brighter, red more festive, green more alive or blue more serene as they are in 'pata-chitra.' 'Patua' Raghunath Chakroborty says, "Colours don't overlap in 'pata-chitra,' as in other mediums and styles. 'Patuas' (painters of this form) paint with locally produced vegetable colours, which not only make the scroll paintings very bright but also, add life to them." The sheen apparently lasts over 50-60 years -- a remarkable feat for water-

colour. Chakroborty's second solo 'pata-chitra' exhibition, organised by Riddhi, was on at Drik Gallery (ended yesterday). Apart from being unsurprisingly outstanding, the artist's collection of works stand out for a couple of reasons: Chakroborty has moved away from the traditional scroll style and put each scene on a single frame, giving it a contemporary feel while retaining its indigenous appeal; alongside religious themes, these works also highlight everyday events and people.



Raghunath Chakroborty, originally from Gaibandha, has been living in Dhaka since 1992. A self-trained artist, Chakroborty did not go to any art school. The source of inspiration behind pursuing 'pata-chitra': Patua Shambhu Acharya.

Why does he prefer this particular art form? "Its indigenous, inexpensive and its allure is uncomplicated. Materials like oyster shell powder, yellow puer, gum made from tamarind seed and 'bel' (wood-apple) are easily available and I make my own brush for line-work," Chakroborty says.

How did he learn this style? "Reading books on 'pata-chitra' obviously, though publications on this subject are few and far between. I've also tried to study works of Jamin Roy and Abanindranath Tagore."

How long does it take to complete a 'pata-chitra' of a considerable size (say 36"X48")?

"About 6/7 days. I work 3/4 hours a day," says the 'patua.'

Subjects are varied. The 'pata-chitra' at the exhibit features myths and deities like "Janmashtomi," "Sita," "Lokhi" as well as everyday scenes and objects like a lotus blossom, boatmen taking a break, a village belle putting her trinkets on, and the eternal mother and child image.

Chakroborty seems content with the response from art connoisseurs and critics at the exhibition. The guestbook at the gallery was brimming with compliments, kudos and well wishes from senior artists and noted personalities like Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Hashem Khan as well as students of Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University.

This should encourage Chakroborty to hold more exhibitions at home and abroad.

## An in-depth look at Bengali folk theatre

Book launch of Boundless Bengal at Public Library

JAMIL MAHMUD

The publication ceremony of "Boundless Bengal," a research-based book on Bengali folk theatre traditions, was held at the Seminar Room of Central Public Library yesterday. Swedish folklore researcher Dr. Christina Nygren is the author of the book.

Dr. Nygren, noted theatre personality and ITI President Ramendu Majumdar and Chief of Jatra Unnayan Parishad Milon Kanti Dey, among others, spoke on the occasion. Eminent folklore researcher Professor Shamsuzzaman Khan presided over the programme. Theatre Bank was the organiser of the programme.

The book is the output of an eight-year-long research by Dr. Nygren. Nygren first came to Bangladesh in 1992 to attend a seminar at the "Folk Theatre Festival" arranged by ITI. She was introduced to Bangladeshi folk art, in particular folk theatre, at the festival.

"I requested the organisers to arrange a 'jatra pala' performed by a rural troupe but they initially declined," Dr. Nygren said at the

