

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

Chobi Mela VIII
Organiser: Pathshala and Drik
Venue: Different locations in Dhaka
Date: Jan 23-Feb 5
Time: 10-8pm
CHOBIMELA VIII
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF
PHOTOGRAPHY
BANGLADESH

8th International
Children's Film Festival
Organiser: Bangladesh Children's
Film Society
Venue: Central Public Library,
BNM, BSA
Date: January 24-30; Time: 10-8pm

Sho-Shan
Dama Oscura
1st National
Dance-Drama Festival
Organiser: BOAA
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala
Academy
Date: Jan 27-31
Time: 6:00pm

Art Exhibition
Chronology
Artist: Kazi Rakib
Venue: Galleri Kaya
Date: Jan 17-30
Time: 11am-7:30pm
KAZI RAKIB

NEWS
bytes



Kalidas Karmakar
to receive Sultan award
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A weeklong Sultan Mela began in Narail on January 22 marking the 90th birth anniversary of celebrated artists SM Sultan. The festival, which closes today at the Government Victoria College premises in Narail, was inaugurated by Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser, Gowher Rizvi.

The fair featured different rural sports, game show, painting competition, exhibition, dance, music, recitations, seminar and discussion. People from all walks of society gathered at the fair ground to be a part of the entertainment-packed programmes.

This year, noted artist Kalidas Karmakar has been nominated for Sultan Gold Award by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

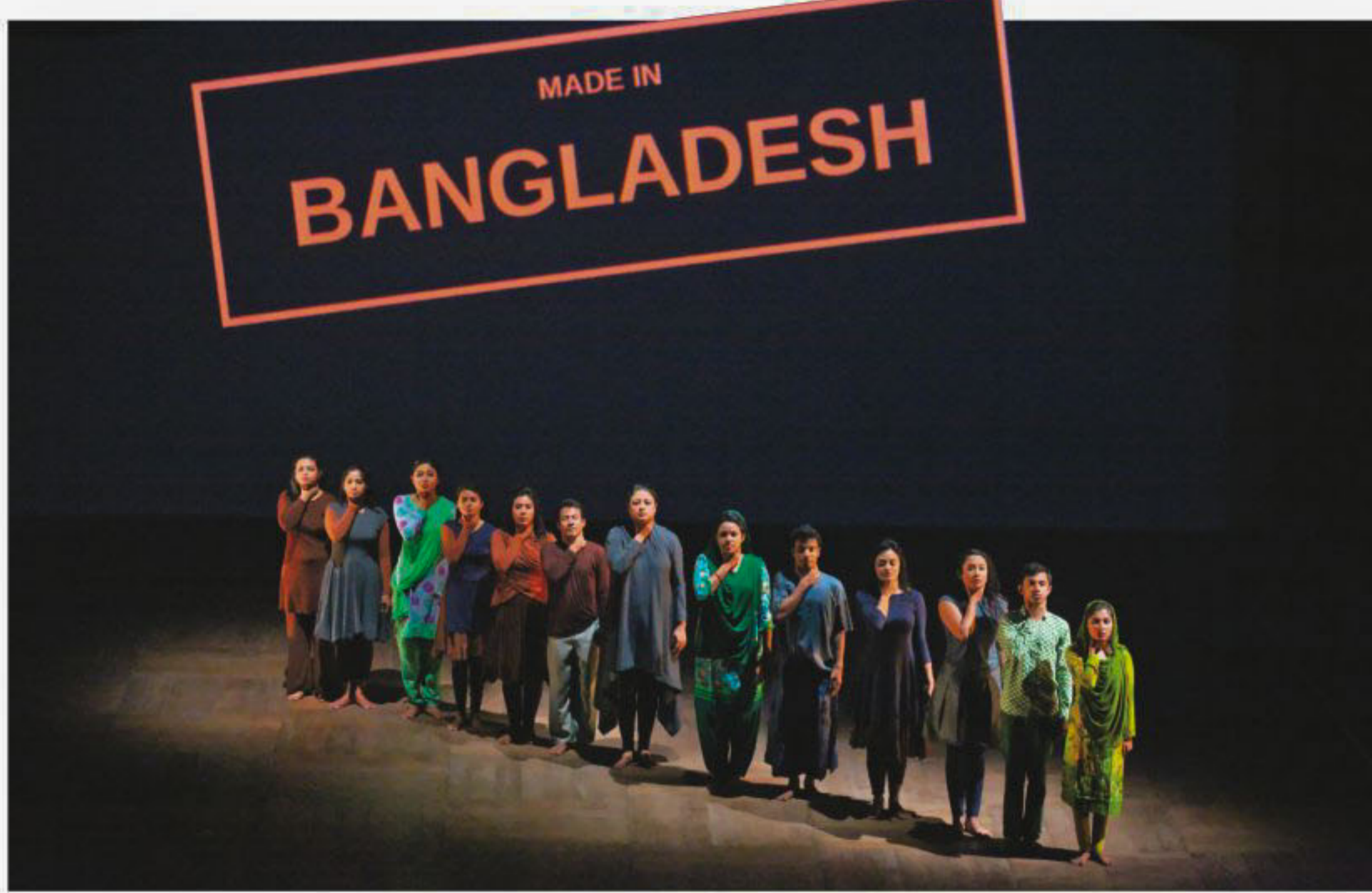
The closing ceremony of the festival will take place today at 4pm where Kalidas Karmakar will receive the award. State Minister for Youth and Sports, Biren Sikder will attend the closing programme as chief guest, along with other distinguished guests including the Director General of BSA, Liaquat Ali Lucky.

