

Solo Oriental Painting Exhibition
Title: Reunion of Shakuntala
Artist: Malay Balal
Venue: Zainul Gallery, FFA, DU
Date: Nov 16-22
Time: 10am-8pm



Comedy Show
Organiser: Naveed's Comedy Club
Venue: The Stage, 1st Floor, House 31, Sector 13, Uttara
Date: Nov 21
Time: 7:30pm-9pm



Solo Exhibition
Chromatic Delusions
Artist: Maksuma Iqbal Nipa
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge
Date: Oct 31-Nov 21
Time: 12-8pm



5th Tone Int'l Art Biennale 2015
Organiser: Tone Art Society of Bangladesh
Venues: Galley Chitrak and Athena Gallery of Fine Arts
Date: Nov 13-30; Time: 10am-8pm



Solo Exhibition
Title: Rokeya
Artist: Rokeya Sultana
Venue: Bengal Shilpakala, Dhamondi
Date: Nov 17-Dec 5
Time: 12-8pm



IT'S TRUE!

Surbahar, (meaning 'Spring Melody' in Hindi), is a plucked string instrument used in the Hindustani classical music of North India. It is closely related to the sitar, but has a lower tone, and is sometimes known as bass sitar. Depending on the instrument's size, it is usually pitched two to five whole steps below the standard sitar. Surbahar was invented by Omrao Khan Beenkar, the grandfather of Wazir Khan. However, the invention is also attributed to Ustad Sahebdad Khan, and recent research shows that Lucknow-based sitarist Ustad Ghulam Mohammed may have been invented it. The Dhaka audience will get the first taste of the surbahar at this year's Bengal Classical Music Festival through Irfan Khan's performance (December 1).



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Curtains rise on first Indigenous Theatre Fest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first International Indigenous Theatre Festival Dhaka began at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on Thursday evening, amid festivities.

The eight-day festival, by Sampreeti Natyotsab Parshad, will simultaneously take place at the National Theatre Hall, Experimental Theatre Hall and Nandan Mancha of BSA.

The inauguration ceremony of the festival was held at the National Theatre Hall in presence of chief guest Finance Minister AMA Muhib and Cultural Affairs Minister

Asaduzzaman Noor, Veteran thespians Ramendu Mazumdar, Ataur Rahman, Nasiruddin Yousuf, director of Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre Jayashree Kundu, and Indian theatre director Prabir Guha attended the inauguration ceremony as special guests. BSA director general Liaquat Ali Lucky presided over the programme.

The festival began with the performance by Assamese musical troupe Stooti. The five-member troupe enchanted the present audience with their brilliant instrumental pieces. Starting from Bangladesh's National Anthem to folk songs and Assamese

tunes, the troupe beautifully articulated the tunes one violin, dhol, khol, mondria, khonjoni and other traditional instruments.

Later, a group dance performance featuring artistes from different indigenous group was staged, produced by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. The inauguration ceremony ended with another dance performance by Assamese troupes.

The fest, featuring productions by 16 indigenous troupes from Bangladesh and the eastern part of India, will run every evening till November 26.

Mimi puts on a new hat BFTA opens in the capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Afsana Mimi has been known to her TV audience as an actress for decades, but she ventured into TV direction a while ago. And now, the veteran media personality has a new identity: she is the founder of an academy, named the Bangladesh Film and TV Academy (BFTA).

The academy was inaugurated recently in the capital's Uttara, by Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, in presence of a number of prominent faces of the television and film fraternity.

About her decision, Mimi spoke to The Daily Star: "I began my acting career in theatre, and we heard a lot about the National School of Drama (India), but it was not easy for us to go study there. Similarly, when I started making TV dramas, I would have ide-

ally liked to learn it somewhere, like the Pune Film Institute (India). Whatever we learned was through the course of our work, but there was no formal training, and it has long been a regret of mine."

"I started thinking long ago about making an institute. I started sharing the ideas with some people close to me, and finally decided on going through," Mimi added.

The academy will primarily offer only diplomas in acting, and will expand eventually. "We often think how much further we could have gone if we had the training, and now we want those thoughts of us to benefit this generation," she added.

Aside from BFTA, Mimi is currently busy with directing the second series of "Doll's House", titled "Saat Tara's Timir" which is airing on ATN Bangla.



Guests at the inauguration of the academy.

