

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Drawing Exhibition

Title: The Surge of Emotion
Artist: Shahabuddin
Venue: Saju Art Gallery, F/40-41, North Super Market, 2nd Circle, Gulshan
Date: January 4-19
Time: 10am-8pm



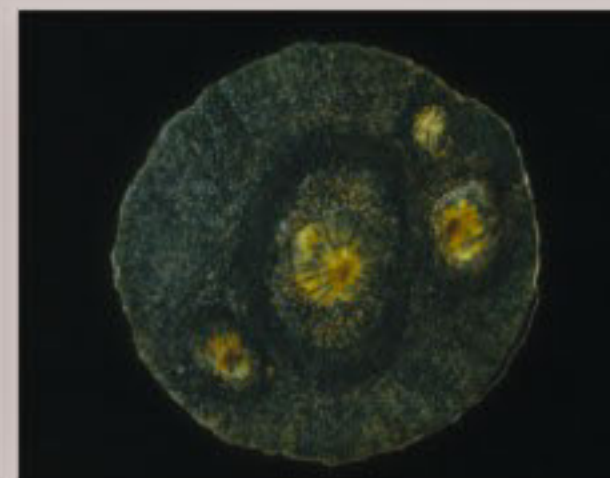
Theatre

Play: Bisharjan
Troupe: Dasharupok Repertory Theatre
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: January 9
Time: 6:30pm



Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Image
Artist: Mohammad Fakhrul Islam
Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: January 4-15
Time: 9am-12pm & 5-8pm



Painting Exhibition

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



Learning the basics from Zainul Abedin

Murtaja Baseer reminisces



"Abedin Sir was tall and sturdy, and had an indigenous look about him. His appearance exuded confidence. His voice was deep and eyes were bright. He was a chain smoker."

from my elder brother Muhammad Shafullah. My brother and Abedin were close friends. I got admitted at the college. At the time, the college was on Nawabpur Road. Some rooms on the ground floor of National Medical College were allocated for the Art College.

"Abedin Sir was tall and sturdy, and had an indigenous look about him. His appearance exuded confidence. His voice was deep and eyes were bright. He was a chain smoker.

"He taught us to draw human figures, faces, curb lines of figures and various animal forms. He focused on drawings and sketches. He taught us to copy from Ajanta Ellora drawings and some renowned Indian painters. He also went over charcoal drawings. He meticulously observed and corrected our wrist and hand movements. When I started working as a teacher at Chittagong Art College, I gave importance to those particular aspects.

"Vivek Das Gupta and Zainul Abedin were the pioneering watercolourists in the subcontinent in our time. Vivek's work highlighted the intricacies of urban life whereas Abedin focused on rural landscapes and riverine life.

"During my second year in college (1950), I was incarcerated for six months on political grounds. I went back to the college afterwards, but could not continue because of the long absence. Teachers were going over watercolour and brush works. I became frustrated and told Abedin sir, 'I cannot become a painter.' He then asked Aminul Islam to help me with painting and watercolour.

"In 1955, Abedin Sir visited my studio in Old Dhaka and praised my work. He attended my marriage ceremony (in 1962). In 1976, a few days before his death, I went to meet him. He warmly hugged me and asked artist Quamrul Hassan to take a photo of us - an image I continue to cherish."

Lifelong devotion to classical music

In conversation with Tushar Dutta



Tushar Dutta performs at Bengal Gallery.

MAINUL HASSAN

Bangladesh born Indian classical singer Tushar Dutta recently visited Dhaka. Dutta came to Bangladesh upon an invitation from Chhayanaust, to perform at the recent classical music festival (from December 24-26, 2009) organised by the institution.

Dutta talked about his musical background and shared his experiences in Bangladesh with The Daily Star.

"This is my first visit to Bangladesh as a performer. I've been here several times previously to visit my ancestral home in Natore," said Dutta.

"My introduction to music happened at a very early age. According to our home tradition, daily *rewaz* (music practice) is a must," the artiste said, adding, "My first music teacher was Santosh Chowdhury."

"I was born in Natore city in 1966. My father Rabindranath Dutta was a trader. He moved to Durgapur in Bardhaman in 1978.

"In Durgapur I started taking music lessons from Bimol Mitra. I learnt the basics of classical music from him. When I was in school, I got an opportunity to study at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy.