IT'S TRUE!



Beatles legend John Lennon was raised by his aunt as his father left him when he was only five years old. His mother handed John over to her sister. His aunt was intolerant of John's aspirations as a rock musician, and told John that he would never make a living out of the guitar. John kept in close contact with her, calling her once a week until his death in 1980. John was also an avid writer of short stories and poetry. He wrote three books which were published posthumously. In numerous interviews, Lennon said he hoped to write a book of children's stories when he was old and retired from music.

MADE IN BANGLADESH
with Blood, Sweat, Tears and Hunger



KARIM WAHEED

Despite lack of natural resources, tremendous pressure of overpopulation and persistent political violence, Bangladesh has maintained a 6+ percent GDP growth rate over the last 5 years. How has that happened? With endless blood, sweat, tears and HUNGER. We're hungry: for three meals a day, for economic freedom, for recognition of our hard work, for dignity. Racing on an uneven playing field means our labour has to remain cheap. But then what's labour when life here is cheap? "Made in Bangladesh", the dance production which had its Bangladesh premiere on January 26, puts the working condition in the RMG industry on stage - creating the ambiance of a "sweat shop", where workers are put to a Herculean test. They have to work harder, faster, better - all the while keeping labour cost cheaper than competitors. There are no bathroom breaks either, we're told. Dance director Helena Waldmann and co-choreographer Vikram Iyengar use the signature spin, hand and footwork of Kathak to dramatically

represent sewing. The choreography featuring 12 Bangladeshi dancers - Munmun Ahmed, Shammy Akter, Shareen Ferdous, Masum Hossain, Urme Irin, Lamiya Mela, Trina Mehnaz, Hanif Mohammad, Tumtumi Nuzaba, Bishwazit Sarkar, Sharmin Shoma and Labonno Sultana - is complemented with video clips, stills, ambient sound and music. In fact, the staccato movements of Kathak against projection of mammoth needles coming down in the background made an impact that dance alone perhaps wouldn't have had. This was Kathak we're not familiar with - without the omnipresent bells and at times without any music. Bol were used effectively though. There was an impassioned dramatisation of the Rana Plaza tragedy that left many in the audience visibly choked with emotion. That wound is still fresh. But boycotting our products is not the solution. I would've been absolutely content if the performance ended here, but the audience was in for a surprise. The scene changed and the audience now found itself in the art industry. This is another kind of "sweat shop", where dancers and artists are



PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

expected to satiate the public's hunger for culture. They are pressed to work harder and perform better but are offered meagre wages. There are no bathroom breaks while you're performing either. Many in the audience may have not been able to digest the comparison between the RMG and art industry but the intention was, perhaps, to draw attention to the exploitation both factory workers and artists undergo. What worked: The dancers' precision and soulful execution of the acts, Waldmann's vision, sound/music (Daniel Dorsch and Hans Narva) and video (Anna Saup and Michael Saup). What didn't quite work: The length of certain scenes; extended demonstration of the same footwork felt monotonous. "Made in Bangladesh" is a production by Helena Waldmann and ecotopia dance productions in collaboration with SHADHONA - A Center for Advancement of South Asian Culture and Goethe-Institut Bangladesh. The production has been funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation. The writer is Editor, SHOUT and is not a dance critic.

Faces, Unforgotten

Philip Blenkinsop's lecture at CM VIII

MALIHA MOHSIN

Twice over World Press Photo Award winner Philip Blenkinsop is one of the most notable photographers of his generation, and is currently in town for Chobi Mela VIII.

