

WHAT'S ON

Tagore Film Retrospective
Organisers: India Gandhi
Cultural Centre
Venue: Main Auditorium,
National Museum, Shahbagh
Date: Sept. 23-26Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: David Salkot
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre,
Dhannondi
Date: Sept. 16-27
Time: 10am-8pmTagore Dance Drama
"Shyama"
By artistes of Viswabharati
University
Venue: National Theatre Hall,
Shilpakala AcademyPhotography
Exhibition
To celebrate 22 years of Drik
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A
(new), Dhannondi
Date: Sept. 25-30
Time: 3-8pmGroup Art Exhibition
Organiser: Studio 48
Title: Reminiscence of Childhood
Venue: Shilpagan Gallery,
Dhannondi
Date: Sept. 27-29
Time: 12-8pmSolo Painting Exhibition
Title: Portraits, Studies of Characters
Artist: Aswatha Kanti Das
Venue: La Galerie, Alliance
Francaise de Dhaka, Dhannondi
Date: Sept. 30-Oct. 13
Time: 3-9pmTheatre
Play: A Man For All Seasons
Troupe: Prachyan
Venue: Experimental Theatre
Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: September 26Memorial Programme on
Tareque Masud, Mishuk
Munier & Akhtarruzzaman
Venue: Poet Sufia Kamal
Auditorium, National Museum
Date: September 27
Time: 5:30pm

Mamunur Rashid on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011 Bangla Theatre stages a coup with **The Distant Near**



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Mamunur Rashid in a scene from "The Distant Near".

JAMIL MAHMUD

Distant Near" featured at the prestigious Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011, highlighting two creative titans -- Rabindranath Tagore and William Shakespeare. The play has been written by Shahidul Mamun, and directed, designed by Faiz Zahir. Amit Mallick directed the music. Seasoned actor Mamunur Rashid enacts several characters in the play, including Tagore, Shakespeare and major characters created by both bands.

In a first for a Bangladeshi play, "The

mances were on in about 300 venues! All the available spaces had been turned into stages; theatre companies designed the given space to meet their own convenience. The whole city was in a festive mood," said Rashid about the colours of the festival.

The authorities arranged for the theatre companies at the festival to stage at least seven shows of their respective productions so that a larger audience could see the performances. Edinburgh turned into a study of diversities; even the stages of the hotels were turned into venues. Rashid and his troupe were allotted Hotel Radisson as

the venue, located at the city centre, and the epicentre of the festival. Rashid said that to accommodate the large number of shows at least seven companies had to perform at one particular venue. Everyday the show started at noon and continued till around 9pm. A one million-strong audience had options to choose from 2,500 shows, while 21,000 performers displayed their skills. Nearly 1.9 million tickets were sold. The age of the performers ranged from 17 to 70. Theatre companies from all over the world took part in the festival.

The Bangladeshi community living

in the city as well as from adjacent cities turned up to see Bangla Theatre's production. "They lauded our performance and took pride in it. Local communities were similarly enthusiastic," said Rashid.

"The Distant Near" is a tribute to Tagore on his 150th birth anniversary (this year), and also marks 200 years of Shakespeare and his plays on the Bengali stage. Rashid said that everyday they staged the play at noon, but the overall turnout was impressive. As the festival was held at around 300 venues, it was a massive cultural extravaganza.

"The Distant Near" is an attempt to see Shakespeare through the eyes of Rabindranath who, although separated by centuries and two different cultures, sings about the struggles of the former, against great odds of life.

It is an initiative to bridge dialogues from their plays as well. The play is an experimental work.

Instead of taking a hardline orthodox attitude, the local audience loved such experimentation, especially, on Shakespeare.

According to Rashid, at the festival, all the plays were experimental -- both in form and content. For example, there was an adaptation of "Hamlet", where Ophelia does not die and eventually becomes the queen of Denmark. Referring to Shakespeare, the theatre company in their playbill admitted: "We are not doing 'Hamlet' as you wrote it."

The Bangla Theatre production was in English. Local audience praised the actor's typical Bangladeshi diction, as they termed it a "post-colonial attitude".

About the other interesting sidelights of the festival, Rashid said that a solo concert of Pandit Ravi Shankar was the most impressive experience.

"He is in his 90s. But when he started to play there was radiance all over as if he was in his youth. It was a great opportunity for me."

The actor said that he would like to take part in the festival again. "As for our play, we received appreciation, criticism, and hospitality from the Bangladeshi community and a host of new friends," said Rashid.



ZAHANGIR ALAM

SORA

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Dr. Shahidul Alam's "Journey as a Witness"

Photo book launched by Bengal Foundation and Skira Editore



(From left) Giorgio Guglielmino, Rosa Maria Falvo, Nurul Islam Nahid, Dr. Shahidul Alam and Abul Khair at the book launch.

