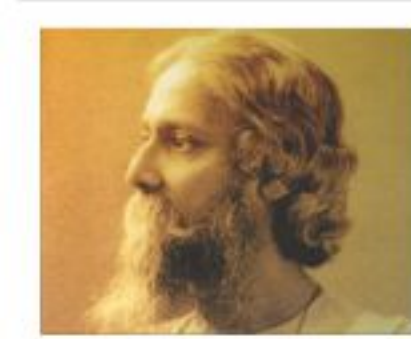


## WHAT'S ON



Discussion and Musical Soiree  
Organiser: BRSSS  
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Public Library



Celebrating Life Gala 2013  
Venue: Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium, Mirpur  
Date: October 4  
Time: 6pm  
(Event is invitational. Collect passes from The Daily Star Centre)



Handicraft Exhibition  
Venue: National Art Gallery, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Sep 22-27  
Time: 11am-8pm



Photography and Video Clips Exhibition  
On Noted Actress Sarah Begum Kaboli  
Venue: National Museum, Shahbagh  
Date: Sep 27-Oct 2  
Time: 10am-7pm



Solo Painting Exhibition  
Artist: Shahabuddin Ahmed  
Venue: Gallery Chittrak, Dhamond  
Date: Sep 28-Oct 12  
Time: 10am-8pm



Bonsai Exhibition  
Organiser: Radiant Bonsai Society  
Venue: WVA Auditorium, House 20, Dhamond Rd 27  
Date: Sep 26-28; Time: 11am-8pm



Musical Soiree  
Artist: Anup Barua  
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan 1  
Date: Sep 27  
Time: 6:30pm



Group Exhibition  
Title: Unity of Souls  
Venue: Athena Gallery of Fine Arts, Al Heights, C/O-7/7/10, Pragati Shorani  
Date: Sep 27-Oct 26

## Diana biopic on the big screen

Star Cineplex releases film before USA Premiere



A CORRESPONDENT

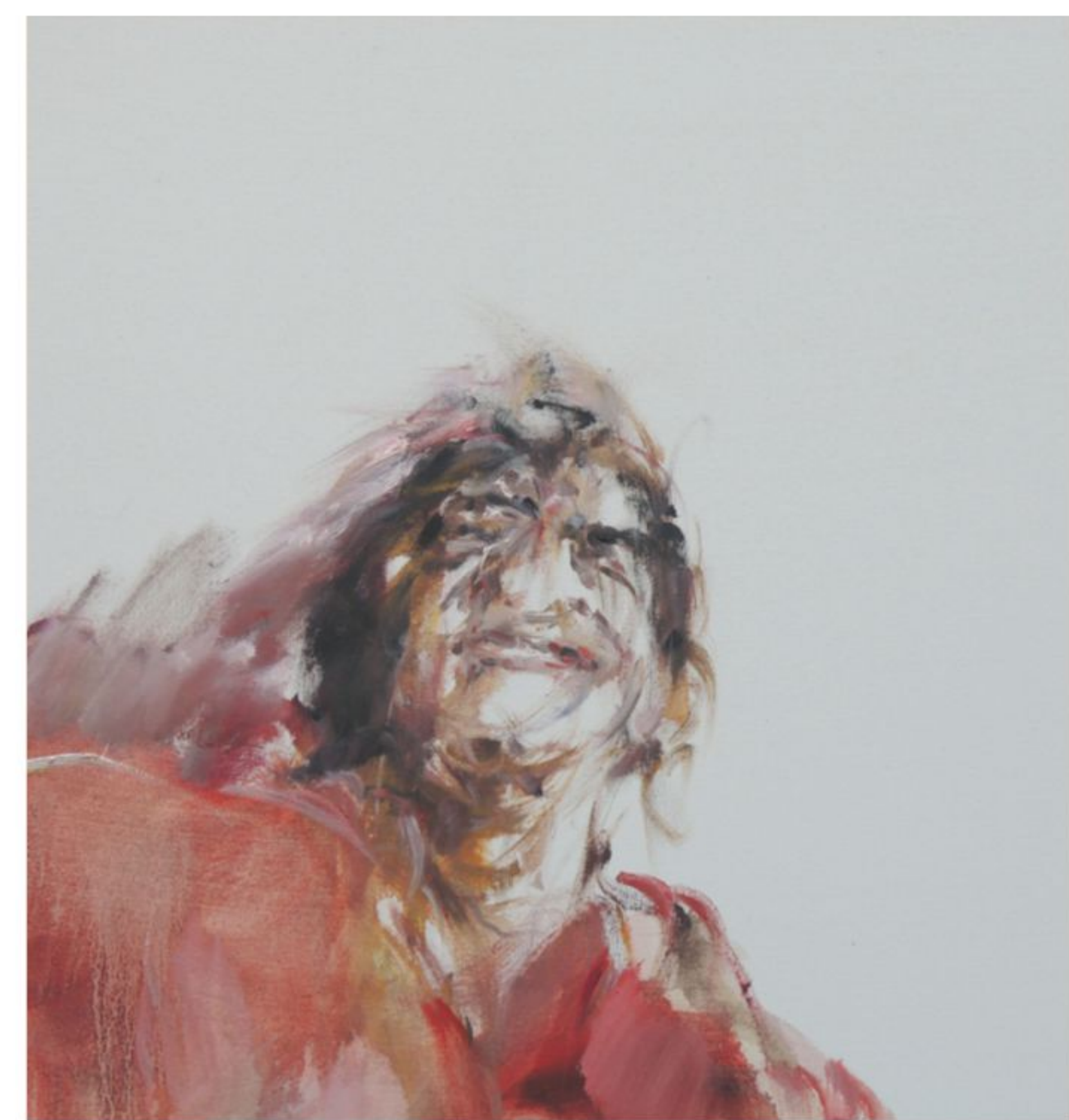
Star Cineplex, the country's first multiplex cinema, has just added the latest film to their roster -- Naomi Watts-starrer "Diana", the feature biopic directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel on the princess of Wales. In association with Tanweer Pictures -- the international distributors of the film -- the release comes just one week into the UK premiere, and more than a month ahead of its release in the USA (scheduled for November 1).

