

WHAT'S ON

Nazrul Utshab 1421

Organiser: Chhayanaout

Venue: Main Auditorium, Chhayanaout, Dhanmondi

Date: May 24-25

Time: 6:30pm

Dance-drama

Title: Chompaboti

Troupe: Shadhona

Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy

Date: May 22; Time: 7pm

Group Art Exhibition

Title: Trailing the Root: One Step Ahead

Venue: Dhaka Art Center, H-60, Rd-7a, Dhanmondi

Date: May 16-22

Time: 3-8pm

Theatre

Title: Dog, Woman, Man

Director: Reetu Sattar

Venue: Goethe-Institut, Dhanmondi Rd. 9

Date: May 20-31

Time: 7pm

Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Bornil Pandulipi

Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, H-7, Rd-13, New Dhanmondi

Date: May 17-30

Time: 12pm-8pm

# NEWS bytes

## Harrison guitar sells for \$657,000



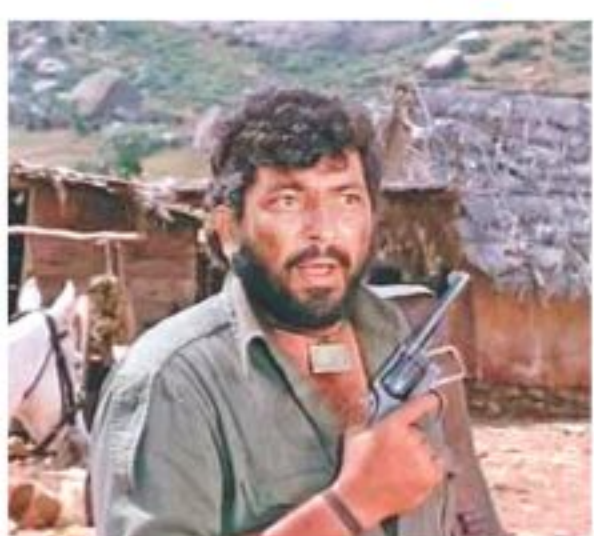
An electric guitar played by The Beatles' George Harrison has sold for \$657,000 at an auction in New York. Harrison played the 1962 Rickenbacker 425 guitar on British TV in 1963, prior to the band's US invasion in 1964.

The Beatle, who died in 2001, also used the instrument during the recording of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "This Boy".

The auction also included a handwritten placard with doodles signed by John Lennon and Yoko Ono from their 1969 anti-war protest in Montreal, which fetched \$187,000. A Hofner bass guitar rented by Sir Paul McCartney in the mid-1960s sold for \$125,000, while a white jumpsuit worn by Elvis Presley during a 1971 concert fetched \$197,000.

