

<p><b>WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK</b></p>	<p><b>14th Asian Art Biennale 2010</b>                  Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy                  Venue: National Art Gallery (BSA) and Osmani Memorial Hall                  Date: October 8-November 6                  Time: 11am-7pm</p>		<p><b>Exhibition</b>                  Paintings, Installations, Photography, Films, Literature and Architecture  <b>Title: Dhaka Safe and Sound</b>                  Organiser: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh                  Venue: Goethe-Institut, Shilpangan Gallery and Dhaka Art Centre                  Date: October 18-30                  Inauguration: 6pm</p>		<p><b>Musical Soiree</b>                  Artists: Chanchal Khan and Lily Islam  <b>Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Indian High Commission, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1</b>                  Date: October 30                  Time: 7pm</p>		<p><b>Art Exhibition</b>  <b>Title: Janmasthan</b>                  Organiser: US Embassy in Dhaka  <b>Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, R-7 A, H-60, Dhanmondi</b>                  Date: October 28-30                  Inauguration: 6pm</p>	
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## When sitar met banshi

### Instrumental performance at Bengal Gallery



Firoz Khan (left) and Gazi Abdul Hakim during a duet at Bengal Gallery.

JONATHAN RICHMOND

I wasn't quite tuning into the music at first because I thought sitarist Firoz Khan was still tuning up.

But that, in fact, was fine. Sitar music grows organically... and as it becomes more expansive and complex it lures the listener to a state of utter concentration and calm. And with an astonishing sitar player like Firoz, that is exactly what happened at the Bengal Gallery in Dhanmondi, Dhaka Wednesday last.

Firoz builds sound naturally, catching the ear unawares. From gentle simple harmonies, he added layers of colour to reach heights of fantasy where the music embodied a deep sense of transcendental spirituality. Shaping his music elastically, Firoz produced ecstatic sound, returned to simpler themes, and then took the audience to yet new dimensions. Zakir Hossain provided sympathetic and at

times powerfully colourful tabla accompaniment of great virtuosity.

Banshi player Gazi Abdul Hakim was next to take the stage. The banshi is a wooden flute. It has less power than one made of metal, but considerably more expressiveness. As against a metal instrument that tends to blend sounds, the banshi makes every note distinct and therefore becomes at once an instrument of both pure legato and percussive staccato. Gazi put on an astonishing performance. The purity of his sound was poignant: his instrument, as against the ethereal one of Firoz, had an earthy dimension rather than one of spirituality, and in its tones could be heard themes of reflection, of yearning, and also of celebration.

Gazi also played a high-pitched piccolo banshi, producing the cheeky sounds of over-energetic children at play. And then Firoz returned to join Gazi on

the stage and the two played together to magnetic effect. The sound became deeply introspective, neither sitar nor banshi taking the lead but both merging in an intense performance at once human and spiritual that took steps of harmony and understated virtuosity that went even beyond what each player had contributed alone.

The audience was transfixed with bliss, utterly distracted from any of the trials of everyday city life, and the Bengal Gallery generously as well as fortuitously offered snacks and tea afterwards. It would have been too cruel to throw Dhakaites who, for once, had found a source of absolute peace and beauty straight back into the dissonant beep beep of Dhanmondi Road 27 without a chance to depressurise first.

Jonathan Richmond is an advisor to the Dhaka Transport Coordination Board, Ministry of Communications.

## Review

# Shironamhin rock-ifies Tagore with latest album

JAMIL MAHMUD

When Shironamhin's fourth studio album "Shironamhin Rabindranath" hit the market around last Eid-ul-Fitr, it generated much buzz among the band's fan base and music enthusiasts in general. The title of the album suggests that it features Rabindra Sangeet, but in a new avatar. Shironamhin has given the Nobel laureate poet's timeless compositions a rock makeover.

Although, over the years experimental works involving Rabindra Sangeet have become more frequent, this is probably the first time in Bangladesh that a rock band cut out a complete album of Rabindra Sangeet.

The band announced plans for the album last year, soon after releasing its third CD "Bondho Janala". The announcement initially puzzled many, particularly the band's fans consisting of young rock aficionados. The main question was: Will the band stick to its style?

Through its previous albums, Shironamhin has carved a niche in the country's rock music scene. The band's signature style includes thematic lyrics and post-modern approach to music.

Nine songs on the CD represent different *parjaya* (sub-genres) of Rabindra Sangeet, including *Baul*, *Puja*, *Prem* as well as songs inspired by foreign tunes. The album certainly offers the listener a taste of variety.

The album unfolds with a little surprise. Banshi (bamboo flute) -- instead of regular guitar riffs or sarod notes that Shironamhin songs are known for makes the intro. An apt rustic feel has been created, as the opening track of the album is "Gram Chhara Oi Rangamati Poth", which belongs to the *Baul* sub-genre.

Tanzir Tuhin's renditions may not earn kudos from hardcore traditionalist Tagore connoisseurs, as his vocals don't have that hard-earned diction a trained Rabindra Sangeet singer does. But his devotion cannot be disregarded. Particularly, the part "Orey kaar paney mon haat bariye..." instantly takes one to some wide-open paddy field -- a sign that the vocalist has successfully attained the essence of the soulful *Baul* style.



Cover of the album.

Musical arrangement of "Phoolay Phoolay" is inspired more by the original Scottish tune that fascinated Tagore. To accomplish this, the band raised the tempo. Guest instrumentalist Rahul Anand's plays Scottish whistle, making the song memorable.

