

WHAT'S ON

**Painting Exhibition**  
 Bangabandhu Bangladesh  
 Organiser: BSA & Samata  
 Sonargaon  
 Venue: National Art Gallery, BSA  
 Date: March 4-17  
 Time: 11am-8pm

**Photography Exhibition**  
 Title: London 1971: Unsung  
 Heroes of the Bangladesh  
 Liberation War  
 Venue: British Council  
 Date: March 3-31

**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
 Title: Journey & Images  
 Artist: Ranjit Das  
 Venue: Galleri Kaya  
 Date: March 12-25  
 Time: 11am-8pm

**Theatre**  
 Play: Sheshrakhyaya by Natyajnan  
 Venue: Nilima Ibrahim  
 Auditorium, Mohila Samity, Baily  
 Road  
 Date: March 10  
 Time: 7pm

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
 In Memory of Khalid Mahmood  
 Mithu  
 Venue: Zainul Gallery, FFA, DU  
 Date: March 7-13  
 Time: 12noon-8pm

**Solo Sitar Recital**  
 Artist: Irshad Khan  
 Venue: IUB Auditorium,  
 Bashundhara  
 Date: March 10  
 Time: 6pm



From left: Monirul Islam (M) shows his small paper works to the fellow artists; a view of the artworks created by the artists at the camp.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSEHED

# Music as muse to the creation of art

Art camp at Bengal Sangskriti Utshab

ZAHANGIR ALOM, back from Sylhet

*Music has a mesmerising power to connect souls. When melody is an inspiring muse for artists, it truly creates an artistic ambience. This was evident at a recently concluded art camp at the 10-day (February 22-March 3) Bengal Sangskriti Utshab Sylhet 2017.*

The festival, dedicated to Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq, offered an array of cultural elements and performances like song, instrumental recital, dance, recitation, theatre and film. Alongside, the grand scale festival had an art camp participated by prominent and promising Bangladeshi artists, craft fair displaying the traditional crafts of Bangladesh, literary conference, symposium on architecture titled "Agamir Sylhet" and a display of traditional musical instruments and architectural designs and maps of Sylhet and Dhaka.

"The purpose of the art camp was to connect artists so that they could express their artistic feelings freely. The art camp was placed just beside the main stage called Hason Raja Mancha so that the artists could carry on their work inspired by the melodic ambience. The artists enjoyed the camp very much and so did the audience who closely observed art in the making," said Sarwar Jahan Chowdhury, Head of Operations, Visual Arts Programme of Bengal Foundation. The theme of the art camp was open. Artists portrayed the rich cultural aspects of Sylhet, the essence of folk music, portraits of the mystic bards, the unparalleled natural

beauty and landscapes of the region including Lala Khal, the threads of nakshikantha, the innocence of childhood, the searching of the soul, the rhythm of musical lines, abstract and semi-abstract paintings and more. "A total of 28 artists joined the art camp in three phases and they portrayed 53 artworks. The general audience enjoyed watching the country's famous painters at work; it was a rare privilege for them," added Sarwar Jahan Chowdhury. The participating artists at the art camp were Mustafa Monowar, Rafiqun Nabi Abul Barq Alvi, Hashem Khan, Monirul Islam,

Nisar Hossain, Abdus Shakoor Shah, Shahid Kabir, Mahmudul Haque, Shishir Bhattacharjee, Rokeya Sultana, Nazlee Laila Mansur, Ranjit Das, Jamal Ahmed, Dhali Al Mamoon, Mohammad Iqbal, Maksuda Iqbal Nipa, Dilara Begum Jolly, Rezaun Nabi, Mahbubur Rahman, Tayeba Begum Lipi, Sahid Kazi, Abdullah Al Bashir, Bipasha Hayat, Fahamida Enam Kakoli, Bishwajit Goswami, Najmun Nahar Keya and Yasmin Jahan Nupur. This correspondent too depicted lyrical rhythms on an acrylic canvas inspired by the melodic proceedings on stage.



PHOTO: STAR

WEEKENDER

## "I love anime" ...Shahtaj Monira Hashem

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

Young and glamorous, Shahtaj Monira Hashem created ripples in the showbiz industry by first working as a model, and now as an actor. Shahtaj has since appeared alongside noted actors of the television industry and has been a young star in her own right. In a recent conversation with The Daily Star, the artiste speaks of her life beyond the camera and other personal interests.

**What is the ideal weekend for you?**  
 Shahtaj: For me it's just being able to have free time to myself. I don't normally go out unless invited somewhere, but I prefer to spend the day watching anime, play games and spend time with my family.

**What are you currently working on?**  
 Shahtaj: I am working on some TVCs and short films. I am also planning to come up with a new music video that will be done in an energetic, K-Pop style with lots of dancing. There isn't a song for the video yet, and it's still something we are still thinking about.

