

WHAT'S ON

Theatre
Play: Tempest
Troupe: Dhaka Theatre
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: April 27, Time: 6:30pm

Group Art Exhibition
Title: The Voice of Time
Venue: Institute of Art & Culture, H-2, R-1/A, Gulshan-1
Date: April 17-26
Time: 12pm-9pm

Grand Group Art exhibition
Venue: Saju Art Gallery, Gulshan-2
Date: April 7-May 8
Time: 10am-8pm

Folk Theatre Fest
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: April 21-24
Time: 7pm

Tagore Related Dance Drama
Title: 'Rabindra Rachoneya Trishara Prem'
Venue: Main Auditorium, Bangladesh National Museum

Solo Painting Exhibition
Title: Cycling in Circle
Artist: Mostafiz Karigar
Venue: La Galerie Alliance
Francaise de Dhaka, Dhanmondi
Date: April 18-May 2

Film Festival
Title: Rabindranath O Chalachchitra
Venue: National Music & Dance Centre, Shilpakala Academy
Date: April 22-28

Photography Exhibition
Title: World Press Photo 12
Venue: Drik Gallery, H-58, R-15A(New), Dhanmondi
Date: April 26- May 18

LUCKY STREAK

Tête-à-Tête with Nova



PHOTO COURTESY: TUNIN HOSSAIN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Rising star Nova has won the appreciation of the audience with consistent noteworthy performances whether as an actor, model or TV host. The talented star recently came to The Daily Star and gave glimpses in her busy career.

You captured the limelight with your debut performance. Tell us about it.

Nova: My debut role was in "Prem O Ghamer Golpo", directed by Animesh Aich. Before the shooting began, I never imagined that the TV play would be so popular. I was a bit tensed, as it was my debut performance. But many people came and congratulated me on my work after the play was aired. Truth be told, it was a turning point in my career.

How did you land in the media?

Nova: There is an interesting story behind this. I was studying for my A Level exams at the time. I had pictures of many stars in my room. I was curious about where I could take a good snap of myself. Then I found about Chanchal Mahmud and went to him for a photo-session. He took my picture and submitted it to an ad agency with my consent. But my family didn't know about it at the time. So, when a call came from the agency, my parents were not happy about it. But I was able to convince them.

What are you busy with now?

Nova: Most of my time is spent on TV plays. I'm also busy with hosting TV shows. Ntv is airing a show called "Roop Madhuri" on beauty and makeup. I also hosted a

programme called "Unish Kuri" a while ago, as well as game show titled "Bou Kotah Kow".

About three years back, I hosted a programme called "Destination Unlimited", which was shot in Malaysia. Right now, I'm acting in several serials: "Mama Bari" by Sheikh Selim, "Putul Khela O Long March" by Masud Zennane, "Ohongkar" by Kaysar Ahmed and "Mayered Pathshala" by Rommyo Khan.

You also took part in the Pantene You Got the Look competition?

Nova: I took part in the competition in 2006. I was elected in the Best Look and Best Smile awards that year. After that success, I got some modelling assignments, including one for Banglalink.

Are you producing TV plays?

Nova: I've created a production house called Prottyasha Creation, and producing TV plays under its banner. A serial titled "U-turn" has already been made, which was shot in Bangkok.

Will you be regular as a TV host?

Nova: I won't be a regular and I also have no plan of hosting programmes in the long run. Once in a while I may take up such projects. I feel that hosting is a very tough task. My main focus is on acting.

What do you consider to be your notable works?

Nova: "Houseful" was a noteworthy project. I received much admiration for my performance in the drama. I was also nominated for Meril Prothom Alo Award for my debut performance in "Prem O Ghamer Golpo".

A remarkable feat
600th show of "Konjush"

JAMIL MAHMUD

The 600th show of "Konjush", one of the most popular stage plays in Dhaka, was staged on April 21 at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Theatre troupe Loko Natyadal (Siddheswari) staged the play to a full-house. Prior to the show, the troupe honoured the cast and crew of the play. ITI Worldwide President, Ramendu Majumdar, handed over the crests to the cast and crew.

