

WHAT'S ON

Bengal Classical Music Festival
 Organiser: Bengal Foundation
 Venue: Army Stadium
 Date: November 24-28
 Time: 7pm-5am everyday

Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Sands of Time by Jamal Ahmed
 Venue: Edge Gallery, Bay's Edgewater, Gulshan-2
 Date: Nov 12-25
 Time: 10am-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
 Soul to Soul
 Artist: Tarshito
 Venue: Bangladesh National Museum
 Date: November 19-30
 Time: 9:30am-4:30pm

Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Urban Slight
 Artist: Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed
 Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, Dhanmondi
 Date: Nov 18-Dec 3
 Time: 12Noon-8pm

Int'l Group Art Exhibit
 Venue: Gallery Cosmos, New DOHS, Mohakhali
 Date: Nov 27-Dec 26
 Time: 12noon-8pm

Theatre
 Play: Payer Awaj Pawa Jaye
 Venue: Dr. Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium, Mahila Samity Mancha
 Date: Nov 25
 Time: 6:30pm

Classical Music has the power to change society -- Abul Khair



PHOTO: STAR

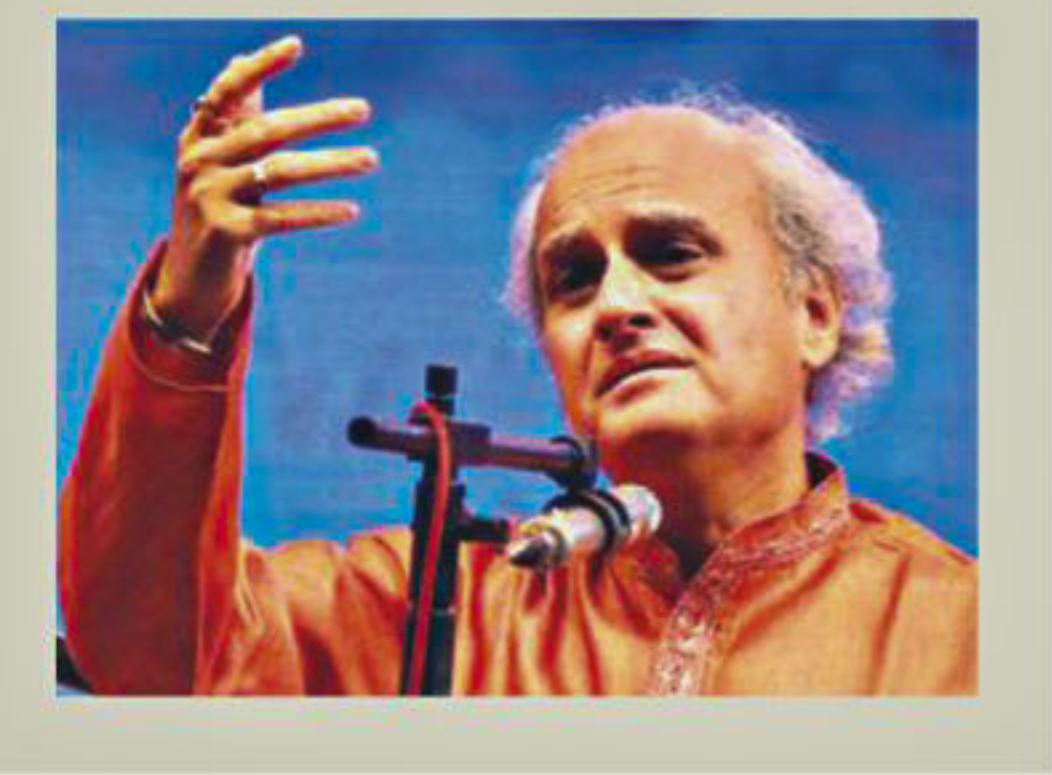
ZAHANGIR ALOM
 Eminent art and music connoisseur Abul Khair, Chairman of Bengal Foundation, embarked on a dream of reaching classical music to the masses, and with the Bengal Classical Music Festival, that opened its fifth edition last night at the Army Stadium, that dream has come a long way. The Daily Star caught up with him in a recent conversation.
How do you think this grand event of classical music can help shape the collective taste of a nation?
 Abul Khair: With both the purity of classical music as well as the fact that it outlines the basic principles of music practiced in the region, it may be rightfully perceived as the foundation on which to build the practice of music in general. The different types of music practiced in the region are mostly Raga-based. One can only truly begin to appreciate and develop a taste for better and refined things in life once exposed to it, so by providing an opportunity for the people to come and listen to music which is so pure, we are confident that it will help mould the intellect in a certain way. I strongly feel that it has almost a cleansing effect and it would be difficult to influence these people

