

WHAT'S ON

17th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh

Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Date: December 1-31

Time: 11am-8pm

Kathak Dance Recital

Title: "50-20 Kathak Jugabandi"

Artists: Munmun Ahmed, Aporajita Mustafa & Her Fellow Students

Venue: Chhayanaut Auditorium, Dhanmondi

Date: December 27; Time: 6pm

Performance Art Week

Organiser: Bengal Foundation

Venues: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct & Gyantapash Abdur Razzaq Bidyapeeth

Date: Dec 27-30

Time: 4pm-7pm Daily

Solo Photography Exhibition

The Beauty of 18th

Photographer: ATL Aakash

Venue: Drik Gallery

Date: Dec 26-28; Time: 3pm-8pm

Group Painting Exhibition

Title: Jolob - 2

Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka

Date: December 17-29

Time: 3pm-8pm

Esho Gaan Shikhi and Ferdausi, the inseparable duo

SYEDA FARYA RASUL

Who wouldn't recall humming along with "Jadoor pencil, amar thakto jodi ekta jadoor pencil" or "Timi macher naam to jano, jano ki taar porichoy" when it played on BTV? Over the course of a staggering five decades, the iconic show "Esho Gaan Shikhi" has become synonymous to the melodious voice of the elegant lady hosting the show- the legendary Ferdausi Rahman.

"Esho Gaan Shikhi" celebrates its 51st anniversary today, and The Daily Star recently spoke to the noted artiste, without whom the show wouldn't be born.

She first named it "Sangeet Shikhar Ashor", which first aired on December 27, 1966, the same year that BTV started, and the renowned Abida Sultana was one of her first students. The show was later renamed "Esho Gaan Shikhi" to give it a child-like rhythm with a broader appeal that Rahman longed for.

The puppet concept was brought into a reality in our country by her, after her trips to London and Australia in 1966 and '75. Rahman's



PHOTO: STAR

good friend, the British Silvia Mortaza residing in Dhaka made Mithu and Monti for the show and even volunteered to lend her voice. Later on, her youngest son Rubaiyat and Shekhor also gave voice to Mithu and Monti. Currently, it is through the voices of Nirmol and Deepak, speaking as the voices of Mithu and Monti.

Her initiatives to make "Esho Gaan Shikhi" the programme that it is now, reflects her devotion towards children and music. "Esho Gaan Shikhi" is of the same age as BTV", she said, her eyes full of pride and

happiness. "I had my first performance when I was only six years old", she recalled, adding "I remember all the difficulties I had to face as a child artiste, even after having a father like mine. That's why I feel so deeply about 'Esho Gaan Shikhi' and the children who join the programme. They are like my very own".

Being the only daughter of the great Abbasuddin Ahmed, she was born with music flowing through her veins. Her mother too was a music lover, but her reverence towards her spouse was far greater,

and so she refrained from pursuing music as a career. Rahman was born on June 28, 1941, has two elder brothers: former Chief Justice Mustafa Kamal and singer Mustafa Zaman Abbasi. She is married to Rezaur Rahman, an engineer and industrialist and has two sons Rubaiyat and Razin Rahman, and five grandchildren whom she adores.

Ferdausi Rahman's galore of awards ranges from the Lahore Cine Journalist Awards 1963 to Lifetime Achievement Award 2008 and The Daily Star-Standard Chartered Celebrating Life's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2013.

Currently, she is busy as the President of Nazrul Sangeet Shilpi Parishad and her autobiography that she wants to finish very soon. She has also been managing the Abbasuddin Sangeet Academy for the last 25 years at Banani, where she welcomes students of all ages. Talking to The Daily Star, she emphasized that her academy is a shade different as she is not only concentrating on music but also on performance etiquettes which many artistes today overlook.



Bengal's Performance Art Week begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Visual Arts Programme of Bengal Foundation is set to hold Performance Art Week 2016 featuring 20 performances by artists of diverse backgrounds. The event will begin today at 4pm at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi in the capital.

