

I want to satisfy my inner artiste:

TANVIN SWEETY

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Tanvin Sweety started her career in the industry as a model, and is a renowned face in television dramas for 2 decades.

She has also appeared on theatre, where her presence is still active. She talked to The Daily Star about her latest works, and future plans.

You are starring in the ongoing mega-series 'Gulshan Avenue' season 2. Share your thoughts on this project.

It is a family drama where I portray the eldest daughter-in-law of an influential family. Being the eldest daughter-in-law, my character wants to handle everything in the house by exercising her power. It is written and directed by Nima Rahman, and is being aired on Bangla Vision.

You have been involved with theatre troupe 'Theatre' for many years. 'Mukti' made its 101st appearance on stage recently. You also worked on this drama. Share your experience about it?

We recently staged the 100th premiere of "Mukti" in a grand manner, earning positive response from the audience. It has an amazing storyline, which mesmerized the audience and makes them feel a lot of emotions.

Are you working on any new plays?

The work for a new drama, titled "Jamini Na Jete", is going on. It is expected to appear on stage in February or March next year. The audience will see a new side of me through this drama.

Why did you decrease your appearances in films?

I will surely work on films that have good characters and storylines. In this year's "August 1975", I played the role of a historical character in this movie. I recently got a new offer for another film, which I will work on.

After working in the industry for so many years, what are your expectations from acting?

I want to work on something which the audience will remember for a long time. I want to create a strong position in the industry, through my acting. I have done many projects, but now, I want to do satisfy my inner artiste.

Translated by Rafsana Amin



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



2021: LOOKING BACK

5 outstanding web productions throughout the year

SHABABA IQBAL

This year saw the release of a slew of outstanding Bangladeshi web series and films that had us glued to our screens. As 2021 comes to an end, we bring you a list of some of the best productions, released on OTT platforms.

Networker Baire

Renowned director Mizanur Rahman Aryan's "Networker Baire" was released on Chorki. A story about love and friendship showcasing the aspirations of young Dhaka dwellers, the original film brings together the life of Ratul (Yash Rohan), Munna (Khairul Basar), Abir (Sariful Islam Razz), and Sifat (Jonayed Bukdadi).

The multi-starrer production also features Nazia Haque Orsha as Tania opposite Khairul Bashar, Tasnia Farin as Kotha opposite Jonayed Bukdadi, Nazifa Tushi as Samia opposite Sariful Islam Razz and Tasnuva Tisha.

"Networker Baire" was lauded by the audience for its unique storytelling.

Mohanagar

Hoichoi's "Mohanagar", written and directed by Ashfaque Nipun, boasts a gripping story that shines a spotlight on the deep-rooted corruption in the police machinery.

The series was widely acclaimed upon its release. Mosharraf Karim brilliantly conveys the deviousness and chutzpah of the morally bankrupt officer Harun.

Ladies & Gentlemen

Internationally acclaimed filmmaker Mostofa Sarwar Farooki is known for showcasing a myriad of social and emotional struggles in his stories.

His eight-episode debut web series "Ladies & Gentlemen", on ZEE5, was lauded for portraying the journey of the protagonist, played by Tasnia Farin, as she fights for her rights in her own workplace and in the process, paves the way for every working woman in Bangladesh.

The cast also includes Maria Nur, Afzal Hossain, Mukit Zakaria, Hasan Masood, Partha Barua, Iresh Zaker, Pavel Areen, and Tanvir Hossain among others.

Unoloukik

The five episodes of Chorki's anthology series "Unoloukik" — strange, dark,



unpredictable, funny — both overlap in style and wildly differ from one another. There is a consistency in tone. This is achieved because they are all

based on stories by the same author, Shibabrata Barman, and made by one director, Robiul Alam Robi, but shot by five different cinematographers.

The cast of the show includes Asaduzzaman Noor, Chanchal Chowdhury, Nusrat Imrose Tisha, Gazi Rakayet, Intekhab Dinar, Iresh Zaker, Rafiath Rashid Mithila, Mostafa Monwar, Shohel Mondol, Farhana Hamid, Sahana Rahman Sumi and Naziba Basher, among others. Intekhab Dinar, in the role of Mostak Ahmed, delivers a stellar performance in his episode, "Dwikhandito".

Adhkhana Bhalo Chele Adha Mostaan

This musical film on popular singer-songwriter Shayan Chowdhury Arnob was released on Chorki to much anticipation. It showcases newly remastered versions of 12 popular Arnob tracks, along with some special stories narrated by the artiste himself and some of the people close to him.

"Adhkhana Bhalo Chele Adha Mostaan" is a film that explores the duality of an artiste, told through chats between director Abrar Athar and Arnob about life, battling one's demons, and overcoming them.

