

WHAT'S ON

Victory Day Celebration
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: Shilpakala Academy premises
Date: Dec 1-31, Time: 6-30pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Of Rapture and Certainty
Artist: Moinul Islam
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, 60 Gulshan Avenue
Date: Dec 10-23
Time: 12pm-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Shahabuddin Ahmed
Venue: National Museum, Shaahbagh
Date: Dec 18-28
Time: 10am-8:30pm (Friday: 3-8:30pm)

Day-long Book Fair
Organiser: Bobondhu Shangha
Venue: Seminar Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Central Public Library, Shaahbagh
Date: Dec 20
Time: 10am-8pm

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Songs of Our Motherland
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dharmadighi
Date: Dec 19-21
Time: 12pm-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Songs from the Leisure
Venue: Shilpakalam Art Gallery, Dharmadighi
Date: Dec 17-21
Time: 12pm-8pm

National Folk Music Fest 2010-2011
Organiser: Bangladesh Lok Sangghe Paribad
Venue: Chittagong & Dhaka
Date: Dec 24, 30, 31
Time: 10am onwards

Art Workshop
Organiser: Depart
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dharmadighi
Date: Dec 19-23
Time: 10am onwards

Penning songs for over two decades Tête-à-tête with Mahmud Khurshid



A CORRESPONDENT
Who hasn't heard the evergreen Miles songs "Phiriyee Dao", "Bhulbona Tomake", "Dhiki Dhiki" and "Jala Jala". These songs are still fresh in the memories of millions of fans, and they were penned by Mahmud Khurshid. Twenty-one years on and Khurshid is still going strong.
On the occasion of 40 years of independence of our country, George Harrison's iconic song "Bangladesh" has been translated in Bangla by Khurshid. The song was performed by Miles.
Mahmud Khurshid is a man of many talents and is actively involved with several social and cultural activities. He started with writing rhymes at a young age and later shifted to short prose. He wrote his first song "Ek Jhor Eshey", later titled "Shopno Bhongo" (in 1989), when his friends who were forming a band. That band, Octave, requested him to write songs for them. The song did not come out in Octave's album but his other songs did. "Shopno Bhongo" was later taken up by Miles and came out in their second album in 1991.
His first released song was "Tumi Chole Geccho", the title song of Octave's album. Next, he wrote lyrics for Miles, which instantly brought him into the limelight.
Some of Khurshid's popular songs like "Phiriyee Dao", "Neela", "Dhiki Dhiki Agun Joley" appeared with "Shopno Bhongo", "Jadu", "Ridoyheena" and other songs in Miles' second album "Prattasha". In fact most of Miles' (four albums) hit songs are written by Mahmud.
Khurshid also wrote the popular numbers "Josh" and "Uru Uru Monto" performed by feedback. Warfaze's "Dhupchaya", "Aasha" and "Mounota" are also written by him.
Besides bands, he also wrote songs for several artistes such as Ankhi Alamgir, Kaniz Shuborna, Mehreen Khan, Waqar Chowdhury, Lopa Hussain, Dilruba Khan, Khaled Hassan Milu, Feroz, Lyla and many others. In 2004 he was awarded the Bhashani Padak as a lyricist.
"The lyrics of most my songs are tuned while they're still in the process of being written. The lyrics and the music are interlaced in a complementary manner," he adds. "Phiriyee Dao was instantly cooked up in the studio. Not all songs came so spontaneously though, like 'Bhulbona' for example which I wrote over a span of six months."
As a lyricist, Khurshid also takes into account the artist who will sing his song. He says, "Lyrics conveys messages to the audience." I have remained cautious whether the song will communicate with the target audience or not.
Speaking on why he thinks his songs have longevity, the lyricist says, "Phiriyee Dao" was actually inspired by lines from Tagore's "Shesher Kobita". He was also inspired by Kishore Kumar and Kazi Nazrul Islam's songs. "Having knowledge about global music trends is also important. When writing 'Obak Shahar Dhaka', sung by Mehreen Khan, I not only kept her style and the type of song that goes with her voice in mind, but also wanted it to have a Latin vibe, as it is becoming more popular these days."
Apart from writing songs, Khurshid also wrote the jingles for Banglalink, School Football Campaign (with FIFA and AFC) and Food for Hunger (WFP, UN project).

