

WHAT'S ON

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Monirul Islam
Venue: Gallery Chitrah, Dhanmondi
Date: May 27-June 15
Time: 10am-9pm

Nazrul Festival
Organisers: Nazrul Sangeet Shilpi Parishad & Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Music & Dance Centre Auditorium, Shilpakala Academy

Theatre Festival
Organiser: Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation
Venue: Shilpakala Academy
Date: June 3-17
Time: 7pm everyday

19th National Art Exhibition
Organiser: Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Art Gallery, Shilpakala Academy
Date: May 28-June 17

Solo Painting Exhibition
Title: Essence of Mystery
Artist: Tarak Mahadi
Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhanmondi
Date: June 3-16

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Mustapha Khalid Palach
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, R-7 A, JH-60, Dhanmondi
Date: June 17-July 1
Time: 11am-9pm

Solo Photography Exhibition
Title: In Search
Photographer: Shamsuzzaman Pirze
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi
Date: June 3-14; Time: 12-8pm

Photography Exhibition
Title: Bay of Bengal in Focus-1
Venue: DRI Gallery, H-58, Rd-15/A, Dhanmondi
Date: June 5-8
Time: 3-8pm

End of an Era

Azam Khan no more



A CORRESPONDENT

Azam Khan, a freedom fighter, singer, composer and guitarist, known as the "Pop Guru" whose popularity transcended generations of music lovers, passed away yesterday (June 5) morning at Combined Military Hospital (CMH). He was 62.

The cause of death was oral cancer that spread to both of his lungs. The artiste went to Singapore on July 14 last year for treatment. After being treated at Mount Elizabeth Hospital he returned home. He was admitted to Square Hospital on May 22, 2011 with severe pain in his hands and shoulder. As his condition deteriorated, the doctors gave him life support. With his health condition unimproved, Azam Khan was moved to CMH in Dhaka Cantonment on June 1.

The tall, lean, soulful singer liked playing cricket with teenagers around Kamalapur, Motijheel, where he lived. A pioneering pop/rock musician, Khan actively took part in the Liberation War. During the war, his impassioned singing served as great source of diversion to his fellow warriors. Throughout his life, he believed that it is the common, ordinary people who will bring a positive change in the country.

After the war, he formed his band 'Uchcharon' and began composing music that was completely unfamiliar to the Bangladeshi audience at that time. In the decades that followed, those tunes initiated the Bangla pop genre. Azam Khan to Bangladeshi pop music is what Chuck Berry is to Western rock and roll. His songs 'Alal O Dulal' and 'Ore Saleka Ore Maleka' were nothing less than anthems to a generation of music lovers. The tunes of his songs and his trademark

guitar works made so lasting an impression on Bangladeshi contemporary music that every pop/rock artiste and band has been directly or indirectly influenced. When he returned home following his treatment in Singapore, The Daily Star caught up with the "Pop Guru". Sharing his experience, he said, "This was the longest I had ever been abroad. It felt suffocating and frustrating at times in Singapore. But all the weight on my shoulder was lifted when I touched Bangladeshi soil at the airport."

Azam Khan's peer and comrade, singer Ferdous Wahid said: "Unforgettable memories accumulated over 40 years sit heavily on my heart now. He was the soulmate of many musicians and music lovers. Farewell my friend."

Gano Sangeet singer, Fakir Alamgir, another lifelong friend of Azam Khan couldn't hold back his tears: "I can't find words to express how close he was to me."

Rock singer Ayub Bachchhu began his career under the mentorship of Azam Khan. He said, "I can't believe that he [Khan] has left without saying goodbye. May his departed soul rest in peace."

Suborna Mustafa, Chashi Nazrul Islam, Abida Sultana and other cultural personalities of the country regretted that Azam Khan was not honoured with the Ekushey Padak or the Swadhinata Padak in his lifetime.