UK's "The Daily Express" has termed the film "a must-see this Autumn", while renowned critic Geoffrey McNab of "The Independent" has praised Watts' "intense and volatile performance" in the lead role. The film chronicles the last two years of the beloved princess' life after she divorced from Prince Charles. Her relationships with heart surgeon Hasnat Khan -- played by actor Naveen Andrews from TV series "Lost" -- and Dodi Fayed are also narrated.

This is an important release for Star Cineplex as this biopic film signals a change from the Action/Adventure movies the theatre has released previously, signalling a shifting interest in reaching a more widespread audience in the Dhaka. After the release of "Diana", Star Cineplex has plans to continue their venture into biopics with the forthcoming release of "Jobs" -- detailing the life of Apple CEO, Founder and visionary Steve Jobs starring Ashton Kutcher.

## Highlighting vigour and energy

SHAHABUDDIN'S exhibition begins tomorrow at Gallery Chittrak



TAKIR HOSSAIN

Shahabuddin Ahmed is celebrated for his figurative propositions through which he often exteriorizes drama of movement. The Bangladeshi expatriate who has been living in Paris for over 35 years, is known to the wider public for his impassioned and keen depiction of the spirit of the Liberation War in 1971. Beginning his career in the early 1970s, a point of history when a new generation of artists was struggling to make the best out of the post-liberation era situation, he started to draw attention as a painter given to intense emotion while exploring human and animal forms. Connected to the

concept of the Bengali national identity, his signature trait is often animated by sweeps of brush strokes and painterly contrivances leading to the illusionistic imagery.

Shahabuddin's solo painting exhibition begins tomorrow (September 28) at Gallery Chittrak in Dhamond.

An artist who prefers working on large and middle sized canvases, often tackling sizes according to the requirement of his larger-than-life themes and style, a common thread that runs through most of his works (oil paintings) has to do with the spirit of emancipation of the human being.

The created space -- one that is conceived as the field of action for the protagonists

whom Shahabuddin portrays -- is broad, so that it provides for a large backdrop against which to enact his visual drama.

Shahabuddin's oeuvre at the Gallery Chittrak exhibition articulates the valour of the Freedom Fighters by emphasising their muscularity and robustness, as is his norm. Figures for him are means to infuse the painterly space with a mythological sense; and he brings them into view as instigators of freedom as they are made to traverse a vast, expansive domain defying time and space. One can say the artist's personal desires, emotions, hopes, and aspirations are associated with that of the Bengali masses, whose zeal centering the independ-

ence war is unwavering.

This time, the emergence of horses, Royal Bengal Tigers and bulls as motifs signifying force and strength provides a respite for viewers already familiar with his advancing human figures. The cluster of paintings present the same Bengali will that seeks to revive the forgotten ethos of the Liberation War.

