

WHAT'S ON

Nazrul Death Anniversary Programme
 Organiser: Bangladesh Nazrul Sangeet Sangstha
 Venue: Chhayanaud Auditorium, Dhanmondi
 Date: Sep 15; Time: 7pm



Solo Watercolour Exhibition
 Artist: Anisuzzaman
 Venue: Institute of Asian Creatives, Gulshan
 Date: Sep 6-17, Time: 10am-9pm



Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Neuralgic Window
 Artist: Mustapha Khalid Palash
 Venue: Athena Gallery, Badda
 Date: Sep 13-26
 Time: 10am-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Banglar Rup
 Artist: Shohag Parvez
 Venue: Dhaka Art Center, H-60, R-7/A, Dhanmondi
 Date: Sep 13-26
 Time: 3-8pm



Death Shipment: Rana Plaza
 Photographers: Rahul Talukder, Abu Sayeed Sumon, Ismail Ferdous and Parvez Ahmad Rony
 Venue: Chhobit Haat, Charukola, Shahbag, Dhaka
 Date: September 13-15
 Time: 10am-10pm



NEWS bytes

Rowling to pen HP spin-off film

JK Rowling is to make her screenwriting debut in a new Harry Potter-themed film series, Warner Bros has announced. The first film of the series will be titled "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them". Warner Bros said the film series was part of an "expanded creative partnership" with the best-selling author. Warner Bros has given no indication as to when the film could go into production. Rowling said "I always said that I would only revisit the wizarding world if I had an idea that I was really excited about and this is it."

The Harry Potter novels, about a boy wizard who survives the attack that kills his parents, became a worldwide phenomenon and were turned into eight blockbuster Warner Bros films starring Daniel Radcliffe. The films have grossed more than \$7.7bn to date worldwide at the box office, making Harry Potter the largest-grossing film franchise in history.

Source: BBC

Traditional sports in Habiganj

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Thousands of enthusiastic spectators of all ages thronged the Machhulia Government primary school playground of Habiganj district town on Sunday, to witness traditional lathi khela and Ha-du-du contests.

The event was arranged to observe International Literacy Day. Six teams, including tea garden workers took part in the lathi khela, while three teams were in the Ha-du-du competition.

At the prize distribution function, Deputy Commissioner Manindra Kishore Mazumder assured that such contests of rural games, which are on verge of extinction, will be arranged annually. The speakers stressed the need to preserve traditional games.

Lawmaker Md. Abu Zahir and Habiganj pourashava mayor GK Gous also addressed the gathering among others. Prizes were handed out to the winners later.

Besides, prizes were distributed among the winners in the contests on lathi khela, Dhamaail song and student's art competition, at the Machhulia government primary school. The contest was organised by organisation Sushashoner Jonnyo Procharabhijan.

Poetry festival held in Pabna Creativity gets a boost

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Mohiyashi Shahitta and Pathchakra, a local organisation of poets organised a day long Poetry Festival in Pabna on Friday. Over 100 poets from 30 districts joined the festival held at the Pabna Zila Parishad auditorium.

Administrator of Pabna Zila Parishad Md. Saidul Haque Chunnun inaugurated the festival. Poet Enamul Haque chaired the inaugural programme while poet Rafiqul Haque, freedom fighter SK Habibullah, general manager of Universal group Achinta Kumar Ghosh, poet Golam Rabbani and journalist ABM Fazlur Rahman spoke on the occasion.

On a lyrical note, the speakers said that poetry is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings from the heart. A poet presents the reality of life and society in verses from his own observation. Apart from enriching the soul, poetry has played a vital role in social reformation the speakers added.

In the second session of the festival, a discussion was held on the techniques of poetry. The chairperson was poet Alamgir Kabir Hridoy. Among others Dr. Sondip Mollik, poet Akter Zaman, Samir Ahmed, Professor Mahfuzur Rahman spoke on the occasion.

Poets from different areas of the country recited poems at the festival.

The concluding programme of the festival was held in the evening, chaired by poet Kamrunnahr Shilpi, an advisor to the organisers. Pabna Deputy Commissioner Md. Mostafizur Rahman spoke as the chief guest. Additional Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Riazi, managing director of Universal Group Sohani Hossain spoke on the occasion.

The poetry festival is a small initiative to encourage creativity. The privileged should patronise local poets and cultural activists, urged the speakers.

PEARLS of IMAGINATION

In his current show 'Colour from the Soul' at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts Syed Iqbal searches for pearls of images in his subconscious



(From left) Canadian High Commissioner Heather Cruden; Hashem Khan; Qayyum Chowdhury and Subir Chowdhury at the inauguration.

