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# LIFE

Style

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## The Annual Art Issue

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THE BUSTLING THEATRE SCENARIO OF DHAKA

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED



# 5 simple art projects you can do at home

#HOBBIES

Are you looking for a fun and creative way to make some art without getting out of the house? Do you want to awaken your inner Picasso and keep boredom at bay? Well, you are in luck because these are 5 of the simplest art projects you can create from the comfort of your home. These projects are perfect for people who want to flex their creative muscles and are simple enough that you can get them done fairly quickly as well.

## Tie-dye shirts

Tie-dye shirts have been around for a while and making them at home is very satisfying and gives you a sense of fulfilment. All you need for this is a plain white top, preferably a T-shirt, rubber bands, fabric dye in your favourite colours, and a pair of gloves.

Scrunch and twist the shirt for your desired pattern and tie them with the bands; either drip your colours onto the shirt or dip the shirt in the colour. After a while, remove the rubber bands and let it dry. Voila! You now have a super awesome shirt that you created.

## Picture collage

This one's pretty self-explanatory. It might be what people call 'basic' but honestly seeing pictures of good memories or motivational quotes does brighten up one's mood.

All you need is some pictures, some glue,



and a place to set it all up. Alternatively, you can use wires and clips to hang them up too for a more temporary setup in case you want to change the pictures often.

## Origami

Origami is the Japanese art of paper folding, creating elaborate designs using a single piece of paper without cutting or using glue.

All you need for this are some paper, they can be plain white or in various colours. You can find tonnes of videos online on how to make animals, flowers, and even folding paper to make structures!

## Friendship bracelets

The classic friendship bracelet — we

have all seen them, and some of us were fortunate to get them, well now you can make them! All you need are some colourful strings and scissors.

Cut 6 or so strands and tie them together in a knot and continue tying in your desired pattern; end with a knot at the other end when the length is appropriate.

Repeat this for more rows if needed and there you go! Your very own friendship bracelet. You can even include beads or some miniature decor too.

## Abstract art

And last but certainly not the least, is creating your amazing abstract art. This one really is open-ended and allows you to experiment to your heart's content with different colours, patterns, and designs. All you need to start is some paint, a brush, and a canvas and you can let your imagination run wild and create lots of wonderful paintings.

By Abdul Warith Khan  
Photo: Collected

**Typhoon**  
Fabric Care

প্রথম ওয়াশেই কাপড়ের কঠিন থেকে  
কঠিনতম দাগ দূর করে।

টাইফুন... লাগে কম, তাই সশ্রয় বেশী।

**KOHINOOR**  
CHEMICAL

#EVENTS

# 5 art melas in Dhaka you can't miss out on

Dhaka is a city with a vibrant and dynamic art culture featuring many notable artists, exhibitions, and art spaces. All year round, many art melas celebrate the thriving art scene and we will list 5 of the best ones you simply can't afford to miss! Whether you are a seasoned art connoisseur or a newcomer to the world of art, these melas are definitely going to be a great way to explore.

## Dhaka Art Summit

One of the most hyped events on the Bangladeshi calendar is held at Shilpakala Academy around the first week of February and has been around since 2012. It is the go-to event for artists and enthusiasts alike. Initially, they only promoted local artists but as the event grew, so did the candidate



pool. Nowadays, it hosts many international artists and their work too. The event only takes place once every two years, so it's even more important that you don't miss it the next time!



## Berger Young Painters Art Competition

This is a bit of an oddball choice but it certainly has its merits. Berger organises an annual painting competition for young artists and the winners get some prize money. Does not sound too good right? Well, when you consider the fact that it is held in an open space, and you can go see hundreds of top-notch arts, meet some big names in the art ecosphere, and have a good time; it makes for a sweet deal. The main event is usually around the first few days of December and the venues are always changing so keep an eye out and make a day out of it!

## Zainul Uthab

Zainul Abedin, often regarded as the father of modern art, is synonymous with art in Dhaka. He has inspired scores of people to follow their artistic passions. On 29 December, the day of his birth, Zainul Uthab takes place at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. It features artworks by teachers and students of the Faculty of Fine Arts and other notable artists.

## Charukala Art Exhibition

If you're searching for a more relaxed and communal scene, then this choice is perfect for you. Every year, Shilpakala Academy and Charukala organise an annual art exhibition

featuring works from the students at Charukala. Students from all departments participate and present their work. The atmosphere is very friendly and inviting too. The event usually takes place during the first week of May and runs through most of June, so you still might have time to catch it while it's active this year.

