

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

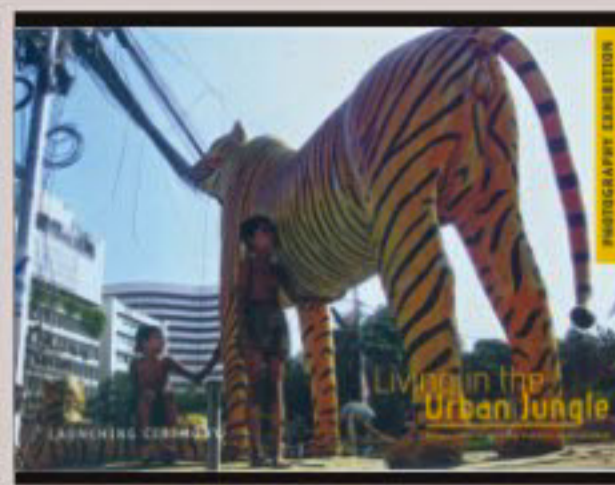
14th Asian Art Biennale 2010

Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
 Venue: National Art Gallery (BSA) and Osmani Memorial Hall
 Date: October 8-November 6
 Time: 11am-7pm



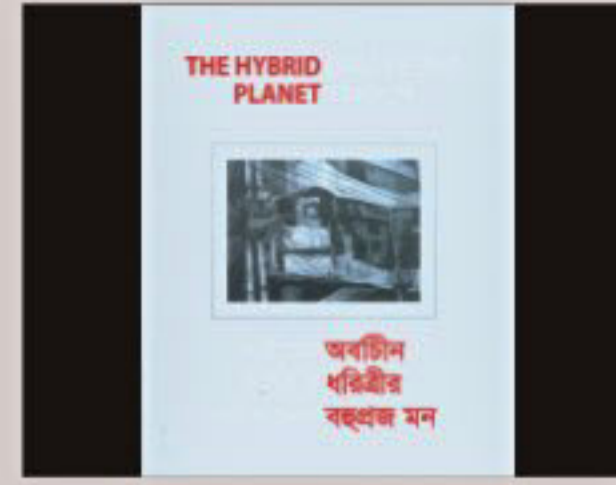
Photography Exhibition

Title: Living in the Urban Jungle
 Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (new), Dhanmondi
 Date: Oct 26-Nov 1
 Time: 3-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: The Hybrid Planet
 Artist: Dravid Saikot
 Venue: Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU
 Date: October 29-November 7
 Time: 11am-8pm



Theatre

Play: Drop Out
 Troupe: Aikik Theatre
 Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
 Date: November 1
 Time: 7pm



A musical storyteller

Mustafa Zaman Abbasi performs at Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre

KARIM WAHEED

What separates average singers from true artistes is the latter's willingness to offer themselves completely to the song they are rendering; if it makes them laugh, they do so unabashedly, and if it induces blues, eyes well up, and voices get choked. That honest passion is highly potent; when it hits the audience, they too demonstrate the same reaction.

Then there's another group of artistes -- they are the chosen few. Their craft to them is their form of worship. When singers of this kind immerse themselves in their music, the audience hears and feels the Divinity.

Mustafa Zaman Abbasi undoubtedly qualifies as both. The first time I heard him live was in 2006, at the Nazrul birth anniversary celebration. To a full house of loud, disruptive audience, Abbasi sang an Islamic song. To someone who considers himself more spiritual than religious, that song was a prayer from the inner-most depths of devotion. I closed my eyes and after a while I couldn't hear the noise and chattering around me; I figured I was that much into the song. When I opened my eyes, I saw the whole auditorium was that much into the song.

Abbasi doesn't just sing, he narrates songs -- you hear the story and get the complete imagery. At the musical programme arranged by Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, High Commission of India, Dhaka on October 29, Abbasi in his usual style engaged the audience. The occasion: Abbasi's father, legendary folk singer Abbasuddin's 109th birth anniversary. The event was held at Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre in Gulshan, Dhaka.

