

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

### 4th National Dance Festival

Organiser: Bangladesh Dance Artists' Association  
Venue: Plaza, National Art Gallery, BSA  
Date: April 23-29  
Time: 6pm



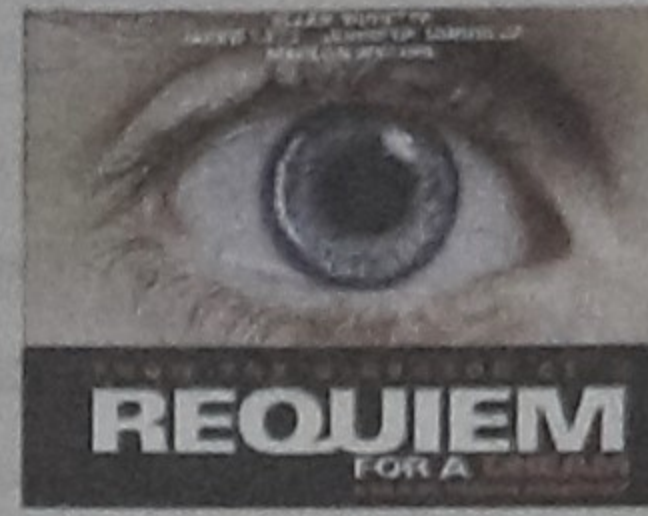
### Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Searching  
Artist: Nusrat Jahan Nazlee  
Venue: Radius Centre-Bay's Galleria, 5th Floor, 57, Gulshan Avenue  
Date: April 17- May 1



### Film Screening

70th World Film Manifestation Programme  
Organiser: Dhaka University Film Society  
Venue: Goethe Institut auditorium, H10, R9 Dhanmondi  
Date: May 10-11  
Time: 3pm onwards



### Folk Theatre Festival

Organiser: Dept of Theatre & Film, BSA  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA  
Date: April 23-29  
Time: 6:30 pm  
April 27  
Tajul Badsha (Manik Jatra)



## Twilight Rhythm

# Dance festival by Srishti Cultural Centre

NADIA SARWAT

Something was missing from the two larger than life replicas of dancing feet -- one donning an Indian classical costume and the other in a ballet outfit -- put at the corner of the stage. Prominent and promising dancers of the country put a pair of dancing bells on them, and the feet looked complete. This endearing gesture marked the inauguration of the two-day dance festival by Srishti Cultural Centre at the National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA).

Celebrating International Dance day, Srishti Cultural Centre organised the festival titled, "Twilight Rhythm," which started on April 25. The festival featured both classical and modern dance pieces by different groups.

Anisul Islam Hero, director of Srishti Cultural Centre welcomed the audience. Founded in 1994, Srishti Cultural Centre has carved a niche both in the local and international dance circuits. With a strong social commitment, the organisation strives to generate awareness in social issues, using dance as a medium. Noted dance artiste Shibli Mohammad read out the chief guest's message on behalf of ITI President Ramendu Majumder, who could not attend the event. Dance artistes Golam Sarwar, Laila Hasan and Kajol Ibrahim also spoke at the event.

The event started with three dance performances by artistes of Srishti Cultural Centre. First was a fusion piece titled "Utpatti," where three dance forms mingled. Next was a brief performance, highlighting one of the basic human emotions -- envy. Different shades of expressions -- ranging from jealousy, alienation, frustration and pain -- caused by envy were enacted.

The last number focused on the colours of nature. While some artistes performed in basic colours of red, yellow and green, in the course of the dance, a new shade emerged from within, represented by artistes in costumes of the respective colours. At the end, the stage was shimmering with bright colours and the performance was received with rounds of applause from the audience.

Next on stage were artistes of Nrityanchal, presenting a group Kathak dance. Titled "Reflection," the performance was directed by Shibli Mohammad. Three pairs of dancers performed in the composition, one mirroring the other's movements. With the growing tempo, the two images assimilated. Shibli Mohammad changed the usual turns of the Kathak, which gave the perfor-



mance a new dimension.

Srishti took the stage once again with a performance "Pushpanjali," which refers to the offering made prior to classical dance.

Directed by Tamanna Rahman, "Jugalbandi," a performance featuring two major dance forms -- Orissi and Manipuri -- was next. Tamanna Rahman performed Orissi and Subrata Das presented Manipuri.

Jaago Art centre, headed by Belayet Hossain Khan, Rewaz, led by Munmun Ahmed; Nrityam; Chhayana and Benazir Salam's group, among others, entertained the audience with their performances on the first day of the festival. Abbas Uddin Academy, Shikhar, Nataraj, BAFA, Nrityanchal, Srishti Cultural Centre and others performed on the closing day.



PHOTO: MUMIT M

The festival featured both classical and modern dance pieces by different groups.



PHOTOS: MUMIT M

On the second and third day of the ongoing Folk Theatre Festival at the Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA, "Behular Nachari" by a troupe from Haripur Betduba, Tangail, and "Nouka Bilash" by the troupe Pagal Bhai-er Astak Dal, Narail were staged respectively. A form of "Manasha Mangal," "Behular Nachari" (top) is a powerful art form consisting music and dance; artistes often get into a trance while performing. In the photo, one of the performers is carrying a real snake. "Nouka Bilash" (bottom) is a localised adaptation of Baru Chandidas' "Sri Krishna Kirtan" through 'Astak Gaan.' A part of rituals, worshipping the Hindu god Shiva, 'Astak Gaan' is a tradition indigenous to the Narail district. The performing art form usually highlights the love between Radha and Krishna.



## In Memoriam

# Bea Arthur: A Golden Girl who'll always remain a friend

"Sassy" is the word that comes easiest to mind when describing an actress like Bea Arthur and the characters she played, most notably on "Maude" and "The Golden Girls." But sassy finally seems too small for Arthur, who died on April 25 of cancer at age 86. It connotes perkiness and feistiness; Arthur, on the other hand, exuded too much stature and presence to possess sassiness -- even to need it, really. Physically (at 59), in her husky voice and in her imperious stature, she was a daunting presence, and even her nimblest one-liners seemed to vibrate up from deep in the earth. Sassy? She ate sassy for breakfast.

That was what made Arthur so memorable and lovable in her two best-known TV roles. But what made her a great comic actress in them was that she was able to convey a flawed, human character firing those barbs from that silver tower. She barged into TV viewers' hearts zinging one-liners at Archie Bunker as his liberal cousin on "All in the Family." But spun off by Norman Lear onto her own show, she created a legendary character in her own right by showing Maude wrestling with serious issues for a TV sitcom -- alcoholism, drug abuse, and famously in 1972, abortion, as her character decided to terminate a pregnancy late in her 40s. (Even today, it's extremely rare for a TV female lead to make that choice.) What endeared Maude to TV buffs, beyond her quick wit, was the fact that she was a person with doubts, not just a paragon of liberal rectitude.

Arthur went on to "The Golden Girls" in the 1980s, becoming a fixture on a show that was a rare spotlight for senior actresses. But she had already broken ground in that respect, having become a TV star well into middle age. Her death today is not just a loss, but a reminder of how unfortu-

nately rare it is for TV and Hollywood in general to give meaty lead roles to older actresses.

Here's hoping her memory inspires older actresses after her -- and, more important, the producers who cast them and the executives who greenlight their shows. Endearing and mighty, Bea Arthur didn't just change TV. She kicked its sass.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