and make them do anything which is wrong or immoral. It is music which has the power to change society and that is the power of classical music.
 The idea behind hosting a festival of this scale had the intention of not only reviving the practice of classical music in Bangladesh, but also was always backed by the idea of providing a platform to facilitate the proper practice of it. The unprecedented success of Bengal Classical Music Festival in its first year led to the thought of properly reviving the practice of classical music in Bangladesh, and in 2014, Bengal Foundation formed the Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay, an academy for South Asian classical performing arts, with emphasis on music. I am proud to say that within a short time, students have taken a keen interest to learn, to the extent that this year, three groups of students of Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay are performing on the same platform graced by the likes of Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Vidushi Girija Devi, Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Ustad Rashid Khan and many other legendary names. The impact of the Festival is therefore quite apparent in how it has enkindled the passion for classical music. It has always been my belief that an educated appreciation of art and culture are the best moulds for any

intellect and a person who has a love and understanding of the arts cannot really be pulled into a lower realm of thought.
What is your message to classical music lovers at the upcoming festival?
 Abul Khair: I had the privilege of being tutored in art and culture by my uncle and my mother, and it is because of them that I have had access to the thoughts of countless great minds. In retrospect, I have often thought that perhaps, those discourses sketching the backdrop of my childhood may have carved the first mark of passion and appreciation for the arts within me. Bengal Foundation stands for more than just a Trust involved in promoting the arts. The genre is usually termed as Indian classical music more because we were all once a part of one India and has more to do with simple geography than anything else. This is a genre of music that belongs to the whole sub-continent and music seems to effortlessly flow in our veins. I cannot speak of the success of the festival without mentioning the audience and every single artiste has spoken highly about the love and connection they have felt with such an appreciative audience. It is our pleasure to be able to present a festival of this kind to people who appreciate and understand it.

PERFORMING TONIGHT AT BENGAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FEST

- Odissi dance by Vidushi Madhavi Mudgal & Arushi Mudgal
- Group tabla recital by Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay
- Khayal vocals by Priyanka Gope
- Santoor by Rahul Sharma
- Group vocal presentation by Mohammad Shueb and others
- Sitar by Purbayan Chatterjee
- Khayal vocals by Pt. Ulhas Kashalkar
- Instrumental jugalbandi by Pt. Ronu Majumdar (flute) and U Rajesh (mandolin)



SHIMU stays true to the profession

SHAH ALAM SHAZU
 A glamorous face on the small screen, Sumaiya Shimu has been acting for over a decade. Besides, she has ventured into modeling as well. She has impressed many by her works and still continues shooting for TV plays. The actress talked about her profession and more in a recent chat with The Daily Star.

Tell us about your series "Somlata" that is currently being aired.
 Shimu: Under the direction of Amlan Biswas, the drama serial is telecast on Maasranga twice a week. It is a story based on a struggler who takes shelter in a relative's house with her father and leads the two-member family by teaching children at a school. I'm getting a good response for my performance.
You have been irregular in serials lately. Why is that?
 Shimu: I recently lost my father and due to his demise, I had to go through a difficult time, but now I'm back to work. Besides, I have started networking with others. I hope I will go back to my previous track with lights, camera and action. In the meantime, I did a one-hour play.
What are your expectations from life?
 Shimu: I have been in the profession a long time. I never do any work based just on glamour. I am comfortable to do all kinds of role and due to this directors can trust me, which is a great achievement for me. At

