

WHAT'S ON



Memorial Programme
 On Sudhin Das and Karunamaya Goswami
 Organiser: Bangladesh Sangeet Sangathan Shommonoy Parishad
 Venue: Music and Dance auditorium, BSA
 Date: July 15; Time: 6pm

Solo Art Exhibition
 Mangrove Portal
 Artist: Avi Shankar Ain
 Venue: La Galerie, AFD
 Date: July 7-19
 Time: 3-9pm (weekdays)
 5-8pm (weekends)



Group Art Exhibition
 Perspective
 Venue: Spotlight Art Gallery, Uttara
 Date: July 4-14
 Time: 3-8pm



Musical Soiree
 Artist: Mahnaz Karim Hossain
 Organiser: Bangladesh National Museum
 Venue: Sufia Kamal Auditorium
 Date: July 14; Time: 6:30pm





Group Art Exhibition
 Title: Jump StArt @ 30
 Venue: Zainul Gallery, FFA, DU
 Date: July 9-15
 Time: 1pm-8pm

Solo Painting Exhibition
 Artist: Sultan Ishtiaque
 Venue: Gallery Chitrak, H-4, Rd-6, Dhanmondi
 Date: July 14-25
 Time: 10am-8pm



“Breaking gender barriers on stage is very liberating”

In conversation with Kazi Roksana Ruma



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

BotTala may not be the biggest name in Bangladeshi theatre, but it has stood out in significance with major plays in its handling and portrayal of socio-political issues. “Crutch-er Colonel”, a serious play on Bangladesh’s pre- and post-Liberation political history, will stage its ninth production today at Bangladesh Mahila Samiti’s Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium. Based on Shahaduzzaman’s popular novel of the same title and directed by Mohammad Ali Haidar, the production has garnered praise for its handling of such a sensitive subject matter, and the distinct style of performance where multiple actors play one character, including that of Colonel Taher.

Kazi Roksana Ruma is one of the two women in the cast, and has been in the theatre scene since 2000 when she first worked for Subachan Natya Sangsad after graduating from the-then Department of Theatre and Music from Dhaka University. After a ten-year hiatus during which she focused on her professional career in the development sector, she came back to the stage in 2010 with BotTala’s “Khona”, and have been a central part of their acting roster, playing roles in their stage play “The Trial of Mallam Ilya” and a number of street plays. In a recent conversation with The Daily Star, the artiste shares her experience in theatre, and speaks about her challenges women face in the field.

“I play several characters in ‘Crutch-er Colonel’, including a soldier, Colonel Taher in one scene, his mother Ashrafunnesa in two or three scenes, as well as his wife Lutfa Taher. There are no fixed roles for any actor, and we maintain consistency by having the colonel don a red hat. This deliberation came from a crisis management; after adapting the play on stage, there were some actors who did not show up for the technical show. Another reason was to portray the spirit of revolution, which lies in every individual. Colonel Taher had a dream, and

as with all such dreams it stemmed from a higher moral ground, therefore never being wrong idealistically.”

“There are only two women in the play, and it requires physical transformation from us to perform male roles convincingly; I have cropped my hair short for the role. Breaking gender barriers on stage is very liberating; though ironically there is still a huge gender disparity in theatre as women face many obstacles in the exploration of the arts. Our jobs often have us return home in late hours of the night, which is a social taboo for women. In my years I have noticed that people tend to bring their significant others to shows, but never their families. I believe that increased familial involvement will help counter the stigmas surrounding theatre, as much of the prejudice revolves around ignorance.”

“My first dalliance with theatre began in 1991, as a college student during my years in Pirozpur, before it grew into a passion that led me to study it in university and subsequently join Subachan. Unfortunately you cannot carve out a financially stable career out of theatre, which led to my ten-year break. In 2008, I founded AIMS, a communication organisation where we create advertising and promotional content for NGOs and other organisations in the development sector. Being my own boss enabled me to take time into my own hands, and that’s how I have been able to resume my passion for theatre.”

