

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK


Group Art Exhibition

Title: Rooted Creativity-3

Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi

Date: June 15-26

Time: 12pm-8pm




Mango, Silk and Folk Festival

Organiser: Amra Rajshahibashi

Venue: Green Plaza, Rajshahi City Corporation Building, Rajshahi

Date: June 18-20

Time: 5:30pm



Art Exhibition

Painter: Nikhil Chandra Das

Title: The story of lost painting

Venue: Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Date: June 12-26

Time: 11 pm-7 pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Artist: Mohammad Fakruzzaman

Venue: Gallery Chitrak, H-21, R-4, Dhanmondi

Date: June 19-27

Time: 10am-8pm



Generating interest in ‘Chhau’ dance

In conversation with Swapan and Sucheta Majumder

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Swapan Majumder is an Indian exponent of *Chhau* dance and his wife Sucheta, a Bangladeshi, is a *Kathak* artiste. The dancer duo is now in Dhaka to conduct a workshop on dance. Noted Bangladeshi dancers Shamim Ara Nipa and Shibli Mohammad of Nrityanchal are organising the workshop. Starting from June 6, the workshop is on at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and will continue till June 21.

It is difficult to determine the exact origins of *Chhau*. The three forms of *Chhau* are named after the regions where they were practiced -- *Purulia Chhau* of West Bengal, *Seraikela Chhau* of Bihar and *Mayurbhanj Chhau* of Orissa. Ancient scriptures refer to the dance form's martial origins, suggesting that the term "Chhau" was derived from the local dialect meaning an army camp. Apparently warriors, in their leisure, developed this dance form as an expression of celebration. Often dealing with gods, goddesses and other mythic characters, *Chhau* dance features steps called *Chali* and *Dharan* (Mayurbhanj style) and is accompanied with musical instruments like *shanaï*, *dhol* and *dhamsha*. While, the Seraikela and Purulia sub-genres of *Chhau* use



Swapan Majumder (centre) with students at the workshop.

masks, the Mayurbhanj style uses none.

In between training young dancers, Swapan and Sucheta talked to The Daily Star (TDS).

TDS: What's your impression of Bangladeshi dance?

Swapan: Before coming here, I

presumed that perhaps, Bangladeshi dancers predominantly work with folk dance as most of the Bangladeshi students studying in Delhi have a great penchant for the genre. But now I've realised that students are equally eager to learn different forms of classical dance. They proceed with utmost sincerity. This is truly inspiring!

TDS: How do you evaluate the participants attending your workshop?

Swapan: To be very frank, they try their best but at times find it difficult to grasp all the elements, as physical expressions are quite frequent in this form of dance. The students might find the lessons challenging but they are really enthusiastic and try to grasp things quick. I've also allocated an extra hour for them in this regard.

TDS: Why did you choose Chhau as your dance style?

Swapan: I used to be a student of *Kathak*. After training in *Kathak* for six years I realised that the style might not be suitable for my physique and I started taking interest in *Chhau*. Gradually, the dance form appealed more to me. I've performed *Chhau* in many countries including a major show in

Edinburgh, UK.

TDS: Your wife is also a dancer. Does it create issues in your conjugal life?

Swapan: Not at all! Rather we can work together and encourage each other.

TDS: Tell us about your background in dance...

Sucheta: *Kathak* is my passion. My *Kathak* lessons started under Shibli Mohammad. Later, with a scholarship, I went to India and completed a diploma on *Kathak*. I also learnt *Chhau* at Bharatiya Kala Kendra. I also attended Ballet classes there. Currently I teach at Indian schools.

TDS: Unfulfilled ambition?

Sucheta: I'm in search of a guru. Though I have trained in *Kathak* for five years, I feel like I still know nothing about it. I would like to take *Kathak* lessons till the end and I want to do something remarkable in this field.

Swapan: All my aspirations involve dance.

Swapan Majumder and Sucheta, accompanied by dancers of Nrityanchal, will perform at Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium on June 21 at 7 pm.



Sucheta and Swapan.

Buzz

Early Oscar contenders scarce despite rule change

As the first half of 2010 draws to a close, serious Academy Awards contenders have yet to emerge.

Admittedly, the 83rd annual Academy Awards ceremony, set for February 27, is a long way off. And traditionally most awards hopefuls arrive during the second half of the year.

But when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences expanded its best picture race to ten nominees last year, it opened the door so that commercial hits could be rewarded alongside narrower, specialty fare.

Yet despite the Academy's open-door policy, the film industry hasn't been pumping out likely nominees.

"Robin Hood," given the full red-carpet treatment at the Cannes Film Festival, may have reteamed Russell Crowe and director Ridley Scott, but it paled next to their Oscar-winning "Gladiator." With more than \$300 million in domestic grosses, "Iron Man 2" has moved ahead of the original's box office at the same point in its release, but the sequel failed to generate the critical enthusiasm that greeted its 2008 predecessor.

