

WHAT'S ON

Bengal-ITC SRA Classical Music Fest Organisers: Bengal Foundation & ITC-SRA Venue: Army Stadium, Baranai, Dhaka Date: Nov 29-Dec 2

Duet Art Show Title: Blue Mountain Sage Venue: Shilpagan Gallery, H-7, Rd-13, New Dhanmondi Date: November 15-20 Time: 12-8pm

Int'l Theatre Festival Organiser: Theatre Art Unit Venue: Shilpakala Academy Date: November 14-24 Time: 6-10pm

Death Anniversary of Sufia Kamal Venue: Chhayanaut Auditorium, Dhanmondi Date: November 20

Group Art Exhibition Venue: Gallery Cosmos-2, New DOKS, Mahabali Date: Nov 16-24 Time: 11am-9pm

Solo Art Exhibition Artist: Mike Woodcock Venue: Institute of Art and Culture, Gulshan Date: Nov 15-30 Time: 12pm-9pm

Solo Art Exhibition Artist: Sabrina Mezaqui Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, Gulshan Date: Nov 3-22 Time: 12pm-9pm

Film fraternity laments the demise of Subhash Dutta

SHAH ALAM SHAZU Eminent filmmaker Subhash Dutta is no more, but his memories remain unfaded in the hearts of many, as do his films. Subhash Dutta debuted in film direction with "Shutorang", a landmark in the country's film history, where he also played the leading male role.



It was Subhash Dutta who discovered Kobori, and the name "Kobori" was given by him. The eminent actress, who is now a lawmaker, said that she was deeply hurt when she lost her father, and the pain of losing Subhash Dutta feels quite the same. She came to the industry with "Shutorang" -- courtesy of Subhash Dutta, and later worked in his films "Abirbhav", "Bolaka Mon".

Elias Kanchan, another noted actor, began his career under Subhash Dutta's guidance. Kanchan told The Daily Star that he had always wanted to be a film actor, but his first break came through Dutta, in the film "Bashundhara", after the director saw Kanchan in a play. One of the best things about Dutta was his ability to connect to people closely with ease, Elias Kanchan said.

Known as "Nayok-raaj" or "King of Heroes", Razzak also worked with Subhash Dutta in a number of films, starting with "Abirbhav". Razzak said



Young Subhash Dutta and Kobori in "Shutorang".

that "Abirbhav" was a turning point in his career. Other films they worked on include "Phool Shojya" and "Abdar". Subhash Dutta also directed a film under the banner of Razzak's 'Rajlakkhi Productions' -- the veteran actor said, praying for eternal peace for the departed soul.

Ahmed Sharif, one of the many people who were brought to the fraternity by Subhash Dutta, said that the late filmmaker was one of the few people who blessed the art of cinema in the country. There was a time when he was being perceived by the audience as a villain, but Subhash Dutta gave him a positive role in "Arunodoyer Agnishakshi", an emotional Ahmed Sharif said, adding that he had worked in "Phool Shojya" and "Shobuj Chhaya" under the direction of Subhash Dutta.

Managing Director of BFDC, Pijush Bandopadhyay recently hosted a programme on Subhash Dutta on Desh TV. Bandopadhyay said

that he had known Subhash Dutta for years, and he was feeling the absence. He also grieved the fact that the guardian figures of the country's cultural arena are taking the journey of no return -- and wished eternal peace and happiness for the deceased filmmaker.

Suchanda, another massively popular actress of her time, also worked with Subhash Dutta in a number of films. She reminisced countless memories with the director, and prayed for the soul of the humble and unselfish film icon.

Besides being a noted director, Subhash Dutta was a brilliant actor, and acted in numerous films, including "Rajdhami" r Bukey", "Shurjo-snan", "Chanda", "Talaash", "Nodi o Nari" and "Shona r Kajol". The most notable of his directorial works include "Shutorang", "Kagojer Noutka", "Aina o Oboshisto", "Arunodoyer Agnishakshi" and "Bashundhara".

Mohammad Eunos at Int'l Art Camp in Rajasthan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Neerja Modi Visual and Performing Art Center in Jaipur, Rajasthan has organised the 8th International Art Camp. Noted Bangladeshi artist Mohammad Eunos (Professor at the Department of Graphic Design, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) is taking part in the art camp. The event was inaugurated on November 16, and will continue till November 21. Saurabh Modi, chairman of Neerja Modi Visual and Performing Art Center, opened the workshop as chief guest.

