

**WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK**

**Experimental Theatre Festival**  
 Organiser: Palakar  
 Venue: Palakar Studio, 133, Natok Sharani  
 Date: November 21-30  
 Time: 6:30pm everyday  
 Today: Kalapani, Platform, Shanki



**Solo Painting Exhibition**

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



**Video Art**

40 years of Video Art in Germany  
 Organiser: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh and DIFS  
 Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, H10, R 9, Dharmoad  
 Date: Nov 30-Dec 2  
 Time: 4pm onwards



**Solo Painting Exhibition**

Title: Tales of a city  
 Artist: Nazib Mohammad  
 Venue: Gallery of Fine Art, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Nimtoli, Ramna  
 Date: Nov 24-Dec 2  
 Time: 12-8pm



## Kanak Chapa Melody unbound



PHOTO: MUMIT M

**Kanak Chapa**

SYEDA SHAMIN MORTADA

Kanak Chapa's exemplary voice and Lata-esque nuances have taken her to different parts of the globe where she has managed to mesmerise non-resident Bangladeshis (NRB). Recently, Kanak had cast her magic in Italy and Qatar, where thousands of NRBs had the privilege to attend the concerts.

Going over her recent tour, Kanak said, "We were a team of six -- Kumar Bishwajit, Andrew Kishore, Salma, Sonja, Biplob and I -- who performed at the concerts organised by Bangladesh Association." The concert in Qatar was called the 'Bangladesh Mega Nite' and the artistes took the audience on an engaging musical journey. Describing the audience Kanak said, "The hall was packed. Everybody loved our performance and it went on for four hours. Each song was greeted with rapturous applause."

Kanak who is also a serious advocate of charitable causes partook in a conference with an objective to assist the Bangladesh Association in supporting the disadvantaged and the destitute people of the country during natural calamities and disasters. Talking about the conference, the singer added, "You see, I don't always work for commercial purposes alone; I'm often involved in voluntary work both home and abroad."

After Qatar, the talented singer flew to Milan

to perform at another concert called 'Poush Mela'. The performance saw a standing ovation from a 12000 plus crowd in a beautiful hall. Kanak reached out to every section of the audience by smoothly switching from old folk to 'adhunik' and Bangladeshi film songs, involving the young and the old.

According to Kanak, "The 'probashis' (NRBs) love to hear 'matir gaan' (songs of the soil). The middle-aged group wants to hear Bengali film songs while the new generation is interested in folk, Lalon and modern songs."

Kanak's undaunted and dedicated efforts to excel in the field of singing have brought her several accolades, and a large fan following globally. How does she deal with stardom? The singer responds, "When I go out of the country it feels like they are all my own brothers and sisters. The NRBs are the biggest assets of our country; they contribute through remittance and play a big role in the national development. I respect them a lot. After the end of a show one tends to get a bit exhausted, but I never let that be an issue. I try to talk to everyone who approaches me."

Undoubtedly one of the favourites of the masses, the talented singer with her melodious voice and versatility has made a unique place for herself amongst the artistes of today. She has received a number of awards and accolades and also possesses a large array of hits in the competitive industry.

## Priceless yet uncared for artefacts at Mohasthan Museum

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra

Artefacts from various historical periods are on display at the Mohasthan Archaeological Museum premises. These priceless objects d'art are rapidly being damaged due to lack of proper maintenance.

Department of Archaeology officials admitted to the fact and said that the shortage of manpower and fund constraints as well as lack of chemical treatment of most of the images, sculptures and art of different dynasties had put them at great risk.

Mohammad Mahabub-Ul-Alam, custodian of the museum, said that to preserve the original artefacts, the museum needed a laboratory and sufficient manpower. "A huge number of art, sculptures and images from the 7th-8th to the 18th century have been preserved in Mohasthan Museum premises," he said.

The department has failed to maintain a museum ambience due to the lack of mod-

ern museum facilities and technological support, said an official of the department. To keep alive the arts and sculptures of different dynasties in the museum, the department should set up a modern laboratory, stores and adequate rooms in the 40-year-old museum and its premises, said an archaeologist.

An engraved lion and human sculpture in a piece of black stone along with other arts are one of the important artefacts in the museum premises. They are kept under an open sky along with other artefacts. The broken image shows a human form in prey-like mode before a lion. An ancient decorated stone pillar has been lying in the open space for a long time. Most of the artefacts in the museum premises have lain uncared for and without any chemical treatment for years together. It is believed that in the past the pillar was part of a drainage system, said an archaeologist. In addition, flower engraved artefacts, about 1,000 years old, are strewn about like the other artefacts, including engraved feminine images.