"ITC Sangeet Research Academy is one of the finest institutions in India, promoting classical music. The institution has groomed many acclaimed classical singers.

"After my post-graduation I won a scholarship at the academy. There I received in-depth

education in the various aspects of classical music -- *dhrupad, khayal, tarana, thumri, tappa* and more. I received tutelage from Pt. A Kanan, Pt. Arun Bhaduri, Pt. K.G. Gindey and Pt. Sunil Bose," said Dutta.

Tushar Dutta has performed in several countries including the US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Denmark, Dubai, Spain and more. He performed at the ITC Music Conference in 1996, which included some of the biggest names in Indian classical music, such as Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasi and Ustad Zakir Hussain. Dutta also performed at the Shaptak Music Festival in Ahmedabad in 2009.

Talking about his Bangladesh tour, Dutta said, "I have thoroughly enjoyed my visit. Bangladeshis are keen music enthusiasts; same as audiences in Maharashtra or Kolkata."

About the young artistes of Bangladesh, the seasoned musician said, "If one compares the emerging artistes of India with their Bangladeshi counterparts, no striking difference would be perceived. The music scene in Bangladesh is very enriched and there is a lot of possibility."

On January 4, Bengal Foundation arranged a solo performance of the artiste. Titled "Dhrupadi Sangeet-er Ashor", the programme featured Dutta performing various *raaga*, including *Baghesri, Shohini* and *Hangsadhvani*. The artiste also rendered some Bangla songs -- "Mago Tomar Daakey Debo Shara", "Shobai Amra Tomar Baganey" and more.

TAKIR HOSSAIN

Murtaja Baseer is one of the distinguished painters of our country, who has made a great contribution to Bangladeshi art. From his childhood, he has had a great passion for art. Baseer recently reminisced on his association with his teacher Zainul Abedin, a pioneering figure of the modern art movement, who founded Dhaka Art College in 1948 with some of his comrades.

"I heard of Zainul Abedin before going for admission at Government Art College (now Faculty of Fine Arts) in 1949. I heard the name of another painter -- Shafiuddin Ahmed. In that period, Nandalal Bose, Atul Bose, Sudhi Ranjan Khastgir, Ramendra

Nath Chakroborty, Hemanta Kumar Roy and others were famous in the art scene of the subcontinent.

"My elder brother Muhammad Shafiullah was a regular reader of *Peoples War*, a prestigious newspaper of the time. In *Peoples War*, I first saw Zainul's famine sketches (1943). The sketches were deeply embedded in my mind. Somnath Hore and Chitra Prasad's images were also published in the newspaper. An article by Sarojini Naidu on Zainul Abedin helped me get an intense glimpse into his life and works.

"From his childhood Abedin intended to study art. He gained admission in Kolkata Art College in 1933, without appearing at the Metric

examination. He came first in first division in 1938. While in Kolkata, Abedin associated with two noted personalities -- Abul Monsur Ahmed and Abul Kalam Samsuddin. He used to tell us various stories of Kolkata life.

"I was introduced to Abedin under unusual circumstances. I didn't intend to become a painter initially. I was closely engaged with a political party and I always tried to abide by the party rules. The Communist Party asked me to generate awareness about our intentions and objectives among the young. With that intent I got admitted to Art College. When I was a student of class nine, I became a member of the party's Student Federation.

"When I went for admission at Dhaka Art College, I carried a letter

Theatre Review

A "Sonata" of disconnectedness



Dolon (Leesa Gazi) reveals a secret to Bipasha (Mita Chowdhury) at the risk of ruining their friendship.

JONATHAN RICHMOND

Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" is dreamy and draws listeners into themselves. "Sonata", by Mahesh Elkunchwar is all about people drawn into themselves: people with dramatic exteriors but a pain of inner loneliness not far below that gets achingly more intense with every lie they tell the world and also to themselves.

The play is by an Indian playwright and was originally about three women in Mumbai. It has been transformed by Leesa Gazi to

feature three Bangladeshi immigrants in London. However, the play's theme is universal, and the Bangladeshi connection can seem elusive except for the fact that the show is in both Bangla and English, with verbal language shaped capriciously with body language to make itself understood by one and all.

