

17th Asian Art Biennale
Bangladesh
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala
Academy
Date: December 1-31
Time: 11am-8pm



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



Group Exhibition
Title: Terracotta Plaque
Venue: Zainul Gallery-1, FFA, DU
Date: Nov 28-Dec 3
Time: 11am-8pm daily



Solo Print exhibition
Title: Deep Print
Artist: Wakilur Rahman
Venue: Gallery Twenty One,
751 Satmasjid Rd, Dhanmondi
Date: Nov 29-Dec 16
Time: 12noon-8pm



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



THE DAWN AFTER: Treasured times with Pt. Ajoy Chakrabarty.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Magical moments: Lunch with Ajoy Chakrabarty

KASHFIA BILLAH, Princeton, NJ

November 27, 2016 will remain forever memorable. The day had dawned with the engulfing melody of classical music – last act of the night – at the Bengal Classical Music Festival. Returning from the programme with the beautiful renditions still tingling my ears, I was extremely excited about the lunch invitation in a few hours at the home of noted singer Sadya Afreen Mallick (my aunt) and her husband Faruq Hasan Mallick. After hardly sleeping for two hours, it was time to get ready to go for the eagerly awaited lunch. It was wonderful to see my family and old friends Kanta Jamil, Milia Sabed, Dalia Nausheen, Nazia Jabeen, Zia Arastu, Zaheed Reza Noor of Prothom Alo and the Arts and Entertainment team of The Daily Star at the lunch along with young talented singers Aloke Sen and Tanveer Alam Shawjeeb. Of course photos and selfies followed the usual "ki khobor!"

I noticed Sadya running downstairs to welcome someone. In a few minutes as we stood by the door, the tall, dignified artiste extraordinaire Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty walked in. An aura of radi-

ance seemed to permeate the room. As we were introduced, he folded his hands to greet us. We all crowded around him as he sat down, cameras clicking, selfies flicking in conjunction with introductions and conversations about the ongoing music fest.

Sadya mentioned the enthusiastic crowd at the music fest, at times critiquing the programmes. The self-effacing Pandit responded, "Good – that's the way it should be." He spoke about music, the importance of understanding the words of songs, and rendering with the right emotions which creates the completeness of the melody.

Upon request, he related an anecdote from his life. He said that in his 40s he was extensively performing all over the world. Prior to every journey for a show he always met with his guru. Before one such performance, he wanted to meet his guru before he left but was not able to and that yearning remained with him. As he boarded the plane he saw his guru boarding the plane also and as he met him in the plane, his guru said, "I know you were wanting to see me."

Chakrabarty ended his story by saying he had numerous similar experiences in his

life which made him feel that if you want something desperately, God is waiting to give that to you.

We moved on to the dining table which had an elaborate spread: Ilish machh, chingri, taki machh and chingri-bhotta, papaya salad, vegetables, chicken roast, mutton curry, polao, chhithpitha to name a few. As the conversation flowed at the table, Chakrabarty talked about the unparalleled hospitality of Bangladeshis – the remnant of that warmth prevailing on the other side of Bengal amongst those who migrated from the erstwhile East Bengal, including his family – that ensures that guests never leave without having a meal.

The conversation returned to music and he solely credited Kazi Nazrul Islam for the spread of classical music in Bangla music. I mentioned his live performance in New Jersey where he sang the Nazrul Sangeet, "Shoshone Jagichche Shyama Ma" which he sang in his unbelievable, ethereal style forever etched in my memory. His response was even more surreal: "I can't take credit; it's Kazi Shaheb's composition and Raag Malkauns bandish which made the song." I was speechless at his response but later realised that I should

have said that the greatness of Kazi Nazrul Islam's composition in Raag Malkauns reached the pinnacle due to Pt. Ajoy Chakrabarty's rendition.

After lunch, the pandit listened to performances by Aloke Sen, Tanveer Alam Shawjeeb and Dalia Nausheen. He spoke of the importance of accentuating the meaning of the words by pouring emotions into the song. He expressed his appreciation of Dalia Nausheen's melodious voice.

It was time for him to go and rest before his late night performance at the music fest. As we prepared to bid him farewell, he told us in no uncertain terms, his views on paying respect, "Remember, you can always respect others, but don't forget to respect yourself, because He resides in all of us through His omnipresence".

It was my great fortune to have had the opportunity to spend time with and listen to the profound words of this legendary classical artiste, an inspiration and guru of Indian music worldwide, the ever humble, soft spoken – Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty.

The writer is a noted singer and an engineer by profession.



