

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Sculpture Exhibition

Title: Sensibility Objectified
Sculptor: Sarban Roy Chowdhury
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi
Date: June 26-July 5
Time: 12-8pm



5th Int'l Children's Art Biennale

Organiser: Bangladesh Shishu Academy
Venue: Auditorium of Bangladesh Shishu Academy
Date: June 21-July 5
Time: 11am-6pm



Fete de la Musique

Organiser: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka (AFD)
Venue: La Galerie, AFD, 28, Mirpur Rd, Dhanmondi
Date: June 21-July 2
Time: 6:30pm onwards



Film Screening

Organiser: Alamgir Kabir Film Centre
Venue: Alamgir Kabir Film Centre, 62, Science Laboratory Road
Films: Before the Rain (June 26), Gone With The Wind (June 27)
Time: 6pm



Fete de la Musique '09

'Bhawaiya' and 'ghazal' performances at Alliance Francaise



Shafiul Alam Raja (2-L) and his troupe Bhawaiya perform at Alliance Francaise, Dhaka on June 25.

PHOTO: STAR

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Alliance Francaise of Dhaka (AFD) in cooperation with Dhaka University, Classic Event Management and Gulshan Club is celebrating the Fete de la Musique, known as the World Music Festival in Bangladesh. On the fifth day (June 25) of the ongoing ten-day festival, folk musical troupe 'Bhawaiya' and 'ghazal' singer Mesbah Ahmed performed at the La Galerie, AFD, Dhanmondi.

Musical troupe Bhawaiya performed first. Led by aspiring 'bhawaiya' singer Shafiul Alam Raja, the troupe performed several songs.

A genre popular in the northern part of the country, bhawaiya is

believed to have originated in the greater Rangpur region. Lyrics are usually in the local dialect and highlight love and 'yearning to be united with the beloved.

Raja performed several songs at the programme, including "Dui kyane dakilu nisharaitey," "Bondhu ki diya bandhichhen tomar hiya" and "Orey urua-re," articulating the emotional attachment between lovers.

Under the tutelage of noted composer of the genre Nurul Islam Zahid, Raja has gradually become an accomplished singer. "Bhawaiya is my passion," said Raja, who also claimed that his mentor Nurul Islam has composed over 3,000 bhawaiya songs.

Later Raja performed a couple of

songs composed by his mentor, including "Na paiba mook thakaibar" and "Shonar moine-re." Bhawaiya songs may also be spiritual in theme. Raja concluded his performance with the bhawaiya anthem, "O ki garial bhai."

The second part of the evening featured solo performance of 'ghazal' by Mesbah Ahmed. Mesbah has devoted his passion to ghazals and is concentrating on pure music to satisfy the souls of ghazal lovers.

Since its inception in Bangladesh, Mesbah has been a regular performer at the Fete de la Musique. At the programme, Mesbah rendered some popular ghazals, including "Rang dey chunariya," "Main nashey me hu," "Hoshwaalon ko khabar kya" and "Chandni raat."