The portraits of Bangabandhu, Mahatma Gandhi and other legendary personalities -- the political giants he has been portraying since the early 1990s -- are also part of the exhibition.

The exhibition will continue till October 12.



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Sajal is one of the busiest and popular TV actors of our time. After successful ventures into the world of modeling, he is now set to make his debut on celluloid. Recently, the actor talked to The Daily Star about his first love letter.

To be honest, there was someone in my life and I felt my feelings spill over for her. It was then that I wrote my first love letter, and thankfully, received a reply. I however prefer not to mention her name.

We both studied at the same college, and became close friends. We had chitchats everyday, but I never dared write to her. But one day I thought it was time to tell her about my feelings. Spontaneously, I sat down to draft my very first love letter. But days passed, and

I drafted several letters; none to my contentment.

But one fateful day, I gained courage and with quotations from here and there I finished writing the letter. But I was confused as to how I should hand over the letter to her, and how she would react.

Finally, I left the letter in her diary. I still remember I wrote the letter carefully to impress her. The following day, to my surprise, she also sent me a reply. The letter had positive vibes.

However, matters did not proceed and communication between us faded. When I am all by myself I still think it was an interesting gesture to reveal my liking for someone. I get fan mails, but the first letter is definitely something that etches itself in the heart, that becomes a part of nostalgia.



ILLUSTRATION: SADAT

## Unity of Souls at Athena Gallery

Athena Gallery of Fine Arts will host its first collaborative show featuring eight Pakistani and nine Bangladeshi artists, says a press release. Titled "Unity of Souls", the exhibition brings together Pakistani artists Hajra Mansoor, Mansoor Rabi, Maryam Rasul, Munizah Janbaz, Raja Changez Sultan, Samina Jamshed, Summiya Khan and Sundas Tariq, while Bangladesh is represented by Afrozaa Jamil Konka, Golam Faruque Belul, Md. Abdul Aziz, Md. Anisuzzaman Anis, Md. Mahabubul Islam Baabu, Rezaun Nabi, Sohana Shaheen, Syed Mohammad Shamim and Zaman Mohammed Fakhruzzaman.

The opening ceremony will be held on September 27 at 6 pm, with eminent artist Monirul Islam inaugurating it. The exhibition will run till October 26 from 10am to 8pm, except on Sundays.



## Living works of Art

Fifth Annual Bonsai Exhibition begins in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bonsai, the ancient Chinese art of miniaturising mammoth trees to fit in living rooms, has its share of practitioners in Dhaka, despite the lack of patronage. Radiant Bonsai Society (RBS) has organised Annual Bonsai Exhibits since 2009 and opened their 5th such exhibition at the WVA Auditorium in Dhamond (Road 27) on Thursday.

Speaking at the inauguration, chairman of RBS Gulshan Nasreen Chowdhury said that the art of bonsai can help urban children learn about trees.

The chief guest at the event, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu appreciated the bonsai plant gifted to him. He added that bonsai would make very innovative and pleasing gifts. Terming bonsai a "living work of art", he hailed the bonsai artists and added that the art should be popularised.

About a hundred different varieties of Bonsai are on display at the three-day exhibition, with banyan, 'pakur', fig, tamarind, Bougainvillea, Epil Epil and even pine trees done in various formations like formal upright, slanting, broom and rock-style. Some of the works are even in a landscape format with small clay houses and bamboo bridges, including one depicting a banyan tree with a miniaturised model of the Rayerbazar martyred intellectuals'



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

memorial. Most of the trees are for sale, with prices ranging from 300 taka to a staggering 60,000 taka

The exhibition is open from 11am-8pm till tomorrow.

## "I don't want to compromise with my artistic self"

Omer Ayaz Ony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Omer Ayaz Ony, the actor who came to limelight with a Grameenphone TV commercial and went on to star in multiple national-award winning film "Guerrilla", has been missing from the circuit for a while. However, the actor is back from his stay abroad, and is getting busy with work again. The Daily Star recently caught up with the artiste.

What is it like to be back to the scene?

Ony: I'm actually very excited to be back, because I have a film releasing very soon (today, September 27). I worked in it from late 2011 to early 2012, but the release was somehow delayed. "Putro lokhon Poyshawala", directed by Nargis Akhter and also starring Farah Ruma and Bobita, is a quintessential Bangla entertainment film, and I am looking forward to the response.

