

Bengal Classical Music Festival
Organiser: Bengal Foundation
Venue: Gallery No. 6, National Art Gallery, Dhaka
Date: December 28-30
Time: 10pm onwards

Contemporary Indian Print Exhibit
Venue: Gallery No. 6, National Art Gallery, Dhaka
Date: Dec 25-Jan 6
Time: 11am-6pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Artist: Tasdikul Hossain Das
Venue: Kala Kendra
Date: Dec 15-Jan 6
Time: 5-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Beyond the Imagination
Artist: Tasdikul Hossain Das
Venue: Kala Kendra
Date: Dec 15-Jan 6
Time: 5-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Code of Conduct
Artist: Md. Masum Rana
Venue: Kala Kendra
Date: Dec 15-Jan 6
Time: 5-8pm

National Cultural Festival
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpa Academy
Venue: Central Shilpa Museum, Dhaka
Date: Dec 28-30; Time: 10pm

BENGAL CLASSICAL MUSIC FEST 2017

Four must-see instrumental duets at this year's festival

FAHIM FERDOUS

One of the greatest joys in Indian classical music is to see great artists performing together, joining their individual musical masteries to create something even more magical. *Jugalbandi* is an integral part of Indian classical music, and it's no surprise that the world's biggest stage for it will have some riveting instances every year. The Bengal Classical Music Festival has produced many unforgettable duets of sorts – sometimes a vocal with an instrumentalist, sometimes two melodic instrumentalists, and even two percussionists.

The first of such collaborative performances at the festival is probably one of its most iconic: two legends of their arts – bhayala Vidushi Girija Devi and Kathak exponent Pt. Birju Maharaj took the stage together in 2012, performing a *duet* – "Bairan Re Koyela Tori Boli Na Sohaye". In the years to come, the *jugalbandi* performances of Pt. Ronu Majumdar (flute) and the late Dr. M. Balaramakrishna (vocal), Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar (sitar) and Ganesh Rajagopal (violin), Pt. Yogesh Sami and Pt. Shubhankar Banerjee's tabla duo, Pt. Ajoy Chakraborty (khyal vocals) with slide guitarist Debashish Bhattacharya and the *lajwari* vocal *jugalbandi* of Vidushi Ashwini Bhide-Deshpande and Sanjay Abhyankar remain some of the most memorable.

This year, there are five such duets to watch out for. Here's a quick preview:

Purbayan Chatterjee and Rakesh Chaurasia by the time you're reading, this performance (scheduled as the final performance of the opening night) is already over, so you either missed it or already have experienced it, while this is being written before the performance. However, it is safe to say that the star-flute duet would be the power-packed. The two have worked together before, most notably in *Chaurasia's* Indian classical band *Shastriya Syndicate*, and have performed live together, as evident from YouTube clips. The two are not only among the top classical musicians of their generation, but also seem to share similar musical ideologies – of staying true to the classical roots but also exploring avenues of fusion and collaboration with other genres of world music.

Pt. Ronu Majumdar and Pt. Debojyoti Bose Pandit Ronu Majumdar has become a familiar name to regular festival-goers in the last two years, and both times he has performed in alliance with another instrumentalist (with the legendary Dr. M. Balaramakrishna in 2015 and mandolin player U. Rajesh in 2016). However, both the performances were in Carnatic-Hindustani (the two broad divisions of Indian Classical music) *jugalbandi*. This is the first time he will be performing with another Hindu instrumentalist, Sarodiy Pt.

Carnatic violinist, Dr. Mysore Manjunath. Dr. Manjunath, one half of the Mysore brothers and son of the renowned Professor S. Mahadevappa, will also be giving his first performance for the Dhaka audience and with Tejendra Narayan Majumdar, are highly likely to set off some musical fireworks on the fourth night of the festival.

Pt. Kunal Das and Kalyanji Das The Bengal Classical Music Festival has seen father and son perform on the same stage before. Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma and Rahul



Pt. Ronu Majumdar and Pt. Debojyoti Bose's *jugalbandi* is one of the highlights of tonight.

