

WHAT'S ON

Folk Festival To Mark Wazhedul Haque birth anniversary Title: Doh Chorer Gaan Venue: Sakhalia, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU Date: March 16 at 7pm onwards

Documentary Premiere Title: The Speech Venue: TSC Auditorium, DU Date: March 15 at 6pm

Musical Soiree Title: Pramer Khele Artists: Rina Fausia, Yasmin Mukhtar & Bazon Chandra Hossain Venue: Bengal Shikhalay, H-27/5, Rd-27 (Old), Dhamondi Date: March 15, Time: 7pm

Exhibition Title: Peace Women Across the Globe, Peace Women Across Bangladesh Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhamondi Date: March 8-19

Solo Photography Exhibition Photographer: Naymuzzaman Prince Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhamondi Date: March 25-April 6 Time: 5pm-9pm

Hindustani Classical Musical Soiree Artist: Padma Vibhushan Pandit Jasraj Venue: National Theatre Hall, 8/4 Date: March 16, Time: 6:30pm

Theatre Play: Bhumadhyosagar Troupe: Oboyoy Natyadali Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shikhalia Academy Date: March 17 at 7pm

Srijonshil Tanuner Natyapokash Venue: Naymondol, Dhaka University Date: March 1-15 Time: 6:30pm

Solo Art Exhibition Artist: Mushida Azra Alpina Title: Contemplation Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, H-60, R-7/A Dhamondi Date: March-4-16 Time: 3pm-9pm



The Dhaka American Women's Club (DAWC) held its biggest fundraising event, 'The Annual Hollywood Ball' on March 4 at the Radisson Hotel in the capital. The US Ambassador James Moriarty was the chief guest at this glitzy evening featuring jazz music, a live talent show, and performances by a band. Guests from Dhaka's expat community and other dignitaries were also present at the event.

Watch 'Jiboner Joy Gaan' every Sunday at 6pm on Channel i



TAKIR HOSSAIN

Tivoli Art Gallery has organised a group art exhibition, titled '7 Visions', featuring works of eight painters -- Samiran Chowdhury, Laila Sharmeen, Mokhesur Rahman, Elham Huq Khuku, Md. Jalaluddin, Dilruba Latif, Uttam Kumar Karmakar and Syeda Mahbuba Karim. Of the participating painters, Samiran Chowdhury, Laila Sharmeen and Moklesur Rahman are familiar names in the art circuit. Md. Jalaluddin is the senior-most painter at the exhibition. The veteran artist now works as a senior designer at Bangladesh Television. The painter has been known for his portrayal of middle-aged women, in their varied dispositions. His painting at

Playing with Paints

Group art exhibition at Tivoli

the exhibition depicts a man with a violin and a floating vessel in the deep sea. His mode of expression is semi-abstract where love and yearning are in focus.

Samiran Chowdhury, arguably the most accomplished artist in the group, is now recognised as an abstract painter and prefers to work with emotional ecstasy as theme. Samiran's paintings, infused with spiritual strength, engage the viewer with great emotional force -- inspiring contemplation. He considers colour to be the means of expressing emotions. Samiran's works are composition and form-based. About five years ago, the artist did several figurative works -- portraying people, animals, kites, rickshaws, boats, ships, pigeons and sunflowers. His current compositions are marked by delicate brush strokes, bright colours, and effects of light and shade. His application of paint is quite unique.

Mokhesur Rahman is one of the few Bangladeshi artists working on the woodcut medium, which is rather expensive and labour intensive. Simplicity is the main characteristic of his prints. Abundant greenery, flora, fauna, mustard fields, moonlit nights, the unique shades nature takes on during the six seasons and the unparalleled beauty of Bengal appear in his works intimately and flamboyantly. Rahman works in wood, and paints on its fibre. The fibre's unevenness helps him to create something more appealing. The artist tries to articulate his personal agony and admiration on the surface of fibre.

Laila Sharmeen's works highlight the essence of nature. Spontaneous use of colours expresses the artist's poetic mood. She has tried to explore nature, rhythm and poetry through her meticulous interpretations. The artist is inspired by literature, philosophy and myths as presented by TS Eliot, Jibanananda Das, Immanuel Kant, Derrida and

Michel Foucault. Uttam Kumar Karmakar lives and works in Rome. Though he lives overseas, his umbilical cord with Bangladesh is still apparently intact. Consciousness about environment is the key aspect of his works. The painter tries to speak out against pollution, overpopulation, greenhouse effect and global warming. Crimson, blue, black merge together in his works where flawless application of colour and formal arrangement are main features. Dilruba Latif's works have a touch of fantasy where emerald green, azure, sapphire and purple mingle. The artist displays an accomplished handling of colours and tones. Her free-floating female figures give a surrealistic view to the works. The exhibition ended yesterday.