The play's popularity could be judged if it's compared to the troupe's other productions. While "Konjush" marked its 600th show, the troupe's other popular play [counting the number of shows] is "Shonai Madhab", which has been staged 76 times. Very few plays in Bangladesh have crossed the 200th show milestone.

Apart from Bangladesh, "Konjush" was also staged overseas, including in India and UK. "Konjush" belongs to the 'Comedy of Morals' genre, which is designed to address vices such as hypocrisy, pride, greed, social pretensions and nepotism. The play is an adaptation of French playwright Molière's "L'Avare" (The Miser).

Liaquat Ali Lucky is the director of the play.

The director sees the play as a tool to uncover the real faces behind the masks of the elites.

Tariq Anam Khan's adaptation of the play presents a 'Dhakaiya' (a native of Old Dhaka) protagonist -- a rich old man named Haider Ali Khan. Through Haider Ali's story, "Konjush" attacks the selfish and opportunistic tendencies of the elite.

The play premiered on May 8, 1989. Since then it has been staged regularly. Several times the troupe changed the play's design to keep it up to date. In the latest show, improvisation -- as is the recent trend -- by the actors was apparent. At one point, one of the actor was singing the popular Tamil song "Why this Kolaveri Di".

Popular Hindi songs have been used in the play as background scores, which is going to be the trend of Old Dhaka.

Azizur Rahman Sujon donned the protagonist. Among others, Jebunessa Shobhan, Ziauddin Shipon, Rubel Shankar, Masud Suman, Abdullah Mahmud Mamun, Abu Bakar Bakshi, Shamima Islam, Mahbub Rabbi, Alif Sharif and Khadiza Mostari enacted different roles in the play.

Azizur Rahman also designed the set based on Liaquat Ali Lucky's idea. Krishti Hefaz did the costume.



A scene from the play.

PHOTO: STAR

Bangla in the heart of United States
Int'l festival and book fair in New York

JAMIL MAHMUD

It was the year 1992. A group of expatriate Bangladeshis in New York planned to observe the 'Amar Ekushey' (February 21) with a programme. The inevitable plan was to erect a temporary Shaheed Minar somewhere in New York City but they could not find out any suitable site. After several meetings they finally came to the decision that they would create the Shaheed Minar in front of the United Nations headquarter.

That was the beginning of a remarkable feat for Bangladeshis across the globe. That initiation of observing the 'Amar Ekushey' later played an important role in the recognition of February 21 as the International Mother Language Day, in 1999.

Those who planned the programme were involved with the New York based cultural organisation 'Bangali Chetona Mancha' and the publication house 'Muktadhara'. Some were involved with the New York based Bangla journal 'Prabashi' as well. They did not limit their activities surrounding that commemorative programme; they also initiated a book fair and cultural extravaganza the same year.

"Since its inception it turned into a grand celebration for us -- Bangladeshis and Bengali-speaking people living in North America. It plays a major role in generating interest in Bangla among second generation immigrants," says Biswajit Saha, one of the initiators of the book fair. Saha was in Dhaka recently.

Known as 'International Bangla Festival and Book Fair', every year the event features noted literary and cultural personalities from Bangladesh and India.

Among those who joined hands with Saha were Sajal Paul, Harun Ali, Abdur Rahman Badshah, Shakhwat Ali, Dildar Hossain Dilu and Shamim Hossain.

Till 2006, the festival was organised by Bangali Chetona Mancha and Muktadhara. However, in 2007, the same group of people formed Muktadhara Foundation Inc. USA, a non-profit tax-exempt organisation, which is responsible for arranging the festival at present.

"The aim of the foundation is similar to that of the earlier organisers. They include popularising and generating interest in Bangla language and literature among the people of North America, honouring noted Bengalis and observing International Mother Language Day every year," says Saha.

Noted personalities from Bangladesh and India such as Dr. Jyotiprakash Dutta, Shahid Kadi, Nirmalendu Gunn, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, Purnendu Potri, Humayun Ahmed, Samaresh Majumdar, Dilara Hashem, Sunil



Every year the event features noted literary and cultural personalities from Bangladesh and India.