## Pahela Baishakh Art Exhibition

The beginning of the Bengali calendar is always a huge thing not only in Dhaka but all around the country. Besides the Mangal Shobhajatra and Ramna Batamul cultural events, there's an art mela that Shilpakala Academy holds celebrating Pahela Baishakh with artworks inspired by the occasion. They feature both notable and upcoming artists and present their work in the exhibition. The



event takes place in the National Art Gallery from 14-18 April every year.

By Abdul Warith Khan  
Photo: Collected

# 5 art galleries you can visit in Dhaka

If you want to indulge yourself in the rich and vibrant art culture of Dhaka, look no further. Here are 5 of the hottest and most happening art places in town that are sure to please your creative side. From cutting-edge contemporary art to traditional masterpieces, these spaces boast a unique flavour that is sure to leave you captivated. So, join us in this enchanting journey through the heart of Dhaka's art culture.

## Gallery Chittrak

Gallery Chittrak, located in Dhanmondi, is a contemporary art gallery founded in 2000 by Md Muniruzzaman. The gallery features a wide range of art forms including paintings, sculptures, photography, and video art. It features notable artists from



Bangladesh, as well as abroad. It's known for its commitment to promoting art education and cultural exchange. They also have rotating themes to keep things fresh for visitors. If you like traditional and folk art, this is the place to go.



## Edge Gallery

Edge Gallery is an art gallery located in Gulshan. It was founded recently in 2016 and showcases a wide range of contemporary art, including paintings, photos, and modern sculptures. They mainly focus on promoting international art forms and bringing them to Bangladesh to introduce new and innovative artistic values here. They have featured a lot of foreign and local artists and their gallery spaces are very sleek and minimal to highlight the amazing art pieces.

## Gallery Cosmos

Gallery Cosmos is a contemporary art

space with two locations in Mohakhali and Siddheswari. They have been active since 2011 and have featured a wide range of art forms since. They always feature new and upcoming artists as well as showcase notable ones. But what sets them apart is their focus on promoting social and environmental issues which they express through art. They always have workshops and exhibitions happening all year round, so it's never a boring day at Gallery Cosmos!

## Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts

This majestic art space was launched in 2000 in Dhanmondi and is the premier art gallery in Bangladesh. As such, it is a must-

visit for art enthusiasts. The place exudes tranquillity and boasts art pieces from local and international artists. The art pieces are varying in size and some of them take up entire sections! The combination of natural lighting and an enormous space really brings you to a whole other world of artistic amazement.

## Studio 6/6

One of the most talked-about art community spaces, Studio 6/6 is located in Mohammadpur and founded in 2015 by the lovely couple Najib Tareque and Farhana Afroz Bappy. It's a family-run studio and also a sort of artist's hub where they can freely express their creativity and push the boundaries of contemporary art. You are not only going to see some



amazing artwork but also be a part of the community which really gives a homey vibe.

By Abdul Warith Khan  
Photo: Collected

# TALE OF BLUE RIVER

## A love letter to Bangladesh's rivers

Afsana Ferdousi, the Bangladeshi fashion designer renowned for incorporating sustainability while fusing modernity and tradition in her designs, has come forward with her new collection. Titled "Tale of Blue River," it is an ode to the riverine majesty of Bangladesh and a wake-up call for our society to work towards preserving and protecting these vital natural resources. Star Lifestyle recently spoke with her to discuss her creativity, and the thought process behind her designs and her latest collection.

### Tale of Blue River

The collection features an array of saris, jumpsuits, jackets, midi dresses for women and shirts, shorts, and trousers for men. All the garments were created using silk, endi silk, handloom cotton, and linen.

One of the standout features of the collection is the use of sustainable, eco-friendly, and natural indigo dye to impart the various shades of blue. These shades reflect the hues of the river as it meets the sky at the horizon.

The pieces have been adorned with motifs of fishes, birds, boats, water lilies, flowing water, and the riverbed. These motifs are brought to life with the pride of our local heritage, and a signature of Afsana's design aesthetic, the Nakshi Kantha stitch. Almost 90 per cent of the embroidery of these motifs comprises Nakshi Kantha stitch done by hand, while the remaining 10 per cent of the stitches consist of satin stitch, chain stitch, and running stitch.

### Inspiration behind the collection

Afsana wanted to pay homage to the rivers she grew up next to. To bring her inspiration to life, she researched the history and cultural significance of rivers. As part of her design process, after researching the concept, she then went on to sketch looks and create mood boards for the collection. She ensured that her team brought in their perspectives and expertise in the process. Together, they chose materials and experimented with various techniques to ensure that the resulting collection is wearable, comfortable, and sustainable, and maintains a unique aesthetic and message throughout.

"I worked with my team to translate my ideas into designs that capture the movement, texture, and colours of the river. I drew upon the imagery of flowing water, riverbeds, and aquatic life, and translated these into intricate Nakshi Katha stitches," said Afsana.

