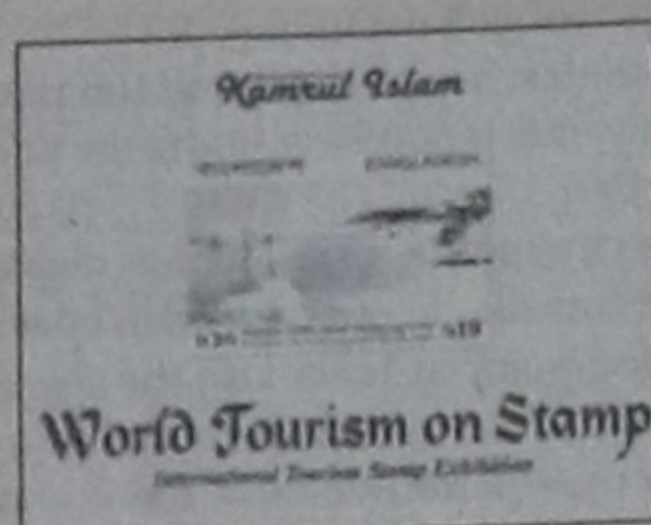


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Int'l Tourism Stamp Exhibition
Title: World Tourism on Stamp
Venue: Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU
Date: December 27-30
Time: 10:30am-7:30pm



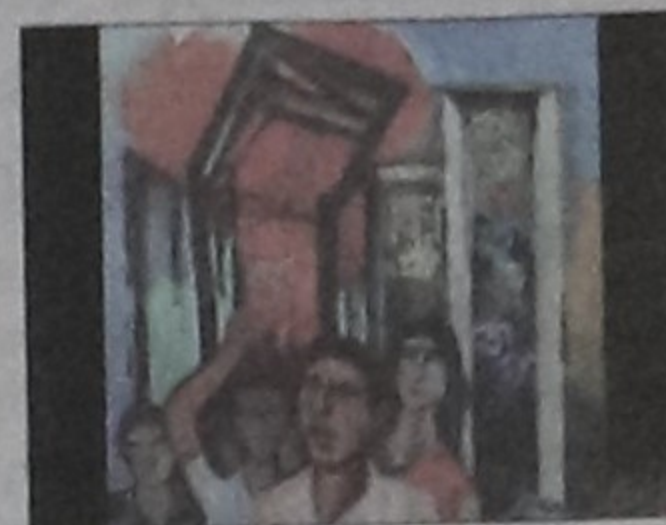
Solo Art Exhibition
Painter: Zahura Sultana Hossain
Title: Contemplation
Venue: Bay's Galleria, Radius Centre, Gulshan-2
Date: December 11-January 27
Time: 10am-8pm



Film Premiere
Film: Indumati Baita
Filmmaker: Biplab Kumar Paul
Venue: Bangladesh Film Centre, 160, Lake Circus, Kalabagan
Date: December 29
Time: 5pm



Painting Exhibition
Painter: Biren Shome
Venue: Shilpakala Gallery, H 26, Rd 3, Dhanmondi
Date: January 4-20
Time: 10am-8pm



Of melody and romance "Bolini Kokhono" Ayub Bachchu's latest studio album released



"I am optimistic that fans will love the album."

A CORRESPONDENT

On December 24, Ayub Bachchu's latest solo album "Bolini Kokhono" was released at a city restaurant. The album has been sponsored by Nuvista Pharama Ltd and presented by Marvelon. The album has been produced by AB kitchen, Ayub Bachchu's music studio.

"The album comes after a long break; my last album was "Rimjim Brishiti", released nearly two years ago," said Bachchu. Amplifying on the album, Bachchu said, "Bolini Kokhono" is a melody and soft based romantic album like all my solos; the rock music is for the albums released with the band.

another can never be expressed in simple words, even though many things have not been said in words that doesn't really prove that they are not meant from the heart.

"Again the song "Shangshar" addresses the right which a couple has over each other; one should always remain loyal and never break a heart in a relationship. Other songs in the album address other issues. Other tracks in the album are "Proshno", "Onubhob", "Swapno bhongo", "Mon-er katha", "Fhera", "Rangin prithibi", "Onek din-er porey" and "Behey thaka."

"While recording the album, special attention has been given to sound quality, to make the songs more enjoyable. I am optimistic that the fans will love the album. Those who loved songs such as "Tara bhora rattey" and "Ekhone onek raat" will find the album a treat.

"Through the album I want to reach all those who are suffering from the pain of break-ups or fall outs in love and tell them to come back to life -- these are part of life accept them and return to joy of life, don't waste any moment without a smile as there is only one life: enjoy it and rejoice in it."

Speaking on his future plans, Bachchu said, "In March 2010, LRB plans to launch a new album, "Judhdo". "The work for the album is complete; we hope the album will meet the expectations of LRB fans and well wishers."