The previous film you did was "Guerrilla", which was highly acclaimed, critically. Why did you choose your next film to be a commercial film?

Ony: Honestly, just to touch all bases. I have worked in advertisements, TV plays, documentaries, radio, even with Sisimpur (the Bangla adaptation of Sesame Street), but I had

never done the typical FDC film. I just wanted that experience, and to see how well I do there.

You've stayed abroad for a while. Did you do any work there?

Ony: Yes, I've been in Australia for over a year, and I've actually signed up for a film by Bangladeshi director Golam Mostafa, based in Australia. The film, which has a working title "Leena", will be done in Australia next year, and the producers have plans of international releases.

What have you been up to since you've been back?

Ony: I have worked on some single-episode TV plays, for the upcoming Eid, and for Victory Day. I was also offered roles in TV serials, but I prefer single episode plays better.

Despite having your career launched quite some time back, you don't have a large volume of work. Why?

Ony: If I become a professional actor and must work 30 days to earn my living, I cannot afford to be very picky. I might have to do things to support my career that my artistic self doesn't appeal to. Acting is my passion, and I don't want it to be my profession because I don't want to compromise. I am always looking for characters that I would really want to do, and the more of them I get, the more I will work.



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

## Thank You For The Music, ABBA

SYED MAQSUD JAMIL

'It was the best of time, it was the worst of time, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness' - and it was the age of music. Thank you for the music, ABBA! The band started working together since 1972 but ABBA the group made its debut in 1973. They sold over 370 million albums and singles worldwide, and are regarded as the second best-selling music group of all time. Even after forty years, the music produced by Anni-Frid, Benny, Björn and Agnetha still cast a spell that life is always young. Their manager Stig Andersson crafted the names, Benny Andersson, Anni-Frid Frida Lyngstad, Agnetha Fältskog and Björn Ulvæus into ABBA.

Benny Andersson was associated with a band group The Hep Stars since the age of 18. He was a keyboard player a pianist, Björn was the guitarist, while Anni-Frid and Agnetha were the two vocalists. Ulvæus was involved with the band The Hootenanny Singers. Agnetha used to sing for a dance band that sent a demo tape that contained her songs to Karl Gerhard Lundkvist. Under him, her self-composed song "Jag va kassar" sold 80,000 copies, when she was only 17. Lyngstad was singing from the age of 13. Benny and Ulvæus knew each other and often worked together to write and compose songs.

The quartet recorded their first album "Nina, Pretty Ballerina" in September 1972 - released in 1973. It was popular in Austria and gave them the idea of their potentialities.

They decided to send music to 'melodifestivalen' and they composed "Ring Ring". Initially, it was not successful. That was February 1973. Then came "Waterloo"; it was a great hit. There was no looking back and Agnetha and Ulvæus were married by then, as were Anni-Frid and Benny. 1973 was crowned with "Honey, Honey". The blond and the blue-eyed girl, the swinging guitarist and the approving keyboard player took enchantment to a new level.

In 1974, music lovers conferred with approval "I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do". In 1975 there was "SOS". "Mama Mia" was joy unbound uniting in its appeal. The profundity of the next year, 1976 was full to the brim -- "Fernando", "Dancing Queen", "Money, Money, Money" and "Knowing Me, Knowing You". The melody,



the beat and the magic of words of ABBA's music continued in 1977. There was "The Name Of The Game" and "Take a Chance on Me" and above all "Thank You For The Music". The music world responded with adulation and love. In 1978, a lovingly lilting melody in "Chiquitita" followed. On 9 January 1979, the group performed "Chiquitita" at the Music for UNICEF Concert held at the United Nations General Assembly to celebrate UNICEF's Year of the Child. ABBA donated the copyright of this worldwide hit to the UNICEF. And the soaring beat in the melody of "Voulez-Vous" was remarkable! In 1979, "Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! (A Man After Midnight)", "The Winner Takes It All" and in 1980 "Super Trouper". Music was taking its toll on the quartet. The couples separated, first Agnetha and Ulvæus and then Anni-Frid and Benny. ABBA ended its celestial ride in 1982.

However, members of ABBA did not, in fact, officially bring an end to their group. They went their own ways and all of them kept on following careers. But the

magic was gone and the phenomenal popularity of ABBA did not pass on to them as legacy.

Benny and Ulvæus remained active writing and composing music. They worked with Barbara Streisand and Whitney Houston. Benny held a Swedish musical Kristina från Duvemåla at Malmö for five years. He also released the English version of Krista in 2010.