ZIAUL KARIM

For Syed Iqbal what matters in painting is the emotions it arouses. His images are often disjointed, at times suggestive, at still other times stylized and submerged in apparently abstract compositions. Most of the time, his Images reveal themselves to viewers only after close observation. He thwarts the possibility of a narrative emerging from the images. They work as objective correlates to his fear and angst; ecstasy and ennui. To borrow from Kandinsky, Iqbal 'seeks to express only inner, essential feelings.'

He treats his themes in the abstract mode of high modernism, but approaches the surface of his painting in Art Informel manner, experimenting with different materials, combining colour with sand, different modeling paste, textured glue and resin, for example, to create a multi-layered surface to convey a calm beauty. The delicate balance he creates of abstract imagery, and the interplay between powerful hues of exquisite colour and form result in a feast for the eye.

As he places personal feelings at the heart of aesthetic experience his images, associated with individualistic subjectivity, appear elusive and ambiguous. The white-winged blue fairy in Mind the Gap (2012) floating in the heavy impasto of blue paint at first glance eludes the eye. But as the viewer's eye becomes accustomed to the painting, the slender figure of the fairy slowly takes shape in the viewer's field of

vision. The sweeping pale light from an unidentified source and the splotch of red around the pelvic region, indicative of the vagina, give the painting a surreal overtone. Overarching sexual desires take the form of the fairy in the painting, but at the same time we find a yellow border in the right corner which reads 'mind the gap' suggesting repression of the desire by our conscious mind.

The internal theatre of the conflict between the subconscious and the conscious has been a consistent theme for Iqbal and he dips his paintbrush in dreamy blue to set up the stage for the play of inner desire and repressed emotions. But his palette oozes with the colours of the rainbow when he expresses his concern for the loss of bio-diversity in the series Tears of Nature. A flurry of primary colours constructs the language of the series. Nature here appears as a sad, gloomy and distorted face of a woman who is integrated into a fantastical amorphous landscape. Visions from his dark imagination dart across the picture surface, like electrical currents. The series rings the bell of the doom of a planet engendered by unsustainable development and loss of bio-diversity.

Iqbal has always looked into himself as the source of his images much like a silkworm which produces silk from its own cocoon. The rich repertoire of his onerous images made to sink in thick layers of paint and textured surface, is virtually spun from his own cocoon of anxi-

ety, lust, despair and fear.

The current Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts show 'Colours from the Soul' reveals the Syed Iqbal we have not seen since 2001. He left for Montreal, Canada that year to start a new life. A year later, he moved to Toronto for a long sojourn that still continues. In the past 12 years he has visited Dhaka, the city that provided him nourishment for his creative self, on a number of occasions but never to offer a solo exhibition. The importance of the current show thus lies not only in viewers being able to see Iqbal after a long hiatus, but also to catch up with his recent experiments and look at his exciting new palette shimmering with hues.

Imaginary figures, distorted parts of female body or phantasmagoric imagery have started inhabiting Iqbal's recent canvasses. The images appear lyrical at times and on other occasions as haunting. Perhaps he is trying to find the meaning of love, sexuality or even failed relationships anew through them. But meaning, as we all know, is always slippery and elusive. This anxiety for meaning runs deep into this recent works.

While groping for a meaning, the best an artist can do is to plumb the depths of the subconscious as an 'underwater swimmer' to fish for pearls of imagination. And this is what we see Iqbal doing in his recent works.

Ziaul Karim is an art critic.

Nitun Kundu's seventh death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the seventh death anniversary of painter, sculptor, cultural figure, entrepreneur and a hero of the Liberation War, Nitun Kundu.

Kundu graduated from Dacca Art College (at present the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) in 1959. Apart from being a sculptor, he was also a painter and was recognised for both his abstract and realistic works.

During the Liberation War, Kundu worked with veteran painter Quamrul Hassan for the Public Relations department of the then Bangladesh Government-in exile at Mujibnagar. Some of his posters during the war earned him wide recognition. Most popular of these include "Shoda Jagrato Banglar Muktibahini", "Amra Shobai Bangali" and "Banglar Bir Muktijoddha".

Among his sculptures, "Shabash Bangladesh" and "The SAARC Fountain" are much acclaimed. With his designs, Kundu wanted to present complex structures in simple atmosphere. His metal-based works have an air of modernism and the designs have enriched the Bangladeshi contemporary art scenario.

Kundu was also known for his furniture designs. Wood and metal both were main ingredients of his works. He was the founder of Otobi and received several awards throughout his illustrious career, including Ekushey Padak, National Film Award, President Gold Cup and The Daily Star-DHL Best Entrepreneur Award.



Nazrul death anniversary observed in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, Bogra arranged a cultural competition on National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's songs in Bogra town on Friday last.

A large number of students from educational institutions of the town participated in the competition in two categories.

The jury of the cultural competition was noted music director of the area Minal Kanti Shaha, eminent Nazrul researcher Abdul Alim and cultural personality of the town Arifur Rahman Arif. The cultural programme was presided over by the secretary of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, Bogra Mahamudus Sobhan Minu.