Tagore Theatre Festival ends with Debotar Grash

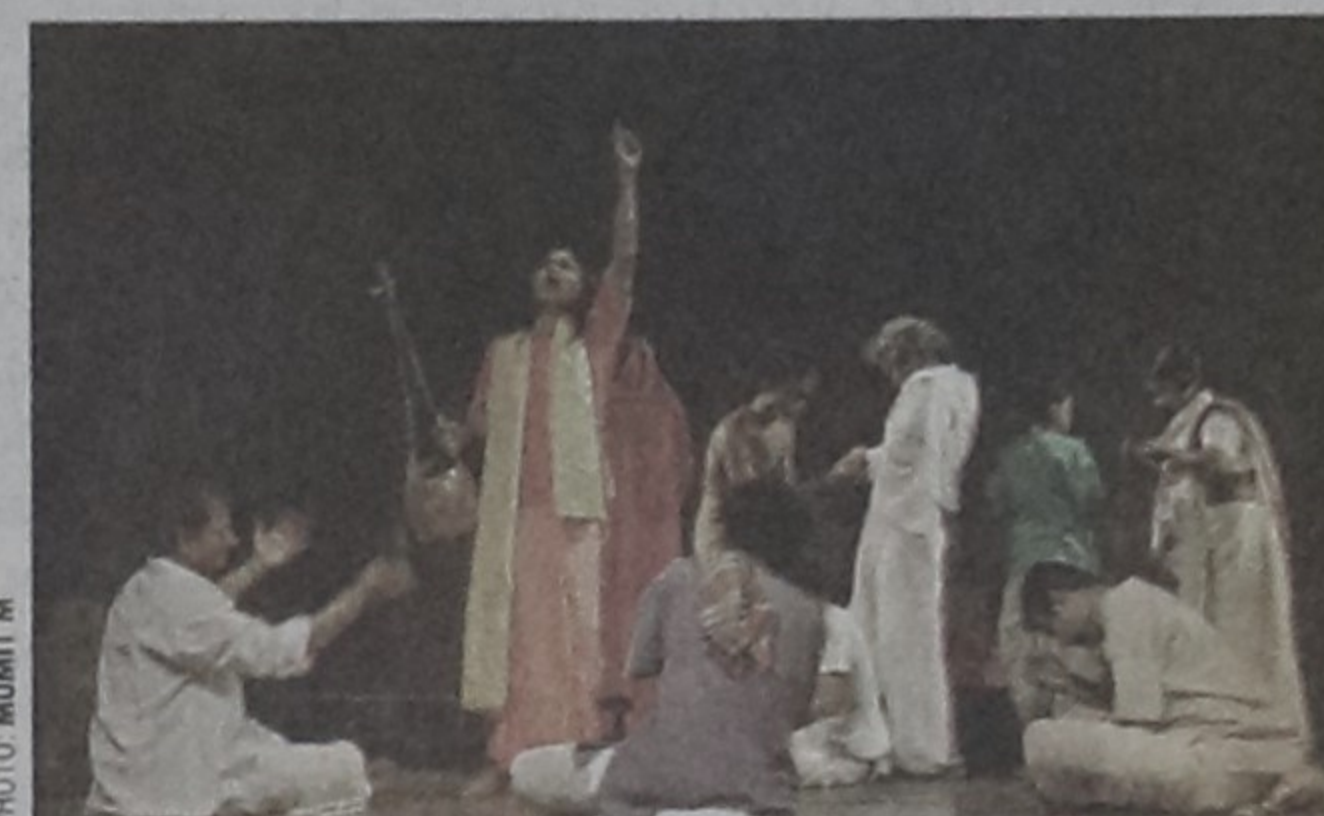
NADIA SARWAT

With "Debotar Grash," staged by Sanglaap Group Theatre, the six-day festival featuring Tagore plays ended on June 24 at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. The play was an adaptation of a poem with the same title by Rabindranath Tagore. Sanglaap Group Theatre organised the festival to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the troupe. The festival featured six plays by Tagore and adaptations of the Nobel laureate's works by troupes from Dhaka and outside.

Scripted by Majumdar Biplob and directed by Mostofa Hira, the play started with Moitra, an affluent man, preparing for a pilgrimage across the sea. A large number of people are included in his team. As the team gets set for the journey, a young widow, Mokkhoda, begs Moitra to

take her along. Moitra agrees, but points out that she has a child. Mokkhoda assures Moitra that her son, Rakhal, is very fond of his aunt Annada and can live with her. But young Rakhal is fascinated by the idea of a sea voyage, and refuses to get off the boat. Failing to control the persistent boy, Mokkhoda angrily utters, "well then, let me sacrifice you to the sea."

Upon return from the pilgrimage, the boat falls prey to a violent storm. As the situation gets worse, the pilgrims start to point fingers at Mokkhoda. The superstitious and self-centred passengers of the boat remind Mokkhoda that she had promised the sea god her son, and the god has raised the storm to make his claim. Mokkhoda protests, saying the god must understand it was not her real wish, those were meaningless words spoken out of anger. But to the pilgrims are only interested in saving their own



Actors of Sanglaap Group Theatre in "Debotar Grash," an adaptation of a poem by Tagore.

lives, even if it requires sacrificing a child to the sea. Humanity and logic is defeated by superstition, the play moves towards a tragic end.

While transforming the poetry into a play, several new characters and incidents elaborating the main plot have been created. Though it was a bit difficult to maintain the subtlety of Tagore's work through dialogues, the play

more or less managed to create an atmosphere depicted in the poem.

The cast included Habibur Rahman Habib, Hima Mridha Soma, Azmeri Sultana, Safia Arefin, Akhter Hossain Hira, SM Maniruzzaman, Imdadul Haque Anis and others. Young actor Sabbir Dewan Fahim as Rakhal was impressive. Junayed Yousuf did the set and light designs for the play.



In Memoriam

Farrah Fawcett (1947-2009): The Original Earthly Angel

Farrah Fawcett, an actress and television star whose good looks and signature flowing hairstyle influenced a generation of women and bewitched a generation of men, beginning with a celebrated pinup poster, died Thursday morning in Santa Monica, California. She was 62 and lived in West Los Angeles.