### Message of the collection

Afsana has once again shown that fashion is an art and a form of storytelling. This collection is her homage to the 700 rivers of our motherland, our heritage, history, and culture. Each piece of the collection is a story in motion, a story of aquatic life and its connection to humanity and our Bengali identity.

She wanted to instil and inspire a deep respect and appreciation

for the artistry and skills of our local craftsmen and artisans. The indigo dye and the Nakshi Kantha embroidery serve as a testament to the rich diversity and beauty of the heritage of Bangladeshi textiles. Each of the Nakshi Kantha stitches is a tribute to the beauty and vitality of our rivers. Moreover, the natural indigo dye also serves to remind us of the importance of environmentally conscious and eco-friendly practices in industry known for its pollution and heavy waste.

"We hope that by wearing these pieces, people will be reminded of the importance of preserving Bangladesh's rivers and natural resources," stated Afsana.

The "Tale of Blue River" collection strives to forge a connection between local consumers and their surrounding natural environment, with pride, respect, and admiration.

**By Maliha Arosha Hasan**

**Photo: Salek Bin Taher**

**Models: Lucky, Elias,**

**Alexandra**

**Wardrobe: Afsana Ferdousi**



#FASHION & BEAUTY

# Fashion designer Chandana Dewan

## THE PATCHWORK ANGEL

Chandana Dewan's fashion-forward ideas have been garnering much attention for quite some time. The designer is known to work with bold and vibrant colours as well as block motifs, but it is her love affair with patchwork that really sets her work apart from everyone else.

"I took a course on jewellery design in California and started dabbling with different mediums like paper and beads. My love for accessorising slowly started to spread across mediums and I started designing saris with patches decorated with embroidery", explained Chandana.

She slowly started to expand her horizons and range of products, designing shalwar suits, kurtis, tops, shawls, bags and jewellery, men's kurta, and even children's outfits. Her creations gained a lot of traction



and quickly became a go-to amongst fashionistas.

Chandana mostly works with bright colours and her work draws inspiration from nature and the changing seasons.

"My pieces are an embodiment of the season they correspond to. I also draw a lot of inspiration from deshi flowers like krishnachura, jaba, nayantara, rajanigandha, and even seasonal fruits for the motifs that go into my collection," she elaborated. However, her intricate patchworks have become her trademark over the years. The idea of patchwork actually came when she realised that a lot of fabric would be left over after making any outfit.

"A lot of good leftover fabric goes to waste because there is not enough to be utilised in making another outfit. However, I realised that these fabrics, when used as patches, can make any outfit even more eye-catching. I started experimenting with patchwork and soon, it became my

signature style," she added.

Another defining element of Chandana's creations is the use of sustainable fabric. "Light, comfortable, and easy to wear while being extremely stylish. Sustainable fabrics give the wearer a look that is timeless and distinct, and definitely a class apart. The climate of Bangladesh is very hot and humid. Keeping this in mind, we always try to use natural breathable fabrics with the emphasis being comfort," she further stated.

Chandana is currently working on new designs that will continue to implement her signature and trademark patches. She has also added embroidery, block print, and screen print to bring variations and break away from her usual style and keep things fresh. She will continue to experiment with the fabric of the patchwork and embellish her patches with beadwork, block print, and screen print and will continue to use bold vibrant palettes.

Chandana also had heaps of praise for

the current fashion scene where women, regardless of age, ethnicity, or social position are trying to embrace fashion in their own way.

"Fashion now has become more affordable for the masses. Women wear colours based on seasonal variations and adopt the theme of the different festivities. They are very into the fusion Indo-Western look which is very popular now. This is a great time to be a fashion designer as we have the freedom to experiment with colours and trends and find designs that sit well among our clientele," she added in her concluding notes.

**By Irfan Aziz**  
**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**  
**Model: Linda**  
**Styling: Isha Yeasmin**  
**MUA: Jewel**  
**Location: InterContinental Dhaka**

### PAMPER YOUR MOTHER ON **MOTHER'S DAY** WITH BLAZE O' SKIN

Mothers, no words can fully express what they mean to us, except perhaps to say that for many, the word "home" is synonymous with "mother." We can only hope to give back a tiny fraction of the devotion they have given us, although we know they'd never ask for it. So go ahead and pamper your mother for a change on Mother's Day with these Blaze O' Skin products.

#### NO COMPROMISE

A mother's devotion to her child's well-being and happiness always comes with a no-compromise policy. A gift of the face mask, "No Compromise," will undoubtedly make her appreciate your consideration of her unwavering affection for you, and your willingness to return it.

