

WHAT'S ON



Book Fair
Organiser: Ottijyo
Venue: Central Library premises, Shabagh
Date: April 24-May 20
Time: 9am-8pm



Group Art Exhibition
Venue: Diska Art Centre, Dharmoddi
Date: May 12-18
Time: 12pm-8pm



Film Festival
Organiser: Zahir Rahan Film Society
Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Rd
Date: May 12-21



Solo Exhibition
Sculptor: Samiran Dutt
Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, Dharmoddi
Date: May 13-22
Time: 10pm-8pm



Solo Musical Soiree
Artist: Dr. Nazish Kamal
Venue: IGCC, H-35, Rd-24, Gulshan-1
Date: May 20
Time: 6:30pm



Short Film Festival
Organiser: Dhaka University Film Society
Venue: TSC Auditorium, DU
Date: May 15-19
Time: 3pm onwards



Friday Film Show
Film title: Man to Man
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dharmoddi
Date: May 27
Time: 6pm



Jatio Shishu-Kishore, Adibashi Natyo Utshab
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA
Date: May 9-19
Time: 4:30pm



Group Art Exhibition
Organiser: FFA and BFGA
Venue: Bengali Gallery, Dharmoddi
Date: April 16-21
Time: 12pm-8pm

PROFILE

Ashraful Huda: Devoted to Lalon's songs



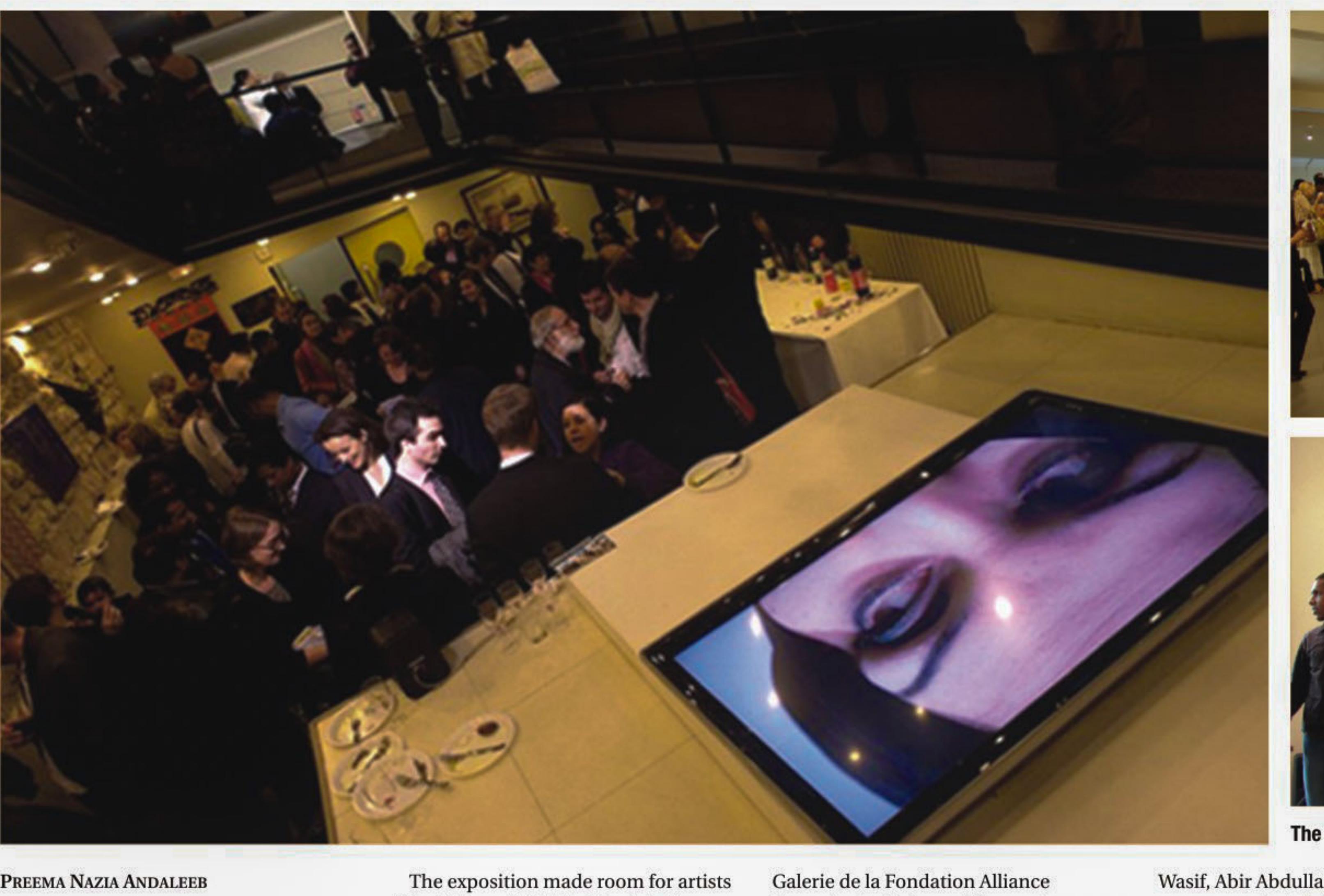
A CORRESPONDENT

Lalon singer Md. Ashraful Huda was born and grew up in Rajshahi. While he is taking lessons in classical music from Rabui Hossain, he has also been singing adhunik songs on Rajshahi Betar (radio) for the last 10 years. He received music lessons from Abdul Aziz Bachchu and Shafi Mandal and often writes songs.

"I always prefer Lalon songs. For one thing, I believe the words and tunes of his songs are invaluable assets of our heritage. Lalon's words can reach the very depths of soul," said Huda. The young singer's spirited renditions of Lalon songs "Ami Kangal Hobo" and "Bhed Bidhir Por Shastro Kana" have attained much acclaim.

"Lalon's songs are an integral part of our collective consciousness, although not everyone is aware of this," said the artiste. "We, Baul singers, try to follow the principles of Lalon. We want to understand him and his philosophy," he added.

Bangladesh shines in the City of Light



The director general of Cité Internationale des Arts speaks at the festival.

PREEMA NAZIA ANDALEEB

