

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

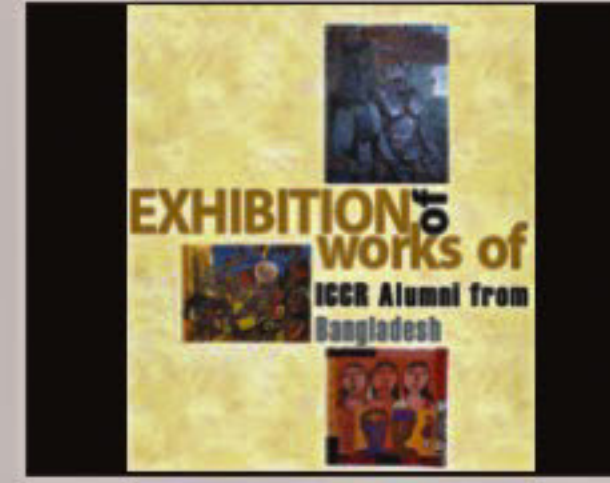
**Human Rights Theatre Festival**  
 Organiser: Bangladesh Manobadhikar Natya Parishad  
 Venue: Rabindra Sharobar  
 Date: March 12-14  
 Time: 4pm onwards



**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
 Title: Not Here  
 Artist: Ali Akbar  
 Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
 Date: March 13-27  
 Time: 3-9pm (except Fridays and Saturdays)



**Group Art Exhibition**  
 Organiser: High Commission of India, Dhaka and ICCR  
 Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1  
 Date: March 10-23  
 Time: 10am-6pm



**Theatre**  
 Play: Raarang  
 Troupe: Aranyak Natyadal  
 Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
 Date: March 14  
 Time: 7pm



## In search of roots

Oriental art teachers showcase their works



Clockwise (from top-left): Works by Masuda Khatun Jui, Abdus Sattar, Md. Abdul Aziz and Malay Bala.



ZAHANGIR ALAM

Paintings by six teachers of the department of Oriental Art, Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA), DU are on display at a weeklong exhibition that started from March 11. The exhibition, titled "In search of roots", is being held at Zainul Gallery-1 of FFA.

Professor emeritus Dr. Sirajul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the exhibition. Eminent artist-cartoonist Rafiqunnabi also spoke on the occasion.

In his speech, Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury said, "The west has its own perception of the east. The tendency to make its impact felt in the form of neo-colonialism has been prevalent. But we must uphold our roots through exploring

the opulent culture that we have inherited. Unlike many civilisations that have fallen victims to extinction, culture survives the test of time through ceaseless practice. This effort by these six artists -- to trace our identity -- is appreciable."

In his works, Professor and Chairman of the department, Abdus Sattar has depicted women embellished with natural elements like flora and fauna. All his artworks, engraved on wood, reflect a taste for the uncomplicated beauty of oriental art.

Associate Professor Nasreen Begum portrayed women (in acrylic) in a fashion that is evocative of the mythical water nymphs.

Assistant Professor Md. Abdul Aziz has presented watercolours. Village belle with birds is the theme of his works. The artist has brilliantly played

with subtlety.

Inspired by the Sanskrit classic "Abhigyan Shakuntalam" (of poet Kalidas), artist-lecturer Malay Bala has exquisitely depicted vignettes of Shakuntala, daughter of the heavenly nymph Menoka.

"My artworks may create an impression of illusion, but I hope a true connoisseur will savour the essence of Oriental art," a confident Malay said.

Each painting [watercolour] took the artist around a month to complete.

The technique, according to the artist, is washing the paper and brushing the colours gently -- the inspiration is romanticism. The style was popularised by Abanindranath Tagore (brother of Rabindranath Tagore) who founded the Bengal School that upheld swadeshi (patriotic) values.

Malay Bala also mentioned shringa [six qualities of Oriental Art] -- forms of appearance, sublime beauty, gesture, measurement, separation of colours and distinction.

Another lecturer of the department, Mizanur Rahman Fakir, has also done watercolours on nature, women and mother, child. His watercolours on nature feature flowering plants.

Masuda Khatun Jui, a part-time lecturer of the department, has created images of Buddha, the mystery of birth and an untitled work in watercolour.

