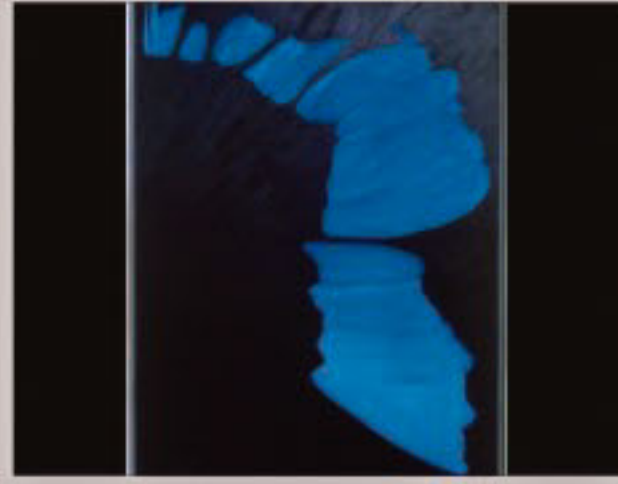


## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
**Title:** The Wing  
**Artist:** Murtaja Baseer  
**Venue:** Galleri Kaya, H-20, R-16 Sector 4, Uttara  
**Date:** September 25-October 10  
**Time:** 10am-8pm



**Group Art Exhibition**  
**Venue:** Radius Centre, Bay's Galleria  
**Date:** September 24-October 8  
**Time:** 10am-8pm



**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
**Title:** Nepotism  
**Artist:** Srijon Chowdhury  
**Venue:** La Galerie, H 7B, Rd 13, Gulshan  
**Date:** September 24-October 8  
**Time:** 12-8pm



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
**Title:** Over Loaded  
**Artist:** Ayesha Siddiqui (Pakistan)  
**Venue:** Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (New), Dhanmondi  
**Date:** Sept 30-Oct 4  
**Time:** 3-8pm



## Panoramic impact

*Murtaja Baseer's solo exhibition at Galleri Kaya*



Clockwise (from top-left): The Wing-108, The Wing-99 and The Wing-128.



TAKIR HOSSAIN

Murtaja Baseer is considered one of the foremost painters of Bangladesh who has established his individual style. The artist is the son of noted linguist and educationist Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah. Like his father, Baseer is a powerhouse of talent. Baseer's current solo painting exhibition, titled "The Wings" is now on at Galleri Kaya, Dhaka. "The Wings" is one of his noteworthy series, comprising of 37 paintings, articulating truth, beauty, romanticism and spirituality. The most significant part of the series is that all of the works have a deep correlation to each other but each painting denotes its individuality. Baseer has experimented

with colours and its various facets. He has also experimented with diverse forms. The artist applies colours directly, piling up thick and at times thin layers on the canvas, and tries to create an image that is dynamic. Brush strokes give his works a textural quality. His colours are bright and produce an imposing vision. Throughout his illustrious career, Baseer has gradually transformed his style into abstract realism. In his use of materials and tints, he frequently goes for the bold and natural. He concentrates on utilising space on the canvas, making his work appear relaxed. Baseer started working on "The Wings" in July 1998. Initially he did two paintings. The works try to depict butterfly wings. During the initial stage, Baseer tried to portray the outlines of the

wings and its various colours. After a pause, he resumed the series in November, the same year, and continued working on it till January 1999. During this period he finished 28 paintings and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy held an exhibition of the works in February 1999. In the series, abstraction has been attained through fractional representation of the whole and by the boldness of colours. Experimentation is not quite noticeable though. Outlines have been completely absent from the work "Wing-8". Gradually, the artist started concentrating on several wings. The works from this stint look more organised and the painter may have wanted to meticulously reproduce the patterns as seen in nature. "The Wing-17" and "18" are two monochromatic paintings which focus on black and white features on butterfly wings. Between December 2001 to February 2002, Baseer completed 23 paintings as part of the series. At this stage, the painter highlighted forms against colours. Contour was seemingly missing in the works. "The Wing-49" features azure, crimson, yellow and black, blending with each other -- the form is blurry and ambiguous. Over the years, the artist has become more innovative, using space to interact with lines and forms on his canvas. These works simultaneously display technical excellence and a mature intellect. Murtaja Baseer has maintained continuity in his works. Subtle forms and colours create a panoramic impact in his works. Hope, aspiration and strange visions are evoked with passion in his images. He allows all these elements to frequent his canvases through various symbolic configurations. The exhibition ends on October 12.

