

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

21st National Rabindra Sangeet Festival

Organiser: Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Public Library, Shahbagh
Date: May 4-8
Time: 7pm onwards



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Nocturnal Shades
Artist: Hamiduzzaman Khan
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H-275/F, R-16, Dhanmondi
Date: April 4-16
Time: 12pm-8pm



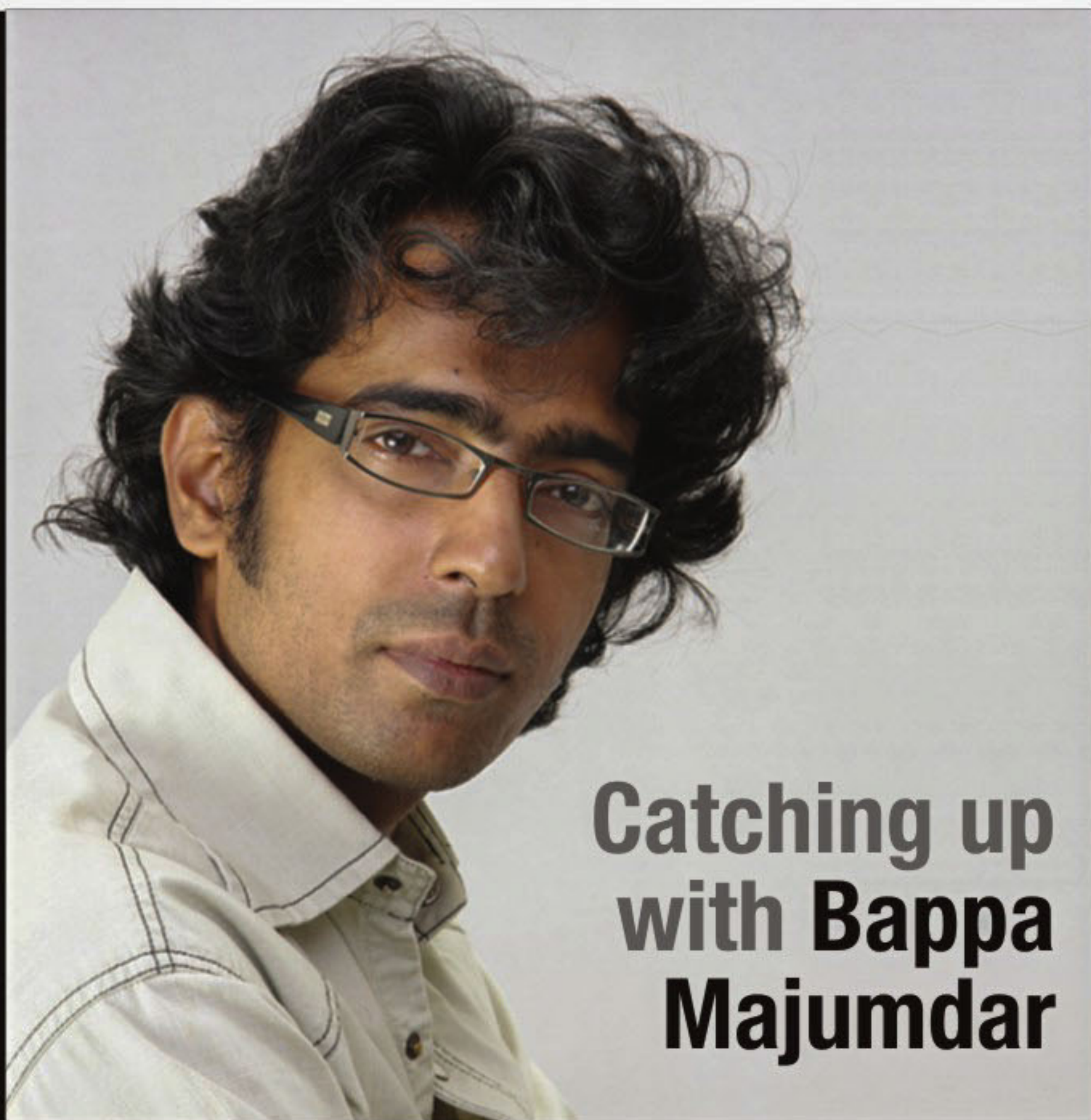
Musical Soiree

Singer: Shama Rahman
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1
Date: May 8
Time: 6pm



Group Art Exhibition

Title: Diversity
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: April 23-May 6
Time: 5pm-8pm



Catching up with Bappa Majumdar

A CORRESPONDENT

At present singer-composer Bappa Majumdar is busy with a mixed album and his band Dolchhut's next. The popular musician is leaving for Australia today; he is scheduled to perform at a concert there. The Daily Star caught up with the artist:

TDS: The Daily Star (TDS): Tell us about your current projects.

