

WHAT'S ON

Solo Exhibition
Title: Dreams-Sowing
Artist: Kanak Chanda Chakma
Venue: Gallery Chitra, R-6, H-4, Dhanmondi
Date: Jan 28-Feb 12

Book Launch
Book: The Bangladesh Sundarban
Writer: Enayeturrah Khan
Venue: Cosmos Centre, 69/1, New Circular Road, Malibagh
Date: February 03
Time: 4pm

National Poetry Festival '12
Venue: Dhaka University Central Library premises
Date: Feb 1-2
Time: 10am onwards

Solo Painting Exhibition
Title: Quest
Artist: Abus Sabur
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H-42, R-16 (new), Dhanmondi
Date: Jan 31-Feb 6
Time: 12pm-8pm

Commemorative Programme on Potua
Quamrul Hassan
Venue: Liberation War Museum, Shegungacha, Dhaka

Solo Sculpture Exhibition
Title: Inheritance of Women
Sculptor: Sigma Haque Angkan
Venue: La Galerie, AFD, 26, Mirpur Rd, Dhanmondi
Date: Jan 27-February 01

Solo Cartoon Exhibition
Title: My Beloved Motherland 2
Artist: Md. Abu Salim
Venue: Galerie Zoom, Alliance Francaise de Dhaka

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Rejuvenation
Artist: Rajul Islam Luvlu
Venue: Galleri Kaya, Uttara
Date: Jan 27-Feb 7
Time: 11am-7:30pm



DISAPPEARANCE OF AN ICON

Documentary on Zahir Raihan premiered at Public Library

ZAHANGIR ALOM

To commemorate 40 years of Bangladesh's independence, cultural activist and freedom fighter Sentu Roy has made a documentary on Zahir Raihan.

Termining Zahir Raihan a filmmaker, a litterateur and a political activist, Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman formally launched the screening.

The 80-minute long documentary tries to highlight the entire life of the iconic personality. Interviews of eminent personalities who were Zahir Raihan's peers, friends, family members, colleagues and well-wishers have augmented the authenticity of the work.

"I observed that Zahir had profound love for three things -- love for elders, love for his art, and above all, love for the country," said Professor Anisuzzaman in the documentary.

A pin-drop silence prevailed in the auditorium when the Tagore song "Boro Bishshoy Lagey" went on, depicting the idyllic beauty of Bangladesh.

Writer Shahriar Kabir said, "Zahir was my cousin. He grew up in a liberated environment. I heard from Comrade Moni Singh that when Zahir was a student of class four/five, he would carry letters of communist leaders."

Inspired by his elder brother, noted litterateur Shahidullah Kaiser, Zahir Raihan joined the communist party. Zahir Raihan's real name was Abu Abdur Mohammad Zahirullah. His father Mohammad Habibullah was a teacher at Calcutta Madrasa in the then undivided Bengal. Later, he served as a principal at Dhaka Alia Madrasa. Zahir Raihan's mother Syeda Sufia Khatun was a housewife. Thrid among eight siblings, Zahir was born in Feni on August 19, 1935.

"Zahir was my friend. While studying at Jagannath College in 1949, we along with litterateurs -- Hasan Hafizur Rahman, Shamsur Rahaman and Alauddin Al Azad -- would gather at Pakistan Matth (now Bangladesh Matth) in old Dhaka to discuss how we could take part in the Language Movement. When students were divided on the issue of violating section 144, Zahir Raihan was the first to boldly suggest violating the curfew," said Dr. Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir.

"Later he was arrested. But during his stay in jail, Zahir Raihan wrote an outstanding novel 'Aarek Phalgun' on the Language Movement," added Dr. Jahangir.

Eminent artist Qiayyum Chowdhury talked about Zahir's novel "Hajar Bochor Dhorey" in the documentary. A portrayal of quintessential rural Bengal, "Hajar Bochor Dhorey", won an Adamjee Award,

according to Qiayyum Chowdhury.

