

<h3>WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK</h3>	<h4>Calligraphy Exhibition</h4> <p>Calligrapher: Najib Tareque Venue: Impressions Gallery, 67, Gulshan Avenue Date: August 19-September 19 Time: 9:30am-2:30pm and 4-5pm (Sunday-Thursday) and 10am-1pm (Saturday)</p> 	<h4>Photography Exhibition</h4> <p>Title: Ramadan in the Middle East Photographer: Christel Becker-Rau Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, H-10, Rd-9, Dhanmondi Date: August 9-September 9 Time: 10am-8pm</p> 	<h4>Photography Exhibition</h4> <p>Title: Apparitions and Cinographies Photographer: Jean-Philippe PERNOT Venue: Bengal Gallery, H-275/F, R-16, Dhanmondi Date: August 27-Sept 2 Time: 12pm-8pm</p> 	<h4>Photo Exhibition</h4> <p>To mark Int'l Day of Tourism Title: Tourist Sights of Moscow and Moscow Region Venue: Modern Language Institute, DU Date: September 2-28</p> 
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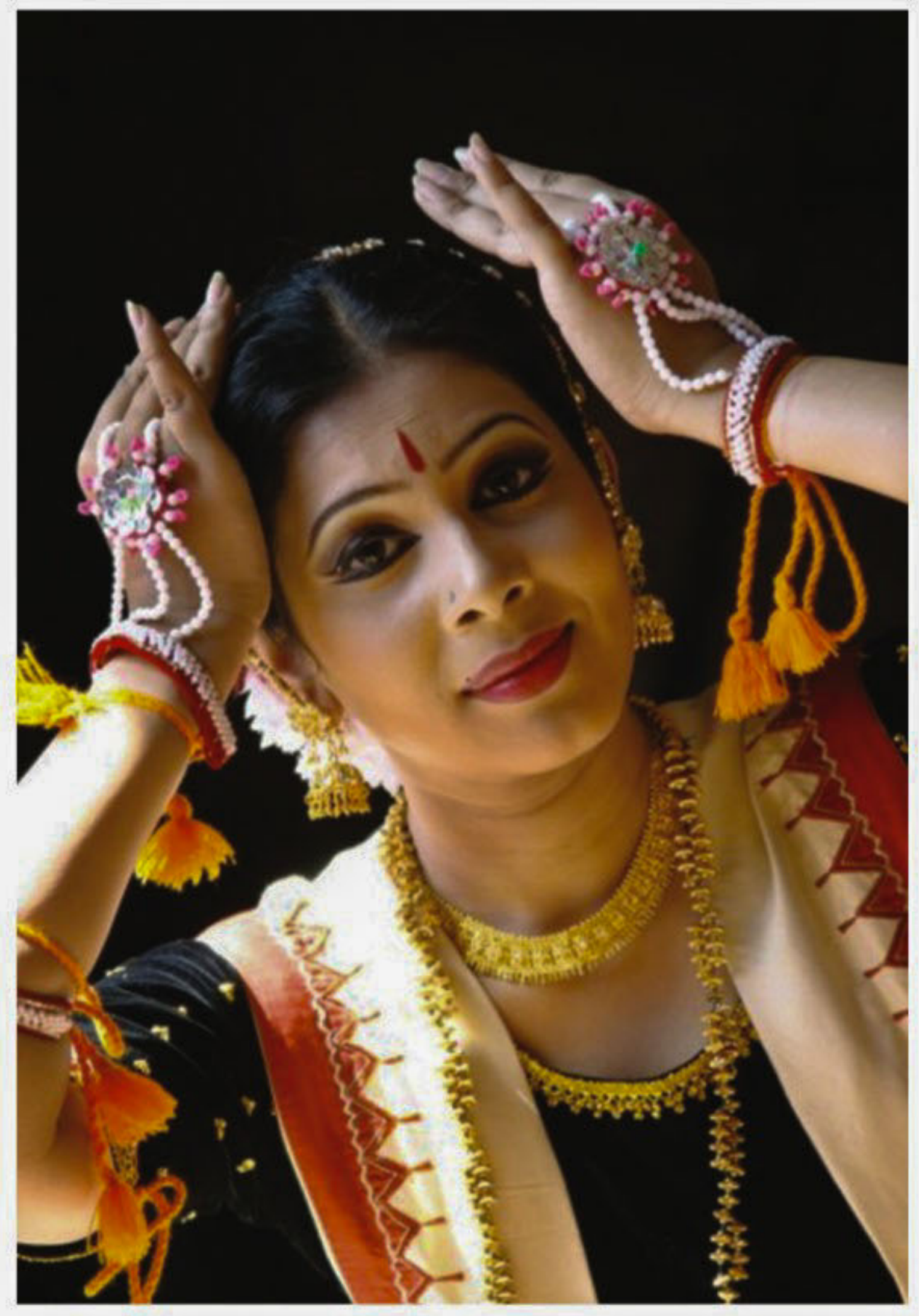
Living and breathing Manipuri dance

