

WHAT'S ON

Bengal Classical Music Festival

Organiser: Bengal Foundation

Venue: Abahani Field

Date: December 26-30

Time: 6pm onwards



Kathak Dance Festival

Organiser: Kathak Dance Community

Venue: Main Auditorium, Chhayanaut

Date: Dec 24-26

Time: 6:05pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Beyond the Insignificant

Artist: Tasadduk Hossain Dulu

Venue: Kala Kendra

Date: Dec 15-Jan 6

Time: 5-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Code of Conduct

Artist: Mohammad Hasanur Rahman (Reaz)

Venue: La Galerie, AFD

Date: Dec 19-Jan 2

Time: Mon-Thurs (3-9pm), Fri-Sat (9am-12noon & 5-8pm)



National Cultural Festival

Organiser: Bangladesh Uddichi Shilpijoshthi

Venue: Central Shaheed Minar, Dhaka

Date: Dec 28-30; Time: 3pm



BENGAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL '17

A reunion of Shadhaks!

SADYA AFREEN MALICK

The late sitar maestro Nikhil Bandhopadhyay during his stay with Acharya Baba Allaiddin Khan, awoke one night to the sound of the Acharya's riwaaz and was astounded to find the courtyard filled with venomous serpents calmly enjoying the vibrations and hypnotic serenity of the music. Along came the deer and other animals drawn to music, and Bandhopadhyay later thought: "If Hindustani classical music can tame the wildest of animals, it can definitely tame our minds."

Today we celebrate ourselves to renew the bonds we have shared across generations with our cultural heritage. Bengal Classical Music Festival '17 (BCMF) brings with it a whole new dimension of classical vocals, instrumental performances and dance by globally renowned artists from both India and Bangladesh and will host a reunion of great musicians, or *Sadhaks* who define music.

And if last five years' festivals are anything to go by, it's going to see a huge turnout of avid music lovers, cut across all ages.

Devoted music lovers have been counting days for the curtains to go up on the grand Festival, to be held at Abahani grounds in Dhanmondi this year. Registration was closed down within two days as an optimum number was reached in a short span of time.

The festival this year introduces a fusion of Indian classical and Western classical music featuring violin virtuoso Dr. L Subramaniam and the 58-member Astana Philharmonic Orchestra. The line-up will also see celebrated performers Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma (santoor), Pandit Ulhas Kashalkar (khyal vocals), Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan (sitar), Pandit Ajoy Chakravarty (khyal vocals), Ustad Rashid Khan (khyal vocals), Pandit Tejendra Narayan Majumdar (sarod), first timer at the festival Pandit Jasraj (khyal vocals), and much more. The closing ceremony will feature a flute performance by maestro Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia as has been a festival tradition.

Such is the rapport with the warm audience that last year, Pandit Hariprasad offered to bring a truck laden with flutes so the audience could all learn to play the instrument.

The occasion has been a nostalgic event for many taking them back to the glorious period of our classical music. Showcasing 150 years of our cultural history and heritage along with our rich musical legacy, an

open exhibition will also be held at the festival venue.

Many of you will recall how in the '90s, hundreds of people crammed into the Osmani Memorial Hall or at Modhumita Movie theatres at different points in time to listen to the great masters of Indian classical music of Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Allah Rakha, Zakir Hussain, Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Sultan Khan, Pandit Jasraj and dancers Sanjukta Panigrahi, Leela Samson and more -- there was hardly standing room at the venue.

Five years back when Chairman of Bengal Foundation Abul Khair spoke about his plans to hold a classical festival with 100 legendary musicians in the biggest classical music festival in the world in the country, it all seemed a distant dream. Judging from the galaxy of legendary performers coming together on the same stage and the consistently packed stadium, many will say that the festival has answered its skeptics.