Documentary "Seemantarekha" Tanvir Mokammel looks for crowd-funding

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Veteran film director Tanvir Mokammel has been among the pioneers of the parallel cinema in Bangladesh in early 1990s. And now he has embarked on a project to introduce the trend of crowd-funding to finance film making.

The director's latest documentary "Seemantarekha" (Border) dealing with the effects of the 1947 Partition of the Indian subcontinent has got stuck due to a fund crunch, forcing him to resort to crowd-funding of the project with a slew of incentives to potential contributors.

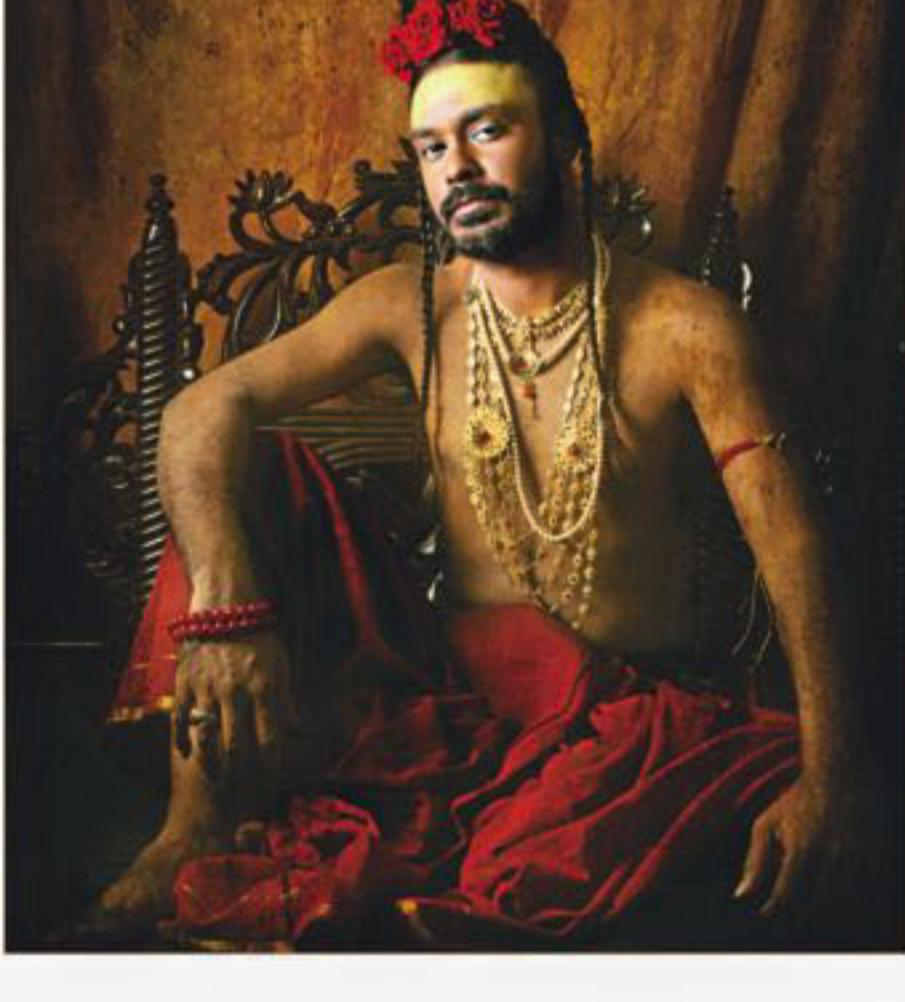
In an "open letter" to cinema lovers posted on his Facebook and shared by some others, Mokammel says 80 per cent of the shoot of the film in locales in India and Bangladesh has been completed but the remaining part has got stuck due to financial crisis.

Besides the 20 percent of the shooting, the documentary needs editing, background music and other post-production work to be completed, he says.

While the total budget for the documentary has been pegged at Taka 18 lakh, Taka 12 lakh has already been spent and the remaining part needs to be arranged, the director says adding that crowd-funding was resorted to since no commercial producer would come forward to back a project like "Seemantarekha."

Mokammel says he wants to introduce crowd-funding in Bangladesh, a trend that is well established in the West, and is hopeful of getting a positive response.

In a bid to attract crowd-funding, Mokammel has listed five incentives to potential contributors including recording with gratitude the names of those who contribute 125 Dollars or more in the title sequence of the film, a DVD signed by him of the documentary and 20 invitation cards for the premiere of the film.



