

WHAT'S ON

Zainul Quamrul Exhibition

Venue: Nalini Kanta Bhattacharya Gallery, National Museum

Date: Dec 22-Jan 18

Time: 10am-8pm



Theatre

Play: The Trial of Mallam Ilyia

Troupe: BotTala

Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy

Date: Jan 10

Time: 6:30pm




Musical Soiree

Artists: Salma Akbar and Sajed Akbar

Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan

Date: Jan 10

Time: 6:30pm



Solo Painting Exhibition

Artist: Bahram

Venue: Dhaka Art Center, H-60, R-7/A, Dhanmondi

Date: Jan 10-22

Time: 3pm-8pm



Film Festival

Title: Tribute to Suchitra Sen

Venue: International Digital Cultural Archive, Shilpakala Academy

Date: Jan 8-17

Time: 6:00pm



NEWS bytes

Jane Campion to head Cannes jury

Film-maker Jane Campion is to head this year's jury at the Cannes Film Festival, organisers have announced. The New Zealander is best known for "The Piano", which made her the first, and so far only, female winner of the Palme d'Or at the French film gala in 1993. Campion said she was "truly honoured" to be offered the role, adding: "I can't wait." The director succeeds Steven Spielberg in the role. This year's Cannes Film Festival takes place from 14-25 May. Campion, whose work on "The Piano" won her a best screenplay Oscar, was called "a major film-maker and indefatigable pioneer" by Cannes organisers. Campion called Cannes "a mythical and exciting festival where amazing



things can happen, actors are discovered, films are financed careers are made. In 1986, Campion's short film "Peel" won the main prize in that category at Cannes. Last year she headed the short feature jury. While she is the first woman to have won Cannes' chief honour the Palme d'Or, female film luminaries have acted as president of the jury at previous festivals, including Liv Ullmann in 2001 and actress Isabelle Huppert in 2009.

Source: BBC

IT'S TRUE!



Sooraj R. Barjatya's romantic family drama "Maine Pyar Kiya" (1989) is one of India's highest grossing films, that made business across continents. It earned Salman Khan a Filmfare Award for Best Male Debut, as well as his first nomination for a Best Actor at Filmfare. Later, the film was dubbed in English as "When Love Calls", a 125-minute version, was the biggest hit in the Caribbean market at Guyana and also dominated the box-office collections at Trinidad and Tobago. "Maine Pyar Kiya" had also been dubbed in Spanish as "Te Amo", the first experiment of its kind. This film also proved its universal appeal with a glorious 10-week premiere run at Lima, capital of Peru. In Telugu as "Prema Paavuraaalu", it crossed the 25 weeks at Visakhapatnam and had 100 plus day run at six centres in Andhra Pradesh. It was also dubbed in Tamil as "Kaadhal Oru Kavithai" and in Malayalam as "Ina Praavukal".

MONIRUL ISLAM

Courage and contemplation



TAKIR HOSSAIN

"I am enjoying the liberty of working on a large canvas; it proffers me opportunities where I can easily apply my thoughts through lines, shapes and colours. I feel that courage is needed for any ground-breaking work in the sense that one works in the ability to even destroy one's own painting and create a new image from it," said Madrid-based Bangladeshi artist Monirul Islam at his atelier cum residence in Dhanmondi.

Without much deliberation, the artist applies colours and creates forms, lines and compositions. He puts layer upon layer of paint, until he feels that he has achieved what he's striving for. The outcome is a contemplative, a subtly-balanced arrangement of colours and space that draws an art enthusiast's eyes. Monir said, "Without any fear, I might even destroy the image or produce a new pattern, as the painting takes over me; I believe each painting has a life of its own. It is true that many artists in our time cannot bear to destroy their work of art, but to me, to destroy means starting all over again."

Monir is mainly recognised as a printmaker, who produces different genres of prints. However, over the years he has focused more on painting. Currently, his application of paint is profound and the lines are more minimised; colours give the impression to be both quiet and vivacious. These works simultaneously demonstrate technical finesse and mature intellect. His relationship with geometric abstraction has made him one of the pioneers of abstract painting in our country. Some of his works feature



Monirul Islam

scribbles and clean compositions -- articulating fantasy, longing and melancholy.

Currently, Monir's paintings often feature many surprising elements. He said, "I think each medium has an individual demand and personal trait. Art can be enriched by transforming medium." Each medium has a particular feature. As part of experimentation and developing new demonstrations, Monir has used oxide colours, smoked black, different types of soil, coffee, marble dust, brick dust, burnt ground rice, acramin and natural pigments. The painter has used special glue that bonds the materials. One remarkable feature of his works is that he has pasted paper on canvas in a number of his works. Then he has worked on them with acrylic, oil, hand colour, pencil and other mediums to portray varied surrealistic and symbolic images, which feature elements of surprise, perplexity, unanticipated juxtapositions and vague forms.

