

WHAT'S ON

Victory Day Celebration
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: Shilpakala Academy premises

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Of Rapture and Continuity
Artist: Monirul Islam
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, 60 Gulshan Avenue
Date: Dec 10-23

UPL Book Festival
Venue: UPL Bookstore, Shahjadpur
Date: Dec 9-23
Time: 10am-7pm

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

Musical Soiree
Artist: Shreya Guhathakurta
Venue: Main Auditorium, National Museum
Date: Dec 23
Time: 6-30pm

Group Art Exhibition
Organiser: Artist Club Bangladesh
Venue: Kurat, Gallery of Fine Arts, 5, Old Secretariat Road, Miratoli
Date: Dec 17-26
Time: 12-9pm

National Folk Music Fest 2010-2011
Organiser: Bangladesh Lok Sanggeet Parishad
Venue: Chittagong & Dhaka
Date: Dec 24, 30, 31

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



FILM REVIEW

ANDHO NIRANGOM

The Baul way of life under the microscope

JAMIL MAHMUD

Question: Who is a Baul? Answer: A Baul is an artist who sings songs of Lalon as well as other traditional and devotional rural songs. A simple and, frankly, quite typical answer to a question that can possibly stir up a deep discussion. To use the aforementioned overly simplistic description to define Bauls to a group of foreigners would be unjust. To define Bauls, one must understand the Baul way of life and devotion, as well as their way of searching the Divine within. A Baul is more than just a singer.

Hasibur Reza Kallol's "Andho Nirangom" -- the latest film on the philosophy of Fakir Lalon Shai and the lives of contemporary Bauls -- starts with trying to define Bauls. An individual from a group of foreigners, who are about to attend Lalon Festival in Kushtia, presents the question to the Bangladeshi acquaintance/guide (enacted by AFM Moniruzzaman Shipu).

Done in a docu-fiction style, the film tries to unravel puzzles induced by Lalon's doctrine.

As the group reaches the akhra (Lalon's den in Chheuria), a narrator goes over Lalon's story. The tourists come across Bauls as well as urban singers.

According to the narrator, Lalon was raised by his mentor Siraj Shai. Siraj Shai apparently found a seven-month-old Lalon by the river, though the last recent film on the mystic bard tries to establish that Lalon was found as an adult by Malam Karikar and raised as a son.

As the foreigners -- escorted by their Bangladeshi friend and Baul Shafi Mandal -- go out for sightseeing,

they come across a boy named Munna. His singing ability mesmerises them. They want to know about him. And from this moment on the main plot of "Andho Nirangom" develops. Going beyond Munna's story, it is a tale of two Bauls -- Mataji (Rokeya Prachy) and her devotional partner Shamsher Shai (Jayanta Chattopadhyay).

The title of the film is borrowed from one of Lalon's songs: "Chitto Mandotomo Andho Nirangom". The film, in its on way of course, tries to shed light on Lalon's deliberate will to remain childless. It is known that Lalon had no child and perhaps, he wanted his disciples to follow his examples. Mataji faces a dilemma when she finds out that two of her disciples have broken the rule. They ask Mataji, "If a child is not born, who would carry on the legacy?"

Apart from direction, Kallol also wrote the story and screenplay. Research for the film, however, seemed inadequate. "Andho Nirangom" is the first feature film produced by Ekushey Television. The main reason the film should be lauded is that it highlights Lalon's philosophy and the Baul way of life. More educated views and observations on Lalon and Bauls, in the form of films and TV plays, are necessary.

Sanjeeb Ahmed and Reetu A. Sattar, along with Bauls and a group of foreigners have donned other important roles. As the film is on Lalon, music is an important part of it. Popular songs by Shafi Mandal, Anusheh Anadil, Bimol Das, Munna and Mamo will certainly appease the audience.

"Andho Nirangom" premiered on December 20 at Star Cineplex, Bashundhara Mall, Dhaka. The film will be released today (December 23).

Khan Ataur Rahman recalled

Discussion and musical programme at Shilpakala Academy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In memory of Khan Ataur Rahman, Katha Lalitakala Academy hosted a discussion and musical programme at National Music and Dance Centre Auditorium of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on December 21.

Khan Ataur Rahman was born on December 11 in 1928. He passed away on December 1, 1997. He was popularly known as "Khan Ata". He was a multitalented film icon. He was an actor, director, producer, screenplay writer, lyricist, music composer and singer.

Eminent journalist and poet Fayez Ahmed was the chief guest at the programme while veteran filmmaker Chashi Nazrul Islam; renowned music directors -- Sheikh Sadi Khan, Alauddin Ali, Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul; noted singer Syed Abdul Hadi and others elaborately spoke on the life and works of Khan Ataur Rahman at the event. AKM Badruddoza presided over the programme.