Zahir Raihan went to Promothesh Barua Memorial Photography Institute, Calcutta (now Kolkata) to study filmmaking. According to filmmaker Amjad Hossen, Raihan's film "Kancher Deyal" received 11 awards at Pakistan Film Festival.

"Zahir Raihan brought about revolutionary changes in Bangla cinema including using cinemascope lens and making films within the shortest possible time. He made a film, 'Rahim Newaz', in only 17 days. His 'Jibon Theke Neya' was a symbolic film, denouncing the autocratic rule of Ayub Khan during the pre-Liberation period," said actor Hasan Imam.

Veteran actors Anwar Hossain, Razzak, Afzal Chowdhury, writer Abul Hasnat and filmmaker Abu Musa Debu talked about other creative faculties of Zahir Raihan. Panna Kaiser, widow of Shahidullah Kaiser, revisited the memories of her brother in law in the film.

"The birth of Bangladesh stands on two important events. One is Language Movement and the other is Liberation War. Zahir Raihan's two outstanding works -- 'Aarek Phalgun' and 'Stop Genocide' -- superbly showcase these two events," said Syed Shamsul Haq in the documentary.

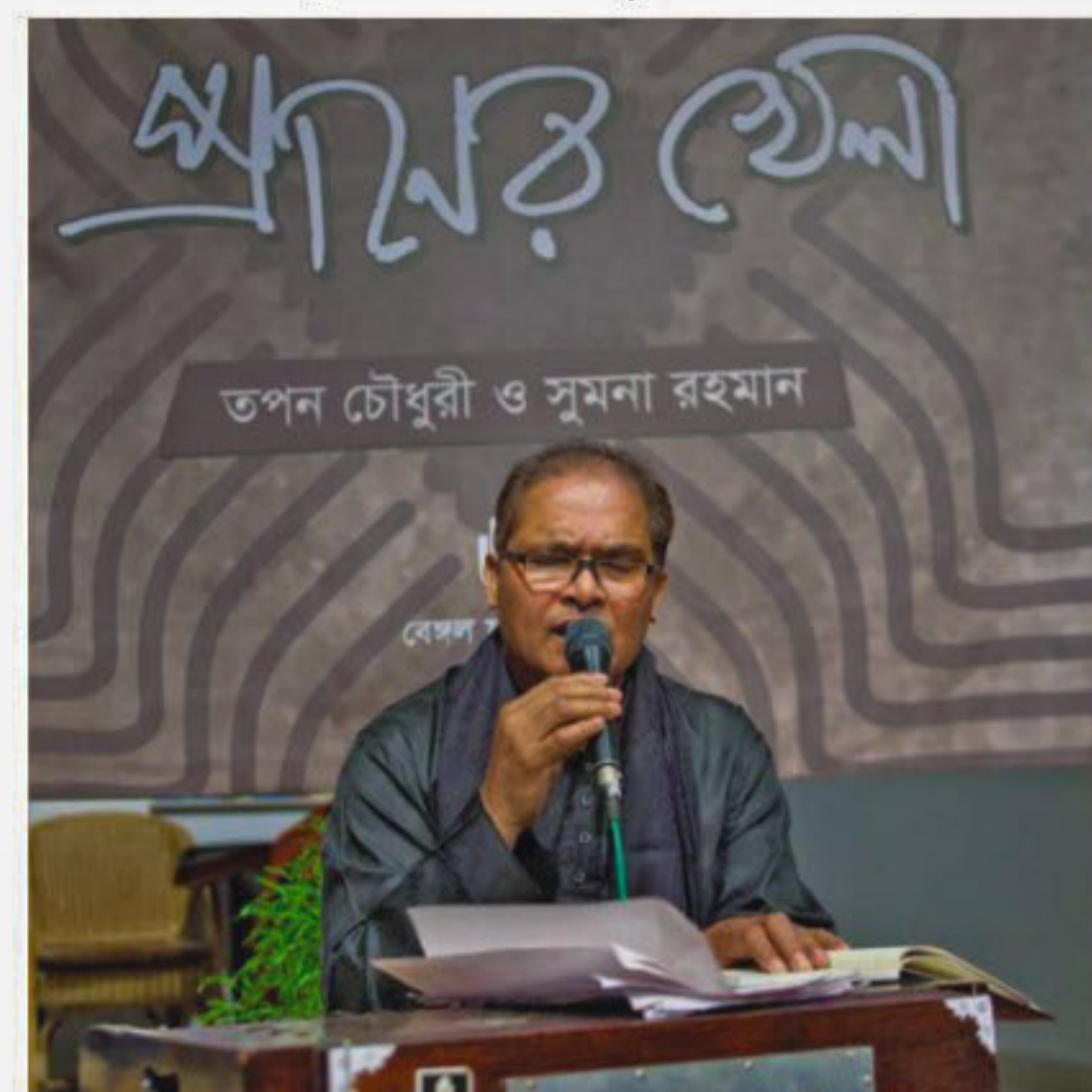
Apt use of Gano Sangeet in the documentary articulated the spirit of Language Movement and Liberation War.

