

THE WORLD OF THEATRE

APURBA JAHANGIR

PHOTOS: COURTESY



Sayed Dulal

STAR PEOPLE

In the world of arts and entertainment, Shabdabali Group Theatre needs no introduction. For 37 years the group has showcased excellent performance on stage; orchestrating some of the most distinguished plays in the theatre world. Located in Barisal, Shabdabali is considered the pioneer of Barisal's theatre culture and has taken part in many theatre festivals in the country and abroad. Apart from hosting 5 national theatre festivals, Shabdabali established the country's first studio theatre.

"The group was first formed in 1978 in the hands of Professor Alamgir Hai and Humayun Kabir Selim," says Sayed Dulal, the current chairman of Shabdabali Theatre Group and founder of the studio theatre. "We dedicated this group to establish the art of theatre in a then remote area-Barisal." The first director ever working with the group was Professor Shaikhul Islam. "He was the pioneer of modern theatre in Barisal and with his help Shabdabali's first show was a huge success," says Dulal. Renowned theatre activists such as Altaf Hossain Kabir, Khandakar Mizanur Rahman, Khaled Hossain Panna, Shahana Giyas, Nadira Anu, Aruna Das, and late Enayat Hossain Milan have worked with Shabdabali, taking its performances to their peaks.

Though they reached the hearts of the audiences a long time ago, Shabdabali made its mark by creating the first ever studio theatre. "In 1987, I joined a workshop organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation," says Sayed Dulal. "That was the first time I had heard about a studio theatre and I immediately proposed this idea to the group." The idea was accepted positively by everyone and in 1991; Shabdabali's studio theatre was born. The studio is built with Shabdabali's own light settings and audio equipment, providing everything there is to stage a play. More than 900 plays have been staged in the studio theatre since now. They also have a section for children called 'Shabdabali Shishu Theatre'. Here children of different ages practice the art of theatre and have already staged their plays in countries such as Russia, Delhi, Kolkata etc.

On January 15, 2016 Shabdabali Theatre will celebrate twenty five years of its studio theatre. "We plan on organising the biggest theatre festival in the country. Every theatre group from the country will join us, making it one of its kinds," says Sayed Dulal.

"Every incident that we come across everyday that can be a scene of beauty and peace or a bleak image of injustice or pollution creates a deep impression in my mind. When I touch my pencils and colours I cannot resist myself from depicting my thoughts about these experiences," says Amit Nandi, a promising and passionate young artist who has proved himself as one of the most talented artists in the oriental art scene in Bangladesh.

He is one of the few contemporary artists in the country who have been working with the complex wash technique of oriental art form. A devoted enthusiast of this technique Amit says, "If any person knows the process of creation through wash technique, he will fell in love with it."

"After drawing the total picture, I have to wash it with water and repaint it more than 7 to 8 times. And finally when I get a perfect work after giving proper light and shade, the joy of creation is simply indescribable in words, adds Amit.

A graduate of Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Art, Amit has secured the first position in the department of oriental art both in his honours and masters studies. He also got a lucrative ICCR scholarship for studying drawing and painting in Banaras, India but he refused the offer for his passion to study the oriental art. This brilliant artist achieved the first recognition of his talent in 2011 when he was awarded with the Artist Shafiqul Islam Smrity Puroshkar (Award) from his department for his painting using the wash technique. At that time, he was a student of third year of the bachelor course.

Afterwards, his paintings have been exhibited in numerous national and international exhibitions. His first solo exhibition of the oriental paintings titled "In the midst of Eternal Beauty" has recently been held in Zainul Gallery of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka from 10 to 15th November, 2015. His paintings have recently been exhibited in two other exhibitions simultaneously titled 5th Tone International Miniature Art Biennale, Bangladesh and *Bangladesher Prachho Shilper Bistar* (Expansion of Oriental Art in Bangladesh) by Bangladesh Society of Oriental Art at Dhaka National Museum. He won the Media Best Award in Oriental Art at the 5th Tone International Miniature Art Biennale 2015 for his artwork titled "Old Tradition and Present Position-1."

A JOURNEY OF ART AND PASSION

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN



Amit Nandi

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Universal Pain and Its Ramification 1, water colour on paper, 76x56cm, 2015.

