

Standing the test of time

Nisar Hossain's exhibit at Kalakendra



ZAHANGIR ALOM

Professor Nisar Hossain is a renowned artist, critic, connoisseur, activist, organiser and the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. As a socially conscious and responsible artist, he always tries to grasp the time and its spirit in his pursuit of art. He is thought to be one of the best art organisers after Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin.

The artist believes that the journey of contemporary art should always be contemporary. "The theme, aspect, language and presentation of the art must represent the specific time. Some say that Van Gogh was 200 years ahead of his contemporary artists; but I interpret it like the contemporary artists of Van Gogh were lagged behind him by 200 years," says Nisar Hossain. "If you consider him after two hundred years his significance will be lessened; but if you judge his caliber according to his time, he is extremely important. The major responsibility of an artist is to stay relevant to the time."

The artist's second solo exhibition titled *Linear Text of a Delirious Time* is now underway at Kalakendra, Mohammadpur, Dhaka. Eminent artist Rafiqun Nabi inaugurated the show as chief guest on June 30. The exhibit, curated by Wakilur Rahman, is open from 5pm to 8pm daily until July 25. Kalakendra has arranged an art talk by Nisar Hossain today at 5pm at its premises.

Though basically a painter and installation artist, Nisar Hossain, over the years, has created a distinctive art language of his own. The show, featuring drawings, relief process prints, small etching and *puthichitra* on palm leaves, is a rare display that represents contemporary time and its harsh reality. "I want to connect my audience with works I create. The expression of the oppressors/torturers and the victims are highlighted in my works.

Besides, the environmental degradation, deforestation, panic-evoking news published in the media and socio-political-religious anomalies are subjects of my works," he says. The

elements and the use of space used in his drawing-based paintings suggest such connotations and feelings he deals with.

He participated in an art camp titled

"Living with Art", held at Raghurajpur, Orissa, India. Artist Aziz Sharafi, son of legendary Tagore singer Kalim Sharafi and a Professor at the Department of Graphic Design, Washburn University, Kansas, USA, annually organises the camp where local community artists practise traditional art entirely belonging to their profession. "*Taal Patar Puthichitra* is the oldest and the long lasting media of our paintings, as the famous pieces of Proгна-Paromita were depicted on it. And the possibility of the media is immense as I can continue subtle drawings on it. We closely worked together and gained experience from their *chitrapothi* (painting on palm tree). Though I first collected their art in 1996, I fell in love with the media. I have used their art material but created compositions of my own."

Fear of Darkness is a famous series where the artist has tried to portray the dark aspects of time. He allegorically uses black colour that symbolises a shock. A kind of fear works in our psyche. The artworks contain forms, faces and expressions of ominous creatures, animals and humans. Gestures of ugly and bizarre expressions with provocation of threat are prominent in his art. The series also signifies the chronology of decaying time.

"I also depicted the oppressors of certain time and the trend continued later on. I also took part in a group art show titled *Celebration Violence* with one of my vast work *Diary of the Hell* (20 feet) along with text and sound," concludes Nisar Hossain.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Dameer Khan Indie and Independent

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

At only 17 years old, Dameer Khan has signed up with Majestic Casual Records, a German label known as a pioneer in Indie music. Even though he is the son of decorated musician Pilu Khan of the band Renaissance, he manages to make his own mark in music with unconventional and fresh tunes. The Daily Star has a chat with the up and comer about his music, aspirations and more.

We hear that you have been doing music since the age of eight. Tell us about when you started to consider music as a career.

When I was little, I used to tag along with my dad (Pilu Khan) to various events. I have always been fond of music, but only recently have I understood how much he has actually influenced me. Sometimes when I make music now, I feel like I am borrowing some elements from one of my dad's songs which were already stuck in my head (laughs). I have since realised that nothing makes me happier than music, so this is my ideal career choice.

Tell us about the kind of music you are making right now. How do you record them?

I am working on a lot of indie stuff as of late. To be honest, I only have an average laptop and a 60 dollar podcast microphone with which I make do. I sometimes set the mic in the closet and surround it with clothes for 'acoustic' treatment. I usually play all the instruments in my songs as well.

Signing up with Majestic Records must have meant a lot to you. How do you feel after this tremendous achievement?

Honestly, I have followed them since I was 12 or 13 years old and never actually expected them to reply to the demo that I had sent them. When they got back to me and told me to forward them to their label manager, I was over the moon! After a few days, they decided to sign me and that inspires me to do a lot better now.

Who are some of the current indie musicians that you like?

I am proud to be a part of a stellar indie community. Issa Nibras Farooque is amazing, and I consider him to be my mentor. Albab Rana, Kadin Imdad, Zayan Khan, Ummid Ashraf and Saif Rahman are all great indie musicians.

What can we expect from you in the future?

I just want to keep on doing the music that I like, in my own way. I am hopeful that indie will not only be appreciated by a small minority, but everyone will come around to accepting this genre.

Shwapnil Shojib and Iman Chakraborty to star in 'Khoyeri Bikel'

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Shwapnil Shojib will be seen pairing up with his long-time friend and India's national award-winning singer, Iman Chakraborty. The duo will star in the song *Khoyeri Bikel*, and it marks the first time Shwapnil lends his voice to a modern song. The music video, which was directed by Shahrear Polock, sees Shwapnil and Iman melt hearts with their sizzling chemistry. "I think that it will be obvious in the video that me and Iman are very close", says Shwapnil Shojib. The singer, who is renowned for his Tagore renditions, is very excited about his new venture. *Khoyeri Bikel* was written by Galib Sardar, tuned by Ehsan Rahi and directed by Amzad Hossain. Both the song and the music video will be released on 8th June under the banner of Dhruva Music Station.



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