Among the participating artists are: Kingslee Gunatillake (Sri Lanka), Ragini Upadhyay Grela (Nepal) and ten senior artists from different places in India like Bangalore, Bhopal, Delhi, Mumbai, Udaipur and Kolkata.

Veteran Rajasthani artist Vidya Sagar Upadhyay is the coordinator of the camp. After completion of the art camp, the organiser will arrange an exhibition featuring the paintings, produced at the camp.

Mohammad Eunos' current style of choice is abstract expressionism. But occasionally, realistic forms are also found in his works. The painter frequently changes the arrangement of forms, compositions and largely the structure of the paintings. Most of his works explore silence and emptiness. The beauty of simplicity shines in his works. Blue, yellow, ochre and white are notable shades in his paintings. Despite living in Japan for a long time in pursuit of higher studies, the artist has not been directly influenced by Japanese art. His colours and forms clearly voice the dilemma of our times.



Mohammad Eunos at the art camp.

BENGAL-ITC SRA CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL 2012 Roundtable on "Classical Music in Bangladesh" at Prothom Alo



Discussants at the roundtable.

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Addressing the upcoming Bengal-ITC SRA (Sangeet Research Academy) Classical Music Festival 2012, popular Bangla daily Prothom Alo together with Bengal Foundation hosted a roundtable on "Classical Music in Bangladesh" at its office on November 18.

Noted Bangladeshi artists, music connoisseurs and cultural personalities attended the roundtable.

Composer and music director Azad Rahman said, "Practising and promoting classical music is a must for bringing about qualitative changes in all the genres of music. I am recalling Barin-da (Pandit Barin Majumdar) prior to this festival. Certainly, the initiative that Bengal Foundation has taken is appreciable. And we should all play a positive role in making the festival a grand success. I propose to kick off the festival with the performance of a Bangla Khayal by Bangladeshi artists, as the nation is proud of its identity. Cultural reporters, who will cover the event, should undergo workshops so that they can evaluate the renowned maestros and their renditions of subcontinental classical music."

Director general of Bengal Foundation, Luva Nahid Chowdhury, said, "About 100 musical artists are set to perform at the four-day music festival; among them at least 25 are world renowned. A great passion for music lies in the hearts of the Bangladeshi audience. Around 15,000 classical music enthusiasts have so far registered to attend in the festival. Showcasing 50 years of our cultural history and heritage along with our rich musical legacy, an open exhibition will also be held at the festival venue."

"Holding such classical music festivals will make the audience receptive to the genre. A few days back, we saw a tremendous response from the Dhaka audience to the performances of world-renowned vocalist Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty and his daughter Kaushiki Desikan at the Daily Star-Standard Chartered Celebrating Life gala event. It is a matter of great joy that the grandest classical music festival will be held in Bangladesh where world-class classical maestros will perform," said eminent singer Ferdousi Rahman.

Music connoisseur Mobarak Hossain Khan said, "If a Dover Lane-like classical music festival is held once a year in Bangladesh, Bengal Foundation, especially Abul Khair, will receive accolades. If the classical music tradition is strong in our country, other genres of music will ultimately flourish. In this regard, organisations including Chhayanaut, BAEA (Bubul Academy of Fine Arts) and Shilpakala Academy have significant roles to play alongside Bengal Foundation."

"Professionalism is a must in promoting classical music. We have to take that responsibility. Music is the soul of culture. Despite the dismal scenario of classical music in Bangladesh, we have to move forward. Government, corporate houses and of course the media must come forward to promote the legacy. Classical music festivals are on the rise in Bangladesh. I am optimistic that the situation will further improve in days to come," asserted a Chhayanaut guru Asit Dey.

Chairman of Bengal Foundation, Abul Khair, said, "Bengal Foundation works on diverse cultural mediums. Classical music has not received patronage since the partition of 1947. If Chhayanaut did not exist, songs of Panchojobi would not have reached such heights in Bangladesh over the last 30 years. Music is the lifeblood of the Bangladeshi people. We have taken the initiative of setting up of a parampara-based classical music school where ITC-SRA gurus will teach. We need your support in this regard."