The exhibition will remain open till March 17.

## 11th Int'l Short & Independent Film Festival Brilliance in brevity, modesty

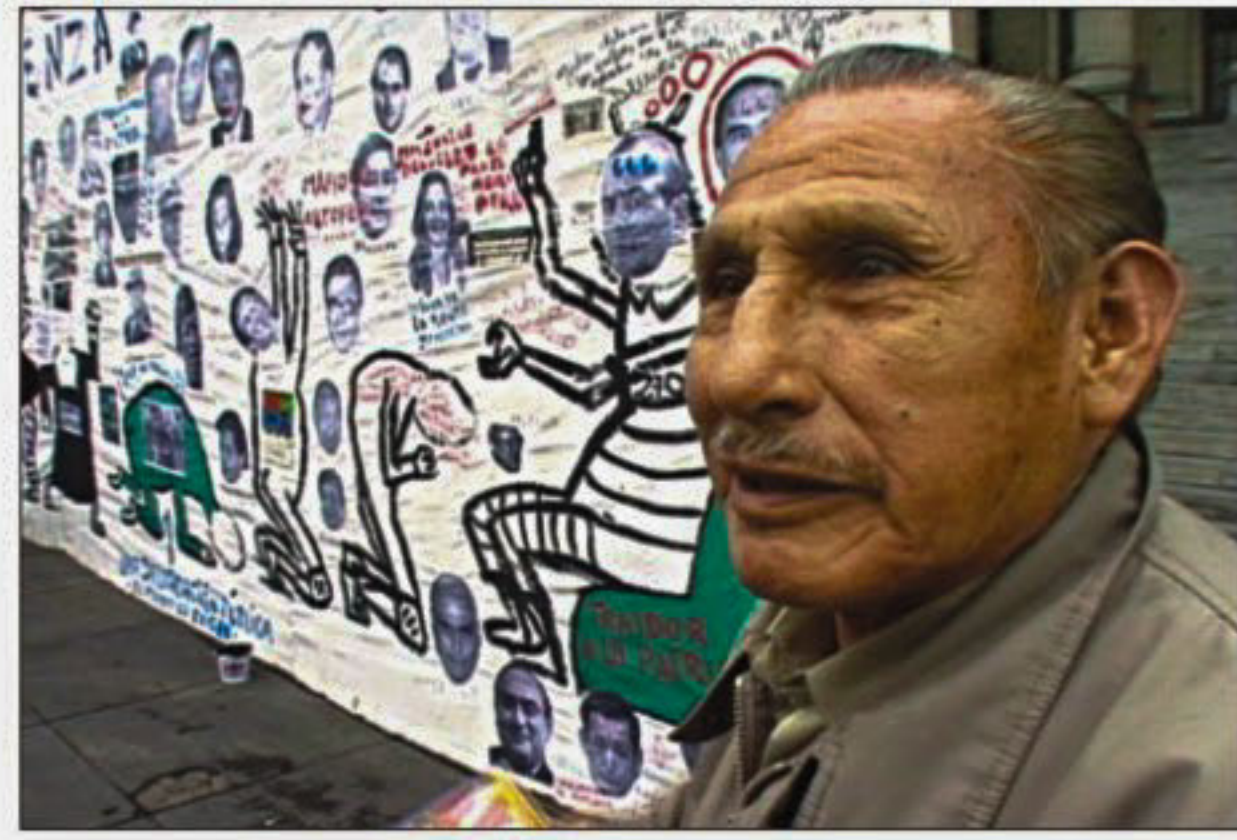
MAINUL HASSAN

"Free Cinema Free Expression" is the slogan of 11th International Short & Independent Film Festival, organised by Bangladesh Short Film Forum (BSFF). The festival ended yesterday.

Starting from March 4, the festival screened over 200 films from 30 countries. Of these over 40 were Bangladeshi entries, directed by renowned and emerging filmmakers including Tareque Masud, Yasmine Kabir, Shabnam Ferdousi and Shibu Kumer Shill.

"One of the main purposes of this year's festival was to give the upcoming filmmakers an opportunity to keep themselves updated with the contemporary global movie scene. Such festivals also give them a chance to compare their works," said N. Rashed Chowdhury, festival committee director.