On January 26, Blenkinsop presented slideshows of his work and videos at the Goethe-Institut—one of the many attractions lined up for Chobi Mela. He began by expressing his thankfulness for the absence of the internet at the start of his journalistic career. He said that the freedom from being constantly tracked via phone or internet allowed him to go away for long periods and lose himself in the lives of his subjects. In his view, journalists' race to get to the news first stopped them from settling down and familiarising themselves with the lives of those whose stories they wanted to tell.

His presentations comprised of a display of his handmade photobooks with relics and photographs from his journeys into the war-torn regions of Southeast Asia, panoramas that gave a wider view of the destruction caused by war, videos of the busy streets



of Dhaka and a party in Barcelona. The videos seemed almost random at first - as if they were just home videos awkwardly zoomed onto people's faces. But that is exactly why they slowly opened up to us with a different perspective - the faces, expressions and behaviour of the people slowly surfaced out of the noise. It made the audience see the city in detail and pay attention to the hundreds of faces that pass them by. He also showed polaroids from his journeys with the guerrillas of East Timor, smudged with blood and their stories scribbled on them which he read out. And all of a sudden, all these soldiers who may or may not be alive now, and their struggles, their fears and their hold on their relics from their homes were familiar to the audience.

Blenkinsop's exhibition, "Of Mortals and Remembrance", is open to the public at the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute for Chobi Mela VIII till February 5. Meanwhile, more lectures and presentations by local and international photographers are lined up at the festival.

Bangla Khayal Festival at Channel i

A CORRESPONDENT

Channel i will host the first night-long Bangla Khayal Festival at its premises on January 31. At a press conference yesterday, organisers informed that over a hundred artists, will perform Bangla Khayal at the event, led by eminent music exponent Azad Rahman and including reputed names like Ustad Yasin Khan, Ferdous Ara, Karim Shahbuddin, Nashid Kamal, Bizon Chandra Mistry and Priyanka Gope, among many others.

Ustad Yasin Khan will also be given lifetime achievement honours at the festival. Channel i director Shykh Seraj made the announcement at the event, adding that the festival is an initiative of Channel i to popularise Bangla Khayal, a form of Hindustani classical music.



Ustad Yasin Khan, Shykh Seraj and Azad Rahman at the press conference.



Winners of the Veet Channel i Top Model 2014 pose for photographs at the grand finale of the event. The programme was aired live on channel i on January 23 from the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. The gala featured performances by the top 15 contestants, along with notable celebrity performances. Mithila was crowned the winner, while Lamia was first runner up and Moon was the second runner-up. Mithila told The Daily Star that the win has given her a sense of determination to do quality work in the modeling arena.

BIRDMAN
weekend continues at SAG Awards



Birdman cast at SAG Awards.

Less than 24 hours after "Birdman" upset "Boyhood" to win the top prize at Saturday's 26th PGA Awards, Alejandro G. Inarritu's quirky dramedy topped Richard Linklater's unprecedented 12-year project to win the top prize at Sunday's 21st annual SAG Awards as well. And, in a development just as surprising, Eddie Redmayne from "The Theory of Everything" upended Birdman's Michael Keaton - the heavy favorite - to win the best actor SAG Award. Redmayne's co-star in the film, Felicity Jones, also picked up best actress.

The other winners on the film side were all heavy favorites: Julianne Moore ("Still Alice") won best actress, JK Simmons ("Whiplash") won best supporting actor and Patricia Arquette ("Boyhood") won best supporting actress - following up wins at Critics' Choice and Golden Globe previously.

The SAG Awards show how the acting community feels about the year's top contenders: winners are chosen by the 120,000-plus members of SAG-AFTRA, the world's largest actors union, after nominees are chosen by 1,200 randomly selected members thereof - which is useful in light of the fact that the largest branch of the Academy is composed of actors.

In the television world, multiple awards went to projects featur-

ing minorities, coming in stark contrast to the Oscars' much-discussed, all-white crop of acting nominees this year. "Orange Is the New Black", with its diverse, largely female cast, won for ensemble in a comedy series, and African American actress Uzo Aduba for her portrayal of an emotionally unstable homosexual person on the Netflix show. "Downton Abbey" won best ensemble in a drama series and Kevin Spacey on best actor for "House of Cards". ABC sitcom "Modern Family", despite four nods, went home empty-handed.

The guild gave its life achievement award to Debbie Reynolds, the 82-year-old actress, singer and dancer best known for her roles in "Singin' in the Rain", "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" and "How the West Was Won".

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