

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Theatre Festival 2010

Title: Srijonshil Tarunner Tatyapokash
Organiser: Department of Theatre, Dhaka University
Venue: Natmondol, DU
Date: August 11-18
Time: 7:30pm



Ethnic Jewellery Exhibition

Title: Aadi
Artist: Amman Rashid
Venue: Chondons, Rd 103, H 9, Gulshan-2
Date: August 20-21
Time: 10am-8pm



Film Screening

Film: "Angel-A"
Venue: Auditorium, Alliance Française De Dhaka, Dhanmondi
Date: August 20
Time: 6pm



Contemporary Norwegian Glass and Ceramics

Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, R-16, H-275F, Dhanmondi
Date: August 6-20
Time: 12pm-8pm



In Conversation

Versatility personified: Azizul Hakim

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

If versatility could be personified, it would surely take the form of Azizul Hakim, who has left his imprint in all media -- starting from theatre, radio and moving on to television and eventually the silver screen.

However, with the rolling sands of time, he has stayed put in the world of television, proving his skills in countless TV plays and serials.

Many of his contemporaries have failed the test of time, while new blood has replaced them in the never-ending rotation of media talent. But Hakim has maintained a steady pace.

With his unique acting skills, Hakim paired up with contemporary actresses like Shomi Kaiser, Bipasha Hayat, Afsana Mimi as well as younger ones, such as Meem. On his success, the actor says that every individual endures ups and downs and artistes are no exception.

Hakim attributes his continued success in the media to his determination, hard work and luck. The humble actor does not forget to thank his wife, Zeenat Hakim, for being his muse throughout his career, while adding that he is content with what life has offered him.

Hakim has had a long association with theatre group Aranyak. He acted in popular plays of the troupe, such as "Ora Kodom Ali", "Iblish", "Guinea Pig", "Agunmukha", "Khela Khela", "Pathor" and "Manush".

His attributes his absence from the theatre to his busy schedule, and laments not being able to test his skills on the stage anymore. Theatre marked his beginning, and



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it is the stage that continues to draw him. Azizul Hakim however asserts that it is impossible to maintain complete integrity if one intends to work in both television and theatre. It is not reasonable, he adds, to seek some time off from TV and be involved with the theatre on a daily basis. Pointing this out as one of the main impediments of his career in theatre, Hakim expresses his aspiration to return to Aranyak productions in the future.

The versatile actor has tested his hands at direction as well. He has directed two TV plays in the UK, while his latest directorial work was in the serial "Shey Amaye Bhalobashey Na". Although acting is his first priority, Hakim says directing TV plays is like an addiction, which explains his plan to direct another mega serial, the script of which is currently being written by his wife Zeenat.

Asked about his versatility, Hakim says the viewers, critics and journalists are the true judges, while he can only try his best to develop his talent. But he also notes that his works include playing roles ranging from a romantic hero to taking on the characters of thieves, police, clerks, labourers and unemployed.

Hakim dreams of directing a film for the big screen, but adds that his focus remains on acting. He adds that if he gets offers he would like to act in quality movies such as his previous works "Shonkhonil Karagar" and "Joyjatra".

On his recent endeavours, Hakim asserts that he is busy working on Eid-special plays, including "Dhaka to Barguna", "Aula Jhuala", "Nayikar Ma", "Schedule Nai", "Family Politics" and "Fapor".

A full calendar for actress Prova

A CORRESPONDENT

Popular actress and TVC model Prova and her beau Rajib were engaged on April 16 this year. After the engagement, both the families are readying for a grand wedding, to be held later this year.

Expressing excitement over her approaching wedding, Prova said the date has been fixed for December 17. She is now keeping her fingers crossed that everything goes smoothly at the nuptials.

As she counts the days on the calendar, Prova remains busy with TV plays for the coming Eid. She pointed out that as many as 20 plays are on the table for this joyous festival, and work on many of them is complete. Chayanika Chowdhury will direct eight of Prova's TV plays, including "Rupa", "Papri Tomar Jonno", "Jara Brishtite Bhijechilo", "Opekkha", "Dekha Holo Bhalobasha Bedonaye" and "Porosh pathor". Work on Ripon Nobi's "Honeymoon Porbo" is complete as also Kaiser Ahmed's two plays, "Imrul Gazir Shopno" and "Malka Banur Monu Miah".

Prova said she is working in three so far untitled Ferdous Hasan productions. She has acted in Ashrafi Mithu's play. Shooting for Salahuddin Lavlu's "Service holder" is over, while another of his Eid plays will be shot during Ramadan. Prova is also set to work for an ETV in house production and an SA Haq Alik will be shot by the month's end.

Prova is also currently working in many serials, including a Ferdous Hasan production "Khunshuti", which is being aired on ntv. Banglavisision is airing a Masud



Shezan production "Patigonit", featuring Prova. The talented actress said due to pressure from her studies, she can only select a few plays before she graduates.

Meanwhile, Prova is also preparing to play the lead role in the new Arun Chowdhury serial "Rumali", which is an adaptation of a Humayun Ahmed novel of the same title. The role came to Prova, after Nova -- who was set to play Rumali -- fell ill. On her upcoming challenge, Prova said she read the novel a long time ago, without knowing that one day she will play the title role in a TV serial, and the opportunity comes as a thrill to her.

Beginning her career with an advertisement in The Daily Star, Prova's debut in the visual media was via a Meril Soap TVC, directed by Mostafa Sarwar Farooki. There was no looking back for Prova after that, as her first commercial proved a hit.

