

WHAT'S ON


Bengal Classical Music Festival

Organiser: Bengal Foundation

Venue: Army Stadium, Dhaka

Date: Nov 28-Dec 1

Time: 5:30pm-5am



BENGAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL 2013

Dhaka, Bangladesh

In association with ITC Sangeet Research Academy

Theatre

Play: Boshonto Jagoron

Venue: Nat Mandal, Dhaka University

Date: Nov 22-28

Time: 6:30pm

Group Exhibition

Title: Very Graphic: The Art of Storytelling in Graphic Detail

Venue: 60 Gulshan Avenue, Circle 1

Date: Nov 16-Dec 7

Time: 12pm-8pm

Discussion and Musical Soiree

Organiser: Amra Surjomukhi

Venue: Poet Sufia Karmal Auditorium, National Museum

Date: Nov 30


Time: 5pm

10th Anniv of Theatre Troupe Prangonemor

Venue: Dance and Music Centre, Shilpakala Academy

Date: Nov 22-29

Time: 6:30pm



NEWS bytes

Swift picks up four at American Music Awards



Taylor Swift has won four prizes at the American Music Awards 2013, including artiste of the year, favourite pop/rock female artiste and favourite female country artiste.

Justin Timberlake picked up three awards including favourite soul and R&B male, while One Direction collected two prizes including best pop/rock group.

Katy Perry, Jenifer Lopez, Miley Cyrus and Lady Gaga were among the performers at the show in Los Angeles.

Swift, 23, beat Justin Timberlake, Rihanna, Bruno Mars and Macklemore & Ryan Lewis to win artiste of the year for the third time, the most times an artiste has won the category.

Rihanna appeared on stage with her mother to pick up the icon award. The Bajan singer also performed on the night.

Ariana Grande was given the best new artist award and Avicii beat off Calvin Harris, Daft Punk and Zedd to win the favourite electronic dance music artist award.

Source: BBC

IT'S TRUE!



The dinosaur species *Masiakasaurus knopfleri* was named after British singer-songwriter-composer and guitarist Mark Knopfler. The palaeontologists were listening to recordings of his band Dire Straits, when they discovered the species.

BENGAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FEST '13

Setting course for an overwhelming joyride

FAHMIM FERDOUS

There are times in our lives that, when they pass by, leave an impression that we know is going to be indelible. If we are fortunate, we know that such moments would come by again in the course of time; if we are very fortunate, we know exactly when. As dawn broke after the second night of the first edition of the Bengal ITC-SRA Classical Music festival (November 30, 2012) and I walked out and got on a bus home, transfixed from, I knew I was very fortunate, for I knew this kind a night was but only a year away.

It was the Santoor of Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma that had blanketed thousands of hearts at the Army Stadium on that night, including mine. I was at awe; my most vivid imagination could not have been this unworldly beautiful. I understood next to nothing of classical music (I still don't), but it was not about knowing what Raga was being sung my Ustad Mashkoor Ali Khan, or on the sarod of Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta, the 80-something year old maestro who kept interjecting his wit in between the performances, or even the technicalities of the incredibly complex



Kaushiki Chakravarty in her element.

compositions played on the tabla by the teenage prodigy Yashwant Vaishnav. I did not need to understand it, for it was not a lecture. It was music; our brains are programmed to extract the beauty of sound, and we just had to sit back and let our soul swim in it.

I fell in love with Vidushi Kaushiki Chakravarty on that night. Her vocal modulations so sweet, her transitions on the higher and lower scale of voice so seamless, but most of all, her aura so magnetic -- it was unbelievable. Her performance of "Rangeen Saari Gulabi Chunariya" (which I later learned falls in the thumri category) kept playing in my ears as I walked around the stadium, restless.

Ustad Rashid Khan also performed on that night. My only prior experience of him was through his Bollywood track "Aage Jab Tum", but this was something entirely different. That a person can change the atmosphere of a place as big as a stadium, and sort of put the four other senses to hibernation, is something I experienced through his performance.

A year has passed by, much quicker than I thought, and the Bengal Classical Music Festival is upon us again. I could not have been more excited. It was just that one night of the four that I stayed for all the performances, and if that had such an impact on me, I cannot wait to rush to that same venue; to relive those feelings, at least, if not supersede them.



