

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Shudurer Mita
Artist: Mustaque Ahmed
Venue: Gallery Chittrak, H 21, Rd 4, Dhanmondi
Date: October 23-November 5
Time: 10am-8pm



Solo Painting Exhibition

Artist: Mustafa Khalid Palash
Venue: Asiatic Art Gallery, Nimtoli, Ramna
Date: October 23
Time: 10am-8pm



Theatre Festival

Title: Dhaka Natyashab '09
Organiser: Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation
Venue: Zahir Raihan Cultural Centre, Shufapur
Date: October 15-31
Time: 7pm everyday



Architecture Week

Venue: Open Sky Gallery, North South University, Basundhara Campus
Date: October 17-22



In Memoriam

Probal Chowdhury: Singing of Liberation



FILE PHOTO

Probal Chowdhury

NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR, Chittagong

Renowned vocalist and artiste of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra Probal Chowdhury passed away in the early hours of last Saturday. His demise cast a pall of gloom in the port city as well as across the country. Family members and admirers expect the state to give due honour to Probal as well as support artistes during their lifetime.

Probal's songs will live on in the minds of his huge audience. Among his memorable songs are: "Bhebonago ma tomar chhela hariye giyeche," "Jiboner eki porajoy ashar boshoti bhengey jaye," "Lokey jodi mondo koy sheto nohey porajoy," "Ami manusher moto banchte cheyechhi," "Amar

shajano bashar" and "Dhanyo hoyechhi ami dhanyo."

"The government hardly takes responsibility or extends a helping hand to artistes during their times of crisis in our country," Probal's son Dr Ranjan Chowdhury quoted his father.

Ranjan said, "We expect proper evaluation of the artistes when they are alive. The state should honour and support artistes like my father, who as a singer of the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, is entitled to the state honour accorded to freedom fighters."

"Our television channels focus on a few artistes repeatedly while a number of talented artistes of those days escape attention," said Probal's elder sister Kalyani Ghosh, as she recalled the golden days

when she sang along with her brother from the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra in 1971.

Probal Chowdhury, one of the notable singers of the '70s, was born on May 20, 1947 at Rahmatganj in Chittagong and was sixth among the five sons and five daughters of Manmohan and Lilabati Chowdhury.

Growing up in a cultural atmosphere, Probal and three of his sisters became a vibrant presence in the port city's cultural arena. Probal's younger sisters Uma Khan and Purnima Chowdhury also earned a reputation as singers. Lilabati Chowdhury, who was also a good singer, was a constant source of encouragement to her children.

Probal retired as an assistant manager of Bangladesh Chemical

Industries Corporation in Chittagong in 2004. However, all through he kept in touch with music and raised his offspring to follow the same path.

Probal's sons Tapas Chowdhury and Dr Ranjan Chowdhury, a trader and doctor respectively, are also accomplished singers.

Probal's song was aired on the radio first in 1966. He had been an artiste of special grade at Bangladesh Betar (radio) until his death, recalled his sister Kalyani Ghosh.

Inspired by artiste Abdul Jabbar, Probal sang for Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra for the first time in June 1971. Probal also excelled in patriotic songs, *gano sangeet*, *ghazal* and *Rabindra Sangeet* and earned a name as a composer and music director as well, she asserted.

Probal enthralled audiences of Voice of America and Akashbani Calcutta and visited several countries including the UK with a cultural team representing the country on several occasions.

He received several awards for his songs in the country and abroad. The awards included The New York Drum Society Award (1984), The Asian Cultural Academy Award (1987), Zia Smriti Award (1988), Muktiyoddha Sangsad Award (1989), Amader Pathshala Award (2004) and Abasar Shilpi Sammanana (2007).

Probal sang around 7,000 songs and lent his voice for over 50 films in his lifetime. He sang in 10 audio albums, including five solos.

Right from his childhood, he showed a penchant for music, said family sources, who added that he took first singing lesson from his mother Lilabati and later, from the late Nripen Chowdhury, late Mohonlal Das, Mihir Nandi, sister Kalyani Ghosh, Anwar Chowdhury and other renowned musicians.

New reality show channels the Other Side

Nokia presents "Uttaradhikar"



PHOTO: NELOY HOSSAIN

Celebrities participating in the reality show.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

As a treat for the TV viewers nationwide, Nokia is introducing a brand new reality show "Uttaradhikar," from November 5. The show will be aired on Channel i every Monday and Thursday at 9:35 pm.

Curtain raiser of the show was held at a city hotel on October 18. Nowfel Anower, head of marketing, Nokia Emerging Asia; Aly Zaker, managing director, Asiatic JWT and Prem Chand, general manager, Nokia Emerging Asia were present at the event. Amitabh Reza, is production director of the show. His organisation Half Stop Down is the production partner of the event.

For the show, 10 celebrities have been selected -- actors Shimul, Shahriar Nazim Joy, Ilora Gawhar, Tushar Khan, Shimla, Shanu, Lara Lotus; models Immi, Fardin Khan and vocalist of the band Black, Jon. They will go to a zamindar estate in Tangail and spend the two months of winter there.

