

SKETCH: YAFIZ SIDDIQUI

MAD GENIUS

## ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

(22 June 1940 – 4 July 2016)

Abbas Kiarostami was a veteran Iranian film director, screenwriter, photographer and film producer, who had been working in more than 40 films from 1970. He was also a poet, photographer, painter, illustrator and graphic designer. Kiarostami was applauded for directing the Koker trilogy (1987–94), Close-Up (1990), Taste of Cherry (1997) – which was awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival that year – and The Wind Will Carry Us (1999).

“All the different nations in the world, despite their differences of appearance and religion and language and way of life, still have one thing in common, and that is what's inside of all of us. If we X-rayed the insides of different human beings, we wouldn't be able to tell from those X-rays what the person's language or background or race is.

I don't have very complete scripts for my films. I have a general outline and a character in my mind, and I make no notes until I find the character who's in my mind in reality.

Therefore, when you see the end result, it's difficult to see who's the director, me or them. Ultimately, everything belongs to the actors – we just manage the situation.”

## FEELING GUILTY

Last week as I went to interview some underprivileged women working for an NGO, I felt very guilty and sad learning their stories. An 18-year-old woman told me “You fast on Ramadan while many people don't because they find starvation very difficult. When you walk on the street and see many pale and hungry faces have you ever thought of how they survive?” She told me that she was one of them. She told me how she starved, abused drugs, and sniffed glue. When she entered her teen years, she was surrounded by violence and crime around her. Her life seemed so different and difficult from the people I know as she ended up in prison when she was only 15 years old. After two years of being in jail, she was somehow rescued and came to a shelter. I told her about some non-profit charitable organisations who could help people like her to have a 'normal' life. She laughed and said, “Taking photographs with the victims, making publicity out of it and holding an event for one day does not change any life.” I did not know what to tell her. I met many other young girls who shared stories of their miserable conditions. I realised that we take all the privileges that we have in our life for granted without knowing what life could be like on the other side. I realized how lucky we are to be educated and to live the lives that we do.

Esaba Ahnaf  
Maple Leaf International School  
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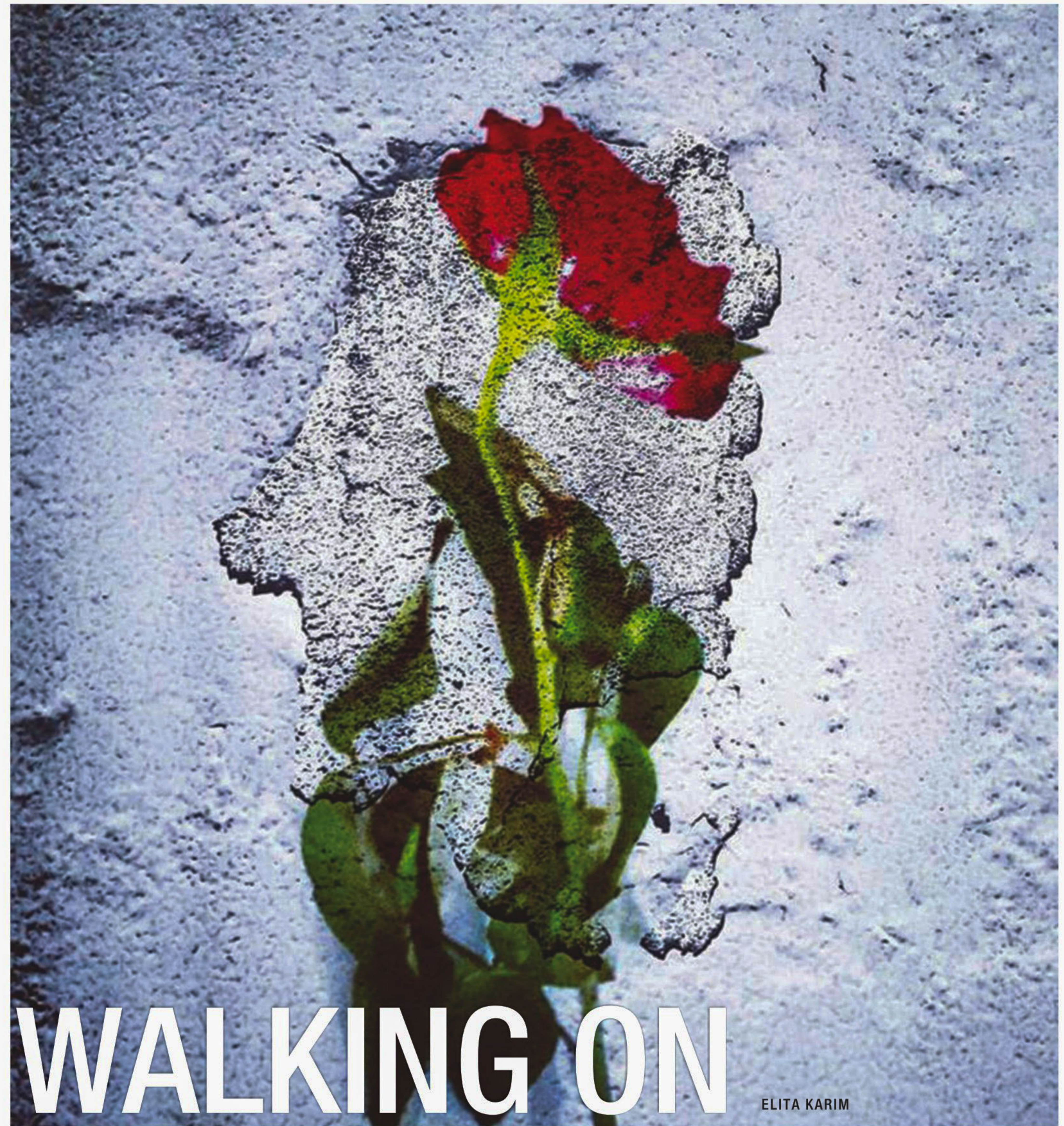
PHOTO: INTERNET

## THE NIGHTMARE

My worst moment in 2016 was on the night when Holey Artisan was attacked. That night we all were in Gulshan 1, doing some Eid shopping. Suddenly we came to know about the café siege and we were not sure of the intensity of the incident. We were not sure whether we should go back to our home in Uttara or stay back at some relative's place in Gulshan. We were not sure whether we would trust all the rumors, half-truths and facts that we were listening to during that time. All of us were frantically doing everything possible to get to a safer place with our loved ones. Finally we could manage to go to a relative's place and we were up all night grieving with the victims and their families. The next morning, it was shockingly difficult for us to come to terms with the truth when we heard what happened that night.

Israt Sarwar  
Uttara, Dhaka

## SPOTLIGHT



# WALKING ON ROAD 79

ELITA KARIM

IMAGE: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

The long stretch of road, just wide enough for two cars to cross each other from opposite directions, is perpetually semi-lit. Even before the tragedy hit Holey Artisan on July 1 and the road was closed down for security purposes, where the journalists from all over the world along