

DRIK SET TO HOST THE MUSLIN FESTIVAL

The Muslin Festival, hosted by Drik in collaboration with Aarong and Bangladesh National Museum is set to start this February. The month-long national exhibition will open at the Nalini Kanta Bhattachali Gallery, Bangladesh National Museum on 5 February, where Drik will present muslin artefacts and share the exciting story behind this famed fabric.

The opening will also feature a book launch that will inform the readers about the origins of muslin, its links with Bengal and Europe and will also cover the journey that Drik undertook to discover its roots.

The book, titled 'Muslin – Our Story' will feature stunning imagery taken by world-class photographers as well as other rare historical images. A trailer of the documentary film 'Legend of the Loom' will also be screened on opening day and promises some interesting spoilers.

Following its opening, the Festival will host a Muslin Night on 6 February at Ahsan Manzil. The event is designed to boost public awareness of muslin's history and also to display the revival of muslin weaving.

The legendary Lubna Marium and her dance group, Shadhona are set to perform the Muslin story against a historical setting. On the night, the current jamdani styles will also be displayed by Aarong and the future of muslin will be portrayed through dresses made by fashion designers from the UK, India and Bangladesh.

The Muslin Night will be followed by a day of seminars and workshops on 7 February. The seminars and workshops will provide a platform for national and international experts to discuss some of the issues including muslin's future, its legacy in Bangladesh and to develop plans for marketing the product. It is an open event with seats reserved on a first-come-first-served basis.

On 8 February, the Muslin Tour of Panam Nagar, Sonargaon and adjoining jamdani villages is set to take place. You can look at the old buildings of Sonargaon and revisit their history.

The tour will include a look around the English factory buildings where muslin was collected, assessed and packed prior to shipment. You can also meet the weavers who are responsible for producing the most wonderful designs of jamdani on the loom.

Drik is extremely excited to be hosting the Muslin Festival. Saiful Islam, the CEO of Drik had this to say, "Muslin is a story that initially came to us. Stepney Trust in UK wanted to do an exhibition. When we started to inquire



about the cloth, we found that there were more dimensions to the story than simply the fine fabric and its designs. Initially what seemed like simply a craft revealed multiple dimensions including political, cultural, colonial, and social ones. Finding those dimensions made us look deeper, wider. It enlarged the radius of our enquiry, made us search for the plant, the spinners and weavers, even the garments themselves, which were missing."

He added, "On the one side, you see that it's so rich and so loved by the world. Then, you look at the other side and you quickly discover Bangladesh has nothing, no records, no artefacts. We realised we needed to do justice, to uncover the full story behind muslin and fill in these large missing gaps. We started to get involved in the weaving and became involved in the actual art of muslin. We also started to wonder what had happened to the cotton plant. What started from a research viewpoint quickly moved

into the practical area. We evolved into hands-on researchers"

He further added, "All along our aim was to establish an authentic story of muslin with all its dimensions, to make an effort at inspiring other people to revive a lost art and to also bring respect and attention to the craftspeople behind this story. The real people are not you and me but the weavers and the farmers. I think that these people need to be recognised and acknowledged as the heroes behind the woven air of muslin."

The Muslin Festival is set to kick off on 5 February. Whilst we have heard of muslin before, this will be the first time that we can take a more informative and authentic look at muslin, its origins and its future.

By Naveed Naushad
Photo: Tapash Paul – Drik



- Jojoba Oil ত্বকের কোমলতা ধরে রেখে ত্বককে করে তোলে আরও প্রাণবন্ত ও লাভন্যময়।
- Anti Cracking Agent ত্বকের যে কোন ফাটা রোধে বিশেষভাবে সহায়তা করে।
- Moisturizing Agent এই শীতেও আপনার ত্বকে এনে দেয় বসন্তের ছোঁয়া।

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