



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Priyanka Gope's high hopes

APORAJITA MUSTAFA

National award-winning vocalist, Priyanka Gope has been making waves in the Bangladeshi music industry for nearly a decade with her soulful voice and melodic prowess. A graduate at the master's level in Music from the reputed Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata, India, Priyanka is now completing her PhD, alongside serving as a faculty member, at the Department of Music in University of Dhaka, all the while performing regularly on stage and television, both home and abroad. *The Daily Star* caught up with the supremely versatile artist to chat about her musical endeavours, her take on the future generation of musicians, and more.

How do you juggle between teaching and performing?

Teaching takes up a limited period of time but apart from that, I am completely devoted to my own music. However, I also have to simultaneously run my household while keeping up with professional commitments, which poses to be a great challenge at times.

What upcoming projects do you have in the pipeline?

I am currently in the preparation phase for an album comprising of thumris. The songs will be arranged in a way that brings a contemporary touch to pure Indian classical music. I will begin recording as soon as I finish my PhD dissertation.

Do you see the passion for classical music in the future generations of musicians, music lovers and music students in Bangladesh?

Indian classical music is definitely an acquired taste. I see the passion in a segment of musicians, music lovers and music students alike, but the proportion is not very high. Nonetheless, I believe there is still significant promise for the future of Indian classical music in Bangladesh.

Who are your favourite vocalists from the current lot of singers, both home and abroad?

Shreya Ghoshal definitely tops the list for me internationally. From the Bangladeshi industry, I really enjoy Elita Karim and Kona's music.

What is your advice to the next generation of musicians who want to pursue music as a full-time career, much like yourself?

I believe the most important thing is to love music. Nothing can replace dedication and passion for your craft, if you wish to pursue a career in it full-time.

Pran Premium Ghee-Anandadhara Pitha Fest to be held

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The Pran Premium Ghee-Anandadhara Pitha Fest press conference was held in Dhaka yesterday. The discussion panel included Rafi Hossain, Editor, Star Showbiz and Anandadhara, The Daily Star and Tasneem Tayeb, Executive Editor, Anandadhara. On behalf of title sponsor, Pran Premium Ghee, Md Maksudur Rahman, Head of Marketing, Pran-Dairy Limited was present. Kazi Tanvir Hussain, Public Relations Manager, Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel was also present. Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel is the hospitality partner of the fest. Sumit Chakraborty, Senior Brand Manager, IGLOO Ice Cream and Md Moniruzzaman, Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Relationship Division, Prime Bank Limited were present as the co-sponsors delegates. Anonna Ruma, senior manager of Channel i, the media partner of the fest, was also in attendance.

The two-day fest will be held today and tomorrow. It was inaugurated by Mahfuz Anam, Editor and Publisher, *The Daily Star*, in the presence of Laila Hasan, Tariq Anam Khan, and representatives from the title sponsor, co-



PHOTO: COURTESY

sponsors, and hospitality and media partners. Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Dhaka is providing a variety of scrumptious pithas at the fest. Joler Gaan, Elita Karim, Oyshee, Pooja Sengupta's Turongomi and the band Doob will be performing at the open-air concert at the event, that will

feature various celebrities of the showbiz industry. In addition, there is entertainment for children, including magic shows, bioscope and kids play area. Entry is open for all. So come along with your friends and family for an exciting weekend.



Udichi Shilpi Gosti staged their second production of the jatrapala titled 'Biallisher Biplob', at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy yesterday. The play, written by Krishna Bhattacharya and directed by Vittor Daniyel, is based on the Swadeshi movement.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Guru-Shishya: Shishya-Guru in review

PRİYANKA CHOWDHURY

Guru-Shishya parampara is an ancient teaching-learning heritage of the sub-continent. Over time, the line between the pedagogue and the students has reached a blur, where the student takes the spot of the teacher and vice-versa. With this concept, The Oriental Painting Studio Bangladesh is hosting their first group exhibition titled, *Guru-Shishya: Shishya-Guru* at La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka. The featured artists at the exhibition are Malay Bala, Zahangir Alom and Amit Nandi. The exhibition is dedicated to the late artist Shawkatuzzaman.

