

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: "Art Against Terrorism - BRAVE HEART"
 Venue: Gallery Cosmos, H-115, Lane-6, New DOHS, Mohakhali
 Date: August 19-31
 Time: 12am-8pm

Nazrul Death Anniversary & Award
 Organiser: Nazrul Institute
 Venue: Bangladesh National Museum (Main Auditorium)
 Date: August 27; Time: 4pm

Hamidur Rahman Puroshkar 2015
 Recipient: Murtaja Baseer
 Venue: Chhayanaut Auditorium, Dhanmondi
 Date: August 27
 Time: 5pm

Solo Painting Exhibition
 Artist: Proshanto Karmakar
 Venue: Bay's Gallery, Radius Centre, 57, Gulshan-1
 Date: Jul 30-Aug 30
 Time: 12am-8pm

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: "Shilpa Aloye Bangabandhu"
 Venue: Gallery 3, National Art Gallery Plaza, BSA
 Date: August 1-31
 Time: 11am-8pm



SUDHIN DAS PRESERVING NAZRUL'S TREASURE TROVES



The importance of proper projection of Nazrul In conversation with Dalia Nausheen

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

Sudhin Das, renowned exponent of Nazrul songs for over half a century, turned 86 on April 30. Looking back, he has almost single-handedly worked painstakingly to authenticate the original notation of Nazrul Sangeet, the "swaralipi". For his untiring commitment, he has achieved a revered status at home and abroad. He has been awarded the Ekushey Padak, Nazrul Gold Medal, Nasiruddin Gold Medal, Zebunnessa-Mahbubullah Trust Gold Medal and the Altaf Mahmood Gold Medal and amongst others. Nearly four decades after Nazrul's death, Sudhin Das is still as committed to his task as he was when he first started. Excerpts from his insightful interview...

It was a sweltering day, when I entered the Nazrul Institute. Sudhin Das was as usual, sitting deeply engrossed behind stacks of old gramophone records and busily instructing a group of young students. There was gleam in his eyes as he noticed my surprise, listening to the popular lyrics of the song, albeit a slightly different tune. "I never tire from teaching the original tunes..." he said. As we settled down, he explained the nature of his work.

"The discs, as you know, are collected through different sources. Most often, they are in such a dilapidated condition, that, it is a painstaking job to even grasp the words, let alone decipher the delicate filigree works of the different musical forms of Nazrul songs. The songs range from classical to the folk, Ghazal to modern and one has to understand the exact technical nuances to carry on with the task," he added.

"After Nazrul was incapacitated by neurological illness in 1942, his works fell into the hands of the so-called intel-

lectuals and well-wishers who took advantage of the situation. From then on these were tampered beyond imagination," says Das.

He went on to add, "I was myself a victim of circumstances. I taught the students the songs which I could easily gather from West Bengal. These works had gained immense popularity by then. But as time went on, we realised that a

lenged the works by Abdul Aziz Al Aman, the author of the notation book.

"Nazrul was very liberal with his songs and allowed eminent artistes to make variations keeping the original form intact. But, he hardly imagined that the immortal songs that he composed in *Bhairabi* would be tuned in *Bagesree*, or some of his classic songs would be sung according to whim. Singers preferred the classical genres where

immense stock of songs and the lack of copyrights was certainly at the core of the problem."

Three authentic notation books titled "Nazrul Swaralipi", "Sur Mukur" (by Nazrul) and "Surlipi" (by Jagat Ghotokl) were printed before Nazrul's illness. A low spot in his life was in 1927, when he faced grave financial crisis. He was deceived by the publishers. He found it difficult to make ends meet and often sold his songs for a meagre amount.

"With such differences of opinion amongst experts, how difficult was it to start this initiative?" I asked.

"Talim Hossain, the founder GS of Nazrul Academy inspired me to work on the authentic notations of Nazrul. I took the initiative to work on this challenging job. But this project failed to continue after five publications, due to a difference of opinion," says Das.

In 1982, the then-Executive Director of Nazrul Institute Md. Mahfuzullah took over and requested Das to work for a project in the Authentication Board of the Nazrul Institute. Stalwarts like Laila Arjumand Banu headed the board for 10 years. Other experts on the field such as Sheikh Luthfur Rahman, Sohrab Hossain, Bedaruddin Ahmed and later on Ferdousi Rahman joined in as members in the Board. Much later, eminent singer Feroza Begum took over as the President of the Board.

"In terms of preserving Nazrul's work, TV and Radio should have a cell from where Nazrul's original songs should be scrutinised. If strict measures are taken for a year the authentic tunes will once again be practised by all," he says.

The National Poet's songs are timeless gems. One can only hope that future artistes and exponents of Nazrul Sangeet would continue to adhere to the original tune, and appreciate the true genius that was Nazrul.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

group with a shallow understanding of Nazrul were adapting the songs, and commercialising it for profit. This group was at the heart of distorting the poet's heritage. It was then that we started our campaign for authenticating Nazrul Sangeet notations."

