

WHAT'S ON

Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2016
 Organiser: Bangla Academy
 Venue: Bangla Academy premises & Suhrawardi Udyan
 Date: February 1-29
 Time: 3-8pm & 11am-8pm (Fri & Sat)

Group Paining Exhibition
 Title: Taste of Light and Darkness-2
 Venue: La Galerie, AFD, Dhanmondi
 Date: Feb 26-Mar 8
 Time: 3pm-9pm

Felicitation to Shaheen Samad
 Organiser: Aamra Surjomukhi
 Venue: A.S. Mahmud Auditorium, The Daily Star Centre
 Date: February 26
 Time: 6pm

Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Unknown Spirit
 Artist: Esperanza Romero (Spain)
 Venue: Gallery Cosmos, H-115, Lane-6, New DOHS, Mohakhali
 Date: February 20-29
 Time: 12-8pm

Solo Paining Exhibition
 Title: Of a Poetic Vision of Life
 Artist: Ranjita Das
 Venue: Shilpangan
 Date: February 26-March 12
 Time: 12pm-8pm

Musical Soiree
 An Evening of Rabindra Sangeet
 Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan-1
 Artists: Shirsendu Roy and Arena Mukherjee
 Date: Feb 27; Time: 6pm

Photography Exhibition
 Butterflies of Bangladesh
 Venue: Drik Gallery
 Date: Feb 26-28
 Time: 3-8pm

A masterful visual storyteller

In conversation with Shumon Ahmed

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Last month, Shumon Ahmed became the first Bangladeshi artist to win the prestigious Prudential Eye Awards 2016, in the photography category. Leaving behind Robert Zhao (Singapore) and Zhang Wei (China), Shumon brought home glory for his series "Metal Graves" and "When Dead Ships Travel".

A Dhaka-based artist, Shumon Ahmed explores the fusion between video, photography, sound and text, creating stories are private yet collective. His work with the camera and film has also been likened to abstract paintings due to his experimental processing techniques that yield the melancholic, often-blurred images with multiple exposures.

His works has been previously exhibited in various galleries, festivals, summits and screenings worldwide, notably at the 2014 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, India; Dhaka Art Summit (2012, 2014 and 2016); Whitechapel Gallery in London (2010); Fotomuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland (2010) and a recent solo exhibition at Project88, Mumbai (2015). Two of his group shows



Metal Graves 4



PHOTO: DUNCAN BARNES

are currently on at Chicago University, USA and Art Science Museum, Singapore. In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star he shared his passionate artistic journey. Excerpts:

"Back in 2008 I went to Chittagong Ship Breaking Yard with a Swedish friend who is an art photographer. It was difficult for us to access the area, as it is encircled with a fence and the authority doesn't allow anyone carrying a camera. Later, we luckily met a young labourer of

the yard, and he let us enter into the place through a conical breakage of the barbed wire fence. We began our adventurous journey through the unusual landscape at 3am one night. The very first impression I experienced when I got there was amazing. As the early sunlight fell on us, I tried to render my feelings into visual language."

"The stagnant ships appeared to me as the gigantic metal graves. They were being transformed into other forms, depleting their original forms. A mysterious feeling surged my heart. Though I depicted my images based on objects, those are ambiguous. The images are blurred and relay a feel of abstract paintings. I think the mystery that swallowed me up has a lasting influence on making my works. I studied various forms and subjects including human beings in my images; but I never thought of documenting things around or intended to transmit any instructions attached to those. Yet, many art con-

noisseurs thought that way. I set the images free and it was the audience and connoisseur who explained in their own ways."

"I was surprised to learn that I was nominated for The Prudential Eye Awards. I didn't even submit my work till the last date as I was apprehensive. Later, an organiser from London phoned me to submit my work. It was quite a moment when I found myself as one of the three shortlisted ones, and was overwhelmed to receive the award eventually."

"I love to work and just follow my artistic passion and feelings. People appreciate my works. I think this is my award. If someone runs after awards, they create a trap for themselves. I have seen many awardees fall into that trap as they got out of their creative track. An award-winner tends to produce repetitive works and thus, the artist loses their original talents. I didn't want to be that kind of artist."

NEWS bytes

Sarah Michelle Gellar returning to TV

It's official. Sarah Michelle Gellar has signed on to reprise her role as Kathryn Merteuil in NBC's revival of "Cruel Intentions". The actress posted the news Wednesday night on her Instagram.

NBC's "Cruel Intentions" series kicks off 15 years after the film ended, centering around Gellar's all-grown-up Kathryn, as she vies for control of Valmont International, as well as the soul of Bash Casey (newcomer Taylor John Smith), the son of the late Sebastian Valmont.

Roger Kumble, the original writer and director of "Cruel Intentions," will direct the pilot.

