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Facebook page: www.facebook.com/CartoonPeopleOfficial.

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Cartoon People is a community that is testament to the adage that you can find your inner artist at any age.

It has members from different age groups and professions- school students to corporate employees.

They are all quick-witted, slightly eccentric and passionate about art- be it doodling, sketching or cartooning.

But what made Syed Rashad Imam Tanmoy come up with a platform that is dedicated only to cartooning?

"Think about the reaction from your parents when you have the "I want to become a full time painter/cartoonist" discussion with them. In Bangladesh, we don't have any institutional backup for cartooning," he says. "Most of us started our journey of cartooning and doodling on the back pages of our math notebooks, for which we would be chided at home and school many a times. When I made 'Draw my life', a documentary on my journey of becoming a cartoonist, many people could resonate their stories to mine. My inbox

would be filled with queries, asking for advice and suggestions about cartooning and how to become a cartoonist."

Tonmoy believes interaction is very important for art and artists. So the activities for Cartoon People are taken up using a very friendly and easy-to-follow approach. Cartoon People is bringing up an online show called Cartoon Show Dhaka, a first ever cartoon based show channelled officially on YouTube, where cartoon buffs can meet, and learn from a host of local cartoonists.

Have you ever stumbled over drawing the perfectly proportioned head or often get confused where the eyes and ears should sit? Cartoon Show Dhaka addresses these struggles and engages accordingly with its viewers. Since its first episode in October, Tonmoy's easy-to-master steps along with his friendly demeanour, made it a favourite to all the cartoon lovers. The bright green screens and high-end visual editing, spice it up even more.

For many years Tonmoy has been feeling a

huge need for a media platform for the art lovers. Today's youth are mostly hanging out on social media and YouTube as opposed to watching television. "We wanted to create a platform that is accessible to people living in different parts of Bangladesh, who cannot be physically with us. So we decided to hold this show to put the message across while creating a social media existence," says Tonmoy.

Not only online tutorial, they also offer a diverse range of handouts with detailed instructions, available on their page. Cartoon enthusiasts go through them, implement these tricks in their work and rush back to the page moderators for feedback.

Apart from tutorials, the show also promises to come up with artist interviews, funny skits and other interesting events in the upcoming seasons.

Another activity that Cartoon People carries out is going on a sketch walk in different areas of Dhaka. "We call it Sketchbook Saturday, where every Saturday we meet up and fill our sketchbooks with

what we see around us. We post a status on Facebook every week, prior to the walk, saying when and where we are going to assemble. This walk is open to all."

Talking about Baily Road, during such a walk, "What are the features that pop in your mind? The rows of eateries for example, or the vibrant saree shops. That is what a sketch walk helps us to do- catch the essence of the particular area and different gestures of people around," says cartoonist Asifur Rahman.

Other than being a mobile-cartooning-school, the meet-ups also work as a platform where aspiring cartoonists can come in direct contact with the established ones. "At the end of each of these sessions, we also sit in a circle and share tricks and tips while giving constructive criticism to each other, without hurting anyone of course," Tonmoy says.

Just like the YouTube show, Sketchbook Saturday sessions are also an interesting sight to behold. "Sometimes we would find people looking at our sketchbooks in curiosity, sometimes we would get a request of making

their portraits," says Rakeeb Razzak, a young member of Cartoon People.

"The hardest thing about pursuing cartooning has probably got to be gaining my parents approval. But now when they see me going out with cartoon people community, holding a sketchbook in one hand and pencil in the other, they take me seriously," chimes in Oishik Jawad, a young cartoonist who has been with Cartoon People since the beginning.

Like Oishik and his friend Masuda Khan, Cartoon people can now boast about a new crop of cartoonists who are not scared to experiment and work further on their love for cartooning. It's sad that we could not grow a cartoon industry where our comics and

cartoons could be appreciated on the international platform. Tonmoy believes, Cartoon People is here to carry the flag forward by making cartooning popular while experimenting with different forms and styles. It aims to work as a platform for those who want to take cartooning just as a hobby and also for those who are sitting around with their passion for cartooning, waiting to learn more and pinning to get their works published.

And with a platform like this, we can surely hope to get a new generation of cartoonists who have already taken a step to build an industry, in which we can take immense pride in the near future.