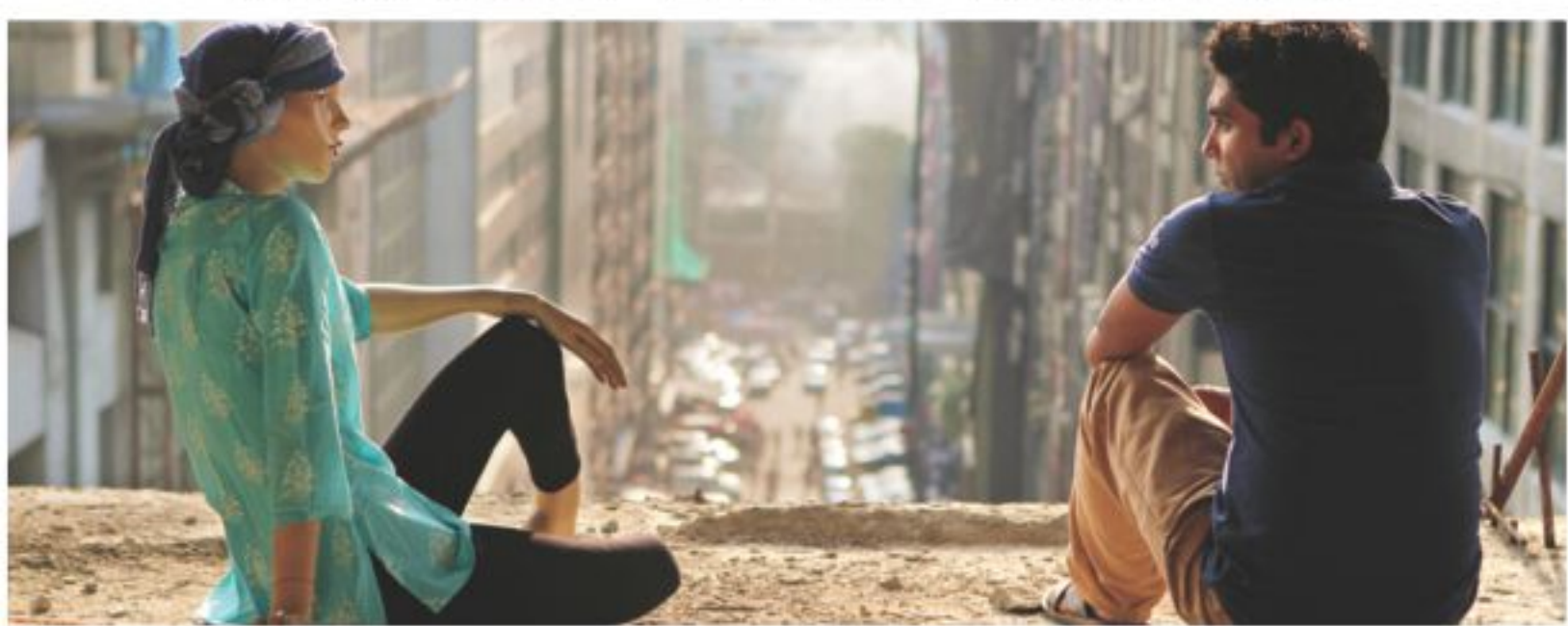
Source: BBC

# IT'S TRUE!



Actor Amjad Khan was almost dropped from 'Sholay' (1975) because scriptwriter Javed Akhtar found his voice weak for Gabbar Singh's role. Danny Denzongpa was approached for that role initially. Needless to say, his portrayal of Gabbar is considered by many to be the first depiction of pure evil on the screen in Indian Cinema. In an all-time classic film with the cast boasting Amitabh, Dharmendra and Sanjeev Kapoor, Amjad stole the thunder with his unorthodox and eerie dialogue delivery.

## PIPRA BIDYA at three more festivals



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's latest feature venture, "Pipra Bidya", has been selected for three more festivals: Shanghai International Film Festival, Dallas Asian Film Festival (competition section) and IFF in Melbourne, Australia.

The Melbourne screening was held earlier this month, while the Shanghai festival begins on June 14 and the Dallas festival begins in September.

The film, yet to be released in Bangladesh, premiered at the Dubai Film Festival earlier this year and received positive reviews. It features Sheena Chohan, Mukit Zakaria, Mou Debnath and Mithu in the central roles.

# A replay of history

## Sompur Kathan staged at Paharpur Buddhist Bihar



SAURAV DEY

The concept of staging plays at archeological sites is new in Bangladesh. Last month, a play was staged at the historical Sompur Mahabihar in Naogaon's Paharpur. The play, titled "Sompur Kathan" depicts the glorious history of the Buddhist Bihar from the 8th to 12th century during the reign of the Pala Dynasty in the subcontinent. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) produced the play, while Debashish Ghosh directed, scripted and developed the concept of it.

The Mahabihar, now one of the most significant archeological sites in Bangladesh and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was once an epicenter of higher education and spiritual learning for Buddhists. "Sompur Kathan" revolves around this Mahabihar, including its establishment, glory, educa-

tional process, significance and its gradual decline in the latter part of 12th century. Part of the "Charyapada" – the collection of the oldest written verse in pre-modern Bangla, was written by poet Kānhapāda during his stay at this Mahabihar.