"Spanish guitars sell the best"

Visiting the musical instrument market

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Music holds a fascination for the younger generation, and many are always on the lookout for good musical instruments. The Daily Star recently spoke to Gopal Ray, who has been working at a musical instrument shop New Surasree at Mirpur Road for long. He talked about the market for musical instruments and more. Excerpts:

What is the most popular instrument at

the moment?

Gopal Ray: The Spanish guitar is the most sought-after musical instrument as youngsters love to play it. Most of our customers are amateur musicians who scout for all sorts of guitars.

What other instruments do you have in your shop?

Gopal Ray: We sell all kinds of musical instruments. We keep everything, starting from guitars to tanpura, trumpets, sitars,

sarod, surmandal and harmoniums. The starting price of guitars is Taka 1800 taka. We also have expensive guitars of renowned brands. Harmoniums go from Taka 9,000-60,000, while flutes start from Taka 350.

We also have a large array of folk instruments including ektaara, dotara, khamak, mondria, dhol, tabla, banshi and shanai.

Folk instruments are being modernised as they are being used by young musicians. Instruments like flute, dotara, khamak and mondria are widely used as well.

However, the shanai is almost on its way out in Bangladesh as there are a handful of shanai players left.

How do you collect these instruments?

Gopal Ray: We import most of our instruments from India, Europe and America. And for folk instruments, local guitars, tabla and harmoniums, we have our own factory in Rishipara, Narayanganj. Making musical instruments is tough, and requires expertise. What's the present market scenario?

Gopal Ray: Despite a downturn in the audio market, our business is steady. However, we are yet to recover fully from the losses we suffered during last year's political instability. Once there used to be concerts in every corner of the city, but the trend has reversed. Now there are more live shows on television and radio, and a small number of indoor shows.



Despite demands for Western instruments, the shops have ample stock of traditional ones.

Freddie Mercury biopic revived

A biopic about Freddie Mercury has been kicking around Hollywood since 2010, when it was revealed that Sacha Baron Cohen would portray the Queen singer. However, Baron Cohen dropped out of the film in the summer of 2013, and in March 2014, the director hired to helm the biopic also departed the gestating project. Since then, the Mercury film has sat in stasis, but on Wednesday, GK Films announced that they had hired a new screenwriter to kick-start the movie, Deadline reports.

"The Theory of Everything" scribe Anthony McCarten has stepped in to write a new script for the biopic, with Sony Pictures potentially on board to produce the film. However, McCarten isn't the first Oscar-nominated screenwriter to attempt to write the Mercury film: "Frost/Nixon" playwright Peter Morgan penned the first draft of the movie – now tentatively titled "Bohemian Rhapsody" – but the project still didn't secure a green light.

Since Baron Cohen's exit over "creative differences" with Mercury's Queen band mates, who will also serve as producers

on the film, "Spectre" actor Ben Winshaw has been the frontrunner to take over the role of Mercury. Winshaw was initially named as the favorite to play Mercury in December 2013, and while the actor hasn't officially signed onto the project, Deadline writes it's still his role to lose. No director has been hired yet either.

In December 2013, Queen's Brian May talked to Rolling Stone about why Baron Cohen left the project, adding that producers felt the actor's persona threatened to overshadow his portrayal of Mercury. "What led us to that conclusion was the last three movies that he's made – 'The Dictator', 'Les Misérables' and 'Hugo' – in which he makes outstanding performances, but they're very much Sacha Baron Cohen performances," May said. "And we thought there has to be no distraction in the Freddie movie. You have to really suspend that disbelief – the man who plays Freddie, you have to really believe is Freddie. And we didn't think that could really happen with Sacha."

Source: Rolling Stones



NEWS bytes

'Star Wars' breaks pre-sale records

"Star Wars: The Force Awakens" is breaking records and it's still a month to go before the hotly anticipated space



opera opens in theaters. Insiders confirm that the seventh film in the hugely popular franchise has generated more than \$50 million in advance ticket sales.

Fandango tells Variety that the picture is the biggest pre-seller in the history of the ticketing company, trumping the first "Hunger Games". Most Imax screenings have sold out, but outside of those premium formats, there are tickets remaining of many shows on opening weekend. Theatre chains are continually adding extra showtimes to keep up with demand, a Fandango spokesman said.

MovieTickets.com, the USA's other major online ticketer reports that advance sales for Star Wars represent the most tickets ever sold for one film by the company when compared to all other films at the same point in roll out.

It's too early to give a sense of how many theatres "The Force Awakens" will screen on, but sources predict it will be on at least 4,000 theaters.

Source: Variety