President of International Theatre Institute (World-wide) Ramendu Majumdar said, "I would like to emphasise on the role of the media, especially the electronic, that has a tremendous role to play in promoting classical music. At first BTB has to take the responsibility. We have to make other private TV channels understand their responsibilities too. The festival that Bengal Foundation is organising, I believe, will play a pivotal role in taking us to a new era."

Singer-musician Bappa Mazumdar said, "I received little from my father Pandit Barin Majumdar who was an institution of classical music. Once my father asked, 'Why didn't you learn classical music? At least you could play sitar or sarod.' I replied, 'If I practise classical music, no one will know me.' I don't know why I said that. And I think those who are to review or cover the festival must be well versed in classical music. I also advocate for including classical music in school syllabi."

A Chhayanaut guru, Dr. Rezwana Ali Lavlu, said, "We are appreciating the flowers and foliage of the tree but do not care for its roots. Why classical music didn't flourish in Bangladesh, is a basic question. I think this is for the first time such an interactive session has been held with classical artists or connoisseurs."

"I am thrilled about the upcoming music festival. I have spent an important part of my life in Shantiniketan. What I have understood is that an artist doesn't have any boundary or limit. We hope to watch performances by the best artists in the festival, free of cost," said noted Rabindra Sangeet singer Aditi Mohsin.

"The music school that Bengal Foundation will set up should involve noted classical artists and teachers of Bangladesh alongside ITC-SRA scholars," suggested general secretary of Chhayanaut, Khairul Anam Shakil.

"Patronage is a major deal. The celebration of Pahela Baishakh has given us a unique identity for which we can take pride. We need to take a cue from ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) that promotes Indian culture abroad," said another Chhayanaut guru Anup Barua.

"After Mughal emperors, the Bengali kings and zamindars extended patronage to classical music. Such patronage halted after the end of royalty and zamindari. Then Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru urged Indian radio to air classical music for six hours a day. The initiative indirectly helped the genre to be sustained. As our successive governments have paid no heed to the importance of promoting classical music in Bangladesh, Bengal Foundation has taken the responsibility. They deserve sincere appreciation for this commendable initiative," said sitarist Reenat Fayza.

A featured performer of the festival, Priyanka Gope, also spoke at the roundtable. Editor of Prothom Alo, Matiar Rahman, joined the roundtable later. The editor received candid appreciation from all the participants of the roundtable for predominantly assisting the Bengal-ITC SRA Classical Music Festival 2012. Managing editor of Prothom Alo, Sajjad Sharif, moderated the roundtable.

Habib releases new album on Banglalink Music Station

At a press conference recently, Habib Wahid shared details of his new album "Shadhin". Before the album becomes available at the music stores, it made its debut on Banglalink Music Station (starting from November 1).



Habib speaks at the press conference.

Banglalink subscribers have to dial the code 5858 to subscribe and enjoy the album exclusively on Banglalink Music Station.

For the new album, Habib has rendered all the songs. This is his 9th studio album. It features eight pop songs, and the main theme is "liberty from all odds".

Habib said, "Banglalink has created a unique platform like its Music Station, which helps artists reach a broader audience. My previous album 'A'haban' was also launched this way."

A month after the launch of the album on Banglalink Music Station and its other value added services, the album (by Deadline Music) will hit the music market by mid December 2012.

Banglalink's Head of Marketing Operations, Iftekhkar Azam, and Head of VAS, High Value and MFS, Solaiman Alam, were present as special guests at the press conference.

Reflections on the Arab spring

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alliance Française de Dhaka and Alliance Française de Chittagong have organised a series of cultural programmes focusing on the Arab Spring, one of the most significant world events since the end of the Cold War.

Two leading French intellectuals and experts on the Arab world -- Abdelwahab Meddeb and Dr Stéphanie Latte Abdallah -- have been invited to share their views with their Bangladeshi counterparts in the course of a number of seminars.

As a part of the programme, yesterday (November 19), a poetry recitation session was held with Meddeb, members of the Writers' Block and Kaiser Haq as guests.

Today, Alliance Française will organise a seminar, titled "The Arab Spring: cross perspectives from France and Bangladesh", at the Senate Hall, University of Dhaka. Former Ambassador Humayun Kabir; Dr Shaheen Afroze; Professor Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah; Professor Imtiaz Ahmed; Tareque S. Rahman; Nurul Kabir (editor of New Age); Abdelwahab Meddeb and Dr Stéphanie Latte Abdallah are set to attend the seminar.