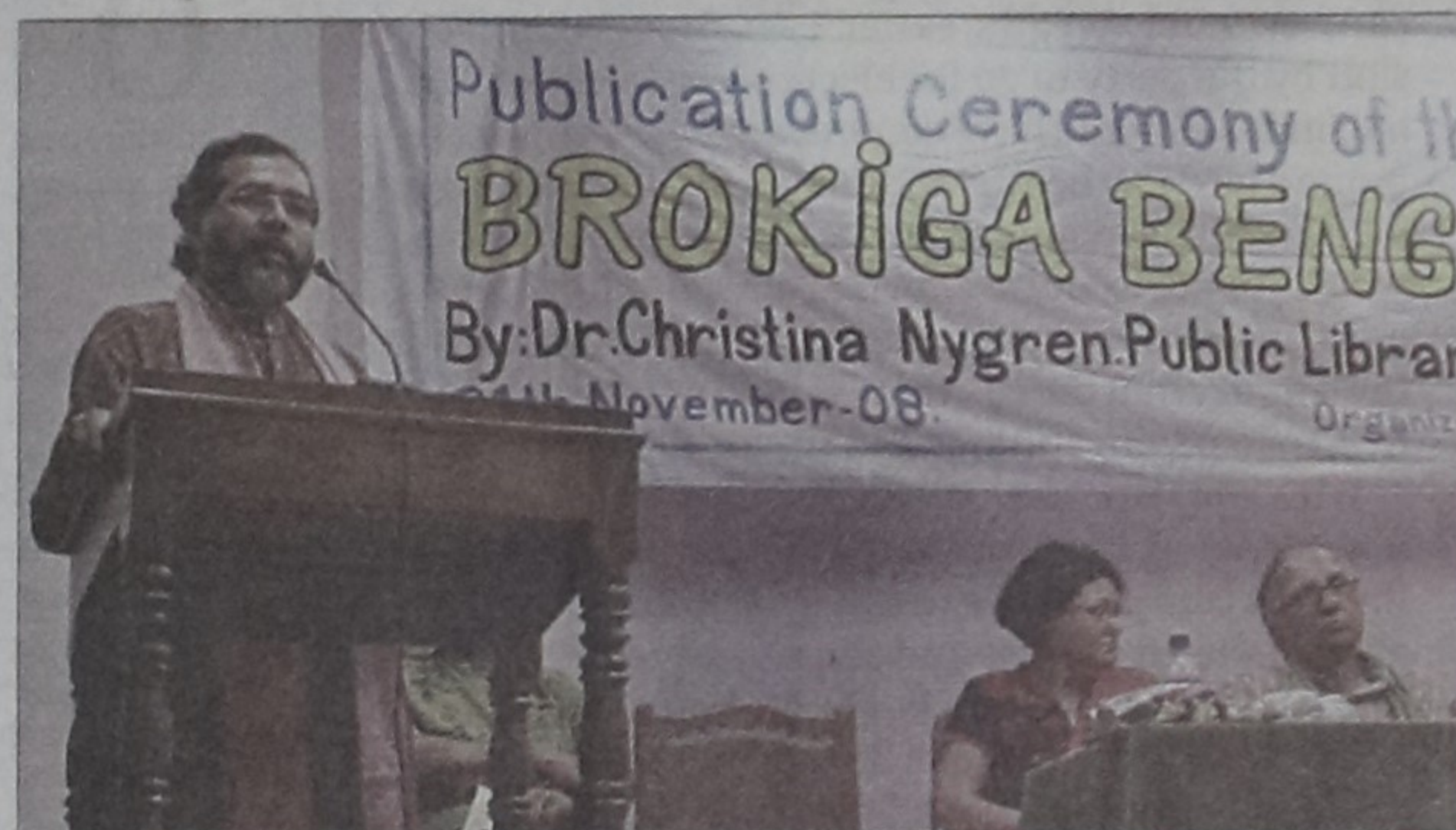


PHOTO: MUMIT

Shawpan Guha speaks at the programme. Dr. Christina Nygren and Ramendu Majumdar are seen seated.

programme.

"Later I enjoyed a 'jatra pala' performed by Kohinur Opera, which encouraged me to learn more about it," she added.

Though "Boundless Bengal" highlights the folk theatre forms of both Bangladesh and India, traditional 'jatra pala' got an emphasis and priority in her research, according to Dr. Nygren.

Apart from 'jatra pala', other traditional performing art forms like 'shong pala', theatre performances by sex

workers and inter-sex communities; religious rituals like 'Muharram' and the baul lifestyle have been featured in the book.

The book has been written in Swedish and the original title is "Brokiga Bengalen." 'Brokiga' means multi-coloured, a description Dr. Nygren thinks fit for Bengali folk theatre traditions. An introductory writing on the book in English was provided at the programme.

The English version of the book is in the pipeline and a

Bangla version would also be published in near future, said Shawpan Guha, one of the research associates of Dr. Nygren. Guha is chief of a Khulna based organisation 'Rupantar Institute of Folk Theatre.' The organisation has taken the initiative to publish the book in Bangla and English.

Noted 'jatra' artistes S.M. Mohsin and Sultan Selim also spoke at the programme. A traditional 'shong pala' was staged after the publication ceremony.

## Expressions' celebration for Ramendu Majumdar

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Advertising and communication agency Expressions Ltd. arranged a cultural programme at Saffron Restaurant in Gulshan on November 20. The event was a celebration of Ramendu

Majumdar being elected the president of ITI. Ramendu Majumdar is also the managing director of Expressions. Noted personalities were present at the programme to congratulate Majumdar.

The cultural programme started with a performance by

artists of theatre troupe Palakar. Artistes Fahmida Nabi and Tanveer Alam Shawjeeb rendered songs at the programme. National Professor Kabir Chowdhury, poet Syed Shamsul Haque and Majumdar himself, among others, spoke at the programme.