Though Reese Witherspoon's character (Annette Hargrove) is still alive in the world of "Cruel Intentions", the Oscar-winner was not approached to reprise her part, and the role is currently being cast.

"Cruel Intentions" marks a major return to TV for Gellar, who has starred in two network shows since "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" went off the air: "The Crazy Ones" with Robin Williams in 2013 on CBS and "The Ringer" in 2011 on the CW. Both series only lasted one season. Gellar starred on "Buffy" for seven seasons, and became the "it" girl of the '90s, landing lead roles in teen cult favorites "I Know What You Did Last Summer" and then "Cruel Intentions" in 1999.

Source: Variety



RIAZ RETURNS

"Krishnopokkho" releases today

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Riaz, who once ruled the film industry, is rarely seen on the silver screen nowadays. After a long break, the film "Sweetheart" released this month where he plays a supporting role. But his grand return to the big screen happens today, when Meher Afroz Shaon-directed "Krishnopokkho", based on a Humayun Ahmed novel, releases in theatres. Talking to The Daily Star, the national award-winning actor spoke about his recent projects and more.

What's it like to have two films released in a month?

Riaz: It's great! My film "Sweetheart" has been released after a hiatus for about two years. I watched the movie with great enthusiasm at Balaka Cinema Hall in the capital.

Tell us about your other film "Krishnopokkho"?

Riaz: "Krishnopokkho" releases across the country today (26 February). Recently, I went to watch the premiere. On the whole, it's the creation of Humayun Ahmed so there is no doubt that it's a good story.

What was the reaction to the film at the premiere?

Riaz: While watching the movie, there were scenes that brought the audience to

tears. As an artiste, it was very gratifying.

How was the experience of working with Shaon as your director?

Riaz: Shaon gave her full effort to make a good film. The audience will experience that if they go to the cinema halls.

Did you feel any presence of Humayun Ahmed during the filming?

Riaz: Humayun Ahmed Sir was a constant inspiration during the whole process of the film. The plot was so strong that we did not feel his absence for a moment.

Have you signed any new film?

Riaz: Not yet. But I hope I can give everyone some good news soon. Keep me in your blessings.

RAPID FIRE WITH SALMA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Salma hasn't had to look back after her grand success in the 2006 edition of the musical talent hunt "CloseUp One: Tomakei Khujchhe Brangladesh". Taking off from there she has become a name to contend with as folk singer. Recently, she fielded some quick questions from The Daily Star:

How do you start your day?

Salma: With prayer and practice of music as much as I can.

If a night were endless ...

Salma: It would seem lifeless and horrible for everyone.

What is on the opposite end of the spectrum of love?

Salma: Hatred.

What is your greatest fear?

Salma: Ghosts.

What would you do if you assume super-powers?

Salma: I would do something for better livelihoods of people.

What do you find within music?

Salma: To me, all happiness and peace exist in it.

What's the worst thing about Dhaka?

Salma: Traffic jam.

Do you believe in astrology?

Salma: A bit.

What do you do when you get angry?

Salma: I gaze at the sky or simply burst into tears.

What do you never leave home without?

Salma: Purse and cell-phone.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSEHD

Divisional folk festival '16 in Mymensingh

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

The two-day Divisional Loksangskriti Utsab-2016 (Folk festival) will begin at Boro Villa of Char Anandipur village in Mymensingh sadar upazila on February 26.

The festival at a rural location is the first of its kind in the country.

The two-day festival titled "Manush Bhojle Sonar Manush Hobi" includes discussions, baul songs and cultural performances.

Organised by Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, Mymensingh district unit, the festival will be inaugurated by noted cultural activist Kamal Lohani.

Eminent academic and writer Prof Jatin Sarker will be the chief discussant at the opening ceremony.

On the second day, Professor Mohit Ul Alam, Vice-Chancellor of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (JKNIU); Dr Shafi Uddin Ahmed, advocate Emdadul



Haque Millat, Udichi joint-secretary Jamshed Anwar Tapon will give addresses at the concluding ceremony.

Udichi Mymensingh president AKM Mujibur Rahman will preside over the event.

Artists of Udichi Kishoreganj, Netrakona and Mymensingh; Bangalok Theatre in Dhaka, and different cultural organisations from Mymensingh and Dhaka will also perform at the festival.

Dance dramas "Mahua", "Sonai Madhab", "Chandraboti Pala" and "Rupchan Sundarir Pala" will be attractions for the audience as well, says Sarwar Kamal Robin, joint-convener of the celebration committee.

Eminent baul artistes of the country, Fakir Shahabuddin, Anshuman Dutta, Sunil Karmaker, Shafil Mandol, Jesmin Akhtar and Mizanur Rahman Milon are also expected to enthrall the audience with their performances.