Le Bangladesh a Paris (Bangladesh in Paris) -- no matter how French it sounds, it was a memorable experience to present Bangladesh for sure! It was a unique attempt to showcase our country's art and culture in the 'City of Light'.

This festival (held last month) was an initiative taken by Alliance Francaise de Dhaka and Chittagong; Fondation Alliance Francaise and Bangladesh Brand Forum to present a young but creative, happening and diverse image of Bangladesh, as we celebrate 40 years of our independence.

The word 'contemporary' has a very intriguing connotation to me, as what is old today was contemporary yesterday, and art always represents contemporary practice. At the festival, artists were selected based on their style, concept and ideas capturing the contemporary pulse of their time.

The festival was divided into two segments. One was photography, at the

exposition made room for artists of the '60s and '70s like Murtaja Baseer, Hashem Khan, Kalidas Karmakar to today's young talents like Ronny Ahmed and Ashraful Hasan. It also explored different styles and media: print by Monirul Islam, water colour by Laila Sharmin, mixed media by Mursidha Arzu Alpona and oil painting by Gautum Chakravorty.

Unlike conventional exhibitions, which usually focus on a particular aspect of an artist's work, this festival attempted to present works that are intended to brand contemporary Bangladesh, as we celebrate 40 years of our independence.

Thus, it was necessary to make a concrete compilation of progressive art and culture in Bangladesh. This was done to help the world identify Bangladesh's image, to realise art's ability and thus proceed further to become one of the important cultural hubs in Asia.

The festival was divided into two segments. One was photography, at the

Galerie de la Fondation Alliance Francaise in Paris, and the contemporary visual art exhibition at Cité Internationale des Arts. In between, there was also a small but significant presentation of craft and indigenous art like jute, rickshaw, kantha, tapestry, pottery, silk, Jamdani etc. There were two unique tapestries by veteran artist Suraiya Rahaman, which were a revelation of the lost talent of the country.