The 48-minute drama was staged in the evening so that a realistic ambience could be created with the use of lights and props. A total of 68 artistes performed in the play, all of them local artistes of Joypurhat. The director included local artistes so that the play could be staged smoothly. After one- and-a-half months of hectic preparations, the inaugural staging took place in a lively atmosphere at the site in the presence of the Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, BSA Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky and many others.

About the play, director Debashish Ghosh

said "It was very challenging to direct the play, but with the assistance of everyone connected with the project, it was a success. I hope our next staging, due in November, will be even better. I had to work with many limitations, but the response of the audience was great. They remained captivated throughout the play. I tried to keep everything simple and realistic. Some of the actors even sacrificed their hair to play the roles of bald Buddhist monks. I am thankful to them and to the audience."

Sekandar Ali, Zafar Imam, Runja Orao, Rabi Orao, Prince Hasan Shuvo, Lalon Hossain, Zulfikar Ali, Sumaiya, Tapan Chandra and many others appeared in the play. Thandu Rayhan did the innovative light design, while Dr. Saim Rana directed music for the play. The play will be staged in November for the ambassadors of different countries.

# Trailing the root

## Group exhibition at Dhaka Art Centre

FAYZA HAQ

In "Trailing the Root", artists at the Dhaka Art Centre are holding an exhibition with modern overtones from May 16-22. Art enthusiasts, who came to admire the post-modern work certainly paused to appreciate the work that the members of "One Step Ahead".

Shabin Shahriar had burnt wood figures of people formed in a circle. Some of the figures appear like clay dolls with outstretched hands, hair tied in buns and flowing saris with borders. Other featured women carrying pitchers. All around were blossoms and circles, containing pitchers and children. Apart from this mixed media work, which was called "Feeling-2", there was "Feeling 45" which was also in mixed media. The piece has an owl, dressed up in a glowing gold frock with a yoke and spangles at the bottom. The backdrop of the owl looked like pieces of carved tiles. "Feeling-3" by Shabin had two large cattle at the base, and two small ones on top of four pieces of tiles that joined up. Apart from the dainty cattle, which were almost child-like, were human forms in a similar form.

Golam Farouque Bebul's acrylic work in blue and beige appeared like a mixture of modern work -- as if a wall was presenting various types of creations, some like a collec-



tion of powdered dust, and another like a huge mask in black and cream. Bebul's acrylic painting -7 was beige upon beige layer. The main layer contained squiggles of man-monsters playing imaginary musical instrument. His last painting in acrylic was a haunting enigma with a crescent moon and scattered machine parts, thrown over the

black and purple creation.

Maynul Islam Paul had carved and dented blocks of stone -- each representing "Silent Discourse". They all had apertures. The stone piece by Maynul Islam, almost white in colour, was a post-modern piece, which could represent anything.

Nurul Amin's "Couple" in clay, evoked emotions of joy and happiness, as one expected at a wedding ceremony. The man's head was covered with a green and grey "gamchha", while the woman had a pink and grey "orna" for a cover. In the background there was an enormous pink flower and a green banana tree. His "Bishonnota"-1 was a circular clay piece. It contained a large eye, some trees, with clumps of leafy tops, some ponds and dry land. The artist's other clay composition had variations of rose shades. Two hands were prominent. A man encircled with barbed wire played a central role.

Md. Zillur Rahman's "A Part of Nature" was a combination of ochre, burnt sienna and white. Here one found sweeps of tree branches and twinkling stars. In the next one, was a crescent moon and layers of aged tree trunks. Zillur Rahman's figure with Nature revealed a woman on a cloudy day.

It was refreshing to see such appealing paintings and sculpture at the show.

# "We Tell" exhibition at IAC

## Stories of the underprivileged

Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) project, a joint initiative of the Government of Bangladesh, United Kingdom and the UNDP, has launched the "We Tell" photo project that focuses on getting girls and women from the slums of Bangladesh to voice the stories of their lives and those of their communities through photography.