Honourable mentions

There were many other web projects that sparked interest among viewers this year, one of which was Ashfaque Nipun's "Koshoneer", on Hoichoi.

Featuring brilliant performances by Tariq Anam Khan, Saberi Alam, Runa Khan, Sayed Babu, Shyamol Mawla, Sabila Nur and Yash Rohan, the film tells the tale of a family torn apart by rifts.

Raihan Rafi's "Dark Side of Dhaka", featuring five connected stories, was lauded for its outstanding screenplay. The film, released on Cinematic, featured Nazifa Tushi, Manoj Kumar Pramanik, and Khairul Basar in pivotal roles.

Adnan Al Rajeev's debut Chorki original film, "YouTumor", features Pritom Hasan and Ziaul Hoque Polish in the lead roles. A story about two friends who turn out to be YouTubers, it was appreciated for addressing social issues, with a tint of comedy.

The Hoichoi series "Boli", directed by Shankha Dasgupta and starring Chanchal Chowdhury and Shohel Mondol among others, thrilled audiences with the story of the mysterious Chheradia Dwip, where the locals are doomed amidst the struggle for power and control.

SERIES REVIEW

Season 2 of 'The Witcher' takes folklore fantasy to new heights

SHANIZ CHOWDHURY

Based on Polish author Andrzej Sapkowski's stories that spawned an incredibly popular gaming franchise, Netflix's "The Witcher" recently released its much-anticipated second season.

You don't have to be a die-hard fan of "Game of Thrones" or even fantasy shows to watch "The Witcher". With sweeping multitudes: rich mythology, political tectonics, monster fables, peripatetic adventures, and unique characters, the new season has something refreshing to offer every step of the way.

The star of the show, Geralt of Rivia, a genetically enhanced monster slayer, now has a "Child Surprise" - Cirilla, a princess in exile - which means he is a surrogate father. From the very first episode, the audience learns about Ciri's conspicuous animosity towards the Nilfgaard Empire, which lay siege to her home, the Kingdom of Cintra. She is determined to take her revenge, for which she believes it's crucial that she transmutes into a Witcher.

Not long after meeting more of the Witcher clan in Kaer Morhen, Ciri learns to be one as well, under the tutelage of Geralt. Meanwhile, the world is hardly barren of calamities. In between well-choreographed and gnarly fight scenes, the story progresses further as conflict rises between empires, terrifying monsters attack and a host of new and captivating characters add to the breadth of lore. On one hand, we are introduced to Geralt's mentor Vesemir and on the other, Yennefer's mentor Tissaia makes a return. Other familiar faces such as the mage Triss



Ciri in 'The Witcher'

Merigold and Nilfgaardian commander Cahir also reappear.

When stories are blended together, it makes for a fun watch and also allows the writer to string in diverse plot elements. Each episode unfolds across three non-linear timelines, which is a testament to how the world-building in this season is more expansive.

The earliest timeline portrays the origin of the sorceress Yennefer of Vengerberg, played by the brilliantly versatile Anya Chalotra. Although Yennefer's love interest Geralt is under the impression that she is dead, the opposite is true. After being stripped off of her magical powers, she embarks on quite the winding journey with fellow mage, Fringilla.

We follow Geralt as he is thrown in the

deep end of many desultory adventures. We meet Ciri in the present timeline as she battles between playing safe and playing hard. Despite sparse timelines, these three main characters' fates are intrinsically bonded.

Freya Allen carefully channels the dichotomy of vulnerability and control into her role of Ciri. As for Geralt, Henry Cavill personifies the character exactly the way fans envisaged it. From Geralt's gruff mannerisms and his stoic profile to his sly sense of humour and affectionate nature, Cavill interweaved several quirks to create this character.

While "The Wheel of Time" and "The Last Kingdom" are wrestling to fill the void left by "Game of Thrones", "The Witcher" is at the forefront of this new era.

I forgot how to act after lockdown: Meryl Streep

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Noted actress Meryl Streep opened up about how she temporarily forgot how to act while portraying the U.S. president at a political rally for writer-director Adam McKay's comedy "Don't Look Up".

"I found it really hard," Streep revealed in the course of EW's *Around the Table* chat with the actress, McKay, Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence, Jonah Hill, and Tyler Perry.

"I didn't feel funny in the lockdown. When I would come in to shoot my stuff, [I'd] get out of the car and hadn't spoken to anybody in three weeks. [I'd] walk into the stadium in Worcester, put on the wig and the nails and the suit, and make a speech to all these people. I just lost it. I forgot how to act, I forgot what I was about. It sort of dismantles your humanity, to be isolated like that."

However, Streep swiftly recovered her acting mojo, at least according to Hill, who plays the actress' son in "Don't Look Up", and is full of praise for his co-star's comedic chops.

"Don't Look Up" is now streaming on Netflix.



PHOTO: COLLECTED