During 1976-77, a noted publication house of India, had printed a third edition of 900 songs of Nazrul. However, a careful scrutiny revealed that most of the songs in the book were not authentic. It was then that Sudhin Das visited Kolkata and chal-

one could implement their own style. In contrast to Tagore songs which were structured; the singers had no option to change the style or even breathe in between words," says Das. He adds: "I took it as my prime responsibility to work on Nazrul's creative works which was at a risk of extinction."

"Tagore's creations were guarded against distortion under the copyright of Biswa Bharati. However, the same was not applicable for Nazrul's literary pursuits. Nazrul's legendary popularity, his



A scene from the TV programme.

Channel i programme in memory of Nazrul

"Tora Shob Joyodoni Kor"

A CORRESPONDENT

In memory of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, Channel i is airing a television programme titled "Tora Shob Joyodoni Kor." The programme will be telecast tonight at 11:30 pm Conceptualised and directed by Raju Alim, Dr. Leena Taposhi will appear as host and 40 students from the Music Department of Dhaka University will perform three songs. Minister of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Nasrul Hamid and Cultural Affairs Secretary Akhtari Momtaz will appear as guests to talk about the Rebel Poet. Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Professor AAMS Arefin Siddique will recite "Bidhrohi," a poem written by Kazi Nazrul Islam, and Professor Leena Taposhi and Sushmita Anis will render two songs composed by the National Poet.

Maasranga commemorates National Poet with day long programmes

A CORRESPONDENT

To commemorate the 40th death anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, Maasranga Television will host a series of programmes today. Starting at 10:02am, Mustafa Monwar's puppet show "Lichu Chor," based on a story written by Kazi Nazrul Islam will be telecast, followed by a documentary screening at 10:30am titled "Nazrul-er Muktobe."

At 12:15pm, "Kuhu," a telefilm based on the story "Badhonhara" will be screened. Directed by Nahid Ahmed Piyal, the telefilm casts Sadiya Islam

Mou, Shams Shumon, Dipa Khandakar, Maznun Mizan, and more. The telefilm will be followed by a magazine programme at 6:30 pm titled "Shonchita." The programme will feature artistes Kona and Polok, dancer Sohel and Shokh, and reciter Ahkamullah. Next is another programme titled "Amare Debona Bhulite" at 11:00pm hosted by Jayanta Chattopadhyay, with Nazrul exponents Shalahuddin Ahmed and Priyanka Gope performing Nazrul Sangeet. The day long program will conclude with a single episode TV play titled "Shiulimala" at 12:02am, directed by Rehman Khalil with Bhabna, Sayeed Babu and others are cast of the play.



DRIVING NAZRUL SONGS FORWARD

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

Bright and hibiscus-red, like the morning sun you are rising, you the poets of days to come. - "Na Asha Diner Kobir Protir", translated by Mohammad Nurul Huda.

Kazi Nazrul Islam has left behind a legacy of not only songs and poems, but also a revolutionary stance, a call for social change. His diverse compositions have inspired contemporary Nazrul exponents in various ways. Today upcoming artiste Chhanda Chakraborty shares with The Daily Star how Nazrul has inspired her throughout her life.

Nazrul Sangeet is renowned for its diverse genres- which genre has inspired your creativity most?

Chhanda: Nazrul has songs that span around 36 genres. Among them the raagas, ghazals, kabbo geeti have been very inspirational to me, and I have tried to base my artistic journey on them.

How can society make Nazrul's philosophies relevant to our times?

Chhanda: There has always been social conflict, and the social issues that were prevalent around the time fueled the Rebel Poet and allowed him to construct his Sangeet canon and poetry. But in



Chhanda Chakraborty

order to understand his moral vision one must study him intensively, and dig deep in order to understand them in their context. I belong to our current generation, and I can say that his works and legacy are now more readily available compared to the times of our predecessors. We have training opportunities and rich archives, thanks

to the Nazrul Institute. We can make use of these in order to deepen our understanding as well as find scope for improvement. Our mentors who are renowned classical Nazrul exponents, such as Sadya Afreen Mallick, are now finding innovative ways to involve the youth.

How can Nazrul artistes play an instrumental role in spreading the legacy of Nazrul Sangeet and his other works?

Chhanda: I study Nazrul academically, because I felt that being involved with Sangeet is not enough. It is also a good way to have proper comprehension of Nazrul to help enhance our other skills, as well as find new ways to spread Nazrul's legacy. We must have a deep, heartfelt understanding of the songs that we sing, and that is our primary artistic responsibility. I have completed my MPhil from Dhaka University, and am also honing my skills as a singer. We must also practice perfection in pitch and tone, in order to do his work justice. Due to living in a technologically driven age, we are a restless generation. To keep up with the pace we must not stop searching for new ways to bring Nazrul to the forefront.