

A new Pritom Hasan on the horizon

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

From 'Esho Mama Hey' to 'Kababer Haddi', Pritom Hasan's journey in the music industry has been an unprecedented success. Behind it, however, is the willingness to work day and night – researching, honing and improving his craft. We catch up with the young music director, where he talks about his journey, future plans and more.

Congratulations on the success of 'Kababer Haddi'. How was the experience of shooting a music video at this time?

I had a blast, really. High-budget music videos are very difficult to publish nowadays, so I would thank TECNO mobile for investing and believing in me. The entire video team, including Adnan Al Rajeev, Kajal Arefin Ome, Marjuk Russell, Ziaul Hoque Palash and Sabnam Faria, among others, are to be thanked. To be honest, corporate investment can play a huge part in the overall development of the music industry, so more corporates should step up and invest, giving due respect to the artists.

Even though you have come to be known as the 'party guy' in music, you surprised everyone with the recent 'Bhenge Porona Ebhabe'. Are there more sides to you that are yet to be revealed?

I was hoping that you would ask this. I have many projects in the pipeline – in which the music and aesthetics will be unrecognisable compared to my current image. I will also be working with artistes like Farooque Bhai Project and Xefor to hopefully give something fresh sounding. If you look closely at international music industries, every artiste changes their image after 5 years or so, and you will see a new Pritom Hasan in 2021.

What are you doing in your spare time?

I love researching about music in my spare time. I also listen to underground artistes on Soundcloud, usually because they are completely detached from the mainstream music scene and can innovate to their heart's will.

If there were one thing that you could change about our music industry, what would it be?

To be honest, it would be the audiences' mindset. I would like them to be more accepting towards different and newer genres. If the listeners open their hearts towards different styles, they are the ones who reap the most rewards!

What more can you expect from you in the coming days?

I don't want to spoil too much more than what I have already revealed! However, I think of my fans before I sign up for any project, because they believe in me, and I don't want to disappoint them. That being said, I would like to say to everyone that it has been a tough year, so hang in there! I will see you on the other side of the year with many surprises!



PHOTOS: STAR



The director with the actors of the project.



A snippet from 'Mainkar Chipay'.

MAINKAR CHIPAY

An intriguing prospect with three leads

SHARMIN JOYA

ZEE5 Global recently announced their first four web originals from Bangladesh. One of them is the Abrar Athar directorial "Mainkar Chipay".

ZEE5 is the largest OTT platform for South Asian content with access in 190 countries. They unveiled the trailer of "Mainkar Chipay" during a recent virtual press conference.

"Our originals are always subscription



Sariful Razz

driven across global markets. However, as a very special initiative, we've made "Mainkar Chipay" free to watch in Bangladesh, so that anyone can watch it and feel proud," expresses Archana Anand, Chief Business Officer, ZEE5 Global. "In fact, all other locally produced originals that we have announced will be available for free in Bangladesh."



Shamol Mawla

Archana also talked about the growing market of ZEE5 Global in Bangladesh, in terms of content. "As the leading OTT platform in the market, we are bringing audiences in Bangladesh high quality and differentiated local content, featuring the best of Bangladeshi talent, and also global stories and rich narratives from different countries," she adds. "Further embodying our philosophy of growing 'Stronger Together' with Bangladesh, we also want to be the clear partner of choice for local producers and talent looking for a global platform and global recognition, and thereby be a catalyst for Bangladeshi talent to find a global stage."

Starring Afran Nisho, Shamol Mawla and Sariful Razz, the trailer of the web film, has already stirred excitement among the audience.

The cast and the director of the web project shared their experiences of working together on this action-thriller



Afran Nisho

dark comedy.

"I believe there are so many stories around us that we need to explore," says Abrar.

Considered as one of the youngest independent filmmakers of the fraternity, Abrar's debut short film "Life in Other Words" won international awards and competed at NYIFF, Bahamas, and Oscar-qualifying festivals like Short Shorts Asia.

The highly acclaimed "Koli 2.0" was Abrar's first web project, featuring Nusrat Imrose Tisha, Pijush Badhyopadhyay and Irfan Sajjad.

"Mainkar Chipay" is uniquely a Bangladeshi phrase, that suggests an odd or critical situation.

"We will be successful if the phrase is used by people around the world too!" laughs the director.

The trailer builds curiosity about the film's plot. In short, it is the story of an adventurous night between a cop, a drug

dealer and a drug addict with a car, who are faced with an odd situation.

"It is nothing educational. It is just an entertaining and intense story," shared Nisho at the press conference held recently.

"The story of this less than an hour crime thriller comedy web film is relatable to everyone," shares Abrar.

Nisho, Shamol and Razz are working together for the first time in this project. There are no prime female characters in "Mainkar Chipay."

"I have never worked with any of them before," says Abrar. "When I approached Nisho, I told him, 'I don't know anything man, but you are doing this film.'"

Luckily, Nisho was so amused by Abrar's approach that he could not say no, the director further adds.

When asked if the cast got into any 'mainkar chipay' while shooting the film, Shamol shared an interesting anecdote.

"The whole experience was great.

However, we had to shoot an action scene in a brickfield, which really felt like being in a 'mainkar chipay', says the actor. "Thankfully, nobody was injured."

The shooting of the project was done in a record time of just four nights.

"Abrar is a very good friend of mine, and this is the first time that we have worked together," says Razz, who has a cameo in the film. "Mainkar Chipay" will be available on ZEE5 from November 9, free for the audience.