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IACSS Biennial Conference in Dhaka



STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University hosted the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) Biennial Conference on December 17 and 18.
The conference, titled "Cultural Transformations: Development Initiatives and Social Movements", opened at BRAC Inn Auditorium on December 17 morning.
The conference of the IACSS, which is a consortium of universities in South, East and South East Asia, critically explores the relationship between culture and socio-political/economic changes. This instalment of the conference focused on development and tried to explore its links with culture and collective values.
The conference has a three-fold objective: Stimulating the growth of cultural studies in Bangladesh and South Asia not only in academia but also in social sectors; contribute to

One of the discussions on the first day of the conference at BRAC University. PHOTO: GOLAM MAHBUB
"remapping" inter-Asia cultural studies to bring South Asia to the centre and provide the opportunity for formally launching the innovative inter-regional post-graduate programme which is working towards designing.
Apart from BRAC University, participants of the conference included National University of Singapore; Lingnan University in Hong Kong; Tokyo University; Sungkonghoe University in Seoul; University of Jakarta; Centre for the Study of Culture and Society of Bangalore etc.
On December 17, the conference opened with a welcome address by Firdous Azim, Chairperson, Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University. In her speech Azim said: "We hope that many delegates from outside the country will find this conference useful as it provides them with another example of the way a small Asian country has tried to refashion itself. For our Bangladeshi participants, the opportunity to exchange views with scholars and activists from various locations would hopefully provide fresh impetus to their thoughts and ideas.
Professor A.K. Azad Chowdhury (State Minister), Chairperson, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, was the chief guest. Professor Ainun Nishat, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University, chaired the opening session. Professor Syed Hashemi, Director, BRAC Development Institute and Acting Chairperson, Department of Economics and Social Sciences, gave the vote of thanks.
Keynote addresses -- "Being someone's symbolic other: A cultural study for South Asia" and "Presence of the Past: Cultural Continuities and Continuities in Asia" -- were presented by Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, India) and Professor Perween Hasan (Vice Chancellor, Central Women's University, Dhaka) respectively.

Birthday celebrations for Mimi and Nobel



A CORRESPONDENT
Two popular media personalities of our country share a common birth date, on December 20. One of them is actor-director Afsana Mimi and the other is the model-actor Nobel.
Mimi started her career with theatre. She joined the theatre troupe Nagorik Natya Sampraday and later moved on to the mini screen. Mimi became a favourite of the masses within a very short span of her career. Presently, she has her hands full directing a mega serial, "Push Phaguner Pala".
When asked how she would like to spend the special day, Mimi said that she does not have any particular plan, and that she'd be busy with work throughout the day. But all the wishes and felicitations of people close to her and her fans would make all the difference. She was also hopeful that the coming days will be rewarding and productive.
On the other hand, Nobel says he too will be spending his birthday working, as it is the year-end. But his children always arrange something or the other on his birthday. It is the children who enjoy and make the most of the day. The love of family and relatives will make the day more special, said Nobel.



Table with TV and radio program listings for ATN BANGLA, Diganta TV, CHANNEL i, Z Studio, RTV, Star Movies, ETV, and RADIO.

Table with radio program listings for abc radio FM 89.2, Dhaka Calling, Knight Riders, GREEN FM, Today's Adda, U Turn, Robey Hit Ink, and Humum Pecha.

Obogunthan on CHANNEL i at 09:35pm Drama Serial Cast: Iresh Zaker, Ruhil

Kama On Baishakhi TV at 08:45pm Drama Serial Cast: Chanchal Chowdhury, Alvi

Warrior The Lost Future Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban Son of the Mask The Last Airbender Star World BFA Reads Master Chef USA The Shield The Big Bang Theory National Geographic Channel Banged Up Abroad Man hunt Fight Science Caught in the Act Discovery Channel Dana Man vs. Wild Death of Bin Laden Swords HARD talk The Hub with Nik Gowing World Business Report

Table with Drama Serial listings for ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL i, RTV, and Maasranga Television.

Table with News Bulletin listings for ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL i, RTV, and Maasranga Television.