A photography exhibition on the same title was held from May 19-21 at the Institute for Asian Creatives (IAC) in Gulshan. The exhibition was inaugurated by the visiting UNDP Regional Director Hao-liang Xu at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon on May 18, according to a press release.

As many as 30 girls and women from three slums in Tongi, Khulna and Naogaon were asked participate in the project. They were provided with digital cameras and were

tutored by professional photographer Emdadul Islam Bitu, a specialist in working with poor and vulnerable communities. The participants joined hands to learn how to operate the cameras and capture images that would tell the story of their lives and those of their communities. This included standalone images and photo essays. The professional photographer then helped the girls and women to edit and caption their photographs.

This exhibition displayed 68 photographs which gave an insight into the realities of life in a poor urban settlement through the perspective of women who live there.

The 30 participants of the project were present at the opening event of the exhibition on May 19. They guided the attendees through their work, giving more inputs on why they chose to photograph the respective subjects and their intended message.

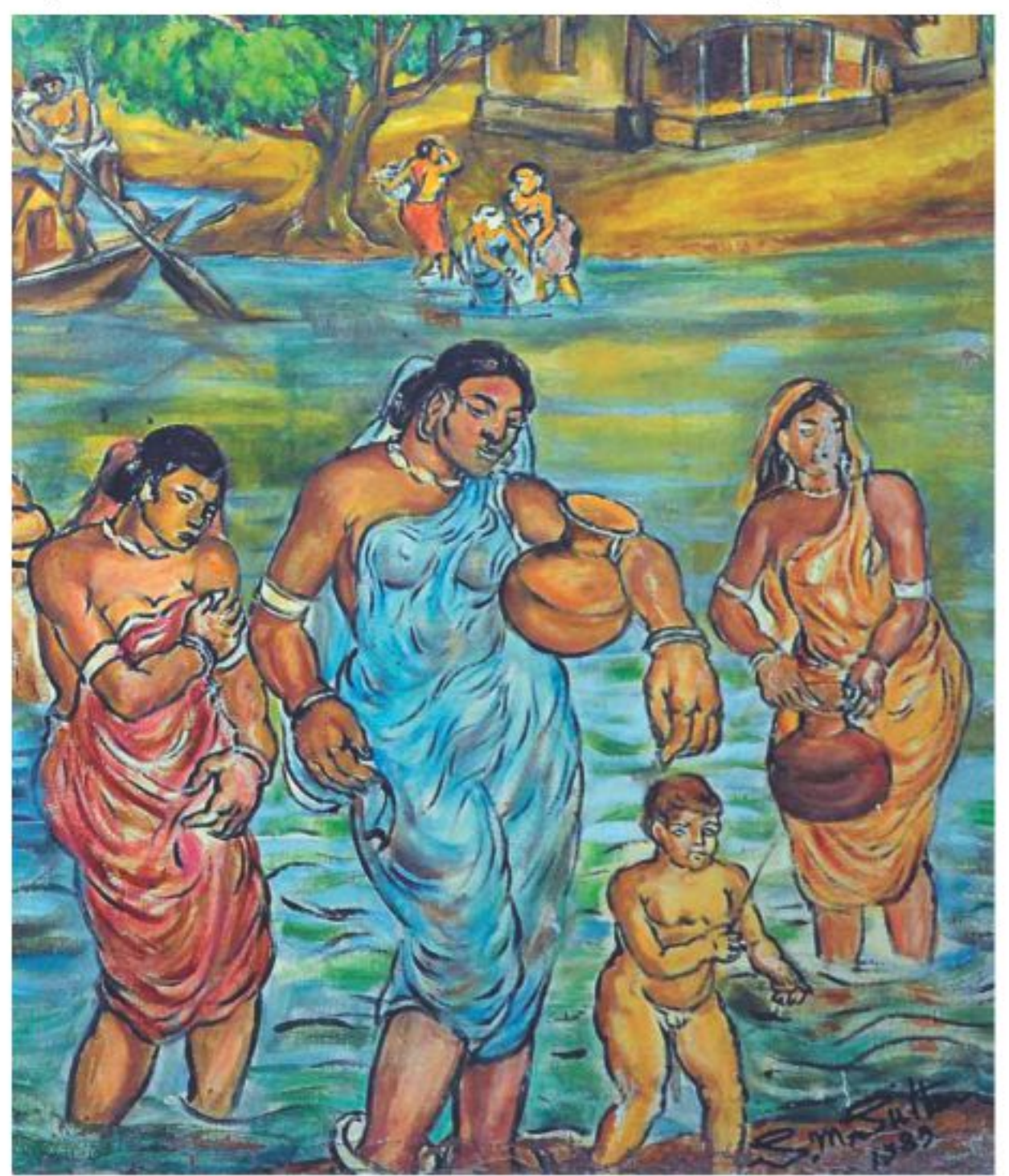
# Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct opens tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bengal Foundations new cultural centre, the Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct, opens tomorrow at The Daily Star Centre, through an exhibition titled "Poradrishti", of works by master painter SM Sultan from Bengal Foundation Chairman and art collector Abul Khair's personal collection. Founder and Chairperson of BRAC, Sir Fazle Hasar Abed and Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman will jointly inaugurate both the centre and the exhibition tomorrow at 6pm.