Over the last few years, Monir has worked on (as medium) paper used in boxes of sweets, old books and varied unnoticed objects. He said, "The material's rough texture and rutted surface give me some advantages; I can easily apply colours and create lines. Most of the time, the paper encourages me to create something novel." He followed up on this idea and gradually started liking it. Grimy, pitted paper inspired him more than fresh white paper. Corrugated board is another pet medium which enables him to portray his desired illusion and fantasy. The artist has made a collage of different kind of papers, materials as a part of his continuous experimentation, which gives his works a novel look.

Monir's specialty is his delicate lines and the balance between use of space and composition. Use of space is an important aspect of his paintings and the artist likes to work with unusual forms and shapes -- transforming them amazingly into tangible expressions. An admirer of nature, Monir tries to replicate colours and harmony prevalent in surrounding environment through his works. The space that is found in his works is aptly related to the perspective of the themes. In his compositions, the artist uses doodles, sharp lines, dots, tiny motifs and a lot of symbols.

Monir considers pure colour to be the most effective way to express emotions and sensitivity. He believes that colour approaches the soul directly and is able to induce profound emotions in the viewer. He applies his colours meticulously, in thin layers, and reduces the texture of the paint to its most minimal state.

Gravity leads Bafta nominations



Space drama "Gravity" leads the way at this year's Baftas, scoring 11 nominations including best film and best British film. Its star Sandra Bullock is up for best actress, while Alfonso Cuaron is nominated for best director.

Steve McQueen's "12 Years a Slave" had 10 nods, with five in the main categories including best film, best director and best actor for Chiwetel Ejiofor. Michael Fassbender and Lupita Nyong'o also landed supporting nominations.

"American Hustle" equalled the tally, with nominations in all the acting categories for its stars Amy Adams, Christian Bale, Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence. The 1970s drama, about two con artists who get entangled with the FBI, is also up for best film, with David O Russell nominated for best director and original screenplay.

Ejiofor, who was previously nomi-

nated for Bafta's Rising Star award in 2006, told the BBC working on "12 Years a Slave" was "one of the greatest experiences I've had as an actor". Ejiofor will compete for his award against Bale, Tom Hanks for "Captain Phillips", Bruce Dern for "Nebraska" and Leonardo DiCaprio for "The Wolf of Wall Street".

The best actress category will see Bullock challenge Adams, Cate Blanchett for "Blue Jasmine", Emma Thompson for "Saving Mr Banks" and Dame Judi Dench for "Philomena".

The nominations saw Dame Judi set a Bafta record, with her 15th acting nomination. That puts her one ahead of Meryl Streep, who was overlooked in the best actress category for "August: Osage County".

Other movies competing for best film include "Captain Phillips" and "Philomena", while the latter is also nominated for best British film

alongside "Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom", "Saving Mr Banks", "The Selfish Giant" and "Rush".

"Gravity", "Saving Mr Banks" and "Rush" all qualified for the British film category because they were either filmed in the UK, utilised British effects companies or employed other British talent, from writers to producers.

Actress Helen McCrory, who announced the nominations, told the BBC it was important for Bafta to recognise British films separately. "I think it's important we let the world know what we're doing here," she said.

Notable snubs in the acting categories included Robert Redford for sea drama "All is Lost" and Matthew McConaughey for "Dallas Buyers Club" - both of whom have been tipped for Oscar consideration this year. British actor Idris Elba was also left off the shortlist for his portrayal of Nelson Mandela in "Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom".

Monday saw Bafta announce the five young actors nominated for this year's Rising Star award. "12 Years a Slave" actress Nyong'o will compete against "Blue is the Warmest Colour" star Lea Seydoux and Sunshine on Leith's "George MacKay". Will Poulter from "We're the Millers" and "Kill Your Darlings" actor Dane DeHaan complete the list.

Winners will be announced at a ceremony at London's Royal Opera House on 16 February.

Source: BBC

Hassles of Fame

Kumar Bishwajit

A CORRESPONDENT

I don't know if I should call it hassles of fame or smothering admiration that comes with fame. Although some can be considered as "hassles", I usually love what my fans express towards me.

Back in 1994, my father passed away. I was on my way to Sitakundo with the corpse and had to cross a river on a ferry. But as soon as we boarded the ferry, people began to throng around me -- asking for autographs or to have photos taken. I tried to explain to everyone that my father had just passed away. But no one listened. I had to comply with their wishes. I consider that incident a hassle of fame.