The Longest Night of the Year screened at JU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On November 30, the film "The Longest Night of the Year" was screened at Jahangirnagar University. Written by Abdullah al Muktadir and directed by Dipa Yasmin, the film is an alternative take on the myth of Radha and Krishna. Starring Shaon Shah and Munni Talukdar, the scenes breathtakingly capture the mythical elements of the narrative whilst breaking the barriers of social conventions. The film is produced and released by Epiphany.

The film also marks the directorial debut of Dipa Yasmin, an artist and photographer who received training from Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, said, "The story was originally written by my friend, and I never had plans to make a film," she said, "But I was so taken by

the mythological journey outlined so beautifully that I could not resist."

When asked about the inspiration behind the project, the artist said, "In the traditional myth, Radha waits for Krishna. In the film I wanted to reverse the gendered roles by having Krishna waiting for Radha. Another thing I sought to do was to deconstruct the conventional image of the "goddess" and the "witch" in the portrayal of Radha; she is not a conformingly beautiful goddess one would expect to see. I have decided to reverse the myth that has been written from the perspective of man, and undo the male gaze that has become the norm in our society."

Guests at the screening included artistic director of Shadonna Lubna Marium and faculty of Jahangirnagar University.



SOULFUL RENDITION OF SOIL Terracotta Plaque exhibit ends today at Zainul Gallery

ZAHANGIR ALOM

On an invitation from the Department of Ceramics (DOC), Faculty of Fine Art (FFA), University of Dhaka (DU), Professor Goutam Das, Head of the Department of Design, Visva-Bharati University, Shantiniketan, India came to DOC to conduct a week long "Terracotta Plaque" workshop in March 2016. Both the teachers and students of DOC took part in the workshop and engaged in their distinctive research-based artistic efforts to create works out of traditional trend using local soil.

A six-day exhibition, featuring the outcomes of the workshop, is now on display at Zainul Galley-1, FFA, DU. The workshop conductor Professor Goutam Das along with six teachers -- Dr. Azharul Islam Chanchal, Md. Robiul Islam, Swapan Kumar Sikder, Debasish Pal, Muhammad Subbir-Al Razy and Chinmoye Sikder -- of DOC are showcasing two works each while seven MFA students -- Md. Shahabuddin Shek, Md. Anisul Haque, Farjana Islam, Tanjila Sumaiya Siddique, Boijoyanti Sarkar, Mousumi Akter and Mabia Akter -- of the department are exhibiting one work each.

Eminent artist Professor Rafiqun Nabi, as chief guest, while Architect Dr. Abu Sayeed M Ahmed, Engineer Mainul Abedin and Professor Shishir Bhattacharya, as special guests, inaugurated the exhibition on November 28.

The show is evocative of soulful rendition of soil. The artist's portrayal of beauty and diversity of nature, folk heritage, mythical connotations, life and its multifaceted expressions is praiseworthy.

Goutam Das, coming out of the conventional concepts of Terracotta, has interestingly presented fragmented forms of pottery like a teapot, jug, mug and kettle in one of his works. He has pulled out the flexible soil and pasted it beside to give a decorative motif in another work "Nature".

Dr. Chanchal has incorporated relief pro-



"Life in a Frame" by Tanjila Siddique.

cess using dark colours to distinguish his subjects from surface of the work "Expression-1". He uses light and shades with various textures.

Robiul Islam has kept the original colours and simplicity of the traditionally burnt terracotta. Graceful oriental lines, folk and natural forms are the main characteristics of his works. He has kept the flexibility of soil intact, the distinctive feature of his works.

Swapan Kumar Sikder follows the conventional process of making his ceramics. To distinguish his works from the surface, he just uses the traditional colour that is popularly used by the potters of Bangladesh.

Debasish Pal pursues many techniques like stoneware mural to produce his works. He also darkens some surface of his work to add depth to it. The prime feature of his works is to relay a message attaching screen print to his terracotta works.

