

#ARTS

THE DANCE EXPERIENCE

“Era had always been a sporty girl and so we enrolled her into other activities like, skating, tennis, martial arts, etc.,” said Fahmida Akhter, Era’s mother.

We are always on the lookout for originals and Mubashshira Kamal Era certainly qualifies as one. The Naogaon based young dancer is instantly recognisable. With a lean figure and an ‘almost floating’ style of walk, everyone who has had a glance of her would know she has something to do with contemporary dance or perhaps even ballet. “People mistake my steps as ballet, it’s actually fusion: at best you can call my style ‘contemporary,’ but definitely not ballet,” said the young dancer.

Era started dancing when she was only six years old and continued until she was dejected by the seniors for an accidental mishap in a group performance. “Funny thing is even my guru thought I was good for nothing and my movements were ungraceful.”

This particular event discouraged the parents to continue with their child’s dance tutoring and move on with athletics instead. “Era had always been a sporty girl and so we enrolled her into other activities like, skating, tennis, martial arts, etc.,” said Fahmida Akhter, Era’s mother.

Hailing from a relatively remote region of Bangladesh and a largely conservative society, Akhter proves herself to be an extremely progressive woman.

“I have four

daughters and all of them are a gem on their own. The eldest is an artist, second daughter a singer, Era a dancer and the youngest is a tabla player. I am a humanist, who strongly believes in the equal rights of both men and women. I have never considered my daughters any less than a boy or man their age.”

And the outcome is certainly beautiful, because Era also trained to be a part of the women’s national cricket team. A little lack of knowledge in bowling required her to fall back a year. This is the time when she faced the toughest hurdle of her life, to discover her one true calling. “Sometimes to get over with the frustrations, I would dance till I was tired. That is when I realised that maybe there was a special connection between me and dance. And surprisingly, people in my surroundings including my childhood guru who

rejected me once, begged my mother to allow me to train with him once again. “Mom, ultimately succumbed to his pleas and I began training ‘Bharatanatyam’ with him. I attended few shows and won quite a few awards in the months following. And then when I had high hopes of training further in India, the pandemic happened and the world came to a halt. This is when my ‘contemporary dance’ trainings geared up online, and I looked up inspiring free-form dancers on various YouTube channels and followed their unique styles. I danced with passion and all the emotions in my body. This made me feel complete as a human being,” stated Era.

There is certainly quality in Era’s work that resists any commonality. She calls herself a master of expressions and her performances do reflect the same.

In a brand-new photoshoot with Star Lifestyle, Era performed to the beats of a clicking camera instead of the energetic vibrations of Carnatic music. Her youthful exuberance was captivating, her energy contagious. Donning a white sari and a matching blouse, she mimed sweeping and posed for the camera, hopping and jumping back and forth. Her sari and her hypnotic performance became one with herself, putting the viewer in a trance.

Captivating and surreal, her performance expressed her love for dance. And our assumptions were finally confirmed. “This girl will go places; this girl will make it far.”

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Model: Mubashshira Kamal Era
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