Bappa: I'm working on a mixed album. Tanveer Alam Shawjeeb has composed and penned the songs. I'm directing music for seven songs, while Arnob is doing three others.

TDS: Who are the featured singers?

Bappa: Partho Barua, Arnob, Kona, Elita, Shawjeeb and I.

TDS: Give us some update on your band Dolchhut. When can the fans expect the band's latest album?

Bappa: Dolchhut is doing great. We are performing on stage regularly in and outside Dhaka. Our last album 'Jyotsnabihar' was released in 2007. Fans' response was positive and inspiring. The new album Dolchhut 5 is in the pipeline. We are expecting to release the album later this year.

TDS: A mixed album titled "Ek Mutho Gaan-2" was released recently, featuring you and Fahmida Nabi. How has the response

been?

Bappa: "Ek Mutho Gaan-2" was produced in a very short time. Fahmida Nabi is a brilliant singer. Some of our duets have been received well in the past. The album is a continuity to retain that popularity.

TDS: Many feel that the audio market is going through a slump right now. If so, what would be the reason behind that?

Bappa: I think it is because of the disinterest from the production houses' part. They are seemingly not interested in the publicity/marketing aspect of albums. Apart from this, audio piracy, free downloads etc are to be blamed for the current decline in sales of audio albums.

TDS: Singers can come forth to solve the problems...

Bappa: For some unexplainable reason we, singers, have no unity. Artistes from other sectors are united, and we seem to have little interest in coming together for a cause. If producers and singers together take a stand, we can achieve a lot.

TDS: Are you doing playback as well?

Bappa: Not often. I do playback once in a blue moon. My most recent playback was for the film "Bailey Road". Abid Roni is the composer of the song. If I were approached with more quality compositions, I'd love to do playback more often.

Theatre festival by Padatik Natya Sangsad ends

MAINUL HASSAN

The 'Kochi Sharok Padatik Natya Utsab 2010' by Padatik Natya Sangsad, Bangladesh ended amidst much festivity on May 1. Theatre troupe Mohakoron Binodon Shangstha from Tripura, India staged the play "Rajendra Dhakir Golpo" at the festival on the concluding day.

The theatre festival was a tribute to the memory of late Abu Mohammad Murtaish Kochi, one of the founding members of Padatik. Kochi was a dedicated theatre activist till his untimely death in 2002.

The festival which started on April 24, featured participation by five local troupes (Theatre, Desh Natok, Shubachan, Dhaka Theatre and the host), two Indian troupes (Ha-Ja-Ba-Ra-La from West Bengal and Mohakoron Binodon Shangstha)

Talking about the festival, Selim S.H. Chowdhury, chief executive of Padatik said, "The festival was a success. We've had full-house during the entire festival. We introduced special discounts on ticket prices to encourage theatre enthusiasts, especially youngsters to attend the shows."

Among the attractions of the festival was Ha-Ja-Ba-Ra-La's latest production "Obogunthita." Based on Rabindranath Tagore's short story "Tyag", the play had its debut at the festival.

"It is a rare occasion for an Indian troupe to premiere its production at a festival in Bangladesh," said Chowdhury.

"Obogunthita" was staged at the festival on April 30. The play has been produced on the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. Chandan Sen is director of the play.

The concluding day's performance "Rajendra Dhakir Golpo" zooms in on the ills of discrimination based on the caste system.

The protagonist of the play Rajendra Hrishidas (played by Shomir Roy, also the director of the play), is a member of the lower caste Hrishidas community.

"In Tripura members of the Hrishidas community often face social discrimination as they are considered to the lowest rung of the Hindu caste system," said Manab De, general secretary, Mohakoron Binodon Shangstha.

"Through the play we hope to raise social awareness highlighting their struggles in the society," added Manab.

Rajendra Hrishidas earns his livelihood by playing *dhak* during the *puja*. Rajendra wants to pass on the skills to his son Poran (played by Anshuman Das). But instead of following his father's footsteps, a progressive Poran chooses to join the military. As the play progresses, the social discrimination factor Rajendra and his community faces becomes apparent.



PHOTO: MUMIT M.



PHOTO: NELYO HOSSAIN

Scene from "Obogunthita" (top) and "Rajendra Dhakir Golpo".

Philology of Time

Solo Raku exhibition by Ashim Halder



"Beautification" (left) and "Belong with Memory" by Ashim Halder.

ZAHANGIR ALOM

A weeklong solo *Raku* exhibition titled "Philology of Time" ended recently at the Zainul Gallery-1, Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA), Dhaka University. The exhibition featured works of young emerging artist Ashim Halder Sagor.