Clockwise (from top-left): Artworks by Mokhesur Rahman, Samiran Chowdhury, Uttam Kumar Karmakar and Dilruba Latif



AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

A few miles off Jhenidah, at Barobazar, lies the dargah (shrine) of Gazi, Kalu and Champaboti, who according to popular

A Myth Lives On

Festival at the shrine of Gazi, Kalu and Champaboti

takes on a festive look on the occasion. This year's congregation was held from March 10 to 12.

Thousands of ardent devotees thronged here last Thursday night. Some brought batasha (a kind of sweet) and candles, while some brought goats, sheep and cows as offerings. Food is provided to all -- dirt poor or rich. The devotees pray and keep a candlelight vigil for the three legends.

Devotees believe that Gazi and Kalu had miraculous powers. Gazi was the son of Sultan Shah Sikandar Ali and Azufa Shundari. Gazi's mother was the daughter of the Hindu king Bali. Kalu was Gazi's adopted brother. Sultan Shah Sikandar Shah offered his

throne to Gazi but the latter refused claiming that he had to live as an ascetic. The Sultan was enraged. Gazi's convictions were tested. An elephant tried to trample him; he was attacked with a sword and thrown in a fire. But Gazi survived. He left home accompanied by his brother. He reached the Sundarbans and stayed there for seven years.

Here fairies and tigers became his disciples. From this belief locals of the Sundarbans still recall Gazi when they fear tigers. A devotee, Abdul Barik of Moheshahati village, under Kaliganj upazila, told The Daily Star that every year he visits the shrine to seek the blessing of the three legends.

Bangladeshi Art Going to Venice

Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh will be taking part at the Venice Biennale 2011, to be held in Italy, starting from June 4 this year. This is the first time that Bangladesh is participating at the prestigious event.

The 54th International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale is to be directed by art historian and critic Bice Curiger, with previews from June 1 to 3. The official opening will take place on June 3. The mega exhibition will open to the public from June 4 and run till November 27, 2011.

Five Bangladeshi artists -- Mahbubur Rahman, Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisti, Imran Hossain Piplu, Promothesh Das Pulak and Tayeba Begum Lipi -- have been selected by the organisers to display their installations at the biennale alongside artists from across the globe.

On the occasion, a special preview (March 11-12) was held at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in Dhaka. Besides the preview, a



(From left) : Promothesh Das Pulak, Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisti, Imran Hossain Piplu, Tayeba Begum Lipi, Paolo W. Tamburella, Mahbubur Rahman and Subir Chowdhury at the press conference.

press conference was held on March 11 at Bengal Café. The participating artists; Subir Chowdhury, director of Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts and Paolo W. Tamburella, curator of the exhibition, spoke at the programme. "Parables" is the theme of the Bangladeshi participation at the biennale. The theme is symbolic of the situation prevailing in the society. Marking the participation of Bangladesh

Table with TV channels and programs: CHANNEL i, Ntv, ETV, etc.

Table with radio stations: abc Radio FM 89.2, Dhaka, etc.

Festival Commemorating Pagla Kanai's Birth Anniversary

Our Correspondent, Jhenidah

On the occasion of 201st birth anniversary of mystic bard Pagla Kanai, a three day folk festival and a fair were held at the Pagla Kanai complex in Jhenidah. The anniversary was observed on March 9 in a befitting manner. The programme was arranged by Pagla Kanai Smriti Shangrakshak Shangshad of Berbari village, Jhenidah.

Promod Mankin, State Minister for Cultural Affairs, was present as chief guest at the opening programme. Several stalls were set up around the shrine of Pagla Kanai. Visitors in thousands thronged the venue. A good number of followers of Pagla Kanai showed up to pay tribute to the legendary mystic.

Pagla Kanai was born on March 18 in Labutala Madhabpur village under Jhenidah district. He was born to Messer Ali

and Momena Khatun. Kanai became renowned for his folk songs. He composed a good number of devotional songs but many of these have not been preserved. An auditorium and library named after him now stands near the shrine.

