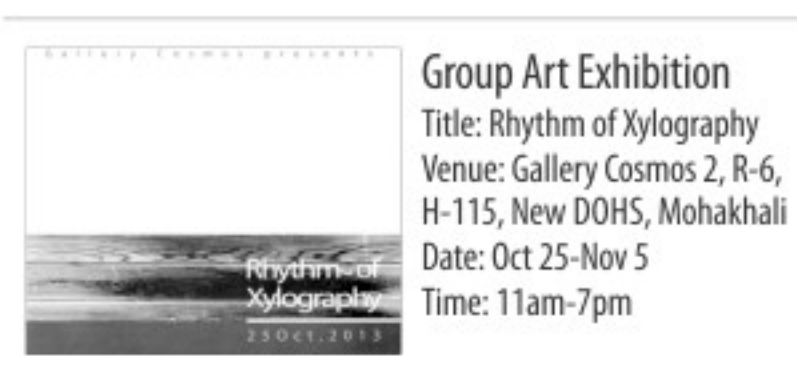


**WHAT'S ON**

Group Art Exhibition  
Title: Rhythm of Xylography  
Venue: Gallery Cosmos 2, R-6,  
H-115, New DMC5, Mohakhali  
Date: Oct 25-Nov 5  
Time: 11am-7pm



Classical Music Workshop  
and Film Screening  
Marking Bengal Classical Music Fest 2013  
Venue: Bengal Club, Dharmamandi  
Date: Sep 28-Nov 16  
Time: on every Thursday (5-5pm) &  
Saturday (10am-12pm)  
Entry is free



Solo Painting Exhibition  
Artist: Shabkun Nahar Nooshin  
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26  
Mirpur Road, Dharmamandi  
Date: Oct 25-Nov 7  
Time: 3pm-9pm



Urban Youth Festival II  
Organiser: Goethe-Institut Dhaka  
Venue: Goethe-Institut, House 10,  
Rd 9, Dharmamandi  
Date: Oct 24-31  
Time: 11am-9pm



Theatre  
Play: The Tempest  
Troupe: Dhaka Theatre  
Venue: National Theatre Hall,  
Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Oct 28  
Time: 6:30pm



Theatre  
Play: Dui Je Chhilo Ek Chaker  
Troupe: Natyalekendra  
Venue: National Theatre Hall,  
Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Oct 27  
Time: 6:30pm



Theatre  
Play: Shaka Shongit  
Troupe: Shomoy Natyadal  
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall,  
Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Oct 31  
Time: 6:30pm

# Chompaboti: Rising from the East

KARIM WAHEED

We, children of the '80s, grew up on a steady diet of unimaginative, dull, and to some extent, insufferable, "snake dance", "fishermen's dance" and "farmers' dance" (aired on good ol' BTV). We were told by elders that these were our heritage. These are the performances that define rural, agrarian East Bengal.

At this point I feel the need to explain what a stereotype is: "A conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image."

Stereotypes and clichés don't have to be bad things. If you can own it, hone it, take pride in it and can astound the world with it.

That's how I'd articulate Shadhona's latest production "Chompaboti". It is essentially all about wandering snake charmers; simple, hard working rural folk; the sinister yet buffoonish village headman; objectification and abuse of women...the usual. "Chompaboti" is an adaptation of poet Jasim Uddin's "Beder Meye" by poet-playwright extraordinaire Syed Shamsul Haq. The premiere show was held at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on October 25.

I won't give out a detailed synopsis: for one, I don't think it's necessary, and I'd like everyone to have a magical experience (as I did) when they see it for the first time. In a nutshell, Chompa is an embodiment of Behula,



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

Young artistes of Shadhona pushed their artistic boundaries to take the production to great heights.

Savitri, Sita and all the heroines traditional Bengali literature upholds and celebrates -- beautiful belles whom every male wants and objectifies, who must guard their "dignity" as defined by a patriarchal society, whose beloveds betray them and move on while they wallow in agony and are always ready to embrace martyrdom for the sake of the beloved.

So far, so clichéd, right? Then why did this production work? And not just work, but excel with flying colours? For starters, artists of Shadhona worked their tails off researching on and training in folk art forms such as "Lathi-khela", "Raibeshe", "Jhumur" and "Chhau". They incorporated contemporary elements like "glow in the dark/neon" dance which hasn't been used in dance productions here.

The music -- directed by Zahidul Kabir and arranged by Durbadul Chattopadhyay, Nirjher Chowdhury and Rokon Emon -- and songs rendered by Anusheh Anadil and Shofi Mondol were laden with ethos. The "Dohar" (accompanying instrumentalists on stage -- Shamim Hasan, Shoron Prottoy, Suman Chowdhury, Ajoy Chakraborty, Khairul Islam and Nasirul Islam Raj) complemented the whole musical ambience.

But what took the production from Grade-A to Grade-A+, were the young dancer-actors of Shadhona. The sweat, the passion, the tears were all real, very real. They went above and beyond. Shabby Akter as Chompaboti, the lithe, beautiful snake charmer, won hearts and broke hearts. She lived her character even after the curtain came down. I feel obligated to mention all the artistes -- Sabir

Ahmed Khan (as Goya); Amit Chowdhury (Mainka/Snake); Manosh Talukdar (Morol); Rehana Haque Poly (Maleka); Zuriyah Mouli (Asmani); Lubna Marium (Boishnobi); Taskin Anha, Sankari Mridha, Lamiya Saiyara Mela, Abu Nyeem, Labonno Sultana Bonna, Anandita Khan, Md Hanif, Sohan Arefin Nayan, S.M. Hassan Ishitque Imran, Nurul Haque Abir and Nasirul Islam Raj (villagers and Bede people). It takes the whole team to make a production fly.

