

WHAT'S ON



Dhaka Int'l Theatre Fest
Organiser: ITI Bangladesh
Venue: Bangladesh
Shilpakala Academy
Date: May 21-30
Time: 7pm everyday



Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Monirul Islam
Venue: Gallery Chitrak
Dhannomoni
Date: May 27-June 15
Time: 10am-8pm



Solo Exhibition
Sculptor: Samiran Dutt
Venue: Shilpangan Gallery,
Dhannomoni
Date: May 13-24
Time: 10pm-8pm



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



Solo Sand Recital
Artist: Ashok Lahiri
Organiser: KCC, High Commission
of India, India
Venue: Music and Dance
Auditorium, Shilpakala Academy
Date: May 28, Time: 6:30pm



Group Art Exhibition
Title: Ishaan Baibhab
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine
Arts, Dhannomoni
Date: May 23-29
Time: 12pm-8pm



Jewellery Exhibition
To raise fund for tsunami victims
in Japan
Organiser: Adhi
Venue: IZUMI, H 24, Rd 113,
Gulshan 2
Date: May 27-28, Time: 11am-



Group Art Exhibition
Title: 7
Venue: Zainul Gallery, FFA,
Shahbagh
Date: May 19-25
Time: 11am-7pm



Manipuri Theatre staged "Kohe Birangana" and Buds Theatre staged "Shades" (right) on the opening day.

1st Dhaka International Theatre Fest by ITI, Bangladesh Kicks Off

A CORRESPONDENT

'1st Dhaka International Theatre Fest', organised by Bangladesh Centre of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), opened at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) on May 21. Ramendu Majumdar, the President (worldwide) of ITI formally inaugurated the 10-day programme, while Information and Cultural Minister Abul Kalam Azad was present as the chief guest. Also present as special guests were Director General of BSA, Liakat Ali Lucky and Secretary General of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGT), Jhuna Chowdhury.

In his message, Ramendu Majumdar welcomed the participating theatre groups from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Singapore and Hong Kong. "Because of its various continuing initiatives like organising seminars, festivals, workshops and above all, bringing out publications, Bangladesh ITI enjoys a prestigious position among the ITI member-countries," he said.

The inaugural session of the programme was followed by a staging of the Manipuri Theatre production, "Kohe Birangana". Shuvashis Sinha has written and directed the play based on Michael Madhusudan Dutt's "Birangana Kabyo". The play can also be seen as the playwright's response to Madhusudan Dutt's epic.



Madhusudan's "Birangana Kabyo" features the agony of female characters from the epic "Mahabharat". "Birangana Kabyo" has 11 verses, from which Shuvashis adapted four for his play. The play features stories of Shakuntala, Draupadi, Dushala and Jona.

The play is a narrative of letters written by these four characters to their respective husbands, starting with Shakuntala, who writes a moving letter to her husband

husband Jayadratha. Jayadratha has become Arjun's adversary by killing the latter's son Abhimanyu. Arjun signs a peace accord instead of avenging the death. A bereaved Dushala writes a letter rebuking her husband's seeming cowardice.

Shuvashis has written the play in a lyrical form known as "poyar".

Jyoti Sinha played the four characters. It is a tough act for any performer to adapt four major literary characters in a single production with ease. Jyoti made a truly commendable effort to reach the zenith of the characters' emotions.

Compared to "Kohe Birangana", Buds Theatre Company's (Singapore) production "Shades" seemed rather run of the mill. The play is a simple love story with controversial undertones based on cultural and religious identities.

The play attempted to show a contrast between religious dogmas and the adverse impact of globalisation on the individuals in Singapore.

The festival features 25 plays at the National, Experimental, and Studio theatre halls at 7pm everyday.

Nazrul Memorial Centres: In Dire Need of Attention



The Nazrul Memorial Centre in Kazir Shimla.

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Nazrul memorabilia at two Smriti Kendra (memorial centres) in villages Kazir Shimla and Namapara, of Darirampur, Trishal draw the attention of visitors far and wide.

Nazrul, born in Churulia of Burdwan district, West Bengal on May 25, 1899 spent a year of his boyhood in Kazir Shimla and Darirampur in Trishal here and studied at Darirampur High School.

Later Nazrul lodged at the house of Bechutia Bepari at Namapara, as his school was far from Kazir Shimla. However, Namapara is given more importance than Kazir Shimla, say locals.

Later Kazi Rafizullah, a sub-inspector of police, took Nazrul to his village home at Kazir Shimla in 1914.

Nazrul memorabilia housed at the two centres include gramophones and records (released by His Masters Voice Company); manuscripts in Bengali, English, Hindi and Urdu; a coat used by Nazrul during his stay at Kazir Shimla and some rare black and white photographs of the poet.

The memorabilia can be seen on the second floor of the centres. Though the memorabilia collection is meagre, visitors flock enthusiastically to have a view, says Kazi Azizul Haque, an employee of Kazir Shimla Nazrul Smriti Kendra.