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Rajeev Mitter and director



Abbasi's (centre) repertoire included songs popularised by his father, Abbasuddin.

of Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Ankan Banerjee, greeted Abbasi; his elder brother, former chief justice Mustafa Kamal; sister, renowned singer Ferdousi Rahman and niece, also an accomplished artiste, Dr. Nashid Kamal.

Mustafa Kamal reminisced how a young man from an affluent land-owning family in Cooch Bihar (India) became an iconic folk singer. From the urban centre Kolkata, cutting records of songs from remote corners of East Bengal was not a cakewalk either. According to Kamal, initially Abbasuddin failed to convince the studio owner to let him record *bhawaiya* (folk songs from North Bengal). The singer then approached Kazi Nazrul Islam to intervene. Nazrul did a composition based on a *bhawaiya* song Abbasuddin rendered. That song "Nodir Naam Shoi Anjona" was included in one of the records and

became a hit. After that there was no looking back. Songs from North and East Bengal found their place in the Kolkata record industry. Abbasuddin, along with Nazrul, was also instrumental in initiating the Islamic Bangla songs genre.

Abbasi eased into his performance with the ever-familiar Jasimuddin composition "Agye Janley Tor Bhanga Nouka-e Chortam Na". Among the accompanying instruments, *banshi* (flute) and *dotarashined*.

"One needn't use 12 musical instruments in folk songs. Just like we appreciate our mothers' modest, homely appearance, folk songs too sound best in a minimalist setting," Abbasi, who is also a noted folk researcher, said.

Next the artiste rendered another Jasimuddin number, "Amar Gohin Gang-er Naiyya". As Abbasi breathed life into the song and a *bicchhedhi*

(song of separation) after that, the essence of yearning took a tangible shape. The other side of the river, where the beloved supposedly lives, is visible, but remains elusive, inaccessible.

As he performed the *bhawaiya* song, "Phandey Boriya Boga Kandey Re", a song about a pair of birds divided by a river, Abbasi said, "For our convenience, we have marked borders but artistes, musicians are like these birds. They sing of peace and universal love."

At 74, Abbasi still effortlessly moves the audience through his sensitivity, wit and a voice that glides through bass, baritone and tenor as if it was waxed with molasses indigenous to rural Bengal. And why not? When one sings "to Tagore, Nazrul, Jalaluddin Rumi past midnight, for hours" [according to the artiste], his craft blesses him in return.

Speaking out against acid violence

Cultural programme and discussion in Dinajpur

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Rangpur-Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS), a non-government organisation, arranged a cultural event, procession and discussion to speak out against acid violence.

Acid survivors and their children performed at the cultural programme, which moved a full house at Dinajpur Shilpakala Academy auditorium last Thursday morning.

A drama also staged highlighting the negative impact of acid, which continued suffering to the acid victims.

The event included dances, recitation, songs and a play -- highlighting the negative impact of acid violence, which destroys lives -- staged by acid



Children of acid survivors perform at the programme.

PHOTO: STAR

survivors. RDRS and District Acid Control Committee (DACC) jointly organised the programme, titled 'Addressing the Causes and Effects of Acid Attack'. Acid Survivors Foundation of Bangladesh and OSAID jointly coordinated

the programme. Md. Jamal Uddin, deputy commissioner of Dinajpur, attended the programme as chief guest.

From a survey it emerged that at least 90 per cent acid attacks occurred in rural areas of the country, which

might indicate that illiteracy often leads to such vicious crimes.

Marking the programme, the acid survivors of different upazila of Dinajpur were present at the programme.

Speakers at a discussion said that perpetrators choose acid simply because it is cheap and widely available in the local markets. The offenders often go unpunished, thus encouraging potential perpetrators.

The discussion was chaired by Apurba Sarker, programme coordinator of RDRS Bangladesh.

Earlier, local acid victims and organisers brought out a procession, which marched major streets of the town.