Kudos to Sabir Ahmed Khan and Shamim Hasan for their brilliant dance and theatrical direction, respectively. Artistic direction by Lubna Marium and light design by Reazuddin Mahmud employed creativity and intelligent use of the limited space at the Experimental Theatre Hall; a boat making its way through two of the openings, on to the performance space was one of the best demonstrations of that.

Note to the Government high-ups who decide which artists/troups would represent Bangladesh as delegates at international cultural events: I do realise I'm in no position to make recommendations, but I strongly believe this production deserves to represent Bangladesh, and can make us proud.

This is not a review; it's a heartfelt appreciation. I'd like to argue that Shadhona has been doing what no one else has in the contemporary cultural scene. Awestruck. Indebted.

Karim Waheed is Editor, **SHOUT**.

## McCartney releases star-studded video

Sir Paul McCartney's video for new song "Queenie Eye" has been unveiled. The shoot features the singer performing on a piano, while stars including Johnny Depp, Kate Moss and Jude Law appear alongside him.

"Queenie Eye" is taken from his latest album "New", which is currently at number three in the UK charts. The former Beatles star worked with music producers Mark Ronson and Giles Martin on the record.

The video was filmed at Abbey Road recording studios, a place made famous in the 1960s by McCartney in his Beatles days. The London studios were used by the

band to record their work including their 11th studio album titled "Abbey Road". In the video, the singer is seen recording the track in what he thinks is an empty studio. As the song develops, the room starts to fill up with people all reacting in different ways to the song.

Meryl Streep, Chris Pine, James Corden, Gary Barlow, Jeremy Irons, Sean Penn and Tracey Ullman are also among the host of celebrities who take part in the shoot. Sir Paul McCartney recently promoted the release of "New", with pop-up shows in New York City and London.

Source: **BBC**



### TV WATCH

## Three Comrades begins on Ekushey Television

A new TV serial, "Three Comrades", is about to premiere tonight on Ekushey Television. Written by Shafiqur Rahman Shantanu and directed by Dipu Hazra, the central cast of the comedy serial features Hasan Masud, Shahriar Nazim Joy and Adnan Faruq Hillol. Apart from them, Nawshreen, Ahona, Simana, Shams Sumon, Golam Farida Chhanda and Dr. Inamul Haq have also portrayed various roles in it, says a press release. "Three Comrades" is the story of a mess in the city where three men live their varied lives,



and share pieces of it with each other.

The serial will air Sundays and Mondays at 8:20pm.

# A tribute to Abdur Razzaque

TAKIR HOSSAIN

Abdur Razzaque is regarded as one of the greatest sculptors of our country. He was the first person to take up sculpture in the independent country from the centre point of Joydevpur. A versatile individual in arts, he was not only immersed in the sculpture medium, but print making and painting were also among his favourite media of expression. He showed outstanding evidence in both creativity and skill in each branch. Even on the day prior to his death, he was silently involved in his work. He was 73 when he passed away in 2005. He died in Jessore where he had conducted a drawing workshop. The participants were his former students.

October 23 marked the 8th death anniversary of the significant artist.

Passionate and introvert, Razzaque, shied away from the atmosphere of human preoccupation with fame, wealth and domination. With a long and chequered life, Razzaque gradually transformed himself into an abstract expressionist painter. His works were form and colour-oriented and nature was a recurring leitmotif in his works. His watercolours give us a serene and tranquil feeling which was one of the hallmarks of his works. He always enjoyed creating new forms and shapes that represented unfamiliar and unconventional facets. This avant-garde painter was associated with modern art movement in Bangladesh from its very early days. Razzaque was the student of the second batch of the Dhaka Art College (now the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka). His classmates included Murtaja Baseer, Rashid Chowdhury, Qayyum Chowdhury, Zunabul Islam,

Ekramal Huq, Emdad Hossain, Humayun Kabir and others.

Razzaque's mediums of works included water colour, drawing (pen, ink, pencil, charcoal, pastel), print (etching, aquatint, lithograph, dry point, wood cut), sculpture (white cement, bronze, metal) oil colour and mixed medium. From the beginning of his career, he liked to work in different media and was always striving to unearth the mystery of nature and human beings. In his portrait sketches, he is profoundly true to the characters. The characters evoke soulful and touching emotion, which is very rare and unusual. Razzaque always tried to articulate the inner essence of nature in many of his works. It is noteworthy that he had a deep capacity to feel and respond to the beauty of nature in his works. He not only produced works, but also introduced an aesthetic and artistic element. Razzaque also did figurative work -- rural men, goldsmith, his companions, his parents, boatman, hard working people, boats, crows, indigenous flowers, people at leisure, and other facets. Razzaque's landscape transported the viewers far away from urban life. He arranged the motifs in different combinations of light and shade.

Razzaque liked to work in bold brush strokes, bright colours, light and shade that mark his figures and forms from the ambience around him. In his use of colours, he frequently went for vital colours from our natural world. He was increasingly imparting messages through his paintings and he was becoming more innovative, using his space to increasingly interact with his figures and objects. The finely honed and though provoking themes were really praiseworthy. His watercolours and oil paintings are highly impressive in their colour, tone and texture. These works are simultaneously of technical excellence and intellectually very mature.

The sculptural works by Razzaque at Joydevpur and other locations are largely figure-based. He also did many semi-abstract and purely abstract pieces which were also acclaimed by art enthusiasts. Always willing to experiment, he had a passion for creating art that was fresh and novel. These vary in media, materials and size. As mediums he has used cement, stone, steel, iron, bronze and wood. In metals he has used both the welding technique and casting. Wood, one of his favourite mediums,



Top: Composition-8 (oil on canvas); Freedom fighter (white cement and concrete)

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