

Dhaka Day by Day

From Mughal Miniatures To Modernity

by Fayza Haq

Showkatuzzaman's paintings at his sixth solo exhibition is very different from the Moghul miniature art that we found in his first exhibitions more than eleven years ago. For Moghul miniature we need special colour and paper which is not available in Bangladesh. The process too is lengthy. I will never be able to make a living with it. "However the training that I have in Moghul miniature helps me with my modern creations. People see modern art pieces and want to grab them. No matter how fine the miniature might be it won't sell at the same rate. Even if people appreciate Moghul miniature they don't have the means to buy it. This is although I have kept my prices very reasonable," the artist comments.

Dwelling on his work Showkatuzzaman says that he should join some art gallery as that helps the artist to keep alive. "I am now using various media. I have found a counterpart of terra-cotta that costs 50% less. At present I am using clear glass to work on. That way there is no need for canvas or paper or additional glass to cover the paint. This has not been done before in Bangladesh."

"We have a scarcity of colours. I try and make paints with egg emulsion, adding raw paints that you get in Ghotia Market of New Market. Most of my paintings in the recent exhibition at the Alliance Francaise is done in acrylic. I was presented with a massive box of 12 large tubes when I went to Japan, and I did my work from that," the artist adds.

One of the remarkable pieces at the exhibition is "Bird". The form is taken from a pigeon. The background is a dramatic red and black. The bird represents youth. The form is simplified to symbolise all birds. "The bird is apparently optimistic, full of happy thoughts and eager to beautify itself," the artist comments.

"Waiting" has bright colours and environment of flowers, leaves and tree branches to evoke the romantic mood. "Radha is sometimes said to wait in the form of a flower", the artist elaborates. The simplified form of the duck represents a woman waiting for her lover.

Very similar in them is "Expecting" which has a duck in a dry area of marshes. The season of mating is off and the countryside, specially the pool has dried up and yet the bird waits. "In both winter and summer our ponds sometimes dry off," the artist explains. All the three entries are acrylic on board.

"Autumn" has been done in egg emulsion. The colours were prepared with egg yolk and egg white. One is confronted with dry leaves against a yellow land with hints of grass. Despite the theme of drying up yet the picture appears bright and optimistic.

"Summer" is an exotic piece. Due to the intensive heat everything is seen in shades of

JS House body meet cancelled

The third meeting of the Jatiya Sangsad House Committee scheduled to be held at 11 am on September 21 has been cancelled due to unavoidable reasons, reports BSS.

The new date of the meeting will be announced later.

Qul Khwani

Qul Khwani of Alhaj Kazi Zahirul Quyyum, a political leader and former MP will be held at his residence at 7/2, Shantibag, Dhaka, today (Friday) after Asur prayers.

Relatives, friends, well-wishers and colleagues of the deceased have been requested to attend the function.