Pagla Kanai's passion and intense spirituality was evident at an early age, hence the locals started calling him "pagla" (crazy). Kanai left his village to evade the oppression of the authorities, under the British Raj, who forced the farmers to cultivate indigo. Dirt-poor Kanai became a drifter after his father's death. He became a cowherd. Many were taken back by his eclectic spiritual songs and 'dhua jaari'. His spiritual inclination put him in touch with the bauls and fakirs of the area.

People from all walks of life used to throng his 'ashor' (performance) and listened to his songs for hours. And gradually his fame extended throughout the country.

Pagla Kanai's songs can be classified into 'jari', 'dhua', 'pala gaan', 'kobi gaan', 'murshidi', 'marfati', Islamic and more. Scholars such as Mohammad Mansur Uddin, Dr. Mazharul Islam, Abu Talib, Amin Uddin Shah, Durga Das Lahiri and Uppendranath Bhattacharya collected Pagla Kanai's songs and conducted researches on the bard.

The legendary baul passed away in 1889. On the concluding day of the festival, children of local institutions took part in a painting competition. A competition was also held on 'kobi gaan' as well as a cultural programme.

Aulad Hossain, a descendant of Pagla Kanai said, "We are elated that his birth anniversary gets a major celebration as local administration takes steps in this regard. He added that a bust of Kanai has been erected in commemoration of the bard's birth anniversary."

MOHEENER GHORAGULI Wild Horses of Musical Conviction



Moheener Ghoraguli performs at a concert at Rabindra Sadan in 1979.

Md. ROKANUZZAMAN

"Prithibita naki chhoto hoty hoty/ Satellite ar cable er hatey/ Drawing room-e rakha boka bakshotey bondi" [The world gradually became smaller and smaller, and gets imprisoned in the grip of cables and satellites, in the stupid boxes in living rooms]. Many of us know the creators of the song and many don't. They are 'Moheener Ghoraguli'. The tune of "Prithibita Naki" was later used with an elaborate orchestra accompaniment by Pritam Chakraborty in the Bollywood blockbuster "Gangster". The song "Bheegi Bheegi" covered by James enjoyed mass popularity all over the sub-continent and fetched the Bangladeshi rockstar international fame.

Moheener Ghoraguli was formed towards the end of 1974 in Kolkata. Initially, they called themselves 'Saptarshi'. When Ranjon Ghoshal, one of the founding members, proposed the name 'Moheener Ghoraguli', the band decided to go with it. Some of their popular tracks are: "Prithibita Naki", "Telephone", "Manush Chena Dayer", "Koto Ki Korar Achhe Baki", "Tomaye Dilam", "Hi Bhalobashi" etc. The band emerged in the contemporary Bangla music scene during the heyday of legendary singers such as Hemanta

Mukhopadhyay, Sandhya Mukhopadhyay and Shyamal Mitra. Here, across the border, Azam Khan, Firoz Shai, Ferdous Wahid had already started popularising pop music. The name of the band sounds unusual and it is difficult to relate to. The literal meaning of Moheener Ghoraguli is 'Moheen's horses'. It is actually taken from a poem "Ghora" (Horses) by Jibanananda Das.

They were, as they admitted, a 'baul jazz' band. A fusion of rock music and Bangla folk, their compositions presented a different taste to the youth of Kolkata, if not as a big hit. The band's music can perhaps be described as 'jibonmukhi gaan'. They talk about the disadvantaged, social disorders and pollution. They played western instruments and also experimented with a variety of musical styles. They generously used indigenous instruments -- banshi, dotara, dhol, tabla -- alongside violin, guitar, drums and harmonica.

Moheener Ghoraguli released three albums in three consecutive years. In 1977, the band released its debut album "Shongbigno Pakhikol O Kolkata Bishayak". "Ajana Udanto Bostu Ba Aw-Oo-Baw" (Unidentified Flying Object or U.F.O) followed and finally "Drishyoman Moheener Ghoraguli" (Visible Horses of Moheen) was released in 1979. During the mid-'90s, Moheener Ghoraguli was revived with the release of the albums: "Abar Bachhor Kuri

Alo O Adhar On ntv at 09:00pm Single Episode TV Play Cast: Anwar Rahman Milon, Sarika

Romeo Is Bleeding On HBO at 12:00am Genre: Drama/ Crime Cast: Gary Oldman, Lena Olin