On January 30, 1972, Zahir Raihan went looking for his elder brother Shahidullah Kaiser and never returned.

The documentary comes to an end with a mother desperately searching for her missing son among corpses -- those massacred by the Pakistani army and their local cronies.

A post-screening open discussion followed where experts and the audience took part.

Praner Khela at Bengal Shilpalaya



Tapan Chowdhury sings at the programme.

This month's instalment of "Praner Khela", a monthly musical soiree organised by Bengal Foundation, was held at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in the capital on January 28, according to a press release.

The latest instalment featured musical offerings of popular singer Tapan Chowdhury and one of the top "Bengal Bikash" (musical talent hunt by Bengal Foundation) contestants, Shumona Rahman.

Tapan Chowdhury performed Adhunik songs as well as compositions of Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam and Rajanikant. Shumona Rahman rendered Adhunik songs on the occasion.

Shumona Rahman was first to take the stage. She performed "Amar Khola Janalately", "Naamti Pakhir Chandana", "Keno Asha Bendhey Rakhi", "Ami Ki Tomar Moto", "Nodir Jemon Jhorna Achhey" and "Jete Dao Amaye Deko Na" at the event.

Tapan Chowdhury first rendered Adhunik songs. His repertoire included "Palash Phutechhey", "Ami Shob Kichhu Chhartey Pari", "Aj Phirey Gele Ki Noy" and "Akasher Shob Tara". Later, he performed a Rajanikant number "Ami Okriti Odhono", a baitalki Tagore song "Shudhu Tomar Bani Noy Go", a Nazrul Sangeet "Sur-e O Banir Mala Dye" and more at the soiree.

Besides producing albums, Bengal Foundation arranges regular musical programmes throughout the year. The monthly musical soiree "Praner Khela" is a part of this initiative.



RECONSTRUCTING FASHION

Exhibition by British Council at National Museum

AFRIDA MAHBUB

Fashion in its core is individualistic. It is a projection of perception that is moulded by traditions, culture and heritage, alongside individual taste. Hence, fashion can be seen as a pathway from the past to the present, a continuous wave of reinterpretation and congregation of historical, traditional and cultural significance.

British Council took the initiative to demonstrate this idea by introducing an international exhibition in Bangladesh. On January 28, 2012, "Reconstruction: Cultural Heritage and the Making of Contemporary Fashion" was inaugurated at the National Museum. Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad graced the event as chief guest.

The exhibition displays the works of seven renowned UK-based designers who skillfully demonstrate their takes on culture and heritage in a contemporary setting to create clothes with narratives, along with three eminent local designers. International names like Vivienne Westwood, Marius Schwab, Paul Smith, Sophia Kokosalaki, Osman Yousefzada, Peter Jensen and Hussein Chalayan are participating in the exhibition.

The local names include Ruby Chuznavi, Monjulika Chakma and Emdad Haque, who have already won international accolades for their breakthrough works.

