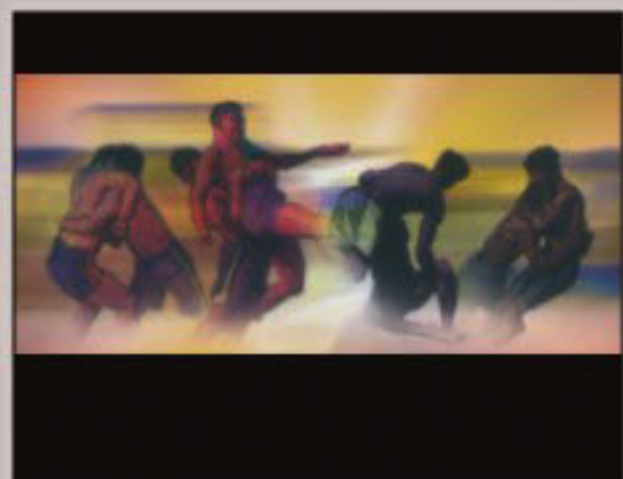


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Jabbarer Bali Khela O Baishakhi Mela
Venue: Lal Dighi Maidan, Chittagong
Date: April 24-26



Group Art Exhibition

Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F Road-16, Dhanmondi
Date: 16-30
Time: 12pm-8pm



Film Screening

Organiser: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre
Films: Documentary on Pather Panchali and Apur Sangsar
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1
Date: April 24
Time: 6pm onwards



International Dance Day

Organiser: Dance Artists Association and Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Theatre Centre, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: April 23-29
Time: 6.30pm



Musings of a seasoned actress

A chat with Subarna Mustafa

Over three decades, actress Subarna Mustafa has enchanted the audience with her versatility. She has her hands full at the moment: There's "Shimanto" and "Metro" on Desh TV, "Uposhonghar" on ATN (by Shaatkahon, her own production house), and "Manobjomin" that will be aired on ntv from June.



A CORRESPONDENT

For women in media, what changes have you seen over the years?

Subarna: More women are in the work force now, which is a positive side. Initially, when we started, there were just a handful of us; it was something you did on the side. In my case it was studying. When you take your work professionally, the level of commitment goes up.

Professionally, the market has widened. Since there was only one channel to start with, one had to focus on films or jatra or theatre. Theatre was flourishing on personal finance.

ETV was the first epoch-making private channel. Although there were other private channels, I would specifically like to mention this one as it opened up avenues for new directors, playwrights and actors.

Have you ever felt burdened by the diverse roles a woman is expected to play?

Subarna: This is true not only for South-Asian women but women everywhere and at all times, even now when women are educated. There are small yet significant changes, like the housework is shared. Personally, I feel that one does not have to go about pleasing everybody.

Occupying a privileged position in society, I can assert this notion. This happiness changes the world around you. You learn to cope. More than 80 per cent of the labour force comprise of women. Thus a woman earns the bread, looks after the family, and is there for herself and others. As for myself, I don't really go out on a mission. There were instances when say my parents were unwell for a long time and I made sure that they were taken care off.

Tell us about the interesting characters you have played so far?

Subarna: In "Shongshoptok", I played the role of Rabu who had made a long journey in life from the age of 15 to 35. This was rather interesting. In Humayan Ahmed's "Kothao Keu Nei" too, I had an interesting role. Currently, in "Shimanto", I find my character very curious; she speaks in the Mymensingh dialect. When a character challenges you, it really boosts an actor's enthusiasm.

Do you find any free time amidst your daily hectic schedule?

Subarna: I have to have some free time, otherwise I cannot function properly. It's like food for the soul. I watch TV, movies, etc. I am a bookworm. I am a great sports enthusiast; I like football, cricket and basketball, evidently everything other than golf.

The reality of an ever-renewing art form

In conversation with Tobias Biancone

KARIM WAHEED

Swiss poet-playwright and General Secretary of International Theatre Institute (ITI) Tobias Biancone was in town to attend the international seminar and theatre festival jointly organised by the Bangladesh Centre of ITI and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). The festival, which ended on April 21, featured 21 productions -- including a dance performance, a dance-drama, one Chinese opera and a jatra -- staged by troupes from Bangladesh, India and Singapore.

At the lounge of Dhaka Club Guest House, over coffee, Biancone talked about his impression of the festival, Bangladeshi theatre and more.

