

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

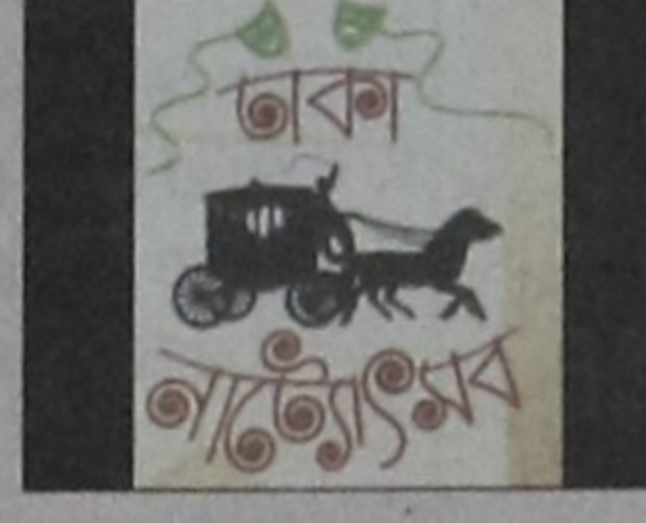
**Theatre Festival**  
Organiser: Aranyak  
Venue: Natyadal  
Venue: Shilpakala Academy, Shagunbagicha  
Date: October 22-25  
Time: 7pm everyday  
Today: Ebong Bidyasagar



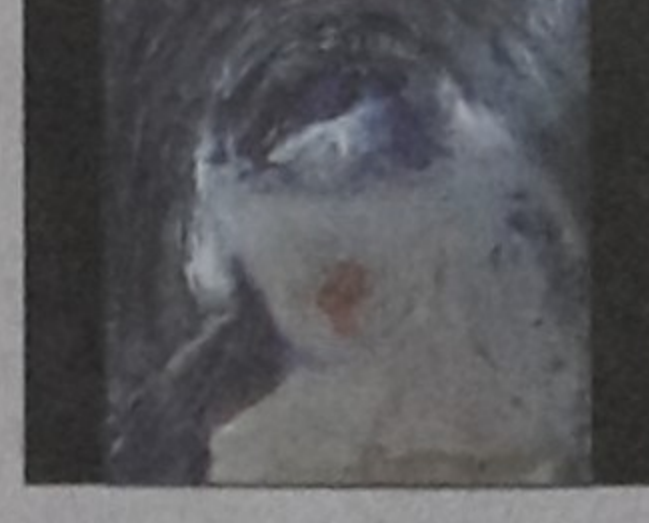
**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
Artist: Mustapha Khalid  
Palash  
Venue: Asiatic Art Gallery, Nimtoli, Ramna  
Date: October 23 - November 22  
Time: 10am-8pm



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



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Title: Shudurer Mita  
Artist: Mustake Ahmed  
Venue: Gallery Chitrak, H 21, Rd 4, Dhanmondi  
Date: October 23-November 5  
Time: 10am-8pm



## The lure of bansuri

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia performs at Dhaka Club

KARIM WAHEED

According to mythology, 'bansuri' (South Asian transverse alto flute) is intimately linked to the love story of Krishna and Radha. Legends narrate how the tunes of bansuri would drive the women of Braj into a frenzy.

For eons bansuri has been very popular in folk music. Its introduction in Indian classical music has been rather recent, however, and the late Pandit Pannalal Ghosh has been widely recognised for this achievement.

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia further enhanced the bansuri playing style with his innovative techniques and gave the instrument a higher status.

The Indian master musician performed live at Dhaka Club on October 23. In association with the event management group Web Entertainment Ltd, Dhaka Club organised the programme.

The President of Dhaka Club Ltd, Sadat Hossain Salim, said, "Dhaka Club strongly believes in providing patronage to classical music. Renowned artistes of the sub-continent like Mehdi Hassan, Hemanta Mukhopadhyay, Ustad Ghulam Ali and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan have performed here. Continuing with that tradition, Dhaka Club invited Pandit Chaurasia to grace us with his music."

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia was born in Allahabad, India, in 1938. Chaurasia surprisingly does not come from a long lineage of flutists. His father was a famous wrestler who had aspirations of his son following in his footsteps. Chaurasia has said that he takes advantage of his wrestling training as it gives him immense stamina and lung power that are the hallmarks



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Chaurasia developed a style that is respectful of tradition, yet demonstrates innovation. of his flute playing.

When he was just 19, he got a job playing for All India Radio, Cuttack, Orissa, and within five years he was transferred to their headquarters in Bombay (now Mumbai). There he got the additional

exposure of performing in one of India's cultural centres and also studied with Annapurna Devi, daughter of Ustad Allaaddin Khan.

There he established the creative peak of his career, developing a style that was

respectful of tradition, yet demonstrated innovation. In 1992, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan and in 2000, the Padma Vibhushan. Chaurasia has also composed music for a number of Indian films and has performed

throughout the world along with renowned musicians, including Yehudi Menuhin and Jean Pierre Rampal. Currently he heads the World Music Department at the Rotterdam Music Conservatory.