Inauguration of the exhibition was presided over by noted artist Swapan Kumar Sikder. Eminent artist Samarjit Roy Chowdhury was the chief guest, while renowned art critic Moinuddin Khaled; chairman of the Department of Oriental Art, FFA, Professor Abdus Satter and artist Shahid Kabir were present as special guests at the inaugural ceremony.

'Raku' (meaning delighted or joyful), a traditional Japanese art form, has its roots in ceramics. The

technique used in *Raku* is burning China white clay in a low temperature with sawdust and dry leaves, followed by instantly cooling it in cold water so that a carbon texture is formed over the surface. Aside from everyday use, *Raku* has become popular for its aesthetic value in both East and West.

"Belong with Memory," "Beautification," "I am the Old King 1" and "2," "Viewing Everything," "Living with Threat," "Symbol of Youth," "Crime in the Name of God," "Expression of Time," "Modernism," "Growing Up," "Peace Prop," "Secret Talk" and a few untitled works by the artist were on display at the exhibition.

Interestingly enough, Halder uses his portrait along with many parts of his own anatomy, including hands, eyes and lips in almost all of works and thereby adds a new dimension.

"Belong with Memory" envisages

the artist's childhood. The piece depicts a meeting of the artist's childhood memories on the edge of his skull.

"Beautification" zooms in on a balanced ecology that is about to crumble thanks to the misguided activities of the greedy around us. The work reminds one of Michael Jackson's "Earth Song." "Viewing everything" demonstrates the third eye, featuring our never-ending helplessness at the clutches of authoritative power.

"Living with Threat", where the artist's self portrait is hidden, depicts a world map adorned with pistols, illustrating vulnerability while "Secret Talk "1" and "2" exquisitely reveal the evil plans of social bigwigs.

"Peace Prop" -- showing three pistols forming a peace memorial -- is a satirical work by the artist that may



generate an oxymoronic image in the minds of art connoisseurs as the title of the artwork suggests. "Me & My Myth 1" and "2" transport the artist's imaginative world into the chasm of time.

Halder tries to capture the philology of time through his artworks.

"My first solo *Raku* exhibition is also the first display of this art form in Bangladesh. This exhibition is an outcome of my participation in two workshops conducted by the internationally famed Bangladeshi artist Mahbubur Rahman, coordinator of Britto Arts Trust, and American artist Ramon Camarillo respectively in 2008 and in 2009," says Halder.

Halder was placed first, securing first class in his BFA (Honours) from the Department of Ceramics, FFA, DU in 2009 and is doing his MFA from the same institute.

Lady Gaga, Robert Pattinson dubbed 'Most Influential' by Time magazine



Cover of the special issue.

A number of Hollywood's leading men and women have made their way onto the Time 100, the magazine's annual list of the year's most influential people.

Amongst them was Lady Gaga, whose music -- and record-breaking YouTube videos -- have taken the world by storm.

"When I see somebody like Gaga, I sit back in admiration," Cyndi Lauper wrote of the already iconic singer in the new issue. "I'm inspired to pick up the torch again myself. I did an interview with her once, and she

showed up with a sculpture on her head. I thought, 'How awesome!'"

Besides Gaga, a number of musicians made the list, including Prince, Elton John and Taylor Swift, who earned kudos from Fleetwood Mac legend Stevie Nicks, who performed with Taylor at this year's Grammy Awards.

"Taylor reminds me of myself in her determination and her childlike nature. It's an innocence that's so special and so rare," Stevie wrote. "This girl writes the songs that make the whole world

sing, like Neil Diamond or Elton John. I still walk around singing her song 'Today Was a Fairytale.'"

On the film and television side, the magazine included stars such as "How I Met Your Mother's" Neil Patrick Harris, "Glee" star Lea Michele, "American Idol" judge Simon Cowell, "Lost" writer-producers Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof, "District 9" director Neil Blomkamp, "Avatar" helmer James Cameron, "The Hurt Locker" director Kathryn Bigelow, TV talker Oprah Winfrey, comedian Ricky Gervais and "Twilight" heartthrob Robert Pattinson.

"We haven't seen a tenth of what he can do onscreen," "The Twilight Saga: New Moon" director Chris Weitz wrote of his star.

Also on the list was new mom Sandra Bullock, finally an Oscar winner this year for her role in "The Blind Side."

"She puts you at ease; there's no movie star there at all. Well, she happens to be a bit beautiful, I'll grant, and a bit built, but the human being inside all that gorgeousness is just a delight," "The Proposal" co-star Betty White wrote of Sandra. "She's been labelled America's Sweetheart, which sounds soft and sweet. Sandra is both of those things, but she also has a strength of her own. She never lets a scene get away from her."

Source: Internet