

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Dance Drama

Title: Savitri by Aurobindo Anusilan Society
Organiser: High Commission of India, Dhaka and Indian Council for Cultural Relations
Venue: National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date and time: May 14 at 7pm



Tagore Birth Anniversary Celebration

Organiser: V Care
Venue: Ball Room, Dhaka Seraton Hotel
Date and time: May 11 at 7pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Urban Delight
Artist: Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (Old), Dhanmondi
Date: May 7-20
Time: 12-8 pm



Photography Exhibition

Title: The Story of Tea Workers
Photographer: Philip Gain
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15/A (new), Dhanmondi
Date: May 10-19
Time: 3-8pm



Jagoron celebrates Tagore

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Cultural organisation 'Jagoron Shangkriti Chorcha O Gobeshona Kendra' (JSCGK) held a two-day special event titled "Kobi Pronaam" at the Department of Dance of Music, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), celebrating the 148th birth anniversary of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, starting from May 8.

The event featured solo and group rendition of songs, dance, recitation and more. An exhibition on Tagore's paintings was also held as part of the celebration. A total of 20 reproductions of Tagore's paintings were put on display.

The two-day event featured performances by nearly 25 noted and emerging Tagore artistes. On May 8 the show started with a recitation of the Tagore poem, "Aji ei probhatey rabir kor" by Ahkamullah. A group performance of the Tagore number "Hey notun dekha dik aar baar" by Sur-er Dhara followed.

On the first day a total of 10 artistes -- Himadri Shekhor, Shoma Rani Roy, Mamun Zahid Khan, Chhaya Karmakar, Azizur Rahman Tuhin, Salma Akbar, Pijush Barua, Rezwana Chowdhury Bonnya, Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury and Papi Sarwar -- performed at the programme.

Ahkamullah and Dalia Ahmed presented recitation. Lively dance performances by Nrityam added to the attraction.

On the second day solo performances were staged by Mita Haque, Sajed Akbar, Laisa Ahmed Lisa, Fahim Hossain Chowdhury, Sharful Alam, Farhin Khan, Swati Sarkar, Ashim Dutta and others. Group performances were staged by Surtirtha and Jagoron. Laila Afroz and Belayet Hossain presented recitations and dance performances were staged by Nritya Nandan.

This was the first programme by Jagoron. The organisation was founded on April 2008. The event was supported by Step Media Ltd.



Mita Haque performs solo (top), Nrityam's ecstasy of dance.

PHOTO: SAIKAT MAJUMDAR



Homage Bob Marley: An Afro-centric, Rastafari superstar

*Africa unite;
'Cause we're moving right out of Babylon,
And we're going to our Father's land.
How good and how pleasant it would be before
God and man,
To see the unification of all Africans.*

-- Bob Marley

Consider the brilliant and evocative music Robert Bob Nesta Marley (1945-1981) gave the world; music that stretches back over nearly two decades and still remains relevant and universal. Marley has been hailed as "the first 'Third World' superstar," "Rasta Prophet," "visionary," "revolutionary artiste" and "Afrocentric." These accolades were not mere hyperbole.

During his over twenty years career, Marley's growing style encompassed every aspect in the rise of Jamaican music, from 'ska' to contemporary 'reggae.'

The Wailers' signing to Island Records in 1972 was a revolutionary move for a reggae band. Their first album, "Catch a Fire" that year was the start of a long climb to international fame and recognition of Marley, which continued till "Uprising" (1980).

In between "Catch a Fire" and "Uprising," Marley and the Wailers released seven more studio albums -- "Burnin'," "Rasta Revolution," "Natty Dread," "Rastaman Vibration," "Exodus," "Kaya," and "Survival."

Most of his songs from these albums encompass mainly three aspects-- Rastafari philosophy, songs for the oppressed and love songs.

It's difficult to understand Marley's music appropriately without considering Rastafari -- a monotheistic religious movement that accepts the former emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie I (1892-1975) as the incarnation of God. It must be stated, however, that Rastafari is at the very core of Marley's music.

"Rastaman Vibration" (1976) was, for many, the clearest exposition of Marley's music and beliefs, including such tracks as "Crazy bald-head," "Johnny was," "Who the Cap Fit" and, perhaps most significantly of all, "War," the lyrics of which are derived from a speech made by emperor Haile Selassie before the United Nations General Assembly in 1963.

The lyric follows -- "Until the philosophy, which holds one race superior/And another inferior/Is finally and permanently/Discredited

and abandoned/Everywhere is war -- Me say war."

Marley referred Haile Selassie as "The Lion" in many of his songs.

"Exodus" (1977) established Marley as an international superstar. The album includes songs like "Exodus," "Waiting in vain," "Jamming," "Natural mystic" and one of his best love songs "Turn your lights down low."

"Exodus" has been recognised by music critics and scholars as one of the greatest albums of all time. In 1998, TIME magazine named "Exodus" the best musical album of the 20th century.

Two events in 1978 were significant to Marley. In April that year he returned to Jamaica after two-year exile in UK to play the One Love Peace Concert. And at the end of the year he visited Africa for the first time, going to Ethiopia, spiritual home of the Rastafari.

Following year Survival was released. The album depicted Marley's Afrocentrism through songs like "Africa Unite," "Zimbabwe" and "Survival." In the song Africa Unite, Marley proclaims Pan-African solidarity. The album's cover-jacket significantly depicts 47 flags of 47 African nations.

Marley again toured Africa in 1980 at the official initiation of the Government of Zimbabwe to play at that country's Independence Ceremony. It was one of the significant honours afforded the band, and one, which underlined Marley's importance in the Third World.

"Uprising" (1980) was Marley's final studio album, and is one of his most religious productions, including "Redemption song" and "Forever loving Jah." It was in "Redemption song" that Marley sang the famous lyric,

"Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery/None but ourselves can free our minds."

At the end of the European tour in 1980, the band went to America. Marley played two shows at Madison Square Garden but, immediately afterwards he became seriously ill. Cancer was diagnosed.

Marley fought the disease for eight months. The battle, however, proved to be too much. He died in a Miami Hospital on May 11, 1981.

"Confrontation," the last studio album, was released posthumously in 1983.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent



Tagore remembered in Barisal



The very young in celebration of the poet.

PHOTO: STAR

RAFIQUL ISLAM, Barisal

The 148th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was observed in Barisal last Friday with paying due homage to the great bard of Bengali literature.

Various educational institutions, socio-cultural organisations and Radio Bangladesh Barisal Centre chalked up interesting programmes to mark the day.

Kheyali Group Theatre at Abdul Khalek Auditorium and Mukto Bihanga Khelaghar Ashor at Mathuranath Public School in the city held daylong programmes which

included recitation of Tagore's poems, dance and songs along with staging of Tagore plays and discussions on the life and works of the poet.

Speakers at the programme said Tagore was a major talent of Bengal and would continue to inspire the future generations.

As they said, Tagore is a "lighthouse" for the Bengalis. Tagore's works, they went on to add, were dedicated to the worship of truth, beauty and the inculcation of human values. He was a source of inspiration for major peoples' movements, struggles and revolutions, apart from boosting the creativity of the Bengali nation.

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