Majumdar is the second Asian to be elected to this coveted position since ITI's establishment in 1948 as an initiative of UNESCO. He was elected President at the 32nd world congress of ITI held on September 25, 2008 in Madrid, Spain.

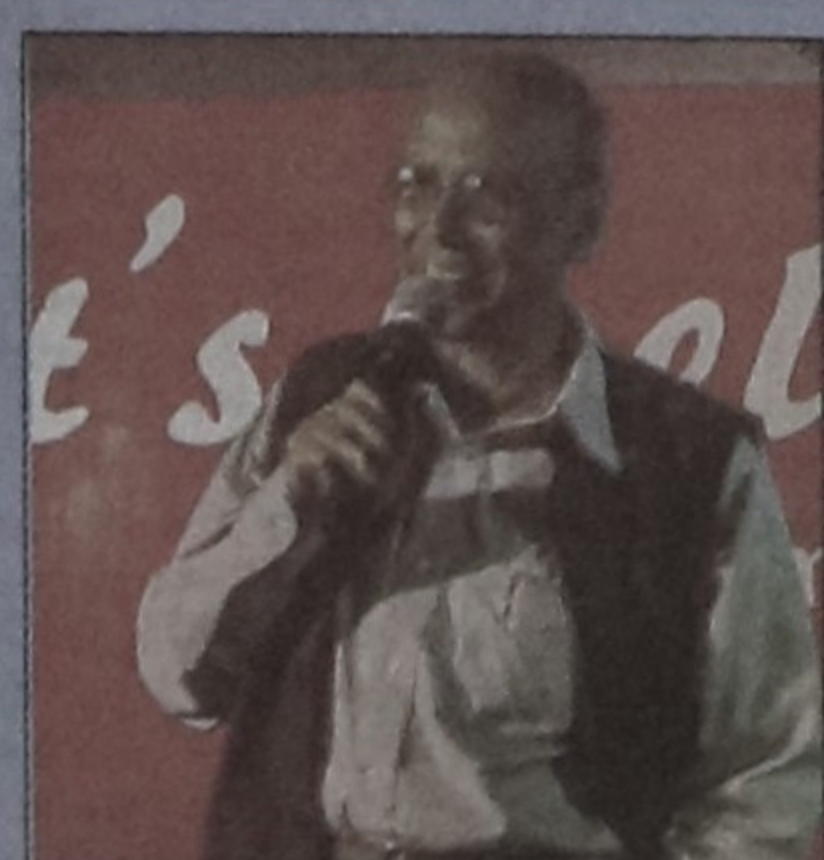
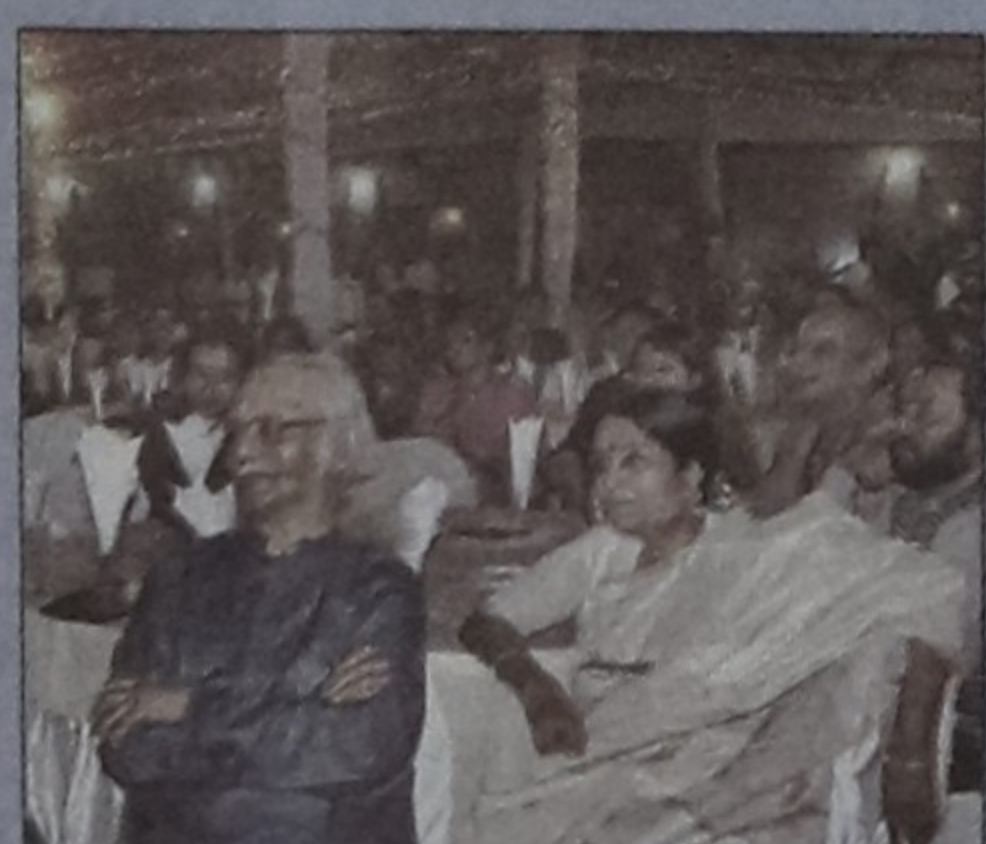
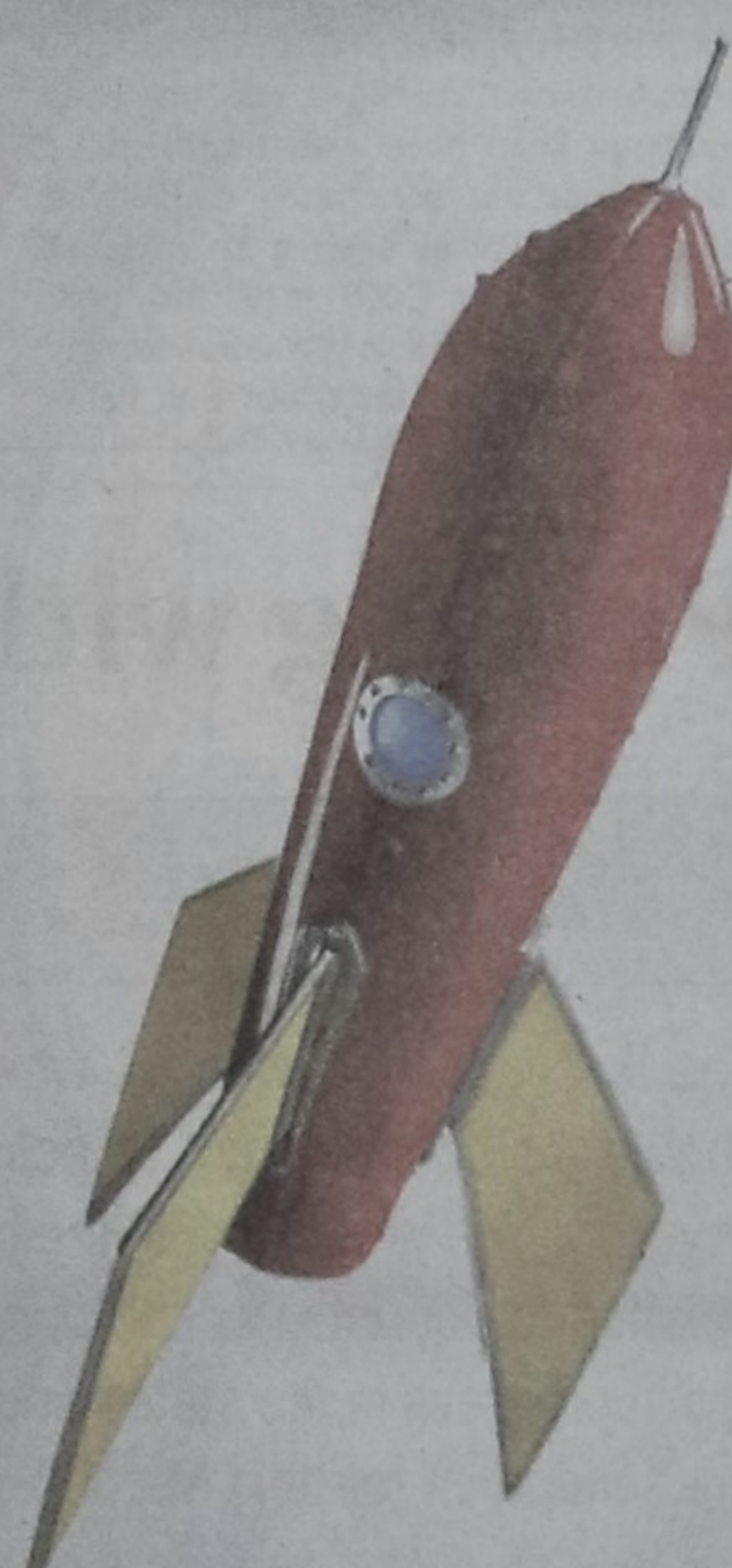


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