#### COME CLOSER

A gift of the body crystal, "Come Closer," is a perfect choice to celebrate the close bond a mother shares with her children. It will undoubtedly lead you both on a trip down memory lane full of warm nostalgia, filled with your mother telling you about your embarrassing childhood stories.

#### 11TH HOUR!

Remember all the sleepless nights of your childhood? Your mother sure does! The memories of those times are visible in the creases on her face. Acknowledge her devotion with a gift of the sleeping mask, "11th Hour!" which will take her back to her

youthful days. Whichever you pick, your mother is sure to love it; at the end of the day, her children's love is all she wants. So go on ahead, celebrate your mother, and let her know just how special

she is to you.  
**Happy Mother's Day!**

GIVE YOUR MOTHER THE GIFT OF  
**RELAXATION**

**HAPPY  
 MOTHER'S DAY**

**BS**  
**BLAZE O' SKIN**  
 NEW YORK





# KANAK CHANPA CHAKMA Portrait of an artist

Given the heights of the art world she has reached, it is obvious that her name follows a long list of prestigious accolades and exhibitions in Bangladesh and abroad. Let us, then, not even go there. But if we mention just one — the very fact that Kanak Chanpa Chakma is an Ekushey Padak recipient this year, one of the highest civilian honours of the country, speaks volumes about her work. Hence, we met up with her recently to explore her work and life at large — to capture the portrait of the artist herself.



As soon as you enter her home and studio, you will immediately feel that this is indeed the space of an artist, particularly that of Kanak Chanpa Chakma. A canvas depicting a woman of an indigenous community in Bangladesh — her signature theme — stares back at you. Stacks of paintings lie here and there. Buddha statues adorn her house. Blobs of paint have made their mark on the floor. Several cats lazily sit around the cosy home.

Amidst all that, an amicable Kanak Chanpa Chakma welcomes you. Over a birthday cake (it was her birthday the day before), we began.

“When I close my eyes, my mind takes me back to the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where I was born and brought up. As I stand in front of the canvas, I feel an urge to work on that part of my life,” she replied as to why she ardently portrays indigenous people in her paintings.

Hailing from Rangamati, she saw the beauty, joys, and sorrows of the people in the region, and as an artist, she passionately and boldly stuck to her roots.

The result of which, I reckon, was the development of her own style, surrounding a rather unique theme.

It is not that other artists before her never attempted to depict the culture and lifestyle of various indigenous societies in Bangladesh, but I would opine that what makes her work special is the scale, depth, and volume she has offered to the audience. In all beauty, she has presented the lives of indigenous peoples to the whole of Bangladesh and beyond the country's borders as well.

Females from indigenous communities frequently come to life on her canvas. “I see women as Durga,” she said. “I portray them as a symbol of strength. I do not want to see them as neglected or weak. They are often the central characters of my paintings.

Through my work, I want to tell their stories, contributions, and their dreams and feelings.”

Whilst doing that, she has also put forth a wide range of aspects — sights of the beautiful hill tracts, fashion, and so on.

To illustrate, a woman is seen in her traditional garb. Sometimes, she is carrying a basket on her back. She may fancy a flower tucked in her hair. Jewellery of various shapes and forms adorn her further — bangles, necklaces, earrings, etc. — all with a touch of the elegance and uniqueness of her culture.

“Some people may say that this is for times of festivities. But even in their daily lives, women like to wear ornaments and traditional dresses,” she explains. “Of course, during festivals and celebrations, they can take things further, but I have seen my grandmothers donning rather large nose pins regularly and when going about their regular work and chores.”

And flowers too. “Let’s say a woman is going to work, and she comes across some beautiful flowers. She’ll simply pluck one off and put it in her hair. It is a very common sight,” the artist described.

She feels that there are numerous stories and a huge wealth of information to be presented about the indigenous communities of our country, lamenting that a lifetime is not enough to portray all of that.

“There is so much diversity in

Bangladesh! Diversity enriches a country. They say that a garden does not look very nice with just one kind of flower. A garden is richer when there are many different kinds of flowers, instead of just one type,” she said.

And she added, remembering her deceased husband (notable filmmaker Khalid Mahmood Mithu), that he was a huge support in her life and career, and that he inspired her to go very deep

play of colours! Such illumination! One cannot express in words the beauty of that scene. It is only possible to show it visually.”

On a separate note, as an artist, she is a morning person. That is when she prefers to work, contrary to the popular belief that creative people usually work late nights. She is an artist, not detached or isolated from reality at all, hence breaking yet another baseless cliché for you!

In fact, she finds herself busy with many endeavours. For example, she is the founding president of Ethnic Art Foundation Bangladesh, an organisation that provides support and platform to indigenous artists of various fields.

