



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

MAHADI FAISAL

A sporadic yet splendid musician

MINAM HAQ

Mahadi Faisal had a knack for music from a very young age. He is a proud participant of *Notun Kuri*, a reality competition series for children that aired on Bangladesh Television (BTV), way before such shows were all the rage. As he grew older, life took a different turn for him and he steadily drifted further apart from his musical endeavours.

However, the flair reigned once again in 2005, as he prepared to participate in yet another musical reality show, *Close Up-1*. As the show progressed, Mahadi began to prove his prowess and garnered much admiration from the viewers.

In no time, the talented artiste had a devoted fan base. "I made it to the top 10 amongst thousands of participants in the competition," expressed Mahadi. "Not only did the show help me reconnect with my zeal, but it also taught me a lot."

From then onwards, Mahadi maintained his ties with his passion for music. He launched his first album, titled *Bondona* in 2007, under the banner of Gaanchill Music. The lyrics of the album

were penned by Asif Iqbal while Prince Mahmud tuned the tracks. Following his devotion for music, he went on to release more albums, including the likes of *Antohin*, a duet with Elita Karim, *Onnorokom* and others. Given the fact that *Antohin* captured the hearts of numerous listeners with its melodious numbers, the duo released another album titled *Antohin 2*. Apart from his albums, Mahadi also lent his voice for several mixed projects, live shows and singles. His latest single was with renowned musician Minar, titled *Keu Bojhe Toh Keu Bojhe Na*.

As of now, the artiste is engrossed in the pursuit of his professional career. Serving as the Head of Business in a distinguished private organisation, Mahadi is dedicated to his corporate career to bring about positive changes to his related field, the agro sector. Despite the busy lifestyle, the artiste continues to nurture his essence for music. "Given the workload I'm dealing with, this Eid, I will not be able to deliver any musical piece for my fans unfortunately," informed Mahadi. "However, music lovers can look forward to my upcoming single during Eid-ul-Adha."

MOVIE REVIEW

Aladdin: A nostalgic wish come true

SHABABA IQBAL

Directed by Guy Ritchie, the same man who gave us *Sherlock Holmes* (2009), *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011) and *Snatch* (2000), the live-action adaptation of Disney's 1992 animated classic, *Aladdin*, is a nostalgic wish come true for anyone who grew up watching Disney films. It follows Aladdin, an Arabian street urchin, who finds a magic lamp containing a genie. In order to hide the lamp from the Grand vizier, he disguises himself as a wealthy prince, and tries to impress the Sultan and his daughter. The premise of the remake stays quite faithful to the 1992 film, with Alan Menken returning as the music director.

People have been a bit worried about anyone messing with a beloved classic like *Aladdin*. After all, the original 1992 animated version—featuring Robin Williams' rapid-fire genius, a fun *Arabian Nights* love story and an Academy Award-winning musical score—is right there at the top of nearly every family's "favourites" list. Fortunately, in his interpretation of what the world of *Aladdin* will look like if it was made out of brick and mortar, Guy Ritchie



magnificently brings the city of Agrabah to life, making some changes to the story in lively and colourful ways. He presents simplistic, bedtime storytelling, stylised to cinematic perfection. However, in the first few minutes, barring the opening credits song, viewers really struggle to connect with the story as an immersive experience. But once the screenplay picks

up pace, the film is a joyful ride.

The character of the Genie is one that everyone is easily emotionally invested in. Despite having been stuck in the lamp for more than a thousand years, the minute the Genie gets out, he is making pop cultural references, giving makeovers and being witty, as if he spends most of his days on Twitter and Netflix. Will

Smith as the Genie sweeps the floor with anyone sharing screen space with him. With his brilliant comic timing, dancing and singing, Smith reinforces his position as one of the greatest entertainers there is.

Naomi Scott as Princess Jasmine wins over Mena Massoud as Aladdin. She stands out in every scene. Her solo song, *Speechless*, an original track made for the adaptation, is one of the most powerful moments of the film.

Mena Massoud is not instantly likeable, which is one of the key characteristics of Aladdin, but as the film progresses, so does his character and he manages to grow on everyone. Unfortunately, Massoud is a better singer and dancer than he is an actor, and because most of his scenes are with Smith, he comes across as more of a novice. Nasim Pedrad plays the newly created character Dalia, a quirky and loveable handmaid to Princess Jasmine. She brings in a strong dose of comedy, but remains largely underutilised in the story.

All in all, *Aladdin* is a film that celebrates love, hope, freedom, breaking down the class divide and living in harmony. It is the fairytale that perhaps all of us need every once in a while.

Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin's death anniversary today

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The country will observe the 43rd death anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin today. The artist, born in Mymensingh, was influenced greatly by the picturesque views by the Brahmaputra River. He was a post-aesthetic painter, and was known as the founding father of Bangladeshi modern art. Abedin's paintings on the Bengal Famine of 1943 brought him international fame. The Government Institute of Arts and Crafts (now Faculty of Fine Arts) was established in 1948 under his wing, and he was appointed as the first principal of the institution. He founded Bangladesh's Folk Art Museum at Sonargaon in 1975.



SPECIAL MENTION OF THE JURY	by Agustina San
QUEER PALM (FEATURE)	<i>Portrait of a Lady on Fire</i> by Celine Sciamma
QUEER PALM (SHORT)	<i>The Distance Between Us</i> by Vasilis Kekatos
SHORT FILM PALME D'OR	<i>The Distance Between Us</i> by Vasilis Kekatos
SPECIAL MENTION OF THE JURY	<i>Our Mothers</i> by Cesar Diaz

FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2019

draws its curtains

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The most anticipated film festival, Festival de Cannes 2019, recently concluded, shedding light on some of the notable films of the year. The jury of this year's award ceremony, headed by Mexican film director, producer, screenwriter, and Oscar winner, Alejandro González Iñárritu, included Elle Fanning, Kelly Reichardt, Enki Bilal, Maimouna N'Diaye, Alice Rohrwacher, Yorgos Lanthimos, Robin Campillo, and Paweł Pawlikowski.

This year, the highest prize awarded at the festival, the Palme d'Or, went

to Korean filmmaker Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* and the Grand Prix award went to Mati Diop's *Atlantic*. Kleber Mendonça Filho and Julian Dornelles' *Bacurau* won the Cannes Jury Prize, tied with Ladj Ly's *Les Misérables*. Besides, Emily Beecham won the Best Actress Award for her role in *Little Joe*, whereas Antonio Banderas won the Best Actor Award for his role in *Pain and Glory*. Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne bagged the Best Director Award for the film *The Young Ahmed*. Celine Sciamma's *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* garnered the prize for Best Screenplay. Following are some of the other awards -



Antonio Banderas

PHOTOS: COLLECTED FROM CANNES' OFFICIAL WEBSITE



Emily Beecham



Bong Joon Ho