The guests lauded the initiative. "I congratulate both Bengal Foundation and Skira for publishing this book. I believe joint initiatives such as this will take our art, culture and all creative work forward," said Nurul Islam Nahid.

Terming Shahidul Alam as "a master of Bangladeshi's visual arts," Giorgio Guglielmino described the book as an extremely beautiful piece of art.

"I'm proud to be a part of this book, which deals with the personal stories of Shahidul Alam. Working with Alam has been a unique experience. He is a dedicated and talented personality. Alam is an inherent scientist. He has given social issues bold

role in connecting Bangladeshi photographers with their counterparts from across the globe. We hope that this book will take Shahidul Alam's mission forward," said Chowdhury.

The book is the first of a series of 40 volumes that Skira Editore and Bengal Foundation have agreed to co-publish over the next 10 years. Skira Editore is one of the oldest and most prestigious publishing houses that specialise in fine art related books.

Prior to the book launch, director general of Bengal Foundation, Luva Nahid Chowdhury, welcomed the guests and delivered an introductory speech.

As part of the agreement, a series of high quality books showcasing the artworks of both master and contemporary artists of Bangladesh will be published by Skira. International publishers -- Rizzoli, Random House (New

York) and Thames & Hudson (London) -- are to distribute these books globally.

Founded in 1928 by Albert Skira, Skira Editore's earliest editions are legendary: Ovid's "Metamorphosis", illustrated with 30 original engravings by Pablo Picasso (1930) and "Poésies" by Stephane Mallarme, illustrated with 29 original etchings by Henri Matisse (1932). Its first office in Paris became a creative hub. This gave birth to the legendary art review Minotaure, which published the works of numerous icons such as Picasso, Matisse, Salvador Dali, and included the early writings of Jacques Lacan and the photographs of Man Ray and Brassai.

The Usual Suspects

Repo Men

Kull the Conqueror

Star World

Cops

India's Most Desirable

Master Chef Australia

Bones

Home Improvement

National Geographic

Channel

Mega Factories

Great Migrations

Dog Whisperer

Nat Geo Wild

World's Toughest Fixes

Discovery Channel

Score Cards

World Round Up

Suphala Bangladesh

Drama Serial: Quick

12:30 Man vs. Wild

Dual Survival

Man Woman Wild

Anatomical Travellages

Drama Serial

ATN BANGLA

08:00pm Adhoro Mess Bari

10:30pm Uttaradikhar

Rtv

09:05pm Boyra Parbar

11:30pm Ronger Shongshar

Boishakhi TV

07:30pm Shokol Shondha Raat

BANGLAVISION

08:45pm Ecarer Dina

10:45pm Tokhon Hemanta

Maasranga Television

12:30pm Taraka Kothon

BANGLAVISION

06:25pm Front Line

Desh TV

11:45pm Sheja Kotha

Boishakhi TV

12:00am Zee Hour

Maasranga Television

07:30pm Prime Issue



All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

Marriage

Chitra Bichitra

Maasranga Television

Bangla Feature Film

04:20 Matir Subash

05:15 Aayor Shamney

Shimana Chhatri

09:20 Drama Serial: Parapar

Rtv

12:10 Bangla Feature Film

05:00 Cinema Gaan

06:00 Drama Serial: Jekhane

09:00 Shmoni

08:20 Drama Serial: Shaat

09:50 Purush Dhaka

09:50 Bridal Show

CHANNEL i

01:05 Ebong Cinemaa Gan

06:00 Jibon Jekhane Jemon

06:20 Andromeda

09:35 Drama Serial: Jogajog

12:00 Ajker Shangbadpro

BANGLAVISION

RADIO

abc radio FM 89.2

09:00 Mukhonto Jiboney

10:02 Drama Serial: Doley

03:00 Shomadara

05:00 Shomadara

07:00 Raat-er Akashye

09:00 Raat-er Akashye

11:00 Golper Shesh Nei

12:00 Radio Footi

10:00 Morning Express

12:00 My Time

01:00 No Tension

03:00 Doley Calling

09:00 Night Rider

01:00 Back to Back music

RADIO TODAY FM 89.6

08:00 Good Morning Dhaka

12:00 Today's Adda

04:00 U Turn

07:00 Today's Adda

10:00 Star Movies

03:45 Stranger

05:20 Markman

08:00 Street Fighter

Matir Subash

On ATN BANGLA at

04:20pm Agricultural

Programme

Directed by

Nabuyat Rahman

Repo Men

On BANGLAVISION at

04:20pm Drama Serial

Cast: Kollar Koraiash, Nisho

Kull the Conqueror

Star World

Cops

India's Most Desirable

Master Chef Australia

Bones

Home Improvement

National Geographic

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Mega Factories

Great Migrations

Dog Whisperer

Nat