All Rounder On BANGLAVISION at 09:45pm Drama Serial Cast: Azizul Hakim, Alif

Media Gossip, Crickeet Crazy, Pelham 1 2 3 Hackers, 07:15 Orphan, 09:30 Romeo Is Bleeding, 12:00 Star World, 12:30 American Idol, 02:30 Friends, 07:30 The Good Guys, 09:30 Koffee With Karan, 11:30 White Collar, 12:30 National Geographic Channel, 10:30 The Known Universe, 11:30 Super Factories, 02:30 World's Deadliest Animals, 10:30 The Decade, 11:30 Great Migrations, 12:30 Discovery Channel, 10:30 Go India, 10:30 How Stuff Works, 02:30 Quidar: The Ice Trail, 09:30 Atlas 4D, 11:30 Rampage, 12:30 BBC World, 11:00 BBC World News, 11:30 India Business Report, 03:10 My Country: Germany, 10:30 India Business Report

ATN BANGLA, 08:00pm Megher Onek Bari, 08:40pm Neel, 09:50pm Chota Papoi, 09:55pm Moar Chhikka, ntv, 02:30pm Labonno Prova, 08:15pm Chader Nijer Kon

CHANNEL-i, 09:45am Gamersphere, 09:55pm Amar Ami

DRAMA SERIAL, Alo Hel, EVV, 06:20pm Ohangkar, 09:30pm Lata, 08:15pm Jamal Mela, 09:45pm All Rounder, 09:15pm Tourist

NEWS BULLETIN, 07:30am News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm, News (English) at 10:00am, 4:00 pm, 10:00 pm, Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm, News (Bangla) 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 am ntv, News (Bangla) 7:30am, 12:00pm, 2:00pm, 7:30pm, 10:00pm, 1:00am, 11:00pm, News (Bangla) 9:00am, 11:50 am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 6:00 pm

TALK SHOW, 11:05am Asian City, 11:05am Topspin, 06:00pm How's That, 11:45pm Sopa Kotha, 09:55pm Banglavisjon, 01:10pm Time to Cricket, 12:00am Zero Hour

MUST-SEE OSCAR FILMS

Conquering the Oscars or even a nomination adds significant weight to a movie than any amount of commercial success. Gate receipts can only get a film so far, whereas an Oscar guarantees immortalisation. In this series, we look at those films which drew international attention thanks to the Oscars, as they ride on their newfound wave of success.