In conversation with Warda Rihab

A CORRESPONDENT

The dance form Manipuri, is now quite popular among urban Bangladeshis. The dance form is ritually practiced by the Manipuri community in India (Manipur state) and Bangladesh (Sylhet region). Rabindranath Tagore popularised this dance form among urban Bengalis. The form developed its own regulations and nuances. It originated as a religious dance form and the experience of it remains spiritual. Like other dance forms, Manipuri, too, narrates stories -- traditionally focusing on Radha and Krishna. The "Ras Lila" is often the central theme. The dance is accompanied by cymbals (*kartal* or *manjira*), double-headed drum (*pung* or Manipuri *mridang*) and *sankirtan*.

Among contemporary Bangladeshi dancers who have studied this dance style, Warda Rihab has carved a niche for herself. Her initial training started at Chhayanaut. Rihab trained under seasoned Manipuri dancers Sharmila Banerjee, Tamanna Rahman and Belayet Hossain. After completing her BBA and MBA from Dhaka University, she attained a scholarship from ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) in 2006 and went to Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata to do her honours in Manipuri dance. She is currently doing her MA in Manipuri dance and also training under Smt. Kalavati



Warda Rihab

Devi and Smt. Bimbavati Devi at Manipuri Nartanalay, Kolkata. Manipuri Nartanalay was founded by the legendary Guru Bipin Singh. Besides her extensive training in dancing, she has also taken lessons in *pung* and *Than Ta* (Manipuri martial art) from Ojha Ranjeet and Ojha Thoiba Singh.

Rihab's talents have been recognised by the numerous awards she has been showered with. These include Dr. Hrinmoy Banerjee Memorial Award, Guru Moisman Amubi Singh Award, Shikriti Shommanona Award (conferred by Bangladesh Mohila Parishad), Sangeet Bibhakar Award and many more.

After her production, "Hey Ananta Punya" (an adaptation of Tagore's "Notir Puja"), Rihab is now working on the dance-drama, "Bodhidrom" under Shadhona's banner. She plans to introduce *Charya Nritya* through the dance-drama. *Charya Nritya* is an ancient Buddhist dance form that has been virtually unknown outside the circles of those who perform it. This ceremonial dance dates back over 1000 years. Priests in Kathmandu perform the dance as part of their esoteric meditation practices, ceremonies, and rituals.

It has now become a trend for dancers to set up their own schools, and Rihab is no exception. "I have started a dance school along with two other gifted dancers, Amit Chowdhury and Arpita Shome. We decided to call the school 'Dhriti'.

With our expertise in different dance forms, we are eager to train young, aspiring dancers. However, our intention is not to just teach, but rather to work with young dancers, and to encourage them to take dance seriously," Rihab says.

"Many feel that dedication to dance will lead to no significant achievement. I consider this state of mind as a social issue in Bangladesh. I've been overseas, and I have seen how it works. Interested individuals abroad get a chance to carry out researches and open doors to further enhancements, while we lack behind due to restraints. Based on this, people make assumptions that there is no future for dance, and we end up shutting the door to our emerging talents. We want to change this mindset," she adds.

Rihab also opened a shop called 'Shalonkara', which offers jewelry, costumes, namely everything related to dance. About the shop, the dancer says, "Initially I started it to make dance materials, costumes, books etc accessible to all. But now I am looking forward to expand it and provide the interested individuals with research materials."

