


WHAT'S ON

**Theatre Festival**  
 Title: BotTala Rongomela  
 Organiser: BotTala  
 Venue: National Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
 Date: Oct 24-Nov 1  
 Time: 11:30am



**Art Exhibition**  
 Title: Searching Myself  
 Artist: Monjur Rashid  
 Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka  
 Date: Oct 21-Nov 3  
 Time: 12-8pm



**4th Death Anniversary of Kalim Sarafi**  
 Organiser: Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha  
 Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Public Library, Shahbagh  
 Date: Nov 1, Time: 6pm



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
 Artist: Syed Hasan Mahmud  
 Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, Dhanmondi  
 Date: Oct 24-Nov 15  
 Time: 12-8pm



**Group Art Exhibition**  
 The Dhaka Print Club Show  
 Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, Gulshan Avenue  
 Date: October 25- November 8  
 Time: 12pm-8pm



# James lends voice to Zero Degree

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

James, known to his fans as Nigor Baul, is active in live performances and album releases, but is choosy about singing film soundtracks. He will be heard in Mahfuz Ahmed-directed upcoming film "Zero Degree", in a song named "Prem Prem Ei Khela". He has been a little more regular in singing film songs of late, with tracks in films "Desha the Leader" and "Swatta". The only singer from Bangladesh in recent decades to break into Bollywood, he also sang a



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

# AN EARTHY TALE FROM THE SOUTH

## TheatrEX's "Dokkhina Sundori" at BotTala Rongomela

SAURAV DEY

Theatre troupe TheatrEX Bangladesh staged their much-acclaimed production "Dokkhina Sundori" on Thursday evening at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, as part of BotTala's Rongomela. Written by Shahman Maishan, the play has been directed by Sudip Chakroborthy, a reputed young director and an Assistant Professor at Theatre and Performance Studies Department of Dhaka University. The play unfolds against the backdrop of Sundarbans, and presents an epic canvas of primordial living and eternal aspiration of the nearly-extinct Chondro-bonde ethnic group. The lead characters of the play - Chondrey and Bona — have been derived from the folkloric

tales about Chondro-bonde community. "Dokkhina Sundori" tells a touchy tale of the inhabitants of this land, their dreams and pathos, their love for animals and the land. And through this, the play surmises that the largest mangrove forest in the world has been historically a target of profit-seeking people. The ending scene of the play voices against the coal-based power plant proposed to be built at Rampal, which environmentalists argue will adversely impact the ecosystem of the forest. The theatrical production combines third person-omniscient narration, location-specific choreography, poetic dialogues and lyrics which altogether create a unique style of performance. The play incorporates legends, fairytales and parables that unfold the existential crisis of the inhabitants and animals of Sundarbans brought about by blatant

corporatisation. The simplistic stage design, apt lighting, vivid costumes combined with narration gave the audience an insight into lives in the forest. However, the play is different than stereotypical narration and could prove difficult to comprehend for some. The 70-minute production is to be watched with rapt attention or the spectator may find himself a little lost. Nevertheless, "Dokkhina Sundori" is a production that will draw critical acclamation, particularly to the director for his treatment of the literarily rich script. Nusrat Sarmin as Chondrey and Atiqur Rahman as Bona excelled in their acting while Mahzabin Islam and Syeda Ifat Ara were superb in their narration. The play was earlier staged at the cultural event of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland.



song "Bebasi" for the Bollywood film "Warning" last year. His other hit songs across the border include "Na Jane Koyi" and "Alvida". The star is also set to sing for a new film by PA Kajol, titled "Chokher Dekha". Koushik Hossain Taposh has composed and arranged the song.

# Homage to MUBINUL AZIM

## A groundbreaking painter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

November 1 marks the 38th death anniversary of renowned painter Mubinul Azim, regarded as a pioneer in Bangladeshi art. Along with his contemporaries, he made a great contribution in the sphere of experimental paintings. Some of them mingle local motifs and western forms.



Azim was a socially aware painter. In 1952, he was involved in the Language Movement. At that time, he was a second year student at the Dacca Art College (at present Faculty of Fine arts, University of Dhaka). He had organised a meeting in protest of the firing on the rally on February 21. He produced many posters and paintings on the Language Movement during that period. Azim died in 1975, at the peak of his artistic career. He produced many paintings, water colours and sketches in the course of his rather short career. He graduated in Fine Arts from Dacca College of Arts and Crafts (at present Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University) in 1955. A hardworking and reflective introvert, Azim spent a significant part of his career in Karachi, Pakistan -- a hub for artists, poets, writers and novelists at the time. Besides immersing himself in painting, Azim taught at an art institute in Karachi. He returned to Dhaka for good after the Liberation War and devoted himself to painting. Azim set out as a naturalist and figurative painter. In the early stages of his career, nature was the focus of his works. Along with natural elements, colour was a predominant aspect of his works. The treatment of colour and the composition was exceptional. An interaction between use of space and objects always carried an aesthetic trademark in his works. During a certain phase of his career, Azim focused on boats. The interplay of darkness and light was another significant characteristic of his works. Azim took part in 37 group art exhibitions. He held 17 solo exhibitions in the country and abroad. After his death, two exhibitions of his works were held at Dhaka Club (in 1976) and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (in 1998). In 2012, the painter was posthumously awarded Ekushey Padak for his outstanding contribution to Bangladeshi art.