PHOTO: STAR

(Left) Patterns engraved on stone in Bogra. Human figures carved in stone in Bogra. On the reverse can be seen other art forms.

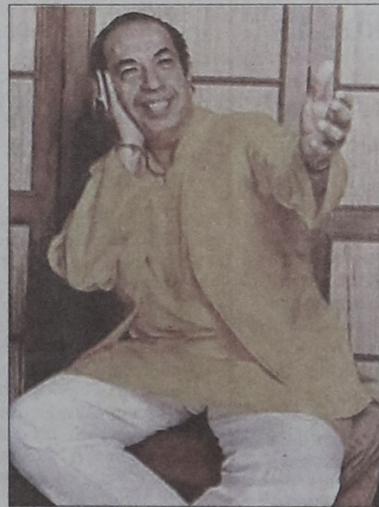
## Mahendra Kapoor and the ripples of song

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

When you reflect on Mahendra Kapoor, you reflect on all the years you have traversed through wallowing in music. It was in the mid 1960s, when my generation was in school, that the sadly beautiful cadences of *chalo ik baar phir se aajabi ban jaayen hum dono* wafted into our lives. Yes, we were too young to think of romance, but then, music has a magical quality in it. It bores into your soul. It did into mine and I sang it all the way to school in the rising winds of autumn.

In the years that have rolled away into time, Kapoor has stayed in the consciousness, not least because of his principled devotion to Mohammad Rafi. Never once in his life did Kapoor waver in his belief that Rafi was the spirit behind his music, that he had always wanted to emulate him. That is frankness. It is also humility. Mahendra Kapoor's humility was to carry him all the way to the top in the 1960s and well into the 1970s. As I graduated into youth and began to understand, somewhat, the nuances of love (or infatuation!), I listened to his quietly passionate number, *ae jaan-e-chaman tera gora badan / jaise khilta hua gulab / zalim teri jawani / qayamat tera shabab*. And I have kept on singing it, for the sheer sensuality of it. And sensuality, in that very positive sense of the meaning, is what you need in life if tedium is not to kill you bit by bit.

And it was there in Mahendra Kapoor, together with the qualities we lump together as versatility. Rafi had an abundance of the versatile in him. Kapoor did not measure up to him in that Olympian way, but he came rather close. Remember the intensely inspirational *mere des ki dharti sona ugle ugle here moti*? There is a verve in the song you cannot miss, a call to patriotism that stirs the soul in you. It is verve that you come by in *badal jaaye agar*



Mahendra Kapoor

*mali chaman hota nahin khali*. The beat is a reminder of *har dil jo pyar karega wo gaana gaaye ga*, the song Kapoor had shared years earlier with Mukesh in the movie *Sangam*. Mahendra Kapoor's music was emblematic of vitality, made richer by the tonality that defined his voice. And this richness came through in *mehnat kash is duniya se hum apna hissa maangenge / ik bagh nahin ik khet nahin hum saari duniya maangenge*. It is a song that recalls the splendid energy of the old Rafi number

*apni azadi pe hum sar ko jhuka sakte nahin / sar kata sakte hain lekin sar jhuka sakte nahin*.

No singer achieves completeness without bringing the purely romantic into his songs. Kapoor brought that completeness to bear in such songs as *tum agar saath dene ka waada karo*. If you recall that song, you will recall another, the inimitable *neele gagan ke tale dharti ka pyar pale*. And then there is another: *kahan se layeen o jaan-e-man ye / kitabi chehra gulabi anken*. Love often has the power, the near spirituality of transforming the beloved into a deity, as Mahendra Kapoor demonstrates in *kisi patthar ki moorat se mohabbat ka iradah hai*. And then comes the matter of mischief in the pursuit of the woman of desire. It comes through in *sehmi sehmi kahan chali chhorh ke dilwalon ki gali*. Not far behind is the plaintively demanding *tere pyar ka aasra chahta hoon / wafa kar raha hoon wafa chahta hoon*. Add to that the call to self-esteem, as in the number *na mun chhupe ke jiyo aur na sar jhuka ke jiyo / ghamon ka daur bhi aaye to muskura ke jiyo*. And the comical? You chance upon it in the rollicking number *gentleman gentleman gentleman*, all pronounced in a distinctively Indian tone. Think of *Sunday ko pyar hua Monday iqar hua* and nana ho gaya diwana. You get a whiff of humour that was in Kapoor.