NEWS bytes

"Moana" headed for \$88m opening

Disney's animated adventure "Moana" is dominating North American movie-going with as much as \$88 million for the five-day Thanksgiving holiday period, early estimates showed.
 Brad Pitt's "Allied" appears to be performing respectably with around \$19 million for the five days while Billy Bob Thornton's "Bad Santa 2" is heading for a decent return in the \$12 million range. Meanwhile, Warren Beatty's "Rules Don't Apply" is generating only modest interest with about \$5 million for the holiday



period.
 "Moana" opened with plenty of box office power by taking in \$2.6 million at Tuesday night preview showings. The film may even match the all-time Thanksgiving record of \$93.4 million for the five days, set three years ago by Disney's "Frozen". It's the third animated film released this year by Disney following "Zootopia" and "Finding Dory" — both which topped \$1 billion in world-wide grosses.
 "Moana" has been embraced by reviewers with a 99% "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes. The film introduces Auli'i Cravalho as the voice of Moana and features Dwayne Johnson as Maui with music by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the creator of "Hamilton".



Sudeshna Swayamprabha Tathoi



Aporajita Mustafa PHOTO: STAR

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN
 Munmun Ahmed and Sharmila Banerjee are names that need no introduction among the country's classical dance aficionados. Today, their daughters carry forward their reputation, but the young dancers, like any other twenty-something individuals, are also juggling their dance careers along with pursuing their university degrees, family, and social lives. Today these young artistes, Aporajita Mustafa and Sudeshna Swayamprabha Tathoi speak to The Daily Star about how they had prepared for their performances at the Bengal Classical Music Festival, and other aspects of their lives.
Being daughters of eminent dancers, what lessons from your mothers do you hold most dear?
 Aporajita: My mother has taught me to never settle for anything less than what I dream for, whether in dance or anything else.
 Tathoi: There is no end to learning, even if you are an accomplished dancer. We must set goals that go on forever so that we can keep being good at it. She taught me to never stop learning, and to surrender myself to my mentor.
You are both performing in your mothers' groups at this year's Bengal Classical Music Festival. How have the preparations been?
 Aporajita: We have been practicing for three months, for three to four days a week. I was also handling all the relevant paperwork as well as attending classes at university, so it has been quite challenging!
 Tathoi: I was in India on a scholarship, and there were a few other students with me. The choreography was taught and presented to us before we left. We rehearsed in Kolkata since, with the majority of the team practicing in Dhaka.
Tathoi is trained in both Bharatnatyam and Manipuri; Aporajita is a Kathak dancer. Are these dance forms of your own choosing?
 Aporajita: I started learning Kathak and Bharatnatyam from a very young age, and have been watching my mother dance since I was born. I have also been exposed to other classical as well as Western dance forms, but Kathak gives me this energy other dance forms don't.
 Tathoi: I was introduced to these forms as a young child since my mother used to practice and teach them. There was another dance I was exposed to, called the creative dance form introduced by Uday Shankar. My mother was a student of his institute - Uday Shankar India Culture Centre, and so was I for a brief period. It focuses on building a body language for dance rather than going directly into it, and that is what I love so much. I have also been training in Odissi, which has helped me immensely in my growth as a dancer.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

present, it's not possible to play the role of a teenager but I want to do good work.
Are you inclined to roles with social messages?
 Shimu: In many cases, yes. TV plays are not just entertainment but also uphold many social issues and we can take a lesson from them. I also have some commitments to myself and always focus on the script and character.
Many complain the good dramas are rare to come by these days. Do you think so?
 Shimu: It's a totally wrong view, because if you see our technology is very advanced. Besides, our directors and scriptwriters are more skilled than before. Definitely, we can see good plays at present. Many people pass such comments without even watching the dramas.
Are you willing to play characters based on famous novels and stories?
 Shimu: I have always wanted to do literature-based roles and still dream of playing such characters. Like, I played the role of Mayaboti based on noted writer Humayun Ahmed's story "Mayaboti"; that was a great experience.
How difficult it is to be an actress?
 Shimu: It is really difficult; acting does not depend on your will. It is even more difficult to become an artiste. To become one, you must be committed to acting. I love this profession a lot and want to be in the arena till my last days.