

EDITORIAL

New beginnings always seem daunting to me. The beginning of a school year, a new semester at university, or even opening up a new planner. So, naturally, at the start of a new year, I find myself anxious and on edge with no particular reason in mind. It might be the countless opportunities missed the previous year, the piles of tasks left for me to achieve and the general weight of a new year staring into my face, or all of it packed in a neatly wrapped box.

So, this year, I have decided to drop the happy from the wishes. Just, New Year. Maybe the addition of happy puts too much pressure into feeling excited and happy about the new year, and all it may or may not have to offer. While it may sound a little unhinged and completely unnecessary, I truly believe that starting the year with neutrality and treating it as yet another day could allow me to feel less overwhelmed by it and keep my own expectations at bay.

- Syeda Afrin Tarannum, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

MUSIC



Aurthohin's *Phoenix Er Diary-1* is a masterclass in composition and storytelling

AYAAN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

Very few Bangladeshi bands to date have lived to tell a tale as illustrious as Aurthohin's journey through thick and thin. Since their inception in the late '90s, the rock and metal heavy hitters have battled prolonged health complications, harsh criticism, member split-ups, and everything in between.

Despite everything that Mother Nature has thrown its way, the band haven't called it quits just yet.

Almost as a reaffirming nod to the fans who have stuck with them throughout the tides of time, Aurthohin has finally released its first studio album after six years, titled *Phoenix Er Diary-1*.

The fifty-minute-long album consisting of eight tracks is a thematic journey of sorts, beginning with "Amar E Gaan", which was originally released a month ago. It serves as the perfect opener to the album, with its sombre and earnest roots.

Every track from there onwards has a distinct flavour and atypical arrangement to them. From clean tones to heavy, distorted growling and vocaloid additions, the experimentation that went behind each creation is as clear as day.

The seventh single, "Nithor" stood out in particular as one of Aurthohin's strongest ballads yet. Guitarist Mahaan Fahim's riffs, coupled with Bassbaba's soothing lyrics, make for a therapeutic eight minutes.

My personal favourite track, however, has to be "Bidrohi", a song that is as intense and unapologetic as the name suggests. With a catchy hook, brash lyrics, and Bassbaba's pristine vocals, there's hardly anything not to love about this song. Furthermore, the final song from the album, "Phoenix 1" is a fitting conclusion to the rollercoaster of emotions, as it

boldly reiterates Aurthohin's comeback – one that is not to be taken lightly.

In retrospect, the entire album has an overarching theme of retribution and perseverance running rampant. As a result, every piece sounds like a part of a larger message from Bassbaba Sumon.

And that's part of why I love this album as much as I do. From start to finish, every song paints a vivid picture and tells a congruent story. The lyrics might creep in with a hint of despair, but they pick up soon after with a burst of hope and optimism, much like Aurthohin's journey until now.

It is clear that the album contains direct parallels with Bassbaba Sumon's constant battles with cancer. This also inspires the lion's share of these lyrics. From the uncertainty of never being able to perform again to selling out venues, Bassbaba continues to be an exemplary figure for thousands of youths around the country.

Even still, many listeners may complain about the album, claiming that it doesn't feel like the music Aurthohin would typically put out. What they must realise is that prior to the release, Bassbaba Sumon promised that the album would be an ode to *odbhuts* – their well-wishers and supporters – in wake of their artistic evolution. And without a doubt, *Phoenix Er Diary-1* achieves that and much more.

With how everything played out, it is as if the band finally came full circle with the album, leaving something for everyone to enjoy. As an avid fan, you can't really ask for anything more, can you?

Ayaan immerses himself in dinosaur comics and poorly-written manga. Recommend your least favourite reads at ayaan.shams@gmail.com

TITLE OF YOUR MIXTAPE



A

Me and My Broken Heart
Rixton

Bidrohi

Aurthohin

Judas

Lady Gaga

Starman

David Bowie

B

The Pretender
Foo Fighter

Should I Stay or Should I Go
The Clash

Shirt

SZA

Ekdin

Arnob

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