Art and culture help identify the attitudes and aspirations, dreams and devotions of a nation. Bengali culture is open in its own right; our artists have gone beyond and proven their integrity and capability in their respective creative fields. Among 16 visual artists, Kazi Salauddin Ahmed, Fokhrul Islam, Ifat Ara Dewan and my work ("Marry My Egg") were also featured.

Along with artists, 16 photographers' works were also featured. Works of noted photo-artists like Anwar Hossain, Shahidul Alam, GMB Akash, Munem

Wasif, Abir Abdullah and Shobh Faruque were presented. Salam Jasim, Jannatul Mawa, Zappilin, Naeem Mohaiemen and Amirul Rajiv also made their way to Paris and became cultural ambassadors of Bangladesh through their captivating images.

The festival was not a quiet initiative. It also made a prolific impact when "Don't Ask", a young band, covered Bangla classics in contemporary style. "Orey Neel Doria" touched Parisian hearts and one could feel that we have already prepared ourselves to create a global impact.

"La Bangladesh a Paris" showed that we have preserved and nurtured our traditions with utmost care and that we have found expressions through the local rituals and festivals. Step by step we have advanced and progressed in multiple dimensions. Although this initiative could capture only a small part of the grandeur of the big perspective, it was nonetheless very crucial in helping Bangladesh receive the positive attention and deep passion."

The writer is a visual artist; Adviser, Bangladesh Brand Forum and was the curator of Le Bangladesh a Paris.

tion.

Parisians are considered to be the

most artistic people and their acknowledgements of our work has been truly encouraging.

The festival had a number of supporters without whom it would have not been as successful as it was. It must be mentioned that the Government of Bangladesh provided much needed support and encouragement.

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The overwhelming turnout at both

venues said it all. Bangladesh might still be somewhat unfamiliar to many across the globe, but as the president of Cité Internationale said, "...It has been a mesmerising experience [for me] to see the effort and the artistic ability of a nation she rightfully deserves."

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Asaduzzaman Noor; theatre activists and media personalities Aly Zaker and Sara Zaker; musicians Topu and Tishma; TV show hosts Munmun and Sharmin Lucky unwrapped the publication, titled "The Glorious History of Bangladesh" at the Pizza Hut in Gulshan, Dhaka yesterday.

The pictorial portfolio represents the history of the Liberation War, highlighting

the nation's struggle for freedom and ultimate victory. Photographs have been collected from the Liberation War Museum.

"Independence is our greatest achievement. Freedom fighters are the greatest sons and daughters of the soil. We return to those golden moments, whenever we are confronted with crisis and confusion. Based on that extraordinary demonstration of courage we get the inspiration to move forward," said Asaduzzaman Noor.

Akku Chowdhury said, "We took this initiative to uphold and generate interest in our history, particularly among the young. We hope this publication will help them learn the true history of the Liberation War and inspire them to move towards a better future."

The publication will be available at all outlets of KFC and Pizza Hut in Bangladesh and also at the Liberation War Museum. Proceeds from sales of this portfolio will be donated to the 'Liberation War Museum Nirman Fund'.

