

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Jatiyo Rabindra Sangeet Shamkhan
Organiser: Jatiyo Rabindra Sangeet Shamkhan Parishad
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbag
Date: March 20-22
Time: 9:30 am onwards

Praner Khela
Artistes: Kiron Chandra Roy and Labik Kamal Gaurav
Organiser: Bengal Foundation
Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi
Date: March 19
Time: 7pm

Film Premiere
Title: Naroshundor
Director: Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbag
Date: March 19
Time: 4pm

Francophone Film Festival
Organiser: Alliance Francaise de Dacca, Zahir Raihan Film Society
Venue: Auditorium, AFD, Rd 3 Dhanmondi
Date: March 16-24
Time: 5pm onwards
Today: My African Family, The Child



Destined for fame

Up close with Sohana Saba

SYEDA SHAMIN MORTADA

One look at her and you will know that she was destined for fame and the world of glitz and glamour. From a dancer, to a model, then the big screen and the small screen she has done it all with panache.

It has always been Sohana Saba's dream to be a part of the entertainment industry and become an actress. Ever since she was a child she had showed an inclination towards music and dance but she always wanted to take up acting as a career. Her mother Rakhshan Hossain who had been involved in various cultural activities gave her full support. Sohana says "I always wanted to become an actress, to do something special so that I stood out from the rest. I wanted people to recognise me when I walked in the streets; I wanted to be a celebrity from my childhood days."

She enrolled in dance classes in Chhayanat when she was in Class I. According to Sohana "I used to be presented with many poetry books as I loved to recite poems when I was a kid." When in Class VIII she began to walk the ramps and within a short time started getting offers to do plays. In 2004, Saba entered film. She says, "I still remember that Sachhu bhai called me up, as (the actor-director) Kabari apu was looking for a girl to do a movie. It came as a surprise but I was selected amongst 300 other contenders. The name of the movie was 'Ayna' and my co-artist was actor, Ferdous. I played the role of an acid victim in the movie." Sohana received rave reviews and much acclaim. Soon after, her second movie, "Khelaghor", directed by Morshedul Islam, was released. She received many accolades for

the manner in which she slipped with ease into the role of a Birangana (heroic woman) in the movie with actor Riaz as her co-artist. Saba says "I was also doing a lot of plays simultaneously."

She received the Meril Prothom Alo Best Critic Award in the year 2006 for her role in "Ayna". The prestigious award is an epitome of her popularity and stature in recent high-quality films.

When asked about her future plans, she says, "I have never planned anything. I consider myself very lucky to do such good films and strongly believe that Almighty Allah will do whatever is best for me."

Today, the actress enjoys an avid fan following as her diverse roles -- both on big and small screen -- continue to impress the audiences.

The writer is a freelance contributor.

Fragments of a volatile world

Shohag's solo exhibit in Paris underway



TAKIR HOSSAIN

Imtiaz Islam Shohag is known for his images that appear fragmented and wrecked. His forms and compositions are unique, and he has an affinity for shapes and compositions. His colours are vibrant and create a correlation between forms and composition.

Shohag's works usually depict



Shohag's canvas is assembled of many fragments and each piece refers to an untold story.

perilous incidents in our surroundings. He is especially concerned about the chaos of manmade disasters and natural calamities such as cyclones, storms and road accidents that extract a heavy price on lives and assets. His adroit hands depict sinking ships, smashed cars and wailing people. A solo painting exhibition featuring the artist's works will soon begin at a private gallery in Paris.

Collages and broken glasses have been frequently used in Shohag's works. Shards of glass are placed on his canvas. The artist believes life is impacted by numerous incidents. Fragments indicate these incidents in our surroundings and help us to review our smallness. His canvas is assembled of many fragments and each piece refers to an untold story. In this sense, Shohag is a skilful narra-

tor. He is also a sensitive artist as he draws attention to the extinction and near collapse of civilisations.

Shohag's works highlight a combination of contemporary geometric shapes and various abstract forms. The artist has used figures and motifs derived from his whimsical visions. Chaos or disorder is a recurring theme that represents the volatile state of world today.



The sisterhood of women journalists

Persona's get-together at Bengal Gallery

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

They all work for reputed media organisations. Some write while relay stories on camera. But in the general sense, they all belong to the growing community of women journalists in the country. In an informal and jovial ambiance, beauty

attended the event. Finding acquaintances among themselves, the participants earnestly mingled and chatted. When Amitav Dewry, head of news of the magazine Canvas, a publication by Persona, formally addressed the participants, the conversation was on full swing.

work, have little opportunity to socialise with fellow women journalists," said Dewry, welcoming all.

Chief Executive Officer of Persona and editor of Canvas magazine, aesthetician Kaniz Almas Khan said, "There is nothing formal about today's meeting, we just want to talk our heart out. It's wonderful to see so many women working in the media these days. Our intention is to create a bond between all these women who have chosen a profession that requires courage. Hopefully, this bond will help us face challenges together."

