



Display at the preview of M F Husain's "JOURNEY IN GRAPHICS" at Westin Dhaka, Hosted by Galleri Kaya in 2016.

PHOTO: GALLERI KAYA

The 14-year illustrious journey of Galleri Kaya

INAM AHMED

His Bhootergoli home seemed like a tubular, elongated chamber; dark and air heavy; dimly lit even at night. But it always gave the feeling of an art gallery.

At one corner of the single-story of the house Goutam Chakrabarty would put layer after layer of paint on canvas, day and night. In another corner, his father, the celebrated artist Debdas Chakrabarty, would have his own kingdom. Their results all lined up against the wall of the long drawing room.

Goutam aspired to be an artist, like his father, which he is now. But then he wanted to be something else too. As the son of an artist and also as an artist himself, he has seen how tedious it is to sell artworks.

A significant thing happened then in his life that helped him realise that dream. He had completed work of a double-story house designed by eminent architect Shamsul Wares at Uttara on a piece of land bought by his father.

As he moved to Uttara, he looked around at the airy living room and the idea suddenly sprang to his mind – why not set up an art gallery. He had the right space, and he closely knew all the famous artists thanks to his father. He started talking to others – artists and friends. The feedback was mixed. Young artists found it a good idea where they could showcase their work. After all, it is this group that struggles the most. The more famed ones talked about the pros and cons and yet promised to help him.

So, 14 years ago Goutam set up his gallery – Galleri Kaya. He walled up the windows to make space to hang canvases. Lighting was a big deal. If the light is too white, a blue tint will fall on the paintings, if it is yellowish, a reddish tint will appear. But finally he got the right kind of lights at Crescent Lights. Artist Kazi Rakib etched out the Vitruvian Man of Leonardo da Vinci on glass to bedeck the entrance to the gallery.

His first opening exhibition was of mixed works from 50 famous artists of the country starting from Mohammad Kibria to Rafiqun Nabi to Aminul Islam to Wakilur Rahman. "UDHBODHON" -- The beginning, it was named and was a big success.

"I will not forget the support I received from the artists," Goutam says. "I remember going to Aminul Islam to pay him for a piece of art sold at the exhibition. The artist refused to take the money and said: 'keep it with you, Goutam. You have just started the journey, you will need the money. I will give you a few more works to sell'."

Eminent artist Murtaja Baseer always supported Goutam. He always welcomed any idea Goutam shared with him about his exhibition or publishing limited edition graphics to the launching of his portfolio.

There were a few concerns in the beginning years. Until then art exhibitions were held around Dhanmondi area. The distance to Uttara cast a doubt on whether art connoisseurs would take the trouble to travel that breadth of the city. Today, despite the crazy traffic of the city, art connoisseurs rarely

miss Kaya's exhibitions because of the innovative themes and designs of the shows.

The second worrying thing was the smallness of the art market. Art so far was considered collectible of the rich.

"We wanted to grow a taste for art in the middle class and make art affordable to them," Goutam says. "We started by promoting graphic prints of famed artists as well artworks by young artists who have talents but not names. Their artworks were sold at affordable prices."

In these past 14 years, Galleri Kaya can name quite a few young artists like Nagarbashi Barman, Shahnoor Mamoon, Kamaluddin, Ashrafur Hasan who have crossed the threshold and made it big.

Goutam can claim quite a few milestones in the art canvass of Bangladesh. His last sensational effort was the exhibition of MF Hussain's print works. He had worked for years to collect the prints as well contact the collectors of Hussain's works and convinced them to lend the works to be exhibited in Dhaka.

He is now working towards holding more such exhibitions.

"One big issue in Bangladesh is the record keeping of artworks," Goutam says. "We keep track of every artwork we deal with so that we can authenticate the pieces."

Because of his untiring dedication, Galleri Kaya has today left an indelible mark on Dhaka's art world.

The writer is Executive Editor, Digital, The Daily Star.

LEGENDARY SINGER ABDUL ALIM'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY TODAY

Arts & Entertainment Desk

Today marks the 87th birth anniversary of legendary folk singer Abdul Alim (1931-1974), whose songs are still popular in the hearts of the people even after his death decades ago. Cultural organisations have different activities to mark the day. Members of Abdul Alim Foundation will pay respects at the grave of the artiste in the morning. Bangladesh Betar (radio) and BTV will air special programmes on the singer while Abdul Alim's sons and daughters will perform his songs today at 7:40am on Channel i and at 3pm on Desh TV. Abdul Alim possessed a sonorous

and melodious voice, yet to be surpassed by any other singer of our country. His songs epitomised the very essence of Bengali folk culture and mesmerised listeners across the country.