"Khan Ataur Rahman had a unique style of music composition. If one could pick up his style, I'd say he/she is blessed," said Sheikh Sadi Khan.

In a moving speech, Chashi Nazrul Islam said, "Khan Ataur Rahman was the most able filmmaker I had met. He was, in a word, a versatile genius. In 1972, he attended the Moscow Film Festival as a representative of Bangladesh. Zahir Raihan's "Jibon

Thekey Neyra" was screened at the festival. As per regulations, the participating films should have had subtitles. But "Jibon Thekey Neyra" didn't have subtitles. Khan Ataur Rahman translated the full movie in English while it was being screened."

Scenes from several Khan Ataur Rahman films were screened at the event. Dinat Jahan Munni hosted a musical programme where a number of noted singers performed songs written and composed by Rahman. Munni with Rumana Islam, daughter of Rahman, rendered a duet -- "Ek Nodi Rakto Periyee". Rumana also rendered "Mon Majhi Tor Boitha Nere" at the event.

Granddaughter of Rahman, Promiti, rendered "Haire Amar Mon Matano Desh". Noted Tagore singer Bulbul Islam sang "Poth-e Poth-e Dilam Chhoraiya Rey", while *adhumik* singer Subir Nandi performed "Din Jaye Kotha Thakey" and "Neshar Latim Jhim Dhorechhey".

Shammi Akhter rendered "Mon Jodi Bhenge Jaye", and Alam Ara Minu sang "Eki Shonar Aloye" at the programme.

Rahman attained much fame for his role in the film "Jibon Theke Neyra" (1970). In the film, his rendition of the song "E Khancha Bhangbo Ami Kemon Kore" echoed the national psyche of the then East Pakistan, crushed under tyranny.

Khan Ataur Rahman was the fifth child of Ziarat Hossain Khan and Zohra Khatun, who lived in



Singair Upazila of Manikganj District.

He attended Dhaka Collegiate School, Dhaka College, and Dhaka University, completing a Bachelor of Science degree. Rahman was obsessed with films. After enrolling in Dhaka Medical College, a career that he later decided not to pursue, he made an attempt to leave home and join films. He was forced back home.

He left Dhaka University in 1949 and ran away from home for the second time. This time he went to Bombay (now Mumbai). He started frequenting the film industry and slept on the sidewalks.

In 1950, Khan Ataur Rahman went to Karachi and took a job as a news presenter at Radio Pakistan. In 1952 he went to London. There he performed as a singer and actor at several Bengali programmes. He met with artist SM Sultan and helped him put up an exhibition.

In 1953 Rahman enrolled in the Theatre Department at City Literary Institute. In 1956, he returned home and starred in a film called "Jago Hua Savera" (1956) directed by A.J. Kardar. In 1963 he made his directorial debut with the film "Onek Din-er Chena", and continued making notable films like "Nawab Sirajuddaula" (1967), "Saat Bhai Champa" (1968), "Abar Tora Manush Haw" (1973), "Sujan Sakhi" (1976) and "Ekono Onek Raat" (1997).

In addition to acting, Khan Ataur Rahman was a songwriter-composer with over 500 compositions, some of which still remain popular.



Subir Nandi sings (top); Sheikh Sadi Khan speaks at the programme.

PHOTO: GOLAM MAHBUB

AN ACTOR'S SPYGLASS



OMER AIAZ ONY

What do you expect from a film? Full-on entertainment? Then what could be the possible requirements from an entertaining film? Romance, fight, tragedy, humour, sensuality, favourite stars, beautiful cinematography, remarkable acting, moving background scores, extravagant sets, believable costumes, pertinent social message, stirring dialogues and most of all, a wonderfully crafted story? "Red Beard" has all these elements and then some more.

This is Akira Kurosawa's 24th production, filmed in 1965, against the backdrop of 19th century Japan. This is his last black and white film and also the last film featuring his most favourite actor till then, Toshiro Mifune. Kurosawa did 16 films with Mifune.

"Red Beard" is significant for another reason as well: After this, Kurosawa had difficulty getting funds for his projects. An interesting statistic is that he had made 24 films till 1965 since his emergence as a filmmaker 22 years

back, and only 7 films in his remaining 28 years after "Red Beard".

To me "Red Beard" is a social epic and it's still very contemporary. This is primarily a story about doctors and healthcare, and then it turns its gun towards the society. The viewer finds a doctor named Noboru Yasumoto, who has come to a Koishikawa clinic; he was forced to come here. He had done his training from Nagasaki and intended to be a physician for Shoguns. Instead, he was sent to a rural clinic for further training by his father. Life is really harsh in Koishikawa. Noboru rebels and feels that Dr. Kyojo Niide, whom everyone calls "Red Beard" (played by Toshiro Mifune), might fire him. An interesting case -- a psychologically disturbed young woman whom people call "Metis" or "man-eater" -- grabs Noboru's attention. One night the patient goes into Noboru's room and tries to seduce and kill him. Red Beard arrives at the final moment and saves him. This whole incident changes Noboru's attitude.