The participating artists are Palash Bhattacharjee, Joydeb Roaja, Jewel A Rob, Hasna Hena Porosh, Sanad Kumar Biswas, Sharkar Nasrin Toontoon, Nazia Andaleeb Preema, Arpita Singha Lopa, Efata Razowana Reya, Sumana Akter, Reetu Sattar, Niloofar Chaman, Waley Jaff, Meherun Akter, Atish Saha, Emran Sohel, Afsana Sharmin, Farah Naz Moon, Sanjay Chakraborty and Ashim Halder Sagor. The featured artists have been selected from a number of applications submitted in response to an open call.

The programme has been organised with an aim to looking into the multiple complexities of this ephemeral medium through discussions, performances and exhibitions. What role does it play in cultural and political activism as opposed to white-cube spaces? How do artists materialise this non-material art? How does this medium contribute to the evolution of new languages? These are some of the questions that the performance art week seeks to answer.

Performance Art Week 2016 will also attempt to have a comprehensive look on the role of performance art in contemporary Bangladesh.

The programme will take place at three different venues -- Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts (Dhanmondi) on December 27 and December 30, Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct (The Daily Star Centre) on December 28 and Gyantapash Abdur Razzaq Bidyapeeth (Dhanmondi) on December 29. Programmes will start at 4pm and continue till 7pm, and is open to all.

Featuring documentations of Performance Art Week 2016, the Visual Arts Programme will also hold an exhibition titled "ephemeral: perennial" exploring the mediums and possibilities of documenting performance art. The exhibition will be inaugurated by Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam and art critic Professor Md. Abul Monsur at Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct on January 6. The show, open from 11am to 7pm daily, will continue till February 25.

HIS LAST CHRISTMAS... Pop legend George Michael passes away

English singer, songwriter, and record producer George Michael, who rose to fame with the group Wham!, passed away on Christmas Day of a heart failure. He was 53.

In a statement to the BBC, the star's publicist said: "It is with great sadness that we can confirm our beloved son, brother and friend George passed away peacefully at home over the Christmas period. The family would ask that their privacy be respected at this difficult and emotional time. There will be no further comment at this stage."

Both as a solo artist and with Wham!, Michael collected 10 No. 1 singles on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, including "Faith", "Father Figure", "One More Try" and "Careless Whisper". The latter cut was credited to Wham! featuring Michael, while Wham! notched two more No. 1s: "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" and "Everything She Wants".

Born Georgios Kyriacos Panayiotou in London on June 25, 1963, Michael showed his musical aspirations early on while attending schools in the towns of Bushey and Kingsbury in the United Kingdom. It was at the former where he would meet future Wham! band-mate Andrew Ridgeley. The two would form a ska band called The Executive, though it was short-lived. Michael also spent time busking on the London Underground, where he performed songs by Elton John, David Bowie and The Beatles.

Michael and Ridgeley formed Wham! In 1981 and released their debut album, "Fantastic", in July 1983, which quickly shot up to the top of the British charts.

The follow-up album "Make It Big" was released on Oct. 23, 1984, and reached No. 1 in the US, UK, Japan and multiple territories with lead track "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go" sitting at the top spot on the US Hot 100 chart for three weeks. That album also included the singles "Freedom", "Everything She Wants" and the ballad "Careless Whisper", a quantifiable smash that reached No. 1 in the US and stayed there for three weeks.

Other major Wham! feats include a history-making tour of China in 1985, marking the first time a western act performed in the country. Wham! officially split in 1986, releasing a farewell single, "Edge of Heaven". Also in 1986 came the mega-hit "Last Christmas" from the band's last album, "Music From The Edge of Heaven".

Michael's solo endeavors extended beyond Wham! to include an appearance on the all-star charity single "Do They Know It's Christmas?" in 1984 and a duet with Aretha Franklin, "I Knew You Were Waiting" in 1987, which won a Grammy Award in 1988 for Best R&B Performance - Duo or Group with Vocal. But it was his first solo album "Faith", which was released in 1987, which catapulted him to a virtually unprecedented level of fame.

The "Faith" title track would lock in what would later become one of the best-selling albums of all time. George Michael sold an estimated 20.7 million albums in the US over the course of his career -- combining both his solo work and that of Wham! The album spent 51 non-consecutive weeks in the top 10 of the Billboard 200, eventually selling more than 10 million copies in the US, and winning the Grammy for Album of the Year in 1989.