As the Pandit began around 9:30 pm, the hustle and bustle of the busy Shahbagh intersection -- in particular, the honking buses -- was clearly a nuisance. Chaurasia's bansuri was potent enough to take flute enthusiasts to another realm. However, the relentless ringing of cell phones and people in the audience chatting during the performance were absolutely regrettable. It's an affront to an artiste of Chaurasia's stature as well as those who went there to enjoy a superlative act.

Starting with Raaga Bageshri (usually played late at night, articulating the emotion of a woman waiting to be reunited with her beloved), the Pandit continued with dhrupad, Raaga Misra and more. Duration of each composition was approximately 15 minutes. A reputed classical musician is capable of playing one raaga throughout the whole night, but as it can be assumed, the Pandit chose to give the audience samples of the compositions.

The highlight of the performance was the versatility of bansuri. It easily produces all basic elements of Hindustani music, such as 'meend' (glide) and 'gamak' (variation of pitch). Bansuri is a simple instrument. Unlike string instruments, it does not need constant tuning.

However, as Pandit Chaurasia puts it, "it is Krishna's instrument and the Lord has made it deceptively simple."

## Bonhishikha's tribute to S.D. Burman

Two-day music festival at Public Library

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

As a homage to Sachin Dev Burman, cultural organisation 'Bonhishikha' held a two-day 'Sangeet Utshab' (music festival) at Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium, Central Public Library. Artistes from Bangladesh and Tripura, India performed songs of Burman at the event. The Tripura team was led by Goutam Das.

S.D Burman was one of the most celebrated music composers in the subcontinent. His compositions used in both Bengali and Hindi films are considered classics.

The festival started on October 23. Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister for Foreign Affairs, was the chief guest at the programme. Promod Mankin, State Minister for Cultural Affairs; Nasiruddin Yousuff, president, Shammilito Shangkritik Jote (SSJ); Golam Kuddus, general secretary, SSJ and president of Bonhishikha; Rupu Khan, general secretary, Bonhishikha and others were present at the event.

The programme started with Dr. Dipu Moni and other distinguished guests lighting the 'mangal pradeep'.

A short discussion on S.D. Burman -- highlighting his life and achievements -- followed.

The cultural programme began with a dance performance by artistes of 'Spondon' to the song 'Takdam takdam bajai Bangladesh-er dhol'. The perfor-



PHOTO: NELOY HOSSAIN

Dignitaries at the inauguration of the music festival.

mance was choreographed by Anik Basu.

The first day's programme highlighted performances by artistes from Tripura. The Tripura cultural team opened their performance with a colourful dance to the song 'Nitol paye rinik jhinik'. The group also staged two performances with songs 'Biroho boro bhalo lagey' and 'Shono go dokhin hawa'. The performances were choreographed by Chinmoy Das.

Solo performances were staged by Dr. Uttam Saha, Aparna Chowdhury, Rakesh Kishore Dev Burman (a member of the Burman family) and Shubaprasad Dhar.

Dr. Uttam Saha performed 'Banshi shuney ar kaaj nai'. Aparna Chowdhury rendered 'Nishithey jaiyo phoolo boney', "Borney gondhey chhondey geetitey" and a folk composition by Burman, "Ke jashrey bhatigun baiya". Rakesh Kishore Dev

Burman sang "Shubolrey bol", "Ghatey lagaiya dinga", "O majhi rey" and "Wahan kaun hai tera" from the blockbuster "Guide" (1965).

The last artiste to perform was Shibaprasad Dhar. He performed "Gaan-er koli", "Kalo shapey dangshey amaye" and "Puchhona kaise maine rayen bitayi" (inspired by the tune of the Nazrul Sangeet "Arunkanti kego jogi bhikhari").

The first day's programme ended the dancers of the visiting group performing to a medley of Tagore songs.

On the closing day (yesterday), the programme featured performances by Kiran Chandra Roy, Bipul Bhattacharya, Rupu Khan, Tansen Khan and others.

This was the first 'Sachin Dev Burman Sangeet Utshab' held in Bangladesh. The event was sponsored by The Hamdard Laboratories Bangladesh. Desh TV was the media partner of the event.

## A new venue for art lovers

Cosmos-Atelier 71 opens its doors



PHOTO: NELOY HOSSAIN

The first day's programme included the opening of a printmaking studio.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On October 23, a graphic art studio 'Cosmos-Atelier 71' was formally opened at Cosmos Centre, Malibagh in the city. The studio has been specially designed for printmaking. The studio is open to all. Print machines are rare in Dhaka. Promising printmakers had been eagerly waiting for this opportunity. Various prints that are popular among Bangladeshi artists are etching, aquatint, litho, lino, silk print, wood engraving, macho print etc.

Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, G.M. Quader was present as the special guest at the inauguration of the studio. Quader said, "It is a good sign to have an art studio at a business centre."

