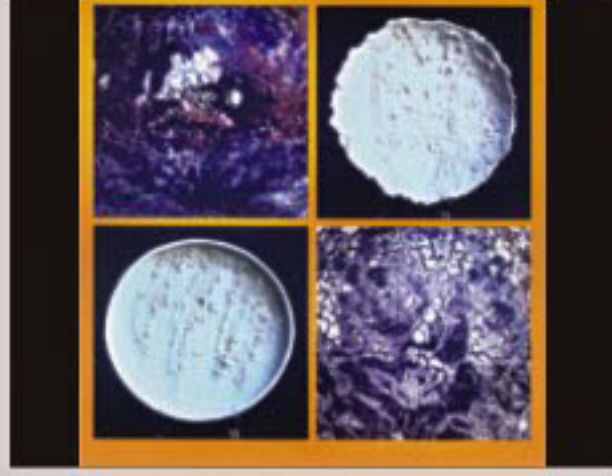


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

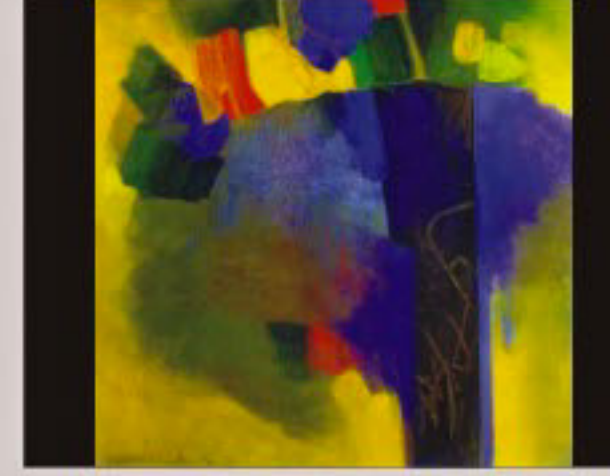
Ceramics Exhibition
 Title: Aesthetic Studio Ceramics
 Artist: Syed Shahadat Hussain
 Venue: Alliance Française de Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
 Date: December 18-30
 Time: 3-9pm (Monday-Thursdays) 9am-12pm & 5-8pm (Friday & Saturday)



Solo Art Exhibition
 Artist: Swapan Chowdhury
 Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, R-7 A, H-60, Dhanmondi
 Date: December 15-31
 Time: 11am-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition
 Artist: Hashem Khan
 Venue: Nalinikanta Bhattoshali Gallery, National Museum
 Date: December 18-January 2
 Time: 12pm-8pm



Theatre
 Play: Tringsha Shatabdi
 Troupe: Swapnadal
 Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
 Date: December 25
 Time: 6:30pm



In a Realm of Tunes

Classical Music Festival at Chhayanaut begins



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

From left: Asit Dey (centre) with co artists; Shubhra Guho [of Kolkata] and Swarup Hossain during his solo tabla 'lohora' at Chhayanaut's Shuddho Sangeet Utshab.



SWANI ZUBAYEER

For the third consecutive year, Chhayanaut is holding its 'Shuddho Sangeet Utshab (Classical Music Festival) 1417'. Seasoned musician and widow of the late classical artiste Barin Majumder, Ila Majumder inaugurated the programme. Earlier the whole Chhayanaut building, at Dhanmondi in Dhaka, echoed with the national anthem. The programme started right on 6:30 pm, as was mentioned on the schedule. General Secretary of Chhayanaut Khairul Anam Shakil invited the chief guest to the stage.

The cultural programme, at the main auditorium of Chhayanaut, began with a Dhrupad in Raga Yaman, presented by Chhayanaut students. The resonance of the perfectly tuned tanpura and fitting accompaniment of the tabla, played by Iftekhar Alam Pradhan, created the right ambience for a classical music festival. Rituparna Chatterjee presented two items -- Dhrupad in Raga Kedar and Dhamar in Raga Shankara. On Pakhawaj was Shushen Kumar Roy, and on tanpura was Shukla



Paul Shetu. Swarup Hossain was magnificent during his solo tabla 'lohora', while on harmonium Alamgir Parvez Suman was holding the 'nagma'.

Asit Dey, son of the late Ustad Mithun Dey, further lifted the mood and took the audience into the world of Khayal. Raga Yaman Kalyan was rightly chosen, according to the time and atmosphere. With Asit Dey, Badal Chowdhury was on tabla and Bizon Chandra Mistri was on harmonium.

Shubhra Guho began with a rendition of Maru Bihag, a melodic raga and performed with command. She sang two Thumri -- one in Mishra Pilu, and the other in Raga Des. Iftekhar Alam, Rezwana Ali and Rezaul Karim were on tabla, harmonium and tanpura respectively.

