

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

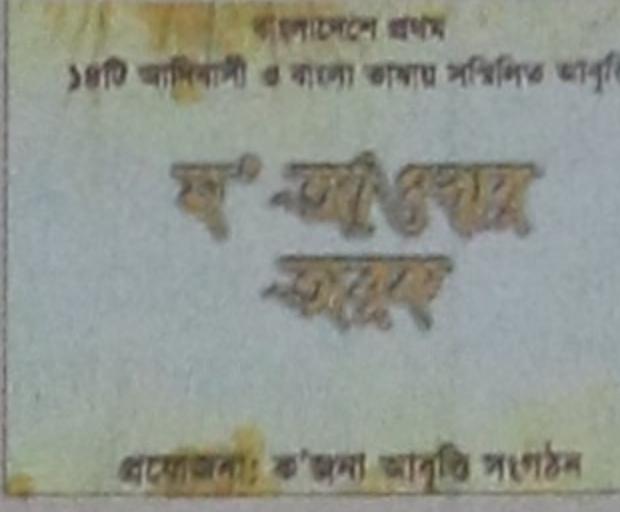
Ekushey Boi Mela '09
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy premises
Date: February 01-28



Chobi Mela V
Int'l Festival of Photography, Bangladesh '09
Theme: Freedom
Venue: National Museum, BSA, Drik Gallery, Bengal Gallery, AF, GIB, British Council, Asiatic Gallery, Kalpana Boarding and Karwan Bazar underpass
Date: Jan 30-Feb 20



Recitation of poetry in 14 Adivasi languages
Title: Ma' Aoujhar Arok
Organiser: Kajana Abritti Sangathan
Venue: TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University
Date: February 8
Time: 6pm



Streetwise Art Exhibition
Venue: Bay's Galleria, 57, Gulshan Avenue
Date: December 2008-February 2009
Time: 11am-6pm



Desh Gherer Gaan

Folklore and myth unfurl under the Bakul tree



PHOTO: MUMIT M

Shib Thakur Mandal and his troupe from Khulna perform Gaazir Gaan, a musical tradition that transcends religious boundaries.

NADIA SARWAT

As a tribute to eminent activist and Tagore exponent Waheedul Haque, a driving force behind cultural movements for decades, Chhayatan arranged a two-day programme featuring folk music belonging to different genres. The event -- held at Bakultala, Faculty of Fine Arts, starting on February 5 -- was titled "Desh Gherer Gaan," a phrase coined by noted Indian litterateur Debesh Roy, referring to the opulent heritage of Bengali folk music.

Waheedul Haque believed that it would not be possible to form a complete idea of our culture, without getting familiar with our folk music -- rooted in our tradition. Upholding this ideal, Chhayatan has been arranging

this programme for the last two years, highlighting various forms of folk music practiced in different parts of the country.

First day's performances included Lalon Geeti, Jugir Gaan, Gazir Gaan and Padma Nagan.

Aklima Baul, from Sarishadanga village of Chhadaunga district, was the first to perform Lalon Geeti at the event. From the moment she breathed life into her first song "Rakhilen Shai(n) bukjal korey adhela pukurey," the artiste demanded undivided attention. All songs Aklima performed, including "Koto jeney koto shuney" and "Na jani bhab kemon dhara," deal with the predicament of a confused soul, searching for the ultimate truth. Through his songs, Lalon provided the most probable answer, that is,

through worshipping the grandeur of humanity life can be meaningful.

Baul Rabiul Islam, a member of Aklima's troupe, performed two Lalon songs next, including the ever-familiar number, "Shob lokey koy Lalon ki jaat shangsharey," a song denouncing the man-made divisions based on religion.

Shib Thakur Mandal and his troupe from Haat Bati Village, Khulna, performed Gaazir Gaan. This narrative-based music, from the southern region of the country, is an ode to a legendary local saint known as "Gazi Pir." People of several southern districts, especially the Sundarbans, revere Gazi Pir as a saviour from the dangers of the jungle. Gazir Gaan is performed to attain the saint's blessings. Although Gazi Pir was a Muslim, his followers

include people from all religious communities and Gazir Gaan represents a tradition that transcends religious boundaries.

During the performance, Swapon Kumar Mandal was the "Gayen," the lead singer providing the "bandana" (prayers) and connecting the performances with the story through songs. Shib Thakur

Mandal along with other performers in dazzling costumes enacted the story.

