

They named their exhibition *Anamnesis*, a Greek term that means to look back. Like the name, Iskander Mirza, one of the artists featured at the exhibition, promises art lovers the opportunity to travel through the lost traditions of a bygone era, while artist Mazharul Islam attempts to offer a glimpse of the pain and sufferings that individuals keep buried in their subconscious.

Mirza and Islam's working style and educational background might be very disparate, but their passion for art brought them together to organise a joint exhibition in Peda Ting Ting's Café Gallery, situated in Gulshan 1, where you'll find 21 paintings by Mirza and eight paintings by Islam.

Despite having no formal background in art, Islam, a student of English Literature, believes that he can paint best when he is in pain. That's probably the reason why one feels emotionally connected with the artwork of this talented artist. Some of the paintings have a dark and foreboding undertone, as they seem to represent the negativity of life, touching you at the right spot as you feel a deep sense of connection with the work presented in front of you.

His painting 'Destruction', for example, simply shows a number of hands trying to reach for the same thing, pointing toward the hunger for power that's human nature. "Greek mythology influenced me a lot when I was studying English literature," says Islam. "I derive my inspiration from the frustration that we face on a regular basis and the sufferings of people."

Mirza, on the other hand, is more interested in portraying the dying traditions of our country. Nature lies at the core of his paintings. The subtle pigments of watercolour on his canvas showcase the age-old traditions of old Dhaka and the serenity of our rural life that are bound to take us back to the glory days of our culture, history and tradition.

"I love doing detailed work using watercolour as the medium," says the artist. "They help me express my thoughts aptly."

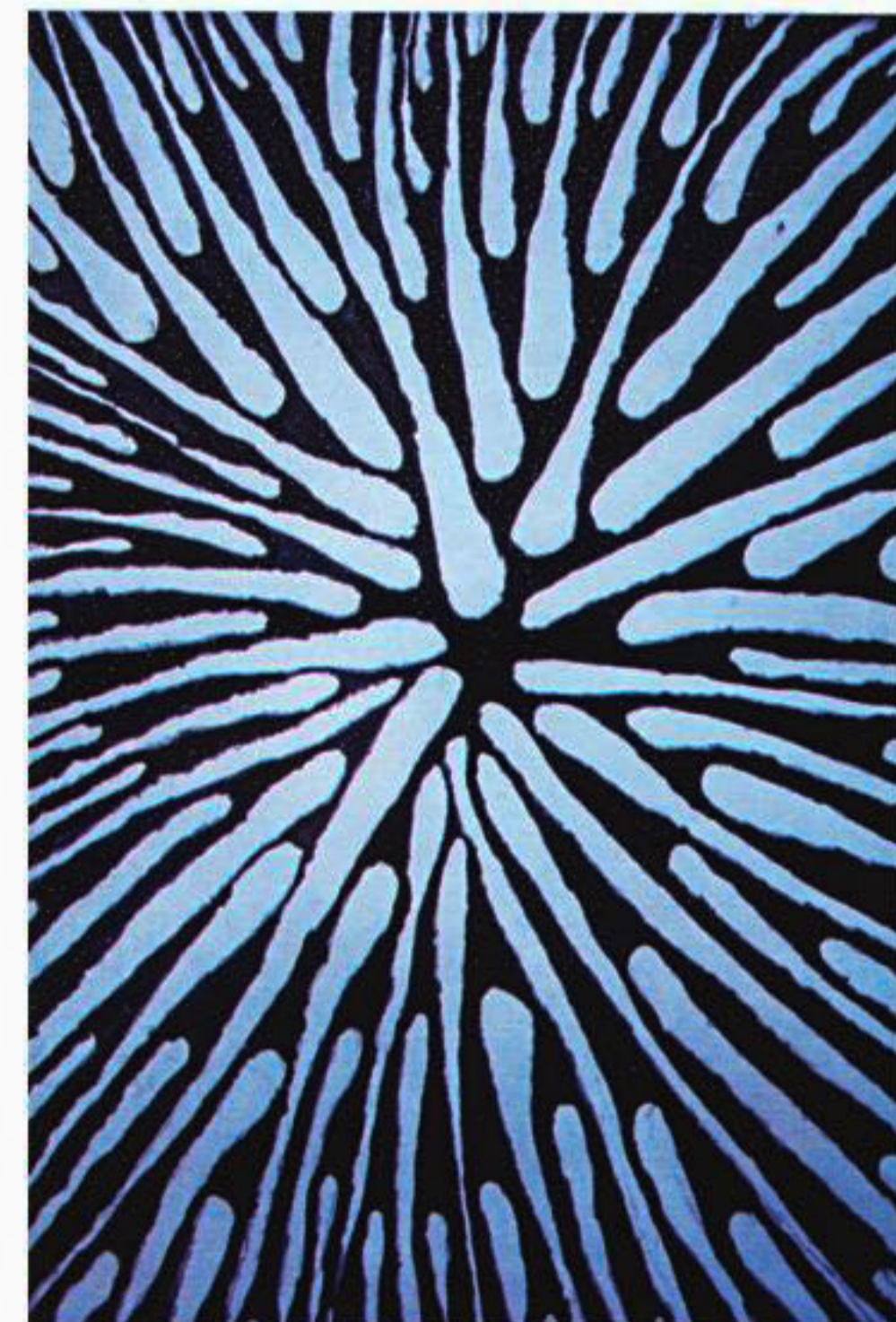
His series on horses of Old Dhaka shows how integral they were to the lifestyle of people, while other paintings like "Moulvibazar" displays the beauty and serenity of rural Bangladesh.

