

WHAT'S ON

Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Poem of Varendra-2

Artist: Suman Kumar Sarkar

Venue: Bishwo Shahitto Kendro Gallery

Date: May 4-10

Time: 2pm-9pm

Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Roop Aroop Oporoop

Artist: Kazi Mrinal

Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, Dhanmondi

Date: May 05-15

Time: 3-8pm

Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Displaced in Dhaka

Artist: Kuntal Barai

Venue: La Galerie, AFD

Date: May 4-19

Time: 3pm-9pm

Contemporary Art Exhibition

Title: Silent Revelation

Artist: Mohammad Iqbal

Venue: Edge Galleries (Dhanmondi & Gulshan)

Date: April 22-May 19

Book Launch

Book: "Art Against Genocide" by Cosmos Books

Venue: Main Auditorium, Liberation War Museum, Agargaon

Date: May 8

Time: 4pm

“Rabindra Sangeet in Bangladesh today is better than it had ever been”

Fahim Hossain Chowdhury

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

With an illustrious career spanning over four decades, the famed Rabindra Sangeet exponent Fahim Hossain Chowdhury will add another feather to his hat today when he receives the prestigious ‘Bangla Academy Rabindra Award 2018’. The award is given every year to luminaries in the field of Rabindra Sangeet. In this interview with The Daily Star, the singer talks about his reaction to getting the award, his career and the current state of the industry.

We would like to congratulate you on winning the Bangla Academy Rabindra Award 2018. What were your reactions when you first got to know about this tremendous achievement?

Thank you very much. It was really surprising for me and my family is very excited for this. They will accompany me when I go to Bangla Academy today to receive the award.

You have been singing for over four decades now. How much does this award mean to you?

As an artist, I think the biggest achievement is to have been able to sing for so long and obviously, the respect and adoration of the fans. That being said, an award as prestigious as this brings me great joy. We all know that it is quite difficult for an artiste in Bangladesh to survive only doing music, so it is important that they are given the respect that they deserve through such awards. I am thankful to Bangla Academy for this honour.

Today, many young artistes are interested in Rabindra Sangeet. Do you think the future of the art is in safe hands?

I am very confident that the state of Rabindra Sangeet in Bangladesh today is better than it had ever been. Previously, there weren't enough teachers but thankfully, this isn't the case anymore. We have enough institutions and talented teachers. However, I will say that this sector lacks proper sponsorship, and the artistes still are not able to earn a livelihood through singing alone. Besides this, I believe that we are on par with West Bengal when



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



PHOTO: SALIM SADMAN SAMOY

CELEBRATING SELINA HOSSAIN

AL HAQ

In the pages of Bangla literature, Selina Hossain's dedication has played an immense role to captivate and entertain readers with her remarkable words. Born on June 14, 1947, Selina Hossain is one of the most celebrated authors of Bangladesh. A winner of various accolades, her latest addition to the list is the *Shwadhinata Padak*, the highest state award of Bangladesh. Recently, *Tarupallab*, an organisation currently headed by Selina Hossain, arranged an event to celebrate the literary icon.

Along with a few representatives from different publishing houses, prominent writers, poets and journalists were also present at the event. The guest speakers wholeheartedly poured

in their appreciation for the living legend. They also mentioned that the characters in her stories were as strong and mesmerising as its creator.

Selina Hossain's stories have been translated into English, Russian, Korean, Tamil, Arabic and Malay, emphasising the fact that she is well cherished far beyond our borders.

When it was her turn to speak, Selina Hossain's humble words seemed to impress the audience with her aura. Everyone listened as the author spoke so selflessly. She was also presented with a crest by the members of *Tarupallab*.

Her renowned work includes *Hangor Nodi Grenade*, *Shaati Marcher Bikel*, *Japito Jibon*, *Purno Chobir Mognota* and many more.

Spotlight on Samantak Sinha



PHOTO: SALIM SADMAN SAMOY

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Having studied music production in London, Samantak Sinha quickly went on to earn the reputation of one of the most promising upcoming musicians in West Bengal. He is currently in Bangladesh for his upcoming projects. The Daily Star catches up with Samantak for a small chat about his ambitions, music and his trip to Bangladesh.

Welcome to Bangladesh! How is the experience so far? It has been fantastic! This is my first time here and I've always wanted to come, specifically to try out the food! (Laughs)

Tell us about your current projects in Bangladesh. I am doing eight songs with Enamul Karim Nirjhar bhai, and I very much look forward to this project. I've also worked with Farhin Khan Joyita for a few compositions. Besides, I am collaborating with the amazing Sahana Bajpaie again for new projects.

