

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Ekushey Book Fair**  
Venue: Bangla Academy  
Date: February 1-28  
Time: 3pm-9pm



### Solo Art Exhibition

Artist: Rashid Amin  
Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, H-26, R-3, Dhanmondi  
Date: February 18-March 1  
Time: 12pm-8pm



### Cultural Programme

Organiser: Amra Surjomukhi  
Venue: Bangladesh Shishu Academy  
Date: February 25  
Time: 5pm



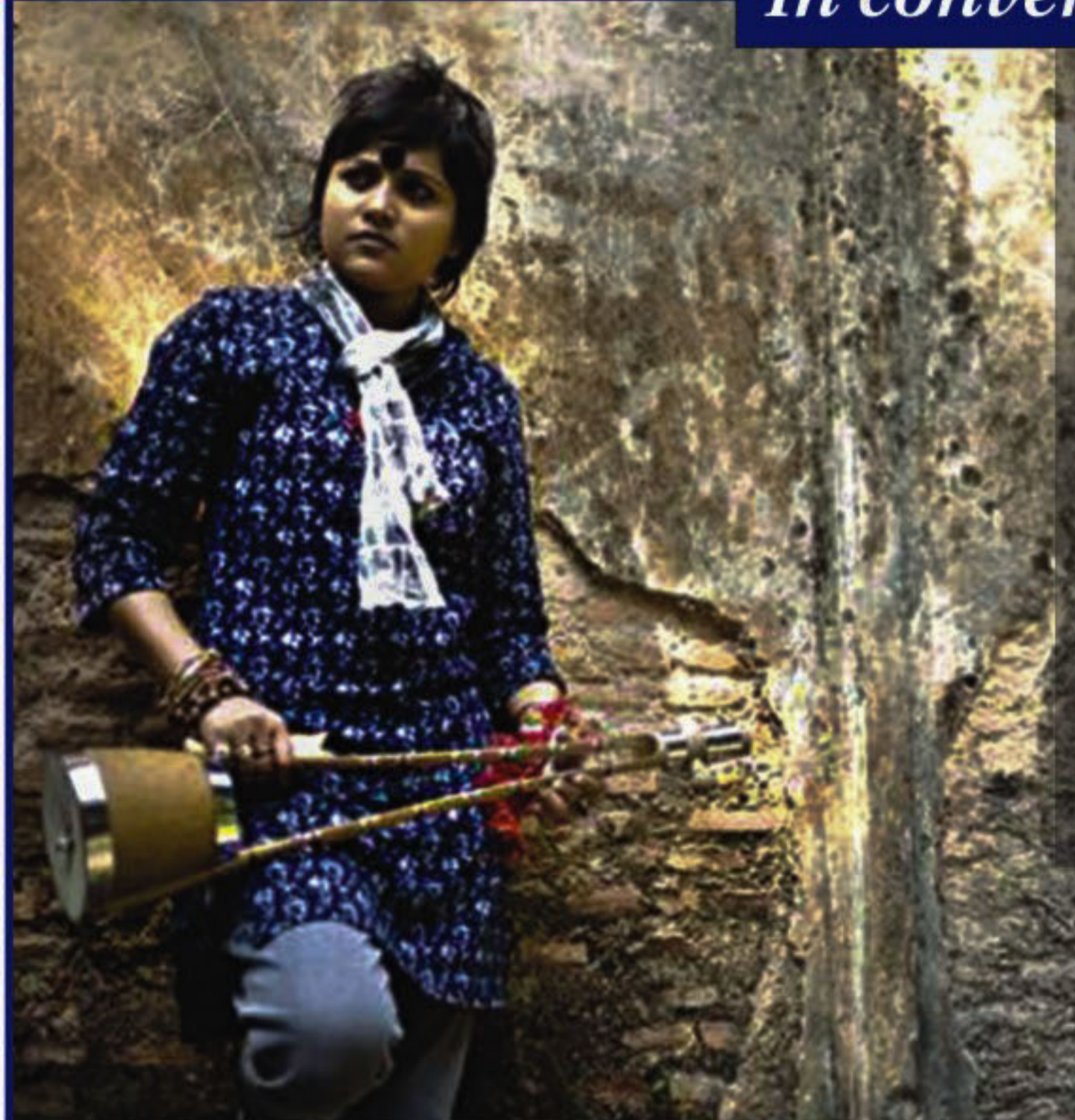
### Film Screening

Organiser: High Commission of India Cultural Centre  
Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1  
Film: Sagarika  
Date: February 26  
Time: 6pm



## In conversation with Sumi

# Essence of folk, power of rock



NUSRAT JAHAN PRITOM

Sumi has carved a niche for herself as the vocalist of the band Lalon. Avid followers of Lalon songs, the band fuses folk/baul tunes with rock. The vocalist recently shared some of her thoughts:

"From the age of six I have been involved with music. I was mainly interested in classical music. I was seven or eight when I was introduced to Lalon's songs and the verses made a huge impact on me," Sumi says.

