

WHAT'S ON

MURTAJA BASEER
Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Murtaja Baseer
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H-20, Rd-16, Sec-4, Uttara
Date: Sep 13-25
Time: 11am-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Montage
Artist: Samiraj Roy Chowdhury
Venue: Bengal Shilpajaya, Diamond
Date: Sep 6-22

Theatre Festival
Organiser: Bataala
Venue: National, Dhaka
University
Date: Sep 10-13
Time: 7:15pm

Solo Classical Recital
Artist: Pandit Tushar Dutta
Organiser: IGCC
Venue: IGCC Gulshan-1
Date: Sep 13
Time: 6:30pm

Theatre
Play: Rupoboli
Troupe: Subashan Natya Sangsads
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall
Date: Sep 13
Time: 7pm

Painting Exhibition
Colours of Friendship by contemporary Indian artists
Venue: Dhaka Art Center
Time: 3pm-8pm
Date: Sep 12-18
Inauguration: Sep 12 at 5:30pm

Theatre
Play: Dukh
Troupe: People's Little-Theatre
Venue: Music and Dance-auditorium, Shilpakala Academy
Date: Sep 13; Time: 6:30pm

NEWS bytes

Bond villain Richard Kiel dies



Actor Richard Kiel - who played steel-toothed villain Jaws in two James Bond films - has died in California aged 74. The 7ft 1in towering American star made his name as cable-chomping henchman Jaws opposite Roger Moore as 007. Sir Roger said he was 'totally distraught' at the death of his co-star.

The character of Jaws in 'The Spy Who Loved Me' was originally intended to die at the end of the movie, but he was so popular with fans that Kiel was brought back to reprise the role in 'Moonraker'.

Sandro Monetti, director at Bafna in Los Angeles and a former showbiz reporter, described Kiel as having 'teeth of steel, but a heart of gold'.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Kiel had the hormonal condition acromegaly, which was said to have contributed to his height. His first break came in 1959 when he played the alien Kanamit in 'Twilight Zone'.

Source: BBC

IT'S TRUE!



Britney Spears founded The Britney Spears Foundation, a charitable entity set up to help children in need. The philosophy behind the Foundation was that music and entertainment has a healing quality that can benefit children. In April 2002, through the efforts of Britney Spears and the Foundation, a grant of \$1 million was made to the Twin Towers Fund to support the children of uniformed service heroes affected by the attacks of September 11, 2001 (on the Twin Tower).

Tributes pour in

Paean to Nazrul's songbird: Feroza Begum

ZAHANGIR ALAM

A number of artistes, painters, politicians, civil servants and cultural and eminent personalities paid their last homage to the legendary Nazrul Sangeet artiste and exponent Feroza Begum at the Central Shaheed Minar premises on September 10. This writer caught up with several artistes, painters and cultural personalities to portray their soulful tributes and paeans to the Nazrul's Songbird Feroza Begum. Excerpts:

Abul Maal Abdul Muhit, finance minister
I have received much affection from Feroza Begum. Today I am here to pay my homage to the timeless artiste.

Mustafa Monwar, eminent artist
The giant-like tree of Nazrul Sangeet and the best musical genius we lost! No other artist can depict the sublime mood with entertaining and presentational facets of Nazrul Sangeet, especially the devotional and love songs of the bard that Feroza Apa exquisitely portrayed with melodious voice and uplifting mood. I have seen her from my childhood. Her brother Mohammad Asfauddowla was my classmate. My father Poet Golam Mostafa was affectionate towards her. She was like my own elder sister. I have many fond memories with her. When BTV was run from DIT building, I directed several programmes on her. She rendered many songs including the one "Tajmahal". She was extremely sincere. Will we find such an artiste again?

Hashem Khan, eminent artist

I was fascinated when I listened to her songs in the 50s. I first heard her in Akashbandhu. I had heard Nazrul Sangeet earlier, but never found anyone close to her rendition style. That was a rapturous feeling. She attracted many with her charisma, and rendition. Due to her effort, Nazrul Sangeet got immense popularity. Her efforts, Nazrul's affection and her husband Kamol Dasgupta's tutelage made her so powerful that she touched the heights. Feroza Begum is our wealth. Bangladesh takes pride in her.