Music . . . when less can be more Rhythmic artistry of Swarup Hossain

JONATHAN RICHMOND

If less can be more, few people can make more out of less than the incredible Swarup Hossain, playing the tabla at this past weekend's Classical Music Festival at Chhayanaut in Dhanmondi. Think what a tabla is: nothing more physically than skin stretched over a sounding box. But just as brilliant actors wearing masks can amplify emotions with their facial expressions concealed, musicians like Swarup can turn the seeming limitations of a drum into not only a whole orchestra, but also a troupe of actors playing out all manner of dramas.

Swarup's playing seemed impossible: His instruments can sound gentle and reflective, and then take off into rounds of complex rhythmic intensity where every sound is heard with absolute clarity. Avoiding the slightest muddiness as Swarup does demands incredible virtuosity; and the coloration that gives life to his musicmaking is an act of

genius. Every few seconds seemed to bring a new revelation of rhythm and timbre from Swarup's instruments and the disbelief grew: how can a musician extract such exhilaration from such a simple device, make a drum more expressive than a trumpet or a violin?

At a different session during the festival, Swarup joined flautist Murtaza Murad, his densely woven percussion fabric offering a trampoline from which Murtaza's flute could take off into flights of fancy.

Murtaza extracted beguiling sounds from his instrument: he uses the flute's woodiness to produce rich dark coloration. At times Murtaza's music was mournfully reflective -- a deeply human song without words, perhaps for a lover seeking his lost beloved. And then the music would soar, and Murtaza's endless agility produced sounds of rapture: perhaps the lovers were reunited after all.

Murtaza and Swarup were perfectly matched. Swarup



Every few seconds seemed to bring a new revelation of rhythm and timbre from Swarup's instruments.

doesn't exactly play second fiddle even when in a supporting role. His tabla playing was engrossing throughout, while also serving to propel Murtaza's flute ever higher. A magnificent duet.

Chhayanaut's Classical Music Festival included generous servings of *khayal*

singing -- but perhaps, like ice-cream, too much *khayal* can lead to indigestion. *Khayal* has as its base a short song that serves as the starting point for extensive vocal improvisation, much of it wordless, purely musical drama. If done well, *khayal* can be ecstatic. Such is the

difficulty of pulling off a *khayal* performance, however, that anything below the best can sound like someone suffering the agonies of toothache, and more than a few minutes of it can lead an audience to seek psychotherapy.

The best *khayal* performance I heard at Chhayanaut came from Priyanka Gop. Her vocal range just sweeps you away. Her virtuosity is all the more powerful for coming naturally as she paints the most fantastical colours with seeming ease. Priyanka's sounds were at times haunting, always intense, and ultimately, rapturous. No wonder the hall was packed out when treats like this were on offer.

One more suggestion is about the amplification: the concert hall is small, and the singers and instrumentalists would all sound more natural if the electronics were switched off. As I said, less can be more.

The writer is a freelance contributor, music enthusiast, and a consultant in Bangladesh.

Ranjan Majumdar: Success story of a musical instrument maker

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

Sincerity and hard work led to his success. At a young age he has reached his goal and has drawn the attention of consumers in greater Jessore, Dhaka, and Chittagong districts as well as other parts of Bangladesh. Many reputed music institutions collect musical instrument from Ranjan Melody & Company. According to Sukesh Kumar, a music teacher, proprietor of the industry, Ranjan Majumdar is an expert in making musical instru-

ments. Instruments like harmoniums made by Ranjan is of a certain standard.

Ranjan (44) is the son of late Ramesh Majumdar of Baharampur village under Swarupkati upazila in Pirojpur district.

Ranjan's early days were like an obstacle race. His father tried to send him to school but he could not continue his studies. Ranjan is third of seven siblings.

Ranjan says that his mother died when he was 12 years old. He left home for Dhaka at the age of 15 and took up a job at a furniture factory. After a year



Ranjan Majumdar is an expert in fashioning musical instruments.

He gave up the job and took interest in making musical instruments. He moved to Jhalkati to learn to make har-

moniums. There he learnt the trade from Debashish, a seasoned harmonium maker. Eventually, Ranjan moved back to his own district Pirojpur. After some years of extensive training in making harmoniums, Ranjan joined Kanthamita Harmonium Shop in Jessore. There he gained more experience. Subsequently he rented a shop on BK Road in Jessore in 1995 and his business gradually picked up. Now Ranjan earns a substantial amount per month from selling musical instruments and is content with small family.

Tagore with a blend of Italy An enchanting evening ahead for Dhakaites

KAVITA, New Delhi

"A love story between voice and piano," is how Maestro Ugo Bonessi describes their music. And what if it is matched up with the Indian genre of Rabindra Sangeet? You have a delightful evening with two Italian musicians Bonessi (piano) and Francesca Cassio (vocal). While some grumbled away at the "hybrid" music, even diehard music critics applauded loudly as the duo performed Tagore's songs of "Love and Destiny" in English.

The songs were transcribed for voice and piano by the late Alain Danielou, a well-known Italian musicologist and Indianist. As the story goes, when Tagore and Danielou met in 1932 in Shantiniketan, Tagore requested Danielou to transcribe some songs from his repertoire for voice and piano in the form of 'lied', the German romantic genre of song.