During the inauguration, Professor Nisar Hossain, Dean, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka (DU), explained the trajectory of oriental painting and corrected the myths associated with it. "It is not mimicking what we see. Oriental art is the expression that lies within what we see presented in a completely new way," he said. He went on to explain how the nephew of Rabindranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore, was the creator of the Indian Society of Oriental Art and was the most critically important figure of the influential



Guests and artists at the exhibition

PHOTO: KAZI SALAHUDDIN RAZU

exhibition demanded a smoother transition. MYTHICAL SAGA OF SHAKUNTALA

Visual artist Malay Bala is an associate professor at the Department of Oriental Art, DU and the preceptor of Zahangir and Amit. His storytelling through soft colours and ancient figures is a treat to the eyes. "I do not have many messages hidden in my paintings. I intend to take my audience through an emotional journey," says Malay Bala. "The figures in my painting are from the traditional verses of Shakuntala who are engaged in joyful activity." The portraits of Tagore and Gautam Buddha wrapped around the rhythmic root figures beamed serenity. The solo wall with the monochromatic portrait tribute to mime artist Partha Pratim Majumder stood out beautifully. OASIS OF COLOURS

Visual artist Zahangir Alom takes his inspiration from nature. Although he calls himself a self-taught artist, his Gurus call him the master of colours. Taming the bright colours is child's play for him. "He is brilliant with colours. I often ask him to mix the colours for me. I like his passion for learning and often I learn from him", comments Guru Malay Bala on Alom. Most of his paintings had the wash-effect. The fluidity of his work looked like music on canvas. "I do not follow any grammar. I travel a lot to gather inspiration," says Alom. "I observe the colours of nature and try to bring the same on canvas."

ANCIENT TUNES INTERPRETED

The youngest of the three is Amit Nandi, a lecturer at Department of Oriental Art, DU. The centerpiece of the exhibition was his painting, *Raga Kedar*. The soft-spoken artist mentioned that he takes inspiration from mythological sagas and blend it with everyday actions. "I used figures from Kalighat painting but blended them with my own interpretation of the sagas," Amit comments. He also mentioned the art *addas* at the studio help him to conceive the ideas. Along with his framed paintings, his miniature sagas from the Mahabharata were highly appreciated. His preceptors and seniors ushered him with words of appreciation during the exhibition. Malay Bala said, "By age I maybe the eldest but I am highly moved by the works of Zahangir and Amit. Amit is a very talented; he has not only surpassed his peers but also his preceptors."

The Oriental Painting Studio Bangladesh also runs a study group that has successfully organised eight oriental painting exhibitions with participants from home and abroad. They began 2019 with this group exhibition and have more events coming up. The studio intends to open new opportunities for oriental art in Bangladesh.

The exhibition is open for all and will run until February 1 from 3 pm to 9 pm on weekdays, and from 9 am to 12 noon and 5 pm- 8 pm on the weekends.

MACBETH to be staged in Bangladesh and India

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

An adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, presented by the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka, is set to return to the stage. It is directed by Dr Ishrafeel Shaheen. He is a director based in Bangladesh and a professor at the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka. He graduated from the National School of Drama (India) in 1991, obtained his PhD on Street Theatre in Bangladesh from the Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata, India, in 1999. He served the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies as the chair from 2006 to 2009. He has taught at Rabindra Bharati University in India and also has also conducted theatre workshops in Bangladesh India, South Korea, China, Russia, UAE, USA and United Kingdom, Egypt Philippines, Spain, Italy, Poland, France and Czech Republic.

The play is translated by Syed Shamsul Haq and edited by Shahman Moishan. It will be staged from January 28-31 at Natmondal, University of Dhaka at 6:30 pm and from February 2-4 at the main hall of Jatiya Natyashala, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at 7 pm. Moreover, it will be staged during the 20th Bharat Rang Mahotsab 2019 on February 10 in New Delhi and on February 12 in Ranchi, Jharkhand.



PHOTO: COURTESY



'Flower of Creation' by Malay Bala and 'Grace of Monsoon' by Zahangir Alom.

Bengal School of Art, which led to the development of modernity in Indian painting.

In the exhibition, while the master extracted his inspiration from the *rasa* of Shankuntala, disciple Zahangir Alom placed the colours of nature on his canvas, while Amit Nandi enacted the verses from Mahabharata in his own style. Curated by Amirul Rajiv, the distinct characteristic of each artist was visible through their work. However the arrangement could have been improved. The wall with cool colour palette suddenly ending with intense bright colours creates visual discomfort. The character in