Other than working on "Bodhidrom", Warda Rihab has plans to perform "Hey Ananta Punya" once again for expatriates living in Bangladesh, as a greater audience has appreciated it, both at home and in Kolkata, the Uday Shankar Festival being one of them.

Ruskin Bond in reel life

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

"My name is Bond..." Hold on and don't expect the next two words to be James Bond. Because he is none other than writer Ruskin Bond.

You may have read Ruskin Bond's books and seen films based on his works such as Shyam Benegal's "Junoon" and Bollywood director Vishal Bhardwaj's "The Blue Umbrella". And now you can see the 76-year-old author in a cameo as a Bishop in Bhardwaj's forthcoming movie "Saat Khoon Maaf" starring Priyanka Chopra.

It's perhaps never too late to try one's hand in a new medium and Ruskin Bond seems excited about it. And why not? After all, the man has made a living out of writing books for over five decades.

Recalling the role in Bhardwaj's new film, the writer said "Priyanka Chopra's character tells me how I make her feel calm and comfortable and I say 'it all comes down to love, sweetheart.'"

Ruskin Bond said his costume changes twice in the film and added with a wry smile that he is much better dressed than he is in real life.

Bond and Bhardwaj are also likely to come up with some more projects in time to come but the writer did not disclose much on this front.

What bonds Ruskin Bond to cinema? "I watched a lot of movies when I was growing up and that influenced my style a great deal," replied the writer.

Ruskin Bond found out while doing the cameo in "Saat Khoon Maaf" that writing is one thing while acting is entirely different. "Acting is very tough as one has to repeat the same action until it's just right," said the author adding with his trademark humour, "There was one scene which required me to kiss Priyanka Chopra on the cheek and I needed 20 takes. Everyone thought I was doing it deliberately."

Bond is not unduly worried that reading habit among the new generations is on the decline because of the Internet and satellite TV. Book readers, he pointed out, have always been limited.

What eggs on the British author, settled in the Himalayan resort town of Mussoorie in Uttarakhand state of Northern India, is his undiminished enthusiasm for writing and his two new books "Mr. Oliver's Diary" and "Escape from Java" have reached the bookstores.

Ono to mark John Lennon's 70th birthday in Iceland

AP, NEW YORK

Yoko Ono is planning a series of events in Iceland to mark what would have been John Lennon's 70th birthday.

The artist and peace campaigner will light the Imagine Peace Tower illuminated memorial, located on the island of Vioey near Icelandic capital Reykjavik on October 9.

A special performance by the Yoko Ono Plastic Ono Band will follow the ceremony.

Lennon's widow is also expected to present awards from the Lennon Ono Grant for Peace, created to honour the former Beatle's peace activism.

Lennon was fatally shot outside the couple's Manhattan apartment building on December 8, 1980.



John Lennon and Yoko Ono

"Visiting Dhaka was upsetting"

-- "Harry Potter" star Emma Watson

"Harry Potter" star Emma Watson, who has fronted a new advertising campaign for ethical clothing company People Tree, says visiting garment factories in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was an "upsetting" experience.

"I had some preconceived ideas but nothing prepared me for the reality. It was upsetting to see the conditions in which these people live, but I was incredibly moved by their spirit and friendliness in spite of such apparent adversity," Contactmusic.com quoted her as saying.

"Having seen the slums in Dhaka and the conditions in which these people live and work to produce 'fast fashion', I would say to those people that this is not the way we should be making clothes in the modern world," she added.

Emma's ad campaign for People Tree follows her collaboration with the brand last year.

The 20-year-old, who first joined forces with the ethical clothing company when she designed a collection for them last year, says the line has expanded and now includes dresses, skirts and shirts made from hand-woven Fair Trade brushed fabric.

"Although I wasn't centrally involved in the design of this collection, I had great fun in helping People Tree select some gorgeous fair trade textiles, such as a dogtooth hand-woven check, cable knits, and the first Fair Trade hand-woven brushed checked fabric, which has been made into easy tulip skirts, dresses and shirts," she said.

Source: Internet



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