Meanwhile, from acid survivors to the third gender population to autistic children to rescue animals, she is involved in tackling a diverse range of issues that our society faces.

And surrounding all these is of course her extraordinary career as an artist,

earning her numerous awards, including the recent Ekushey Padak.

Sharing her thoughts on it, Kanak Chanpa Chakma said, “My country has officially given me this recognition. It is a matter of huge joy. As a painter belonging to an indigenous community receiving this award, this shall be a source of inspiration for the next generations. I feel that my responsibility has increased. There is a long way to go and there is so much more to do!”



into the hill tracts to further explore the cultures of the region.

On the other hand, the theme of Buddhism also sometimes appears in Kanak Chanpa Chakma's artworks. For her, it is not religion per se.

“With this line of paintings, I essentially want to represent peace,” she elaborated. “As a child, I used to see groups of monks come out and collect food in very early mornings. The sun is just rising. The monks are clothed in orange garbs. A splendid

By M H Haider  
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed



#ARTS

# ACTIVISM THROUGH ART

Throughout the ages, art has always been a powerful form of expression, capable of provoking thought and bringing change. It has always been a powerful tool for activism and as such, artists have always used their creativity and imagination to shed light on many social, economic, and environmental issues around us. Today, we will be talking about one such individual who has dedicated his life to such thoughtful and empowering artworks, using his talent to drive social change.

Abdullah Al Morshed or Morshed Mishu as he's commonly known, is a Bangladeshi cartoonist, illustrator, cover artist, and graffiti artist. He has been working as a cartoonist professionally since 2012 and is the current Assistant Editor of the monthly satire magazine, Unmad. He has garnered worldwide attention with his prolific artwork addressing social, political, and environmental issues.

When asked about how art can promote social change, he said that art is merely a tool that helps deliver the idea of change to the masses. Change takes time and there are things in history that were right then but are not right anymore. So, to motivate people to bring about this change, art helps to make people believe in how the changes can help them.



He referred to his famous work in "The Global Happiness Challenge" where he envisioned a world without war and catastrophe. "The idea for The Global Happiness Challenge was simple" Morshed stated, adding, "Instead of all the suffering and death and sadness, what would those scenarios look like if war didn't happen, this vision is what I wanted to show people."

He also brought up his drawing of the sensational Bangladesh women's football team when they returned home after winning the SAFF Women's Championship. He depicted them on a roofless bus, smiling and waving to the crowd, much like the rituals you see abroad. "I can't give them a literal bus, but I can still show the people of Bangladesh what it could look like through my drawing," said Morshed.

Morshed Mishu always takes the opportunity to illustrate his imagination through art on most social issues. Be it political or environmental, anything that aligns with his philosophy, he is at arms to represent the pressing matter.

"Any issue that I personally feel connected to that is good for me, my family, and especially my country that I'm very passionate for, I draw to evoke some thoughts and inspire my fellow countrymen," elaborated Morshed.

When it comes to his thought process on creating artwork, he always keeps it simple. "I ask myself five basic questions; what, where, how, why, and when." This seemingly small step helps him uncover a lot more answers about the issue or cause than expected. He says since he is just a common person, he tries to think from that perspective, adding to his own personal feelings towards the subject and approaches his work accordingly.





#FASHION & BEAUTY

# BLOOD SWEAT AND TEARS

## Sami Alam's ode to fashion's unsung heroes

The fashion world is viewed as exclusively luxurious and glamorous by the masses. But there's more than meets the eye. The US \$1.53 trillion industry has a larger share of workers whose working and living conditions are far from the onscreen glamour.

Bangladesh is the second largest garment exporter in the world. Our RMG workers have served global fashion needs at the cost of little to no benefits in their lives. They are regularly exploited with poor salaries that do not match the rising cost and inflation in the economy, the lack of employee benefits, the dearth of security, and many more.

Sami Alam, an aspiring fashion designer, decided to use his penchant for fashion to tell the story of these workers and highlight their unacknowledged labour. He designed the thought-provoking collection "Blood, Sweat and Tears" for his Master's graduation at International Fashion Academy (IFA) in Paris, France.

### Who is Sami Alam?

Sami Alam, the fashion designer, started his career in 2016 at Aarong — the biggest and most influential fashion house in Bangladesh. He worked as a designer for the export department of Aarong before designing for Aarong's upscale and high-end sub-brand HERSTORY starting in 2017.

### Becoming a fashion designer

"From my childhood, I really loved to draw and paint, but it was never explored academically and remained more of a hobby," said Sami. While pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) at United International University (UIU), he started learning French at Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. Out of curiosity, he participated in the creative blog writing and design competition "Allons en France (Let's Go to France)".