Rabindra Sangeet singer Sadi Muhammad recalled that Azam Khan loved children and had always been a kid at heart.

Azam Khan's remains will be kept at the Central Shaheed Minar [from 10am-11:30am] today for a public memorial. The legend will be laid to rest at Shaheed Buddhijibi Cemetery after Asr prayers.

Mohammad Iqbal's solo exhibition in Japan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gallery Chayamachi, Osaka, Japan recently organised a solo painting exhibition, titled "Unknown Faces", featuring works of Bangladeshi painter Mohammad Iqbal. The exhibition opened on May 19 and continued till May 31.

This is Iqbal's 33rd solo exhibition where about 20 oil paintings were on display. It should be mentioned that the artist had his higher education in fine arts on oil painting.

Prior to leaving for Japan, the paintings were shown at the artist's residence in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

Mohammad Iqbal is a committed painter, recognised mainly for his theme-based works. His canvases feature visible and shadowy figures. The background of most of his compositions consists of abstract forms, delightful colours and soft tones.

Iqbal is now a teacher of Drawing and Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka.



Mohammad Iqbal (left) with visitors at the exhibition.

Rihanna Says "Man Down" Video Empowers Women

R&B singer Rihanna has defended a controversial music video that shows her gunning down a man, saying it is a message of empowerment for girls.

"Man Down" features Rihanna shooting to death a man who appears in the music video to have sexually assaulted her a day earlier.

The Parents Television Council, the Enough is Enough campaign and think tank Industry Ears, have attacked the video as an act of calculated murder that will encourage young women to turn to violence.

Rihanna told Black Entertainment Television (BET) on Thursday that "Man Down" addresses the topic of rape. The 23-year-old singer was the victim of a violent 2009 physical attack by then boyfriend singer Chris Brown.

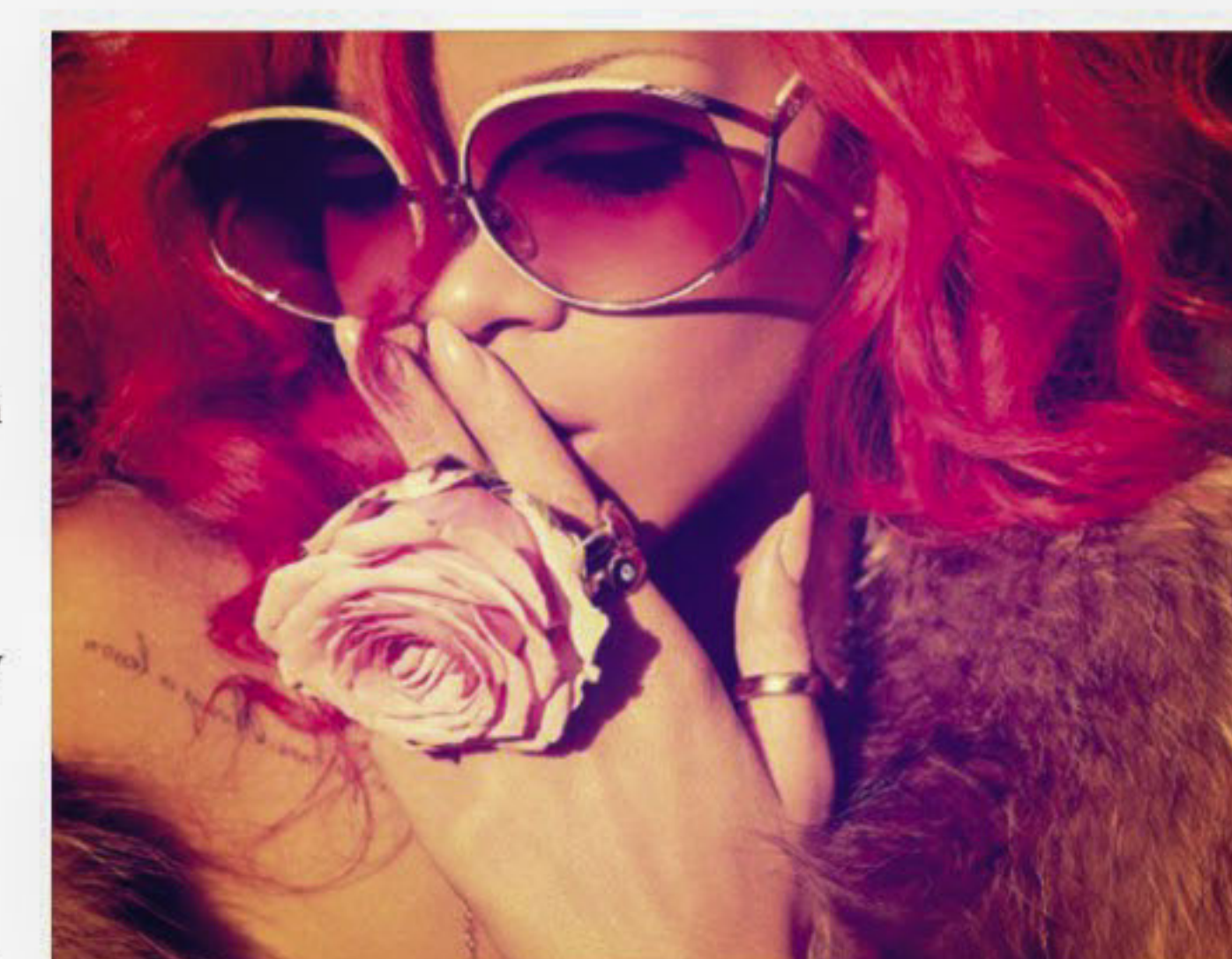
"Rape is happening all over the world and we continue to cover it up and pretend it doesn't happen," Rihanna told BET in an interview.