“I was familiar with BotTola since its founding. I knew their members since my time at Subachan and used to attend their productions as a spectator. Samina Luthfa Nitra’s performance in ‘Khona’ had me so enthralled that I watched it thrice. It never failed to move me emotionally, and I remember after the second or third time of watching the play, I approached her and said, ‘I don’t want to spend money anymore to shed tears.’ She had to take a leave of absence to pursue studies abroad, and it was then the members of the troupe asked me to step in.”

“I’ve been a tortoise”

SONAM KAPOOR

Bollywood actress Sonam Kapoor, who completed a decade in Hindi filmndom in 2017, said she has been a tortoise in the field as her journey has been slow and steady.



“2017 is a decade for me in the industry. I think the whole point of being a human being is to evolve and be better. I’ve been a tortoise. I think it’s about being slow, steady, doing things you believe in, trudging on, working hard and creating relationships because winning is not important, what’s important is being the best version of yourself,” Sonam said in an interview.

The 32-year-old actress says she has formed some great relationships in the industry during her journey.

“Some of my best friends are from this industry, whether it’s Swara Bhaskar, Aanand L Rai, Ram Madhvani,” she said.

Sonam, who will be seen in R Balki’s upcoming film “Padman”, feels she has an “amazing connection” with the director.

“I have a feeling that I have an amazing connection with Balki, who I have had the privilege to work with in ‘Padman’...Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra are like my parents to me. These people are very evolved and great artists. To have them as your mentors is a blessing,” she said.

Source: **IAN S**

Nriytanchal founders flying to LA

Renowned dancers and founders of Nrityanchal, Shamim Ara Nipa and Shibli Mahammad are flying to Los Angeles for the Lotus Festival, says a press release. The 35th Lotus Festival is set to take place on July 15-16. The annual cultural initiative is organised by Bangladesh Unity Federation of Los Angeles, to promote the traditional arts of Bangladesh.



India to host Theatre Olympics 2018

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India will host the greatest carnival of theatre in the world -- Theatre Olympics -- for the first time from February 17 to April 8 next year.

The 8th edition of the Theatre Olympics will be held simultaneously in 15 cities across India with the opening and closing ceremonies scheduled in New Delhi and Mumbai respectively.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, India’s Culture and Tourism Minister Mahesh Sharma said there will be 500 plays and 700 ambience performances from across the world. Activities like exhibitions, seminars, symposia, interactive discussions and workshops with well-known academicians, authors, actors, designers and directors will also be held, he said adding luminaries of world theatre will take part in the Olympics.

Established in 1993, the Theatre Olympics is the foremost international theatre festival, presenting the finest productions of well-known theatre practitioners from around the world.

The Theatre Olympics, being organised by National School of Drama under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, will feature maximum number of Indian and international theatre groups and eminent theatre personalities along with their performances.



The Theatre Olympics was established in 1993 in Delphi, Greece, as the first international theatre festival. With the tagline ‘Crossing Millennia’, this is an initiative to connect the cultural past with the present and future, bringing the richness and diversity of theatre heritage to the experiments and research of contemporary theatre.

The first country to host the Theatre

Olympics was Greece in 1995. Japan hosted the second edition in Shizuoka in 1999, followed by Russia in 2001. In 2006 the Olympics were held in Istanbul, Turkey, and four years later, in Seoul, South Korea. China hosted them in Beijing in 2014 and in 2016 the 7th Theatre Olympics were held in Wroclaw, Poland.

NEWS bytes

Tarantino prepping new movie

Quentin Tarantino is quietly starting to put together his latest project, and is talking to A-list actors for what is promising to be a unique take on the famous Manson Family murders.



The project, whose title is unknown, was written by Tarantino, who would also direct. Harvey and Bob Weinstein, who have produced and executive produced the previous Tarantino films, are involved, sources told The Hollywood Reporter.

Sources say that Tarantino is putting the finishing touches on the script and that Brad Pitt and Jennifer Lawrence have been approached. The plan is to shoot in 2018, possibly in the summer.

Script details are fuzzy but one of the stories centers on Sharon Tate, the actress and wife of director Roman Polanski who was murdered by Manson and his followers in 1969. Margot Robbie is said to be in talks for the role.

Source: **THR**