Her death, at St. John's Health Center, was caused by cancer, which she had been battling since 2006, said her spokesman, Paul Bloch.

To an extraordinary degree, Fawcett's cancer battle was played out in public, generating enormous interest worldwide. Her face, often showing the ravages of cancer, became a tabloid fixture, and updates on her health became staples of television entertainment news.

In May, that battle was chronicled in a prime-time NBC documentary, "Farrah's Story," some of it shot with her own home video recorder. An estimated nine million people viewed it. Fawcett had initiated the project with a friend.

Fawcett's career was a patchwork of positives and negatives, fine dramatic performances on television and stage as well as missed opportunities.

She first became famous when a poster of her in a red bathing suit, leonine mane

flying, sold more than twice as many copies as posters of Marilyn Monroe and Betty Grable combined. No poster like it has achieved anywhere near its popularity since, and, arriving before the Internet era, in which the most widely disseminated images are now digital, it may have been the last of its kind.

Fawcett won praise for her

"Charlie's Angels," in which she played Jill Munroe, one of three beautiful women employed as private detectives by an unseen male boss who (in the voice of John Forsythe) issued directives and patronising praise over a speaker phone. Her pinup fame had led the producers to cast her.

Fawcett and her fellow

outfits or provocative situations.

"Charlie's Angels," created and produced by Aaron Spelling and Leonard Goldberg for ABC, was a phenomenon, finishing the 1976-77 season as the No. 5 network show, the highest-rated television debut in history at that time.

Fawcett was its breakout star. Although she left the show after one season and returned only sporadically thereafter, the show's influence -- among other things, it inspired two much later feature films starring Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore and Lucy Liu -- was so indelible that she was forever associated with it.

Fawcett acknowledged that her sex symbol status was a mixed blessing. It made her famous, but it often obscured the acting talent that brought her three Emmy nominations, most notably for "The Burning Bed," a critically acclaimed movie about domestic violence.

"I don't think an actor ever wants to establish an image," she said in an interview with The New York Times in 1986. "That certainly hurt me, and yet that is also what made me successful and eventually able to do more challenging roles. That's life. Everything has positive and negative consequences."

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

Theatre production for children staged at Geneva Camp

"Amader Katha," a theatre production featuring underprivileged children, was recently staged at the Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur, according to a press release.

The play, produced by Geneva Camp Shishu Natyadal, narrates the struggle of a group of children and zooms in on their dreams. Abuse and exploitation from their employers at the workplace, as well as mistreatment

from family members, form the central theme of the play.

Shamim Ahmed Shanto is the director of the play. Roshni, Saibi, Dulari, Rukhsar and Shabnaz played the central characters.

Apart from "Amader Katha," productions of People's Repertory Theatre -- "Clown Show" and "Shong Natok" -- were also staged at the venue. Regenerative Action for

Kaleidoscopic Human Activity and Learning (RAKHAL) organised of the programme. Executive director of RAKHAL and newly elected chairman of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation, Liaquat Ali Lucky, among others, was present at the event.

RAKHAL has been working with underprivileged children over the last five years.

Rath Festival begins in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The nine-day traditional 'Rath Utsab' began amidst much fervour and religious spirit last Wednesday in Pabna. Pabna Deputy Commissioner Dr. AFM Monjur Kadir inaugurated the festival at Radhanagar Rathghar premises. A programme was held at Radhanagar Barwari Kali temple on the occasion.

Among others, Jayanta Kumar Das, president of Rath Festival; Badal Chandra Ghosh, president of Pabna Sadar Upazila Unit Puja Uddjapan Parishad; Sunil Sarkar, president of Barwari Kali temple and Goutam Das, secretary of the temple, spoke on the occasion. Speakers focused the thousand-year-old heritage of Rath festival.

They also urged all to maintain communal harmony. After the inauguration, devotees take the 'Rath'



Devotees bring out a 'Rath Jatra' in Pabna town.

PHOTO: STAR

(chariot) around the district headquarter. The fair was held in front of the Pabna Jaikali Bari temple.

Meanwhile another Rath festival began at Chatmohar Upazila. The 'Rath Jatra'

started from Handial temple on Wednesday afternoon. A huge Rath fair was organised at Chatmohar marking the occasion.

"Rath fair is a part of our tradition. It also signifies the

harmony between local communities. The largest fair is organised marking the Rath festival," said Binoy Jyoti Kundu, secretary of district Puja Uddjapan Parishad.