As part of the festival, BSFF arranged seminars and lec-



ture. A memorial lecture on Alamgir Kabir was delivered by Indian filmmaker Sajhi N. Karan. A roundtable on "Towards Formation of a National Film Policy" and a special lecture, titled "In search of a Path" (by Sri Lankan filmmaker Dharmasena Patiraja) were also held at the festival, providing film enthusiasts and upcoming filmmakers an opportunity to exchange their views.

Films were screened at four sessions, starting from 11am, at the Shawkat

Osman Memorial Auditorium and the Lecture Hall, Central Public Library. Stalls were set up at the venue to provide the visitors with information on the films screened.

"Initially the turnout was not impressive. However, after a few days that changed. At one point we had to stop selling tickets for the Bangladeshi films as the venue couldn't accommodate more viewers," said Saidur Rahman, a member of BSFF.



Scenes from "Against the Grain-An artist's survival guide to Peru" (top), directed by Ann Kaneko, and "Cinemanía", directed by Saiful Wadud Helal.

## Four-day theatre festival by Prachyanat



A scene from the Prachyanat production "Kathopokathon".

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

by Prachyanat begins on March 15 at the Studio Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Six plays along with the musical ensemble "Music

A four-day in-house theatre festival titled "Mohola Mogon"

of Flowers, Birds and Rivers" by the troupe will be staged throughout the festival.

The plays to be staged are -- "Kathopokathon", "Trishonku", "Patar Khela", "Bioscope", "Keramatnama" and "A New Testament of Ancient Mariner".

A group of young theatre activists, including Rinkon Shikder, Heera Chowdhury, Rontik Bipu, Saiful Islam Jarnal, Monirul Islam Rubel and Farhad Hamid are directing the plays.

Everyday two plays will be staged, starting from 6:30pm.

To encourage the young talents, Prachyanat has been staging in-house shows regularly since 2008.



JAMIL MAHMUD

When mysticism and grace come together, the result is an array of colours -- breathtaking in their composition and splendour. This phenomenon was evident in Indian dancer Manjari Chaturvedi's solo performance of "Sufi Kathak". The performance was staged at National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on March 11.

The High Commission of India, in association with Indian Council for Cultural Relations, arranged the recital.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Rajat Mitter gave the welcome speech at the programme.

Sufi Kathak is a comparatively recent [over a decade] style that has been developed by Chaturvedi. The style unites the philosophical depth of Sufi poetry with the graceful narratives of Kathak to evolve a new school of performance.

Chaturvedi belongs to the Lucknow Gharana of Kathak. She trained under the guidance of Arjun Mishra. The dancer closely studied

## When the grace of Kathak met Sufi mysticism

Baba Buleh Shah's contribution to Punjabi Sufi traditions. Other inspirations include Sufi poets Mawlana Rumi and Hazrat Amir Khusrow.

To introduce the mystique of Sufism through dance, Chaturvedi has travelled to and worked with artistes from several countries including Iran, Turkey, Morocco, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

At the National Theatre Hall, Chaturvedi staged five compositions. Her performance articulated the poetry of Indian Sufi poet Hazrat Amir Khusrow, a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya of Delhi.

As a group of Qawwal rendered the musical versions of Amir Khusrow's poems, Chaturvedi broadened the dimensions of the impact with her dance.

The five compositions formed a series and were related to each other. Chaturvedi was the protagonist, whom she termed as "Nayika".

The first piece was called "A Beautiful Woman". Through the performance, the dancer depicted the magnificence of the "Nayika". The second number was "Basant". This composition articulated the merriment and festivity at the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya during the season of spring.

"Chhap Tilak", "Teri Soorat" and "Mi Raksham" were the other performances.

From introducing the "Nayika" to the audience, to fleshing out her characteristics, desire, passion and gradually moving up to a realm that is familiar, yet unattained -- Chaturvedi was remarkable.

## Solo performance by Manjari Chaturvedi



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

## Spotlight on Shyam Benegal at Belfast Film Festival

Director-screenwriter-producer Shyam Benegal will be in the "spotlight" at the prestigious Belfast Film Festival, being held from April 15-30.