Prova is currently a student of fashion designing at the Shanto-Mariam University. Her popular TV serials include "Eet Kather Khacha", "Shopno Jaal", "Shopno Mongol", "Doinik Tolpar", "Moneybag Fantasy" and "Rasta".

When asked about her favorite actors in the media Prova named Joya Ahsan, Tarin and Richie Solaiman as the most talented.

Readers' Column

The Irons' "Final Frontier" unleashes today

FAHMIM FERDOUS

If you're a rock and heavy-metal fan, you know by now what this is about. It's hard to find any metal fan of this decade who hasn't headbanged to, admired, or at the least heard of Iron Maiden. Yes, the true giants of heavy metal are back, with "The Final Frontier", set to take the world by a hurricane of galloping basslines, sabre-like guitar solos, and ridiculously high-pitched screaming. The album, due today, has already induced huge anticipation among millions of Maiden-frantics across the globe, and for good reasons too. At 76 minutes and 34 seconds in duration, Maiden's fifteenth studio album is the longest they have ever released. Also, this is the longest fans have had to wait for a Maiden album, with their last studio album "Dance of Death" released in 2006.

So, what could fans expect from a band that has a musical legacy spanning 35 years? Dave Murray, speaking about the sound of "The Final Frontier", said the album mixes "straight-ahead, up-tempo rock songs with good grooves with some other tracks that are kind of longer and more complex." "The rhythm's a little different from what we've done before, and

there's lots of melodies... It's a big song..." Dave said, referring particularly to the 10-minute-59-second epic "When the Wild Wind Blows", the band's third longest song to date, after "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and "Sign of the Cross". The songs are said to be varying greatly in lyrical, playing and techni-

cal components, and yet still be signature Maiden. From the chaotic speed-number like the album opener "Satellite 15...The Final Frontier" to the more ballad-ish "Coming Home" and the typically old school "The Alchemist", there's something for every Maiden fan.

The band revealed the

track listings, release date and album artwork on its website on June 8. Arguably the most celebrated mascot in the history of rock music, Eddie, makes an expected appearance on the cover, as long-time friend of the Iron Maiden, and master of the covers of "Fear of the Dark", "Virtual XI" and "Death on the Road", Melvin Grant makes a comeback with his brushes. On July 9, a teaser video for "Satellite 15...The Final Frontier" was released. The full music video, the album's first, was released on July 13.

Meanwhile, in the build-up to "The Final Frontier", Iron Maiden has also launched an online game to keep their multitude of fans busy while they wait for the disc to drop. The game shows Iron Maiden about to play their first intergalactic concert. The only little problem seems to be that they've been attacked by space pirates.

Critics will be critics, and skeptics will always be skeptics. There will be people who will never develop a taste for metal. But most importantly, Iron Maiden will always be Iron Maiden. So that makes it that time of the year, when you pad your room, wait for your parents to go out, and then blast your speakers and lose yourself in the sheer bliss of unadulterated heavy metal.



Iron Maiden

Taj Palace restoration includes art



Before (left) and after shots of a restored painting.

When terrorists stormed Mumbai nearly two years ago, killing at least 163 people, they also dealt a blow to the Taj Mahal Palace hotel, an architectural landmark that has played a critical role in nurturing and housing Indian art.

During a three-day siege the hotel, a Moorish-Florentine palace that opened in 1903, was ravaged by fires, gunshots and grenade explosions. The roof collapsed, and intricate woodwork was burned away. Paintings by modern Indian masters like Vasudeo S. Gaitonde and Jehangir Sabavala were covered in soot and fungus, which thrived in the humid air after air-conditioners gave out, and sprinklers and fire trucks doused the building with water.

Over the last 21 months a team that has at times swelled to more than 2,000 has renovated the hotel. A smaller group of five specialists spent 10 months restoring nearly 300 pieces of art, working in the Crystal Ballroom, where guests and staff sought refuge during the attack.

Unlike before the attack, when much of the hotel's notable art was scattered in hallways and guestrooms, the Taj will

now showcase its prized possessions in three prominent locations: a banquet hall, a lounge and a sea-facing bar just off the main lobby.

Though in recent years galleries have sprung up across Mumbai and New Delhi, there was a time when the Taj was a central hub for Indian art. Until the early 1990s its Taj Gallery was one of just a handful of places where admirers and collectors could go to see and buy contemporary art in Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay.

"A lot of the artists that earned reputations for themselves in the '70s and '80s -- people like B. Prabha -- had a lot of shows there," said Abhay Sardesai, editor of Art India, a Mumbai magazine. "It was an important space."

Other divisions of the Tata Group, which started and still owns the Taj, also contributed significantly to India's modern-art scene by buying works, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, said Gayatri Sinha, an art critic and curator in New Delhi. Most Indian corporations "have been largely indifferent" to art, she said. "In that sense the Tatas really stand

out for having made the right investments in art at the right time."

Closed during a renovation nearly 10 years ago, the Taj Gallery never reopened, but in recent years the hotel has devoted more attention to its own collection, which was started by the wife of the hotel's manager in the 1960s. A few years ago it hired an art specialist, Mortimer Chatterjee, to help catalogue and preserve the collection.

Several notable works, including a large piece by the abstractionist S.H. Raza, escaped damage because they were in storage, slated for cleaning and restoration, when the hotel was attacked, said Chatterjee, who, with his wife Tara Lal, runs a gallery, Chatterjee & Lal, down the street from the Taj.

But other pieces that were on display at the time needed significant restoration because fungus and soot particles became embedded in their paint and canvases.

Taj officials said they had spent \$50 million on the restoration of the hotel and its art.

Source: Internet