



**"I always believe in myself and my hard work. It is true that as a person of colour, I have to prove myself on every occasion."**



Afsara Alvee



Mehzeb Chowdhury



## Working behind the scenes in Hollywood



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In 2017, Mehzeb worked as a cinematographer for the feature film "Redemption", directed by Edward Collier. Thanks to his invention, the artist caught the attention of BAFTA, when he became the only cinematographer in the Northeast to be included in the 2019/20 Crew directory. Mehzeb has now been accepted into the (BAFTA) Connect programme, for his contribution to the British film industry. "I got into filmmaking while pursuing my PhD at Durham University. We have a strong film society established at the premises. We made a couple of short films that did quite well on the film festival circuit.

"We managed to get into prestigious film festivals like Sundance Collab and Sundance TV. Then, I applied to the BAFTA crew programme and got the opportunity to be mentored by Linus Sandgren, who was the cinematographer for 'La La Land' and 'First Man'," he said.

Mehzeb is currently writing the screenplay for his debut feature film, which is set against a dystopian and futuristic backdrop. He wants to cast an actor from South Asia as the main lead as there is a negligible representation of them in Hollywood.

"In the past, I wanted to be an actor. But when I got into this industry, I realised

that representation matters. I want younger people to watch films and think that they could be that person on the screen. I started an organisation called South Asian Film Television and Arts Collective (SAFTAC) with two of my fellow BAFTA crew members - Haresh Patel and Shawn Basheer."

SAFTAC now has over 1,000 members who work for representing the South Asian creatives' interests in the UK and US.

Then there is the story of Mazharul Islam Shuvo, who completed his Bachelor's degree in Electrical and

"As a digital compositor, I finalise all the visual effects by assembling the different elements (green backgrounds, 3D elements, high-resolution pictures, etc.) to achieve the final coherent plan needed to optimise the artistic quality of a project."

"So far, I have worked on 'A Million Little Things', 'Young Rock', and 'Let the Right One In'. As I work remotely from Bangladesh, it's easier for me to work as they have very efficient technologies that help me coordinate with them better."

During his time at Cystore Studio,

in Bangladesh focus on getting the work done quickly rather than focusing on the quality of the project," said Shuvo.

Shuvo thinks that Bangladesh's CG industry needs training in animation and visual effects for it to grow.

"There is no alternative to learning. In our media industry, it's the most common problem. After a certain time, they don't learn anything new and don't put much effort into their work. In our industry, we don't have a balance between art and technology. The

2015: NUMBER 1 SMARTPHONE BRAND

2016: THANKING 4.5

2017: ৬৬

2018: ১২.৫ কোটি

2019: আপনার ডালোচা আত আস্থায় বিশ্বের এগারো ঘর

2020: SYMPHONY আফেলের যুগ

2021: Largest MOBILE FACTORY IN BANGLADESH



Electronics Engineering from a private university in Bangladesh. Although he studied engineering, he was always passionate about animation and visual effects from a very young age. After completing his studies, he started to learn visual effects online because there are no institutions in Bangladesh that teach VFX and animation.

Later, he found a VFX training course offered by Cystore Studios in Bangladesh. He did not want to miss the opportunity to learn it. He also took a course on animation led by the same institution.

"After completing the courses, I came to learn that I have just started creating little footprints in this huge world of the CG industry. As the CG industry in Bangladesh is not so big and well-reputed, I started to apply for jobs in international studios through LinkedIn, but was rejected from every one of them," said Shuvo.

After a lot of rejections, he finally got the chance to work remotely as a digital compositor for Los Angeles-based visual effects company Ingenuity Studios.

he worked on the Bangladeshi animation film "Tomorrow," which won the award for "Best Animation Film" at the Cannes World Film Festival (August 2021).

When asked about the differences he felt between the Bangladeshi CG industry and Hollywood, he replied, "The differences are huge. Even if I had three years of experience in the industry, I would not have been able to secure a job in Hollywood with my skill set. I had to learn a lot," said Shuvo.

"The main difference, in my opinion, is that our CG industry is quite small compared to Hollywood, and with a limited budget. I also feel that the directors and filmmakers in our country have very little knowledge about this industry. So, they don't know how to use it properly," he added.

Just like Jisan, Shuvo also echoed the same opinion about the mentality of filmmakers and directors in the CG industry.

"We have the same technology as Hollywood. We use the same software. However, most directors

directors should look into that matter. Only then our CG industry can flourish," said Shuvo.

In our country, many young cinephiles want to work in Hollywood but don't know where to start. We asked these young professionals for some tips for the aspiring youth of our country who choose this road despite the obstacles.

They all agreed on the same notion - there is no substitute for learning, and also watching quality content. It's also important to remember that there is no shortcut to achieving success.

"I was a little girl from a small town, and my classmates used to laugh at me. But I never gave up on myself, that's how you win half of the battle. The biggest advice I could give is to believe in yourself, and never give up on yourself. Regardless of what your major is in school or what background you come from, as long as you think you can do it, nothing can stop you from achieving your goal," Afsara concluded on an optimistic note.