

# A new cinematic duo on THE HORIZON

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SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ  
Intense, passionate, riveting – the trailer of Badrul Anam Saud’s new movie, *Shyamakabhya*, is likely to invoke these feelings within any reader. While the seasoned director’s vision goes a long way into making this possible, much credit will also go to the leads, Shohel Mondol and Neelanjona Neela.

The rustic location, the human interaction and a subtle hint of the extraordinary – the film promises an earthy story that will subvert expectations.

After Raihan Rafi’s *Taan*, this is the duo’s second outing, and their first time on the silver-

screen together. “I wasn’t even the first choice for the film!”, laughed the gracious young actress, returning to films after her first project with Saud, *Gohin Baluchor*. “The character of Shyama was supposed to have a dusky skin-tone, and another actress was supposed to play it. However, after she dropped out at the last minute, I was informed of my casting just the day before the cameras started rolling!” Neela credits the guidance from the film’s co-producer, Suborna Mustafa, for the prowess that she has made.

“Suborna ma’am, throughout my career, has been a blessing for me.

She was the one who let me know that I was playing Shyama, and made me believe that I can do it.” Shohel, a seasoned star with experience in theatre, television, OTT and cinema, had nothing but praise of Neela’s acting. “We were initially very tense about how she will adapt to the role in such a short time, but she surprised us all,” said the *Taqdeer* and *Hawa* star. Shohel, who dons the hat of the earthy, romantic Azad, claims that this is a role that is unlike any other that he has portrayed on-screen.

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The film, according to the leads, is a psychological drama. Why not make it a thriller, which is a more palatable one according to the tastes of the Bangladeshi audience? “The risk is there, but our director is a visionary

and a risk-taker,” said Shohel. “This is a film that will reward the audience for their patience while they are watching, that I can say for sure.”

That may be, but the political instability, paired with a lack of cinema-going audiences during non-festival dates, will have the entire crew’s work cut out. Neela, however, is extremely confident about their efforts. “I can’t really comment on the film’s outcome. I do, however, stand by the fact that if they make their way inside the theatre, they will leave after watching that a pristine film that they will have enjoyed very much.”

Neela’s journey in the showbiz industry takes a completely different trajectory from Shohel’s as she shot to fame after becoming runner-up at a popular beauty pageant. “I got a lot of film offers after that, but I never really envisioned myself as a film actress,” she said. “However, I, as a joke, mailed Saud bhai’s AD that I wanted to be in his upcoming film. When the call came for an audition, I was shocked!”. She has been a regular face in the television industry after that. “I honestly could not work as much as I’d have wanted to, but now that I have completed my graduation, I definitely plan to be more serious in my work.”

Shohel, who has not looked back after he broke through because of his stellar OTT work, continues to strive to be better. Other than *Shyamakabhya*, Shohel is done filming *Bonolota Sen*, in a role that he has dedicated more than a year to. “I’ve had a great journey through my work, getting to live so many characters. I’ve met so many great people through it, I am grateful that I can continue this journey, and I want the audience to keep me in their prayers,” said the actor.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

## OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



**Luis Buñuel, Day 1: Surrealist Dreams**  
November 19 | 7 pm - 9 pm  
Tara Books, House 32, Road 11, Block G, Banani



**Children’s Carnival 2023**  
November 20 | 2 pm - 9 pm  
Rangs Anam Plaza, Dhanmondi



**Theaterian presents “Death of a Salesman”**  
November 21 | 7 pm  
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

## STYLE STATEMENT

### APU BISWAS

Draped in a teal-coloured lehenga paired with an emerald neckpiece, Apu Biswas exuded regal elegance, resembling a royal princess. Her tightly wrapped hair in a ponytail gracefully accentuated her arch-shaped eyebrows, while her glossy nude lips heightened her beauty tenfold. The actress graced the stage at the National Film Awards 2022 on November 14, radiating glamour in every aspect of her attire.

