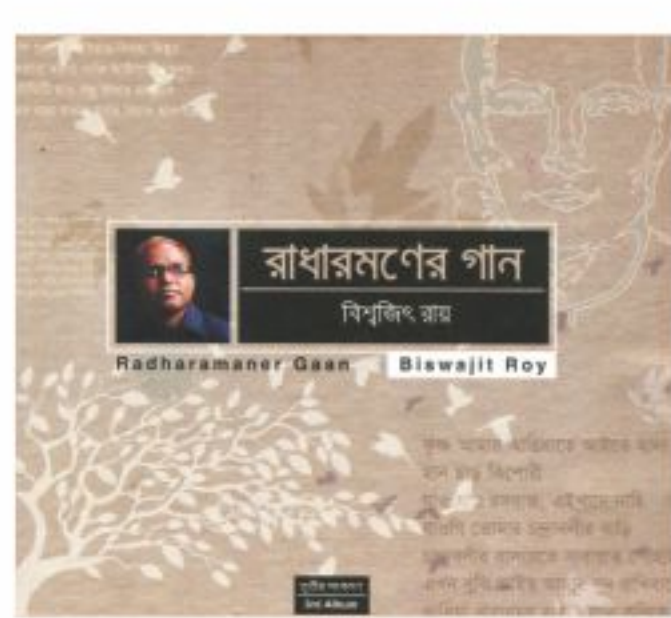


NEW RELEASES



Radharamer Gaan
Artiste: Biswajit Roy



Hajar Bhooter Rajar Doya
Band: Ajob



Udar Pratey
Artiste: Dr. Pradip Kumar Nandi



Banglar Gaan
Artiste: Loobdhak Dey Argho

NEWS bytes

Comic book on Cobain released



Kurt Cobain's life will be captured in the pages of a new comic book that saw release in print and digital forms on April 2, a few days before the 20th anniversary of the Nirvana frontman's death, Billboard reports.

Written and drawn by Jayfri Hashim, the comic is part of Blue Water Productions' "Tribute" series, which has already chronicled the lives of Jimi Hendrix, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Jim Morrison and Keith Richards (future comics in the series are planned for Freddie Mercury and the members of Monty Python). The Cobain instalment will cover the musician's early career and quick rise to superstardom, which caused him so much mental and emotional strife.

Source: Rolling Stones

Arijit rocks Dhaka



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Popular Bollywood playback singer Arijit Singh rocked his Dhaka fans in a live concert held at Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel recently.

Arijit exchanged melodic greetings with the eager crowd with his "Good Evening Bangladesh" set to the tune of his hit song "Tum Hi Ho". His next offerings included "Jab Jab Tere Paas Mein Aaya" from the film "Murder 2" and "Phir Mohabbat" (with Supriya Pathak) from "Murder 2", popular Bangla songs "Bhalo Achhi Bhalo Theko" (Andrew Kishore) and "Ek Paye Nupur" (Topu), a remake of "Har Kisi Ko Nahi Milta Yaha Pyar Zindagi Mein", "Kabhi Jo Baadal Barse" of the film "Jackpot", "Tuhi Ye Mujhko Bata De" from "Aashiqui 2", "Duaa" from "Shanghai", "Yaariyaan" from "Cocktail", a "Tuhi Mera Shab Hain", "O Jane Jaan" and "Tu Jane Na" (Atif Aslam), a Pakistani song "Lambi Judai" and "Mann Ki Lagan" from the film "Paap" (originally by Rahat Fateh Ali Khan).

Arijit rocked the audience with "Na Jane Koi" (James) and a Kailash Kher cover "Teri Diwani", and performed "Kabira" from "Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani" and the title song from the film "Bojhena Shey Bojhena" on request.

Arijit was one of the top contestants of reality show Fame Gurukul in 2005, settled in Mumbai in 2006, and has worked with music directors Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy and Pritam.

A part of the sale proceeds of the concert were donated to two Rana Plaza victims. Minister for Disaster Management and Relief, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya -- along with the organisers -- handed over cheques to the victims at the event.

Signal Events organised the concert.

Looking back at Suchitra Sen

An ardent fan's tribute on the Mahanayika's birthday

HQ CHOWDHURY

"Should I hold on to my tears or let them roll down my cheek?" Suchitra Sen (April 6, 1931 -- January 17, 2014) asked Ajoy Kar, the director during the shoot of one of the scenes of "Saat Pakhey Bandha". Tears soon filled her eyes, the way Ajoy Kar had wanted them. To the Mahanayika, it came naturally, without any glycerine.

Known in the film circle as Mrs. Sen, she in many ways was a trendsetter. A married woman and a mother when she joined the film industry, she was the first to be viewed as both assertive and feminine. And unlike others, socially, she was notches above as she was married to a renowned Sen family from Dhaka.