Both "Tumi Ki Keboli Chhobi" and "Purano Shei Din-er Kotha" will likely make the listener nostalgic. Lead guitar [by Tushar] in the latter generates a kind of mellowness that nudges one to go down memory lane.

Considering Shironamhin's signature style, perhaps "Jetye Jetye Eklia Pothey" is the best-executed track. The song features pure rock arrangement and Tuhin's vocals go the distance in this cover.

Another noteworthy track is "Shudhu Tomar Bani Noy Go". This *baitalik* (without beat) Rabindra Sangeet is usually performed without instruments. Shironamhin, however, has employed several instruments in its cover and created a minimalist yet comforting sound. Anand's supporting vocals cre-

ates a psychedelic effect.

Zia, the bassist and songwriter of the band, did the mixing and mastering of the album.

Apart from widely familiar instruments, the album also features over 20 exotic and lesser-known instruments including esraj, sitar, violin, khol, chakua, gilabandha, ghattam, banjo, Brazilian wood, Scottish whistle, pianika, clarinet and silver flute.

In the essence of inspiration, the cover of the album features members of the band seated around Tagore like disciples. Other Shironamhin members are Shafin (drums), Diat (lead guitar II) and Rajib (keyboard).

The album's real success would be indicated if at least one Shironamhin fan [young Bangladeshi rock music fans who don't otherwise listen to Rabindra Sangeet] gets inspired to foray into the world of Tagore.

"Shironamhin Rabindranath" has been produced, marketed and distributed by Laser Vision.

## Time traveller caught on Chaplin film: Cell phone in 1928?

Perhaps she really is a time-traveller, sent back through the decades to make a jaw-dropping cameo appearance.

Or maybe she was a maverick genius, secretly testing out advanced technology for the government and caught on camera at the wrong moment.

Whatever the explanation, footage from a Charlie Chaplin promotional film in 1928 showing a woman apparently using a mobile phone has left viewers stumped.

The baffling scene is found in the extras section of "The Circus" and shows members of the public attending the premiere of the film at Manns Chinese Theatre in Hollywood.

The short piece of footage shows an older woman dressed in a coat and hat with her hand held up to the left-hand side of her face as she talks.

There is no one around for her to be speaking to apart from a suited man who strides on ahead at the beginning of the shot.

Even her gestures and behaviour as she 'talks' will be eerily familiar to modern-day viewers as she appears to stop, mid-sentence, during her apparent conversation.

The bizarre anachronism was unearthed by film buff George Clark on his Charlie Chaplin box set.

He says he has shown it to more than 100 people and still no one can come up with a convincing explanation.



A traveller from the future? This clip from a film about the premiere of Charlie Chaplin's 1928 movie "The Circus" shows what appears to be a woman talking on a mobile phone in the opening scene (on the right).

face, although this would not explain why she appears to be talking.

Others say she may be displaying signs of schizophrenia and covering her face to hide the fact that she is talking to herself.

It has also been suggested that she is simply trying to hide her face from the camera so she is not filmed.

There are also sceptics who believe the footage is just a stunt created by Clark -- a filmmaker with Yellow Fever Productions -- to publicise his latest film festival.

The first device that could be likened to a mobile phone was Motorola's original 'Walkie-Talkie' which was developed in the 1940s, but that was the size of a man's

arm and still came more than a decade after the Chaplin film.

Portable mobile phones that we would recognise today did not appear until the 1980s and even then they were still too big to hide in the palm of your hand.

In a video that Clark has posted on YouTube he jokes that the only plausible theory is that the woman is a time traveller.

He says: "This short film is about a piece of footage I found behind the scenes in Charlie Chaplin's film 'The Circus'.

"My only theory -- as well as many others -- is simple... a time traveller on a mobile phone. See for yourself and feel free to leave a comment

on your own explanation or thoughts about it."

Chaplin's "The Circus" was one of the master director's final silent movies and won him the Academy Award in 1929 for "Versatility and genius in writing, acting, directing and producing."

It tells the story of the Tramp, who works as a clown in a circus and who falls in love with a circus-master's daughter.

Chaplin produced the film at the height of the legal fallout over his divorce from Lita Grey and he did not mention it once in his autobiography, even though it is now regarded as one of his masterpieces.

Source: Internet

## James Bond's iconic Aston Martin sold!

The iconic Aston Martin, driven by Sean Connery in two James Bond films, has been sold for 2.6 million pounds at an auction in London.

An American car enthusiast paid the amount to buy the famous car and then vowed to take it for a spin around the streets of London.

The silver 1964 Aston Martin DB5, previously owned by American broadcasting boss Jerry Lee who paid 12,000 dollars in 1969, was initially expected to fetch more than 3 million pounds.

The unique car, which boasts an ejector seat, revolving license plates and bullet-proof shield, featured in



Sean Connery poses with the Aston Martin from "Goldfinger".

"Goldfinger" and "Thunderball".

Harry Yeaggy, who bought the car, is likely to display it at a car museum in Ohio.

Yeaggy later told reporters that it has been "a last-minute decision" to fly into London for the auction and that he had spent a little more than he had

planned.

"I thought a European would buy it. But I guess they didn't appreciate Bond as much as we do," the BBC quoted him as saying.

The car, which is said to be in an excellent condition, is the only surviving example of two Aston Martins used in the early Bond films, after the other was reported stolen in 1997.

The sale proceeds will benefit Lee's charitable foundation supporting education and anti-crime projects internationally.

Source: Internet

THE WOLFMAN

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