BIRTH OF SONGS

Shohojia's album launch and musical performance at Charukala



Melody reaches the heights.

PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

ZAHANGIR ALOM

For music lovers, the creation of good songs is more important than random compositions that are made for songs' sake. Promising, yet immensely popular band Shohojia, till date, has come up with many good songs. The front man of the band, Rajeeb Ahmed Raju, has written and composed songs that have figurative meanings, depths,

poetic metaphors and psychoanalytical connotations of the contemporary lives we lead. "Rongmistry" is the band's maiden album that was launched on November 25 at Bakultala, Charukala of Dhaka University (DU). Noted poet-singer Kafil Ahmed unveiled the album, while noted cultural personality Shankar Shawjal, front man of popular band Shironamhin, Ziaur Rahman Zia

and a teacher of the Department of Political Science of DU, Shantanu Majumder, were present at the launching ceremony. Friends of Shohojia organised the launch followed by a live music performance by Shohojia. Another popular band, "Chitkar", and soloist Kafil Ahmed also performed songs at the event.

The album comprises nine tracks, including "Opekkha,"

"Boka Pakhi," "Khela" and "Maa". Shohojia performed several album songs, including "Swapner Akash," "Shobnom," "Chokhey Chokh" and of course the title track "Rongmistry." The band also performed their popular numbers "Aro Kichhu," "Ghora" and "Chhoto Pakhi" on the evening. The title song carries an unparalleled metaphor as the lyric "Tomar Amar Nibhey Jawar Agey Jol Dhowa Agun, Shob-i Rongin, Shob-i Darun, Shob-i Phagun" suggests.

The album is now available in the audio bazaar. The line up of the band is - Raju (Lyrics and Vocal), Alvi, Soumo and Sajib (Guitar), Jafri (Bass Guitar and Rubby (Drums). Rongmistry -- recorded at Studio Sound Machine -- has been dedicated to Kafil Ahmed.

Chitkar performed a nostalgic song, "Eka Eka Din Gachher O Boyosh Holo", along with one of their rock and roll numbers "Hridoy Hulusthul." Soloist Kafil Ahmed rendered three songs, including his popular composition "Gangaburi", and a surrealist song "Ekta Bachhur Jachchhey Urey" with the latter one depicting so-called social mockery and an oxymoronic display of affection prior to being so cruel to a calf.

TV WATCH



An exclusive conversation between Chairman Bengal Foundation Abul Khair, noted Tagore exponent Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna and Managing Director Brac Bank, Syed Mahbubur Rahman will be telecast at 6pm tonight on channel i. The guest trio will take part in a vibrant discussion marking the upcoming "Bengal Classical Music Festival 2013" scheduled to set off at Army Stadium Dhaka on November 28. The programme produced by Raju Alim will include a video footage of last years festival held at the same venue. The programme will be hosted by Sadya A Mallick, Editor Arts and Entertainment, The Daily Star. Presented by Square and supported by Brac Bank; Prothom Alo and The Daily Star are the strategic partners of the event. Maasranga is the broadcast partner while abc is radio partner of the mega event.

DANCE REVIEW

"Romeo and Juliet" at Royal Opera House, London



The slim shoulders of the Russian ballerina Natalia Osipova were carrying a twin weight as she made her debut with London's Royal Ballet. Would this international shooting star be able to add lustre to a company that is depleted of ballerinas of her class? And how would her hard-edged brilliance and her extravagant Bolshoi style adapt to the more intimate, powerfully human quality of a work such as Kenneth MacMillan's "Romeo and Juliet"?

The answers to those questions varied from moment to moment during the course of the evening. Rarely has a performance flickered so rapidly between the astonishing and the disappointing.

Take the famous scene in which Juliet sits on her bed after Romeo has been banished and her father has insisted she marry Paris. As Prokofiev's dark score swirls around her, Osipova conveys incredible intensity and anguish, using the teenage anger that has emboldened all the scenes with her family to produce a sense of clenched misery, rarely matched.

