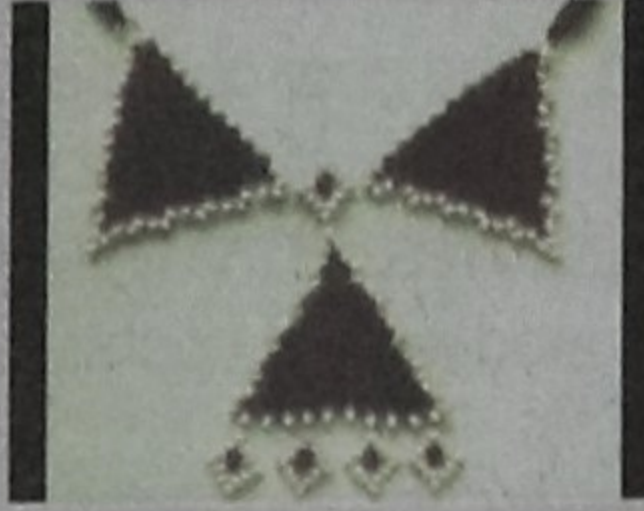


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Theatre
Play: Kolna
Troupe: Prachyanat
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: September 13
Time: 8pm



Solo Crafts Exhibition
Artist: Mahmud-un-Nabi
Venue: Zainul Gallery-1, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU
Date: September 1-7
Time: 12-8pm



Theatre
Play: Raarang
Troupe: Aranyak
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: September 11
Time: 8pm



Iranian Film Festival
Film: Gabbeh
Director: Mohsen Makhmalbaf
Venue: Alamgir Kabir Film Centre, 62 Science Laboratory Road
Date: September 11
Time: 5pm



In Focus

Traditions and heritage of the Garos on the wane



Garos performers with traditional musical instruments at a Wana celebration.

PHOTO: STAR

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

The Garos, a large indigenous community from Mymensingh region, are fast losing their age-old tradition and culture for a variety of reasons. The Mymensingh region, once well-known for its ethnic diversity, and harmony among the people of different faiths and cultures

has lost its rich legacy over the years. Among the indigenous groups living in this region - Garo, Dhalu, Cooch, Khatriya and Hajong form the majority. The Garos are the leading community in these ranks and have their homes in Haluaghat and Dhobaura, frontier upzilas of Mymensingh and Madhupur of Tangail, each with varied traditions. Currently there are

some 40,000 Garos living in the Haluaghat and Dhobaura area but this number is on the wane. There was a time when the Garos used to arrange a variety of traditional festivals: among them 'Wangala' or 'Wanna', a festival celebrating the harvesting in Agrahayan; 'Rangshugala' on the occasion of sowing grains in Falgun and Chaitra; a festival

on the occasion of 'Jhum' in Chaitra and 'Habaghrita' at Baishakh. Why is indigenous culture on the decline? Observers ascribe a variety of reasons: the major factor being the Garo's mass conversion to Christianity. Moreover, the younger generation is lukewarm to the traditional Garo culture, putting its future in jeopardy.

The Adibashi Shangkritik Kendra, the only cultural organisation for the Garos in Rangrapara, Haluaghat, is about to down shutters, sources say. Likewise they add, other cultural centres at Biroidhakuni, Bhakua Para, Ranikhang in Mymensingh and Nalchakra in Netrokona are not functional.

Talking to this correspondent, Adolf Marak, an NGO official, also a former member of Birishiri Cultural Academy in Netrokona the Garos have turned indifferent to their ancestral culture. As a result, young Garos are more inclined towards contemporary western and Bengali cultures. "Since advocate Promod Mankin, MP from Haluaghat, a representative of the indigenous people has been appointed as the State Minister for Cultural Affairs, we hope that necessary steps will be taken to revive this traditional culture that is in danger of being lost forever," adds Adolf.

Sulekha Mrong, vice-president of Achik Mechik Society (A society for hill women) at Pirgachha in Madhupur of Tangail told this correspondent that pressing financial difficulties have compelled the poorer Garo people to migrate to different places and such migration has torn them away from their immensely rich culture. "We need to revive our culture to identify us as Garos and for the betterment of future generations," Sulekha concludes.

Bappa, Arnob, Fuad and Sumon come together for latest album



Artistes and guests at the album launch.

PHOTO: NELOY HOSSAIN

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On the occasion of Eid ul Fitr, Agniweena, (a sister concern of G-Series) has released the album "Bappa with the Rockers". The exclusive studio album brought together four of the most talented and popular musicians -- Bappa Majumder, "Bassbaba" Sumon, Fuad al Muqtadir, Arnob -- and winner of the first "D-Rockstar" contest Shuvo. The album promises something for everyone.

The album was launched at a city hotel recently, and saw a big turnout of renowned musicians, composers and singers. Among others, Fahmida Nabi, Milla, Milon Mahmud, Topu and Jahan (of Black) attended the event and expressed their best wishes for the album's success.