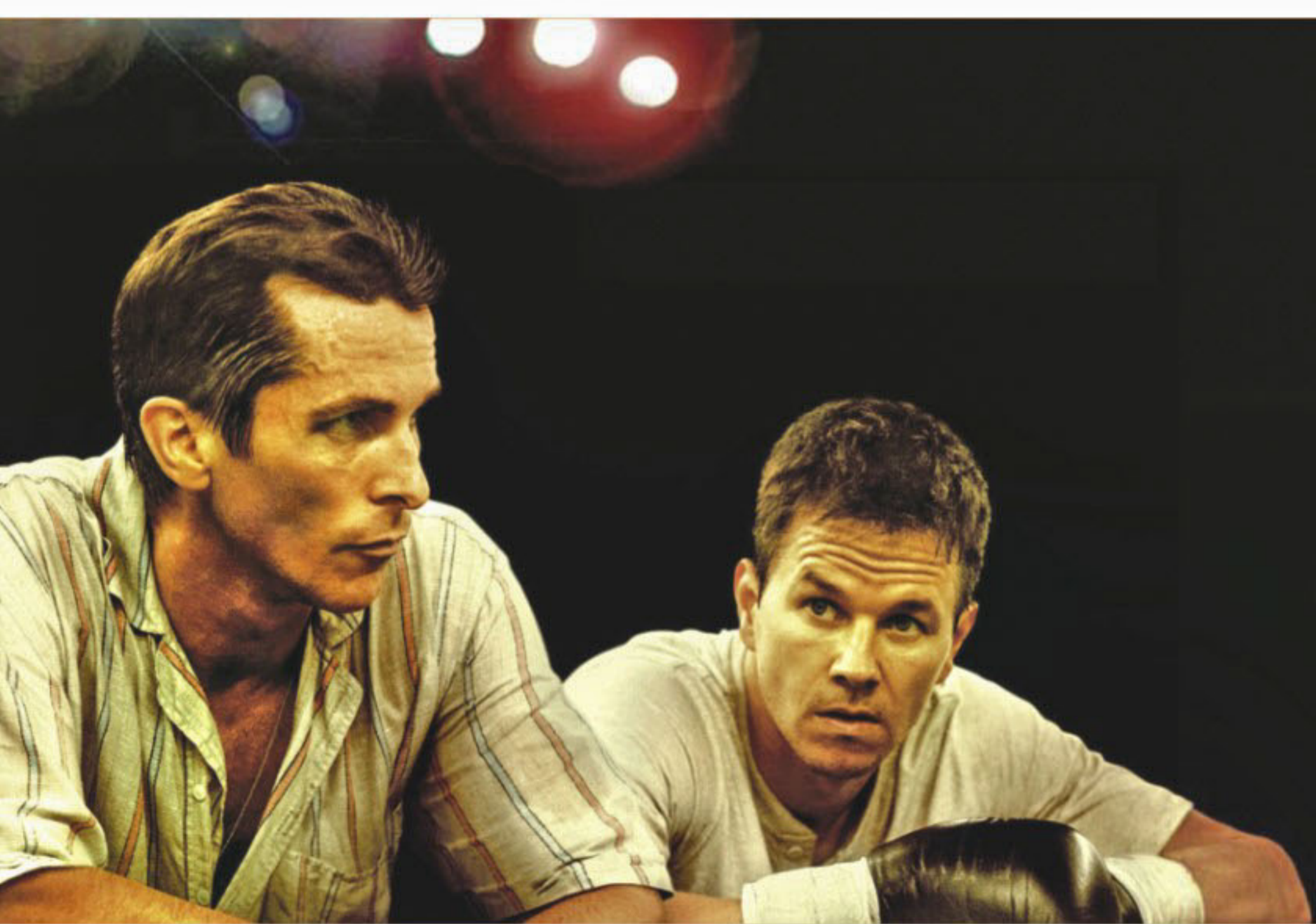
THE FIGHTER Old Bottle, New Concoction

OSAMA RAHMAN

What is it about boxing movies that guarantee success at the box office? Is it the 'feel-good' factor or the underdog's rise that captures the imagination? As previous movies have shown, the protagonist's success doesn't always translate to the movie's success; failures work well too as highlighted by Rocky Balboa. However, it is true, that most boxing movies appear clichéd, hence losing their appeal. Enter "The Fighter".

"The Fighter" chronicles the life of welterweight boxer Micky Ward (Mark Wahlberg) and his trainer/brother Dickie Eklund (Christian Bale). Adding more depth to the movie, we have Melissa Leo playing Micky and Dickie's controlling mother and Micky's love interest Charlene (Amy Adams), who tries to nudge Micky towards an elusive success.

Dickie, a former boxer himself, once knocked Sugar Ray down in a televised HBO event and since then, the success got to his head, leading to cocaine addiction. As Dickie's career went down the drain, Micky's dreams surfaced, although they remained overshadowed by his elder brother's one-time success. Poor booking and training leads to Micky's one night of humiliation when he is pitted against someone 18 pounds heavier than him.



The embarrassment Micky suffers convinces him to retreat from the world of boxing, only to be lured back by his girlfriend, away from the influences of his brother and morale-deflating mother. The movie doesn't stand alone on this particular premise or the few and far between fight scenes. On the contrary, it is the exposure of the life outside the ring that makes the movie so engaging. The idea of Micky being compared to an elder brother repeatedly is a phenomenon close to the hearts of numerous viewers and only adds more reality to the unfolding drama. "The Fighter" doesn't necessarily wish a viewer to root for the underdog.

The fact that Dickie's so-called comeback documentary is really about crack addiction, brings about an endearing aspect to Dickie's persona and hence the movie develops on two different levels; the underdog who is tormented by peer pressure and the silent hopes on a washed-up has been. Whatever the "Fighter" lacks in terms of its clichéd storyline, it compensates for and then some by sheer acting brilliance. With seven Oscar nominations and two Oscars to boast about, this movie is remarkable, capti-

Christian Bale's solid portrayal of Dickie Eklund adds so much more realism to the character that one almost prays for a comeback that can never be. Bale rightfully won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for this performance.

In this case, one finds himself torn between the oblivious Dickie and the ambitious Micky. Christian Bale's solid portrayal of Dickie Eklund adds so much more realism to the character that one almost prays for a comeback that can never be. Bale rightfully won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for this performance. Oscar success can only propel this likely-classic to even greater heights.