Udichi celebrates 42nd anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cultural organisation Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi celebrated its 42nd anniversary on October 29. On the occasion, the organisation arranged a cultural programme at TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University on the day. Members of the organisation as well as guest artistes rendered songs, recited poems and staged short plays and dances.

The programme was formally inaugurated in the afternoon at the TSC premises. Shahidullah Chowdhury, president, Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, launched the programme.

A discussion was held prior to the cultural programme at the auditorium. Discussants reflected on Udichi's role in the national cultural movements and about its impact on the society over the span of four decades.

"Whatever Udichi is doing, should remain its standard," said Morshed Ali, president of Bangladesh Krishak Shamiti. Ali was one of the discussants at the programme.

Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique, vice chancellor of Dhaka University, was the chief guest. Among others, cultural personalities Hasan Imam; M. Hamid; lyricist Akhtar Hussain; cultural activist Golam Kuddus and former general secretaries of Udichi -- Ikram Ahmed,

Mahmud Selim and Rejaul Karim Siddique Rana -- spoke at the programme.

Golam Mohammad Idu, president of Udichi, chaired the discussion.

Prominent cultural personality Satyen Sen along with fellow activists founded Udichi in 1968, at a time when people of the then East Pakistan were getting ready for an uprising. Since then, Udichi has been working towards a culturally oriented society. At present, Udichi has over 200 branches both at home and abroad, which makes it the biggest cultural organisation in the sub-continent.

A large portrait of Sen was kept in front of the stage.

The cultural programme featured several group renditions of *Gano Sangeet* by members of the organisation. They sang "Heiyore Heiyore", "Gram Thekey Jekey Otho", Karkhanatey Khet Khamarey" and "Praney Praney Pran Jechchhey". Among others, Mahmud Selim, Habibul Islam and Oishika Nodi rendered songs.

Recitor Alok Basu read out a satire that he adapted from Shubhash Mukherjee's "Ashcharya Kalom".

Artistes of Nriyam performed a group dance to the song "Jaruler Phuley Doley Doley". Later, members of Udichi Jagannath University branch staged a short musical play, "Batashey Shankhodhoni".



Artistes of Udichi render a chorus.

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Marking the 42nd anniversary of Bangladesh Udhichi Shilpi Goshthi, a cultural function was held on Friday evening. Udichi Shilpi Goshthi Mymensingh Sangsad organised the programme at its office. The event included a colourful rally, musical soiree, poetry recitation and a play.

A drama titled "Mandar", written by Rahul Ananda, was staged marking the occasion.

Udhichi Shilpi Goshthi Muktagacha and Tarakanda units here also joined the celebrations.

Earlier, Professor Nazrul Hayat, advocate Abdul Motaleb Lal and advocate Emdadul Haque Millat took part in the discussion with

advocate AHM Khalequzzaman, president of Udhichi Mymensingh Sangsad in the chair. Secretary of the Sangsad Sarwar Kamal Robin delivered the welcome speech.

Dr. Prodig Chandra Kar presented the keynote paper at the discussion.

The speakers told the gathering that since its foundation Udichi has been working to establish a society enriched with a cultural heritage. The organisation's struggle for decades will continue until the goal is fulfilled, said the speakers.

Udichi works for the benefit of those oppressed in different ways by influential quarters of the society.

To build a society free from exploitation the activities of Udichi urged the younger generation to come forward to reach the goal.

5 Years Warranty

on Fridge/Freezer and TV

Scratch and get up to

100%

guaranteed discounts

on Fridge/Freezer and TV of all brands

SINGER Plus offers

১০০% ঋণ

বিনামূল্যে

This offer is valid till 27 November 2010

INTEREST FREE 90 Days

on Fridge/Freezer and TV

SINGER Plus

MORE BRANDS • MORE CHOICE

9884113, 01552205160-2

www.singerbd.com

Please visit your nearest SINGER Plus shop today