

WHAT'S ON

Theatre
Play: Jamuna
Troupe: Theatre Folks, UK
Venue: Studio Theatre Shall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: Jan 11-12; Time: 7pm



SD Burman Music Festival
Organiser: Bohnishikha
Venue: Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium
Date: Jan 13-14; Time: 6pm




Classical Concert
Raaga & Rhythm
Organiser: Peshkar Cultural Forum
Venue: Chhayanaut
Date: Jan 16; Time: 6:30pm



Art Exhibition
Alluvial Return
Artist: Kalidas Karmakar
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: Jan 4-16; Time: 11am-8pm



Solo Painting Exhibition
Artist: Jamal Ahmed
Venue: Athena Gallery of Fine Arts, AJ Heights, Cha 72/1/O, Pragati Shorani, Uttar Badda
Date: Jan 9-31
Time: 10am-8pm (Closed on Mondays)



NEWS bytes

Manipuri at its finest

Celebrating 25 years of Nriya Nandan

Berlinale to open with Binoche-starrer

Spanish director Isabel Coixet's "Nobody Wants the Night," which stars French actress Juliette Binoche, will open the 65th Berlin Film Festival. The film will world premiere on February 5, as part of the international competition.

Binoche, who won an Oscar for "The English Patient," is joined in the ensemble cast by Japanese actress Rinko Kikuchi and Irish thesp Gabriel Byrne. The adventure film is set in 1908 in Greenland, and focuses on "courageous women and ambitious men who put anything at stake for love and glory."

The Berlin Film Festival, also called Berlinale, is one of the most important dates for the international film industry. With nearly 20,000 professional visitors from 124 countries, including around 3,700 journalists, art, glamour and business are all inseparably linked at the Berlinale. It also features film markets where talents in filmmaking can meet financiers and producers.

Source: **Variety**



While Guru Kalavati Devi (left) was the main attraction, other performances were also outstanding.



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADDID RUPON

NAZIBA BASHER

On the eve of the silver jubilee of prominent dance institution Nriya Nandan, a capacity audience had the opportunity to witness Manipuri at its finest. The celebrations were held at the National Theatre Hall of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) on January 9. A seven-day workshop was organised by Nriya Nandan to mark their 25th birth anniversary, which ended with a Manipuri recital- "Jagoi Pareng", directed by Guru Kalavati Devi.

Kalavati Devi, also the wife of legendary Manipuri dancer Bipin Singh and mother of renowned Manipuri dancer, Bimbhavati Devi, is an international pioneer in Manipuri dancing. She is not just a dancer, but a singer, an instrumentalist, a choreographer and teacher.

The first performance was Rashantikachari, which consisted of all the basic steps and mudras that Manipuri dance is made of. Both Lasya (feminine) and Tandava (masculine) movements of Rashantikachari were performed by the participants of the weeklong workshop. The next performance by the participants was Bhamari. Maibi Jagoi, considered

to be the dance of priestesses, was then presented. Beginning with the process of creation, they showed the construction of houses and various occupations of the people, in a re-living of the way of life of the past. There was a Thougal Jagoi performance by the Manipuri Academy of Arts and Culture in Sylhet, choreographed by Shantona Devi.

Then, the Laiharaoba pieces were performed. Laiharaoba means the enjoyment of Gods. Raslila -- the epitome of Manipuri classical dance, were also performed. There was a Danda raas, a performance with the inclusion of dandiya, a prop which depicted Lord Krishna playing games and having fun while herding cows with his friends.

The most awaited performance of the night was that of Guru Kalavati Devi herself. She performed solo to a piece, titled Khandita. Khandita is one of Ashta Nayikas (eight heroines) classified by Bharata in his Sanskrit treatise on performing arts. Khandita Nayika is the jealous nayika, or one who is enraged with her lover. Guru Kalavati Devi's experienced steps, intricate mudras and passionate expressions left the audience transfixed throughout the performance.

A heart-thumping solo performance, called the Mridanga Cholom followed; a form where the performer also plays the mridangam. It is a highly advanced classical dance piece characterised by the intonation of sound from a soft whisper to a thunderous climax. The final piece performed was Dashavtar (ten avatars) -- referring to the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu-Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki. All ten avatars of Lord Vishnu were displayed by the dancers with great strength and precision.

The other performers of the evening were Sonia Rashid, Farhana Ahmed, Warda Rihab, Subrata Das, Sudeshna Swayamprabha and 70 participants of the workshop from esteemed institutions -- Chhayanaut, Nriya Nandan, Nriyam Nriyashilan Kendra and Dhriti Nartanalaya.

Tokens of appreciation were exchanged between Nriya Nandan, BSA and Guru Kalavati Devi at the end. The night ended on a high note with the audience still mesmerised with the soft swirls and powerful steps, the sweet music and the demanding rhythms of Manipuri dance.

South Asian Documentary Fest concludes in Chittagong

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Chittagong

With a vision to turn the festival a regular one, the three-day South Asian Documentary Film Festival concluded at Theatre Institute, Chittagong (TIC) auditorium in the port city on Saturday.

The festival was the travelling edition of the biennial documentary film festival of Film South Asia, an internationally famed film organisation of Nepal.

"Bistaar: Chittagong Arts Complex", the newly launched arts organisation in the port city, organised the festival that featured 12 documentary films from seven countries. AK Khan Foundation supported the event.

The participating countries in the festival were Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, India and Afghanistan. Three films from Bangladesh -- "Shunte Ki Pao", "Tazrin" and "My Bicycle" - were screened at the festival.

As part of the festival, a film workshop, conducted by filmmaker Yasmine Kabir was also held at the premise of Bistaar.

Veteran film movement activist architect Bidhan Barua inaugurated the festival. Chaired by eminent sociologist also Premier University Vice-chancellor Dr Anupam Sen, the inaugural ceremony was addressed by film critic Kanak Dixit as chief guest.