The plot: The Zamindar, who owned the state, died without leaving an heir. Every winter his spirit descends on the property in search of an heir.

"This is a completely new idea and should be

a groundbreaking show," said Nowfel Anower.

Speaking on the occasion, Aly Zaker said, "I'm optimistic that the TV audience will find this new concept intriguing."

Drawing attention to the participating celebrities, Aly Zaker said, "I hope that the contestants will keep the show exciting till the last episode."

Asiatic is the creative partner of Nokia in the venture.

On the show the celebrities will be given day-to-day tasks: games and challenges set by the 'spirit' of the Zamindar. Contestants will be eliminated as the show progresses forward, based on challenges. The winner of the show will receive a grand prize and the title of 'Uttaradhikar,' the heir to the Zamindar.

About the contest, Shimul said, "It's an incredible story -- the kind we all heard as kids, involving kings and zamindars. I'm very excited about being a part of the programme."

Ilora Gawhar said, "It's going to be an adventure for all of us."

Immi added, "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Who doesn't want to be a Zamindar?"

Jon said, "Well the adrenaline rush would be there of course and I hope that the audience will find the show thrilling."

Movie Watch

"Where the Wild Things Are": A movie for the wild child in everyone



A scene from the film.

The terrific, captivating film of Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are" is unique among movies from children's stories. It's thoughtful, intimate and not just imaginative but also respectful of imagination. Most importantly, this shaggily charming movie knows that kids' oversized emotions are just as gripping as their wildness.

Even when playing on his own, nine-year-old Max (played by newcomer Max Records) causes quite a rumpus. After his older sister's pals smash his snow fort while his single mother (Catherine Keener) ignores him in favour of work and a new boyfriend, Max acts out, biting his mom and running away in his full-body wolf costume.

At a water's edge, he finds a boat that takes him to a mysterious island where he befriends seven giant creatures who make him their king and embody all sides of Max, though in freaky, furry form: Alexander (voiced by Paul Dano) is constantly left out; Judith (velvet-toned Catherine O'Hara) is bossy; KW (whispery Lauren Ambrose) is loving yet needy. And then there's unpredictable Carol (James Gandolfini, sounding like he has a stuffy nose), who becomes like Max's ego, the wild thing's wild thing.

But controlling these monsters, and keeping them free from hurt feelings, is a lot for a boy in a wolf

suit. Especially when his kingliness is fake, while the damage they and he can do is very real.

And, speaking of real: One can't take your eyes off the wild things. Though at first they resemble H.R. Pufnstuf, the sophisticated puppetry that gives them scruffy, surreal life -- there's minimal CGI used here -- makes them feel tactile and genuine. The voice performances, especially from Gandolfini and O'Hara, are pitch-perfect, as is the tribal score from Carter Burwell and Karen O.

If the script, from director Spike Jonze and novelist Dave Eggers, stumbles in its last third, it's because most of it so elegantly expands upon Sendak's 1963 classic. This could easily have been "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" or "The Cat in the Hat" had great care not been taken.

Jonze ("Being John Malkovich," "Adaptation") has said he wanted to make a movie about childhood, not a children's movie, and so viewers under 6 may leave a bit more sad than ecstatic, and parents should be aware there's no Glinda or Willy Wonka around to grant wishes. The conflicts Max and the wild things face are mostly left unresolved. But that's fine, because the film treats kids' inner lives as more than a fantasy, which is a rare and beautiful thing.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent.

Painting competition on Selim Al Deen

Ibsen Theatre Festival to begin on November 12

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

A painting competition featuring artworks on the late theatre icon Selim Al Deen would be one of the highlights of the upcoming International Ibsen Seminar and Theatre Festival 2009. Organised by Centre for Asian Theatre (CAT), the festival will be held from November 12 to 22.

At a press conference, held yesterday at the National Press Club, the organisers informed on the festival and the painting competition. Professor Abdul Mannan, president, CAT; Professor Shafi Ahmed, coordinator, Ibsen Theatre Festival 2009; theatre personality Nasiruddin Yousuff and Professor Afsar Ahmed, among others, spoke at the conference.



PHOTO: NELOY HOSSAIN

Embassy of Japan in association with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) held a show of "Eksho Bosta Chal" at National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy recently. The play was staged on the occasion of Japan Trade Fair 2009 held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. Written by Yuzo Yamamoto, the play was translated in Bangla by noted translator and theatre personality Abdus Selim. "Eksho Bosta Chal" is set against the backdrop of the transitional period from 'Shogunate' era to the 'Meiji' resurrection. The play presents a chaotic scenario of the post 'Boshin War' (1868-69) Japan, where the legendary warriors, popularly known as 'Samurai,' had to constantly struggle for a dignified existence. The play ends on an optimistic note, with the message that people can keep alive a dream under even the harshest of circumstances. "Eksho Bosta Chal" won the Uchimura Prize conferred by International Theatre Institute, Japan. The production was directed by Golam Sarwar.