## Theatre troupe Bongorongo celebrates eighth anniversary



Actors of Bongorongo in "Gurunirmata".

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Theatre troupe Bongorongo celebrated its eighth anniversary on September 17. On the occasion, Bongorongo staged its production "Gurunirmata" on September 23 at the Studio Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. "Gurunirmata" is based on Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen's "The Master Builder". Bongorongo premiered the play at last year's Ibsen International Festival, organised

by Centre for Asian Theatre. "Gurunirmata" zooms in on an individual's ego, self-interest and the ever-lasting conflict between generations. The protagonist of the play is a middle-aged architect, who deprives his wife of a meaningful conjugal life as he is a workaholic. The son of his former employee works at the architect's firm. The architect refuses to give his new employee any freedom, as he fears that he would eclipse him. Asif Munier and Mostafa Sharif Mithun have adapted the play into Bangla; the former directed it.



As part of the nine daylong cultural programmes marking 12th anniversary of Channel i, a painting exhibition -- featuring works of eminent artists -- along with a musical soiree was held at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in Dhanmondi, Dhaka. Noted folk singer Bari Siddiqui performed on the opening day (September 26) at the event.

## Artisans gearing up for Durga Puja

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Idol-makers in Mymensingh are all set for Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bengali Hindus. Artisans have completed making the figures out of clay; all left now is to paint them. The overall trade is better than the previous years as the number of puja mondop (venues where puja is held) has increased in the district. "We are finishing off the work and completing orders," said Joyonto Ghosh, a seasoned artisan from Jubilee Ghat area in the town. "We'll complete painting them and set the idols at the mondop," Joyonto added. Joyonta received 15 orders this season. "Business has been reasonable but due to shortage of workers, we couldn't take more orders," he added. "As we received orders from within the area and neighbouring districts like Sherpur, Tangail, Jamalpur and Gaibandha, we have to consider our limitations," he said. "I make two types of idols -- oriental (hair and clothes also made of clay) and idols with artificial hair and clothes. In ancient times, the oriental idols were in great demand but with the passage of time the taste of devotees

has changed. Now they want their idols wearing expensive costumes," Joyonto went on. The artisan also makes idols for Bishwakarma, Kali, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Manosha puja. "The artisans need a spacious place allocated by the local administra-

tion to continue their work smoothly round the year, as most of us have no place (workshop) of our own," Joyonto said. Shambhu Das, another veteran idol-maker of the district told The Daily Star that he took 14 orders this year, whereas last year he

completed nine idols. He also said that the lack of craftsmen is hampering work and such situation is getting worse every year, as off-spring of artisans are reluctant to follow their fathers' footsteps. "This profession is not considered lucrative," said Shambhu Das. "Artisans can expect to work for six months. They have to sit idle for the rest of the year which is very frustrating," Shambhu went on. Ajoy Kar, another artisan of the town, said that the business is good at present and he hoped that such situation would inspire youngsters to take up this profession. According to historians, the greater Mymensingh region that included Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Tangail, Netrakona and Kishoreganj districts, was famed for celebrations during the different kinds of puja throughout the year. The local zamindar (landlords) were avid art enthusiasts and commissioned magnificent idols, providing substantial patronage to the artisans. Shankar Saha, organising secretary of the District Puja Celebration Parishad informed that 550 puja mondop will be erected in the district. The administration has taken security measures and is monitoring the workplaces of the artisans in and outside the district, Shankar Saha said.



An artisan busy working on a Durga idol.

PHOTO: STAR

## Traditional boat race at Meghna Ghat

A colourful, traditional boat race was held at the Meghna Ghat, near the UK Bangladesh Moitri Bridge in Koshoreganj district, on September 25, according to a press release. The Gaang Shamiti Bhoirob in association with Bangladesh Rowing Federation organised the competition. Teams from rural and semi urban areas participated in the race. Thousands of people from all backgrounds thronged the venue to

observe the exciting competition. The event proved to be a reunion for the mass people of Bhairab. Lawmaker Nazmul Hasan was the chief guest at the programme. Shihab Ahmad, director of Marketing, Banglalink and Abdul Awal Majnu, general secretary of Bangladesh Rowing Federation, were the special guests. Banglalink was the sponsor of the boat race.