Abdur Rahman and his troupe, from Natore, performed Jugir Gaan, one of the lesser-known forms of folk music. "Practiced in the northern districts of Bangladesh, like Rajshahi, Natore etc, these songs have their origin in the 'Nath' community, a localised form of Buddhism. The followers of this creed earned their livelihood through performances addressing 'Sanyas,' and 'Bairagyo,' ideas of asceticism derived from Buddhism," said Kamaluddin Kabir, coordinator of the event. Jugir Gaan progresses through a musical question and answer session between a guru and his disciple.

Derived from "Manosha Mangal," Padma Nagan or Padma Puran is form of folk music popular among communities who live by the river Padma. Haider Gayen and his troupe performed 'Padmalachan' (local term for Padma Nagan) at the event.

They presented one of seven 'parba' (chapters) of Padma Nagan. The 'parba' performed at the programme depicted the well-known myth of Behula and Lakhindar.

Yesterday's programme included Lalon songs, Gazir Geet, Lamba Geet and Hoila songs.



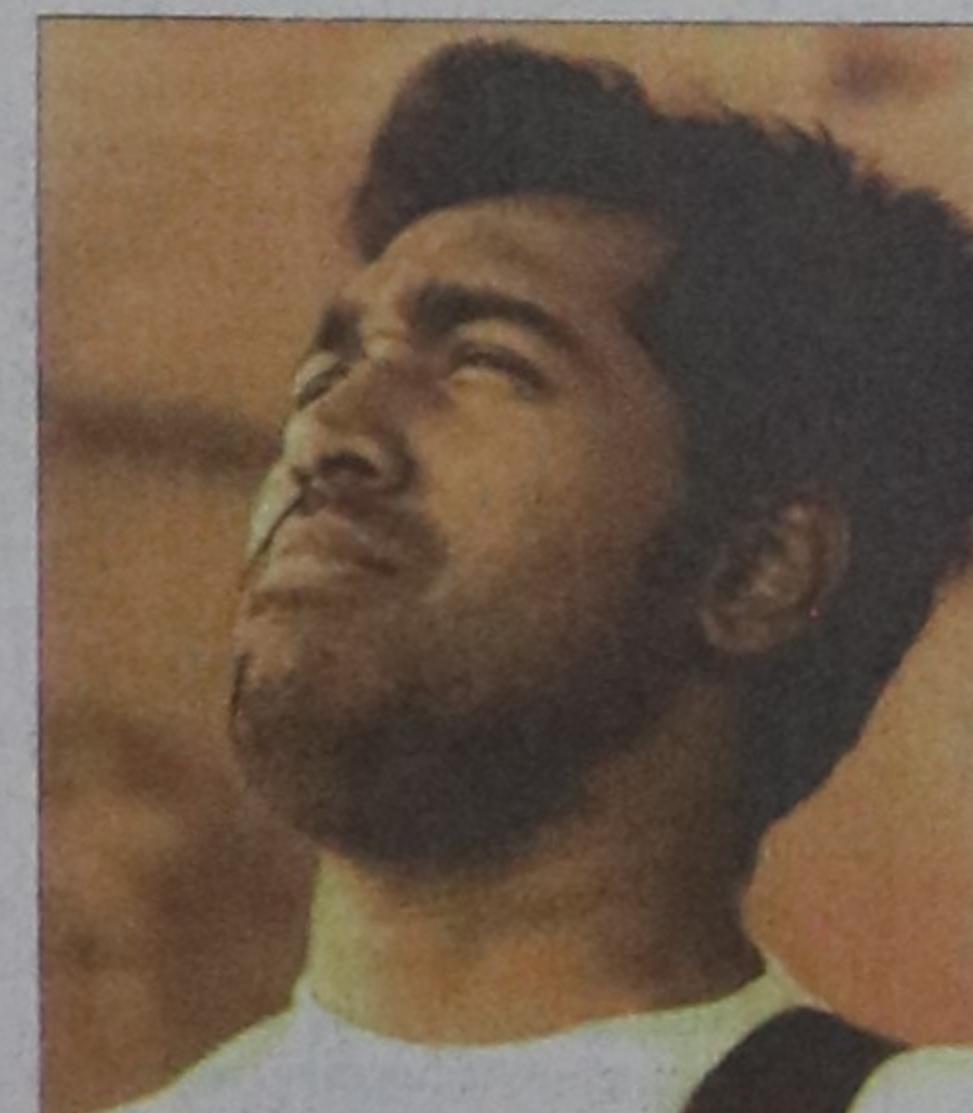
Nokia Music Lounge starts tonight on ntv

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

"Nokia Music Lounge," to be aired live, starts from today on ntv. The programme will be aired on Saturdays at 9:20 pm. Dipu Mahmud is the producer of the show.