"On the occasion of International Women's Day, we have been holding this event for the last three years. Initially it was small arrangement, with 15-20 participants. But as the number of women journalists increased, we decided to make our arrangement bigger too. We have almost 200 invitees for this year's event," she added.

Introducing themselves, the participants shared their work experiences, aspiration and issues. Many lauded Persona for this initiative.



Kaniz Almas Khan (centre), CEO of Persona and editor of Canvas magazine, speaks at the 'adda.'

"This is exactly what we expected from today's event, interaction between these journalists who work in the same city, but do not get opportunities to meet each other on a personal level; especially those who are usually occupied with desk-

A good number of journalists, both from electronic and print media,

American Idol

Anoop Desai goes Country, wows Cowell and company

The "American Idol" judges are willing to give Anoop Desai one more chance to keep them satisfied.

The 21-year-old college student from North Carolina impressed tough critic Simon Cowell and the rest of the panel with his soulful cover of "Always on My Mind" during Tuesday night's Grand Ole Opry-themed performance show.

Cowell -- who criticised Desai's rendition of Michael Jackson's "Beat It" last week -- changed his tune, saying Desai "managed to go from zero to hero" thanks to stellar vocals and choice of the song. "Always on My Mind" has been recorded by Willie Nelson, Elvis Presley and others.

Desai, who prefers R&B music, told Ryan Seacrest he was not surprised by the posi-

tive response. He said he expects "to do the best" he can.

Kris Allen, Megan Corkrey and Matt Giraud also received unanimous love from the judges. Cowell told Giraud, the 23-year-old piano player from Michigan, that he outsang front-runner Danny Gokey on the top-rated Fox singing contest with his heartfelt take on a Carrie Underwood tune. "I don't think you've had enough credit, actually, for your vocals in this competition so far because everyone's been talking about Danny and Adam (Lambert)," Cowell told Giraud, comparing him to pop-and-standards singer Michael Buble.

Not all of the contestants scored such strong reviews. Michael Sarver, the 27-year-old oil rig worker from Texas, disappointed judges in a

genre he might otherwise have nailed. Rating Sarver's rendition of Garth Brooks' "Ain't Goin' Down (Til the Sun Comes Up)," Cowell said the unassuming singer came across not as a star but "a likable guy who likes country music but is a bit clumsy."

Lil Rounds fell off her A-game a bit by performing a straightforward cover of Martina McBride's "Independence Day." Randy Jackson said that song was not a good fit for the bubbly 23-year-old mother of three from Tennessee, who usually gets high marks for her raw R&B edge that was missing this week.

Guest mentor and country singer Randy Travis did not know quite what to make of Lambert, 26, of Los Angeles, who put his own theatrical



Anoop Desai

spin on "Ring of Fire," giving the Johnny Cash gem less of a country twang and more of an exotic Middle Eastern vibe.

Cowell said Lambert's performance was "absolute indulgent rubbish" while

Paula Abdul praised him for staying true to who he is. Kara DioGuardi said his Cash cover left her "confused and sort of happy."

Source: Internet

Architecture

A new Paris, as dreamed by planners

Hand it to the French. Who else would pick an economic collapse as a time to unveil one of the most audacious urban plans in recent memory? Yet the 10 proposals for a new master plan for metropolitan Paris, which were unveiled last week, may just be the kind of brazen idealism the world needs right now.

The results of a nine-month study commissioned by President Nicolas Sarkozy, the proposals aim to transform Paris and its surrounding suburbs into the first sustainable "post-Kyoto city," a reference to the treaty on climate change, with an expanded Metro system and sprawling new parks.

The government has yet to say how it would raise the money to build this new city. And Sarkozy's opponents, who have sometimes dismissed him as "President Bling-Bling," have questioned whether this is anything more than an elaborate publicity stunt.

But even if none of the proposals are ever built, they show a daring that has not been seen in a Western city for decades. The teams range in experience from well-established international stars like Richard Rogers and Christian de Portzamparc to French architects who are just beginning their careers. All forsook flashy imagery for a deep analysis of the city's diverse

communities and the fraying tissue that binds them together. At the very least, the results should force a radical reappraisal of Paris's identity. The enchanted city most of us know through holidays and films is a com-

sustainable city, and to break down the isolation between the outlying neighbourhoods and the historic centre.

Among the most audacious is de Portzamparc's plan, which proposes



Architect Christian de Portzamparc has proposed a new elevated maglev train that would run above the Paris périphérique.

demolishing both the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l'Est and replacing them with a single massive European train station just outside the city centre. The station would link to the Eurostar train lines to London and Brussels, as well as to a new elevated maglev train that would run above the périphérique. It would also anchor a towering new global business district, a rival to La Défense.

The aim of the study was twofold: to create a plan for a greener, more

Other plans are more poetic. Jean Nouvel proposes creating a green belt that would circle the entire city. All future construction would be concentrated inside this belt, adding density to what are now sprawling, isolated communities. New towers would punctuate some of the outlying boulevards, adding visual markers where there are none. The outer ring would become a sort of 620-mile-long community garden, with residents tending their plots along an endless string of parks and fields.

Source: The New York Times