



THE LAST RICKSHAW ARTISTS

B RILLIANT strokes from master artisans bring vibrancy to rickshaws, the three-wheelers that rule the city streets. While considered a traffic nuisance at times, painted rickshaws bring colour to the roads. Four to five rickshaw painters in Old Dhaka are keeping the tradition alive despite screen prints offering heavy competition. Slumped over plates of steel, rickshaw artists can be seen working feverishly to bring the metal to life. Each of them can produce up to four such oil paintings a day, charging a mere Tk 250 for each. However, their daily earning isn't enough. The craftsmen learn the trade either from their father or an ustad. Although rickshaw art is a part of our heritage, there are only a handful holding onto this neo-romantic art form; possibly the last such artists in the region.

Photo: PALASH KHAN