The competition was followed by prize giving ceremony. The prizes went to eight winners of the two categories in the competition and ended with a chorus of Nazrul's songs.

Public art installation at the Korail slum waterfront at Gulshan



PHOTO COURTESY: SAADUL ISLAM

Since early 2013, artist and photojournalist Susie Taylor has been reporting on the Bangladeshi garment industry with her partner, Jason Motlagh. The two have teamed up with the Photography Department of Counter Foto, an international platform of photographers and activists, to install a public art installation with world-renowned artist JR and the Inside Out Project, at the Korail slum waterfront in Gulshan, Dhaka. The exhibition opened on September 13, says a press release.

Taylor brought the Inside Out project to Bangladesh because of the inherent tension inside the Bangladeshi garment industry. While the industry has brought strength and mobility to women, it has also cost them dearly - both in the loss of

traditional craftsmanship and the adoption of grueling labour demands. The art installation at Korail is a celebration of the hard working Bengali woman and in support of her struggle for socio-economic justice.

The message is Dignity in Industry. Bengali photographers from Counter Foto, in collaboration with Susie Taylor and Jason Motlagh, produced the artwork. The interactive public exhibition was installed in collaboration with JAAGO Foundation, a youth organisation that focuses on eradicating poverty in Bangladesh. Jaago has built and operated schools in Korail over the years. The prints are done on PVC plastic rather than traditional paper and wheat-paste to add utility to the environment, and avoid adding

to the solid waste that is already a burden for those living in Korail. The Korail community owns the completed exhibit; and at any point can use the work for insulation, waterproofing, etc.

Jaago Foundation will be collecting garbage from the waterfront during installation of the piece.

The exhibit is entitled "Akhter Begum" - the two most common last names for garment workers in the countries EPZs -- adopted by most who have only first names and sometimes no government record. The broader public is invited to take boats to Korail; interact with the community; boost the local economy; learn their stories; take part in the clean up effort; and close the overt division between the rich and the poor.

"Shuddh Desi Romance" releases Love in the 21st century

KAVITA, New Delhi

Looking for pure unadulterated desi fun in a Bollywood film? For an unusual, fresh plot line that departs from the usual boy meets girl, the two fall in love, complications, and if you are lucky action thrown in until the inevitable happy ending. Yes you could say that "Shuddh Desi Romance" has some of that but it's far more: a witty redefinition of romance in the 21st century.

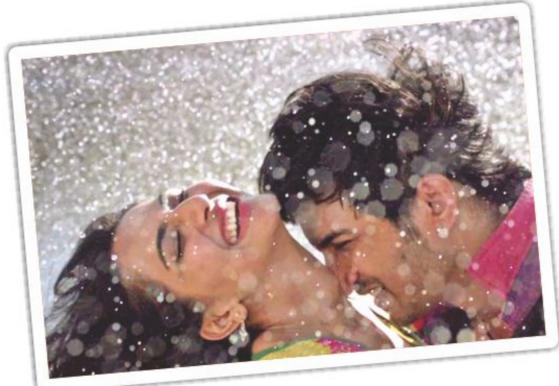
For a start Raghu (played by Sushant Singh Rajput) is not your stereotyped filmi hero. He's so-so looking, a little scruffy yet funny. A tourist guide in Jaipur, he also has a side "profession": as "baraati" who gets paid for enlivening wedding parties. He works for Goyal (Rishi Kapoor), a desi wedding planner.

Gayatri (Parineeti Chopra) is a chain smoking, uninhibited, but as it turns out vulnerable character who dares to push the frontiers of romance. The two engage in some great verbal

sparring on a bus taking Raghu to his own wedding. Such is the chemistry between the two that they end up madly making out in the bus. Which gives the already committed phobic Raghu reason enough to stand up his beautiful bride Tara (Vaani Kapoor) at the mandap.

Raghu and Gayatri live in and love in. To reveal more would make one a spoilsport. Just a hint: Tara reappears on the scene. It's difficult to tell how the triangular romantic comedy will end. Suffice it to say that there's no conventional happy conclusion for the more staid among us.

Director Maneesh Sharma gets the best of his actors, particularly Rajput and Chopra, who are complete naturals. Newcomer Kapoor makes a hesitant start but gradually steps into her role as the bold and beautiful Tara. Rishi Kapoor who plays confidante to Raghu gets better with every movie. Clearly he's come a long way from his boring lover boy days in "Bobby", "Prem Rog", "Chandni" and a string of other box office hits.



Of course writer Jaideep Sahni is the stealer. The snappy one-liners make for some great moments. And it is intelligent conversation between the characters not the usual dumb dialogues. Raghu, Gayatri and Tara dare to dare and even the most blasé amongst us can't help but laugh along.