Appearances on UK television shows with the likes of Elton John (like on the duet "Don't Let the Sun Go Down On Me") kept Michael in the public eye for the rest of the 1990s and into the 2000s. In 2006, Michael embarked on his first world tour in 15 years, called "25 Live". It coincided with a two-disc album called "Twenty Five", released in 2008.

Michael would become more reclusive as the years went on, but his pop culture relevance would not dissipate. Throughout his life, Michael remained active in many charities, performing concerts to raise money a myriad of causes, including HIV research.



Source: Billboard



Members of the Rtv family cut a cake, celebrating the 11th anniversary of the TV channel, at the Bengal Multimedia Studio yesterday. Cultural personalities, patrons and members of the channel were present in the daylong celebration.



"Aynabaji" (left) was the crowd favourite by far, while "Oggatonama" (right) got rave critical reviews. Shuvo and Tisha were two of the busiest stars on the silver screen (below).



The year in Dhallywood Golden days of Dhaka cinema coming back

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Cine-goers in Bangladesh got a taste of a number of excellent films this year, as 2016 showed promising signs of getting Dhallywood back on track.

Amitabh Reza's "Ayanabaji" easily topped the buzz, with an unprecedented run at the cinemas and bringing people of all ages and classes to the theatres. The film went on to be released in Europe, North America and Australia, and even after three months of release, is still on the screen.

On the other hand, Tauquir Ahmed's "Oggatonama", based on a true story, was critically acclaimed at home and abroad. Although it did not draw the audience to the theatre as expected, it saw a resurgence of sorts after it was available on YouTube, garnering praise from viewers. Besides, the director began shooting for his next film "Halda".

Animesh Aich's directorial debut "Zero Degree" was also quite successful, despite a relatively unsettled period in the country at the time of its release. He is now shooting "Bhoyonkor Sundor".

Noted filmmaker Mostofa Sarwar Farooki made big headlines when he cast Bollywood and Hollywood star Irrfan Khan for his upcoming project "Doob", alongside Tisha, Rokeya Prachi and Kolkata's Parno Mitra. There was also some controversy



when there were reports that it is based on eminent wordsmith Humayun Ahmed's life, but the director denied it.

Giasuddin Selim, who's "Monpura" was a commercial and critical success, is making a comeback. His latest film "Swopnojal" went on floor this year, and is nearing completion.

Meher Afroz Shaon made her debut as director with "Krishnopokkho", based on Humayun Ahmed's novel. Filmgoers got to see Mahiya Mahi in a new kind of character opposite Riaz.

Abu Shahed Emon's "Jalaler Golpo" won a number of awards at international film festivals all

across the world. "Under Construction" by Rubaiyat Ahmed also did rounds of the film festival circuit, and Abdullah Mohammad Saad finished the year with two big wins at Singapore International Film Festival for "Live From Dhaka".

In the commercial film scene, Mostofa Kamal Raj released "Tarkata", "Prapajoti" and "Samrat", Redoan Rony made a youth romance film "Icecream", while Ashiqur Rahman showed signs of progress as a director with Arifin Shuvo-starrer "Musafir".

A number of films came out at the far end of the year, including SA Haque Olike's "Ek Prithibi Prem", Ananya Mamun's Bidya Sinha Mim-

starrer "Ami Tomar Hotey Chai", and Nawsheen-Hillol-Kalyan starrer "Mukhosh Manush" is set to release on the last Friday of the year.

Shakib Khan, the top film hero of the industry for the last many years, looked to turn a corner with new look and vigor in films like "Shikari", "Mental" and "Bossgiri". Arifin Shuvo also passed a busy year, releasing "Ostitto" and "Musafir", and filed upcoming cop thriller "Dhaka Attack".

Mim, was among the busiest heroines of the year. Mim made her debut across the border in Tollywood film "Black", while Nusrat Imroz Tisha ventured into the more "commercial" films, with "Mental" and "Ostitto". Mahi, who was seen in only two movies, had an eventful year in her personal life, as she got married. Opu Biswas, meanwhile, remained mysteriously missing throughout the year, and many of her films remained stuck.

The film fraternity lost '90s heartthrob Diti this year to cancer. Actor Farid Ali and directors Shahidul Islam Khokon and Khalid Mahmood Mithu also passed away in 2016.

Actor couple Shabnaz and Naim celebrated the 25th anniversary of their debut film "Chandni", through a get-together attended by many shining stars of the show business.