

"400 Years of Shakespeare" at ULAB

A TRIBUTE TO THE BARD OF AVON

SHREYOSI ENDOW

ULAB's Department of English and Humanities hosted its 2nd Inter-University Student's Conference and Cultural Competition titled "Shakespeare: Then and Now" on April 21 in order to observe the quatercentenary of the Bard's death. The conference was divided into two segments - academic and cultural.

The academic segment commenced with an inspiring speech by special guest, George Mesthos, Cultural Affairs Officer, The American Centre. Students from BRAC University, Daffodil International University, Dhaka University, East West University, Independent University Bangladesh, Jahangirnagar University, North South University, Southeast University, Stamford University and ULAB itself presented academic papers on a variety of ideas stemmed from Shakespeare's works. While some papers focused on the various aspects of the plays themselves, others drew connections between his works and modern day issues like gender discrimination and religious sentiments in the western world.

Professor Shaheen Kabir who adjudicated this session expressed how pleased she was with their overall efforts and lauded the students on their individual successes.

After a tea break, the cultural session kicked off with BRACU's rendition of "A Comedy of Errors". Students of DU then took the stage to tell the fictional account

of a tormented Bengali bride and how female characters from Shakespeare's plays inspired her to take a stand against her oppressor.

EWU's students chose a musical path and performed scenes from Shakespeare's plays while the students from IUB put on

ULAB concluded the competition with their take on three of Shakespeare's greatest soliloquies.

The event was graced by chief guest Barbara Wickham, Director, British Council, while media personality Sara Zaker and Rubana Huq, Managing

interpretations of the playwright's works."

The programme came to an end with the judges awarding Tani Deepavali Nawaz from ULAB the 2nd runners-up, Sabah Tasnia Rowshon and Upoma Sanyal from East West University as the 1st runners-up and Nusrat Tajkia from Jahangirnagar University as the winner of the academic presentation. Barbara Wickham then announced East West University and North South University as the joint winners of the cultural competition.

Shams Rashid Tonmoy, who played the role of the maestro himself in NSU's act, commented on the theme of the conference and how it related to their performance. He said, "We wanted to bring forth the mindset of the society during Shakespeare's time and what influenced him into writing Sonnet 18. Through our dialogues, we also wanted to show how society has changed since then."

With a proud heart, the Vice Chancellor of ULAB, Professor Imran Rahman, concluded, "We wanted to give students from all universities an opportunity to take the stage and share their knowledge about Shakespeare. We have succeeded in our aim and the students have all performed brilliantly in both the academic and cultural segments."

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PHOTO: FARZANA AKTER

their cloaks and hats to play the roles of The Three Witches from Macbeth. NSU presented the Sonnet 18 where the performers tried to showcase through contemporary dance the Bard's emotions while writing this masterpiece. Finally,

Director, Mohammadi Group were the jury members. Reflecting on the performances, Sara Zaker said, "What I found most impressive was how the students did not find it mandatory to stick to the originality of each play but had their very own

A Jazzy Evening with Mohai's Trio

ARMAN R. KHAN

Mohai's Trio - a jazz group based in Dhaka - presented their music publicly for the first time at an event titled "Jazz in Charukola" on the evening of April 23 at Bokultola of the Faculty of Fine Arts (Charukola), University of Dhaka. The event was sponsored by Berger and Space Group.

Mohai's Trio, formed just last month, is led by Mohaimin Karim on the bass, with Imran Ahmed on the guitars and Arjo Shrestho on the drum. Although they are not new to the music scene in general, this was their first performance as a jazz trio.

The show was scheduled to start at 7 p.m. but keeping with the traditions, it got delayed by a short while. Despite a slow beginning that confused the untrained ears, the group picked up momentum soon. Their hour-long set took the eager listeners on a musical journey with both funky and soothing tunes - some tracks picking up pace and slowing down in a matter of moments. The band performed two Chick Corea songs, *Armando's Rhumba* and *Spain*, while the rest of the set list consisted of their original compositions *Ballad Unnamed*, *Ni-Fi*, *Tiles of Times*, *PTO to 35* and *Ballad in 3*.

Renowned Bangladeshi artist and media personality Mustafa Monwar graced the event with his presence. He said that he was impressed by the music of Mohai's Trio. He also mentioned that

Speaking highly of Mohai's Trio, he said, "There's camaraderie among the trio. Their music is spontaneous but not chaotic." He thanked them for their endeavour of practicing this difficult

that such things are already in the making.

The frontman of the trio, Mohaimin Karim, commented, "To be honest, we were a bit disappointed with ourselves for not being able to take what we experienced together in the practice room to the stage. But we got to learn a lot about our sound and how we want it to be. This was an amazing experience for us. We didn't expect such a huge turnout."

He also informed that Mohai's Trio may not be active throughout the year as the drummer, Arjo, studies abroad, and since this is a trio, everyone has a vital role to play. But Mohaimin promised that they'll keep coming back every now and then to satiate the crowds with their jazz.

For those exposed to a jazz concert for the first time, it was a pleasant experience that encourages further exploration of this musical genre. From dreamy eyed, relaxing euphonies to groovy, upbeat tunes that make you want to dance - Mohai's Trio covered it all in their performance, leaving the audience asking for more by the end of the show.



PHOTO: ANTAH CHAKMA

jazz music was quite similar to the classical instrumental music of our region, as it's often improvised with a theme in mind.

genre in Bangladesh. He advised them to incorporate Bangladeshi folk tunes in their jazz music and wished them all the best for the future to which Imran said

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