## WHAT’S PLAYING

### Now and Then

Originally a demo recorded by John Lennon in 1977, *Now and Then* from the iconic band The Beatles opens with confident minor piano chords and strumming from the late George Harrison, recorded in the 90s, before we are introduced to Lennon’s voice. Unlike in *Free as a Bird* and *Real Love*, Lennon’s voice is crisp, clear, and young as ever – as if we are hearing him as a young man once again.

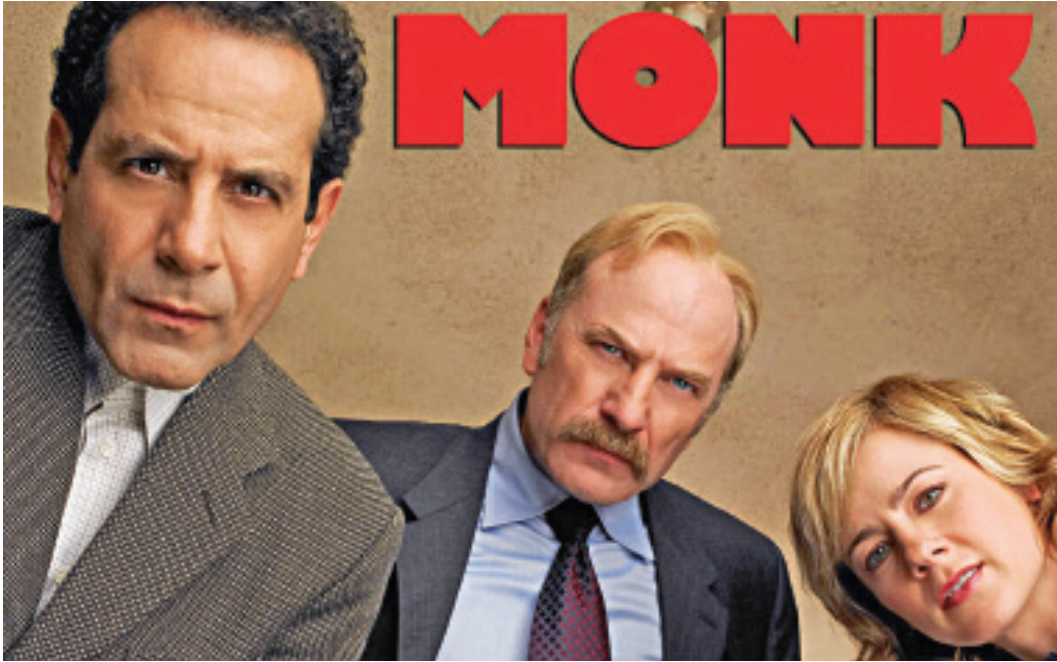
Otherwise known as the *last ever Beatles song*, it might not match the complexity of The Beatles’ classic productions. However, for those, seeking John and Paul’s melodic harmonies, George’s guitar tones, and Ringo’s stirring drumming, all together on a song for the final time, *Now and Then* does the job beautifully.



## TV TALKIES

### MONK

Embracing flaws with brilliance



*Monk* is a delightful detective series that masterfully intertwines crime-solving intrigue with a heartfelt portrayal of its protagonist’s struggles. At the heart of the show lies Tony Shalhoub’s stellar performance as Adrian Monk, a former San Francisco detective, grappling with severe obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and an array of phobias following his wife’s tragic death. Shalhoub’s portrayal is nothing short of remarkable; he skillfully navigates Monk’s complexities, seamlessly transitioning between his character’s brilliant investigative skills and

endearing idiosyncrasies.

The show, created by Andy Breckman and David Hoberman, follows Monk as he aids the police department using his exceptional attention to detail and analytical mind, while simultaneously contending with his crippling fears and OCD-induced rituals.

Its unique premise, coupled with strong character development, makes *Monk* a must-watch for those who enjoy crime-solving dramas with a touch of humour.

## TRENDY STREAMS

**Netflix**  
All the light we cannot see



**Hoichoi**  
Parnashavarir Shaap



**Amazon Prime**  
Pippa



**HBO Max**  
Julia



**Hulu**  
 Fargo season 5

