

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

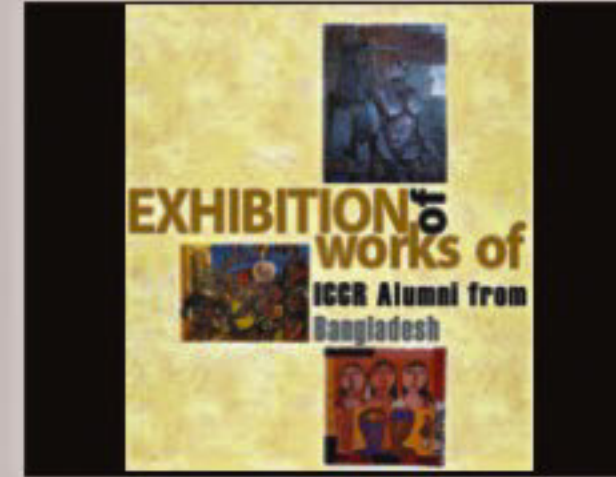
Group Art Exhibition
Title: In Search of Roots
Venue: Zainul Gallery 1, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU
Date: March 11-17
Time: 2pm-8pm



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: Indra Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1
Date: March 10-23
Time: 10am-6pm



Theatre
Play: Umajal
Troup: Nandimukh (Chittagong)
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: March 19
Time: 7pm



Spanish honour for artist Monirul Islam



PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

(From left) Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Dipu Moni; Artist Monirul Islam and Spanish Ambassador Arturo Perez Martinez.

A CORRESPONDENT

Artist Monirul Islam was conferred with the "Cross of Queen Isabella" for his outstanding contribution to art on March 14. The award was handed to the artist at the Dhaka residence of the Spanish Ambassador to Bangladesh. The Spanish Ambassador Arturo Perez Martinez formally handed over the medal and certificate to the artist.

Among others, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Dipu Moni; Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, founder and chairman of BRAC; editor of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam; former CSP officer Nurul Islam; former foreign secretary Farooq Sobhan; art collector and publisher of Depart K Anis Moquit; painters Hashem Khan, Mahmudul Haq; French Ambassador to Bangladesh Charley Causeret; Subir Chowdhury, director of Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts and Bengal Group Chairman Abul

Khair Litu were present at the event. The artist's reaction: "I am elated to receive the award. This will encouraged me to be more devoted to my work. I dedicate this award to my mother who is now hospitalised. My special thanks to the people of Spain, the Queen and the Spanish Ambassador to Bangladesh." Spanish Ambassador Martinez said, "Monirul Islam has created a niche for himself in the Spanish art scene.

He has attained much acclaim in the country. The artist is also a recipient of the National Award of Spain (1997). Monirul Islam was born in 1943. After graduating from Govt. College of Arts and Crafts (now faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka), he joined the college as a teacher (from 1966 to 1969). He went to Spain with a scholarship provided by the then Spanish Government, as part of a cultural exchange programme in 1969. The artist received the Accessit National Award of Spain from the Calcografia Nacionale in 1993. He has conducted many workshops in several countries. His works have been exhibited not only in Madrid, but also other prominent galleries in Europe and beyond. About the award: The Order of Isabella the Catholic (Spanish: Orden de Isabel la Católica) is a Spanish civil order granted in recognition of services that benefit the country. The Order is not exclusive to Spaniards, and many foreigners have been awarded. The Order was created on March 14, 1815 by King Ferdinand VII of Spain in honour of Queen Isabella. The latest reform of the Order dates back to 1998 with its rules and regulations.

Theatre as a catalyst of change

Festival featuring plays on human rights concludes

MAINUL HASSAN

Theatre can provide an unbiased look at our life and society -- inspiring us to right the wrongs. Bangladesh Manobadhikar Natya Parishad (BMNP) is an organisation that works to generate awareness on human rights violation through theatre. The organisation's latest endeavour 'Fourth Jatiyo Manobadhikar Natya Utshab' (theatre festival on human rights) 2010, at Rabindra Sharobar open stage, ended on March 14. Founded in 1998, BMNP held the first 'Manobadhikar Natya Utshab' in 1999. This year's festival, starting from March 12, was inaugurated by eminent writer Syed Shamsul Haque. "Everyday basic human rights are violated in many ways. This festival is an effort to make the people aware of their rights," said Jagannoy Paul, a member of BMNP. The slogan of this year's festival was "Adharer Buk Chirey Shotyere Kori Unmochon." Around 20 theatre troupes including Prachyanat, Theatre Art Unit, Jahangirnagar Theatre, TIB and wings of BMNP (working across the country) participated at the festival and staged plays. Apart from human rights issues, the event also included plays on corruption, student politics, river encroachment, the silent poisoning of drugs and so on. Troupes from outside Dhaka staged plays based on the current state of their areas. On the closing day six plays were



PHOTO: MUMIT M

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staged. The day began with Kishoreganj BMNP staging the play "Bandh Benia". Directed by Harun Al Rashid, the play highlighted the possible effects of the Tipai Mukh dam. According to the play, if the dam goes into operation, the entire Kishoreganj, Sunamganj, Netrakona and other adjacent areas will be severely affected. Kushiya BMNP staged the play "Bishbrikho". The play zooms in on farmers who prefer growing betel leaf to rice, as the former is more profitable these days. However, such practice can contribute to sudden shortage of rice. Other plays staged that day were "Shorisha Therapy" (addressing corruption by Dhaka Yes Natyadal, TIB); "Girgiti" (on corruption in politics by Jahangirnagar Theatre) and "Aschorjo Uposhom" (highlighting the effects of unplanned urbanisation). The last play of the day was "Karkhana", staged by Tirondaj Natyadal. Written and directed by Mannan Hira, the play addressed the recent violence at Rajshahi University. Apart from plays, BMNP conferred special awards to Ferdousi Majumder, Professor Jatin Sarkar and Sardar Fazlul Karim on the closing day.