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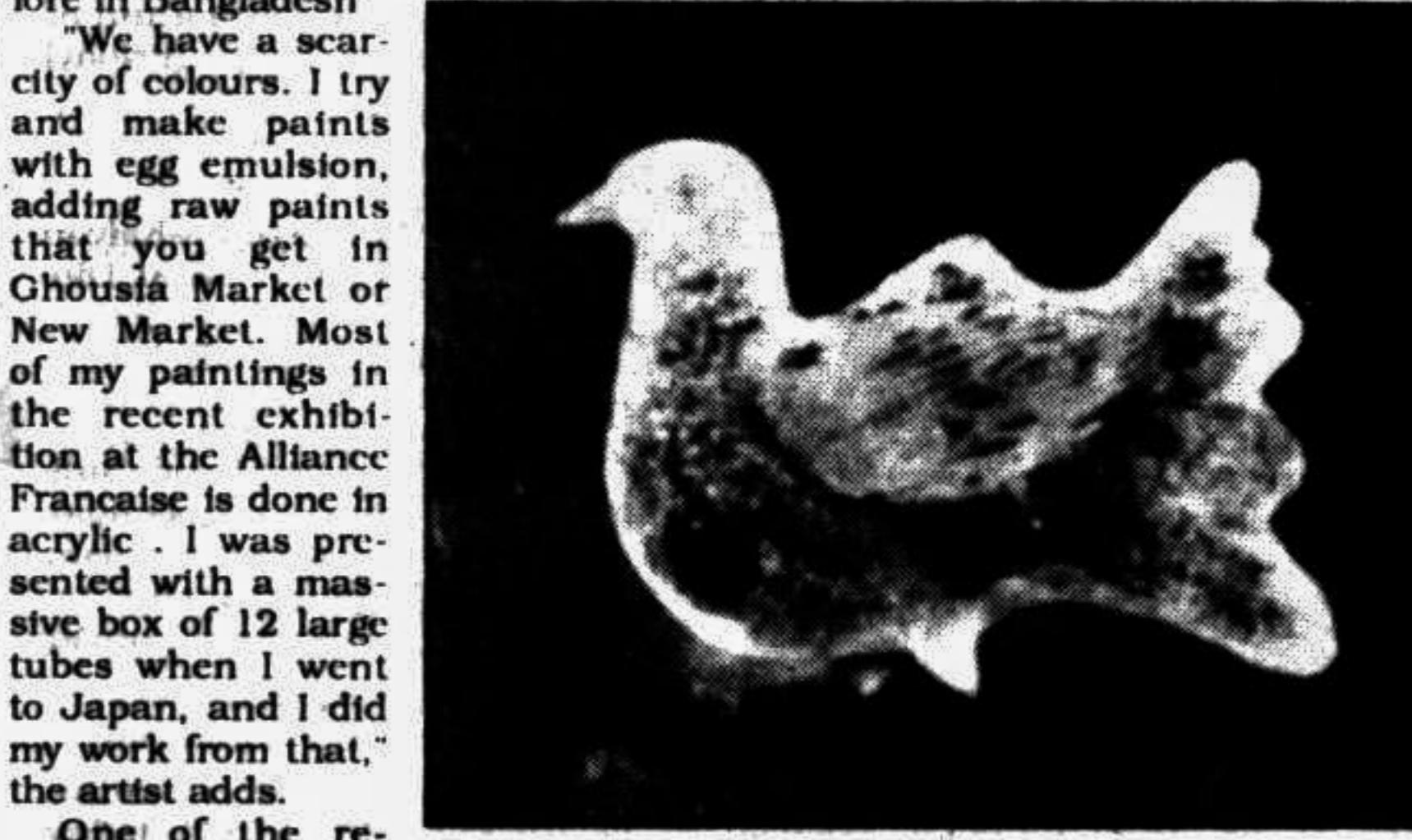
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Bird

There is the image of the Santal girl seen against a dark background. The jewellery, lipstick and modern clothes show the effect of civilisation on them. "I do not approve of the modernisation. They are like animals best kept in the jungles rather than captured and put in the zoo," the painter comments.

The artist has attempted a Christ figure. This is purely an experiment. "It is not a western Christ, as the features tell," the artist points out. The brushwork used is as in miniature work. They are fine and precise. "In our country the lives of great men from the past like Buddha and Christ are forgotten. We are all for modern science and technology, for instance, when man first landed on the moon," the artist comments.

Showkatuzzaman's oil on glass bring in natural beauty with flowers and trees. These remain purely decorative and have yet to be developed.

The artist works as an illustrator apart from working in the publication in the Shishu Academy. His salary from his official work only pays for his rent. His wife Farida Zaman is doing her Ph.D at Shantiniketan on "The modern paintings of the two Bengals and the influence of tradition." They have two children.

bamboo pieces are shown with flying dragonflies. This is simple but exquisite and exotic.

"Polluted Water" has the Greenpeace movement in mind. It shows how our plants and living beings are being destroyed. The water is depicted as red as it is polluted. The fish is shown as full of fear. There is not much scope for them to live, is the artist's message.

Inaugurating a one-day workshop on Systems Rehabilitation Project (SRP) of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) in Dhaka Thursday morning the Minister said water management, the key to agricultural development, became more acute in the recent years with the commissioning of the Farakka Barrage.

He said this barrage had brought happiness to a section of people in the sub-continent, but miseries to the people of Bangladesh by keeping half of the country under water round the year due to water logging and rendering the remaining half to suffer from drought and scarcity of water. It also reduced the crop intensity by 50 per cent in the affected areas, he added.

Organised by the Directorate of Operation and Maintenance (O and M) of the SRP project, the inaugural session of the workshop was also addressed by State Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control M Ansar Ali Siddique, Secretary of the Ministry M A Malik, Chairman of BWDB Dr A

to how a system created by the brilliant technicians and administrators could go out of workable condition within a short period of their commissioning.

He pointed out that this was due to lack of proper operation and maintenance of the projects. He said the persons involved must be taught how to maintain those.

He said the beneficiaries of the projects should be motivated to bear part of the operational costs.

State Minister Ansar Ali Siddique said due to faulty planning, design and construction and use of sub-standard materials the projects of BWDB could not achieve the expected output.