Ulvæus continued to cooperate with Benny. Afterwards he returned to his own group The Hootenanny Singers.

Anni-Frida has moved to Paris. She released her singles "I Know There's Something Going On" and "Shine". She remains involved with an environmental organization.

Agnetha released her singles "Wrap Your Arms Around Me", "I Stand Alone" and "I Wasn't The One". The singles were very popular. In 1996, she released her autobiography, As I am.

On July 4, 2008, all four ABBA members were reunited at the Swedish premiere of the film Mama Mia!

## Asif Azim enters Bigg Boss house

OSAMA RAHMAN

Asif Azim, one of Bangladesh's most famous models and recently rated as one of the top 5 fittest supermodels in India will take the next big step in his burgeoning career by being the latest wild card in Indian reality TV show, Bigg Boss 7. Starting off as a Bangladeshi model, Asif Azim soon caught the eye of international scouts and went on to light up the ramp for famous names such as Rohit Bal, Manish Malhotra and Tarun Tahiliani.

Hand picked for the show by Salman Khan, Asif Azim's soaring popularity is set to reach new heights, with a lot of hope riding on the local boy. The 29-year old, though excited, seemed unfazed by the challenges ahead of him. The show, pitting 14 contestants divided into two houses, Hell and Heaven, live without connectivity with the outside world for 3 months, face numerous challenges and the winner is eventually chosen through audience votes. "I am not at all bothered by the comforts or discomforts in the house. Being born in a middle class family and now leading a lavish life, I have seen both the best and worst parts of life. When I was in Bangladesh, I had lived my life like the hell segment of the house," Asif said when asked which house he wanted to end up in.

Being part of one of India's most watched reality TV shows, Asif Azim's participation isn't just a form of recognition of his fame, but may also open the door for future models from Bangladesh. Joining the leagues of Sunny Leone and Pamela Anderson, amongst others, Asif Azim's 9 years in India is about to pay huge dividends. The star himself though remains modest and wishes only to do his very best and represent the cultures and values that he has been raised with.



PHOTO COURTESY: STAR LIFESTYLE

CELEBRATING LIFE GALA 2013

## In conversation with Dr. Rezwan Ali



ZAHANGIR ALOM

Noted classical vocalist Dr. Rezwan Ali will perform in this year's "Celebrating Life Gala 2013", to be held at Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium, Mirpur, Dhaka on October 4. Currently a Chhayanaut Guru, Dr. Rezwan Ali, with an ICCR Scholarship, went to MS University of Baroda, India where he completed both his Honours and Masters. Alongside, He took musical lessons from Pt. Narayan Rao Patwardhan of "Gwalior Gharana" for eight years and a "Jaipur-Agra Gharana" Pt. VR Athwale for six years. Later he moved to Gandharva Niketan, Mumbai, India where the artiste received tutelage from Dr. Arun Kashalkar of "Jaipur-Gwalior Gharana".

Dr. Rezwan Ali's style of rendition has conspicuous influence of the strong sides including laya, chhanda, bolbat, boltan and layakari of Gwalior Gharana.

Pt. Dhirendranath Chakrobarty of Magura baptized him in music. Later he took lesson from Pt. Chandiprasad Chatterjee [of Magura] and Ustad Abdul Bari Khan [of Dhaka].

"One can get untainted joy from music. The joy of melody is immense. I can mention a story in this regard: Once Baba Ustad Allaiddin Khan invited four of his very close disciples -- Ali Akbar Khan, Pt. Ravi Shankar, Pannalal Ghosh and Nikhil Bannerjee over to dinner. After dinner, Nikhil Banerjee told Baba to play the sitar. While playing, Ustad Allaiddin Khan was crying and so were his disciples. Nikhil asked Baba why he was crying. The Ustad replied that he touched the apt tune of 'Behag' after 40 years, and the tears were of the ecstasy of reaching the ultimate of melody," said Dr. Rezwan Ali.

Dr. Rezwan Ali thinks that Bangladesh has many inborn talents in classical music. Despite having many odds, classical vocalists and instrumentalists are ceaselessly fighting for an apt position and platform.

"No big progress has been marked in Bangladeshi classical music scenario over the last 40 years. The Shilpakala Academy is much less of an 'Academy'; students of classical music can hardly be found in classrooms. Artists' honorariums are also very low compared to the neighbouring country," mentioned the artiste.