

WHAT'S ON



Group Art Exhibition
Title: His Dream World
Venue: Shilpangan, Dhanmondi
Date: December 27 – January 11
Time: 3 pm – 8 pm



Cartoon Exhibition
Title: People of many colours
Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka, Dhanmondi
Date: December 20 – 31
Time: 3 pm – 9 pm (Mon – Thurs);
9 am – 12 noon & 5 pm – 8 pm (Fri – Sat)



Cultural Festival
Title: Bangladesh Shanskritik
Utshab 2020
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: January 2-23, 2020
Time: 4 pm – 8 pm



Cultural Festival
Title: Zainul Utshab 2019
Venue: Faculty of Fine Art,
University of Dhaka
Date: December 29-31
Time: 10 am – 8 pm



Group Art Exhibition
Title: Breaking Ground: Modern Art in Transition
Venue: Subir Choudhury Exhibition Hall,
Bengal Shilpalay, Dhanmondi
Date: Dec 17 – Feb 15
Time: 1 pm – 8 pm (Except Sundays)

40 YEARS DOWN, MILES TO GO

ELITA KARIM

Established in August, 1979, Miles had become a household name within a few years, thanks to their out-of-the-box compositions, bringing about a new wave of pop-rock sound in Bangladesh. For more than 40 years, Miles has successfully inspired generations who hum, listen to and also cover their songs online. Last week, Miles ended the first part of their 40-year-celebrations tour with a power-driven performance in Dhaka and looks forward to the second part of the journey in the year 2020. The band got together with us and spoke about the tour, the challenges that they faced, and also how staying disciplined and focused might just be the keys to their success.

When and how did you come up with the 40-year-tour?

Shafin Ahmed: It was in the beginning of 2019 when we thought of the tour. We did celebrate 30 years, and this time, we wanted the celebrations to be more grand. We all began to brainstorm and fix the number of countries and continents we would cover – starting from North America, Australia, Asia, Europe to Africa. We are done covering the USA and Canada from North America, and Australia. We ended with yet another grand concert in Bangladesh. We

are very much satisfied with our plan so far. However, we still have Europe, Africa and parts of Asia to cover, and are definitely going stronger next year!

What was the 40-year-tour like? Can you share some stories for the readers?

Hamin Ahmed: So many stories to share! However, I think I would rather share the stories that happened behind the scenes. Firstly, Shafin's passport was held back by the US Embassy, which is why he could not accompany us to the States. This is why Foysal Ahammed Tanim (Pavel) played the bass guitar in his place. And then when it was time to go perform in Canada, Turjo's passport got delayed! You see, when you are about to execute your plans, you find so many elements of the universe coming to challenge you, things that you may have never thought about planning, but

LINE-UP

Shafin Ahmed: Vocals and bass

Hamin Ahmed: Vocals and guitar

Manam Ahmed: Keyboard

Iqbal Asif Jewel: Guitar

Syed Ziaul Haque Turjo: Drums



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

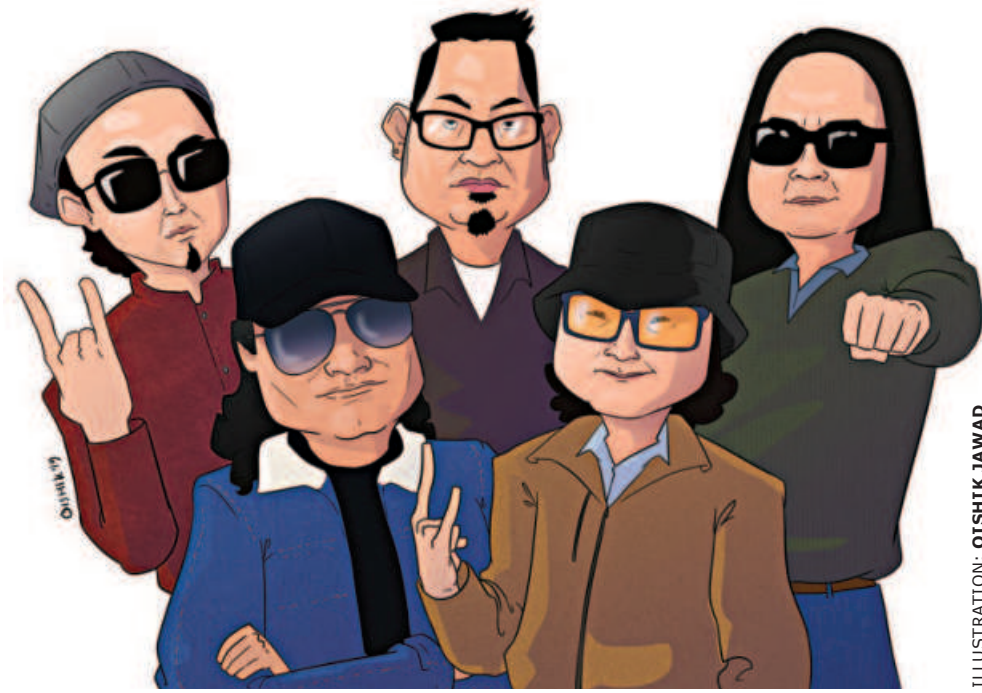


ILLUSTRATION: OISHIK JAWAD

overcoming these challenges is what is important.