But then, suddenly, she sweeps up her cloak, arches her back and runs around the stage with such exaggeration that the miserable girl is replaced by the grand ballerina: the effects are undone.

On the other hand, there has rarely been a Juliet whose relations with the society around her were so beautifully charted. Entering the ballroom, she juts her chin in excitement; she almost swoons when she sees Romeo, the shapes of her solo expressing her pleasure in life; in her dealings with her parents, she clenches her fist in unconscious rage; faced with Romeo's banishment she falls to the floor like a colt.

It is in the central relationship with Carlos Acosta's Romeo that her performance falters. Her movement is consistently sumptuous, but in both the balcony scene and the final parting, she only intermittently finds the abandon that the part requires.

In fairness, this may be partly Acosta's fault. He has talked for some time of the day he gives up dancing Romeo, and it may be arriving: his dancing for the first time looked like the vapour trail left by the comet he used to be. His dramatic commitment and attentive partnering are never in doubt, but he can't convince as a teenager in love anymore.

In fact his best moment came not with Juliet, but with Gary Avis's swaggering, ferocious Tybalt: their fight to the death was the dramatic highlight of the evening, displaying a belief and passion too much of the production failed to share.

The other magnificent moment though, belonged to Osipova. Running to greet Romeo in the garden, she doesn't just step off the bottom step, she jumps off the fifth - and flies to greet him. It made the heart leap. She may have yet found her way into a dramatic ballet of this kind, but she certainly has the promise - and the generosity of her talent means that it is going to be fascinating watching her try.

Source: Telegraph

Artists to the rescue of Ahnaf

FAYZA HAQ

Ahnaf was a bright all rounder who excelled in a range of extra-curricular activities, including debates. In an unexpected blow, his family and friends were informed that he had leukemia. Now major painters of Dhaka, Chittagong, and other places of the country have joined hands to raise funds for his treatment by donating their paintings and prints for an exhibition held at Dhaka Art Centre.

Among them is Farida Zaman whose art work has a curly haired fisherwoman holding a fish. One can make out the rain falling on her face. Her features are sharp with long lashes.

In Biren Shome's painting was an attractive woman with a rose in her hand and bangles that offset her delicate hands. She wears lipstick to accentuate her perfect lips and has pierced ears and nose.

Lalarukh Salim has a hand cutting a fish with a "boti" (instrument for cutting). The head and body of the fish are separated. There is the splash of fresh blood with black and white against it. It appears poetic and symbolic of what women are expected to do in Bangladesh.

There is a work by Nisar Hussain. The print has a vicious looking dog with sharp nails, teeth and a lean appearance with its prominent rib cage.

Anokul Chandra Mojumdar, who has turned towards abstrac-



Artworks on display.

PHOTO: STAR

tion paints a Baul singer with an ektara in shades of gray and black.

Masuda Kazi had a black cat against a royal blue backdrop.

Muniruzzaman, had spoken eloquently, as the chief guest on the first day of the charity art extravaganza. He has delineated the Old Dhaka scene, with the charm of rickshaws, old decaying pillars and windows with rounded tops. The criss-cross of the electrical wires, and the crows sitting on them are

haunting. The porticoes, pillars, and squares have a lyrical quality about them. About four rickshaws have also been included. Along with crows are buntings. The artist has certainly poured passion into his work. The artist has an eye for detail. The work is in brown, blue, red and black.

The artists of Chittagong, are magnificent in their colour and form, especially Nazli Laila Mansoor, is unique in her efforts and imagination. Each and every

one of her work, both at the charity art show and otherwise are superb. The eyes of the cock are bright. Both its tail and comb are swinging. Its feathers, beak and claws are ready for combat. This is a gray and black dramatic creation.

Shishir Bhattacharjee has images against a pale chrome yellow. The backdrop has the visage of a fish and the lips of a woman as if she has been jilted. There is a parrot to heighten the enigma. The young man has

flowers in his ears. There is also a part of a floating fish.

Rokeya Sultana, back from further studies in the US, and her full - professorship well established has donated a well-loved print of herself and her child Laura. Like many in the media and art world she has proved her social concern. Taking up cudgels for the deprived, is just one of her generous ways. The print is in a shade of maroon plus ashes-of-roses.