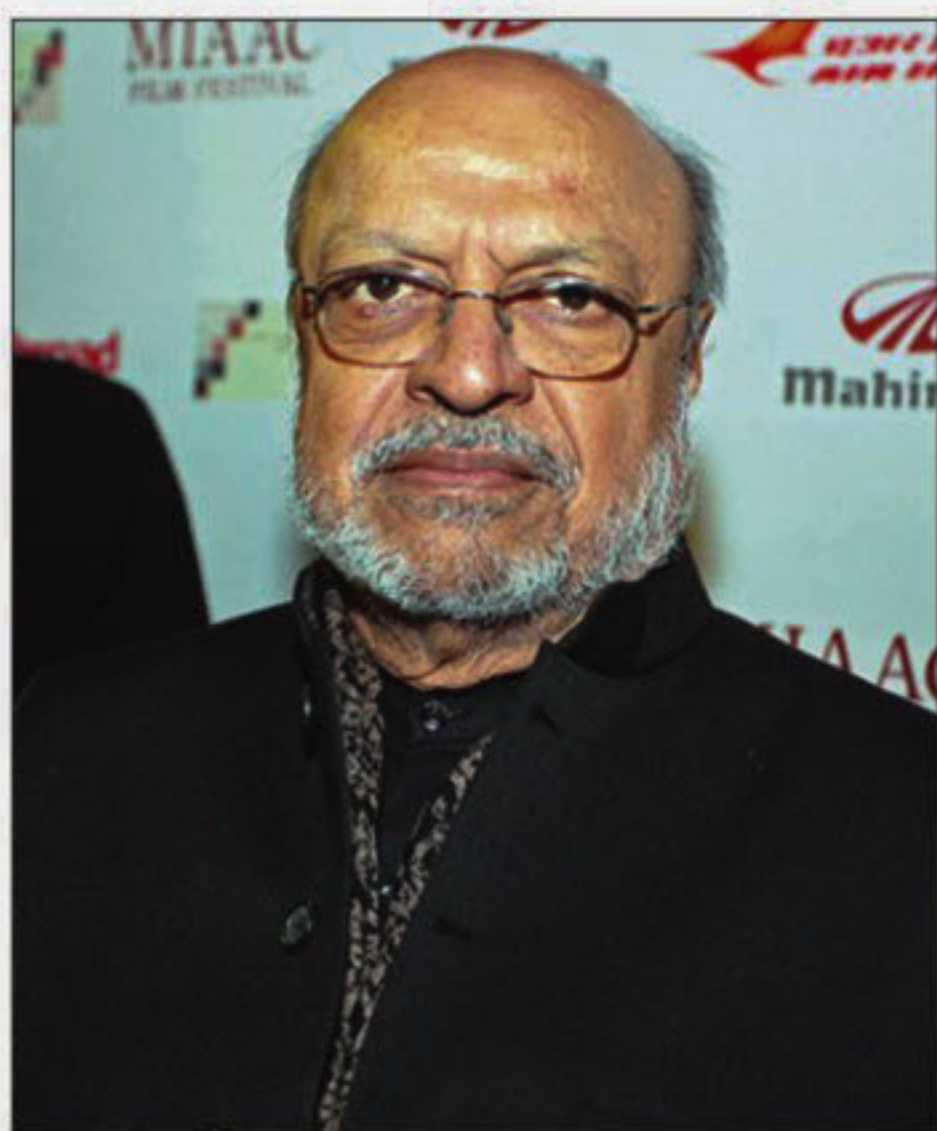
Besides screening of Benegal's films "Zubeidaa" and "The Making of the Mahatma", he will deliver a public lecture on April 22 and participate in the discussion on his films after screening.

Over 16,000 attended last year's Festival, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year.

It will offer over 30 UK/Irish premiers with 125 screenings from over 25 countries, including Japan, Russia, Argentina, Iran, South Africa and Israel.

It opens with "Triage" starring Colin Farrell and closes with Francis Ford Coppola's "Tetro".

Brian Henry-Martin is the chairman of the festival while Michele Devlin is its director.



Shyam Benegal