

International Collaborations We Wish Were Possible

ABIR HOSSAIN

Have you ever wondered how it would be if a Bangladeshi artist could have their album cover designed by Tekashi Murakami? Or maybe a graphic novel done by Neil Gaiman and Ahsan Habib? Perhaps even a musical collaboration between Arnob and A.R. Rahman?

In the contemporary era of pop culture, the lines of diversity are celebrated and embraced. So, we begin to wonder about the endless possibilities that excite us.

With that in mind, here are a few international collaborations we would have loved to see.

Bibi Russell x Andy Warhol

Pioneers in their own rights, Bibi Russell and Andy Warhol never failed to push the limits of self-expression.

The two are characterised by exuberance, glamour, and playfulness with ornamental patterns finding their way into a good portion of their work. Where creatives attempt to shy away from the mundane of everyday lives, Russell and Warhol found inspiration in the supposed dullness of regularity.

Bibi Russell, who had just stepped into the world of fashion, experimented with all sorts of fabrics and styles. However, it wasn't until she began to instil her love for local textile that her designs took a life of their own and launched the handicraft artisans of Bangladesh to a global scale. With the integration of *khadi*, *jamdani*, and *gamchha*, her designs were a breath of fresh air in the scene all the while being eco-friendly.

Warhol, on the other hand, sought to reimagine familiarity and attempted to find beauty in something as regular as a can of soup. Safe to say, he succeeded. "Campbell's Soup Cans" is an instantly recognisable piece that helped pop art become the epicentre of the art movement in the early 60s. The illustration was initially met with indifference from the general public but went on to create waves in the art scene later on. It helped consolidate his signature style of "mass production" and silkscreen printing.

Both Warhol and Russell loved juxtaposing colours and mediums, and showing a part of themselves in everything they created. This duo would amalgamate their commercial prowess and boundary-pushing creativity to produce perhaps a fashion line that embodies the spirit of the subcontinent as well as the boisterous nature of pop art.

Satyajit Ray x Hayao Miyazaki

Lush green meadow imperceptibly swaying against the gush of wind while the protagonist, young and naive,



gazes at the marvel of a train or an airplane passing by. If this imagery reminds you of either Miyazaki or Ray's films, you are not alone.

There is no doubt about the brilliance of the two filmmakers. Their cinema possesses an unforeseen sense of universal love evoking all of our senses to unravel before us a masterpiece each time.



Satyajit Ray started his career as a commercial illustrator and printmaker. In fact, it was Ray himself who illustrated the cover for the novel *Pather Panchali* by Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay. He found himself deeply entrenched in the world of cinema, writing screenplays, being the founder of a film society, and a regular at the theatre. His work hinges on the innocence of being a child and the perils of parenthood.

Much like Miyazaki, Ray explores the conflicting nature of tradition and modernism. With coming-of-age themes, versatile storytelling, and a musical score moulded solely for Ray's films, we can see how it can fit right amongst Miyazaki's magical creatures.

On the other hand, Hayao Miyazaki's films are veiled under multiple layers of meticulous craftsmanship, each playing their part to make the drawings feel alive. Similarly, Ray and his crew were renowned for developing new techniques of filming. The two also love to personify the elements, giving nature the ability to wreak havoc as well as love. Both auteurs are distinctly influenced by the humane aspects of their characters. While one of them engulfs their characters in a magical universe, the other wants their characters to deal with the world head-on.

It is their differences that make them exceptional. However, one can't help but wonder how Apu would befriend Totoro or Feluda solving crime alongside one of Hayao Miyazaki's wonderful companions. It is a thought fuelled by the very essence of the films the two of them have given us. And although it might be impossible now, we can surely let our imaginations wander.

Jalali Set x BROCKHAMPTON

Youthful, rambunctious, and borderline manic – hip-hop, as a genre, is braggadocious and all about the hustle. However, with the rise of young crews, the rules of hip-hop

have been bent, and non-conformity is now the norm.

Jalali Set burst onto the scene embodying an anarchic spirit. They sought to represent the chaos that looms large in Dhaka and pack it into songs that sound nothing short of implosions.

Equally proud of their identities are Texas boy-band Brockhampton. Formed on the internet over a Kanye West forum, this exciting crew is the sound that has come to define a generation. With R&B influences and pop sounds scattered all over their discography, the group has proven to venture out and not be defined by a single genre.

While Jalali Set presents the audience with piercing verses, humorous one-liners, and comical ad-libs, their prime objective is to conspicuously show off what it means to be "puran Dhakaia". Most of their lyrical content is riddled with the vernacular of the area and about the come-up (as well as survival) of the streets. Their beats sound almost menacing and once paired with a classic drum loop, help their mischievous aesthetic come through.

Brockhampton, while musically more diverse, also has a chaotic feel to it. The relentless verses switch from bars to melody almost effortlessly without ever sounding out of sync. Each member contributes a different theme, spanning from identity, trauma, as well as questioning the status quo.

With a blend of sub-continental nudge combined with a sound that has garnered an obsessive global fanbase, it holds the potential to either be a beautiful mess or the next big thing. Kevin Abstract's punchy vocals and MC Muggz's knock-out deliveries over a beat rummaging with multiple influences sounds like a head nodding magnum opus.