Amit has always been vocal against injustice and exploitation. He speaks for the poor and exploited through his artworks. One of his notable paintings titled "Mourning for the Deceased" shows several burnt and rusticated sewing machines on a yellowish green plain while slums of the garment workers can be seen in the horizon. The dark blue lower part of the painting portrays

the agony of the oppressed garment workers of Bangladesh. He also teaches at Kiron Kala Bhaban which is a free cultural school that teaches different forms of fine and performance art to underprivileged children.

This promising artist dreams of a free, prosperous Bangladesh where art can flourish without any trepidation and restriction.

QUIRKY SCIENCE



MARS TO LOSE ITS LARGEST MOON

Mars' largest moon, Phobos, is slowly falling toward the planet, but rather than smash into the surface, it likely will be shredded and the pieces strewn about the planet in a ring like the rings encircling Saturn, Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune.

Though inevitable, the demise of Phobos is not imminent. It will probably happen in 20 to 40 million years, leaving a ring that will persist for anywhere from one million to 100 million years, according to two young earth scientists at the University of California, Berkeley.

In a paper appearing online this week in *Nature Geoscience*, UC Berkeley postdoctoral fellow Benjamin

Black and graduate student Tushar Mittal estimate the cohesiveness of Phobos and conclude that it is insufficient to resist the tidal forces that will pull it apart when it gets closer to Mars.

Just as earth's moon pulls on our planet in different directions, raising tides in the oceans, for example, so too Mars tugs differently on different parts of Phobos. As Phobos gets closer to the planet, the tugs are enough to actually pull the moon apart, the scientists say. This is because Phobos is highly fractured, with lots of pores and rubble. Dismembering it is analogous to pulling apart a granola bar, Black said, scattering crumbs and chunks everywhere.

FARMING CHANGED THE HUMAN GENOME

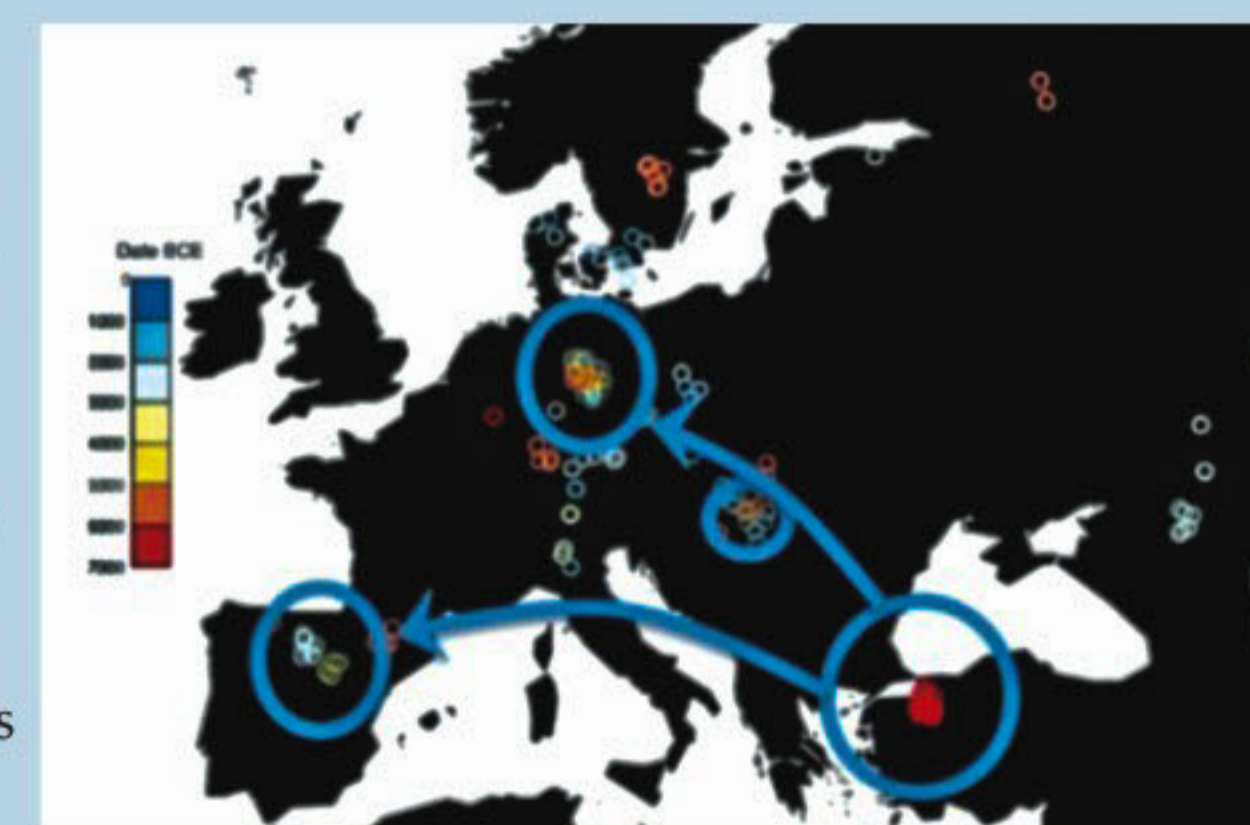
The introduction of agriculture into Europe about 8,500 years ago changed the way people lived right down to their DNA.