Debojyoti Bose will be making his debut at the festival, and audiences can sure expect some familiar *dhrupad* (tunes) in their performance (which is today, the second night), considering the fact they are both Bengalis. **Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar and Dr. Mysore Manjunath** Any Carnatic-Hindustani *jugalbandi* is a special treat to classical music aficionados because it is essentially the best of both worlds. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar has been one of the most regular performers at the festival (and is also a *Guru* at Dhaka's Bengal Parampara Sangeetayal), and his only live duet performance at the festival was in 2014 when he performed with Carnatic violinist Ganesh Rajagopal. Coincidentally, this year's performance of his is again with a

Sharma has both performed multiple times. Sameen Kashalkar (son of Pt. Ulhas Padalkar) has also made his mark with *dhrupad* and, and Pt. Anindo Khatke and Anubrata Chatterjee were here only last year. There has even been a three-generation joint performance as well, when violinist N. Rajam, her daughter and granddaughter performed together at the festival. A father-son duo, however, is less common. Pt. Kunal Das and his son and disciple Kalyanji Das will take stage on the closing day for a *sitar* *jugalbandi*, and sitar being one of the most popular instruments of the Dhaka audience, this duo promises to be riveting. Only once before has two artists performed together at this festival, and incidentally that was also a father-son duo – Pakistan's Ustad Rais Khan and his son Farhan Khan.



A way forward in Indo-Bangla cultural exchange

In conversation with Adwaita Charan Gadanayak

ZAHANGIR ALAM

An exhibition of contemporary Indian prints is on at Gallery No. 6 of the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpa Akademi (BSA). The show, inaugurated on December 25, will run till January 6. About 65 artists from India are taking part at the exhibition that will become a permanent collection of Indian prints at the National Art Gallery of BSA. After the exhibit, Participants of the exhibition include pioneering artists and faculty members of the New Delhi based National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA). India's premier national institution devoted to modern and contemporary visual art practices, and Indian Printmakers Guild which was founded in 1990 to promote the practice of printmaking in India.

In a conversation with The Daily Star, Adwaita Charan Gadanayak, Director General of NGMA, shared many aspects with this exhibition. A new horizon is gleaming with regard to printmaking and artistic practice in general between the two countries. Excerpts: "We are the same souls and share the same artistic, literary and cultural legacies. The modern art movement that started through the noble initiative by Rabindranath Tagore and the artists of Shantiniketan, played a pivotal role in shaping modern art movement in this part of the world. Tagore is the composer of national anthems of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. India is planning to connect each other, especially the creative souls in the cultural fields of SAARC countries. NGMA is initiating to connect artists in this region. So this is just

the beginning through which we are starting off exchange programmes where Bangladeshi artists will showcase their arts in India and Indian artists will display their works in Bangladesh."

"I am delighted to be a part of the event. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two countries through this exchange programme will play a great role towards forming an artistic bonding among the artists of India and Bangladesh. The iconic works of modern masters that the NGMA, along with two branches in Mumbai and Bengaluru, houses and we want to spread this joy of pure passion, insight and hard work with each one visiting the NGMA. The works of art from our collection facilitate us to embark on new journeys and serve as a fertile ground for new contemporary practices. I look forward to collaborations and partnerships with National and international institutions and will explore all possibilities for extension of cultural relations. Bangladeshi people and artists are friendly, hospitable and positive. We have a common artistic way to march forward in the days ahead."

Adwaita Charan Gadanayak, an eminent Indian sculptor, works closely with traditional art. He feels that the traditional and contemporary art must be incorporated and encouraged. His works include the black marble replica of Gandhi leading the Salt March installed in New Delhi, the interactive art work at New Delhi's Lodi Garden and the depiction of the Gandhi household "Hriday Kunj" at the Gandhi Museum.

Performing tonight at the Bengal Classical Music Festival

- Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company (Kathak)
Students of Bengal Parampara Sangeetayal (tabla)
Pt. Shivkumar Sharma (santoor)
Pt. Ulhas Kashalkar (khyal vocals)
Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan (Sitar)
Avijit Kundu, Bengal Parampara Sangeetayal (dhrupad vocals)
Pandit Ronu Majumdar (flute) & Pt. Debojyoti Bose (sarod)



Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan

NEWS BRIEFS

BSA to hold children's film fest

Bangladesh Shilpa Akademi (BSA) is set to hold four-day Bangladesh Children's Film Festival 2017 across the country from December 28-31, according to a press release.

The festival will be inaugurated at BSA's Dhaka National Art Gallery auditorium on December 28 by Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, and will run in all 64 districts at the district BSA venues.

A seven-member committee has selected 40 films for children and made by children, to be screened at the festival. For both categories, there will be awards for the best of film, best director and a special jury award. All districts of films screened will also be given certificates on the closing day.

Aside from film screening, a film appreciation workshop will also take place during the festival, on December 29 and 30, and a seminar at 4pm on December 29 at the National Theatre Hall auditorium.



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