The three women, whatever their origins, live Western lives. Each of them is successful at work and has an aura of sophistication. But all three are seemingly lost. Dolon (played by Leesa Gazi) is bright and vivacious on the

surface, with a larger than life character that suggests her life is rather less than she would wish it to be. Dolon shares a flat with Bipasha (Mita Chowdhury) -- an introverted, embittered schoolteacher. Bipasha is never a person at peace. While Leesa bitingly brings out the thinly disguised insecurity of the overactive Dolon, Mita makes Bipasha a cold unapproachable. Dolon's fury at herself as well as the world around her is no less than Bipasha's, but is concealed, at least until the audience has taken in her antics for the first

half of the play. Ria, the third woman, was acted vividly by Farhana Mithu. Ria hides the fact delicately that she is tormented, abused by her lover (whom the audience never meets). Ria keeps returning to her abuser rather than risking loneliness, or so she fools herself, but her presence in the play shows that she is discontented and comes to her friends to seek connectedness and love.

The best psychodrama, however, comes from the interaction of Dolon and Bipasha: the audience sees them continually rejecting

each other as a protection mechanism from getting too close. Ultimately the truth is unleashed that Dolon had slept with Bipasha's lover on the same night the latter had broken up the relationship. Dolon makes the confession as if this is the only way she can find true friendship with Bipasha, choosing a crisis of truth over the hidden pain just beneath the brittle facade of dishonesty. Leesa's performance is especially compelling here, her body limp with disgrace, but released from the false rigour of the lies that have demised her.

If the audience is looking for a connection with Bangladesh, it comes from reflecting on how these women's lives might have been different back at home. In Bangladesh, they would have been married and their lives would have been distracted by their families. There is seemingly less room for loneliness in a country overflowing with intertwined extended families and with so little personal space.

But it is easy for immigrants to get lost when they try to make the transition to a wholly different culture. And, bringing out the mixture of wit, reflection and shock in Mahesh's work, British-Bangladeshi director Mukul Ahmed paints a dark picture of disconnectedness from the web of family and belonging relinquished when three women set out for cold Britannic shores.

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

Bono blasts internet bosses

U2 frontman Bono has slammed internet service providers for allowing customers to trade rock records online -- branding them "reverse Robin Hoods."

The rocker accuses wealthy web executives of benefiting from the ailing music industry, which loses potential profits whenever albums are illegally downloaded.

And he has warned that the same problem could cripple Hollywood as the popularity of sharing films over the internet increases.

In a column in the New York Times, Bono writes: "The immutable laws of bandwidth tell us we're just a few years away from being able to download an entire season of (TV series) '24' in 24 seconds."

"A decade's worth of music file-sharing and swiping has made clear that the people it hurts are the creators... The people this reverse Robin Hooding benefits are rich service providers, whose swollen profits perfectly mirror the lost receipts of the music business."



"The only thing protecting the movie and TV industries from the fate that has befallen music and indeed the newspaper business is the size of the files."

The "Beautiful Day" hitmaker believes the problem would be solved if internet service providers monitor their file-sharers and enforce strict controls.

Source: Internet

Bond's new agent of change

Oscar-winning director Sam Mendes

Sam Mendes is engaged in discussions to become the next Bond maestro, potentially making him the first Oscar winner ever to direct England's suave spy.

The "American Beauty" director is actually an old friend of Bond leading man Daniel Craig and introduced the actor to wider American audiences by casting him in the 2002 film "Road to Perdition." "Bond 23" already has Peter Morgan, Oscar nominee for "The Queen" and "Frost/Nixon,"

scripting moody character turns for 007, alongside Bond screenwriting stalwarts Neal Purvis and Robert Wade. MGM declined to confirm the report.

Of course, Mendes has a bunch of projects also brewing, including the long-gestating film adaptation of the comic book series "Preacher" and "Middlemarch," based on the George Eliot novel. And, like every directing assignment in Hollywood, Mendes' participation with Bond is contin-

gent on the final script and the film's production schedule (there is no start date, but some speculation has the movie's release date as early as 2011). And then there's the much bigger question of what happens to Bond when/if corporate overlord MGM gets sold in the next few months.

So in other words, this project has a long way to go before the martini shot.

Source: Internet