Until recently, scientists could try to understand the way humans adapted genetically to changes that occurred thousands of years ago only by looking at DNA variation in today's populations. But our modern genomes contain mere echoes of the past that can't be connected to specific events.

Now, an international team reports in *Nature* that researchers can see how natural selection happened by analyzing ancient human DNA.

"It allows us to put a time and date on selection and to directly associate selection with specific environmental changes, in this case the development of agriculture and the expansion of the first farmers into Europe," said Iain Mathieson, a research fellow in genetics at Harvard Medical School and first author of the study.

By taking advantage of better DNA extraction techniques and amassing



what is to date the largest collection of genome-wide datasets from ancient human remains, the team was able to identify specific genes that changed during and after the transition from hunting and gathering to farming.

Many of the variants occurred on or near genes that have been associated with height, the ability to digest lactose in adulthood, fatty acid metabolism, vitamin D levels, light skin pigmentation and blue eye color. Two variants appear on genes that have been linked to higher risk of celiac disease but that may have been important in adapting to an early agricultural diet.

Source: Sciencedaily.com

MUSINGS

SHUT UP AND LISTEN

M H HAIDER

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

Nobody listens! Everybody just wants to talk. To let our voices be heard is more important than hearing what the other party has to say, it seems. But is that really so?

We give a lot of priority to speaking. And that's all good. But listening, too, is an equally vital skill and a necessary part of conversation. So, instead of just talking away, give your mouth rest and listen for some time!

And listen attentively. Don't just listen with ears, but with your heart and mind: hearing and listening are not the same.

impatience, did not add his praise or rebuke, was just listening.

Meanwhile, all of us need at least one person in our life who we can trust wholeheartedly to share our deepest insecurities, secrets and frustrations. Depression and other mental problems now loom over our world probably more than ever; relationships and lives at large have become extremely complex. A confidant - someone you can openly talk to about your problems and miseries without being judged - is an angel in disguise.



Vasudeva listened with great attention. Listening carefully, he let everything enter his mind, birthplace and childhood, all that learning, all that searching, all joy, all distress.

Have you ever stopped to notice that most of the time, when you listen, you do it just to give a reply, to argue back or to tell your own opinion? But a great listener does the opposite: s/he listens just for the sake of it, therefore making him more compassionate, sympathetic and even a good mediator, negotiator, etc.

We often come across phrases like 'the art of negotiating' and the value of being an entertaining talker. But communication is a two-way street, and just like there is the art of talking, there is an art of listening.

This was among the ferryman's virtues one of the greatest: like only a few, he knew how to listen. Without him having spoken a word, the speaker sensed how Vasudeva let his words enter his mind, quiet, open, waiting, how he did not lose a single one, awaited not a single one with

Siddhartha felt, what a happy fortune it is, to confess to such a listener, to bury in his heart his own life, his own search, his own suffering.

Being a patient, attentive listener is a fantastic way of paying someone a compliment. In social gatherings, many feel shy and wonder what to say. Well, there is quite a simple solution: you don't need to be a storyteller yourself. Instead, be on the other side of the table: listen to stories of other people. Everybody loves a rapt audience.

A good listener is rare to find. Develop this trait, and you will do yourself, and others, a great favour. Never underestimate the power and importance of being a good listener.

"... And I also thank you for this, Vasudeva, for listening to me so well! These people are rare who know how to listen. And I did not meet a single one who knew it as well as you did. I will also learn in this respect from you."

(Excerpts from Hermann Hesse's novel, Siddhartha, have been used throughout the write-up.)