PHOTO COURTESY: MUKTADHARA

Ganguly, Humayun Azad, Shirshendu Mukherjee and Rabeya Khatun have attended the festival so far. The organisers also honoured noted film personalities like Satyajit Ray, Aparna Sen, Goutom Ghosh and Rituparna Ghosh.

Well known publishing houses such as Agami, Shomoy, Onesha, Anya Prakas, Ananya and Biswa Shahitya Kendra took part in the fair at different times.

Speaking on the history of the festival, Saha said that the early years were hard fought as they had to survive tough times, especially when collecting and generating funds for the festival.

This year the festival will be held from June 29 to July 1. The event will be bigger as it will comprise of exhibition of Bengali products and

services, Bangla film show, arts, music, drama, food festival, seminar, workshop and business networking. Eminent literatures, artists, performers and celebrities from Bangladesh and India will attend this year's festival.

Art competition for the children and promoting Bangla through educational audio-visual presentations are other parts of the festival.

The foundation has sent books to about 26 libraries in the United States; this includes several university libraries. All these efforts have been much appreciated by the Bengali community living in the US.

For more details about the Bangla Festival one can visit the festival website www.ibanglantsab.org.

John Cusack puts his action skills to the test as Edgar Allan Poe in The Raven

Even after nearly 30 years in show business, John Cusack still has his moments where the adrenaline kicks in and he remembers just why he loves his job so much.

One of them came during filming of "The Raven," releasing soon, where Cusack found himself charging through an Eastern European graveyard (doubling for 1849 Baltimore) on horseback, firing a gun at a stuntman playing a fleeing serial killer.

"I'm on a horse in Serbia playing Edgar Allan Poe in the fog, riding through the underworld," the 45-year-old actor tells the Daily News. "This is pretty cool." Cool is something that John Cusack has "in spades," says the movie's director, James McTeigue.

"John can ride a horse, so that's great," says "Raven" director, James McTeigue. "The amount of time I've stood on sets with actors and they've said, 'I can ride a horse,' and you get them there and it's like, 'no, you can't ride a horse.' John can. With the action, you always buy into the action more if you see it's the actor in the frame.

Not that "The Raven" can be pigeonholed as just a popcorn action movie.

Co-starring Luke Evans and Alice Eve, it's a fictional cat-and-mouse thriller set during the last five days of the author's life, before Poe was found near death on a park bench in Baltimore.

Poe's stories serve as inspiration for a serial killer's imaginative murder spree.

You'll have to watch the "Pit and Pendulum" scene through your fingers.

"The whole concept of the movie is Poe sort of gets wrapped up in one of his own stories, which kind of speaks to all the different mashups and genres he was playing with and creating," says Cusack. "One of the themes that was so great about him is he writes about the thin line, that twilight between insanity, reality and fantasy and also between waking and dreaming and life and death. He had such a romance with the abyss."

The film is also a rare chance for Cusack to flex his

action muscles. It's strange that he hasn't done more in the genre considering he boasts martial arts chops. Audiences still associate Cusack with the iconic image of him holding up a boom box pumping Peter Gabriel's "In Your Eyes" in the 1989 romantic comedy "Say Anything." But in real life, he's an expert martial artist with a sixth-degree black belt in Ukiokan kickboxing.

There have been action scripts that have come his way over the years, he says, just nothing that blew him away.

"You have to make sure you get a good one and you have to make sure they're not taken up by whoever the top box-office guy is," says Cusack. "I mean if Ridley Scott is making an action film, of course I want to be in it."

"But if it isn't offered to me, I can't take it. I'd love to do it, especially while I'm still relatively young.

His career already has included some notable forays into blockbuster territory, most recently in Roland Emmerich's disaster movie "2012." "But basically I just run away from things," quips Cusack.

What attracted Cusack to "The Raven," however, wasn't the opportunity to gallop around on a horse. He loved the idea of playing one of the mysterious figures in literary history -- basing some of his performance on his late friend, gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson.