The exhibition also flaunts the age-old collection of clothing carried by the museum



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

itself that very aptly outlines the history of our country in terms of fabric production and the extravaganza of the royalty during their reigns. The idea is to give the visitors an insight into the rich cultural and historical background of fashion in Bangladesh and Chalyan are participating in the exhibition.

The works at the exhibition are snapshots of the influence of tradition and culture on modern fashion existing in two different parts of the world. They tell you stories that draw references from diverse sources like religion,

architecture, indigenous crafts, cultural heritage and new technology. The exhibition started in Kazakhstan with a plan to tour Russia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.

Alongside the exhibition, there will also be a seminar on Fashion Journalism's Global Trend, a three-day workshop for fashion journalists, several talks and seminars with local designers and stakeholders, and a fashion show displaying the works of the three local designers on cultural heritage.

THEATRE TODAY



"Actors should never sever ties with the stage"

-- Kalyan Chowdhury, actor, Theatre

A scene from "Baramkhana".

JAMIL MAHMUD
Young actor Kalyan Chowdhury (of the troupe Theatre) thinks that whichever medium actors move to, they should never sever ties with the stage.

Kalyan observes that many of his friends and colleagues are leaving theatre and joining the electronic media, but he is convinced that the stage is at the core of acting.

"People can obviously move from one medium to another for whatever reasons, but they should maintain their bonds with the stage, as it is the stepping stone," says Kalyan.

Kalyan's initiation to theatre happened in 2000, through a local troupe in Comilla. He joined the troupe, Theatre, in 2008 after successfully completing schooling from its academy. He has several years of experience in the field of theatre for development -- both in Comilla and Dhaka. He has performed in Theatre's



recent productions "Baramkhana" and "Muktodhara". Moreover, he got the opportunity to perform in the revamped versions of Theatre classics "Meraj Fakir er Ma" and "Payer Awaj Pawa Jae".

Although theatre is not his main source of income, Kalyan is dedicated to his craft and thoroughly enjoys the evening rehearsals at Shilpakala Academy. Often it becomes difficult to make time though. "Some times you have to make

sacrifices for your art, that's just how it is. One doesn't taste success by taking it easy," says Kalyan.

Kalyan believes that there are talented artists among his peers, and they need opportunities to flourish. He feels that senior directors and artists can bring out the best in the young with proper guidance.

"A director can bring out the best in an actor; an actor, too, must demonstrate his/her passion for art and dedication to the art form. It's a two-way street," he says.

The young actor also shares his views regarding issues such as lack of performance venues and the overall theatre atmosphere in the country. He says that as the cultural hub, Shilpakala Academy is playing its role but creating more performance spaces to accommodate more troupes would boost local theatre practices.

Group Theatre Federation can further assist by arranging more festivals and workshops in Dhaka and other parts of the country.

