



INTERVIEW

Olin's ink



Dhaka is far from being spoilt when it comes to good tattoo places. The city is simply not the right place for tattoos! But that thought is also quite wrong as Dhaka is now home to one of the most promising professional tattoo artists out there, working under the brand Olin Inking.

Whether you are looking to get a butterfly as a first tattoo, or something more related to home, he is your man. Extremely talented, Olin is really making a mark for himself on the tattoo scene of the city. We met him last month for a tête-à-tête over coffee, and he had a lot to say!

When did the tattooing process start?

Professionally it started in 2008, but I have been doing sketches for a very long time. When I realised that tattooing was my calling, I started practicing on fake skin and this was back in the early 2000s. I would also like to say that both my parents are artists, so being in this profession was perhaps ingrained in my genes.

Did you study tattooing?

Not really; I am completely self-taught. This process began when I was in college. I always wanted to do something different in life, but was not sure. At the beginning, I wanted to study a rare topic such as automobile colouring, but as this was unavailable in Dhaka, I had to give up on the dream.

How did you become inspired and finally how did you get to know that tattooing was your calling?

Back in the early 2000s, there was a popu-

lar show on TV called Miami Ink – this was completely based on tattooing and this particular show inspired me a lot, and helped me become more serious about becoming a tattoo artist.

Do you consult with your clients before you work on them?

Yes of course! Today, the young people in our society are mostly inclined towards getting a tattoo because they consider it very fashionable. As crazy as it may sound, we try to convince them first to not do it at all; if it is only for fashion!

Tattooing is a painful, permanent process which cannot be easily removed; if someone is not too sure about the reasons, we ask them to re-think. Plus, we have seen that most young people want to put their mark on a very visible place on their body, which would easily hamper in a white collar job. We suggest that they tattoo in a place where it is not easily seen and their ordinary lives are not hampered.

Dhaka clients must be a bit different as the concept is very new here?

Not exactly. Maybe it was so, at the beginning of the millennium. But things have drastically changed over the years. Today, at least 70 percent of our clients are women and 25 percent of them are studying medicine. This means that the taboo regarding tattoos is slowly breaking and its considered safe amongst the crowd.

Any interesting stories to share?

We have plenty! Almost everyone who

ends up getting a tattoo at our place has a unique story to share. Sometimes we joke amongst ourselves that if we were able to make movies out of each of their stories than we would have been super rich by now.

Some are cancer survivors; few others have lost loved ones and there are so many more amazing stories.

Every tattoo artist has their unique style, what's yours?

I can proudly say that we have initiated the 'Bangla Style,' where everything quintessentially Bangladeshi is highlighted. We began with images of Nazrul and his rebellious poems, and now we have plans to highlight Humayun Ahmed's character sketches like Himu.

Future plans?

On 21 February, 2019, we have a special promotion planned; we'd do 21 tattoos at Tk 2,100, with patriotic wordplays and sketches. This would be our special dedication to the language martyrs.

Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

I see myself still learning. If I ever feel like I have learned everything there is to know, then my days as an artist would be over.

What other style inspires your work other than the Bangla style?

I really like minimalism. Given our olive skin tones, realism or extreme colours do not come out too well. Minimalism works best on our skin type.

Any private life?

None at all! Tattoo has never been just work for me. It's my passion, life, work, hobby – everything!

Interviewed by MMC

Photo courtesy: Olin Inking

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OUR SHOWROOMS

UTTARA

Plot: 13, Road: 02, Sector: 03, Uttara, Dhaka.

DHANMONDI

KB Square (Ground & 1st Floor), House: 49/A, Road: 09/A, Shat Masjid Road, Dhaka.

MIRPUR

Plot: 66, 66/1, (1st & 2nd Floor), Block: D, Chiriyakhana Road, Mirpur-2, Dhaka.

BANASREE

Plot: C/40, Road: 09, Block: C, Banasree, Rampura, Dhaka.

JAMUNA FUTURE PARK

1st Floor, Shop: 1A002, Jamuna Future Park, Dhaka.

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