Economic Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister, Dr. Mashur Rahman; senior adviser of Asian Cultural Council in New York, Ralph Samuelson and former member of the parliament, Anjuman Ara Jamil were present as guests of honour.

Dr. Mashur Rahman said, "In recent times, many art studios and galleries have opened in the city. While some are continuing successfully, a few have stopped their ventures gradually. Through new studios and art galleries, Bangladeshi artists can have platforms from where they would get chances to explore their creativity and aptitudes."

Enayetullah Khan, editor-in-chief and chief executive of UNB, is the CEO of Cosmos Group. Khan, an avid art collector, has been planning

to open up an art gallery with a printmaking studio. Gallery Cosmos intends to promote Bangladeshi art locally and abroad. On the occasion, a three-day festival is now on at the Cosmos Centre. The first day's programme featured the opening of the printmaking studio. Second day's event had the inauguration of a painting exhibition featuring the works of Abdus Shakoor Shah. On the third day, a CD titled "Colour, Creation, Country" -- featuring selected artworks from the private collection of Gallery Cosmos -- would be launched.

Khan said, "Within a short time, a voluminous publication will come out from Gallery Cosmos. The publication will provide detailed information on the leading painters of Bangladesh."

Ralph Samuelson has worked at the Asian Cultural Council (ACC) for 32 years. For 18 years he was the director of the council. Samuelson has been a senior adviser of ACC since 2008.

"The organisation has been promoting cultural exchange between the United States and Asian countries for four decades by providing grants. In 1963, John D. Rockefeller established a small private foundation. In its 45 years of activities, the ACC has given grants to over 5000 artists and researchers. Many grant receivers have become noted painters." As a senior adviser of ACC, Samuelson wishes to do something for the artists of Bangladesh. Samuelson was elated with the studio's cosy atmosphere. "This is one of the finest print studios in Asia," he said.

## Return of a showman

Sonu Niigaam in town

NUSRAT JAHAN PRITOM

Last Friday evening at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), Sonu Niigaam's magnetic presence marvelled the crowd. This young artist had received wide recognition not only in India but also in other South Asian countries. With his amazing voice that has a pure classical touch, Sonu can belt out virtually any song -- be it pop, jazz or rock. The singer has fans of all sorts and all ages. He was in Dhaka last year.

"This is the beauty of our profession. We get to meet a lot of people and experience a variety of cultures. Bangladesh has a rich, diverse culture and it is great to see the appreciation of 'kala' (arts) here. Last time I was taken cared of so well that I was inspired to experience Dhaka's warmth and hospitality again," said Sonu. He further added, "There are some places, some people who radiate incredible energy. Dhaka is one of them."

The show began around 7:30pm. After a few moments of silence, the electrifying beats of "Rock on" filled the podium. Singer Gunjan performed with her track from "Jab We Met". Finally after a few more moments of silence and darkness, the showman himself appeared blazing in the spotlight and welcomed by furious music.

Sonu didn't just sing. He danced, screamed, laughed, joked, and what not! His undeniable energy got the whole house moving and shaking with him.

"A lot of people wonder where do songs really come from? Well, it's like

this: first come the lyrics, then the rhythm, and then a singer performs that." As a demonstration, he proceeded by asking around the audience to come up with names of vegetables. He then made a jingle out of the "Aloo-gobi-gajar-bengan" and delivered that in classical style, Anu Malik style,

pop style and even Himesh Reshammiya style. He even made a beat-to-beat remix of that. Soon the bass guitarist caught up, next was the lead guitarist. Even the drums and finally the whole house were singing the "Aloo-gobi" song with him.

Sonu Niigaam stands out from the

rest for his ever youthful and vibrant presence. The hour-long first act did not seem to wear him out. Even at the end of act one, he was still laughing, playing with his mic and doing his dance which if anyone else did, would have looked corny, but Sonu somehow made that dance seem charming and trendy.

He sang a number of his hits, from "Bijuria" to softer ones like "Om shanti om". "I try to have a medley of the wild and the subtle so that it goes out to the entire crowd."

During the song "Chak de saare gham", Sonu sang the first line of the number and paused. But there were no silence because the audience sang along the second line without a need of queue. "This is Dhaka," said Sonu. On various occasions, the fans went wild with the songs and their voices were heard alongside Sonu's.

"A lot of you are smiling, a lot of you are laughing, yelling, screaming. But a lot of you are also wondering with a hand on their cheeks 'what is this mayhem about?' People who are wondering when will they go home and sleep and get up for work the next day... and so on. Well for those of you who are laughing and screaming..." With that the vocalist finished the song. Shenanigans like this made him connect with the crowd completely.

There were many celebrity guests present at the show like Shakila Zafar, Mila, Nobel and Kumar Bishwajit.

'Nokia Presents Sonu Niigaam Back in Dhaka' was organised by Fireworks Events. Its co-sponsor was Europeur.



The artiste's undeniable energy got the whole house moving and shaking with him.

The writer is a freelance contributor.