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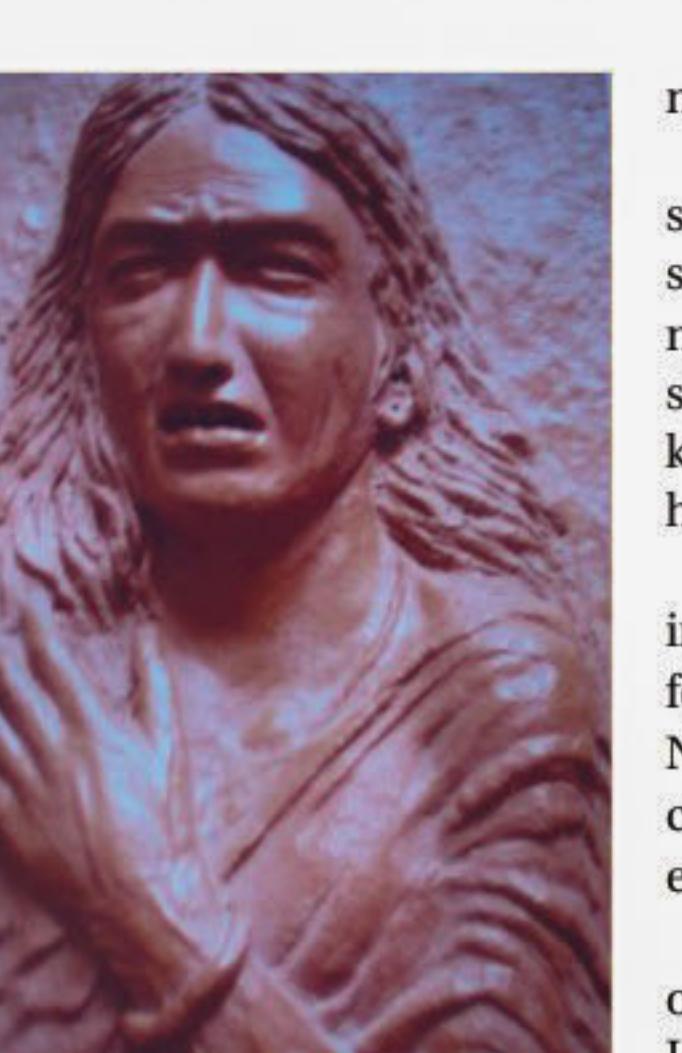
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Sculpture as a lifeline

JAHANGIR ALAM, Netrakona



"I want more time to continue my work. I don't work for monetary gains or awards, but only because I am dedicated to my art," says 75-year-old Puspa Ranjon Acharya, a sculptor of Netrakona.

The artist has been ailing from bronchitis for over a year. Though he cannot afford medical treatment, his illness has not deterred him from pursuing his art.

Despite his talent, Acharya has never received the exposure he deserves. His sculptures reflect Bangladeshi, the masses, the Liberation War and the local culture in general.

The artist has repeatedly declined to sell 50 sculptures he has completed so far, in the hope that one day these will be displayed at national exhibitions.

It is no distant dream. After learning about Acharya's works, the authority of National Museum in Dhaka contacted him, and acquired one of his sculptures, to be displayed at the

Netrakona Museum.

Acharya has a small studio of sorts at his home and believes that some day his works will attain nationwide recognition. His workstation is at a rented shop, half a kilometer away from his village home in Sahlipur.

