

# Wahid Ibn Reza on 'Surviving 71'



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

SHABABA IQBAL

Wahid Ibn Reza is the only child of freedom fighter and Former State Minister of Bangladesh Rezaul Karim and Advocate Suraya Karim Munni. He has a BSC in Mechanical Engineering from BUET and BFA in Film Production from The University of British Columbia, Canada. Wahid joined the Bardel Entertainment animation studio after his graduation, and worked there for a few years. He later joined Moving Picture Company as a project coordinator and worked on *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*. He has also worked on Marvel's *Captain America: Civil War* (2016) and *Doctor Strange* (2016) during his tenure in the Method VFX Studios. Wahid worked with the visual effects teams of *Furious 7* (2015), *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2015), *Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb* (2014) HBO's *Game of Thrones* and *Angry Birds 2* (2019), among other projects. In 2017, *Doctor Strange* was nominated for the Academy Awards for Best VFX, which made him a part of an Oscar nominated team. Currently, he is a production manager at Atomic Cartoons Inc in Canada.

*Surviving 71*, a 2D animated short film about the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh written and directed by Wahid, is currently under production. The teaser of the film was released on March 25, 2019. "We received a hugely positive response for the teaser upon its release, but

now, we want it to cross one million views," says Wahid. "We aim to turn *Surviving 71* into a miniseries or a full length feature film, which is next to impossible without international support. If we manage to garner more views for the teaser, it will be easier to convince sponsors to back the project."

The film, which follows a semi-realistic animation style, is about three captured freedom fighters who reminisce about what brought them to the war as they prepare to face their ultimate demise, getting shot in the back and thrown out of a moving

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train. The voice cast of the film includes Jaya Ahsan, Meher Afroz Shaon, Tanzir Tuhin, Gousul Alam Shawon, Anik Khan, Samir Ahsan and Wahid himself.

"My father was captured by the Pakistani forces during the war, and two men were shot right in front of him. When they were about to shoot him, he jumped out of a train and survived," Wahid says. "I just felt that it would make a cinematic survival story."

He also spoke about the themes that the film touches upon. "Surviving 71 provides a snapshot

of the war, structured into three segments. We have focused on the tortures faced by the minority groups and women and the resilience of our people during the war. There is also a segment about the *Razakars*," explains Wahid. "The film is a figurative piece. In the teaser, we can see that members of the Pakistani Army are depicted as demon-like beings, which is a metaphor for how terribly they treated our people."

The team of *Surviving 71* is working very hard at the moment, both in Bangladesh and Canada. Wahid hopes to wrap up the production of the film by this year, and present it in film festivals across the world by the beginning of 2021. A song, written by eminent lyricist Sheikh Rana and composed and sung by popular artiste Minar Rahman, will be released on March 26, 2021, kicking off the promotions for the film. "Surviving 71 is predominantly for the young audience, to educate them about the history of Bangladesh. We hope that it will spark an interest in people to find out more about the country and the events of 1971," says Wahid, who looks forward to releasing the film on December 16, 2021, across multiple television channels and streaming platforms. Moreover, Wahid is also working on a children's web series and his own feature film.

For more updates on *Surviving 71*, visit: <https://www.surviving71.com/>

## WHAT'S ON



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



Workshop  
Title: Kata Kutti - Collage Workshop  
by Kazi Tahsin Agar Apurbo  
Venue: Studio 6/6, Mohammadpur  
Date: January 25, 2020  
Time: 11 am – 6 pm



Cultural Festival  
Title: Bangladesh Shanskritik Utshab 2020  
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy  
Date: January 3 – 23, 2020  
Time: 4 pm – 8 pm



Musical Evening  
Title: Plugged Out IV - One Night Stand  
Venue: Counter Culture Club, Dhanmondi  
Date: January 31, 2020  
Time: 5 pm onwards  
Tickets: BDT 300



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



Award Ceremony  
Title: Kali O Kalam Young Poet & Writer Award 2019  
Venue: Bengal Shilpalya, Dhanmondi  
Date: January 4  
Time: 5 pm

## Chitta Halder Exhibition concludes at Barishal

SUSHANTA GHOSH, from Barishal

Commemorating renowned sculptor Chitta Halder, a two-day exhibition recently concluded at Ashwini Kumar Hall, Barishal. The exhibition, organised by Chitta Halder Memorial Committee (CHMC), was inaugurated by Rafiqul Islam Khokon, Panel Mayor of Barishal City Corporation, on January 1.