Shaheen Samad, noted singer

It is an extremely courageous effort initiated by Feroza Apa, she started her singing at the time when Muslim women were forced by conservatism to stay indoors. Ignoring all hurdles, she marched forward with Nazrul Sangeet. Feroza Apa will never die, she will shine bright in the hearts and conscience of lakhs of her fans and admirers. We should have highlighted her image, which we failed to do.

Dalia Naushreen, noted Nazrul singer

We have learnt music from her. Feroza Apa's mellifluous voice, distinctive rendition style are what made her a great artiste. She could properly judge our rendition of Nazrul Sangeet, whether we are up to the mark or not in any song. She was equally popular in her offering of Nazrul Sangeet, adhunik song and Urdu ghazals. She has left behind an opulent treasure trove, a legacy both for the present and forthcoming generation of artistes. She is regarded as the uncrowned empress of Nazrul Sangeet in the Indian subcontinent, but what have we done for her?

Yakub Ali Khan, noted Nazrul singer

Every time I approached her, I got fascinated. I have received affection from her. Feroza Apa filled the vacuum



in Nazrul Sangeet. She made other singers, including Manabendra Mukherjee, learn and carry forward the beautiful musical legacy of Kazi Nazrul Islam. Nazrul Sangeet has now achieved completeness. When she started her mission, only 35 songs were completed.

Salahuddin Ahmed, noted Nazrul singer

Unfortunately, when Nazrul fell ill in 1942, many artistes who popularised Nazrul Sangeet changed their tracks and the bard's songs became a bit neglected. Only

Manabendra Mukherjee and Feroza Begum, especially the latter with her divine voice, created both the artistic and commercial value of Nazrul Sangeet. Allah gave her such a quality to attract people with her voice. For that reason, Nazrul Sangeet has endured. They created a fertile field for us where we are prevailing. We have done nothing. Being such an eminent artiste, she would always guide us and even listen to us. We could not place her in the highest position. As an artist and teacher it is my great shame!

Maifidul Haque, cultural activist and writer

Feroza Begum resurrected and gave life to Nazrul Sangeet.

The biggest repository of Nazrul Sangeet was Kamol Dasgupta. She exceeded three barriers -family, religion and state, to reach the heights of excellence. All she achieved was through her music. The life that she led was musical. Her rendition enriched the entire gamut of Bangla music. We hope new generation artistes will pursue her sublime path. We are fortunate that we have grown up listening to the legendary songbird.

Bizan Chandra Mistry, Nazrul singer

The brightest star has fallen! I regard Feroza Apa and Nazrul as two sides of the same coin. Feroza Begum solely steered the wheel of Nazrul Sangeet in a critical time when the genre's popularity seemed declining. We are now devoid of a guardian.

Yousuf Ahmed Khan, singer

She is like a saint for me. The sun of Bangla music sets with her demise. She is second to none. We are yet to properly honour our National Poet, while Feroza Begum, a star, passes away silently.

Mortaz Parveen, Nazrul enthusiast

Feroza Begum was kept bogged down in our mean national psyche. An artiste of her stature was not held high. We have also kept Nazrul in constrained circumstances. In my childhood I have heard the cowherds rendering the patriotic song "O Bhai Khati Sonar Cheye Khati Amar Desher Mati"; but now the scenario has changed.

Sadya Afreen Mallick, noted Nazrul artiste and journalist

In earlier times the media and singing were literally prohibited among the Muslim community. At that time, Feroza Apa single-handedly struggled and avoided hindrances to take music to such a height which is unparalleled. She tirelessly worked to diffuse Nazrul Sangeet across the world. I hope the present generation of artistes will listen to her songs and try to understand the songs of a devotee in order to comprehend, practice and perform songs. She recorded all the genres of Nazrul Sangeet. "Chander Konnya Chand Sultana Chander Cheyeo Jyoti". The lines are apt for none other than Feroza Apa.

Of Men, Music and Movies

HQ CHOWDHURY

Does a bell ring for you when someone croons, "Hai sabse madhur woh geet, hum dard ke sur mein gaate hain"? Yes, it is one of Talat's finest renditions for composers, Shanker Jaikishan in the Hindi film, "Patita" when matinee idol, Dev Anand lip-synched so beautifully on the screen. Inspired by Percy Bysshe Shelley's, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts", Shalendra, the lyricist went on to compose the rest with refined artistry.

