

CHECK IT OUT

All about FASHIONOVATION

COVID-19 has introduced a new world order. From frequently disinfecting our surroundings to holding virtual meetings instead of the age-old board room conferences, a lot has changed in these two months.

Every industry faced its own levels of turmoil and one of the worst-hit has been the fashion industry. In a declining economy where people's disposable income is continuously crumbling, most do not feel the need to buy another fashion item — that was not a basic necessity.

It must also be mentioned that the fashion industry does not only include the apparel manufacturers and retailers, but everyone from photographers, designers, models, choreographers, makeup artists to even the light boys, all connected to each other like a wheel to the axle. While most fashion outlets were seeking an online solution to their problems, the modelling industry was not left behind.

Azra Mahmood, renowned model and



AZRA MAHMOOD
Ideation and initiation

NUZHAT KHAN
Executive Editor, CANVAS



choreographer of Bangladesh, initiated the lead to set the industry back in motion through a concept she termed as 'Fashionovation.'

"I was sitting at home and staying safe when I realised there is no immediate solution to the pandemic. That's when I made a pressing decision to save the almost dying industry and take innovative approaches to continue with our livelihoods. I discussed this idea with Nuzhat Khan, Executive Editor, Canvas. Together, we worked in the first online photoshoot for Canvas Magazine, which was well received by the masses," said Azra.

Nuzhat Khan voiced a similar opinion, saying, "The pandemic and the concept of social distancing prevented us from going to print anytime soon. An immediate solution was necessary to keep business in motion

and Azra Mahmood came with a timely solution. We gathered a few like-minded models, stylists and photographers together over a virtual meeting and discussed the possibilities of a virtual shoot. Everyone was excited, and we materialised the photoshoot within days. Easily downloadable apps like Google Duo and Zoom were used at the beginning to hold the shoots. Then we moved on to remote access functions found on smartphones and cameras to work with 'finer' prints. The shoots were amazing and everyone enjoyed working as a team, like always."

Sonia Yeasmin Isha, model and fashion director shared her views on Fashionovation as well, saying, "We were all cooped up in our houses after the pandemic hit. None of us were willing to work outside until a worthy solution was found to tackle the

problem. That's when Azra Mahmood and Nuzhat Khan approached a few of us, to take part in virtual shoots. I was a bit apprehensive at first, but after seeing the results, I feel quite encouraged to take on more work. This is surely the way going forwards."

To sum up Fashionovation and its future prospects, Azra Mahmood's ideas sound appropriate — "This is the time to completely dedicate our efforts to Bangladesh – on both a collective and individual basis, because she needs us. So, for my future photoshoots, I have decided to include local designers and their collections to portray to the masses. I hope this helps to keep the entire industry alive and thriving."

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo courtesy: Azra Mahmood