



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BENGAL FOUNDATION

## Kazi Ghiyasuddin and his world of colours

'The Work of Creation 2' inaugurated at Bengal Shilpalaya

An exhibition titled "The Work of Creation 2", featuring the works of eminent Bangladeshi artist Kazi Ghiyasuddin, was inaugurated at Bengal Shilpalaya on October 28. The exhibition was jointly inaugurated by Masud Bin Momen, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh; His Excellency (HE) Ito Naoki, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh and Prof Nisar Hossain, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Also present at the event were Abul Khair Litu, Chairman of Bengal Foundation, and Luva Nahid Chowdhury, Director General of the foundation. Tokyo-based Bangladeshi journalist Monzurul Huq writes about the eminent artist, who was bestowed with the honour of the Order of the Rising Sun from the Emperor of Japan.

MONZURUL HUQ

How close an artist is to the soil is what defines how authentic are the creations that he presents. We cannot separate Vincent van Gogh from the vast yellow fields of his native land stretching to the horizon and imagine him in a different surrounding.

Saying so, Wassily Kandinsky was probably among the pioneers who had taken the essence of this message to the heart, and we know that as a way of tracing his own routes to the soil, he travelled to the Vologda region near Karelia, the Russian territory closer to Finland, during his younger days.

This had a significant impact on his works and in his abstract world of art as well. The presence of that connection can be easily traced in most of his works, despite the fact that much of his later life he had spent in Germany and in France, and never again made it back to the colourful world that left a permanent impression in his life.

Talking about the trip that he made during his younger days, he later proclaimed that the houses and churches were decorated in such vivid colours that he felt as if he was passing through a painting.

Kandinsky was an enthusiastic participant of new movements in art and culture in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution.

However, he soon became disappointed with the rigidity the new regime was trying to impose. He left his root in 1921 and spent rest of his life, first in Germany, and then when Nazis seized power in that country in 1933, in France. But all his creations give the clear evidence that in his exiled life too, the early impact of moving through the colours of life in his native soil remained intact.

Kazi Ghiyasuddin is probably the only example among our artists who might be resembling Kandinsky, not only in his style of painting and use colours, but also in the life that he is leading. His creative works can be in short described as a world of colour. He plays with colours in the same way as Kandinsky



used to do. And more importantly, roots of those colours are firmly placed in the soil of his native land.

We can easily find in his paintings, the early morning scenes in winter time when fog covers everything around with a semi-transparent sheet, and our eyes hardly see things around very clearly. But we know for sure how spell bounding the beauty of this partially exposed world can be. Or take the example of the crystal clear night sky after a heavy rain washed away all the accumulated dirt, as if to expose the mystic beauty of our surroundings that compels us to feel nostalgic for bygone days.

In some of the works of Kazi Ghiyasuddin as well, there is the same reflection that ignites the feeling of helpless existence deep in our heart, in the same way the mystic world of a clear night sky is able to do.

In his private life as well, Kazi Ghiyasuddin is an 'exiled' artist, once again like Kandinsky, though not someone who had been forced to do so. His earlier academic involvement as well as his family connection somehow compelled him to make the choice and unlike

Kandinsky, he made it sure that his native land never moves further away from him. He roughly spends half of his time every year in the quite surroundings of his studio, that he had built in Savar.

This obviously paves the way for the impact of the soil to penetrate silently in the realm of his creation. It is quite significant from few other aspects too that his solo painting exhibition is now being held in his native land after a gap of few years. The post-Covid world needs something to soothe our heart that have gone through a time of uncertainty. As a result, this wonderful arrangement where 175 of his recent works that he had completed during last two year period are on display, is bound to work as a healing factor for our troubled minds. Finally, it should also be noted that Kazi Ghiyasuddin never hesitates to try new ways of painting, as if to make a breakthrough from the set mold of methods practiced earlier. Here too, there are more than 30 of his works, for which he has used unconventional ways of using boards to play with oil colours. No wonder, these are to bring a new touch in the old charms and delight that we are used to see in his paintings.

The author is a Tokyo-based Bangladeshi journalist. He also teaches at Japanese universities.

## 'Damal': How did it do initially?

SHARMIN JOYA

Raihan Rafi directorial "Damal" created a lot of hype on social media, ever since the film was announced. However, there was an unseen pressure for the entire team as previously released films "Poran" and "Hawa" did incredibly well in cinema halls, and are still running successfully as of late.

"Damal" hit the theatres on October 28, in 22 halls across the country. The first day reception in the capital was quite positive, with some houseful shows in the multiplexes. Yet, the single-screen halls outside Dhaka had mixed responses.