"Girls are empowered by this ... I'm just really impressed that my fans get it," she said. "That was really important to me. This is a story for them."

She also told BET, which itself drew criticism for airing the video, that the girl she depicts is "not a cold-blooded killer" and she shows remorse about the killing.

"I didn't do it to make a controversial video," Rihanna said. "I wanted to make a mini-movie, something raw and artistic." Rihanna has also defended the video on Twitter.

"The music industry isn't exactly Parents R Us! We have the freedom to make art, LET US! Its your job to make sure they



don't turn out like US," Rihanna said in one Twitter posting. The Barbados native also spoke of double standards that allow depictions of women being exploited in music videos. "Now a woman flips the coin & look!" she wrote. "Man Down", the latest single from Rihanna's album "Loud", was released last week.

SOURCE: THE NEW YORK TIMES

54TH VENICE BIENNALE

Bangladeshi Art's Proud Presence in the City of Canals

TAKIR HOSSAIN writes from Venice

Venice city has taken on a festive mood on the occasion of the 54th Venice Biennale. Each corner of the town reflects individual architectural magnificence; the city as a whole seems to be a fantastic theatrical stage set. You won't see any car or bike in the city. People either walk or use boats or some other vessel to move around. The streets are like alleyways but the lanes are full of people.

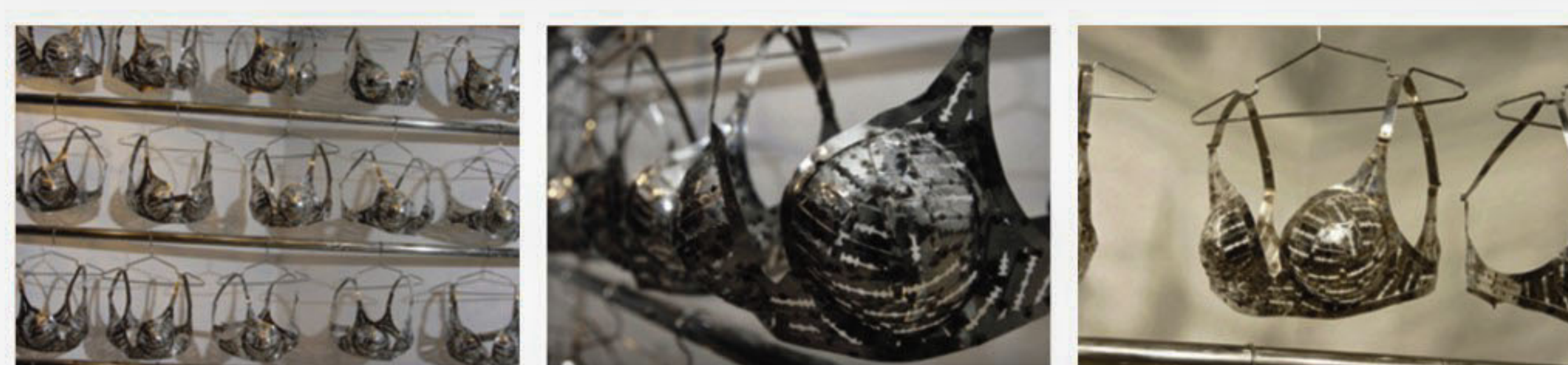
The festival has provided novelty since its launching in 1895. Installation, video art, sculpture are the main genres of art which are on display at the festival.

With the title, "ILLUMINATION", this year's festival has been directed by prominent historian, critic and curator Bice Curiger and organised by la Biennale di Venezia, under the presidency of Paolo Baratta. It opened on June 4, and will continue till November 27. The biennale is being held at the two main locations of Giardini and the Arsenale, as well as other venues around the city.

The exhibition features 83 artists from all over the world. There are about 89 participating nations. The countries that have participated for the first time are Bangladesh, Andorra, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Haiti. Other countries that have participated after a hiatus are Congo, Iraq, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Costa Rica and Cuba.

The Bangladesh pavilion is at 93A, Gerasvuti Foundation (an old abandoned armoury converted into an art gallery). For the first time in the history of the 115-year-old Venice Biennale, Bangladeshi artists have received invitations to demonstrate their installations, video arts to fellow artists from around the world and Venetian art enthusiasts.

Britto Arts Trust, Bangladesh; Bengal Foundation, Bangladesh and Gerasvuti Foundation, Venice-London have jointly arranged the Bangladeshi participation, titled "Parables". Tayeba Begum Lipi, one of the founding trustees of Britto, is acting as co-commissioner, working alongside her Italian counterpart Fiona Biggiero.



(From top) Works by Imran Hossain Piplu, Mahbubur Rahman and Tayeba Begum Lipi.

Mary Angela Schroth and Paolo W. Tamburella are curators of the Bangladesh pavilion.

Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Bangladesh), Mohammad Mijarul Quayes, inaugurated the Bangladesh pavilion on June 3 at 7pm.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Italy, Masud Bin Momen; Subir Choudhury, director, Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts; curators Mary Angela Schroth and Paolo W. Tamburella; artist Tayeba

Begum Lipi, among other, spoke at the inaugural session.

Five participating Bangladeshi artists are Promotesh Das Pulak, Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty, Imran Hossain Piplu, Mahbubur Rahman and Tayeba Begum Lipi. The painters are considered to be socially aware and lay emphasis on varied contemporary issues.

Last year, Mahbubur Rahman and Tayeba Begum Lipi of Britto participated at a work-

shop in Rome. Several curators and critics were impressed by their thought-provoking installations and requested them to submit their project proposals for the Venice Biennale. They submitted their proposals and the projects saw the touch of light. This is the background of Bangladesh's representation at the 54th Venice Biennale.