Talking about the album, Bappa Majumder said, "We had plans to bring out an album together for a long time. We often get together at adda. It feels great to be able to turn that plan into reality."

"Work on the album began in June and all along we planned to release it around Eid, as we wanted to give our fans something special," he added.

"The experience was unique, as my co-artists -- Fuad, Arnob and Sumon -- are all accomplished musicians," Bappa

smilingly said.

Sumon echoed the same view. To quote him, "It has been a real pleasure working together with these guys. Credit goes to Bappa bhai who has done a great job with the compositions. When he played the demo to us, we were all interested. It was just perfect."

The album contains two songs -- "Ghorir kata" and "Amar shathey chol" recorded by Fuad.

"When Bappa bhai approached me regarding the album, I was a little nervous, as I'm more accustomed to composing rather than singing. Thanks to him, his wonderful compositions and the team's everything went smoothly," said Fuad.

Other songs in the album are -- "Olot palot" and "Bhalo lagena" by Sumon; "Tomaye dekhey," "Hoyto ami" by Arnob; "Bhanga gora," "Chaichho jokhon" by Bappa and "Khunshuti," "Bhuljanalaye" by Shuvo.

"Bappa bhai has effectively blended several genres -- mellow rock, pop and so on. Quality of the production is very good. Fans will hopefully like it," said Fuad.

"Most of the songs featured in the album are acoustic-based, so the listener should get a real taste of music," said Bappa.

Brac Bank Limited is the sponsor of the album.

BBC Bangladesh Sanglap on Channel i tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Channel-i will telecast "BBC Bangladesh Sanglap" tonight at 8:00 pm. The programme has been recorded at Bangabandhu International Convention Centre on 5 September.

Prime Minister's Adviser on health and family welfare and noted eye specialist Syed Mudassar Ali, BNP leader and former State

Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon, Professor of Economics of Dhaka University M.M. Akash and President of Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry Selima Ahmed were present as panelists at the programme.

Anchored by Mithila Farzana, the programme is produced by Waliur Rahman Miraz.



Participants and the moderator of tonight's episode of the programme.

66th Venice Film Festival

Herzog screens 2 Golden Lion contenders

AP, Venice

For four decades, no Werner Herzog film was accepted for competition at the Venice Film Festival. This year, there are two.

After the festival accepted "Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans," which premiered last Friday, Herzog said he mentioned as an aside another film ready: "My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done."

Festival director Marco Mueller "was completely enthusiastic about it and said 'I need this film as well.'" Herzog said Saturday. "No festival this size will be so demented as to show two films of one man in competition. If you are going so wild, if you have such a wonderful wild life in you, yes, I accept."

Herzog is doing them one better even, showing his four-minute short film "La Boheme" -- a truncated version of Puccini's classic opera set in Ethiopia.

"My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done" -- which was announced as a surprise competition entry on Friday -- is a golden example of life imitating ancient Greek tragedy and becoming art.

Produced by David Lynch, the film is based on the true story of a southern California actor who kills his mother.



US actors Nicolas Cage and Eva Mendes arrive with German director Werner Herzog for the screening of the film "Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call New Orleans" at the 66th Venice Film Festival on September 4, 2009.

And proving life can be stranger than fiction, Herzog said the real-life actor was known in some circles for playing the role of Orestes, who in the Greek tragedy kills his mother.

Herzog said that, when he decided to do the film, he visited the man after his release from a mental institution, where he had lived 8 1/2 years after being declared unfit to stand trial.

"From a distance, I could tell he was still kind of dangerous, still really insane," Herzog said. He recalled finding in the actor's small trailer

home a poster of Herzog himself with a crucifix over it and a candle beneath. "After that meeting, I never contacted him again."

Michael Shannon stars as Brad Maccallum, an aspiring actor who lives with his mother in a house that is best described as a temple to flamingos, or as Brad calls the long-legged pink birds: "eagles in drag." Despite his apparent devotion to his mother, the idea of murder lurks.

Herzog cast Shannon before he won the Oscar nomination for

another mentally disturbed character in "Revolutionary Road," and said had no idea the actor had a history of playing offbeat roles, including a man convinced he has been infected with insects in "Bug."

Shannon said he liked that Herzog didn't try to explain his character's behaviour.

"Werner took things from such a more mysterious and complicated perspective," Shannon said. "It is not about why did this gentleman kill his mother...how does the subconscious work, and what leads us down these dark passages."

The movie, also starring Willem Dafoe as a homicide detective, was shot on location in San Diego, California, where the actual murder took place, as well as in Peru, the site of Herzog's 1982 film "Fitzcarraldo" and where Brad goes on a fateful white-water rafting trip, and in Calgary, Canada, and western China.

Herzog said he and Lynch teamed up for the film, despite their different directorial styles, after finding shared outrage over exploding production costs.

"And I said, like a manifesto, we should make films that cost only \$2 million. But we will work with the best of the best of actors," Herzog said.

The Venice Film Festival closes September 12, with the awarding of the Golden Lion.

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