Yes it has been challenging for Francesca and Bonessi to put together their repertoire of 18 Tagore songs (of which nine were performed at the Delhi concert) but it is a litmus test for their talent, that they went from Delhi to perform to enthusiastic crowds in Mumbai (December 24), Kolkata (December 27) and Dhaka (December 29).

"When I went in to Shantiniketan as visiting

professor in musicology, I met Professor Professor Anisuzzaman, a renowned Professor of Bangla literature from Dhaka University. He invited me to perform in Dhaka. The concert in Dhaka, organised by Dhaka University and the Italian Embassy, will be held at the Italian Embassy itself. I look forward

me" (Tobu mone rekh), considered to be one of Tagore's masterpieces.

"My personal favourite," says Bonessi "is "Before me lies spread" (Somukhe shanti parabar). He definitely keeps a lower profile than Francesca, who is extensively trained in Western and Indian music and has studied



Dhaka is the next stop for Maestro Ugo Bonessi and Francesca Cassio.

to that," says Francesca.

Of the nine Tagore songs performed that evening in Delhi, the audience loved the song of hope, "Never doubt your own courage" (Shonkochoero bihvolotaye) and the intensely moving finale, "Will you remember

Rabindra Sangeet, dhrupad (under Padmabushan Usad Rahim Fahimuddin Dagar) and thumri (under Padmabushan Girija Devi)

However, Bonessi is a highly talented musician who dons many hats--as a pianist, author, teacher, choir master

and musicologist. Bonessi is also an out and out Indophile. Having travelled "from Ladakh to Cape Comorin" he has studied the vocal genres of dhrupad and genres briefly in Italy. "I cannot perform this music but it gives me a better understanding of Tagore's music, which is written in a raga style. Even when two ragas blend, it sounds familiar to me," says Bonessi.

Their music is now accessible to all Tagore aficionados. Prior to the concert, two CDs of Tagore's 18 songs transcribed by Danielou were unveiled. The CDs are a joint production of Visva Bharati University, Harsharan Foundation which promotes Danielou's works and the Kolkata-based Questz World.

As always it was an eye opener to talk to a section of the audience. While the general feeling was that Danielou's transcriptions for voice and piano captured Tagore's original writings to a large extent, some were more critical. Said one artist, well acquainted with the finer nuances of Indian and Western classical music, "Rabindra Sangeet is lovely. To transpose the genre into the western idiom results in a very clumsy production".

No one in the audience could, however, fault Francesca and Maestro Bonessi for their soul-stirring 'jugalbandi'.

Recitation and play on Liberation War staged in Thakurgaon

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

A play on the Liberation War titled "Ekatture Amra" was staged at Thakurgaon District Shilpakala Academy Auditorium on December 15.

Amjankhor Union Federation, a Gana Natya Dal of Balladangi upazila, performed the play, written and directed by Upan Pal.

The play is based on the Liberation War and reveals how a Freedom Fighter is inspired to join the battle.

In observance of Victory Day, Thakurgaon District Shilpakala Academy held a four-day long programme titled "Bijoy Utsab", including a play, recitation and cultural programme.

The recitation programme titled "Srishti Shukher Ullashe" was organised by the Department of Drama and Recitation of District Shilpakala Academy.

The programme started with a poem of Jibonananda Das "Banglar Mukh Ami Dekhiachi", recited by Anupom Moni. Members of the group rendered poems

on the Liberation War. The programme ended with a choral rendition of Nazrul's poem "Srishti Shukher Ullashe".

In the course of the programme a discussion was also held.

Chief guest Deputy Commissioner of Thakurgaon and also President of Dis-

trict Shilpakala Academy Munshi Shahabuddin presided over the discussion; acting president of District Awami League Advocate Mokbul Hossain Babu was special guest.

Enthusiastic people attended the event in hundreds.



A scene from "Ekatture Amra".

PHOTO: STAR

Meena fair ends in Khagrachhari

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

The two-day Meena fair organised by the District Primary Education Office ended with a prize giving ceremony at the Town Hall auditorium in Khagrachhari.

Chief guest Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Abdullah handed over the prize among the winners of various competitions.

Earlier, at the inaugural, the frontrunners of civil society vowed to

ensure equal rights for every child at each stage of their life. They also vowed to build a corruption-free society and work in unison for the country's development.

Speakers also said Meena Dibosh is an important day to ensure the rights of girls and for the latter to have a clear conception of their own rights.

Before the discussion, hundreds of students from primary schools participated in a rally that went through the main roads of the hill town, performing

choral patriotic songs, dances and reciting poems.

At the inaugural session Khagrachhari Hill District Council Chairman Rubity Karbari was chief guest while Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Giasuddin Mogul presided over the discussion.

Among others, Executive Officer Abdur Rahman Tarafdar, Headmistress Dilura Begum, member of civil society Nurunnabi, Upazila Primary Education Officer Krisnapodo Das gave speeches.