After winning the competition in 2010 and going on a cultural exposure trip to France, Alam came back home and with the blessings of his family, left UIU and pursued a Bachelor of Fashion Design Technology



at Shanto Mariam University, graduating in 2015.

Afterwards, in 2022, he went on to receive a Master's in Contemporary Fashion Design from International Fashion Academy (IFA) in Paris. He completed a semester on exchange at Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici in Italy, studying courses on Fashion Styling, Fashion Cross Culture and Fashion Business.

His academic zeal took him to one of the most prestigious fashion schools in the world, Central Saint Martins, which boasts alumni such as Alexander McQueen and John Galliano. Sami completed two short courses on Fashion Creative Direction and Fashion Film at this esteemed institution.

### "Blood, Sweat and Tears"

As part of his Master's programme, Sami had to design a graduation collection. He wanted to reflect on the history of garment manufacturing in our country. "We serve as a manufacturer of these clothes which is something to be proud of. Looking back at the history, I found this process hasn't been fair to us. People got injured, suffered, and died. We paid for fashion with blood, sweat, and tears," noted Sami.

Hence, his collection perpetuated the notion of a safe and fair working environment through sustainability, to all the workers involved in the global fashion supply chain, both at home and abroad.

In his words, "It is not a disregard towards the improvements that have taken place in the past few years, but rather a push towards better working conditions and a reminder that we still have a long way to go."

It is an exploration of the concept of showing the fashion industry through the lens of an RMG worker. As stated by Sami, "No human life should be cheaper than clothes. No one in the world should suffer, be injured, or die for fashion."

Sami brought his message to life and motion by creating three acts within the collection. The acts, Confrontation, Tragedy, and Aftermath work in harmony to create a

The collection has 17 looks featuring an array of dresses; some hooded, along with skirts, tops, jackets, shirts, crop tops, shorts, high-waisted bottoms, and a sari. The clothes have been emblazoned with slogans that resonate, such as "Fashion kills," "Inhumane working environment," "Our lives are cheaper than clothes," and many more.

The colour scheme heavily features red, synonymous with the blood of the garment workers lost to tragedies. Various shades of denim bind the collection with cameo appearances of white and black.

The collection was shown on the runway at Le Salon des Miroirs in Paris.

Keeping sustainability at the forefront, the entire collection has been constructed using upcycled materials. Sami made excellent use of recycled saris, denim pants, end of roll fabrics from Aarong, alongside factory waste trims and accessories.

Regarding the techniques used, Sami said, "I explored many experimental techniques to create the design language I wanted, including contemporising traditional Bangladeshi kantha stitch to create the blood vein texture, burning denim and compiling them together with single taaga stitches, typography using different textiles, using twill-tapes to create a fabric, utilising waste trims and accessories to create a picture on the garment and many more."

### Looking forward to the future

When asked about the future, Sami expressed his desire to keep working for Aarong. "I consider my schooling of Bangladeshi heritage and culture rooted here (Aarong) and it guided me to be the designer I always wanted to be," stated Sami. He also plans to work in fashion education in Bangladesh. His ultimate dream is to bring all the stakeholders of the industry in Bangladesh to unified excellence on the world map by sharing education and knowledge.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan  
Photo: Sami Alam



flow of the story. Confrontation evokes the acuity of the factory workers. The opening look starts with the slogan on the outfit 'We make your clothes.'

The second act, Tragedy, recalls the dreadful memories of the Tazreen Fashion fire in 2012 and the Rana Plaza collapse of 2013. The clothes portrayed the post-catastrophic visuals as a symbolic interpretation of the grim reality and the true cost of the clothes we wear. The final act, Aftermath, concludes the collection with the message 'No more death for fashion.'



# Elevate Your Platter with **BENGAL MEAT COLD CUTS**



**C**old cuts, also known as luncheon meat or deli meat, are pre-cooked or cured meat. They are usually sliced and served hot or cold. It is a very common type of processed meat, consumed all over western countries.

**Different varieties of cold cuts are available:** Beef, chicken, turkey, fish, etc. They can be pre-sliced or sliced according to the consumer's preference. Cold cuts are consumed as sandwich fillings, inside deli wraps, sometimes as pizza toppings, or served on a cold cut platter with cheese and fruits. Carefully and thinly sliced cold cuts are the best to consume, as they bring out the best flavours embedded inside.

If we look at the history of cold cuts, it was a means of meat preservation. People used to cure or smoke meat to make it last longer. The Romans were among the first to create particular kinds of cold cuts, including prosciutto, a dry-cured ham that is still popular today. The Italians invented salami and pepperoni, which quickly became popular in other parts of the world.