This other time, I went to Dallas (US) with my wife to perform at a show. There a Bangladeshi young man approached me. He hugged me and started weeping. My wife asked if I knew him. I replied that he was a fan. That young man wept for quite a while, saying, my songs take away his pain. Things like this have occurred at many places.



Once I was going to a concert, probably in Barisal. On the way, people gathered around my car on a ferry. An old beggar started banging on the window. I was annoyed, as I didn't want to roll down the car window. But after constant banging, I gave up and opened the window to give the beggar some money. He declined, saying he just wanted to get a glimpse of me. The

beggar added that he loves my song "Jare Ghor Dila, Shongshar Dila Na". His words brought tears to my eyes. I then insisted and gave the old man a hundred taka. He in return, gave me his blessings.

There are many more incidents like these. Giving autographs or having pictures taken with fans is almost mandatory even when I don't feel like it. Rather than calling these "hassles of fame," I look at them as manifestations of adoration. It is reasonable for fans to make expectations, though there should be a time and place for everything.

Honey collectors are busy as bees



Honey collection is quite an art which affords both pleasure and risk.

PHOTO: INTERNET

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

Honey, a word that conjures up images of sweetness in your imagination and temptation in your heart. It is a term that takes you back down the road to the innocence of childhood and, in larger measure, to a significant part of the heritage you are heir to. Think of all the associations that come with honey. Your sweetheart is honey for you. For a newlywed couple, intimations of a honeymoon are in the air. Flatterers and sycophants have an abundance of honey in their speech. There is too the honeysuckle.

But it's time to understand what honey is all about, really, away from the metaphorical aspects of it. The reality is what we have before us. So here goes.

Next time you dip your hands in that honey jar, stop to think about the hard working insect, that has brought you this delectable sugary feast. The buzz is that while the busy bee has not lost any of its sting, there are many gutsy people who collect and market honey. Take the case of Hamiduddin and his colleagues for whom the advent of winter means another round of honey harvesting. Initially they took a crash course in honey collection from BSCIC back in 2000. From then on they have been in this trade which has benefited their family kitty to a great extent, he says gleefully.

According to Hamid, primarily they collect four frames of bees which in a matter of six months increase its number to no less than 20 frames full of buzzing

bees ready to stock honey.

The queen bee lays 2,500 eggs each day while her worker bees take care of her by feeding her "royal jelly" sucked from flowers.

When the seasonal mustard or leechi flowers are in full bloom the worker bees go in search of honey, while the queen bee holds the fort-- the baskets, set in the fields.

It's an amazing power of nature where each queen bee has different fragrance known as "queen scent" and is attracted by her particular swarm.

Just before the bees are set in search of honey an "intelligence group" first identifies the sites and decides where to strike for honey, continues Hamid. It's equally unique how the male bees are there to increase the stock and during shortage of food they are stung to death by the female bees in the "brute chamber".

"We don't destroy the chak (honey-comb) but use centrifugal force to gather honey which is around 1 kg per frame, 50 kg per box. However, now is the time when honey collectors have started setting their boxes in different fields and are gradually moving towards Gopalganj, Faridpur. Soon they will move towards Sathkhira and Narail and ultimately towards the Sunderbans which is a storehouse of honey of the country," he says.

The only problem these collectors face in terms of export is the preservation process. If that is taken care off, collectors will soon be busy as bees as orders pour in from different parts of the globe.

An evening of Tagore songs by Salma and Sajed Akbar



Eminent Tagore artists Salma Akbar and Sajed Akbar, will perform on January 10, at 6:30pm at the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC), Road 24, Gulshan-1, according to a press release.

Salma Akbar trained in Tagore songs under Karim Sharafi, Sanjida Khatun, Sadi Mohammad, Rezwana Chowdhury Banna in the country and under Konika Bandopadhyay, Nilima Sen and Sanghamitra Gupta in India.

She has been a part of several visiting Bangladeshi cultural delegations to India. In 1996, on the invitation of the Florida North American Bangladesh Association, Salma presented Rabindra Sangeet in the US.

Salma is associated with leading cultural organisations of Bangladesh such as the Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Sangastha, Gitanjali and the Government Music University.

Sajed Akbar was born in Chittagong to renowned politician parents, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury and Gholam Akbar Chowdhury.

Akbar has represented several Bangladeshi cultural delegations to India, the US, UK and Australia. He is also the joint editor of the Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha. The duo is regular artistes for Bangladesh Betar, Bangladesh Television and other TV channels.