Termining the present world a world of technology, Nepali publisher-writer-editor Kanak Dixit said while the world has progressed in terms of tools of films, creativity is on the decline.

Dr Anupam Sen, president of Bistaar, hoped that the organisation would broaden its frontiers more for the flourish of the city's cultural arena.



Kanak Dixit speaks at the programme. PHOTO: STAR

Bonomali Shilpakala Kendra reopens in Pabna

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The new journey of historic Pabna Bonomali Institute, with the new name of Bonomali Shilpakala Kendra, began on Friday in the district headquarter, aiming to patronise cultural activities in the district, especially theatre.

Land minister Samsur Rahman Sarif Dilu inaugurated the resumption of the newly-built fine art centre in Pabna. A three-day cultural programme was also organised at the new auditorium.

A discussion and cultural programme was held on the occasion. President of Pabna Bonomali Institute, Anjan Chowdhury Pintu inaugurated the discussion.

The original Bonomali institute was established in 1924, according to the organisation. Sons of zamindar Bonomali Roy established the institute for staging plays and cultural programmes.

"The name of the Bonomali Institute was changed to Bonomali Shilpakala Kendra to introduce cultural activities at a wider scale," Anjan Chowdhury said. Hosting theatre will be the priority for the centre, he added.

Artists of Bonomali Institute staged the drama "Royal Bengal Tiger" on Thursday, as part of the cultural programmes.

"Bonomali Institute was at the heart of the cultural activists of the district. We are delighted about the new journey in the new shape of a fine art centre. We are happy with modern facilities, but a little concerned about its rental costs," Sarwar Ullash, secretary of Pabna Drama Circle, a leading theatre organisation of the district told the Daily Star. Most of the cultural organisations are in financial hardship, so they would not be able to perform in the stage at excessive cost, Ullash said.

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.

"No films while son is too young"

...Shilpa Shetty

Shilpa Shetty has no plans to take up an acting project anytime soon as all her energy is focused on her son Viaan, who will turn two in May. Viaan is Shilpa's first child with her businessman husband Raj Kundra, with whom she tied the knot in 2009. "I'm not doing a single film right now as Viaan is too young. I am enjoying my motherhood. I want to give him all the time," said Shilpa.

Meanwhile, she is working on penning a book on nutrition and health.

Talking about her book, the fit-as-a-fiddle 39-year-old said, "People feel that I am slim by birth, but that's not true. I have worked really hard on my body. I have started writing this book and I will launch this book this year."

Source: **IANS**



Quarter-million dollar painting found by punk rockers

Members of punk band Stereo Fire Empire have found and returned a \$250,000 painting hours after it was stolen from a New Orleans gallery.

Bassist Elliot Newkirk and his bandmates had just finished a show at the House of Blues when they saw the artwork propped up against a wall.

"Our guitar player was actually talking about how he saw on Facebook that a painting was stolen," Newkirk said. "Literally five minutes later" he found the canvas and "his jaw dropped."

The painting, entitled "Wendy and Me", was by beloved New Orleans artist George Rodrigue. It was stolen in broad daylight from New Orleans' George Rodrigue Studios on Tuesday.

A thief walked into the gallery, lifted the picture from the wall and left. The entire incident lasted less than a minute, and was captured on security cameras.

Featuring the blue dog for which he is famous, "Wendy and Me" was used on the artist's wedding invitations when he married his second wife Wendy in 1997.

The band handed it in to police, along with another artwork believed to have been sold to a local non-profit organisation through the George Rodrigue Foundation for the Arts several years ago. "I collect discarded art and things like that," guitarist Evan Diez told a local news station.

Singer John Kennedy picked up the story: "His face was ghost white - jaw dropped, like, 'you don't understand -

this is a \$250,000 piece of artwork."

The band described the events that followed as a "Scooby Doo adventure", as they carried the paintings to a nearby police station.

The band - who filmed themselves handing over the paintings - did not ask for a reward. But "we joked that we're going to write a song about it, so we'll see what happens," said Newkirk.

George Rodrigue, who died in 2013, was catapulted to fame by his blue dog paintings, which were based on a Cajun legend called loup-garou.

Police say they will use DNA fingerprinting techniques to track down the thief, who is still at large.

Source: **BBC**



An exceptional reception by Brahmashaily

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Brahmashaily, an art movement of young painters, organised a reception for seven artistes, who contributed to the fine arts of Mymensingh region, including Rober Deu, an English civilian from some 200 years back.

The recently-held reception was a part of 13-day programmes on the bank of river Brahmaputra, marking the centenary celebrations of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin.

Apart from Rober Deu, the other artistes were -- Shashi Kumar Hesh, Hemendranath Majumder, Atul Bose, Alok Roy, Mir Mohammad Rezaul Karim and Joynal Abedin Tarafder. Alok Roy, Mir Mohammad Rezaul Karim and Joynal Abedin Tarafder were present at the programme.

Rober Deu, an assistant collector of Mymensingh Collectorate in



PHOTO: STAR

1801 and was later a district judge (in-charge) in 1805. He depicted the nature of Mymensingh in sketches, and also wrote a brief history on Mymensingh -- the first history book on the district in which he depicted its social and natural conditions.

Sharmin Jahan, additional deputy commissioner of Mymensingh received the crest and citation of Rober Deu on his behalf.

Earlier, a seminar was held. Eminent artist Bubul Osman, artists Swapon Kumar Roy and Sumon Pal of Government College of Arts and Crafts, Kolkata addressed the discussion, among others. Prof. Mohammad Mukarram Hossein was in the chair. Prof. Dr. Syed Azizul Haque of Dhaka University presented a key-note paper at the seminar.