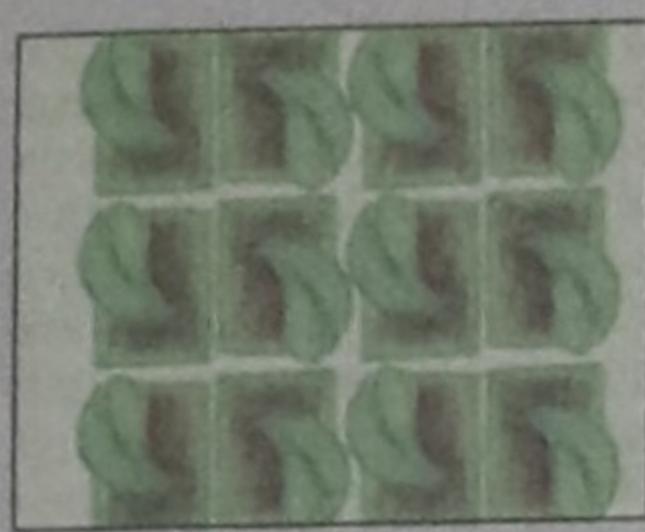


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Musical Soiree
Title: Praner Khela
Artistes: Naqib Khan and Tanvir Alam Shuvveeb
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi
Date: October 29



Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Ballads and Paintings
Artist: Abdus Shakoor Shah
Venue: Gallery Cosmos, Malibagh
Date: October 24- November 7
Time: 11am-6pm



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



Solo Photography Exhibition
Title: Rest In Peace
Photographer: Chandan Robert Rebeiro
Venue: Holy Rosary Church, Farmgate, Tejgaon (Near Holy Cross School)
Date: November 1- 2
Time: 10am-8pm



In Focus

"Third Person Singular Number": Behind the success story

NUSRAT JAHAN PRITOM

"Third Person Singular Number" would have to be the most promising film of the year. Though the cinematic work has not even been released in Bangladesh, it has already been selected to participate at major international film festivals. The film had its world premiere at the 14th Pusan International Film Festival, South Korea.

A major share of credit for the success of "Third Person..." has to go to filmmaker Mostafa Sarwar Farooki.

The experience was amazing. When the film was first selected to take part in Pusan International Film Festival (considered Asia's largest film festival), I was thrilled. Sadly most people don't know about it because we are not yet at a fair about the Asian film festivals. There were 7,000 foreign distributors, festival directors from Berlin, Venice and other places. There was an audience of around 200,000 from various nations, backgrounds and cultures. Through this, our film got world access, with many reporters from around the world putting this film in their columns. The 10-minute question-answer episode at the festival got extended to 45 minutes. It was overwhelming! The autographs, the applause, the appreciation -- it all actually made me nervous," Farooki said.

Is the filmmaker known for his unusual approach to storytelling gung ho about the prospects of the film? "Yes, of course! It created a major buzz. It will travel to more film festivals. It's not a very complicated film. It has a lot of heart," he added on a lighter note.

"This is a film about reality. It's my first film that got real international accolades. It was also one of the 18 films vying for the top prize at the recent Middle East International Film Festival in Abu Dhabi. 'Third Person...' was the only South Asian film to participate at the festival."

"We didn't win the award, but meeting the legendary Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami was bigger than any award for me. I wanted to tell him that I consider him to be my mentor but the way he was praising my film made me so nervous that I couldn't manage to say how much I admire his work."

Tisha, who played one of the central roles in "Third Person...", talked about her experiences. "I can't explain my excitement," she said enthusiastically, "as it had been screened at two major international festivals and had already been the centre of much curiosity even before its release in Bangladesh. The expectations have become greater."



Farooki (left) met Kiarostami (right) at the recent Middle East International Film Festival in Abu Dhabi.



Featuring interrelationships among a convict serving a life sentence, his wife and an amateur singer, the film poses a question: can a woman, on her own, lead a dignified life in our society?

"The feedback was awesome for me as it was my first feature film. Everyone's appreciation was overwhelming. This was perhaps the best experience for me because in the beginning I never even imagined that I would do a movie. My parents were also not keen on seeing me on the big screen. Thanks to Farooki and others friends whose help I enlisted, I could finally convince my parents and they gladly agreed. What came next, everyone knows. I found myself landing into one of the biggest projects of this year. When I read the script, the story was so good, I was like 'Oh my God, I don't want to lose it!'

"When I actually saw the final print, I couldn't believe it was me," she added.

What was the experience like for Topu? "It was a treat. It never felt like we were shooting a film. Farooki selects actors depending on the characters. Maybe he saw a connection between the character and me. I could do it only because he made it seem easy to me. I'm a musician, so this was totally a different experience."