Table with Talk Show listings for ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL i, RTV, and Maasranga Television.

THEATRE TODAY



JAMIL MAHMUD
The overall theatre scene is not as active as Hasan Shahriar would like it to be. Shahriar is the editor of the theatre-based journal Theatrewala. He is of the view that the number of theatre journals and magazines would increase with rise in the theatre practice.
If you look back at the era when Bangla cinema was seemingly at its peak, you'd find several film magazines such as Chitrail, and these magazines attained popularity. When the film industry started to collapse, these magazines crashed too," said Shahriar.
Shahriar's initiation happened in his hometown Comilla in 1985. Later he enrolled at Jahangirnagar University and joined the campus-based troupe, Jahangirnagar Theatre. After completing his studies, he and several of his friends came to Dhaka and formed a branch of Jahangirnagar Theatre in 1993. In 1998, the troupe changed its name to Drishyapat. "Socrates-e-Jobanbondi", "Narak Gulzar" and "Naag Mandal" are some of the popular productions of the troupe. Shahriar has played significant roles in these productions.
Shahriar affirmed that though Drishyapat has some popular plays to its credit, it's not that active of late. He tried several times to revive the troupe but failed. As a result, he had to choose another way to stay involved with theatre. From that perspective, he launched Theatrewala in 1999.
It's hard to regain a position that you've once lost in theatre. You have to be

"More theatre activities would ensure more journals" -- Hasan Shahriar, editor, Theatrewala



A scene from "Shylock and Sycophants".
involved in some way. When our troupe was going through a rough phase, I realised that not only us, rather several other couples of my friends decided to launch a journal on theatre," he said.
Unfortunately, Shahriar could not run the journal smoothly either. Although initially the issues were published regularly, he soon faced an uphill battle. Lack of financial support is the main problem, he said. "I have a vision that my journal would be appreciated by all activists."
Under the circumstance, the innovative Shahriar came up with another idea. He launched a repertory theatre group called 'Theatrewala Repertory' in 2008. The troupe's debut and only production so far, "Shylock and Sycophants," has been lauded by the critics.
"I just wanted to initiate a professional attitude in theatre. Sometimes I have to subsidise a show. But the truth is that performers are earning a meagre amount from each show," he said.
Shahriar could not manage to stage a show in last three months, as the troupe couldn't rent a hall. "When a theatre enthusiast asks me when the next show would be staged, I cannot give him/her a proper answer, as I don't know either," he said.
Shahriar also feels that an executive body should be formed to decide which plays should be staged at the three venues at Shilpakala Academy. He said that theatre needs star performers who would draw the audience in droves to the theatre.

Photography exhibition on Liberation War

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh
Alokchitra Shilpi Sangsad (Ashis) organised a photography exhibition on December 17 at Boishakhi Mancha of Shaheb Quarter Park area in the town marking the 40th anniversary of the Liberation War.
More than 200 photographs, including 40 on the War of Liberation taken by internationally reputed photographer late Nayeb Uddin Ahmed, were displayed at the exhibition. It was the 35th exhibition by Ashis.
The other photographs were on wildlife, environment, agriculture, culture and heritage, nature and daily life of the common people. A good number of visitors thronged the venue to enjoy the exhibition.
Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Lokman Hossain Inaugurated the exhibition as chief guest. Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of sadar upazila Shibir Bichitra Barua presided.
Among others, mayor of Mymensingh municipality Ekramul Haque Titu, acting president of Ashis Md. Mosharrar Hossain, its vice-president Dr. Abul Mansur, programme officer of Mennonite Central Committee Bangladesh Peter Musgrave and Subudh Chandra Chanda addressed the inaugural session of the exhibition. Ashis secretary AHM Motalab delivered the welcome speech.
The speakers at the inaugural session said that photographs taken during the War of Liberation drew the attention of international communities who later came forward to assist the war victims.
Internationally reputed photographer, also president of Bangladesh Bird Association Enam Al Haque; mountaineer M A Muhi; Adiluzzaman Adil; Mazeda Begum; Biplob Kumar Guha Manik; Shanta Roy; Prithish Sarker; Shahidur Rahman Hira; Abdul Halim; M.A Rusuh; Ratan Sarker; Surindra Kishore Dutt Chowdhury; Motalab-bin-Ayet; among others displayed their photos at the exhibition.