Mahbubur Rahman is one of the founders of Britto. At the biennale, he is displaying an



The Bangladesh pavilion in Venice.

installation project. The project shows pigs in a steel case. Neon light has adorned the outside of the case. The pigs are covered in cowhide. Rahman said, "Social norms are usually created according to the local atmosphere, weather and culture. Many seemingly irrational norms do exist, bringing about conflict, and compelling us to decide how we ought to act. In my country, for instance, we domesticate cows but not pigs. Growing up in Muslim

family, this tradition was instilled in me from a tender age."

Tayeba Begum Lipi's two projects are: "I Wed Myself" (a video projection of three minutes and two seconds) and "Bizarre and the Beautiful" (an installation, made of stainless steel, hangers and razor blades). In "I Wed Myself" Lipi has played two contrasting roles at the same time -- both the bride and the groom -- at a wedding.

Her "Bizarre and Beautiful" is a very powerful and expressive work through which she asks how a woman's beauty should be represented. The installation consists of 3,000 razor blades made of stainless steel, shaped into 30 pairs of brassiers that hang from a metal bar.

Promotesh Das Pulak is the youngest participating artist and his project is called "Echoed Moments in Time" that focuses on the Liberation War. Pulak collected photographs by noted photographers Robin Sengupta and Rashid Talukdar on the Liberation War. Then he removed the faces of the people in the image and pasted his own face conveying different moods. He has done it using Photoshop.

Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty's work depicts the old Greek myth of Medusa. For the project, he did over 1,000 drawings of faces in varied moods. Then he chose over 100 drawings for his project. He has used pencil and graphite. The faces seem to be identical but the structures and forms are different according to compositions. In "Quandary", he has experimented with his self-portrait and snakes. The facial expressions demonstrate agony, ecstasy and inner visions. Through the project, he questions the concept of uniqueness.

Imran Hossain Piplu's work is a virtual museum that presents fossils discovered in different parts of the world in the form of sculptural relief, digital print and publication. The collection refers to the idea that everything exists as fossil.

Around 7,000 Bangladeshis live and work in Venice. Bangladeshi expatriates are proud of the country's first participation in the biennale.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

The 60th anniversary of Khelaghar Ashor, an organisation for children, was celebrated with a cultural programme here last Saturday afternoon. On the occasion, a procession was brought out that paraded the main streets of the town.

Syed Mohammad Nasih, presidium member of Khelaghar Ashor's central committee, formally

inaugurated the event. Sushmita Zaman, president of the Khelaghar Ashor's Natore unit, chaired the programme. Child members of the organisation performed at the cultural event.

Among others, M. Aslam Liton, Pavel Sarkar, Sankar Kumar Das and Adityo Sukriti spoke on the occasion. The speakers called upon the young to study our rich cultural traditions and adhere to them. These values would help them build a better Bangladesh, they added.

Advertisement for Turkish Delight festival at The Westin Dhaka. Text: Just in case you thought Tulips came from The Netherlands and Santa Claus came from The North Pole, Think Again... Live traditional Turkish music. A chance to win return trip to Istanbul.

partnership with seasonal tastes TURKISH AIRLINES A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER THE TURKISH EMBASSY

Table of TV programmes including ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL I, Diganta TV, and Z Studio.

Table of radio programmes including abc radio FM 89.2, Radio Today FM 89.6, and Radio Footi.

Boya Paribar Drama Serial. Cast: ATM, Shamsuzzaman, Kamrul Bahar.

25th Hour On 2 Studio at 11:40pm. Genre: Action/Drama. Cast: Edward Norton, Barry Pepper.

Terminal On ntv at 11:30pm. Drama Serial. Cast: Shahed, Rumana.

Table of TV programmes including Apnar Jiggasha, Star Movies, BANGLAVISION, and Star World.

Table of Drama Serial programmes including ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL I, and Diganta TV.

Table of News Bulletin programmes including BTV, ATN BANGLA, and CHANNEL I.

Table of Talk Show programmes including BTV, ATN BANGLA, and CHANNEL I.