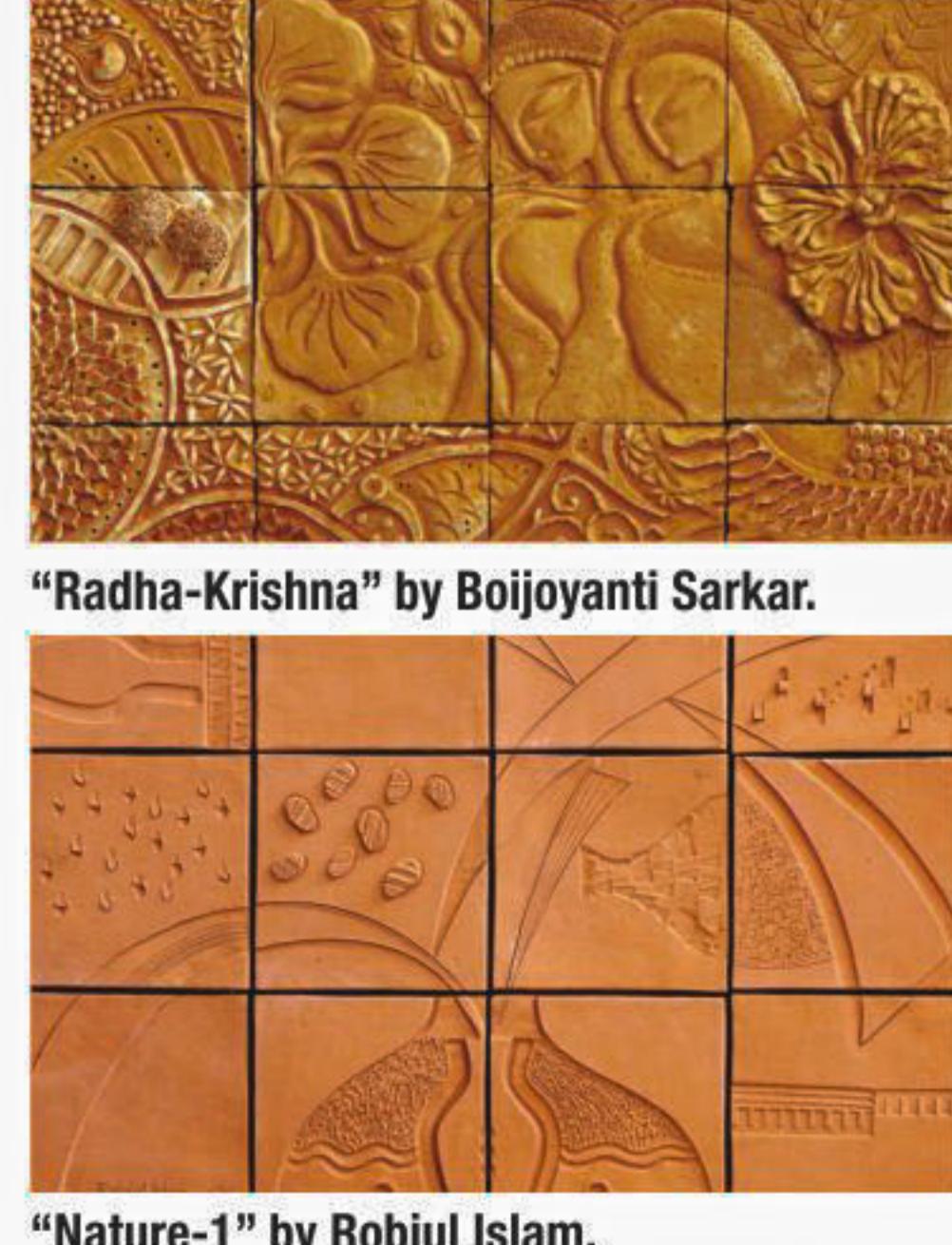
Subbir-Al Razy has worked differently. He

kept almost all the slabs flat with geometric textures and presented floral motifs and celebration of nature in his experimental work. Chinmoye Sikder has portrayed her works using folk motifs and animals like horse and elephant.

