



700 TAKA

A quirky and charming tribute to young love

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

'Relatable' - a label that every director wants on their project, while some others try their best to tag this to the most outlandish of genres. However, Nuhash Humayun's latest short on iflix, *700 Taka*, is 'relatable' done right. As a director, Nuhash had already made his presence felt with *Hotel Albatross* and *Paperfrogs*, the latter of which bagged him the coveted 'Best Debut' award at The Daily Star-Standard Chartered Bangladesh's Celebrating Life 2017.

In spite of that, I feel like the director outdid his previous works when he made this romcom. That too without even taking into account the plethora of memes on social media that has helped *700 Taka* go viral. The 17 minute short features Pritom Hasan and Sabila Nur as the leads, both of whom showcase believable chemistry from



the get-go. Pritom, even though not a professional actor, perfectly fits the role of Arik, an economically challenged and insecure youngster. He is arguably the highlight of the short, despite of the presence of the much more seasoned actor, Sabila Nur.

The short film is shot primarily in two

locations - the house where Arik tutors a plump young child and a well-known restaurant in Dhanmondi. The story is centered around Arik's date with Nadia (Sabila Nur), during which Arik is paranoid about having only 700 taka in his pocket. The cinematography by Tanvir Anzum is unconventional but

fitting of the story. The humour of *700 Taka* is pretty much in-your-face, but never to the point that it gets overbearing. The overabundance of television and pop-culture references only adds to the whimsical nature of the film. There is even a parody of a typical Bangla tele-fiction in the short, which made me laugh more than it realistically should.

The segment between Arik and the unnamed waiter, played by none other than internet 'meme-lord' Asif Zaman deserves a special mention due to the sheer unadulterated humour that it brings to the film.

At the end of the day, *700 Taka* is unapologetically funny and surprisingly relatable, the reason being that it was made by an enthusiastic young crew for a young audience. Given that you can sign up to iflix for free and watch this for free, it is highly recommended for anyone looking for 17 minutes of brilliance by Nuhash Humayun.



Superman retires?

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The latest buzz is that Henry Cavill will not be returning to play Superman in Warner Bros.' DC Films Universe. Nothing has been confirmed yet, but according to reports, "talks broke down for a cameo in *Shazam!* due to scheduling conflicts, and the door is now closing on other potential appearances for the actor." Cavill, wearing a 'Krypton Lifting Team' t-shirt, stared at the camera with a stony expression as a Superman figurine entered and disappeared from the frame in a cryptic video he posted on social media. "Today was exciting #Superman," Cavill wrote on in the caption. He recently signed on to star in the Netflix series *The Witcher*.

In addition, sources claim that the studio has decided to shift focus to the planned *Supergirl* movie, and does not intend to put another solo *Man of Steel* project into production for several years.

Talking music with The Seesaw Quartet

SHABABA IQBAL

Comprised of tenor saxophonist Rahin Haider, guitarist Jishnu Haider, bassist Alistair Sarkar Raj and drummer Samiul Wahid, The Seesaw Quartet is an emerging instrumental ensemble on the block that started off its journey this year. Siblings Rahin and Jishnu composed their own music as a duo called The Seesaw.

Eventually, they decided to extend their band to a quartet with Samiul and Raj so as to give a wider sound to their compositions and enrich the rhythmic texture of their music, which is rooted in jazz, funk and blues.

All members of The Seesaw Quartet are experienced musicians. Rahin and Jishnu came across Samiul and Raj during different musical performances. Their first show together as a quartet, which met with widely encouraging reactions, was held at Jatra Biroti in July this year. "Usually, people zone out during instrumental performances, scrolling through their phones or just getting distracted by other things, but at our first show, people were really intrigued and actually listening," says Rahin.

The quartet has built a relationship with one another as friends, which places importance on the art and keeps things in perspective. They opened up about how they approach their collaborative compositions. "I don't believe that we can newly compose

anything during rehearsals or in practice pads," asserts Rahin. "Composing is not a democratic process. The structure and skeleton of a musical piece should come from one mind - others can flesh it out and add elements to it afterwards." Since the nature of their music calls for improvisation, whenever they are in a studio, everything the quartet works on is recorded live.