The opening day's programme wrapped up on a high note, as demonstrated on the smiling faces of the audience coming out of Chhayanaut Bhaban.

BRAC Bank is sponsoring the festival. Dr. Sanjida Khatun, president of Chhayanaut, thanked them in her opening speech.

The writer is an accomplished singer-composer.

Yuletide Memories

In conversation with Andrew Kishore



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Andrew Kishore is a self-made man. Gifted by God with an amazing voice, he had to fight his way to the top. During his 25 years in the music arena, Andrew has given us countless evergreen songs, and continues to do so at full pace. "Ek Chor Chole Jae", "Daak Diyachhen Doyal Amare", "Bhalobeshe Gelam Shudhu", "Haire Manush Rongin Fanush", "Brishti Bheja Mishti", "Tumi Jekhane Ami Shekhane" and "Amar Shara Deho Kheyo Go Maati" are some of his most popular songs.

With Christmas round the corner, we naturally have a chat about the Yuletide. The seasoned artiste confesses that he hasn't celebrated the past few Christmases in Bangladesh. This year will be no different, as he is off to London to perform at shows. He will also offer his prayers for the well-being of the country and its people. Andrew says he will exchange Christmas greetings with Bangladeshi expatriates during his stay in London. Although his son studies abroad, Andrew says he will miss his wife and daughter at home, and will exchange greetings on the phone.

Reminiscing on Christmas in Rajshahi when he was a child, Andrew says he misses the food and the affection he received from his elders. He also visited the local church with his family. The singer adds that the wait for Christmas continued for the entire month of December, and when December 24 arrived, the fun seemed to leap to greater dimensions. With new clothes ready on the shelves, midnight was welcomed at his home.

In the morning, it was time for collecting 'Salami' from the elders, followed by a shopping spree with the newly collected money. Later in the day, Andrew says, all the members of the community visited the church together to pray. Special food was also cooked to celebrate the occasion. Cultural programmes were held at night, where Andrew also performed.

Busy adulthood has wiped off some shine from the boundless joy of his childhood Christmas. But Andrew says he still tries to keep his schedule free for the special day. As he will be abroad this Christmas, Andrew says he will miss all his fans, friends and well-wishers here.

Christmas cheer for a musical instrument maker

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Babul Das, a young maker of dhol (drums) and other musical instruments, is working around the clock to meet the increased demand for his products at Christmas time. Babul and his wife Laxmi Rani have so far completed orders of some 40 drums and khol.

Babul, who has followed the profession of his ancestors, works at Monikura Uttar Bazar, under Haluaghat upazila here. Babul said that they eagerly await Christmas, as the Garo community celebrates the festival with gaiety, increasing the sale of dhol and other musical instruments like tabla, khol and kathi dhol (smaller version of dhol).

Each khol goes for Taka 1,600-1,800, while a kathi dhol is sold at Taka 2,000-2,500, said Babul.

"Since Haluaghat is a frontier upazila, we do not get much business at other



PHOTO: STAR

Babul Das at work.

festivals as the population here is comparatively low and the economic condition below par," said Babul.

Babul also bemoans the fact that the cost of raw materials like wood and leather has gone up.

He has to buy wood from a variety of

trees such as shegun, rain tree, neem and mango from different places, including Manikgang district. To make khol, Babul collects earthen material from Dhara in Haluaghat.

Babul told The Daily Star that Christmas is a busy time for the family. The rest

of the year, he repairs and polishes shoes as well as trades in raw hide.

Babul's wife Laxmi Rani asserts that if they remained busy around the year, the family would have a better standard of living and the children would be educated.

The elderly Ashutosh Wrishi, who makes dhol and other musical instruments in the same locality said, "Once we could only depend on income from shoe polishing and repairing, but now the situation has changed. We can earn more by making musical instruments and trading hide on a small scale."

Arken Marak, an indigenous youth from Askipara village, in Haluaghat, told The Daily Star that since many of the Garos are converted Christians now, Christmas is celebrated with much gusto in the area.

"As musical instruments are part and parcel of Garo tradition and culture, we have incorporated these into our Christmas celebrations," added Marak.



The two-day 17th National Conference of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi began yesterday. Biranganas from different parts of the country, invited by Udichi, inaugurated the event at the Central Shaheed Minar premises in Dhaka. Later, a procession was brought out, starting from Shaheed Minar and ending at Shikha Chirantan in Suhrawardi Udyan. The main programme is being held at Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbagh. A vibrant cultural programme is the highlight of the conference.

PHOTO COURTESY: GOLAM MAHBUB