Cold cuts are popular; however, there are some unfavourable opinions about them. The idea that cold cuts are prepared from inferior meats is one of the most widespread misconceptions about them. This is not applicable to quality meat providers like **Bengal Meat**, where these cold cuts are created from premium boneless meat. The idea that cold cuts are not a healthy option is another wrong concept.

**Bengal Meat Cold Cuts** can be a rich source of lean protein and nutrients when consumed in moderation as part of a balanced diet.



**F**urthermore, people think that cold cuts are bland and cold, often lacking in taste and flavour. **But Bengal Meat has a wide array of cold cuts with different flavour profiles that cater to different cuisines and different taste buds.**

Cold cuts come in a wide variety, ranging from classic deli-style meat to speciality selections. Cold cuts, including smoked roast beef, chicken salami, beef bacon, chicken pepperoni, smoked fish fillet, and many others, are among the most popular varieties of **Bengal Meat Cold Cuts**.

They are a good source of lean protein, which is important for building and repairing muscles. Cold cuts are also lower in fat compared to other meats. Bengal Meat Cold Cuts contain high-quality ingredients and are crafted with natural spices without artificial preservatives or flavours.

The highest quality cold cuts in Bangladesh are available when you shop at **bengalmeat.com**.



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#ARTS

## How to appreciate Bangladeshi arts

Art has the power to move us, inspire us, and give us a new perspective on things we normally would not have. In Bangladesh, there are loads to look out for when it comes to art. It's been around us for centuries. If you want to know more, here are some tips on how you can appreciate the Bangladeshi art culture.

### Visit art museums

This might seem like an obvious choice but it's actually a great way, especially for beginners to experience a variety of art styles in one place. You can learn a lot about the history, the mediums of art and the techniques of different artists. Places

like the **National Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Sangrahashala**, to name a few, are great places to take inspiration from.

### Attend art festivals and exhibitions

Bangladesh always had and still has a vibrant and rich art culture. That's why there are a lot of excellent art exhibitions happening almost all year round. Shilpakala Academy and Charukala are exhibition hotspots as they are always celebrating some form of art.

### Supporting local artists

There are so many talented young artisans who are coming up with the most unique

and mesmerising artwork. You can support them by promoting their work on social media, visiting their studios and exhibitions and if you are really drawn to a specific artist or artists, purchasing their work enables them to work on more projects.

### Read about art history

Another great way of being appreciative of Bangladeshi art is by reading up on it. This can give you a broader perspective on things when you see how art has evolved over the ages and is really a wonderful and inspirational journey.

By Abdul Warith Khan

Photo: Collected

## HOROSCOPE



**ARIES**  
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Don't overreact if your partner behaves badly. Check into new hobbies. You can do well in group endeavours. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**TAURUS**  
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Your charm will entice new love interests. Don't talk about your partner with your friend. Don't make unrealistic promises. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**GEMINI**  
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Don't pick fights with your boss. Don't spend more than you earn. Deal with the needs of children. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**CANCER**  
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Don't let personal problems interfere with work. Avoid jumping to conclusions. Secret affairs will backfire on you. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**LEO**  
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Join groups if you wish to expand your circle. Don't overexert yourself. Catch up on correspondence. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**VIRGO**  
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Seek out courses that will enlighten you. Don't lose your temper if anyone criticizes you. Be creative in your efforts. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



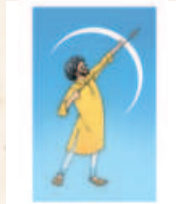
**LIBRA**  
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Focus your energy towards your goals. Don't let your emotions interfere with work. Stress can cause minor health ailments. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**SCORPIO**  
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Overindulgence could result in health problems. Don't pry in every conversation. Avoid confiding to anyone who gossips. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**SAGITTARIUS**  
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Jealous co-workers may sabotage your effort. Don't do anything you are not happy with. Mend any disputes at home. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



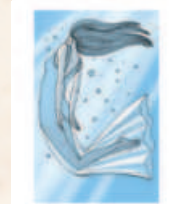
**CAPRICORN**  
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Consider starting a new business. Don't spend on anything unnecessary. You could end up fighting with your partner this week. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**AQUARIUS**  
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Plan physical activities to burn off excess energy. Only do the things you have time for. Luxury items will be costly. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



**PISCES**  
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Your work dynamic will go through changes. Back off if you wish to keep the relationship intact. Take care of any pressing health problems. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

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ঐতিহ্যের আর এক তাম্র আধুনিকতা  
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য ঘাটেই

স্যান্ডালিনা  
সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...



KOHINOOR CHEMICAL



#ARTS

# Our theatre scene and its present challenges

Theatre has a rich history in Bangladesh. Like many other art forms, it combines social commentary and dialogue with skilful acting and narratives to reach audiences. With the advent of various entertainment platforms and given Bangladesh's limited approach to performative arts, theatre has progressed, but still has a long way to go to overcome multiple obstacles standing in its way.