Adopting or adapting lines or tunes has been a practice among poets and composers from time immemorial. In the world of modern Bangla songs, Tagore is perhaps the initiator. His early western adoption includes, "Giyache shedin jedin am hridoy", which actually is a direct translation of the first and last stanzas of Thomas Moore's, "Love's Young Dream" as found in his book, "Irish Melodies". And his first 'hit' was, when he tapped the tune of Robert Burns', "Ye banks and braes, O Bonnie Doon" for his "Phule phole, dhole", followed by "Kotobor bhebe chhini" from "Drink to me, Only with thine eyes". For a while Scottish and Irish songs, especially those by Burns had quite an influence on Tagore in terms of poetic substance, form and tunes. The tunes were of course not Burns' but traditional.

Tagore's fascination for the West, however, did not last long. One possible reason could be the fact that the Scottish and Irish folk songs were sung in choir which did not go well with Bangla music. But then sub-continentals had always appealed to Tagore and so we find his compositions, borrowings from the Punjab, Maharashtra and Karnataka apart from his native Bengal. Again, he did not take many from these regions; very likely, the different languages became a barrier. So, he narrowed his music quest within the gamut of the Bangla folk specially Baul, Kirtan and Hindustani (North Indian) classical music.

With the 1905 division of Bengal, we find Tagore again, in a totally new mood. His, "Jodi tora dake kuna re" was derived from many music pundits, it

was around the last quadrant of his life that Tagore was at his creative best. Does one remember Shahzai Begum's "Harinam diye jogot matala aamar elka nita"? Also, another derivative, "Ebar tora maura gange baan escheway" was from the Sari song, "Mon majhi samal samal dublo tori". But now it was no more of 'adoption' but an adaptation of songs from the vast storehouse of the Bangla folk with the lyrics modified and more meaningful but keeping the tunes as they were. With the Bengal partition annulled in 1911, there was yet another change in his music. It was now a

bears semblance in totality with, "Yeh hawa yeh raat yeh chandni" that Sajjad Hussain created with pride for Talat Mahmood to sing in the Dilip Kumar hit, "Sangdi". Madan Mohan was soon under pressure from the critics and finally had to confront them saying, "Yes, so what if I had copied? It was from Sajjad Hussain's work, who we all know is a genius." Another fine example, recall, Hemanta's, classic, "Tumi to janoma, tomor e hashitye" in the hit Bangla film, "Surjitoron" which explained Uttam Kumar's mental state when he was with Suchitra Sen in a car. The asthai is ditto of, "Tum kya jano, tumhare yad mein" in the Hindi film, "Shin Shinaki Bubla Boo". Hemanta, the composer just could not resist using it for the sequence but he did take permission from the master composer, Chittalakar Ramchandra.

Talking of adaptation, tune wise, perhaps one of the finest examples in Hindi music is that of, "Thandi hawaye, lehrake aye" that SD Burman composed for "Naujawan". Roshanlal, the celebrated Hindi composer grandfather of Hrithik Roshan, was so swept off his feet with the tune that 15 years later, he composed the all time classic, "Rahen rahan hum" in "Mamta". And when RD Burman was sinking in 1988, with the hit, "Sagar kinare" based again on "Thandi hawaye". All the songs by Lata have different tones of the same colour to be delightfully, exclusive.

In Bangla, one fine example of such a work is, "Tumi ki dekhchho kova, jiboner porajoi" that Abdul Jabbar sings in the film, "Eto Tukro Asha". Try, Hemanta's, "Shono bondhu suno, pranin ei shohore itikotha" in "Shapochom" which has lyrics by Bimal Ghosh. Note the structure of the two songs and also the lyrics. Again, a beautiful adaptation, this time a Satya Sha - Dr. Md. Muniruzzaman combination.

Such adaptation or trans-creation of

tunes requires skill of the highest level as

there are only seven notes in music; and

the same for the lyrics as the expression

has to be different keeping the thought

same. It was Tagore's wizardry that paved the way for it.

Lyrics aside, sometimes a tune can be

penetrating that it hits you right there in

the heart and carries you away. It can pro-

voke one to adopt it as his own. Madan

Mohan comes to the scene again. His,

"Tujhe kiya sunao mein diruba" from the

film, "Aakhar Dao" is one such example. To many music pundits, it

deeply inspired with the line; and he knew his job very well. So, after the opening line he moved in his direction to help Abdul Ahad create this Bangla all time soul stirrer.

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