'Art Against Corona' underway at Shilpakala

ZAHANGIR ALOM

A month-long art exhibition, titled *Art Against Corona*, is underway at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). A K Abdul Momen, Honourable Minister for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, inaugurated the exhibition as the chief guest at the National Gallery Auditorium of the academy on October 27.

State Minister for the Ministry of Cultural Affairs K M Khalid, Badrul Arefin, Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and renowned artist Jamal Ahmed were present as special guests. Secretary of BSA, Md Nowsad Hossain delivered the welcome address while BSA Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky presided over the inaugural



ceremony.

"We have proved once again that we are a nation of heroes. Amid the pandemic, everyone worked shoulder to shoulder for the motherland," said A K Abdul Momen. "This event is truly commendable and an admirable



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BSA

example for the future."

"We have been able to organise such an event because of the power that our leaders have given us, to stand beside others," added Liaquat Ali Lucky. "Such arrangements will continue in the future."

BSA is also conducting online cultural activities all over the country to keep the morale of the people strong. In the meantime, tens of thousands of artists from every district of the country, including Dhaka, have joined the *Art Against Corona* online programme. Artists of all ages, including adults, the youth, the elderly and children with special needs, have joined the *War against Corona* programme that has received a widely positive response from people across the country.

After the inaugural ceremony, a cultural programme was organised by the artists of BSA. The exhibition is open to all daily from 11 am to 6 pm till November 26, maintaining all health and safety guidelines.

Remembering legendary artist Mubinul Azim

RASHEEK TABASSUM MONDIRA

The modern art movement in Bangladesh, which started in the early 20th century, gave birth to multiple pioneering artists, gaining Bangladeshi art international recognition. One of the pioneers of modern art in Bangladesh, Mubinul Azim, enriched the Bangladeshi art scenario through his brilliant creations, along with other pioneering legends.

Born on November 24, 1934, Mubinul Azim passed away in 1975, at the age of 41. Marking the legendary painter's 45th death anniversary on November 1, *The Daily Star* caught up with Momtaz Azim, widow of Mubinul Azim, as she reminisces countless anecdotes about her late husband.

Despite his short span of life, Mubinul Azim presented the world with a treasure trove of creations, starting from sketches, oil paints, watercolours to experimenting with various materials, nylon, cement, sand, jute and clothes among others. "He used to love experimenting with different materials and loved to create various artworks with unconventional materials," shared Momtaz Azim.



Mubinul Azim with his wife Momtaz Azim.



(L) The artist in his studio. (R) Artworks by Mubinul Azim.

student of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin and later was given a stature next to the legendary artist upon his brilliance. "He was addicted to painting since childhood and as an artist, he had a completely different world of his own," shared Momtaz Azim.

The 1950-1960 time frame was the most revolutionary for modern and contemporary Bangladeshi artists, around the time, Azim along with other counterparts introduced various forms of modern, abstract, abstract-impressionist and abstract-expressionist art. Azim

was considered a prominent and pioneering artist of Pakistan at the time. Azim's career as a painter started when he moved to Karachi in 1957, where he worked as a teacher at an art institution and later in the Alliance Francaise Karachi, he also worked as a lecturer at Pak-American Centre in Karachi, Pakistan.

Azim had an intricate and individualistic style of painting, his exceptional styling of colour treatment and composition, continues to mesmerise aesthetes till now. Brilliant in design and texture, nature and its various elements found their way into Azim's canvas, with unique, bright colours and forms. Passionate about intrinsic details, Azim also constructed artistic impressions of modern life and portrayed them with elegance. The charm and bitterness, the appeal and longings and other different aspects of city and country life came alive in

his canvas.

Mubinul Azim's brilliant creations made him a favourite among the elites and high officials of Pakistan, several of his works were portrayed in official buildings including a portrait of Quaid-I-Azam in the National Parliament.

In 1964, the former Pakistan president Ayub Khan presented



King Birendra of Nepal, a painting by Mubinul Azim. "The painting mesmerised the King and he later invited Mubin to visit Nepal, but unfortunately the trip never happened," shared Mrs Azim.

After the Liberation War, Azim returned to Dhaka for good and completely immersed himself in the world of art. Azim painted three portraits of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, one of them found its way into Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's personal collection. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman presented the renowned

BBC journalist, Sir William Mark Tully, reputed for his coverage of the Liberation War, a painting by Mubinul Azim in 1974, as a gesture of appreciation.

Throughout his career, Azim held 17 solo exhibitions and 37 group art exhibitions in the country and abroad. In his honour, three solo exhibitions were arranged at Dhaka



Club (1976), Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (1998) and Bengal Art Gallery (2015).

Shortly after his demise, Dhaka Club, along with noted singer Kalim Sharafi and others, hosted an event commemorating Mubinul Azim and his life. In 2012, the painter was posthumously awarded Ekushey Padak for his outstanding contribution to Bangladeshi art.

In the book, "Mubinul Azim: Colours and Dreams," published by Bengal Publications, Momtaz Azim has persevered and documented his works, reports, articles and

discussions on Azim and his works. Momtaz Azim's contributions and sacrifices have played an important role in Mubinul Azim's illustrious career and even after years of his demise, she continues to preserve and collect these valuable works of art.

Azim's paintings are showcased in several places including Bangladesh



National Museum, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, Bangladesh Biman, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, Bangladesh Bank, Jeddah Airport, Sonali Bank- London Branch and Dhaka Club among other monumental landmarks.

It was a huge loss for the new nation of Bangladesh, in 1975 to lose one of its most brilliant artists so early in life. Mubinul Azim's contribution to the art movement of Bangladesh has immortalised the late artist through his invaluable creations.