"Meeting the legendary Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami was bigger than any award for me. I wanted to tell him that I consider him to be my mentor but the way he was praising my film made me so nervous that I couldn't manage to say how much I admire his work!"

"In acting you need to concentrate psychologically and physically, whereas in music you just let it flow," said the singer turned actor.

"I couldn't attend the film festivals. The film is also going to Australia this December; hopefully I would be going to that one," Topu added.

"I had missed South Korea, but of course I received updates on how things went," said actor Mosharraf Karim who played one of the lead roles. "Being a part of this film had been like a thrill-ride. The experience was unlike any other from the incipient stage when we were just working on it."

"Everyone in the country is excited and waiting eagerly for its release. Wherever I go, people are asking me about it, and I find myself wondering the same as just like them I'm also anxiously waiting for it."

The writer is a freelance contributor

ALL-TIME GREATS

Richard Attenborough: A cinematic genius

Remember the brilliant films "Gandhi", "A Bridge Too Far" or the screen version of the hit musical "Oh! What a Lovely War"? Behind all these cinematic works is Richard Attenborough, English director, actor, producer and entrepreneur. The 88-year-old towering film personality is the winner of two Academy Awards, four British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Awards and three Golden Globes.

His most recent accomplishment is the publication of his informal autobiography, "Entirely up to You, Darling" in association with his longstanding assistant and friend, Diana Hawkins.

Time Out London, amplifying on co-writer Diana Hawkins' explanation of the phrase 'Entirely up to you, darling,' says that it "refers to the oft-used passive/aggressive expression that Attenborough would deploy to those doubting they could deliver on his demands. As the quaint, left-leaning sensibility of his films and his reputation as a 'luvvie' would suggest, he is a genuine and gentle man, a person for whom you could easily imagine people bending over backwards to please. He even manages to lend an understated, ambivalent edge to characters such as

John Christie, the notorious serial killer from "Ten Rillington Place" (1972), or the bumptious, small-time crook he plays in Basil Dearden's high-seas thriller "The Ship That Died of Shame" (1952).

Attenborough's first film role was as a deserting sailor "In Which We Serve" (1942), which would typecast him for many years as cowards in films such as "London Belongs to Me" (1948), "Morning Departure" (1950) and his breakthrough role as a psychopathic young gangster in a film based on Graham Greene's novel " Brighton Rock" (1947).

Following a string of other films in 1967 and 1968, he won back-to-back Golden Globe Awards in the category of Best Supporting Actor, the first time for "The Sand Pebbles", starring Steve McQueen, and the second time for "Doctor Doolittle", starring Rex Harrison. There were a few lows along the way as well: his roles in Satyajit Ray's "Shatranj Ke Khiladi" (1977) and "The Human Factor" (in 1979).

As a director, "Gandhi" brought him his share of acclaim: In 1982 he won the Academy Award for direction for this historical epic, a project he had been attempting to get made for many years. The following year he was awarded another Golden Globe for best director.

In Attenborough's words, "I think there were times when, if circumstances had developed, I might have been tempted into politics. I am a fan of Tony Blair, I think Gordon Brown is a fine man, but I think he's headed for one hell of a bloody struggle."

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

Keira Knightley takes on Audrey Hepburn

Keira Knightley has beaten Scarlett Johansson to land the part of Eliza Doolittle in a new film adaptation of "My Fair Lady", it has emerged.

Now the 24-year-old actress will be seen starring in the film, which will be directed by Joe Wright.

"Joe and Keira are looking forward to working together again," says a friend of the 37-year-old director.

In August, it was reported that Knightley had been forced to compete with Johansson, 24, for the role of the Cockney flower seller played by Audrey Hepburn in the 1964 film, reports The

Telegraph.

"I have two actresses as potential Elizas, one British, the other American," said Sir Cameron Mackintosh, who is producing the film with Duncan Kenworthy, at the time.

"You'd know their names, but I'm not letting on," he added.

Recently, Kenworthy said: "I think Keira would be absolutely fabulous in it."

Emma Thompson is writing the film's script, for which Daniel Craig has been mooted as a possible Professor Henry Higgins.



Keira Knightley



Theatre troupe Prachyanat staged its production "Raja... ebong Onnayo" at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on October 26. Based on Rabindranath Tagore's "Raja", the play has been directed by Azad Abul Kalam. The director of the play treats the Tagore classic with a new approach and tries to portray the omnipresent King as a metaphor against the contemporary world of chaos, exploitation and imperialism. The cast includes Afsana Mimi, Rubaiya Manzur, Tapan Majumdar, Shatabdi Wadud and Sakhawat Hossain Rezvi, among others.

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