According to Mesbah Uddin Ahmed,



senior manager (media and marketing) of Star Cineplex, first day collections of "Damal" were very good.

"We are running total of 17 shows in all the branches of STAR Cineplex," says Mesbah. "A combination of advance booking and immediate sales meant that the shows were houseful on the first day." Upon asking about their expectations compared to "Poran" and "Hawa", Mesbah told The Daily Star that they have high hopes for "Damal" as well. Four Bangladeshi films -- "Damal", "Poran", "Hawa", and "Operation Sundarban" -- are all having shows simultaneously at Cineplex.

Razu, manager at Jamuna Future Park's Blockbuster Cinemas, informed that they were very happy with the reception of the film. "It certainly has potential," he shares. "Morning shows are slow, but the attendance is still satisfactory. However, the afternoon and evening shows were houseful." Blockbuster is running the movie at seven of their halls, simultaneously.

On the other hand, a representative from Madhumita cinema hall, in exchange of anonymity, shared that "Damal" is doing below-average business in their premises. "We sold 35% of our tickets on the first day," shared the representative.

"This week, we plan to have 4 shows every day. "On the first-day-first-show, the cast of 'Damal' came to watch the show, and reserved most of the tickets." The single-screen hall did good business with "Poran" and "Hawa". "Operation Sundarban" also did well there.

Faisal, an attendant at Grand Sylhet Cineplex Sylhet, informed that their sales were below 50%. Samina Islam Neela, Chairman, Root Cine Club Sirajganj, shared that they could also sell around half of their tickets.

Single-screen Hall Sugandha Cinema Chattogram, which can accommodate 216 people, had only 3 viewers in their



PHOTO: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

morning show. However, on the afternoon the attendance number rose to 75. Safi Hossain, managing director of the hall, told that it did not match their expectations.

Saikuzzaman, the director of Modhuban Cineplex, Bogura said that they have 336 seats at their single-screen hall. "The sales on the first day was above 50% capacity. We also sold some advance tickets for our evening shows." He informs that within a week, they will begin online booking as well. According to him, the film will do better as time progresses, since it clearly has the means.

Cinemascope Narayanganj's box office manager Abdur Rabbi notified that their hall was houseful in the afternoon and matinee shows. He also shares that 80% of the tickets were sold in advance. The theatre has 35 seats.

Even though the audience reactions vary according to geographical locations, it is hard to judge a film only by its first-day figures. With a strong cast, skilled cinematography and smart marketing by Raihan Rafi and co., "Damal" might eventually run rampant at all cinema halls across the country and beyond.

"Damal" is based on the Liberation War of Bangladesh and the legendary Shadhin Bangla Football Team. Conceptualised by Faridur Reza Sagar, it stars Sariful Razz, Bidya Sinha Mim, Intekhab Dinar, Siam Ahmed, Shahnaz Sumi and Syed Nazmus Sakib, among others.

## Rock and roll pioneer Jerry Lee Lewis no more

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



American rock pioneer Jerry Lee Lewis who is famous for hits such as "Great Balls of Fire" and "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," has died at the age of 87. The singer passed away peacefully from age related complications at his residence in Desoto County, Mississippi.

The musician had been suffering from poor health condition since he suffered a stroke in 2019. His thumping rock 'n' roll moves and powerful voice, gave him the nickname "The Killer" on stage. He was one of the first performers to have his name inducted in the prestigious the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in 1986.

Lewis' immaculate grasp on piano was an essential part in shaping rock 'n' roll in the mid-1950s. Lewis was part of Sun Records talent who helped to train popular musicians including Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins and Roy Orbison.

## Jaya's 'Jhora Palok' to be screened at DIFF

After enthralling the audience in Kolkata, Jaya Ahsan starrer "Jhora Palok" will be screened in Bangladesh at Dhaka International Film Festival 2023 in January. The film will be premiered for the first time in Bangladesh through this festival.

Dhaka International Film Festival will start on January 14, and continue till January 22.

Directed by Sayantan Mukherjee, "Jhora Palok: The Epilogue", based on the life of eminent poet Jibanananda Das, was released on June 24 in Kolkata.

Regarding the film being selected for the festival, Jaya told Times of India, "We are overwhelmed. It is a matter of great prestige and honour for us."

The film was inspired by the autobiographical novel "Malyaban", written by Jibanananda Das. This book focuses on the author's relationship with his wife, Labanya Das.



PHOTO: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