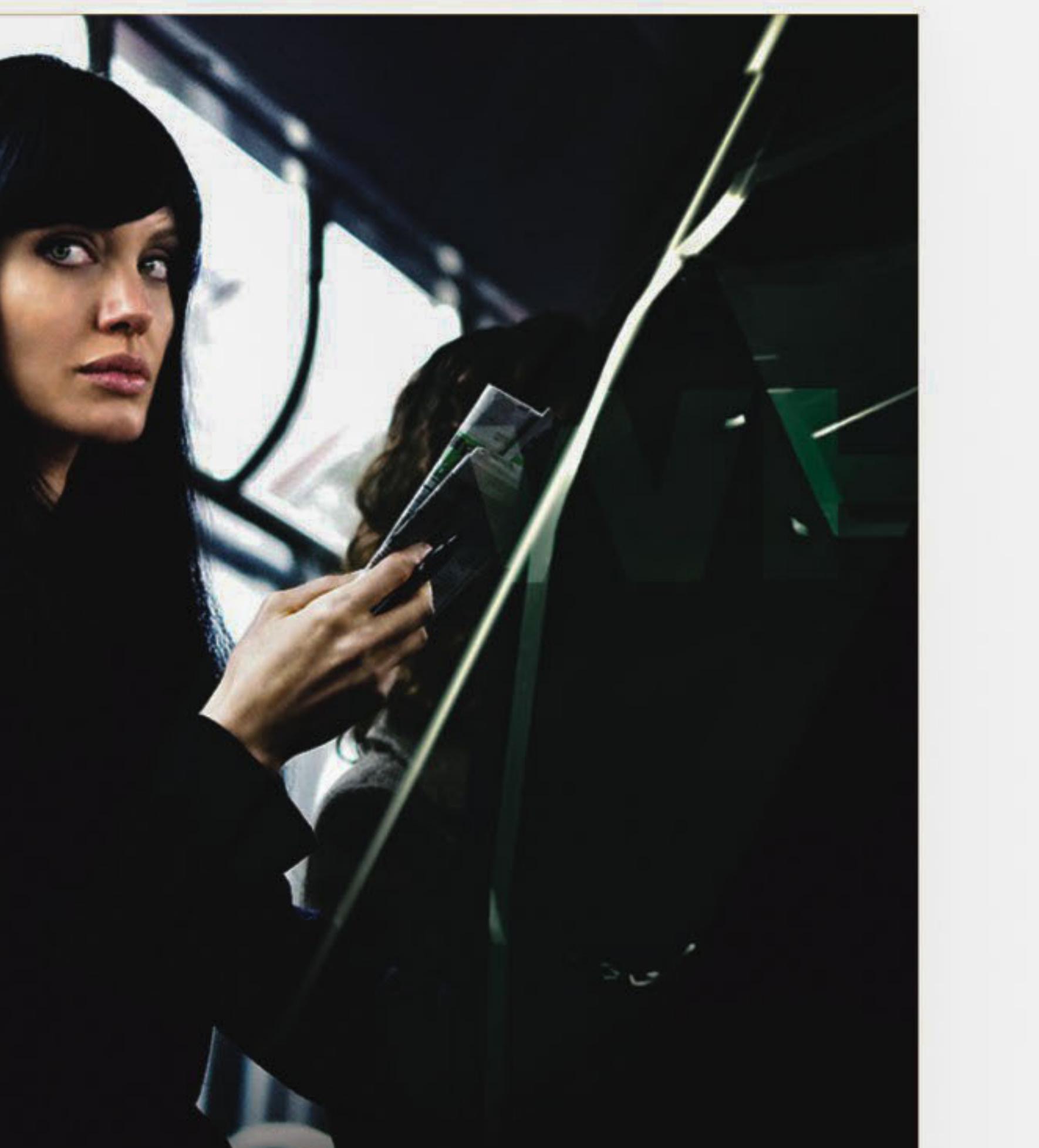
Acharya was born in 1936 to an impoverished family in Sahlipur, four kilometers away from Netrakona district town. The artist could not afford to continue his education.

He uses gum, zinc and red-

oxide when working on sculptures. He says the use of gum gives the sculptures a longer life.

Pursuing his passion for the arts, the sculptor continues to struggle with penury, hoping that some day his art will receive the patronage it desperately needs.

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Angelina Jolie's Salt at Star Cineplex

A CORRESPONDENT

The plot of "Salt" zooms in on Evelyn Salt -- a CIA agent who is highly respected by all, including her boss. Out of the blue, a Russian spy walks into their office and offers a vital piece of information: the President of Russia will be assassinated during his forthcoming visit to New York City. The name of the assassin: Evelyn Salt.

Concerned about the safety of her husband, who she cannot contact, Salt becomes a fugitive. Her boss refuses to accept that she is a mole but her actions begin to raise doubts. Who really is Evelyn Salt and what is she planning?

Apart from Jolie, the movie also stars Liev Schreiber, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Daniel Olbrychski and August Diehl.

This month DS Café will have popular actor Mahfuz Ahmed take your calls. Readers will have the opportunity to converse with him on different issues and interesting aspects of his memorable roles. Call 8126155 on May 25, between 3 and 4pm, to speak to Mahfuz Ahmed!!!



THEATRE

Byatikrom presents Bernard Shaw's How He Lied to Her Husband

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Theatre troupe Byatikrom Narya Goshthi premiered its new play -- an adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's "How He Lied to Her Husband". The premiere of the play was held at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on May 16. Titled "Srimoti Shamir Kachhey Srimaner Mithya Bhashon", the play was directed by Shaiful Islam. Professor Kabeer Chowdhury has translated the play into Bangla.