Again, I will not disclose the whole story though I doubt it'd dampen this film's

unavoidable charm.

In the first half the audience sees stories of patients. Kurosawa wanted to portray the social issues and his rage against them through the film as well. Through "Red Beard" the audience hears: "Poverty is a political problem they say, but what has politics ever done for the poor? If it weren't for poverty half of these people wouldn't be sick." Or "If you shut your eyes at a frightening sight, you end up being frightened."

Kurosawa had always been keen on background scores. In this film he introduced multiplier effect and four channel sound for the first time. Sound of the ambience and use of background scores made each scene more vibrant. Cinematography of this film can be a training manual for professionals. Kurosawa used two cameras to shoot most of the scenes with telephoto lens. Kurosawa wanted the camera to follow the actor, and not the other way around.

THE WRITER IS AN ACTOR AND THEATRE ACTIVIST.



A scene from "Red Beard".

TV WATCH

Tarasankar's KOBİ on ntv

A CORRESPONDENT

A new drama serial based on Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay's much acclaimed novel "Kobi" goes on air from tonight on ntv. Titled "Kobi", the serial will be aired on Fridays at 9:45pm. Arif Khan and Shadon Ahmed have jointly directed the serial. The latter along with Aktaruzzaman has dramatised the serial. Kamol Khalid did the music direction.

"Kobi" is considered one of the most consummate novels in Bangla literature. One of the directors, Arif Khan, said that it was very difficult to adapt it to a serial.

In the serial, Anisur Rahman Milon plays Nitai, while Tarin enacts the role of Bashonto. Momo plays the role of Thakurjhi.

The cast also includes Mamunur Rashid, Dr. Enamul Haque, K.S. Firoz, Pijush Bandyopadhyay, Jayanto Chattopadhyay, Khairul Alam Sabui, Wahida Mallick Jolly, Joyraj and Reetu A Sattar.



A scene from the serial.

BONNA MIRZA @ DS CAFÉ



The gorgeous and talented actress Bonna Mirza is the celebrity of the month at DS Café. She will be on the hot seat and take up your calls at the Daily Star office on Thursday, December 29, between 2:30 and 3:30 pm. Fans can ask about her life on and off screen! The best question will be highlighted in the transcription. Call 8126155, 01711623915 and 01711623917.

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Shahabuddin's paintings: Rooted in 1971



SHAMSUL WARES

Liberation War, in which Shahabuddin Ahmed actively participated as a freedom fighter at the age of 21 -- the massacre of innocent people, shocking personal experience of being caught up between life and death, fierce resistance of freedom fighters and the ultimate victory -- seems to form his emotional built as a painter. His troubled memories of the war, like nightmares, still haunt him. It is no wonder then that his paintings are rooted in 1971.

Young athletic figures of the freedom fighters with heavy lower limbs appear in his paintings -- torn in pain, attempting to reach out to freedom. His paintings focus on these naked figures in intense motion, often faceless, dissolving within, as if corroded by some kind of acid but stretching out with full energy and vigour towards the free world. These figures are so depicted with bold thick brushwork against simple empty space textured by light and shade. Nothing distracts the attention from the focused subject. Although the troubled human figures are symbolic of the perception of the

THE WRITER IS A NOTED ARCHITECT AND ART CRITIC.



Paintings by Shahabuddin Ahmed.

U2 beat Take

That to be top earning touring act in 2011



U2 headlined Glastonbury festival in June 2011.

U2's 360° show was the highest earning tour of 2011, according to Billboard Boxscore.

The series of shows grossed \$293m (£186m) across 44 sold-out gigs with a total of 2,887,972 people attended.

Take That's summer stadium Progress gigs, the highest grossing tour in UK history, came in third.

A total of 1,851,385 fans saw Robbie Williams rejoin the group for concerts in Europe, grossing £117 million across 29 shows.

U2's 360° tour started in Barcelona in June 2009, it concluded with shows in the US in July this year.

2010's highest-earning act Bon Jovi landed the number two spot this year -- 1,851,385 fans saw the Living On A Prayer rockers earn \$192m (£122m) from 68 shows in 2011.

Roger Waters and Taylor Swift completed the top five highest grossing touring artists of the year.

Also in the top ten are Kenny Chesney (6), Usher (7), Lady Gaga (8), Andre Rieu (9) and Sade (10).

Other artists featuring in the top 20 include Michael Buble, Katy Perry, Lil Wayne, Justin Bieber, Glee, Britney Spears and Iron Maiden.

Billboard's rankings were based on tours which took place between 1 November 2010 and 8 November 2011.

SOURCE: BBC