Ustad Rashid Khan

Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma

STAR FILE PHOTO

Abul Khair appears content with what he has achieved so far by single-handedly organising the festival from its inception. "I dream that my young students at Parampara would one day perform at the same platform with stalwarts such as Rashid Khan and more." True to his vision, the youngest performer at the Bengal Classical Music Festival '16 was a mere seven year old -- the prodigious Ishrat Fuljhuri Khan. She happens to be the granddaughter of esraj maestro Ustad Fuljhuri Khan who was also an accomplished Sehnai, Pakhwaj and Sitar player. Originally known as Yaar Md Khan, he was rechristened in Shantiniketan by none other than Rabindranath Tagore who was impressed by his fluidity and proficiency in Esraj and endearingly called him "Ful-jhuri" -- symbolising the soft showering of flower petals.

The festival also hosted the late virtuoso South Indian octogenarian singers Balamuralikrishna and Vidushi Girija Devi who

will be missed greatly at the festival this year.

Inspired by the seasons and time, gifted artists and maestros -- will make the musical offerings for the next five evenings till sunrise at the Abahani grounds. A festival like this provides a massive opportunity for all music lovers to enjoy the performances of such stalwarts.

The Bengal Classical Music Festival also brings to a close an eventful cultural year. We have also witnessed the Folk Fest and the Chhobi Mela by Drik that has indeed played a pivotal role in the socio-cultural transformation of our country. Film-makers have joined the wave as well. People have flocked to the movie theatres to see films on our independence war and more.

These events have not happened overnight and as we warmly greet the New Year, it is time to put our hands together to revitalise our heritage and move on to build a harmonious world "in tune" with the times!

GOING TO BCMF '17?

Here's what you need to know

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 6th edition of the Bengal Classical Music Festival begins today, to stir up the hearts of classical music lovers of the country once more. Held at the Abahani grounds for the first time, the five-night festival is sure to draw attendees in tens of thousands. To ensure smooth management and a safe, pleasant experience for festival-goers, Bengal Foundation has set guidelines for the audience to follow. If you are going to the festival, here are some things to note:

The festival will begin every day at 7pm and continue till 5am. Entry to the festival is free of cost but not possible without registration. Online registration and on-site registration at select Bengal Foundation points have already been closed. There will be no registration facilities at the venue. This year, the organisers have also not arranged for buses to drop off festival-goers every dawn.

Due to strict security requirements, entrance to the festival venue might take a little long. Attendees are requested to arrive at the grounds with time in hand. No bags will be allowed inside the venue, nor will be any facility to keep bags. Attendees will also be required to keep an identity document with them. No cameras (except for accredited journalists), food, drinks and smoking paraphernalia will be allowed at the venue. Attendees are requested to not bring children below the age of 12 to the festival.

Multiple entries at the grounds will not be possible, and gates will close at midnight. However, organisers may close the gate earlier if they see fit. There is no car parking facilities at the Abahani ground.

Rtv celebrates 13th year

A CORRESPONDENT

Satellite channel Rtv is arranging a weeklong event from today marking the occasion of the satellite channel's 13th anniversary. To be held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), the colourful event will also hold the seventh Rtv Star Awards tonight, which will air live on the channel.

The ceremony opened with the event "Utshabe Anondey Aaj O Agamir Gaan" on December 25 at 11:59pm, and well wishers are open to convey their felicitations at the organisation's office premises in Kawran Bazaar, Dhaka, from 11am to 4pm.

On turning 13, Rtv CEO Syed Ashik Rahman said, "Our main focus has been to keep our audience content, and I feel we have attained what we sought to do. Our viewers are the inspiration that drives us, and we would like to make room for more innovation to keep them satisfied. Rtv is a channel for everyone and we strive to deliver quality programmes."