Information fair concludes in Jamalpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur
A two-day information fair was held at the Baishakhi Mela premises in Jamalpur recently. Supported by Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) and the District Administration, Sacheton Nagorik Committee (SANAC) of the district unit organised the event.
Chief guest Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali inaugurated the Mela.
Thirty three stalls equipped with computers and information material of government and non-government organisations were set up at the fair.
The organisations displayed and distributed leaflets, posters, booklets and brochures which had information about their services. Anti-corruption cartoons were also on display. Cultural functions, organised by Zila Shilpakala Academy and Shishu Academy, were held at the fair each day. An anti-corruption play "Durnitir Katha" presented by Gononatyadi of SANAC was also staged.
Presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sirajuddin Ahmed, special guests Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, executive director, TIB, Md. Abdur Razzak, Superintendent of Police (SP), Bijon Kumar Chanda, Sadar upazila chairman and Advocate Bakibillah, President, District Lowers' Association addressed the gathering at the inaugural function of the event.
Speakers said the Right to Information Act is a strong instrument through which democracy can be institutionalised. This act can help establish good governance, prevent corruption from the country and ensure empowerment of the citizens, they added.

Farmers day out Village fair in Jhenidah

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah
A three-day Grameen Jibon Jatra Mela (village fair) from December 17 was held at the village Moheshwar Chanda primary school premises under Kalligan upazila in Jhenidah. The mela has been organised with the initiative of local NGO Sonar Bangla Foundation led by Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods(CSRL).
AL lawmaker Abdul Mannan inaugurated the mela on Saturday. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Roma Rani Roy of Jhenidah, Kalligan upazila chairman Anwarul Azim Anar and Upazila UNO Anjumana Begum were present as special guests.
Thousands of farmers, students and local people attended the rally. An unprejudiced cart rally was brought out spontaneously by the local farmers. A traditional lathi khela (traditional martial art), painting competition, Baul songs and a cultural function were the other highlights. Besides, local sports were held as well.
Around 30 carts took part in the rally, while five groups took part in the lathi khela. A musical evening was held at the school grounds.
Discussions said that if such inspirational programmes for peasants are held in rural areas they will be inspired to interact with their peers and gather knowledge in the process.

Argentine film to spotlight Tagore and his muse



Tagore exchanged a series of letters with Ocampo.
Argentine director Pablo Cesar's new film project is about the iconic Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore's "intimate but platonic" relationship with Argentine feminist writer.
The crux of the film, Thinking of Him, hinges on Tagore's 1924 Argentine sojourn during which he forged a deep emotional bond with Ocampo.
"The film will be set partly in present times and partly in the 1920s," says Cesar.
"The idea is to emphasise the continuing relevance of Tagore."
"I began pre-production in 2008 following a suggestion made by India's ambassador to Argentina. But I could not wrap up the film in time for Tagore's 150th birth anniversary as the research and funding process took longer than expected," says Cesar.
Cesar hopes to have Thinking of Him ready for global distribution in 2012.
"The resonance of Tagore's poetry and world view is still very fresh and absolutely relevant. So it really doesn't matter that the film won't hit the screens in the 150th year of his birth," says the director.
Ocampo idolised Tagore ever since he read Andre Gide's French translation of Gitanjali in 1914, a year after Tagore won the Nobel Prize.
The illustrious poet had a huge influence on the Argentine writer, who was then in her mid-30s and lived to be 88.
For his part, Tagore, who was 63 years old in 1924, not only dedicated his 1925 book of poems, Purabi, to his Argentine muse but was also inspired by her to take up painting.
In 1930, Ocampo organised the poet's first art exhibition in Paris, where they met in person for the second and last time.
However, until he passed away in 1941, Tagore exchanged a series of letters with Ocampo.
Ocampo was legally separated from her husband - divorce wasn't possible in Catholic Argentina of the day - in the wake of an affair with his cousin but she never remarried.
Tagore's stay in Argentina was unscheduled. He was on the way from Europe to Peru when he was forced by illness to disembark in Buenos Aires.
He went on to spend two months recuperating in a garden villa over-

SOURCE: BBC