Music lovers who have heard Alim's presentation of Duarey Aishachey Palki, Holudia Pakhi Shonar Boron, Shob Shokhire Par Korite Nebo Ana Ana, Porer Jaiga Porer Jomi, Naiya Rey Nayer Badaam Tuila, Mon-e Boro Asha Chhilo Jabo Modina-e, Sharbonasha Padma Nadi, Ujaan Gaang-er Naiyya and countless

other songs find it difficult to forget his presentation and artistic skill in voice modulation which was all-encompassing.



PHOTO: ASIF RAHMAN NADIM

Celebrating Life photography exhibition in Faridpur

SUZIT KUMAR DAS, from Faridpur

A photography exhibition with 43 winning photographs of Celebrating Life 2018 was held at the auditorium of Govt. Rajendra College in Faridpur to mark the district tour of Standard Chartered- The Daily Star Celebrating Life yesterday.

Professor Mosharof Ali, Principal of Govt. Rajendra College inaugurated the daylong event as the chief guest. He expressed special thanks to The Daily Star

for organising such events for years. He said, "This kind of arrangement inspires our students to have more creative activities and refrain from negative thoughts."

Ashim Kumar Saha, Vice Principal of Govt. Rajendra College, Arshaful Azim Shakil, Secretary General of Govt. Rajendra College Teachers Association and Panna Bala, district correspondent of the Daily Prothom Alo were present at the inauguration.

1 MINUTE PLEASE Palki Ahmad

SHABABA IQBAL

As a solo artiste, Palki Ahmad loves to explore contemporary and diverse music genres. Having performed with Arnob & Friends, and with Anusheh Anadil, she has collaborated with various artistes both at home and abroad. She is passionate to use music as a tool for peace-building and has performed for many charity programmes. Palki will be performing alongside her friends Dio Haque, the drummer of Nemesis and Indalo and Kaartik, the current bass player of the pioneering band Renaissance, tonight at the restaurant 138 East. Prior to the

show, she had some exciting answers for us in this week's "One Minute Please!"
First song you learnt on the guitar? Phule Phule Dhole Dhole.
Name few musicians who inspire you. The Beatles, Jeff Buckley, Kurt Cobain and Alicia Keys.
Three things you do not leave your house without: My red lipstick, cell-phone and rubber bands.
Cats or dogs? Dogs.
What are your top three favourite films? Baby's Day Out, Set It Off and Free Willy.
Your friends describe you as: Spontaneous.



Kumar Bishwajit



Fahmida Nabi

Composing patriotic tunes

An album comprising of patriotic and romantic songs written by Sujon Hajong and composed by Jadoo Reesil, is currently in the making. Many renowned artistes have lent their voices to the album including Sabina Yasmin, Kumar Bishwajit, Fahmida Nabi, Samina Chowdhury and Priyanka Gope.

According to Jadoo Reesil, two songs have already been recorded after much precision. The sister duo Fahmida Nabi and Samina

Chowdhury have completed the songs Bangladesh and Banglaar Akash. Jadoo Reesil also informed that Sujon Hajong has penned some marvelous lyrics to be sung by the celebrated singers, but due to the artistes' busy schedules, it has become a lengthy process. Other melodious singers who may grace the album include Runa Laila, James, Shakila Zafar, S I Tutul and many more.

SOURCE: AHAI PR



Tanvir Mokammel to speak in Europe

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Award winning filmmaker and author, Tanvir Mokammel is set for Europe to deliver his speech in two universities.

On August 2, he will deliver a speech on Tagore, Grundtvig and "Some Experiences of Alternative Education in Bangladesh" in an international symposium at the University of London. On August 21, he will deliver a speech on Islam and "Influence of Sufism on Lalon Fakir" at Denmark's Copenhagen University.



'Shilper Shohor Dhaka' at Shilpakala

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has organised Shilper Shohor Dhaka, in order to give performance art a new dimension in the city. Shilper Shohor Dhaka started yesterday with the presence of fifteen participants of the event and curator Mahbubur Rahman. The performances will take place in different places of Dhaka including TSC, Old Dhaka, Kamlapur Railway Station and near Shangshad Bhaban. The occasion will continue till July 28.

SOURCE: BSA