**Who is your style icon?**  
 Shahtaj: From Bollywood it would be Sonam Kapoor. I also admire Gigi Hadid and Emma Watson.

**What three words would you use to describe yourself?**  
 Shahtaj: Lost, creative and crazy...

**Do you have other passions that your fans are not aware of?**  
 Shahtaj: I love anime and I read a lot of manga. I used to play a lot of games but I don't have the time to play as much as I'd like anymore. I love sports, and I play table tennis sometimes. I also love cats, and I have a pet cat at home that I always look forward coming home to.

# SATYAJIT RAY

## A WOMAN'S DIRECTOR

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

Master director Satyajit Ray had a 'deep respect' for women and portrayed them as having more moral strength than men in various roles that extended beyond their stereotypes as domestic machines, according to the actresses who appeared as leading ladies in his films. Sharmila Tagore, Madhabi Mukherjee and Aparna Sen recall with nostalgia their experiences of working with Ray. "He had a deep respect for women. He had told me once that probably because women were not equal to men in terms of physical prowess that they are much powerful when it comes to moral strength and his female characters show that," said Aparna Sen who debuted as an actress in Ray's 1961 film "Teen Kanya" based on three short stories by Rabindranath Tagore. Sen played Mrinmoyee in the story "Samapti".

Agreed veteran actress Sharmila Tagore who also started her celluloid journey with "Apu Sansar", the final film of Ray's Apu Trilogy, in 1959 at the age of thirteen.

"He had the director's gaze... that's what made him famous. He did a variety of films spanning different eras and showed what women could do during that period, in the given situation and according to the time. He was true to the time," said Sharmila Tagore.

After "Apu Sansar", Ray had cast Tagore as "Dayamoyee" in Devi, before



From left: Aparna Sen, Sharmila Tagore and Madhabi Mukherjee in various roles.

she went on to become a very successful actress in Hindi films. She returned to work in later Ray films - "Nayak", "Aranyer Din Ratri" and "Seemabaddha". Sharmila Tagore is the only woman to have acted in the highest number of films—five—by Ray.

Tagore said she would never have become a film actor but for Ray as she did not want to be one.

"It was he who introduced me to cinema. He found me in front of my school and he changed my life. He introduced me to this wonderful world and I am sitting and talking with you," said Tagore.

Aparna Sen echoed Tagore and said "without Ray, I wouldn't be me". As

Ray's wife Bijoya tells us in her book "Manik and I", it was due to her prodding that the director turned his attention to Aparna Sen, then just a school student, and chose her for "Samapti".

According to Madhabi Mukherjee, best known for the title role in "Charulata", considered the best by Ray, "There was this idea that women belonged to the kitchen, but Ray brought them out from there. His films gave an idea about what should be done about the problems they faced in society," said Mukherjee who played the powerful role in "Mahanagar" (1963) of a housewife who takes up a job and sustains her entire family particularly after her husband (played by Anil Chatterjee) loses

his job following the collapse of a private bank in Kolkata.

It was Madhabi Mukherjee's performance in "Mahanagar" that prompted Ray to rope her in for "Charulata", says Ray's wife Bijoya in her book.

According to Mukherjee, Ray's films stressed visual content allowing the audience to watch the story unfold rather than being served up with dialogues.

Sharmila Tagore, who called Ray a mentor, said his films are 'contemporary' and relevant even today across the world.

"Wherever I go--be it Paris or Los Angeles--I see people enjoying his films."

## Mystic legendary Pagla Kanai's 207th birth anniversary observed

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenidah

The 207th birth anniversary of legendary mystic bard Pagla Kanai is being observed at Pagla Kanai complex. The programme has been arranged by 'Pagla Kanai Smriti Shangrakkhan Shangshad' (PKSSS) of Berbari village, Jhenidah. The anniversary programme will run from March 9-11.



PHOTO: STAR

On Thursday noon Jhenidah Deputy Commissioner (DC) Md. Mahub Alam Talukdar inaugurated the anniversary. Jhenidah local government Assistant Secretary Abu Yousuf Md. Rezaur Rahman was present as special

guest. The meeting was chaired by PKSSS secretary Abdur Rashid.

Kanai became renowned for his folk songs. He composed a large number of devotional songs but many of these have not been preserved.

Pagla Kanai's intense spirituality was evident at an early age, hence the locals started calling him "pagla".

Kanai's spiritual inclination brought him in touch with the bauls and fakirs of the area.

People from all walks of life used to through his 'ashor' (performance) and listen to his songs for hours. Gradually he earned a following throughout the country.

Pagla Kanai's songs can be classified into "jari" "dhua" "palagaan" "kobigan" "murshidi" "marfati" and more.

Scholars such as Mohammad Mansur Uddin, Dr. Mazharul Islam, Abu Talib, Amin Uddin Shah, Durga Das Lahiri and Upendranath Bhattacharya collected Pagla Kanai's songs and conducted research on the bard.