Each episode of the programme features an 'adda' with members of contemporary popular bands, their experiences, game shows, music videos and more. Viewers can participate too and call their favourite artistes during the show. Nokia is the sponsor of the programme.

John, vocalist of the band Black, is the host of the show.



Turi Munthe, CEO of a 'citizen journalism' based news agency Demotix, speaks at a seminar held at Goethe-Institut Bangladesh recently. Munthe arrived in Dhaka to participate at the ongoing 'Chobi Mela V.' Munthe is a publisher, editor, lecturer, journalist and talking head for CNN, BBC, NBC, Al-Jazeera, Reuters, the Telegraph and many others. He studied at Oxford University and speaks

Italian, French, Spanish and Arabic. Munthe is a Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute and the Next Century Foundation. Demotix is also a freelance photo agency. Professional freelance journalists, passionate amateurs and ordinary citizens can upload their photographs and videos on Demotix. The agency was founded with two principles -- freedom of speech and freedom to know.

Source: Media cell, Chobi Mela V.

Vibrant colours from a world lacking opportunities

Art by street children of Dhaka

SYEDA SHAMIN MORTADA

The second annual 'Streetwise Art Exhibition,' featuring artworks by children living on the streets of Dhaka, has opened its doors again to the public from December onwards at the Bay's Galleria, Radius Centre, Gulshan Avenue.

The Streetwise School has provided the disadvantaged street children -- between the ages of four to fourteen -- an opportunity to express their emotions and views through some stunning and beautiful artwork. These children put their hopes and desires in dashing colours for everyone to see and experience. Most of the paintings are on simple subjects that children see everyday in their surroundings. These original artworks are made from pastels on recycled paper, print reproductions of these works are also available for sale in the form of greeting cards, gift cards, bookmarks and notebooks. Despite different family backgrounds, each and

every child has demonstrated immense creativity and imagination.

This exhibition is more of an emotional tour into the lives of these children, who are left behind by the society. Each painting urges the viewer to recognise them as fellow human beings, asking for fundamental rights like water, shelter, food, clothes, education and healthcare.

A large percentage of the proceeds from sales of these paintings will be donated to the children, addressing issues related to their health, sanitation, education and such important aspects and also towards driving the school forward.

The exhibition will continue throughout the month of February. This is an opportunity for the privileged to empathise the pain and hear the voices of these disadvantaged children, realising the necessity for us to extend our hands to them.



Streetwise Art Exhibition, being held at Bay's Galleria, features artworks by children living on the streets of Dhaka.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

With the slogan "Sanskriti Hok Shomaj Bodoler Hatir," cultural organisation Kranti Shilpi Goshthi celebrated its 42nd anniversary on February 5 at Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium, Central Public Library in Shahbagh. Kranti was founded in 1967. One of the main objectives of the organisation is to generate social awareness through songs and protest human rights violation.

The programme started with a short discussion. K.M. Khurshid Alam Swapan, general secretary Kranti, delivered the welcome speech. Lawmaker Rashed Khan Menon was the chief guest and poet Asad Chowdhury was the special guest at the programme. The dis-

cussion was presided over by Mahbubul Haider Mohon, president of Kranti.

An award giving ceremony followed. 'Kranti Padak 2009' was conferred to 'Gano Sangeet' artiste Fakir Alamgir, poet Nasir Ahmed and composer Shahid Sardar.

The programme also featured live performances. Members of Kranti rendered songs written by Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury -- Ei khaney jara praan diyeche, Jhhor uthchhe and Tolotolaoaj.

Dhaka Swarkalpan presented a group recitation of "Raatri ekhon raatrimoy," also written by poet Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury.

The programme ended with a play, titled "Janatar Adalat," staged by members of Kranti.



(From left) Mahbubul Haider Mohon, Rashed Khan Menon, Asad Chowdhury and Fakir Alamgir (R) at the programme.

Ferdaus and Abu Sayeed on Aamar Ami

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Film actor Ferdaus and acclaimed filmmaker Abu Sayeed are the guests on tonight's "Aamar Ami." The show will be aired on Banglavision at 9:05 pm. Directed by Ananta Zahid, the show is hosted by Munmun.



Abu Sayeed (left) and Ferdaus on tonight's "Aamar Ami."

In tonight's "Aamar Ami" their views and experiences with the audience.