Abir Hossain is a failed SoundCloud Rapper. Tell him you too can't find anything to rhyme oranges with at [fb/abir.hossain.19](#)

STAYING ACTIVE IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

HIYA ISLAM & FAISAL BIN IQBAL

Anyone can write a research paper as long as they have a good understanding of how research publications work. However, it is not just the writing and publication of a paper that will establish your presence in the academic research scene.

To cement your position as a regular researcher or a research enthusiast, you need to stay active within that community. Hence, it is vital that you keep in touch with other researchers, especially those working in your field.

For this article, we will take a look at how you can stay active in the field of academic research and connect with other like-minded researchers. We will also look at the importance of staying away from predatory publications that are only there to exploit you.

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS AND MAKING YOUR WORK MORE ACCESSIBLE

Staying updated with the latest research is pivotal for both young and experienced researchers. This is where ResearchGate comes into play.

ResearchGate was created with the intent to amass science enthusiasts from all over the world and let them share their discoveries. It is a social networking platform for researchers and scientists that enables them to share their conference papers, posters, research articles, preprints, and any other projects.

Additionally, you can find and follow other researchers given they already have an account. Creating an account is easy, free, and requires an institutional email in most cases.

What's more interesting about ResearchGate are the personalised stats, scores, and other analytics it offers to users every week. Users are notified when they have been cited in a paper and get to view their total citations and h-indices. Other users have the option to follow certain research projects as well as recommend them.

You can also interact with each other via a Q&A blog. Here, you can start a discussion, ask questions on troubleshooting, find potential collaborators and so forth.

"The platform allows students to follow works of professors and scientists and can also help them grow an interest towards a particular field," says Md Asad Ullah, a Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering graduate student at Jahangirnagar University, and Chief Research Officer, Community of Biotechnology. "I have published around 20 articles, and ResearchGate has been integral in this journey."

The platform itself is not enough, however. Researchers also need to be good communicators.

Good communication practice starts with the paper itself. While using scientific language in your paper is considered as standard, you should at least use simple language while preparing the research summary. That way, others can easily get the gist of your work.

Selecting keywords for your paper is also important to make sure that your paper is visible in the search results. Choose keywords from the reader's perspective; use words and phrases that readers will use to search for papers. Avoid single word keywords as they might lead to false matches.

PREDATORY PUBLICATIONS AND WHY THEY ARE BAD

Predatory publishing is a form of exploitation. It is an academic publishing business model where authors are able to publish their papers for a certain fee without having their articles checked for quality and legitimacy. In most cases, predatory publications will publish your work with minimum or zero peer-review or editing services.

High quality journals or conferences take longer to publish your papers because they have to go through a long and extensive peer review and editing process in these publications. This is done to ensure quality research and make sure that authors are being credited for their work, and not just because they paid a hefty fee.

Despite the clear red flags, many researchers and research enthusiasts, mostly

and conferences.

"All kinds of research should be avoided from being published in such journals," says Fahim Kabir Monjurul Haque, PhD, Assistant Professor at the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Brac University. "The promise of quick acceptance can also motivate students to submit their work. These publications lack a proper peer-review process which is evident in legitimate journals like Nature, Scientific Reports, PLOS One, etc."

Predatory journals are hard to detect. However, there are some tell-tale signs which give away their true identity.

Professor Haque suggests checking out the members of the journal's editorial board along with their contacts and seeing if these journals are using their own email domain. He also advises to check if the tar-

from submission fees paid by authors.

Predatory publications, especially conferences, have been on the rise during the pandemic. Rafeed Rahman, lecturer at the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Brac University, says that the new interest is due to the conferences being held virtually. That means there is no expense made for visa and travel apart from the participation fee.

"Conference publications are faster compared to journal publications and the submissions can later be extended and readied for a journal," adds Rafeed.

However, an all-virtual event also means students are more vulnerable to fall prey to predatory conferences and thus he asks students to always go for *Core-Ranked* conferences which can be accessed through the website www.core.edu.au/conference-portal. It



students, keep sending papers to these publishers. As far as they are concerned, their work is being recognised and published in "international" journals and conferences, whereas the reality could not be more different.

A 2017 research suggests that Bangladesh is one of the top 20 countries in the world with the highest contribution (211) in predatory journals. India tops that list with the highest contribution (16,720). And these predatory publishers are not just publishing papers on their own make-believe journals and conferences, but are also getting them indexed on different renowned scholarly databases according to a 2021 report by Nature.

With the pressure of "publish or perish" in academia, students and researchers often fall in the clutches of predatory journals

get journal is indexed in reputed indexing agencies such as Scopus, Index Copernicus etc. There are also lists available online that regularly update which journals to look out for such as the Beall's List (which has been discontinued in 2017 but has successors continuing its work).

Predatory publications are somewhat fuelled by the scientific community itself. For job-holding researchers, having a certain number of published articles is necessary for career growth. As for students, having their works published in journals puts them at an advantaged position when seeking higher education.

However, such publications rarely do any good. The main motive of the organizers who host predatory conferences and publish illegitimate journals, at the end of the day, is the financial profit which comes

is a good guide to choosing conferences for students from computing disciplines.

There are other ranking lists for other majors as well, but since these databases are usually scattered across the internet, it is always a wise decision to seek help from your research supervisor regarding this matter.

Getting a paper published is important, but one should also focus on staying clear of predatory journals and conferences. No matter how much effort you put into it or how ground-breaking it might be, the moment it is presented in a predatory journal or conference, its credibility plummets.

Reference

Publishing Research Quarterly (2017). *Publishing in Predatory Open Access Journals: A Case of Iran*.