A concert will be held on November 23 at 6 pm, at the Bokultula premises of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka.

On the occasion of the festival, a press conference was held recently at the La Galerie of Alliance Française de Dhaka in Dhanmondi. Babou Kamichetty, Deputy Head of Mission, French Embassy in Bangladesh; Dr Stéphanie Latte Abdallah; Professor Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Department of International Relations of the University of Dhaka; Khondakar Kabir, country manager of Etihad Airways; and Olivier Litvine, director of Alliance Française de Dhaka, spoke on the occasion.

Small steps Art exhibition in Mymensingh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Visitors at the exhibition.

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

A weeklong art exhibition with the works of 53 child artists of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Shishu Churaship began at Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala (art gallery) in the town on November 16.

The exhibition is titled "Atma-porichoyer Sandhaney (In Search of Self-identity)". The artworks on the scenic beauty of the country, rivers, flowers, birds, Bauls and different seasons, charmed the visitors gathered at the venue.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Professor MA Mannan, principal of Government Ananda Mohan College.

A discussion was held marking the inaugural session of the exhibition.

Mayor of Mymensingh municipality Ekramul Haque Titu; Sadar Upazila Parishad chairman Fayzur Rahman Fakir; principal of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Art School, Mir Rezaul Karim; veteran artist Amirul Islam, among others, addressed the inaugural session.

Artists Poritosh Majumder; Nimol Modak; Abdur Rouf, a lecturer at Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Fine Arts Institute; Kamruzzaman Swapin; Habibur Rahman were also present at the inaugural session.

Dr. Bijoy Krishna Banik, deputy keeper of the art gallery, presided over the session.

The speakers were of the view that Zainul Abedin, a world-renowned artist, dreamed of starting an art movement from Mymensingh, his hometown, and this exhibition is definitely a significant milestone as 53 artists have participated in it.

Such exhibitions will be helpful in producing talents in the field of art who will serve the nation in future, said the speakers adding that art and culture go a long way in producing worthy citizens.

The presence of the participants along with their guardians and visitors made the inaugural session more enjoyable.

Earlier, the art gallery authority invited the heads of different educational institutions in the town to visit the art exhibition with their students to encourage the young artists.

Nazmus Saquib's "Selected Interviews" launched

On November 13, journalist Nazmus Saquib's book -- a compilation of some of his interviews with renowned cultural personalities from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan - titled "Selected Interviews" was unveiled at the "Himu Mela". The fair was held at Channel 1 premises to celebrate the 64th birth anniversary of iconic Bengali litterateur Humayun Ahmed, says a press release.

The book contains a foreword by the late Humayun Ahmed. Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Channel 1 and Impress Telefilm Limited; Rezanur Rahman, editor of monthly Ananda Alo; Mazharul Islam, of Anyadin Publications; Kona Reza and others, spoke at the book launch.

Nazmus Saquib said, "Humayun Ahmed was kind enough to write the foreword for this book. I would have been happier if he was among us today on this special occasion. I have dedicated this book to him as a token of my love and respect for him."

The book contains 41 interviews of Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Humayun Ahmed, Qayyum Chowdhury, Monirul Islam, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Rafiqun Nabi; Kumar Biswajit, Atif Aslam, Azam Khan, Asha Bhosle, Ferdous Wahid, Bappi Lahiri, Ayub Bachchu, James and others.

As part of the Hay Festival, Nagarik Natyasampraday staged a short play based on Shakespeare's "Hamlet" at the newly built auditorium at Bangla Academy, on November 17. Presented by Aly Zaker and directed by Sara Zaker, the adaptation saw a traditional Bangladeshi makeover of the classic play. Young members of the troupe performed in the play. PHOTO: JAMIL MAHMUD

Beetle Baily by Mort Walker. Henry by Don Tranchte. DO YOU EVER THINK SARGE SINGLES ME OUT TO YELL AT? GREG & MORT WALKER

Table with TV and radio schedules for various channels including BTB, ATN BANGLA, CHANNEL 1, ntv, ETV, Desh TV, and various radio stations like abc radio FM 89.2, Radio Forth, and others.