In 2003, Sumi won the Benson & Hedges Award for Best Solo Performer. In 2007, the band Lalon brought out its debut album "Biprotip". Two years later, in December 2009, they released their second album "Khepa".

Sumi is currently working with Fuad Al Muqtadir on an album. Sumi and her band Lalon will be touring London and Canada in May this year.

What made her interested in Lalon songs? "Lalon has always inspired me. There is something immensely spiritual about the songs. As an artiste, I prefer songs that convey powerful messages. Lalon songs embody the bard's secular philosophy," Sumi says.

The vocalist delves more into the subject: "Many of Lalon's verses have not been set to tune. We know only 400/500 songs but there are so many more that are still unfamiliar to the average listener, especially the young. We [the band Lalon] are on a mission to introduce these

songs -- changing the sound but keeping the original tune and words intact -- to young music enthusiasts."

Why is she referred to as "Sumi Pagli (crazy)" often? Sumi laughingly responds, "I honestly don't know. I am what I sing, and maybe I am somewhat different from the majority. I know I'm not fake. I say what I think and what I believe to be right. To sum it up, my music is an extension of my nature. Bob Marley was also labelled 'mad' or 'eccentric'. People like to tag things or artistes they are interested in, I suppose."

Message for her fans? "Please try to grasp Lalon's songs and their messages. We have to preserve and promote the bard's works for generations to come," Sumi says.

## The Ekushey spirit catches on Nazrul Sangeet in Delhi

KAVITA, New Delhi

While Delhiites are familiar with Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Sangeet still has to make inroads in the music circuit. A small group of music lovers in the Indian capital therefore welcomed an evening of Nazrul songs courtesy Nabaroon Bhattacharjee, his son Nilotpal, daughter Nilanjana and niece Shruti.

The endeavour is worth a mention because Nabaroon, a senior World Bank official, manages to combine a demanding profession with a passion for music. Trained in classical music by his guru Pandit Amarnath, he also enjoys singing light vocals like Rabindra Sangeet. However, he has a special affinity for Nazrul songs, because as he says, "In Rabindra Sangeet you are not permitted to sing outside the notations that have been set by Tagore, whereas in Nazrul songs the artiste is given the flexibility to use the base composition and innovate or improvise."

"Secondly while Rabindra Sangeet is based on dhrupad style of music, Nazrul

songs are mainly structured on the khayal, thumri and tappa styles."

The main features of the concert were Nazrul compositions based on ragas while there were other highlights such as patriotic songs, love songs, folk or bhatiali songs. Among the notable pieces were "Mom-er Putul", "Rumjhum Rumjhum" and "Amar Shampan Jatri Na Loy".

The programme is one of the many cultural events that have been lined up on the occasion of Ekushey February in the Indian capital, largely by Impresario India, a Delhi-based cultural organisation. The spirit of Ekushey truly cuts across the geographical boundaries that separate the peoples of the subcontinent.



Artistes sing at the programme.



PHOTO: STAR  
Children perform a group dance at a cultural programme held at Bogra's Titu Auditorium recently. Local organisation Shaheed Jabbar Club arranged the programme.

## Playwright Masum Reza turns novelist



Masum Reza

A CORRESPONDENT

Noted TV playwright Masum Reza has turned novelist. His two novels -- "Meen Konna-doy"

and "Goalkeeper" -- were recently launched at the Ekushey Book Fair.

The young writer talked about his debut novels.

"'Meen Konna-doy' is a novel about two girls -- Manjeela and Josna -- who want to accomplish something but face obstacles from the male-dominated society. They die and return in the form of fish. Then people start paying heed to them," says Reza.

"Goalkeeper" is the story of a young football talent. He wants to be the goalkeeper of a major team. But he encounters hostility from players of the district team, as they do not want to make space for the young talent.

Both books are available at the Jukto Prokashonistall.

Reza gained popularity for the serial "Ronger Manush" (directed by Salahuddin Lavlu) that aired in ntv. He has also written script for the film "Molla Barir Bou".



SHAHEEN DILL-RIAZ, Berlin

With the bestowal of the Golden and Silver Bears at a gala evening in Berlin on February 20, 2010 the 60th International Berlin Film Festival, (widely known by its nickname "Berlinale") wound down the ten day long celebration featuring a major selection of films from around the globe.