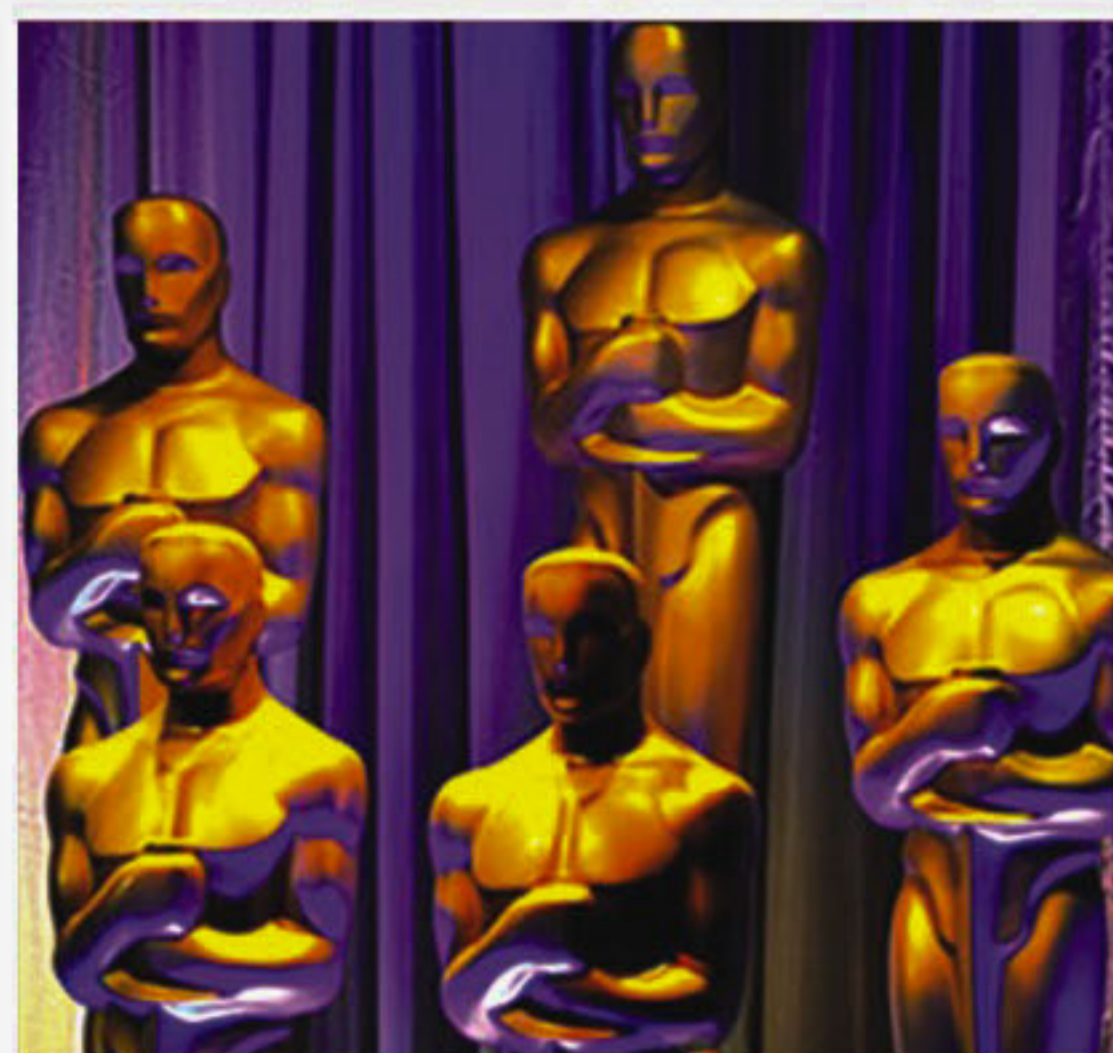
The Academy Awards: No longer about the audience?

The great thing about Academy Awards predictions is that so many people get so many of them wrong that you don't have to, but because of the reason one got wrong -- illustrates a quiet sea change that has taken place in the Oscars: The audience is no longer a very big part of the equation.

The change has only really occurred within the last couple of years.

It was 1977 when "Rocky" won. "Rocky" was an inspired choice, but when you look at the movies it was up against -- "All the President's Men", "Taxi Driver", "Network", and "Bound for Glory" -- the triumph of "Rocky" looks a lot more like what it was: Hollywood honouring the movie that year that had struck the greatest populist chord. Of the five nominees, it was hardly the most indelible work of art, and no one pretended that it was. It didn't have to be. It was a classic crowd-pleaser, and the reason it won is that, make no mistake, that was the business that Hollywood was in, and always had been in. Pleasing crowds.

The Oscars now cover something much more than popularity: They covet credit. It all shifted two years ago,



when "The Hurt Locker" won Best Picture. The movie had grossed around \$15 million, and no Best Picture winner in history had been seen in theatres by that tiny

or select an audience.

That simply wasn't the way that the Oscars worked. But now, suddenly, The Hurt Locker's triumph among critics' groups and its big win at the Academy Awards became part of a continuous, aesthetically dictated sweep. In the old days, or even just a few years before, "Avatar" -- the main movie that "The Hurt Locker" was up against -- would likely have taken the award for Best Picture. Now, though, it wasn't just critics, or "small" or "elite" groups of viewers, who had become art-conscious at the expense of even thinking about popularity. The entire Academy, reversing course on 80 years, had tossed out popularity as a priority.

