WHAT'S ON

Contemporary Indian Print Exhibit
Venue: Gallery No. 6, National Art Gallery, BSA
Date: Dec 25-Jan 6
Time: 11am-8pm

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 (Reza)
Venue: La Galerie, AFD
Date: Dec 19- Jan 2
Time: Mon-Thurs (3-9pm), Fri-Sat (9am-12noon & 5-8pm)

Group Watercolor Exhibition
Ishkishto
Organiser: Bay's Edgewater
Venue: Edgr Gallery
Date: Nov 26-Dec 31
Time: 10am-8pm

National Instrumental Music Fest
Venue: Nandanmancha, BSA
Date: Jan 1-10
Time: 4pm-9pm

Bangladesh Children Film Fest
Venue: National Art Gallery Auditorium, BSA
Date: Dec 28-31
Time: 6:30pm

NEWS bytes

Ringo Starr and Barry Gibb knighted

The Beatles drummer Ringo Starr and Bee Gees founder member Barry Gibb have been awarded knighthoods in the Queen's New Year honours.

Starr's knighthood comes more than half a century after he received an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) at the height of the Fab Four's fame.

Barry Gibb, who is recognised for his services to music and charity, told the Press Association that being awarded a

knighthood was "a moment in life to be treasured and never forgotten."

Also among those featured in the New Years honours list, which recognizes British citizens for their achievements in public life and service to the United Kingdom, is Soft Cell vocalist Marc Almond, who receives an OBE for services to arts and culture. Other honorees include Wiley (real name Richard Cowie) - widely acknowledged as a pioneer of the distinctly British form of hip-hop known as grime. He is awarded an MBE for his services to music. British actor, writer and musician Hugh Laurie -- who has released two blues albums -- is awarded a CBE in recognition of his work in television, film and drama.

Source: **Billboard**

Clockwise from top left: The stellar jugalbandi performance by Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar (2-L) and Dr. Mysore Manjunath (2-R) captivates the audience; Pt. Budhaditya Mukherjee plays sitar and Pt. Jasraj performs at the festival.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Realm of Raga and Rhythm

Bengal Classical Music Festival concludes on a high note

ALOKE KUMAR SEN *and* ZAHANGIR ALOM

It was a mesmerising game of melodies incorporating ragas and rhythms that world's finest music maestros presented in the five-day Bengal Classical Music Festival 2017, which wrapped up on a high note early morning today.

The festival, held at the Abahani ground in Dhanmondi, was aimed at promoting, nurturing and disseminating the essence of classical music to every nook and cranny of Bangladesh. This year's festival, organised by Bengal Foundation, was dedicated to eminent educationist, researcher and cultural exponent Professor Emeritus Dr. Anisuzzaman.

The penultimate night of the festival set off with "Nritya Chirantan", incorporating three forms of classical dances -- Manipuri, Bharatanatyam and Kathak -- by Sweety Das, Amit Chowdhury, Snata Shahrin, Sudeshna Swayamprabha, Mehraj Haque Tushar and Zuairiyah Mouli.

A Hindustani-Carnatic jugalbandi performance of sarod by Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar and violin by Dr. Mysore Manjunath was euphoric. They performed Raga Simhendramadhyamam.

Students of Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay -- Illham Fuljhuri Khan, Ishrat Fuljhuri Khan, Aumbarish Das and Md. Saddam Hussain -- next took the stage and performed Raga Bhopali on sarod. The performance was composed by Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar. Kaushik Mukherjee conducted it while Pinu Sen Das was on tabla.

An enticing khayal performance by Padma Shri Ustad Rashid Khan was the next attraction of the night. Khan is thought to be one of the most popular classical music maestros of the present time. With a unique vocal prowess, he equally immerses in the melodic ocean while performing khayal music, light classical and even film songs. He started off with the vilambit ektaal bandish "Piya Guna Banta" and drut teentaal bandish "Mein Tho Kar Aayi Piya Sang Rang Ralian" based on Raga Puriya. Presentation of a drut bandish followed. It was a lifetime experience for the Bangladeshi music connoisseurs to listen to Ustad Rashid Khan's own creation Raga Priyaranjani, an intermingling of Ragas Madhuvanti and Shivranjani on rupak taal. Diffusing sweet romance in the air, the living legend later rendered a Mishra Pahadi thumri "Baton Baton Mein Beet Gayi Raat" that kept the crowd rapt. Pt. Subhankar Banerjee on tabla, Ajay Joglekar on harmonium, Ustad Sabir Khan on sarangi and Nagnath Adgaonkar with vocal support accompanied the maestro.

