

# The wedding planners



PHOTO: COURTESY

ANIKA HOSSAIN

With the wedding season right around the corner, many are gearing up to tackle the enormous task of planning the perfect events. Fortunately, the new and upcoming business of professional wedding planners has given us the option of easing that burden by more than half. Wedding Diary is one such event management company, the pioneer in its field.

Founded by the talented photographer Prito Reza, who graduated with a Bachelors Degree from Pathshala, the organisation had an interesting beginning. "I started off as a photojournalist

and never thought of being a wedding photographer," shares Prito. "I was working for several dailies such as The Daily Ittefaq, New Age, The Daily Star and more," he tells us. "I took up wedding photography to help pay for my education, but I noticed that people looked down on wedding photographers and did not view it as a respectable profession. This bothered me a great deal and drove me to have an exhibition, the first of its kind, in Bangladesh, featuring weddings. I believe I managed to explain through that exhibition that wedding photography can be a great career option."

Through his work, Prito also started

to realise that the videography department at weddings was also lacking in creativity, vision and education in the field. "That is when I decided to put together a video team as well. It was the first step I took towards setting up my company, Wedding Diary, in 2006," he explains. "We also began to realise that our work did not come out as nicely without the proper décor or lighting, so we decided to work on a few experiments involving wedding planning as a whole," he says. Prito began to try and provide his clients with not only stage design, but venue booking, décor, food, lighting, sound, dala decoration, invitation design,

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holud jewellery, different themes, entertainment and much more, and has undoubtedly been successful. "In 2011 finally, we set up a formal office and established ourselves as an event management company."

Prito's company works for clients with a range of budgets and not just for the ultra-rich. "We make it easy for our clients to get discounts with certain collaborating agencies," says Prito. "For example, if you are hiring us, you can book certain places like Radisson or Regency and get a significant discount. You also get discounts from clothing stores like Ahang, honeymoon destinations like Ocean Paradise Hotel and even grocery shops like Meena Bazaar, so there is plenty to gain by working with us," he says.

Wedding Diary has also sphere headed the concept of a pre-wedding photo shoot which involves taking the couple to a nice place, perhaps outdoors, to do a relaxed photo shoot, without being surrounded by a thousand guests.

"The point is to make each event memorable," says Prito. His wife Paula Rahman, the Creative Head of Wedding

Diary is also on a continuous lookout for new and innovative ways to plan events. "Aside from wedding related events, we also manage birthday parties, convocations, corporate events and much more. We are currently working on destination and outdoor weddings as well as an eco wedding concept, where we show clients alternative materials for decoration, for example, we made a stage once using just bangles, instead of the traditional flower stage."

Prito Reza has been recognised at home and abroad for his achievements. He is the Photographer Ambassador of Fujifilm Bangladesh as well as the Ambassador of WPPA in Bangladesh. Through Wedding Diary, he has covered events in Thailand, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and the USA. He was also awarded The Best Wedding Photographer 2011-12 by Mirror Business Award. "I hope many aspiring photographers will be inspired by what I do and join the industry," says Prito. "It makes me proud to see my students doing well in this profession and trying to give us the healthy competition we need."



PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

## From Computers to Film

APURBA JAHANGIR

As the media has gone through some drastic changes in our country, more people are now interested to work in this field. As a result, the people are now getting better filmmakers, producers and actors. Redoan Rony has proved himself to be one of the leading filmmakers of this generation. Producing popular TV series' such as FNF and Passport, he has definitely made a mark in this industry.

PHOTO: STAR

"My fascination of filmmaking started when I was in college. I had a friend named Rana who wanted to become an actor. He always used to inspire me to become a filmmaker," say Redoan. "But my dreams were put on hold when Rana died of an accident. It took me some time to reconstruct my ambitions but eventually I got back on my feet."

Redoan started his career by being an assistant director to Mostofa Sarwar Farooki. "That

was when I learned a lot about the art of direction. All the little technical aspects and details used to fascinate me. And after three years, I gained the courage to make my own short film which was called 'Urojahaj'," says the young filmmaker.

But the journey was not a bed of roses for Redoan. As he was a student of Computer Science, the dramatic change in the work field frustrated his family but eventually he con-

vinced them. "Another difficulty was the limitation of technology and budget from television channels. But the situation is improving day by day as more and more people are joining this field," says Redoan.

Redoan Rony gets his inspiration from his daily surroundings "The reason I wanted to be filmmaker is because I wanted people to hear me out. And what is better than to tell the story through television screens!"



## For the Love of Words

NAZIBA BASHER

Ahmad Ibrahim is probably one of the few young writers who have been published both within the country and abroad. He has been published in an anthology called Six Seasons Review which launched at last year's Hay Festival, Dhaka. His poems and a short story have been published in Patchwork Pages, which was brought out by Brine Pickles, a performance literature group. He has also been published in an international publication called the ISF (Indian Short Fiction) which is based in Chennai, India.

Clearly, Ibrahim has been an avid writer since he was a young boy. His play with words and publications on hard-hitting topics has earned him quite a name as a

young writer.

"I can't quite explain how or why I started writing," says Ibrahim. "It started off with poems and stories. I sent some into Rising Stars and all of a sudden I had a job at the Daily Star! And that's where it really kicked off, I suppose," he adds. He eventually expanded into non-fiction- articles, analyses, satire and more. "It was not until I was fully into it that I realised how big a part of my life writing had become."

Ibrahim's biggest strength behind his writing is reading. While his bedroom can be considered a 'make-shift' library with a collection of books larger than life, Ibrahim has read through each and every one of them and still has a hunger for books that is seen rarely these days. "My biggest inspiration

*Ibrahim has been an avid writer since he was a young boy. His play with words and publications on hard-hitting topics has earned him quite a name as a young writer.*

is quite possibly Allen Ginsberg. He is the man when it comes to poetry and I can't quite eloquently put into words what effect his poems have on me. Other than Ginsberg, I am also a huge fan of T.S. Eliot and William Dalrymple, who is possibly the best non-fiction writer alive today," says Ibrahim.

A student of Maple Leaf International School, Ahmad

Ibrahim had won the Daily Star Awards for his outstanding results in the O level and A level examinations. He is currently at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, where he will be doing a self-designed major on Intersectionality and Social justice.

"I do hope to write a novel sometime in the future and continue writing poems," says Ibrahim. "Because it's really the fuel that keeps me going."



PHOTO: SARAF NAWAR