You dwell on Mahendra Kapoor. When you do that, you get a sense of what has gone missing in your life since the days when the first intimations of music made inroads into your soul. You remember the gleaming afternoons when you walked home under the pines humming *ankhon mein qayamat ke kajal honton pe ghazab ki laali hai / banda parwar kahin ae kis ki taqdeer sanwar ne wali hai*. And you regret having stepped out of youth and on to the arid plains of maturity.

## Mickey Mouse turns 80

AFP, Washington

Eighty years ago, one of the world's most beloved stars was born as Mickey Mouse whistled his way onto the silver screen with the cinema debut of "Steamboat Willie" at the Colony Theater in New York.

That day, November 18, 1928, is widely considered the iconic mouse's official birthday. But months before, Walt Disney had dreamt up the cartoon character and featured it in the short animated film "Plane Crazy."

"Steamboat Willie" is the most famous of the early Mickey Mouse films because it has a soundtrack," Eric Smoodin, a professor of film studies at the University of California, Davis, told AFP.

"Mickey Mouse, within a year or two after 'Steamboat Willie,' became the biggest star in the world," Smoodin said.

"So even though it's not the first Mickey Mouse film, it really was the beginning of his great celebrity," he added, speculating that in the 1930s, only Charlie Chaplin came close to Mickey Mouse in terms of global superstardom.

Mickey Mouse was created almost by accident: Oswald the Lucky Rabbit was Walt Disney's first cartoon character, but when Disney lost the rights to Oswald in 1927, he returned to the drawing board.

He came up with "Mortimer the Mouse." Popular legend has it that his wife preferred the name Mickey, and Walt Disney deferred to her choice.

"Steamboat Willie" has a flimsy, politically incorrect storyline and features little, if any,

comprehensible dialogue.

But the cartoon marked an animation landmark with its synchronised sound track where Mickey whistles and blows raspberries at the irascible ship's captain, a large tobacco-chewing cat called Captain Pete.

In roughly seven minutes, Captain Pete kicks Mickey Mouse out of the steering room of a riverboat. The hero then hoists Minnie Mouse on board using a crane that grabs her by the knickers, swings a cat by the tail, strangles a goose and plays keyboard on some suckling piglets as the American folk song "Turkey in the Straw" plays from a goat's innards.

The Disney studios pioneered the use of colour-film cinematography and 3D films in the 1930s. Disney also made innovative use of stereo sound technology in "Fantasia," a movie starring Mickey Mouse and first released in 1946.

Just over a year after his debut in "Steamboat Willie," on January 13, 1930, Mickey Mouse got his own comic strip, drawn by artist Ub Iwerks.

He made it into the Sunday comics on January 10, 1932, the same year that Walt Disney won a special Academy Award for creating the friendly rodent.

Mickey Mouse has gone on to star in over 120 different cartoons and got his own television show, "The Mickey Mouse Club," in the 1950s.

His trademark morphology -- the ears above all -- appears on merchandise items ranging from T-shirts to cuddly toys, most often sporting his white gloves, red shorts and yellow shoes. Mickey has also been featured in museum exhibits from New York to Helsinki and Tokyo.



## Owen film to open Berlin festival

Next year's Berlin Film Festival will kick off on 5 February with political thriller "The International," starring Clive Owen and Naomi Watts.

Directed by Tom Tykwer, the film traces the criminal business transactions that finance war and terror.

Britain's Tilda Swinton will chair the international jury at the 2009 event, which runs until 15 February.

German-born Tykwer previously launched the festival in 2002 with his thriller Heaven, starring Cate Blanchett.

The director is best known for his 1998 film "Run Lola Run" and his 2006 adaptation of Patrick Suskind's controversial best-seller "Perfume."

Partly shot in Germany, The International will screen out of competition ahead of its US release on 13 February.

Its cast includes Armin Mueller-Stahl, Danish actor Ulrich Thomsen and Ireland's Brian F O'Byrne.

This year's festival launched with a screening of Rolling Stones concert film "Shine a Light," directed by Martin Scorsese.

Watts, 40, started shooting The International shortly after giving birth to her son Alexander.

The actress is currently expecting her second child with her partner, film actor Liev Schreiber.

Source: BBC



Clive Owen and Naomi Watts in "The International."