What inspired you to become a musician? To be honest, I was drawn towards the profession from a very young age. A cousin of mine, who had studied in Shantiniketan, first exposed me to musicians like John Denver and Bob Dylan, and I have never been the same ever since! I started singing, playing the guitar and thought about making my own music. Back then, artistes like Mohiner Ghoraguli and Anjan Dutt were making amazing strides towards modernising Bengali music and I was greatly inspired by them as well.

Who are your favourite Bangladeshi musicians? Of course! We, folks from Kolkata, absolutely love James, Ayub Bachchu, Warfaze and the amazing rock musicians that hail from here. I personally grew up listening to James, and he is my favourite musician from Bangladesh.

Where do you plan to see yourself in the future? Look, all I want to do is produce original music. I understand that our film industry is booming, but that has somewhat led to a generic nature of the songs that are being produced there. I would very much like to make music that I would proudly be able to claim as mine, and which does not sound like anyone else.

ZAHANGIR ALOM

A solo art exhibition titled “Displaced in Dhaka” by young artist Kuntal Barai is going on at La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka. Noted artist-critic Mustafa Zaman has curated the exhibit. Professor Nazrul Islam, academic, urbanist and art writer, graced the inaugural ceremony as chief guest. Giusepee Semenza, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Italy-Dhaka; Shahjahan Ahmed Bikash, Associate Professor and Chairperson, Faculty of Fine Arts, UODA; art critic Mustafa Zaman and eminent artist Monirul Islam attended the opening ceremony as special guests.

According to studies, Dhaka has reached the peak of criticality with its unplanned growth -- overpopulation, traffic congestion, so called development sprees and insanitary conditions, having reached an all-time high. Except for a select few, who can bear the brunt of a megalopolis gone haywire, many Dhakaites do not find the city to be a safe haven anymore.

The art project is a survey of all the elements mentioned above. As an artist, Kuntal Barai's work takes into account the chaos, as well as the sense of loss we have developed over the years. Still, the artist believes that there is an organic form of life in this chaos through which a new vision may someday burst into view.



Kuntal Barai with Professor Nazrul Islam

Kuntal's work has been depicted through mixed media -- print and acrylic. The display is open from Monday to Thursday -- 3 pm to 9 pm. The exhibit is

also open on weekends -- Friday and Saturday -- 9 am to 12 noon and 5pm to 8pm, respectively. It goes on till May 19.

WHAT'S NEW ON TV

Stranger Things

SARA KABIR

With the news of the confirmation of Season 3 of this series being at the top right now, the excitement over *Stranger Things* is bigger than ever. *Stranger Things* is an American science fiction-horror Netflix series created, written, and directed by the Duffer Brothers. Set in the fictional town of Hawkins, Indiana, in the 1980s, the first season focuses on the investigation into the disappearance of a young boy amid supernatural events occurring around the town, including the appearance of a girl with psychokinetic abilities who helps the missing boy's friends in their own search. The second season, titled *Stranger Things 2*, is set a year after the first, and deals with attempts of the characters to return to normal and consequences that linger from the first season. From the get-go, you can tell this is a homage to classic 1980s Stephen Spielberg, drawing on *E.T.* and *Close Encounters*, as well as JJ Abrams' *Super 8*. But, as the show progresses, it becomes more and more like a twisted Stephen King story set in a Spielberg movie. It becomes a dark and twisted ride into an even darker and more disturbing world where the stakes feel higher than anything before it. The characters of the show are the true stars. They were all great with amazingly interesting flaws and the way they mix and clash with one another was fun to see unfold.



BGTF's National Conference held



Liaquat Ali Lucky



Kamal Bayezid

The 23rd National Conference of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGTF) was held at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Actor and director Liaquat Ali Lucky and actor Kamal Bayezid were elected as Chairman and Secretary General, respectively, for the next three years.

Participated by the representatives from 232 theatre troupes from across the country, the two-day conference elected 38 members for the executive and central council.

Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Speaker of the National Parliament, graced the inaugural event as Chief Guest while renowned thespians -- Mamunur Rashid, Ramendu Majumdar, Aatur Rahman and Nasiruddin Yousuff attended the ceremony as guests. Liaquat Ali Lucky, convener of the conference preparation council, presided over the programme while Akhtaruzzaman, member secretary of the council delivered welcome the address.

An organising session and cultural programme followed.