From the youngest film-school graduate like Burhan Qurbani ("Shahada") to an old-master like Roman Polanski ("The Ghost Writer"), from Bollywood celebrities like Shahrukh Khan and Karan Johar ("My Name is Khan") to Hollywood stars like Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese ("Shutter Island") -- a wide range of film personalities from different generations and cultural space made the Competition Section of this year's festival a very colourful one.

The decision of the international jury, presided by famed German filmmaker Werner Herzog, seems to point out the potentials of this diversity of filmic creations. The jury honoured promising Turkish filmmaker Semih Kaplanoglu with the Golden Bear for his film "Bal" (Honey). Following his earlier films "Yumurta" (Egg) and "Süt" (Milk), "Honey" is the last and the final part of his trilogy, where he examines with sensible eyes the living conditions in rural Anatolia.

Roman Polanski was awarded with a Silver Bear for his film "The Ghost Writer". Even if Polanski

## Sixty years of Berlinale: Less glamour, much glory

proves his directorial talent once again at the age of 76, the film itself (which is based on the Bestseller "Ghost" by Robert Harris) remains at the end nothing more than a political satire/thriller.

Japanese Actress Shinobu Terajima got the Silver Bear for Best Actress for her role in the film "Caterpillar" (by Koji Wakamatsu), a film that shows the sufferings of the Japanese soldiers and their families after World War II. Two Silver Bears for Best Actor went to Grigorio Dobrygin and Sergei Puskepalis for their performances in the film "How I Ended this Summer" [by Russian Director Alexej Popogrebski]. Popogrebski's cinematographer earned the film its third Silver Bear for Best Camerawork. Korean scriptwriters Wang Quan'an and Na Jin wan won the Silver Bear for Best Script with their film "Apart Together". The list of winners is quite long; there were numerous independent juries, who bestowed in total 51 prizes in different categories in each and every additional sections of the festival.

In 1951 the festival was initiated by the three Western Allies in Berlin. Sixty years have gone since the first film was screened at the Berlinale and 15,477 films were shown in all these years. The history of this festival is at the same time the legacy of generations since the 2nd World War. From the early 1950s till the end of '60s, the festival was dominated by films with reflections of the Cold War. The productions of the Hollywood studios were curious but not very convinced about the commercial aspects of the festivals in Europe. Still the Italian Neo-Realism and French Nouvelle Vague kept the European silver screens vibrant. Berlinale was one of the major exposures of these films.

In the late '60s the political turmoil during the Vietnam War forced the festival to define its char-



acter. The situation came to a dramatic point in 1970 with the screening of the film "O.K." about Vietnam War by Michael Verhoeven. The Film was in the competition, but the International Jury became divided after the screening as the president of the jury was unwilling to accept the participation of this film. All the jury-members resigned and the festival was cancelled. As a result in 1971, a new section called "International Forum of New Cinema" was established for "progressive films" and to secure the Competition Section as a relatively neutral space for the mainstream productions as well as the glamorous presence of the film celebrities.

The new 'Forum Section' became since then Berlinale's platform for new and young cineastes. Over the last forty years it has become world's biggest gathering of independent filmmakers. All together 400 films have been shown at the festival this year.

I have been attending this festival for the last 18 years. Each year I feel completely lost in this huge confluence. But it feels like I'm lost in a forest where pleasant surprises await at every corner.

The writer is a cine-journalist and filmmaker

## First Superman comic sells for \$1 million

A copy of the first comic to feature caped hero Superman has been sold on the internet for \$1 million (£646,000).

The 1938 edition of Action Comics No 1 -- which originally sold for 10 cents -- was sold by a private seller to a private buyer, neither of whom was named.

Stephen Fishler, co-owner of the US auction website Comic Connect, said it was "the Holy Grail of comic books".

The sale smashes the previous record price for a comic book of \$317,200 (£205,000) in 2009.

That was also a copy of Action Comics No 1, but in poorer condition.

Fishler said the transaction happened minutes after the issue was put on sale on



The cover of the rare issue pictures Superman lifting a car over his head.

Monday.

He said that the seller was a "well-known individual" in

New York with a pedigree collection, and that the buyer was a known customer who had previously bought an Action Comics No 1.

"The opportunity to buy an un-restored, high-grade Action One comes along once every two decades. It's certainly a milestone," said Fishler.

He added: "It is still a little stunning to see a comic book and \$1 million in the same sentence."

About 100 copies of Action Comics No 1 remain in existence and only two of those have a grading of 8.0 -- very fine -- including the one sold on Monday.

The previous record-holder had a grading of 6.0.

Source: BBC

Semih Kaplanoglu with his Golden Bear (top). Shahrukh Khan signing autographs at the festival.