And like Poe, Cusack suffered for his art while filming "The Raven."

"Going into Serbia filming in nights during winter with a head full of Poe was quite an experience," he says. "Being in the dark, windy, cold streets at night was definitely evocative of the mood -- I definitely felt like a vampire skulking around.

"When I came back, I was really underweight. I scared my mom at Christmas," he adds, laughing. "What happened to you? I was a little rattled after that one."

Source: [Internet](http://www.fox.com)

A remarkable speech on Tagore
Dr. Noni Gopal Saha evokes rapt attention

REZAUL KARIM, Faridpur

An intriguing speech on Tagore -- providing insight into the lesser or unknown facets of the bard's life -- is a rarity indeed. Language veteran and Rabindra exponent Dr. Noni Gopal Saha (an eye specialist) broke new ground with his eloquent speech on the Nobel laureate at Faridpur Chambers' of Commerce and Industry (FCOCAI) last Friday.

Marking the 150th birth anniversary of Tagore, Rabindra Bokrita Ayojon Parishad (RBAP) in Faridpur arranged the first ever such ticketed programme in the region.

The octogenarian Dr. Saha spoke on Tagore for two-and-a-half hours, focusing on four topics

-- "Rashik Rabindranath", "Anondo Bhubone Kobi", "Geetanjali" and "Chhonde Rabindra O Nazrul".

Intellectuals, educationists, well-known cultural bodies and students from different institutions in Faridpur listened in rapt attention to the lucid oration of Dr. Saha.

ASM Jahangir Chowdhury, president of RBAP and also the principal of Faridpur Medical College, said, "This is a rare occasion for us to enjoy a speech on Tagore. Dr. Saha is an exceptional scholar in the field of oration. He is wonderfully articulate."

Among others, veteran journalist Jagadish Chandra Ghosh; educationist professor Altaf Hossain and Dr. Awlad Hossain Babar, president FCOCAI, attended the



Dr. Saha (centre) receives a crest.

programme.

Three hundred books and large artworks on Tagore collected by Tagore promoter Professor Altaf Hossain were

also exhibited on the occasion.

Prior to the oration of Saha, singer Sipra Goswami presented Tagore songs.

PHOTO: STAR

Colour and melody
Weeklong Baishakhi Mela concludes in Thakurgaon

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

A weeklong Baishakhi Mela concluded last Friday with Kobigaan (songs in the form of questions and answers) at the Mela Mancha, Thakurgaon Municipality Auditorium premises.

Mahfuzul Alam Babu Sarkar of Chirribandar village, under Chirribandar upazila, and Kajol Rani Sarkar of Kaharol Upazila, under Dinajpur district, were the main performers at the programme.

In the courses of the five-hour programme, the two performers engaged in a melodious debate on Radha-Krishna.

Hundreds of people enjoyed the programme that spilled over to the wee hours. Prior to Kobigaan, a discussion and prize giving ceremony were also held at the Mela Mancha where Executive Director of Eco Social Development Organisation (ESDO) was present as chief guest while president of

Alpona Shahitya Shangkriti Shangshad, Shaiful Islam, was in the chair.

Water Resource Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen inaugurated the Baishakhi Mela on the night of April 13.

In the course of the mela, discussions, cultural programmes featuring folk, modern songs, and punthipath, pala gaan were held every evening. Several theatre organisations also staged plays.

Alpona Shahitya Shangkriti Shangshad has been organising the mela at the same venue for 27 years.

During the mela, cultural competitions were held in four groups for school and college going students including painting, wall magazine, recitation and handwriting competition.

About 100 stalls -- carrying different handicrafts and food items, clothes, toys and books -- were set up at the fair.

Thousands of people from all walks of life visited the mela every day.



DS CAFÉ
Popular actor and model Sajal is the featured celebrity of this month at DS Café. He will be on the hot seat and take your calls at The Daily Star Centre on April 26, between 5 and 6pm. Readers, fire away all your questions at him! The best question will be highlighted in the transcription. Call 8126155, 01711623915 and 01711623917 to speak to Sajal.