You could argue that it was a fluke. The following year, the Oscars got swept by "The King's Speech", which was a classic art-house crossover movie. Suddenly, it seemed, popularity was relevant again.

In the old days, the Oscars were striving, in their way, for a fusion of commerce and art, of popularity and acclaim that represented the very soul of the Dream Factory. Sure, the Oscars didn't always achieve that fusion, but there was something honourable in the

attempt. In the current era, Academy voters have evolved to the point that they keep a new kind of kosher, with Art and Mass Entertainment on separate tables, and increasingly rarely shall the twin meet.

That's why franchise movies, even stupendous ones like "The Dark Knight", or a cathartic zeitgeist comedy like "Bridsmaids" don't get Best Picture nominations. They may be works of art, but they come from the wrong table. And that's why a likable curio like "The Artist" can already look like an official shiny winner in the hermetic new world of the Academy.

The new Academy Awards appears to be far more tasteful and pure. The movies, by and large, are smaller, the judgments more refined, and the popcorn movies that the vast majority of the audience prefers are nowhere to be seen.

So do you agree with the fact that the Academy Awards, more and more, seem to be cutting the audience out of the picture? Or do you think that the Oscars are simply evolving in a better direction?

Source: Entertainment Weekly

DS CAFE



Azizul Hakim is the celebrity of the month at DS Cafe. He will be on the hot seat and take your calls at The Daily Star office on Wednesday, February 1, between 3pm and 4pm. Readers, fire away all your questions at him! The best question will be highlighted in the transcription. Call- 8126155, 01711623915 and 01711623917.

SEAMLESS STEPS

Performance by Odissi dancer Monalisa Ghosh

MYMENSINGH AND BARISAL CORRESPONDENTS

Indian dancers Monalisa Ghosh and Juthishir Nayak held the audience in thrall with their classical dance performances at the Zila Shilpakala Academy auditorium in Mymensingh on January 28.

The evening began with dance sequences of "Mangalcharan", with songs composed by National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Later, the artistes danced to songs composed on Raga Pallabi. The third dance sequences were on "Makhla Nritya". Shubhankar Chattopadhyay played the background scores.

Other members of the group were Hari Prasad on flute, Abhiram Nanda on

tabla, Swapneswar Chakrabarti on sitar and Ramchandra Behara on mardala. Amit Biswas did the stage lighting.

Earlier, a discussion was held marking the occasion. Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperative Minister Syed Ashraful Islam was present as the chief guest. Acting High Commissioner of India, Sanjay Bhatnagar, presided over the function.

Among others, State Minister for Health and Family Planning, Dr. Captain Motiur Rahman Fakir, Principal Motiur Rahman, MP; Advocate Reza Ali, MP and Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh, Lokman Hossain Miah, addressed the meeting.

The speakers were of the view that the evening dedicated to dance would further strengthen the relationship between the artistes of both countries as well as bilateral relations.

Earlier, the Barisal audiences were swept away by the performances of Monalisa Ghosh and her troupe at Barisal Aswani Kumar Hall.

Talking to journalists and cultural activists at Barisal Circuit House, Monalisa said that Odissi, which is rooted in spirituality, aesthetics and a deep philosophy, is one of the most charming and graceful classical dances.

Monalisa said that she is bound by deep ties to Bangladesh, as her father was from Jessore and mother from Mymensingh. This was her third visit to Bangladesh and the first to Barisal.

Bangladesh needs regular workshops, training and practice of classical dance to create a sustainable, healthy and strong tradition of this performing art, asserted Monalisa.



Relations (ICCR) by the High Commission of India in Bangladesh with the help of the local government and administration, said Dr. Manoj Kumar Mahapatra, first secretary, political wing of Indian High Commission.

Beetle Baily



by Mort Walker

Henry



by Don Tranchte

Table with TV channel logos and program schedules for ATN Bangla, Channel i, ntv, and ETV.

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