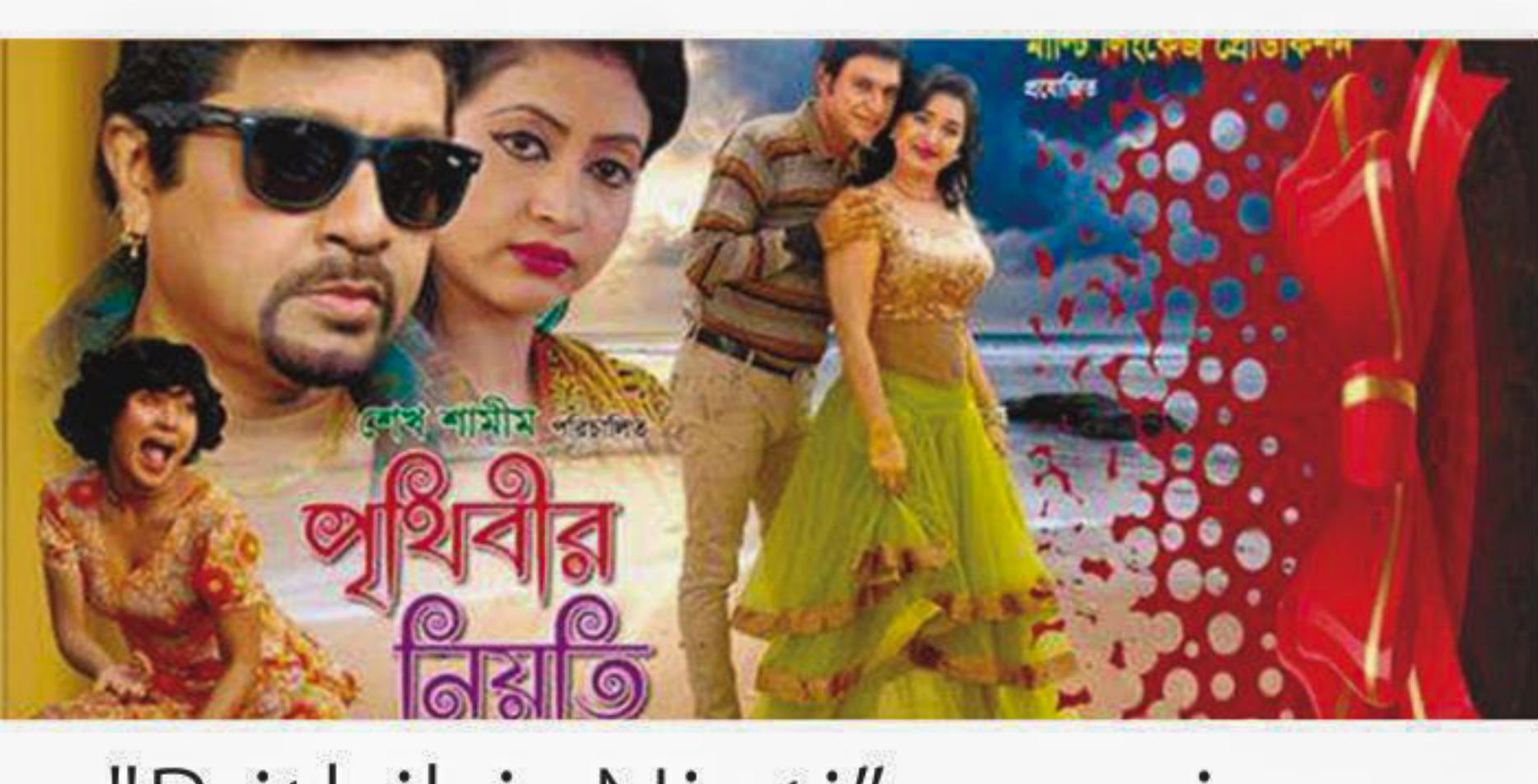
Shahabuddin has depicted an idea of dissent through a spirited poem of Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Tanjila Siddique has portrayed "Life in a Frame" that incorporates four female figures using coil technique in her terracotta works. The concept was developed from the Dokra casting method. She has used colours, symbols and forms to transform her work into a painting quality or a work of wooden craft that resembles the inertia of life.

Boijoyanti Sarkar's "Radha-Krishna", Anisul Haque's "Rising Sun" and Farjana Islam's "Fish" are the fascinating features of the exhibition that ends today at 8pm.



"Nature-1" by Robiul Islam.



"Prithibir Nioti" premieres

CORRESPONDENT

A story-based film "Prithibir Nioti" premiered on December 2 throughout the country. The film casts action hero Rubel, singer-actor Rashed Morshed, actresses Rabina Brishti, Sanjana and Asha Anmona. Veteran actors Siraj Haidar, Bhabita, Ilias Kobra, Amir Siraji and others enact different roles in the film.

Popular singers - Momtaz, Baby Naznin, SI Tutul and protagonist Rashed

Morshed, came to the limelight acting opposite Shabnoor in the film "Bhalobasha Saint Martin", directed by Shahidul Islam Khokon.

Distributed by Asha Production, the film has been directed by Sheikh Shamim and produced by Multi Linkage Productions Limited.

The proceeds of the film will be used for ailing artistes and singers of the film industry, orphans and physically challenged people.

Morshed, came to the limelight acting opposite Shabnoor in the film "Bhalobasha Saint Martin", directed by Shahidul Islam Khokon.

Distributed by Asha Production, the film has been directed by Sheikh Shamim and produced by Multi Linkage

Productions Limited.

The proceeds of the film will be used for ailing artistes and singers of the film industry, orphans and physically challenged people.