A Hindustani-Carnatic jugalbandi performance of sarod by Pt. Tejendra Narayan Majumdar and violin by Dr. Mysore Manjunath was euphoric. They performed Raga Simhendramadhyamam. Pandit Yogesh Samsi on tabla and Arjun Kumar on mridangam accompanied them. The stellar performance turned a friendly blitzkrieg, thanks to the torrential rhythm produced by Pt. Samsi and Arjun Kumar.

Evoking a union of soul, revered khayal maestro Pandit Jasraj performed Raga Jog at the festival. The unmistakable interplay between notes and words to evoke the desired mood and emotion is the hallmark of Pandit Jasraj's music. The octogenarian maestro started off with a vilambit ektaal bandish "Piya Ghar Nahi". The mythical nuance of Ramayana (Hanuman Bandana) was the excerpts of his Teentaal Bandish "Hanuman Lala Mere Pyari Lala" performance.

The striking parts of the rendition were his performance of dramatic long tehai, dancing sargam, decorative long taan, bahelawa and a charming repetition of the mukhra of the antara portion with variation of murki. The living legend later performed a Tarana on teentaal, a Deepchandi (14-beat) Bhajan "Bhai Mero Man Bhayo Saware" and his famous Bhimpashree Bhajan "Om Namo Bhagbate Basudebaye".

Ram Kumar Mishra on tabla, Vidushi Tripti Mukherjee on harmonium, Sridhar Parthasarathy on mridangam and Rattan Mohan Sharma with vocal support, accompanied the performance.

The mellow performance of the Indian cello by Saskia Rao de-Haas reached crescendo while she was playing the melodies of Tagore songs "Phul-e Phul-e Dhol-e Dhol-e" and "Jodi Tor Daak Shune Keu Na Ashe". She started off with playing Raga Nandkauns and later played a traditional Bandish on Raga Kirwani. Pt. Yogesh Samsi accompanied her on tabla.

Pandit Budhaditya Mukherjee wrapped the night's musical proceedings with playing a Gayaki-ang sitar set on Raga Lalit. He aesthetically elaborated the recital with alap, jod and jhala. Offering of a blissful Bhairavi dhun followed.

Pandit Budhaditya Mukherjee, with his adorable recital mesmerised the audience generating the Rasa of both bliss and melancholy.

Nritya Chirantan: An Ode to Bangladeshi Dancers

NAZIBA BASHER

Bengal Classical Music Festival 2017's third day opened with an extraordinary performance. Dancers Sudeshna Swayamprabha and Sweety Das (Manipuri), Amit Chowdhury and Zuairiyah Mouli (Bharatanatyam), and Mehraj Haque Tushar and Snata Shahrin (Kathak) showed on this prestigious stage, the standard and sadhana with which our local artistes are trained.

Titled "Nritya Chirantan", the performance was organised and conceptualised by noted Manipuri dancer Sharmila Bannerjee, and directed and choreographed by Shibly Mohammad, Bimbavati Devi, and Kirti Ramgopal.

The performances flowed in one after the other. It began with Sweety and Sudeshna performing a Mangalacharan in Manipuri composition. Together on stage, the duo contrasted and complemented each other with their individual strengths. Sudeshna, one of the finest young Manipuri dancers of the country, Sudeshna was the epitome of grace throughout her pieces. Sweety's sweetness then emanated from both her mudras and expressions as she took over the stage next. Sudeshna came back and proved everyone right with a mesmerizing Tandava piece.

Amit Chowdhury and Zuariyah Mouli both, individually, displayed the gold standard for Bharatanatyam dancers in the country. Zuariyah, sweet and soulful, represented Bharatanatyam with utmost precision, but it was Amit, who showed the audience what a compact, composed dancer with strong foundation can do. While fluid and continuous in movements,

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Amit's biggest strength as a dancer is his eloquence and ability to distinguish one full *mudra* from the next. With women representing majority of the dance scene in the country, the applause that Amit's performances gained stood testament to what men can achieve as dancers.

Tushar then graced the stage for a short Kathak piece, right before Snata Shehreen presented basic and technical Kathak to the audience. This was before the duo got together for a duet. Their synchronization was worth following throughout the presentation, as each *tehai* ended with both their feet hitting the stage at the stage time.

Two by two, he dancers returned on stage, coming together for a chorus dance on the song "Nrityero Taale Taale" by Rabindranath Tagore. With Sweety and Sudeshna in the centre adorned in red, Amit and Mouli, and Snata and Tushar, wore the green of our land, and together, the six showed us Bangladesh - in colours, in dance, and in passion.