Secretary of the Ministry M A Malik said there was a backlog in the BWDB to take up new projects to increase portfolios while the completed projects failed due to faulty design and sub-standard works.

BWDB Chairman Dr A T M Shamsul Huda said there was no shortage of funds in maintenance of the projects of the board, but the projects failed due to tremendous lack of professional orientation, participation and commitment.

Project Director Abdul Hal said under the Systems Rehabilitation Project (SRP), 16 sub-projects would be rehabilitated and operation and maintenance of four projects would be improved by the year 1993-94. Another 63 sub-projects would be rehabilitated under SRP by 1996-97.

World's poor likely to be worst victims of environmental dangers

By Nazmul Ashraf

The world's poor population is likely to be the worst victim of environmental dangers, extending beyond local hazards, according to a report of the Washington-based World Watch Institute.

The environmental victimisation of the poor extends beyond local hazards and the truly global environmental dangers (climate change and ozone depletion) will endanger everyone, but the poor are likely to suffer the most, the report on 'Poverty and Environmental Degradation' said.

If climate change, soil erosion, deforestation and population growth continue along their current trajectories, the poverty rate will almost certainly skyrocket, perhaps doubling worldwide by the second half of the next century', the institute said adding 'half of humanity could be living in absolute poverty between 2050 and 2075.'

The report's part on

ecological crisis' said the conditions for ecological degradation have spread to more of the earth's fragile lands, as the global poverty trap tightens and the world's poor become increasingly insecure and dispossessed. To reverse the spiral and for development to help the poor, the report suggested, they must be not only the intended beneficiaries but active participants.

The ground work for such development is expanding impressively in many regions as the poor organise themselves and grassroots actions have grown steadily, the institute mentioned holding the opinion 'but ending poverty needs more than a local, piece-meal approach: it is required a government that explicitly directs policy towards aiding the least fortunate'.

The report observed with regret that few countries have undertaken such initiatives focusing instead on reforms of trade, fiscal and monetary matters as prescribed in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) / the World Bank (WB) structural adjustment packages.

Currently, adjustment is based on a 'free trade, free market' ideal. Dozens of the Third World countries, pressurised by the IMF/WB negotiators, have been trying to emulate the 'Korea miracle' and export their way to riches, the report pointed out.

It also mentioned example of China, where poverty has been reduced dramatically.

Gate calls on Majedul

The Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, R K Gate, called on Agriculture and Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister, M Majid-ul Haq in Dhaka on Thursday, reports BSS.

They discussed bilateral issues with particular emphasis on developing the agriculture, irrigation and flood control sector of Bangladesh.



Musallis brought out a truck procession in the city on Thursday on the occasion of Eid-e-MiladunNabi.

— Star photo

Farakka has brought miseries to Bangladeshis : Majedul

T M Shamsul Huda, Chief Engineer of SRP (O and M) M A Rashid, Project Director A B M Abdul Hai and Director (Rehabilitation) of SRP Sk Mostafa Hossain.

Referring to the completed projects of BWDB, which needed rehabilitation, the minister expressed his surprise and posed a question as

to how a system created by the brilliant technicians and administrators could go out of workable condition within a short period of their commissioning.

He pointed out that this was due to lack of proper operation and maintenance of the projects. He said the persons involved must be taught how to maintain those.

He said the beneficiaries of the projects should be motivated to bear part of the operational costs.

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No major floods this year likely

A UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Disaster (UNIAWG) meeting in Dhaka Wednesday in a forecast said that no major floods of the magnitude of 1988 is likely to occur in the country this year, reports UNB.

The group was composed of representatives from various UN agencies, Water Development Board, Meteorological Department and Relief Ministry, after analysing WDB flood forecasting bulletins, rainfall and satellite data.

It concluded that the country experienced moderately high localised floods mostly in the northern parts, said a UNIC press release Thursday.

The causes for this year's flooding was attributed to excessive rainfall during the first two weeks of September and on rush of water from upstream areas in India, the meeting observed.

The UNIAWG meeting noted that flood situation in the affected areas has started improving and will continue so.

Except further showers and another spell of rainfall during the next 4-5 days, the rains will have little impact on the overall flood situation of the country, it said.

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Please note that no candidates will be allowed to take TOEFL without a valid passport beginning with November 16 TOEFL examination.

TOEFL Office
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Admission in the first year H.S.C Class will begin from the 21st September, 1991. Students desirous of taking admission are advised to contact the College Authority for necessary details.

Principal



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