A total of 40 artworks were exhibited at the event. An art competition was organised and cultural performances were held. A book, featuring the life and work of the artist was launched at the

concluding day of programme.

S M Ajair Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Barishal, was present at the closing ceremony as chief guest, among others. Freedom fighter Md Helal Uddin was honoured with the Artist Chitta Halder award for his contribution.

Violet Halder, Member Secretary of the CHMC and Chitta Halder's daughter shared her inspiration behind this initiative. "Chitta Halder had not received institutional art education. However, he created exquisite paintings, sculptures and terracotta pieces based on his concepts and creativity," she said.



PHOTO: COURTESY



## Bangladesh Sangskritik Utshab 2020 begins today

ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The 2nd *Bangladesh Sangskritik Utshab 2020* begins at the Nandan Mancha of Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy (BSA), at 4 pm today. Planning Minister M A Mannan will attend the inaugural ceremony as chief guest, while State Minister for Cultural Affairs K M Khalid will inaugurate the festival. Cultural Affairs Secretary Dr Md Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal will attend the occasion as special guest. Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General, BSA will preside over the programme.

A press conference was held in this regard

at the Seminar Hall of BSA on January 1. Liaquat Ali Lucky and BSA Secretary Badrul Alam Bhuiyan were present, among others. "We organised the first edition of the festival in 2016, and from now on, we are hoping to arrange it on a regular basis. We have tried to include all the segments of culture in this festival. We have also a plan to honour one prominent artiste from each district," said Liaquat Ali Lucky.

BSA has organised the 21-day festival with a view to showcasing the colourful Bangladeshi culture. More than 5 thousand artistes from 64 districts of the country

will participate in the festival, featuring traditional folk games, folk-drama, solo and choral rendition of songs, instrumental music, *jatrapala*, Baul songs, dance, acrobatic show, puppet show, recitation and more. The festival also includes performances by the differently-abled children, music and dance performances on Bangabandhu and Liberation War, performances by indigenous artistes and choreography on drama.

Artistes from all over the country will perform every day in the festival. The open to all event will be held from 3 pm to 9 pm every day, at the BSA premises.

## Shilpacharya's 105th birth anniversary observed in Mymensingh

AMINU ISLAM, from Mymensingh

Marking the 105th birth anniversary of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, seven-day programmes throughout Mymensingh began on December 29.

Bangladesh National Museum and Mymensingh District Administration jointly organised the programmes at the Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala auditorium in the city.

The celebrations also included a painting competition, folk-fair, painting exhibition and cultural shows.

Earlier, a colourful rally was brought out in the town marking the occasion, inaugurated by Mymensingh Divisional Commissioner Kondoker Mustafizur Rahman.

Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Md Mizanur Rahman and Deputy Keeper of the art gallery Mukul Datta joined the rally, among others. An art competition for children was also held on Sunday.

Children of different educational institutions from Mymensingh and beyond took part in an art competition. The subjects of the competition included 'Portrait of Shilpacharya',

'Sketches on Zainul's Art Works', 'Winter Morning', and 'Open Choice'.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs K M Khalid inaugurated the celebrations as the chief guest.

A seminar, titled *Zainuler Shilpa O*

*Shilpa Chinta*, was held. Artist Zahid Mustafa, Dr Mohammad Emdadur Rashed, a professor of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University addressed the seminar, among others.

Art critic Professor Moinuddin

Khaled presented the keynote paper at the seminar, while the Secretary of National Museum, Md Abdul Mazid, delivered the welcome speech. Director General of National Museum Md Reaz Ahmed was the chair.



PHOTO: STAR



## Encore releases GRISHSHO

ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Formed by a group of friends in 2013, Encore is a young rock band from Dhaka. After earning praise for their first album, *Chinno*, the group has announced their second album, from which the track *Grishsho* was recently released at a restaurant in the capital. The song is available for streaming on Gaan App and YouTube.