Far from championing awards hopefuls, critics have spent the first half of Hollywood's summer movie season competing to see who could deliver the most devastating put-downs of movies like "Sex and the City 2" and "The A-Team."

All that should change this weekend, as Disney releases Pixar's "Toy

Story 3," the first blue-chip contender in the 2010 awards race. As of Thursday, it boasted a 100 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes -- just like the first two instalments in the franchise.

And just as Pixar's "Up" was the earliest 2009 release -- it opened on May 29 last year -- to go on to score a best picture nomination, the third "Toy



"Toy Story 3" is seemingly the first contender in the 2010 awards race.

Story" could become the first 2010 entry to make it into the circle of ten.

Looking toward July, the next great Oscar hope likely to stake its claim is Christopher Nolan's "Inception," starring Leonardo DiCaprio, which Warners opens July 16. Visually-arresting trailers have only hinted at

fury of criticism that, in part, led to the new ten-picture field.)

On the other hand, the Academy's new model doesn't guarantee that every box office hit is guaranteed automatic tickets to the Kodak Theater.

Currently, Tim Burton's "Alice in

Wonderland," which Disney released in March, is the year's top grosser: It has taken in more than \$1 billion worldwide. But the idiosyncratic Burton has yet to be embraced by the Academy -- he has received only one nomination, as producer of the animated "Corpse Bride" -- and "Alice" was greeted with decidedly mixed reviews. All of which could limit its Oscar profile to tech categories.

Meanwhile, Cannes didn't push many other films to the fore. The Palme d'Or winner, Apichatpong Weerasethakul's demanding "Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall his Past Lives," doesn't yet have an American distributor.

Although applauded by critics, Mike Leigh's "Another Year" went home empty-handed. But the slice-of-life movie about a circle of middle-aged friends should still find itself on the radar when Sony Classics releases it later this year -- especially for Lesley Manville's performance as a quietly desperate single woman, which includes a drunk scene that's got to be considered awards bait.

Still, that leaves a lot of very open slots awaiting the onslaught of wannabes that will attempt to survive the Venice-Telluride-Toronto obstacle course in September. As far as Oscar 2010 is concerned, the race has only just begun.

Source: The New York Times

Football Fever

Celebrities on World Cup 2010

Joya Ahsan

"I've been a football enthusiast since childhood and World Cup is something which one gets to see once every four years. It is the biggest celebration of football on the planet. Naturally, during every World Cup I'm very excited, and this year is no different," said Joya Ahsan, one of the popular actresses on the small screen.

Brazil is Joya's favourite team. "When it comes to World Cup, missing out on my favourite team in action is totally out of the question!" said Joya, who obviously didn't miss the match between Brazil and North Korea.

"I watched the entire match! It was such a relief seeing Brazil coming out as the winner in the end!" said Joya (smiling).

"North Korea also deserves credit, they played very well," she added.

"I'll try not to miss any of the matches this year. I hope Brazil wins this year," said Joya.

On the work front, Joya plays a major role in Nasiruddin Yousuff's upcoming film "Guerrilla." Shooting for the film is currently in full swing.



"Because of the shooting I might miss some of the matches but I'll certainly try not to miss any major one," said Joya.

"Choita Pagol" on Channel i

A CORRESPONDENT

A naive young man, Choita, whom the villagers call "pagol" (crazy), remains seemingly stable for 11 months. For a month every year, Choita turns insane. The villagers exploit Choita and make him do all kinds of chores. But when he turns "mad," he is shunned by all. Even when he goes without food for days, no one comes to his aid. The drama serial "Choita Pagol" narrates his story.

An episode of the serial will be aired tonight on Channel i at 7:50 pm. Written by Brindabon Das, the serial has been directed by Mahfuz Ahmed. Mahfuz also plays the titular role. The dialect of Noakhali is an interesting aspect of the serial. As the serial progresses, the harsh reality -- abuse of the weak



Mahfuz Ahmed in a scene from the serial.

and the vulnerable in the society -- comes to focus. The cast includes Joya

Ahsan, Badhon, Rawnak Hassan, Moushumi Bishwas and Majnun Mizan.

Mark Twain's tribute to daughter sells for \$242, 500

A tribute written by American novelist and satirist Mark Twain to his daughter, who died of spinal meningitis at the age of 24, sold at auction on Thursday for \$242,500, almost doubling pre-sale estimates.

The unpublished "A Family Sketch" was a 64-page, handwritten manuscript that Twain wrote around 1896 or 1897 for

Olivia "Susy" Clemens, who inspired some of his stories and even wrote her own biography of her father.

The document also reminisced about his own childhood and was described as the missing chapter of his autobiography.