When James Cameron met Aamir Khan

A college dropout, a filmmaker who sold his script for "Terminator" for one dollar on the condition that he direct it, and then went on to give us blockbusters like "Titanic" and "Avatar", James Cameron wowed actor and director Aamir Khan along with everyone in the audience at The India Today Conclave 2010, whose theme was 'New Decade: Great Expectations' on March 13. Held at The Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi, the session was chaired by editor in chief of the India Today magazine, Aroon Purie. The event was attended by the crème de la crème of society, all eager to hear what the two trend-setting filmmakers had to say about The Future of Cinema. The Oscar winning director shared what it was like to have a dream, and then to go ahead and realise it. At a time when 3-D films were almost unheard of, James Cameron decided to take the plunge and bring in a technological revolution that few had faith in. But Cameron knew this was just something he had to do. But there was one big hurdle in his way -- the fact that few theatres were equipped to show 3-D films. That's where "Avatar" came in -- the dream was to make a film so big, so exciting and so irresistible that the theatres couldn't ignore it. "Avatar" is a film that was written 10 years before it was made. I had almost forgotten about it, but when



(From left) James Cameron, Aroon Purie (Editor-in-Chief of India Today) and Aamir Khan at the India Today Conclave 2010.

I pulled it out again, I knew this could work, if done right. So I assembled together a crew and we got cracking. It was really exciting to be a part of something so cutting edge that if we had a problem, there was no manual to refer to -- we were going to have to figure it all out ourselves. That's why the film took 4.5 years to make!" reveals Cameron. Aamir Khan, clearly taken by Cameron's story, expressed disappointment at the fact that

Bollywood is technologically far behind Hollywood. "I find that Hollywood spends so much time and effort on research and development, which we lack in India. I have always wanted to go to L.A. and learn the techniques of special effects. Maybe someday I could visit your studio and you could show me what you've done with 'Avatar'," said the Indian superstar. So is it special effects, technology or the story that makes a film work?

According to Cameron, "In the case of 'Avatar', I don't think it was 3-D that made it successful. What made it work was the fact that the story works -- it touches people's hearts. It's a very personal film for me; it reflects my feelings as a teenager about how we are treating our planet, war, and things like that. Movies are made from the heart, not by computers. 'Avatar' is a film made from my heart." What does Aamir look for before he signs a film? "I look for filmmakers who have a story to tell. If they are just bursting to tell it, I know they will find the right way to tell it, and make sure people listen to it. That's the central thing I look for. That's what I felt when I heard the stories of 'Rang de Basanti', 'Dil Chahta Hai', 'Taare Zameen Par'...in fact, 15 minutes into the narration of 'Taare Zameen Par', I was crying so hard that I had to request a break, go into the bathroom and get a towel before continuing," Aamir says. Cameron agrees. "If I can't make myself cry while writing an emotional scene, I don't believe it. I know I haven't arrived," he adds. The session spanned over a wide range of subjects, including a rather unexpected statement from Cameron, implying that he would like Aamir to work with him in a Hollywood film!

Source: Internet

ABBA among Roll Hall of Fame inductees



ABBA, Jimmy Cliff, Genesis, The Hollies and the Stooges are the latest inductees in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The induction was held yesterday. Other inductees this year include individual recipients of the Ahmet Ertegun Award -- record executive David Geffen and songwriters Jeff Barry, Otis Blackwell, Ellie Greenwich, Barry Mann, Mort Shuman, Jesse Stone and Cynthia Weil. The inductees "represent a great cross-section of artists that define the broad spectrum and history of rock 'n' roll and people that have contributed immeasurably to our business," Joel Peresman, president and CEO of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Foundation, said when they were named last year.

The inductees were chosen by a voting committee of the foundation. Artists are eligible 25 years after their first recording is released. An exhibit featuring all the inductees opened yesterday at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, in Cleveland, Ohio. Their stage outfits, instruments, handwritten lyrics, photographs and more will be on display through March 14, 2011. The museum -- which says it "exists to collect, preserve and interpret the impact the Rock has made on our world" -- features seven floors of exhibition space, spanning 150,000 square feet. Source: CNN

Kanthabithi holds cultural programme

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Kanthabithi the lone recital organisation of Magura held a three-day cultural programme featuring poetry recitation and folk songs to mark its 12th anniversary that ended on March 13 with a folk musical function. Leading Baul singer of the country Samir Baul, singer Sujon, Hashi Ara and local artistes including Saiful Islam Hirok performed at the event.

The programme was held at the Asaduzzaman auditorium in Magura town. At the beginning a production titled "Shato Kanther Abriti" (recitation of hundred voices) was performed by the artistes of Kanthabithi and other cultural organisations in Magura. On the first day of the programme apart from Kanthabithi's child artistes' Porompara a recital organisation from Dhaka, staged a production titled "Bodher kachhey ekti sandhya" where they per-

formed 10 poems. At the fag end of the first day's programme, presidium member of Abriti Samonnoy Parishad (ASP) famed recital artiste Rafikul Islam's performance of romantic and patriotic poetry captivated the audience. On the second day noted recital artistes Rabi Sankar Moitree, Biplab Majumdar and Khondokar Shamsuzzoha along with Kanthabithi's promising artistes Shafikul Islam and Mithun Zaman performed at the programme.



An album titled "O Amar Chander Alo" featuring Tagore songs by Bilu Siddique was launched at Bengal Shilpalaya recently. Eminent artist and cultural personality Mustafa Monwar unveiled the album while noted singer Kanak Chapa was present as special guest on the occasion. Later the singer performed songs on the occasion.