Manam Ahmed: We travelled nights in a row to different cities, checked into hotels in the middle of the nights and performed the next day. It was hectic. However, we went through with all that only because of the fans and the audience who would inspire us and encourage us to do more. Basically, not only did we manage to perform in more than 28 countries till now, we also became excellent managers, travel agents and what not!

Turjo: The experience has been extremely fulfilling! Different cities, countries, hotels, different venues, different sound and a different drum kit! I think by now we have become jetlag proof!

Any incident in particular that you still think back to from the tour?

Jewel: When we were playing in Detroit, there was a huge storm from out of nowhere! We were playing outdoors with thousands of people listening to us and were very worried about our instruments and sound equipment. However, the 2,500

or more people standing there watching us perform did not move and were simply waiting for us to finish our set! That was an unbelievable moment for me!

What is the message that you would like to give out to the young bands who you continue to inspire?

Hamin: One can do music for fun or opt to do it professionally. And if you decide to pursue music professionally, there would be a world of difference! You see, to reach the 40-year-mark, the amount of sacrifices we had to make is still unthinkable and unimaginable. You can say goodbye to addas with friends, to things that people normally do around you, just for the sake of music and keeping your band alive.

Manam: Keeping fit and maintaining discipline is very important. Gone are the days when musicians were expected to remain nonchalant or laid back about their work. We managed to meet the 40-year mark because of our consistency as a professional band with regular performances. If we had taken a pause, like many choose to do, the celebrations would

have been more of an anniversary reunion. I believe this is very important!

Shafin: There will be challenges in life. You get an education, you grow up and start looking for jobs, and eventually you get married and have children of your own. These are all very natural concepts and part of life, however, these are also challenges that you have to overcome, balance your life accordingly and pursue the art of music as a profession.

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2019 IN A NUTSHELL



Lottery

PREMIERE OF SEVEN NEW PLAYS

2019 was particularly significant for the field of theatre. Seven new plays were staged at *Notuner Utshab 2019: Aye Natoker Ongone*, organised by Nagorik Natya Sampradaya. It brought back notable names of theatre such as Asaduzzaman Noor and Aupee Karim, among many others. The plays had experimentation in the stories and their executions. Concluding the festival with Mostafiz Shahin's *Lottery*, featuring visually impaired actors on stage, the young minds reassured that theatre is an inclusive medium.



Miles at their 40 year celebration concert.



Adity Mohsin's solo concert at KIB.



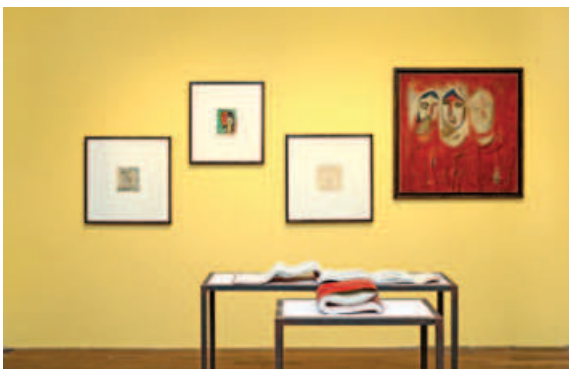
'20 Years of Artcellism' was a runaway success.



'Fuad live in Dhaka' celebrated the best in Bangladeshi pop music.

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY PICKS UP

2019 was objectively a great year for band music, both underground and mainstream. *Fuad Live in Dhaka* was a celebration of the pop music industry in Bangladesh-- a concert to remember. ICCB also saw two landmark celebrations as Miles and Artcell celebrated their 40th and 20th anniversaries, respectively. Renowned Rabintra Sangeet exponent Adity Mohsin's solo concert at KIB was a marvel, celebrating 20 years of her journey as a professional musician.



Breaking Ground: Modern Art in Transition

ACHIEVEMENTS IN ART

This year was objectively a successful one for both renowned and promising artists. Professor Mahmudul Haque received Japan's 'The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon' honour for his



Morshed Mishu

immense contribution in strengthening cultural exchanges between Japan and Bangladesh through promoting modern art. Cartoonist Morshed Mishu was one of the two Bangladeshis to be named in the Forbes 30 under 30 Asia list of 2019. At the beginning of 2018, Mishu began transforming tragic and shocking images from wars into joyful art, hoping to show how beautiful the world would be without violence or war.



Professor Mahmudul Haque (C)

His series, *Global Happiness Challenge*, went viral after that. Bengal Shilpalay's *Breaking Ground: Modern Art in Transition*, opened on December 17. Featuring the works of Aminul Islam, Gaganendranath Tagore, Jamini Roy, Kazi Abdul Baset, Mohammad Kibria, Murtaja Baseer, Qayyum Chowdhury, Quamrul Hassan, Ramkinkar Baij, Rashid Choudhury, Safiuddin Ahmed, S M Sultan and Zainul Abedin, it is quite an iconic art exhibition.

A BITTERSWEET YEAR FOR FILMS

Halls throughout Dhaka are closing down due to the lack of revenue from cinemagoers. There were very few bright spots for films throughout the year. Shakib Khan has been consistently delivering profitable films for the last 20 years, and this year was no different. Among his many hits in 2019, his production, *Password*, earned great success. Films like *Mayaboti* and *Shaap Ludo*, even though praised by the audience, were hit-or-miss at the box office. Mostafa Sarwar Farooki's *Saturday Afternoon*, despite awaiting an official release in Bangladesh, has earned accolades in international film festivals around the world.