Almost always in cotton saris on celluloid, at least to begin with, she was what the Bengali middle class liked -- a beautiful face, an amiable personality with a penchant for 'care', 'sacrifice' and 'understanding'. Directors in the likes of Bibhuti Laha ("Agradoot") and Saroj Dey ("Aragami") created this 'La Femme Mystique' around her with their films, "Agni Parikkha", "Shobar Uporey", "Sagarika", "Shilpi", "Pothey Holo Deri" etc. So, as these films unfolded on screen, it was kind of a routine affair to find her oversee the 'goody' Uttam Kumar, who was always the underdog socially or financially!

The films had the usual stuff to pull in the middle class -- the ill-doings of some characters and the omnipresence of a good 'Kaku' to help her sort out the mess. Some dramatic scenes, tear-jerking dialogues, catchy songs formed the rest of the items of the films' menu. Frankly, to serious film critics, Mrs. Sen's roles from this perspective was no great shake when compared to the ones depicted by Arundhati Devi in "Mahasthanar Pothey", Kaberi Bosu in "Shyamoli" and Supriya Chowdhury in "Meghe Dhaka Tara" during the same period.

But then, why a fairytale-like story about Sen?

First her grace, then an original style of screen presence and finally the roles that allowed her to travel to areas without male company, something women always dreamt of but seldom attempted. The combination of these three laid the foundation to her immense popularity, to the extent, that in Bengal anyone with these traits was 'Suchitra Sen'! But were these enough for her to be the cynosure of all eyes for her 25 years in films and then again be a subject of discussion for another three decades despite being in seclusion? The answer lies elsewhere.

It began with Debaki Kumar Bosu's 1954 hit, "Bhagoban Sree Krishna Chaitanya" where she was Vishnu Priya opposite Basanta Chowdhury. The film caught the sharp eyes of Bimal Roy who took her to Bombay for "Devdas". Here,

despite her flawed Hindi she left an All-India mark that led Raj Khosla to cast her in "Bombai Ka Babu" and Hrishikesh Mukherjee in his maiden directional venture, "Musafir" while at home, Kolkata, it was Asit Sen's "Dwip Jele Jai". Her unconventional roles in these films singled her out from her contemporaries. "Smriti Tuku Thak", "Hospital", "Saptapadi", "Saat Pakhey Bandh" (for which she won the 1963 Moscow Film Festival's best actress award), "Uttar Falguni", "Sandhya Dwiper Shikha" and "Mamta" -- the Hindi version of "Uttar Falguni" -- further cemented this fact. Here, she transported her characters' innermost feelings through her movements, gestures and above all those eyes of her which subtly conveyed complex attitudes, feelings toward others and the gravity of the situation. She didn't act, she lived her roles. If she had to look at some-



one with anger and another with love, one could see it in her eyes as she looked from one to the other; there was no need to change the expression. Call it 'underplaying' but she outplayed all others in the scenes with the cine-goers and critics both swept off their feet. She continued doing that till end as in "Megh Kalo", "Fariyad", "Aandhi", "Debi Chowdhurani", and "Datta". And mind you, these are all non-Uttam films except "Saptapadi". Regretfully, most of us undervalue her by linking her with Uttam Kumar with whom her biggest achievement was "Agni Parikkha", "Harano Sur" and "Sapatapadi", if one was to evaluate her work, truly cinematically.

In the mid-sixties when Sharmila Tagore, Aparna Sen, Madhavi Mukherjee and Tanuja gave the Bengali cinema a new turn, Sen tried to evoke a sensation in the industry with scanty outfits and even played some trendy roles -- as in

"Fariyad" for example. But that did not last long as by then that magnetic charm in her largely got jaded. When "Pronoy Pasha", in 1978 bombed at the box office, she wisely chose to quit. Her portrayal of Sarat Babu's feminist Bijoya in "Datta", a blockbuster, released the year before kept her image of the past.

Interestingly, Sen always worked with mainstream directors and never with the greats of Bengali cinema, Satyajit Ray, Tapan Sinha, Ritwik Ghatak and Mrinal Sen, where make-up mattered little and natural self was the top priority. Satyajit Ray wanted her for "Debi Chowdhurani" with the condition that she would not work for others during the making of the film. Sen refused it on the ground that her colleagues who made her 'Suchitra Sen' would be seriously affected by it. Ray shelved the project and she missed the opportunity to become the artists' artiste. Her lifetime desire was to play Tagore's Damini in "Chaturanga" but Hemen Ganguly, the producer suddenly committed suicide and director, Purnendra Potri gave up. She then considered enacting the role in theatre, but no one came up with a script.

Sen's 'worshippers' often recall her tough personality. In the late fifties, Uttam Kumar kept her waiting on the sets of "Harano Sur" of which he was also the producer. She did not like that and 'paid him back' by demanding her name be put first in the film casting and posters when the trend was the other way round. Again, when Uttam Kumar chose films bypassing her in favour of others, she dumped him and went to Bombay to work with stars like Dev Anand and Dilip Kumar as a result of which the release of "Saptapadi" -- again an Uttam Kumar production -- was delayed by three years. This time it was her way of settling score with the 'flop master general' whom she gave the first 'break' of a big hit through "Share Chuhattor" in 1954. Yet they were the best of friends!