ATN BANGLA	09:50	Look at Me	
11:20	Business and Finance	12:05	Business Talk
12:15	Vision 2020		Desh TV
05:15	Obram Bangladesh	03:00	Gaan R Gaan
08:00	Drama Serial: Palabar	06:00	123 Shimpur
	Poth Nei	06:30	Obak Prithibi
11:30	Drama Serial: Cafeteria	09:45	Symbiosis
		10:30	World Music
CHANNEL i			Maasranga Television
01:05	Ebong Cinemar Gaan	10:02	Bangla Feature Film
04:20	Amar Chhobi	05:30	Amazing Animals
06:20	Drama Serial: Mr. Dhaka	09:30	Drama Serial: Ishkul
07:50	Tele-film	11:00	Gaanpoka
11:30	Banglar Pathoy		
ntv			Fox Movies
11:00	Rugmadhuri	03:45	Gulliver's Travels
04:10	Janar Achhey Bolar	05:15	Tooth Fairy
	Achhey	07:00	You Don't Mess With The Zohan
06:10	Shubho Shondhya	08:50	Homeland
06:50	Crime Watch	09:50	Killers
11:30	Drama Serial: Terminal	11:30	Closer

RADIO			
abcr radio FM 89.2	10:00	Morning Express	
06:00	Bhorer Janjaly	No Tension	
09:00	Mukhorito Jiboney	Dhaka Calling	
12:00	Darun Duprey	09:50	Knights Riders
03:00	Downton Abbey	04:00	RADIO TODAY FM 88.5
05:00	Shondhu Tara	06:00	Green FM
07:00	Shaj-er Maya	08:30	Good Morning Dhaka
09:00	Raat-er Akashey	12:00	Today's Adda
11:00	Gajper Shesh Nei	04:00	U Turn
Radio Footi	07:00	Takey Tai Khat	
07:30	Heho Dhaka	10:00	Rat Shor Gaan

Radio
On Desh TV at 06:15pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Mosharraf Karim, Nawshin

Closer
On Fox Movies at 11:30pm
Genre: Drama/Romance
Cast: Natalie Portman, Jude Law

Raat Biratey
On BANGLAVISION at 11:25pm
Street Show
Guest: Mahub Pial

Etv	11:30	Ekushey-er Business	11:25	Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
04:30	Gaaner Opore	02:35	Clash of the Titans	
05:30	Binodoner Bishwa	04:50	Se7en	
07:50	Music Station	07:25	Gango	
08:20	Drama Serial: Ohongkar	09:45	Paranormal Activity 2	
Boishakhi TV	11:10	Bangla Feature Film	11:45	Jonah Hex
04:15	Shorashori Doctor		Star World	
05:30	Jibon Eto Chhoto Kyane	11:30	Desperate Housewives	
08:00	Drama	02:30	Supernatural	
09:20	Drama Serial: Batpar	05:30	Dexter	
BANGLAVISION	10:30	Person of Interest		
01:05	Bangla Feature Film	11:30	Joey	
05:20	Porikha Prosti	12:00	Raising Hope	
06:30	Drama Serial: Maa	01:30	Discovery Channel	
09:05	Nacho Bangladesh	01:30	Curiosity	
	Nacho	03:30	Deception with Keith Barry	
11:25	Raat Biratey	06:30	Life	
Rtv	12:35	Bangla Feature Film	09:30	Man Vs. Wild
05:00	Cinema R Gaan	10:30	I Shouldn't Be Alive	
08:15	Drama Serial: College Road	11:30	Tattoo Hunter	
			BBC World	

DRAMA SERIAL			
ATN BANGLA	08:40pm	Patheror Kanna	
08:40pm	Rupantarar Manush	BANGLAVISION	
09:20pm	Poush Phagunar Pala	08:15pm	Bokupurer Jatti
CHANNEL i		Rtv	
09:35pm	Obouqunthan	09:05pm	Boya Paribar
ntv		11:30pm	House Number 138
08:15pm	Deval	Desh TV	
09:45pm	Phyo	08:15pm	Radio Chocolate
Boishakhi TV			Maasranga Television

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