If you want to take some time off from the hectic Dhaka life, and travel through the roads of history or introspect about life and its various meanings, while enjoying a scrumptious meal, be sure to check out this exhibition by two very talented artists. The exhibition will continue until October 21, 2015.



WHAT WE LEFT BEHIND

FAYEKA ZABEEN SIDDIQUA



EXHIBITION

HERITAGE

THE SPARKLING STAR MOSQUE

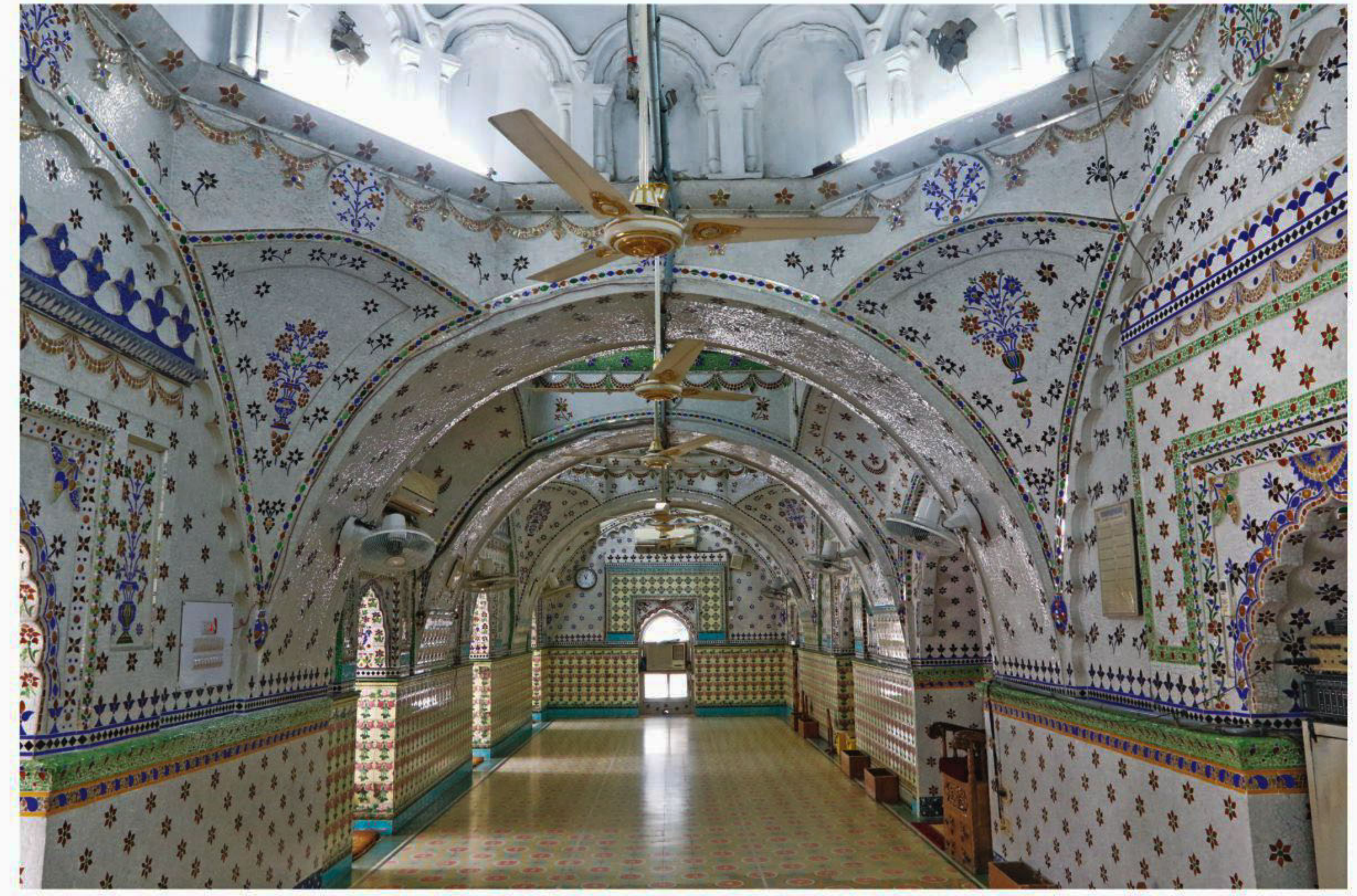
MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Amidst thousands of unappealing, ramshackle buildings in the alleys of Armanitola, one of the oldest and congested parts of Dhaka, an exquisite white marble structure superbly decorated with engraved floral and star patterns will surely capture your attention. Even the local residents of the area often stop for a while to have a look and be amazed with its perpetual beauty.