A press conference in this regard is set to be held at The Daily Star Centre today at 3pm.

The exhibition "Poradrishti" will contain 18 paintings and 15 drawings by the legendary SM Sultan, and will remain open to all from May 23 to July 13. Discussions on various aspects of Sultan's works will also be held during this time.



One of Sultan's artworks from the collection.

## CANNES DIARY

# Asians in the arena

RAFI HOSSAIN and ZIA NAZMUL ISLAM, write from Cannes

No doubt that the Cannes Film Festival is truly an international event. It is the Olympics of film festivals. Even the Oscar is too American. After the Hollywood mayhem of the previous day-- the cast of "Expendables 3" showed up on a battle tank -- the seventh day belonged to the Asians. They brought glamour in the form of Aishwarya (she walked the red carpet as the brand ambassador of L'Oreal), and Asian talents from China, Japan and India.

The first screening of the day was a European film, "Two Days, One Night" with leading role played by Marion Cotillard. The movie is in the main competition, and we thought it is a strong contender. It is a journey of a middle class woman who tries to save her job.

The second film at Grand Theatre Lumiere was a hardcore and gut-crunching movie, "Titli". Director Kanu Behl's film is in the Un Certain Regard category -- a great achievement for a first-time full-length feature filmmaker. The movie is bloody and gory, which is an eye-opener for well-off South Asians. Again, another Asian movie made it to the Grand theatre, "Gui Lai" from China. A political psychological drama based during Chinese Cultural Revolution, the title of the film means "Coming Home". It is director Zhang Yimou's Official Selection for the sixth time, this time out of Competition.

Then it was time for the press conference of "Futatsume No Mado" ("Still in the Water"). Although Japan has been a powerhouse of world cinema, it has very few female directors. Among them, Naomi Kawase is the most renowned one. Like the movie itself, the press conference had depth that intrigued us all. Another Asian film, "A Girl At My Door" dealt with very sensitive issue with wit. In Korean, "Dohui-ya" is a film competing in Un Certain Regard category.

We were lucky to be participating in Iranian cinema icon Abbas Khiristami's conference. He is at Cannes as the chief jury of the short film category. The conference was held at a smaller conference hall, and was jam packed. He shared interesting views on filmmaking, in a more of a QA session.

Our seventh day at Cannes ended with Wim Wenders' documentary, based on a Brazilian photographer family. "Le Sel De La Terre" is full of amazing pictures taken by the Salgado family.

Editor of Star Showbiz Rafi Hossain, and sub-editor Zia Nazmul Islam are in the French Riviera City of Cannes for the 67th Cannes Film Festival, and will keep readers updated on this page, on events at the festival.

Abbas Khiristami at the festival.

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