# IT'S TRUE!



In 1991, Sridevi -- one of Bollywood's most impact-making leading ladies -- was approached by Steven Spielberg for a role in his sci-fi blockbuster "Jurassic Park" but the actress let go of the offer, reportedly "because it wasn't a starring role and it would have meant taking a hiatus from Bollywood, at a time, when she was at the peak of her career." In September 2013, the media announced that Sridevi had been approached by director Amy Redford for a stellar role in a film titled "Cowboys and Indians" along with Meryl Streep. It was said that Sridevi's "superlative performance in English Vinglish is one of the reasons for her being considered for the prestigious project."

# Performing Exploitation

## German-Bangladesh production "Made in Bangladesh" to tour Europe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Whether it is the garments industry or dance studios, human effort -- mostly that of women, is manipulated to perform at its maximum level, with minimum monetary returns. The German-Bangladesh theatrical production "Made in Bangladesh", directed by German Theatre Director Helena Waldmann, and produced by Ectopia Dance Productions (Germany) with collaboration from Shadhona (Bangladesh), brings this issue of exploitation to the stage, through the performance of 12 Bangladeshi dancers: Munmun Ahmed, Shabby Akter, Shareen Ferdous, Masum Hossain, Urme Irin, Lamiya Mela, Trina Mehnaz, Hanif Mohammad, Tumtumi Nuzaba, Bishwazit Sarkar, Sharmin Shoma, and Labonno Sultana. Kathak dancer Vikram Iyengar, from Kolkata (India), is the choreographer of the production. This production is unique and important for the practice of dance in Bangladesh for several reasons. Waldmann employs dance through a unique 'deconstruction' of the classical idiom of Kathak, cleverly showcasing its trademark footwork and pirouettes to symbolise the monotony and drudgery of work in the sewing lines of the factories. Also, the burning issue of social injustice is highlighted through a multi-media theatrical production woven into various sequences of dance.



Helena Waldmann speaks at the event.

PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

However, besides these technicalities, this is the first time that such a large group of Bangladeshi dancers are part of an international production which will premiere in Germany on November 26, 2014 at the Theater ImPfalzbau in Ludwigshafen. Thereafter, the production is scheduled to travel to ten other cities in Germany, Switzerland and Luxemburg. Of course, Helena also addresses the issue of moral responsibility for this state of affairs and questions consumers, buyers and factory owners

about ways in which the situation can be improved without taking away employment opportunities which have for more than a decade empowered women in Bangladesh. The production has been supported by the German Federal Cultural Foundation and by the Goethe Institute (Bangladesh). While addressing a press conference regarding "Made in Bangladesh" at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on October 29, Judith Mirschberger, director of the Goethe-Institut in

Bangladesh announced that, after the European tour, the premiere in Dhaka is planned in a South Asian tour in January 2015. A worldwide tour is also in planning for Oct/Nov 2015. Helena Waldmann, who stated that working in Bangladesh, with the dancers, had been a learning experience for both her and the dancers, also addressed the Press Conference. She went on to explain that she had worked in several international projects, including one in Iran that addressed the issue of women's struggle for freedom from within the 'burkha'. She firmly believed that 'contemporary dance' did not just mean the usage of contemporary movements, but was more about contemporizing the usage of traditional dance movements. Vikram Iyengar, the choreographer, explained how Kathak was being presented in a totally non-traditional manner, while highlighting the virtuosity of the dance. Lubna Marium, artistic director of Shadhona, said that this production would surely pave the way for more and more contemporary issues being performed through dance by Bangladeshi dancers. All the 12 dancers, present at the Press Conference, expressed their excitement at being part of this event and hoped that they would be able to use the experience to rethink their own dance practice.

# Nine year old becomes Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Since 1964, the National History Museum in London has been organizing their annual Wildlife Photographer of the Year contest. This year, the Grand title winner in Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year, which includes photographers up to 17 years of age, was Carlos Perez Naval -- a 9-year-old boy from Spain, for his photo of a scorpion titled "Stinger in the Sun". Carlos' parents are tireless travelers, and they always take their son to all

their trips around the world. When he was 4, he started taking photos of all the nature he saw -- first with a compact camera and now with professional equipment. But Carlos doesn't need to be in far-away lands to take nice photos -- during the school year, even the flora and fauna in his garden can't escape the "clicks" of his camera. Source: Internet



# KALEY CUOCO-SWEETING gets Hollywood Walk of Fame star

Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting has found her place among the stars. The "Big Bang Theory" actress was awarded the 2,532nd star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles Wednesday. "I've been doing this for my whole life, I mean really 20 plus years," Cuoco-Sweeting said at the star's unveiling ceremony. "It's heartwarming to me to be recognized for something that I feel like is so a part of me. It's like my arm. It's always been me." Cuoco-Sweeting also admitted that she was in tears as she and her husband, Ryan Sweeting, headed to the Walk of Fame event. "I didn't write a

speech, because I thought I would just speak from my heart and I already started crying in the car on the way over here, so I got that out of the way," she joked during the ceremony. "I still think they are going to call and say this was a mistake." The 28-year-old actress was met with praise from her "Big Bang Theory" family as she received the star. "She has the reflexes of a cat during a scene," co-star Jim Parsons told fans. "You throw something at her, she throws it back. She never drops the ball. It's amazing. In comedy especially, she's got the rhythm of a musician. It's just beautiful." Creator of the show Chuck Lorre

said Cuoco-Sweeting "makes it a joy to come to work. We laugh a lot when we make the show. And this is a testament to that hard work and that dedication." Cuoco-Sweeting personally requested that her star be placed near the star for actor John Ritter. The late "Three's Company" actor played her dad on the sitcom "8 Simple Rules." "What a dream to have my [star] next to my sweet John Ritter," Cuoco-Sweeting wrote on Instagram Wednesday night. "I think he's doing a little dance right now! I'm definitely being looked after." Source: CBS