This superb structure, popularly called Tara Masjid (Tara Mosque), is still standing tall with her dazzling beauty after more than three centuries. This mosque got its name from innumerable star patterns (Tara in Bengali) made of brightly coloured tiles covering the entire polished marble walls of the mosque. There is also a large star shaped fountain and water reservoir for pre-prayer ritual ablution of the Muslims.

The mosque was built by a Mughal landlord named Mirza Gulam Pir. Unlike other Mughal architectures, there is no inscription found in the mosque mentioning



its founding year. However, according to the trustees of the mosque, it was built in the year 1711, when Dhaka was under Mughal rule. At that time it was a tiny 3 domed mosque made with marble imported from Rajmahal of India. The length of the building was 10.06 metres and the width was 4.04 metres. The walls were not decorated at that time. Still, a part of the original plainly plastered wall can be found behind the mosque.



In 1926, a wealthy merchant named Ali Jaan Bepari, who was a resident of Armanitola, took the initiative to renovate and redecorate the entire mosque. Enthusiastic Ali imported exquisite, precious china clay tiles from Japan and England. Then, with skilled local artisans, he decorated the entire mosque walls, even the domes, with beautiful floral and star shaped patterns made of the china clay tiles. In the white marble background, the glistening engraved stars and floral patterns create a magical and serene environment of light and shade in the mosque, as they reflect sunlight in different angles. There are also verses from the holy Quran engraved in the interior walls. A courtyard and the star shaped fountain were built at that time in the eastern side of this beautiful mosque. However, local residents apprehend that this mosque may face further destruction, in the name of renovation and modernisation. The concerned authority must take proper steps to preserve this historic and beautiful archaeological site.

Islamic religious texts, completely free of cost. During this massive renovation, Ali Jaan Bepari and his artisans carefully preserved the original structural design of the mosque and only beautified the existing structure. However, in 1987, in the name of beautification of this archaeological site, the then government's archaeological department extended the prayer hall and included two more domes, damaging its original historic structure. Tara Mosque is one of the few pieces of architecture in this sub continent which has such elaborate special type of china clay mosaic works, traditionally called Chini Tikri. Currently, this art and its specialist artisans have gone extinct from our country. Still local residents offer prayers regularly in this beautiful mosque. However, local residents apprehend that this mosque may face further destruction, in the name of renovation and modernisation. The concerned authority must take proper steps to preserve this historic and beautiful archaeological site.

Just Arrived

The Mahabharata box set
Translator: Bibek Debroy

Dispute over land and kingdom may lie at the heart of this story of war between cousins the Pandavas and the Kouravas - but the Mahabharata is about conflicts of dharma. These conflicts are immense and various, singular and commonplace. Throughout the epic, characters face them with no clear indications of what is right and what is wrong; there are no absolute answers.

Price : 10,000

Bestseller's Corner



1. Geologica: Earth's Dynamic Forces
By : Robert Coenraads
Price : 12,000



2. Surrealism – Desire Unbound
By : Nicholas Serota
Price : 5,900



3. Kama Sutra Aphorisms Of Love
By : LANCE DANE
Price : 5,500

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