Mohsina Akhter has been involved in the theatre scene since 2005 when she enrolled in Dhaka University's drama department. Currently, she works as a theatre director, actor, designer, and lecturer at Tagore University of Creative Arts (TUCA) and as adjunct faculty at the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Dhaka.

"Intellectual and physical analysis portrayed in theatre teaches us to understand life. Character analysis and development allow us to get to know ourselves through the journey the characters undertake in every act," says Mohsina Akhter.

She further adds, "Unfortunately, until now, there is limited opportunity to choose theatre as a profession in Bangladesh. Everyone involved in theatre has to do something else to survive and this is an obstacle in its development."

Theatre is very distinct from television and other forms of media because there is no intermediary between the actors and the audience. There is no screen or middleman conveying the story to its audience allowing the viewers to relate with the plot, characters and setting directly and interpret the story. The ability of theatre to illustrate commonplace struggles, chores, and emotions to the audience is its most compelling feature and is one best resonated through audience interaction and reaction.

While there are many challenges within the business, the audience sheds hope. In Mohsina's opinion, "The new generation is eager to see theatre differently." To her, this is one of the more positive things in the scene currently which assures her that a solution to the existing challenges will emerge.

She further elaborates, "While this generation is addicted to social media and their attention span is very short, I do not think it should affect theatre. Watching theatre is a practice and there are many countries where this practice is prevalent."

One of the obstacles standing in the

way of theatre expansion is the availability of halls. Mohsina states, "Currently, Bangladesh's theatre is in a very critical condition. We don't have enough stages or money. Teams are trying to make plays with their own pocket money. Ticket prices have to be kept very low; so, it does not compensate for the production expenses. Furthermore, there is also a lack of professional skills."

While Mohsina's view on theatre as a full-time career reflects a specific group of people trying to pave their path, theatre has gradually gained more mainstream attention, with more people actively looking to theatre as a full-time career and audiences being more enthused to watch these performances.

In 2017, Mahjabeen Chowdhury and M Arifur Rahman founded Open Space Theatre, based on their combined experience of two decades in the theatre field. Since then, they have staged more than 74 performances in front of 20,000 plus spectators, created multiple productions, and conducted numerous acting workshops to develop new actors to keep the theatre sector booming as a profession and to enable others to build a career in this field.

Mahjabeen says, "Open Space Theatre creates performances which are entertaining, organic and vivid to help the audience take that essential break and expand their overall perspective on life aspects."

Since Open Space Theatre began working there have been more people, more performances, more occasions, and more conversations regarding theatre.

"Open Space Theatre has created an entire generation of audiences who have high standards regarding theatre. Other theatre practitioners who used to claim earlier that theatre audiences consist of only four to five thousand people have been proven wrong. Audiences have now become accustomed to purchasing our tickets even a month ahead of shows," Mahjabeen explains. "Before we came into the picture, they were comfortable with

empty halls and blaming the audience for not appreciating theatre. Now, at least they are attempting to figure out ways to survive and make efforts to be relevant."

"The abilities required to create a theatre group, provide leadership, and establish the team's financial stability require years of practice. It is a profession for those with unwavering passion and exceptional ability. This is not a place where everyone will succeed," Mahjabeen elaborates, while talking about how far Open Space Theatre established itself as the first and only professional theatre troupe in Dhaka.

Given the challenges and the effort required to make theatre one's singular career, Open Space has created a platform in which individuals can invest their undivided time and energy, passion and interest, and hone the artform. Due to this effort, over the years, the audience has now become attracted to theatre performances and find relevance through their mesmerising acting and storytelling.

Mahjabeen goes further to advise and encourage those who are interested in theatre, to first invest their time in learning the craft.

Mahjabeen goes on to give a more argumentative perspective when talking about theatre halls, saying, "Theatre Hall rents are heavily subsidised by our government, but the hall allocation process is somewhat biased and not based on criteria such as production quality or audience demand."

Despite having the immense support of audiences and a group of people dedicated to production, Mahjabeen goes on to point out that there is still a lack of substantial contribution from the journalists or media in diligently promoting theatre.

A career in theatre boils down to one's passion and dedication to the art. "Theatre is becoming more relevant day by day. Its reach is growing and its importance is felt by those who experience it. Whatever the future brings, I am hopeful that theatre will keep our lives interesting," says Mahjabeen optimistically.

Overall, there are challenges which exist in the theatre field. However, with dedication, passion and hard work, it is possible to build on this artform and mould it into a career with fruitful outcomes for everyone involved.

**By Puja Sarkar**  
**Photo: Open Space Theatre**