The talented quartet also shed light on the many aspects involved in making it as a musician. "When a musician is totally into his work, he cannot afford to stagnate because that would eventually culminate his music career," says Samiul. "Successful musicians make practicing a vital factor like breathing." In the coming days, The Seesaw Quartet plans to put out two originals and one rendition, develop the content on their YouTube Channel and do more live performances.

They will be performing some of their fresh originals and some jazz numbers today at 7:30pm at Alliance Francaise de Dhaka.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

WHAT'S ON

Day of Music, Poetry and Tea
 Title: Cha Chakra in Ashwin
 Venue: Cafe Shanchayita, Banani
 Date: September 22
 Time: 6pm-10pm
 Contact: 01672704823

Musical Programme
 Title: Sanaad: Ukcha Sangeet Ashon
 Venue: Ohayanaut, Dhammondi
 Date: September 17-18
 Time: 7pm

Art Exhibition
 Title: State of Mind
 Venue: Kala Kendra, Mohammadpur
 Date: September 7 - October 3
 Time: 4:30pm - 8:30pm
 Facebook Page: Kala Kendra
 Contact: kalakendrabd@gmail.com

Meet and Greet
 Title: Meet with Author Sabrina Fatma Ahmad
 Venue: Nawab Chatga, Gulshan 1
 Date: September 15
 Time: 3pm - 5pm
 Contact: +8801873667766

Concert
 Title: Get Amped Series Presents: Get Unplugged 5 In Your House
 Venue: Uttara Sector 4, Shajalal Avenue
 Date: Today, Time: 3 pm
 Contact: 01683014690

Movie Premiere
 Title: Rock Strata: Live On Silver Screen
 Venue: Star Cineplex, Bashundhara City
 Date: September 29
 Time: 7pm-9:30pm

Sherebul Islam's path to traditional dance



SAYMON ZAKARIA and NURUNNABI SHANTO

Various forms of dances are found in the different *Padma Purana* or *Manasa* (the myth of snake Goddess Padma or Manasa) performances from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries.

The *Padma Purana* performances in the Kushtia region of Bangladesh are ritualistic and music-dance based. This is why it is known as *Padmar Nachon* (dance of Padma) in Kushtia. There are more than 30 groups of *Padmar Nachon* in Kushtia. More than 500 dancers are involved in the performances of *Padmar Nachon*. Among them, Sherebul Islam is the most renowned one. Sherebul Islam is a rural musical theatre based dancer, who has been performing the traditional form for around 34 years. He performs not only in rural settings but also in urban stages and international events.

Sherebul was born in the village of Khadimpur under the Union of Bahulbaria in Mirpur Upazila of Kushtia. At his age of 14, he was selected for performing in a local Jatra

Party. Local theatre activist and playwright Rezaul Haq Solok trained him in acting. He played the role of Prince Rahim in Rupban Yatrappala. Eventually, he played vital roles in the Jatra Pala of Kajal Rekha, Sagar Vasa, Nasiman and many others consistently for 10 years.

He joined a group of *Padmar Nachon* in 1995 led by Guru Akbar Ali. Sherebul required intensive grooming to achieve the skills in performing the art form. However, the well-known dancers of *Padmar Nachon* opposed his access, owing to his ineligibility as he was known for a different form of dance. So, Sherebul began attending every event of *Padmar Nachon* across his territory, observing the dances and songs and practicing the same by himself.

He first performed at an event in the village close to Bogmari Border. For his first performance, he received a spontaneous reward amounting to Tk 1200. From then onward, he gradually became the inevitable artist of the group of Guru Akbar Ali.

Sherebul maintains his family by his occupation of performing as a *Padmar Nachon* artist. However, during summer and Ramadan, he earns his livelihood by selling vegetables and driving three-wheelers.

As a successful *Padmar Nachon* performer, he along with his group performed at the SAARC Folklore Festival in Chandigarh, India in 2009. This year, he performed at Medenipur in India. Besides performing in the regular rural events in Bangladesh, he and his group performed at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the Liberation War Museum, Jahangir Nagar University and University of Chattogram. He trains emerging dancers to develop the quality of *Padmar Nachon*. He uses seven kinds of rhythm to create numerous dance styles known as picking eggplants, driving pigeons away and several others across Kushtia.

Interestingly, he wears the costume of a woman to perform *Padmar Nachon*. Often he performs other styles such as *Gazir Gaan*, *Manik Purer Gaan* and also *Stick Dance*.