His take on the slogan of the recent festival, "Rediscovering Theatre in New Reality": "Theatre is all about the contemporary time. I call it a 'permanent process.'"

"There are phases when one feels that perhaps theatre

is at a standstill and one has to go back to the basics like dance, music and dramatics to rediscover the medium. Rediscovering also involves exploring new elements and grounds. People like Brecht and Stanislavski thoroughly researched on this before emerging with their respective innovative contributions."

Biancone saw six plays at the festival. Of them two in particular seemed remarkable to him. "I would term 'Gazi Kalu Champabati' (a BSA production; staged on April 21 at Experimental Theatre) a typical Bangladeshi play. Everything about it is unique, from the lights to set and incorporation of music and dance," says the playwright.

The other production that made an impression on him is "Meraj Fakirer Maa" (a Theatre production; staged on April 19 at Experimental Theatre). "It (the play) has a universal appeal. Anyone can relate to this story, this dilemma. The protagonist (played by Ferdousi Majumder) makes you react with her incredible theatrical skills,"

Biancone adds.

"I found 'The Communicator' (staged by Centre for Asian Theatre on April 20 at National Theatre) to be interesting as well. It was very visual and had inspiring elements which are Bangladeshi but executed through a western style," he says.

About Bangladeshi theatre, Biancone says, "It's very alive. There are many quality actors here and the standard is comparable to other nations with rich theatre traditions."

For Bangladeshi plays to draw global attention and focus, the playwright feels "good networking and promotion are much needed." "Croatia is doing that through several international festivals and inviting critics and theatre exponents," he says.

Biancone, who has been involved with ITI for 21 years, has this to say about the Bangladesh chapter of the organisation: "Bangladesh is one of our more active centres and is an ideal model like the US,



Tobias Biancone

Germany and Philippines. The centre is dedicated to the medium and theatre education." Some of Biancone's

acclaimed plays are "The Spy", "The Half Truth" and "Exhibition Opera". Three of his poetry books are being translated into Bangla.



Scenes from "Meraj Fakirer Maa" (left) and "Gazi Kalu Champabati".

PHOTOS: MUMIT M.

TV Watch

Singer Hridoy Khan live on "Music Together"

A CORRESPONDENT

Popular young singer Hridoy Khan will perform on a live musical show "Music Together" on Banglavisision today at 4:05 pm.

Produced jointly by Banglavisision and Radio Today, the programme will also be broadcast live on Radio Today. Aside from adda with Khan, listeners and spectators can enjoy songs from the playlist on request along with watching the music video of the same song on Banglavisision.

Directed by Javed Iqbal Tapu, RJ Nirob and VJ Nabila will jointly anchor the programme.



Documentary on Shakespeare on Desh TV

A CORRESPONDENT

To mark 446th birth and 394th death anniversary of William Shakespeare, Desh TV will air a documentary today at 6:25 pm on the legendary English playwright. Apart from this, renowned litterateur Syed Shamsul Haq and Abdus Selim will participate in a discussion, titled "Bangladesh-e Shakespeare Chorcha."

Shakespeare is recognised as one of the most influential playwrights in the world. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, London on April 23 in 1564. His works continue to be adapted in different languages and inspire films and plays around the world. He died on his birthday in 1616.



Drama serial "Keu Robey Na" on BTV



A scene from the serial.

A CORRESPONDENT

Drama serial "Keu Robey Na" is written and directed by noted writer Anisul Haque and Faridur Rahman respectively. The serial will be aired today on BTV at 7:20 pm.

The story of the serial revolves around two rival villages-- Uttar Khan and Dakkhin Khan. The people of the villages boast of their respective heritage. Uttar Khan seemingly has an edge over Dakkhin Khan in terms of its ancient culture and archaeological relics. On the advice of the sightless Shamsu Gayan, the people of Dakkhin Khan gain a lead over Uttar Khan through diffusing

education among the villagers. Following this path of development, the villagers of Uttar Khan become conscious of the need for education.

Each episode of the serial will focus on a key issue of education. Songs and humour associated with the play will not only produce simple entertainment but also mobilise the nation towards universal and integrated primary education.

Mamunur Rashid, Jayonto Chattopadhyay, Pijush Bandyopadhyay, Wahida Mallik Jolly, Dr. Ejajul Islam, Kiron Chandra Roy, Anisur Rahman Milon and Nadia enact different roles in the serial. The serial will be aired on every Friday as usual.