



Nadia Dora



Sandhi



Joyita



Murtaza Kabir Murad

Celebrating Life is known nationwide as the premier competition that highlights unsung talents hidden in the nooks and crannies of Bangladesh. Emphasizing on film-making, photography and lyric-writing, the participants of Celebrating Life each year are brimmed with potential. Celebrating Life also honors renowned names in the fields of film, photography and singing by awarding the Standard Chartered-The Daily Star's 'Celebrating Life Lifetime Achievement Award'. This year marks the 10th iteration of Celebrating Life, and the unique theme this time is 'Celebrating Diversity in Bangladesh'. Like every year, Celebrating Life 2017 Gala will be a star-studded event which is sure to entertain the audience with a dazzling celebration and amazing performances.

Rezwana Choudhury Bannya, one of Bangladesh's most celebrated and respected artists, will take the stage to soothe the audience with her melodious voice. Baul Shafi Mondol will also be there to electrify everyone with the voice he is renowned for. However, amongst the presence of the juggernauts, there will also be the youthful insurgence of the present and future of the music industry. Three music directors have made the songs consisting of the winning lyrics of the Celebrating Life competition: Adit, Sandhi and Ridwan Nabi Panchar. "It's an absolute joy to work with such a renowned figure like Baul Shafi Mondol", said Panchar, "and I am trying my best to do justice to the soulfulness of his voice." Sandhi, on the other hand, is working with a whole crew of talented singers to make a stellar chorus song for Celebrating Life. "It is indeed a pleasure



Dola and Adit



Farshid Alam

to work with so many talented singers, and I am sure that these singers will represent the future of the industry," said a hopeful Sandhi. The song will consist of voices from well-known young singers which include Farshid Alam, Joy Shahriar, Nandita, Joyita, Naumi, Aanchal, Nadia Dora, Syed Waqel Ahad and Riad Hasan. "I am absolutely elated to be able to sing with such a crew of talented singers, as well as share the stage with some of the



Riad Hasan

best in the country," said Naumi, who has made quite a name for herself while still being a student of North South University. "I have always believed in diversity, and this event is all about it. I'm pretty thrilled."

Adit, while being busy with a plethora of projects is still very happy with the song he is working on. "I am working with Dola to create a song for Celebrating Life. We're both giving voice to it," he

said. "I am positive that everyone will like our song and am happy to be a part of this great festival," he continued.

Fresh off the launch of her debut album, *Uncaged*, Xefar is hyped to be a part of Celebrating Life. "I just love the concept of so many different personalities involved in one festival," she said. "I'll be singing songs from *Uncaged*, along with a few surprises, so be sure to stay tuned!" "It has been a great experience working with so many different artists," said Syed Waqel Ahad, who has recently starred in the critically acclaimed *Bubhon maji* as an actor. "It has been a lot of fun recording the song itself, which was one of the very few new patriotic songs that are produced nowadays," he added.

Murtaza Kabir Murad will be presenting a gorgeous flute ensemble with the students of his organization, *Aaroho*. As one of the more senior performers of the event, he did have some constructive advice for all newcomers. "There are a lot of different kinds of music now, but we have to remember that whatever path we choose, we need to train properly for it," commented Murtaza Kabir Murad. "That being said, there are a lot of talented artists out there and I applaud Celebrating Life for bringing us together. I will hope that the trend of classical music being included in all events continues," he concluded.

The Celebrating Life 2017 Gala will take place today at International Convention City Bashundhara (Noboratri Hall/ Hall-4). The event is one of the most highly anticipated events of this year. You can get your invitation cards for free from The Daily Star Center reception.

By Sadi Mohammad Shahnewaz



Syed Waqel Ahad



Aanchal



Nandita