



CELEBRATING LIFE WITH JAHANGIRNAGAR

Our collaboration with Shadhona has been a long and fruitful one. Their last outing with us before Jahangirnagar University includes our last year's gala event for Celebrating Life 2014. We have always been very satisfied with the level of expertise and dedication that they demonstrate in their works and that's also why we keep coming back to them. So it wouldn't really be that surprising to know that they are now in a very good place. For this year's district program at Jahangirnagar University though, they informed us that they would like to do something a bit different. It would be an experimental yet still contemporary dance performance. This put us in a bit of a dilemma really. That's because first and foremost, we have to consider the mass audience that we have to cater to, and that mass audience might not be ready or very accepting of experimental performances, especially if it's too "out there". Jahangirnagar University is a public university after all, with students coming in from varying fields of study and social thinking. We were worried as to whether they would be very accepting of this per-

formance, but this thought was followed by a contradictory thought as well. If we deny them this performance, how do we open up their minds to newer and more unique things out there? It also came to our minds that maybe we are underestimating their ability to accept new variations to existing formulae. So after much careful consideration, we decided to green light the production.

In past events that we organized at Jahangirnagar University, we almost always had celebrity guests included in the performances as well, to help draw the crowds in. We also had extensive banners and advertisements to help spread the word on the programs at Jahangirnagar University. Due to those safeguards, we always had a guaranteed large audience. This year, however, we neither had any celebrity guests, nor the extensive level of banners or advertise-

ments. As such, there was initially very little audience present in addition to the Vice Chancellor being a little late. So we couldn't even start the show, which frankly, got us slightly worried. With crossed fingers, we kicked off the function and before we knew it, people were coming in left, right, and centre, and soon the venue was packed beyond maximum capacity. This gave us the courage to really start the show, and so began Shadhona's performance, titled "Looking Forward To The Past II", directed by Donald Byrd. Because of the special workshop provided by this American director, we saw a flair to the performance not seen in other contemporary performances. The performance was observed by the audience with absolute pin drop silence. Even the small vendors that were around the show halted all transactions while the

performance was on. The performers were congratulated with heartfelt gratitude and thunderous applause as Shadhona's performance concluded. Even more surprising was that, not only did the VC manage to stay for the entire performance, but also demonstrated her love for Lubna Marium, and her love and dedication towards arts and culture.

Once again, we give our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to all of Shadhona's members and performers for that day. They demonstrated full well that you don't need to be a celebrity to be appreciated so long as you have talent, and the teamwork necessary to back it up. Everyone who was up on that stage did a marvellous job, but if we were to speak of some who really stood out, then it has to be Amit Chowdhury and Kathleen Weitz. The VC of Jahangir Nagar University was so moved with our festival that she wished to hold a week-long festival at the University for Celebrating Life starting next year. Now there's something to look forward to for Celebrating Life 2016.

Intisab Shahriyar



COMING SOON

AMERICAN HERO Hancock knockoff?

Melvin (Stephen Dorff), a reluctant hero who is far from super, has been suppressing his telekinetic powers for years with drinking, drugs, and women. In the process, he has failed at practically everything, most of all as a parent to his son. After a brush with death, Melvin decides to use his powers for good and cleans himself up and the streets of New Orleans with the help of his best friend/definitely-

not-a-sidekick, Lucille (Eddie Griffin). For a man who can do the impossible, it might be a fight even he can't win. American Hero is both written and directed by English filmmaker Nick Love, of the films The Sweeney, The Firm and Outlaw previously. For many audiences, the premise seems eerily familiar to the 2008 Will Smith starrer Hancock. The film is slated for release on December 11th.