"What initially began as a tribute to his late -- and undis-

puted favourite -- daughter Susy thus devolved into a narrative that encompasses the whole of this family and friends as well as glimpses of incidents of his own childhood," auctioneer Sotheby's said in a statement.

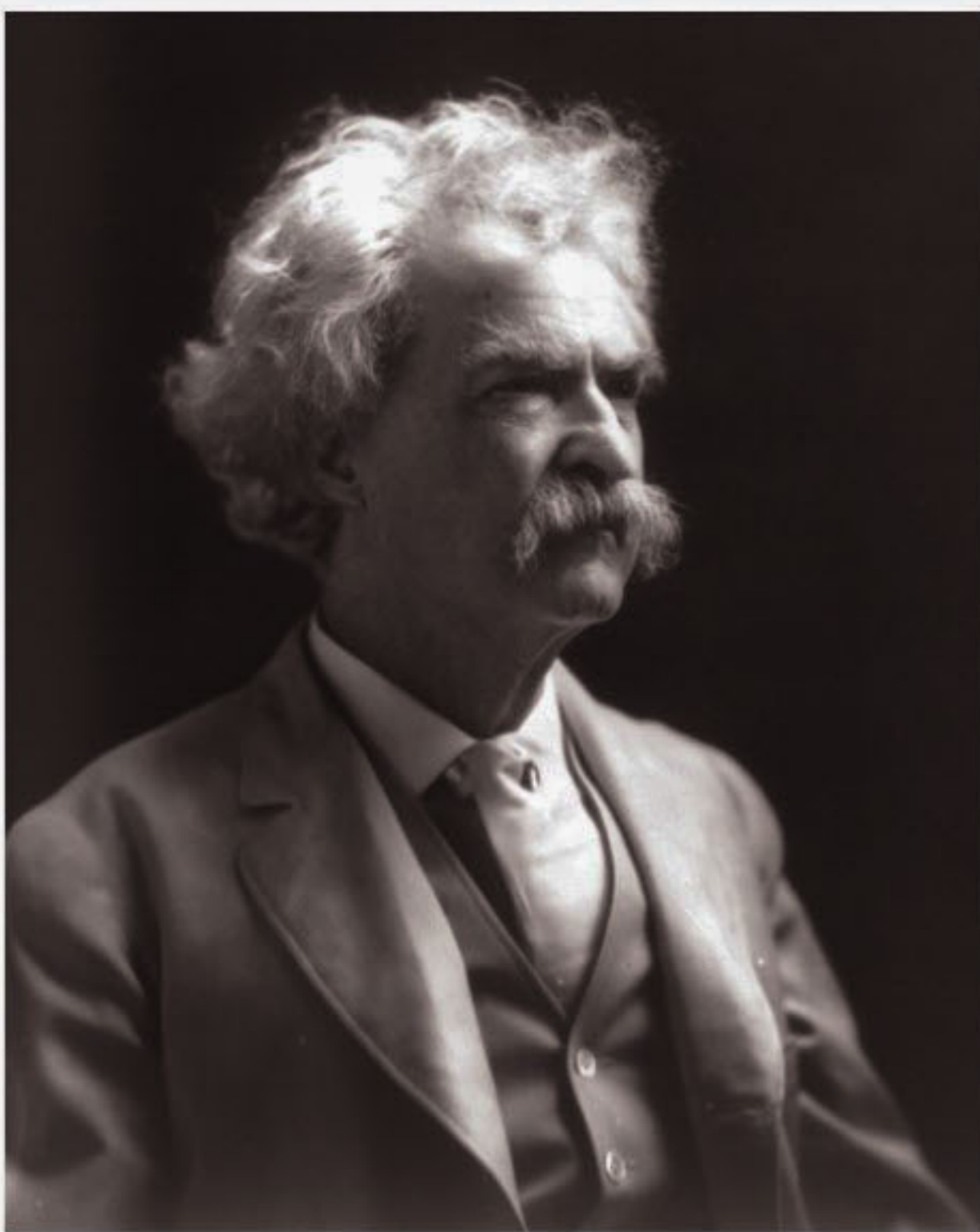
Sotheby's said it sold to an unidentified New York trade buyer.

The document was among 200 Twain letters, manuscripts and photographs sold by the estate of media executive James S. Copley. Sotheby's said the collection "shed light on the wit, pathos, and tragedy of the acclaimed author of 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,' Samuel Langhorne Clemens."

Mark Twain was the pen-name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens who died in 1910 at the age of 74.

The University of California at Berkeley is set to release the first of three volumes of Mark Twain's autobiography later this year to coincide with the centennial year of his death.

Twain spent the last four years of his life recording his life for prosperity but included strict instructions that many of the pieces appear no sooner than 100 years after his death.



Mark Twain

Source: Internet