Playing together creates a universal musical sync

L Subramaniam to collaborate with Astana Symphony Philharmonic Orchestra

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Dr. Lakshminarayana Subramaniam is an internationally acclaimed Indian violinist, composer and conductor, trained in the classical Carnatic music tradition and Western classical music, and renowned for his virtuoso playing techniques and compositions in orchestral fusion. One of the biggest figures of Indian Classical violin, Subramaniam along with the Berik Batyrkhanuly, conductor and director and Anastasiia Kozhushko, manager of Astana Symphony Philharmonic Orchestra (ASPO) spoke to The Daily Star prior to his collaborative performance today at the sixth Bengal Classical Music Festival in Dhaka.

ASPO is considered one of the most notable orchestras of Kazakhstan and has so far collaborated with many distinguished conductors including the likes of K Penderecki, V Ashkenazy, R Gutter, A Tchaikovsky, R Kanetti, and D Brosse, amongst others.

Elaborating the essence of music collaboration, Subramaniam said, "There are two things -- we have our own Indian classical music, which is very strong regarding its having thousands of years of tradition. We journeyed through Baroque, Romantic and Classical

periods where lots of great musicians, composers, and orchestral musicians contributed much to enrich the realm of music. That was so strongly focused on harmony, counter-point and so many instruments covering eight octaves; but our music zooms in on micro-tones, melodic concepts and very difficult polyrhythm. But there is common ground -- very few right compositions. We can create some beautiful things which are appreciated by both the Indian and Western audience. Sometimes it is difficult for our non-western audience to appreciate Indian Classical Music and vice versa. In vocal music there is a language barrier that is not applicable to instrumental music. If you look at the history of

Indian Music, it all started from Vedas. After twelfth century, during the Mughal era, it slowly developed and instruments were modified. It took lots of beautiful influences."

"I collaborated with many world-renowned musicians. Every effort got momentum and people loved it. It is now the era of global music to perform on global platform. We have to understand each other and find peace and harmony in musical collaboration. Music is very important medium of expression of feelings and moods. We play together on stage and forget all our imposed identities. We create music happily going beyond all barriers," he added.

Sharing his experience with the legendary L Subramaniam, Berik Batyrkhanuly spoke while

Anastasiia Kozhushko interpreted in English.

"Thanks for hosting such a beautiful music festival in a lovely country. It is a great pleasure and honour to be here concerning our collaboration with Dr. Subramaniam. We have our own tradition of classical orchestra. Back in 1980s Dr. Subramaniam performed with a collaborative orchestra in Russia and we listened to him. The collaboration between Indian classical and Western classical music creates a unique genre which would be special music for the world in general. History suggests that the folk music emerged as distinctive genre while classical orchestra music was separated. But now we can bring a completely different level of music which will be a great genre of music," said Berik Batyrkhanuly.

The maestro is all set to set sail the musical voyage with the large number of members of ASPO. L Subramaniam will start off the musical flight with Indian classical while the orchestra will play a western classical composition by Leon Chekhovsky. After that the orchestra will perform one of Subramaniam's symphonies called "Turbulence", and at the end, all the artistes will play "Shantipriya", a piece predominantly based on Raga Charukeshi.

Performing tonight at Bengal Classical Music Fest

Dr L Subramaniam (violin) & Astana Symphony Philharmonic Orchestra

Rajrupa Chowdhury (sarod)

Vidushi Padma Talwalkar (khyal vocals)

Firoz Khan (sitar)

Supriya Das, Bengal Parampara Sangeetalya (khyal vocals)

Rakesh Chaurasia (flute) & Purbayan Chatterjee (sitar)



JUMANJI

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

QUIZ CONTEST

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Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

QUIZ - 04

Who became an Einstein in the movie?

WINNERS LIST OF QUIZ-03

- Muhtasim Omar Ali, Mohakhali
- Tanzil Rahman, Mohammadpur
- Ashraf Rahman Arian, Shantinagar
- Ramisa Romana, Dhanmondi/A
- Ahmed Islam, Elephant Road
- Enara Anindita Chowdhury, Baridhara
- Ashik Isha, South Banasree
- Mazharul Hossain, Farmgate
- Sadi Mohammad, Manikgonj
- Tanusri Das, Mohammadpur