She never chased Bollywood. In fact it was the other way round. Raj Kapoor was on his knees with a bouquet trying to sign her but failed (she thought it was demeaning for a man to do that) while Dev Anand tried unsuccessfully to contact his 'doe-eyed, dusky beauty and immensely popular star of Bengal' whenever in Calcutta.

After retirement, she made no public appearances and assiduously tried to avoid publicity. This created the Greta Garbo-esque image that also worked for her being deeply missed. Plagued by ill-health, the last few years were kind of a long death watch but she never slipped from public memory as she was 'Bengal royalty'.

The life of Mrs. Sen was blazing, giant size and yet so underwritten. But that was what she had wanted.

The writer is a film enthusiast. He has authored a work on Sachin Dev Burman.



Documentary on artist Shahid Kabir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A documentary film featuring life, artwork and thinking of renowned Bangladeshi artist Shahid Kabir was premiered on March 31 at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts in Dhanmondi

The film, titled "Shahid Kabir: Prantikotar Rupokar" has been directed by Rashed Chowdhury. Before screening the film, a discussion was held where the artist and filmmaker talked about the film, their experiences and more. The filmmaker spent five years to make the film and he journeyed to different parts of the country with the artist.

The 60 minute documentary depicts various aspects of Kabir's life -- his paintings, themes, childhood, thinking process, how he spends his leisure, his traveling over rural areas and more. The film has also focused his bohemian life. As a bohemian, the artist restlessly walks from street to street, and has portrayed prostitutes and street women, starving people, and dying mothers with their children.

The painter mainly paints ardently with the subjects of downtrodden people, their daily chores and usable items as well as neglected segments of our surroundings. His art features particularly the disadvantaged and exploited community. Their destitution and struggles are recurring subjects of his works.

The documentary also depicts images of the artist's family members including his parents. Besides, the film shows Kabir's childhood images where he is playing and making sketches, portraits and landscapes. His philosophy of art is revealed in the documentary through interviews, where the artist shares that he was born in a well-off family but he was never attracted to wealth. He liked to spend his time with poor and underprivileged people in the society.

IT'S TRUE!

Guitar manufacturer company Cordoba has 'crossed' the guitar and the ukulele, two popular string instruments -- to launch a product called the 'Guilele'. It has the body and fret size of the tenor ukulele, but has six strings like the guitar, and also the same tuning pattern. The instrument is tuned up a 4th from standard guitar tuning (same as a guitar with a capo at the 5th fret - A D G C E A - low to high), in the register of a traditional ukulele. Because the scale length of the Guilele is so much shorter than a guitar, standard E guitar tuning is not possible on this particular instrument, even with an alternate set of strings.

I have high expectations from myself

-- Shaina

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Shaina Amin is a prominent TV model and actress. Her first film "Meherjaan" earned her much acclaim although a furious public outcry about its controversial subject -- the relationship of a Bengali woman and Pakistani soldier during the Liberation War -- led to a clampdown on its screening. In a recent conversation, Shaina talked to The Daily Star about various matters. Excerpts:

Tell us about the first assignment that propelled you to spotlight.

Shaina: It was a TV commercial for Sunsilk. The jingle for the commercial "Tin Dugune Panch" was received warmly by everyone.

What are your other popular TVCs?

Shaina: A TVC for Parachute hair oil

has been aired on almost every TV channel. Directed by Amitabh Reza, I appeared in the commercial a few days ago.

Tell us about your debut on the silver screen.

Shaina: I played the title role in "Meherjaan" based on the Liberation War. Although the film was prevented from being screened, it earned me recognition. I also made a great effort to slip with ease into the character I was playing.

You also acted in another film based on the Liberation War?

Shaina: Yes, it was "Pita", directed by Masud Akhand. I was highly appreciated for it, because of my unique role. I feel that such films on the Liberation War should be made more frequently.

Have you signed up for any new films recently?

Shaina: I am flooded with offers for more films. I have also acted in a few TV plays but have slowed down a bit due to my upcoming exams. My film "Putro Ekhon Poisawala" will be released soon.

What would you call your ultimate professional aspiration?

Shaina: I have high expectations from myself. I want to perform in roles that will be remembered years after I do them.

Tell us about your ongoing TV play, "Colour".

Shaina: Directed by Raihan Khan, it was shot in Bangkok. The storyline of "Colour" is in fact very interesting. Here I play an assistant choreographer; I have received appreciation for the role, as the play continues on air.

Favourite recreational activities?

Shaina: I listen to music, watch television and chat with my friends and family. I normally stay at home if there is no work. I get homesick if I'm away from home too long.

In what medium are you most comfortable?

Shaina: Definitely films, as they remain in public memory. My second choice is modelling as it gives me great exposure with minimal effort.

What irritates you the most about city life?

Shaina: The long tailback of traffic, and the dumpsters you see around the city.