He also said that the old library, which was deserted after the construction of the Smriti Kendra in 2003, can be re-launched as a rest house for tourists who come from distant places.

Professor Syed Giasuddin Ahmed, vice-chancellor of Jatiya Kobi Kazi Nazrul Islam University said that the collection of Nazrul memorabilia at both the centres should be increased for the benefit of visitors. People, including students from far and near visit the centre everyday, he added.

The library at each centre should be enriched with more books and other facilities like residential quarters for Nazrul researchers, said Ahmed.

Afzal Rahaman, a professor of the Bengali Department of Govt. Ananda Mohan College said that, Nazrul is a beacon who encourages us to raise our voices against fundamentalism, oppression and injustice, so the collection of memorabilia should be better taken care of.

Durdana Khanam, daughter-in-law of Kazi Rafizullah, said that her family

donated land for the Nazrul Library in 1974 but the establishment is unfortunately in a derelict state now. "We want greater development of the memorial centres with proper supervision by the government," said Durdana.

There were pledges on different occasions marking the poet's birth anniversary celebration, to establish other institutions at Kazir Shimla to pay homage to Nazrul, but such pledges are yet to be fulfilled, lament the locals.

The pledges include the establishment of two faculties of Nazrul University -- Agriculture and Cultural -- and an open place for "Nazrul Mela", but no initiative

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The two memorial centres also face acute shortage of staff. Though openings for 17 posts at the two centres were announced in 2003, the establishments are run by a skeleton staff of five, of whom four are on a daily basis, according to sources.

Exhibition featuring north-east Indian painters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

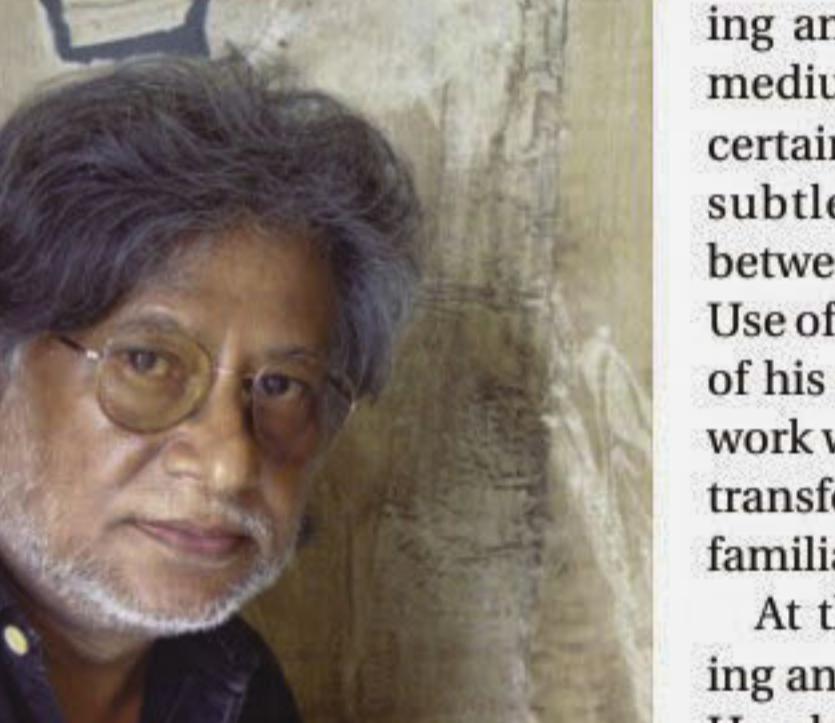
Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, in collaboration with Kiran (an organisation of artists from north-east India), is holding an art exhibition titled "Ishaan Baibhab" featuring works of 28 painters from Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. The exhibition begins today and will continue till May 29 at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in Dhannomoni.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Dipu Moni will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest. Jitendra Chaudhury, minister, Department of Industries and



Rafiqun Nabi speaks at the programme.

Monirul Islam's solo exhibition at Gallery Chitrak



Monirul Islam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gallery Chitrak will hold a solo art exhibition featuring noted Bangladeshi expatriate painter-printmaker Monirul Islam. The exhibition will begin on May 27 and will continue till June 15.

Islam is well known for his etching and aquatint. He controls his medium and technique with a certain mastery. His specialty is his subtle lines and the balance between space and composition.

Use of space is an important aspect of his works and the artist likes to work with varied unfamiliar forms, transforming them amazingly into familiar expressions.

At the exhibition, Monir's etching and aquatint will be displayed.

He also uses acrylic, watercolour, oil, pencil and other mediums.

Arturo Perez Martinez, Ambassador of Spain to Bangladesh will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest. Professor Abdul Barakat, president, Bangladesh Economic Association and chairman of Janata Bank, will be present as special guest. Eminent artist Qayum Chowdhury will preside over the inaugural session.

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