

## #FASHION &amp; BEAUTY

It may be synonymous with glitz and glamour for most, but fashion is only superficially about glam and sparkle. It is a mode of art, a form of communication through which meaningful messages can be communicated to the masses about pertinent topics that matter.



## ATMA BALA 0.01 BY FAIZA AHMED: A celebration of womanhood through fashion

With such a cause in mind, on 13 October, 2023, at Dhaka Gallery, Faiza Ahmed hosted Atma Bala 0.01 – a night of extraordinary affairs that goes beyond fashion and sheds light on contemporary topics about womanhood. Each design displayed not only made a fashion statement but also depicted the struggles women go through every day.

While inaugurating the event, Rubaba Dowla, Country Managing Director at Oracle Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan mentioned, “Every artist’s values are deeply embedded into their art. But in case of Faiza, she is not only a fashion designer but a fashion activist. The collection we see here today, and in all of Faiza’s creations, has a deeper meaning to what appears as mere designs. Every stroke, every splash of colour means something and represents our culture and history”.

The event had a very calming aura, with the lighting and mood set to warm and cosy. A soft, relaxing hum playing in the background, taking the audience into a meditative journey and washing them with serenity. As minimalistic as the event was, portraying life in its simplest form, the spread of food served from Shanchayita was no different, consisting of sweet and savoury vegan delights.

Atma Bala 0.01 featured the first volume of what is to become a series of impactful evenings featuring designer ensembles. Starting with the winter collection of Manas, the first batch of designs displayed in the event will go through some altering to make them suitable for everyday wear. Moreover, all pieces displayed were made available for auction, 60 per cent of the proceeds from which will be dedicated to support an old home.

This unsponsored event by Faiza Ahmed was also a tribute to her father who has been her anchor and strength. As the name “Atma Bala” suggests, it is all about soul

strength paralleling between womanhood and nature; a reminder that human experiences are not shackles but stepping stones into our individual and collective strength.

“Atma Bala is a culmination of my thoughts, my vision, and my tribute to the strength within each of us. Tonight, my collection is an embodiment of celebrating womanhood in its most intimate aspects, and the strength found in embracing life’s challenges, not avoiding, or glamorising them. Every piece showcased tonight is a labour of love and a visual representation of

I am familiar with Faiza’s work and in my accord, the minimalism encapsulated within is truly what makes her work stand out.”

Fakir Deborah Zannat also shared her views, “Fashion is beyond just covering the body. It’s about feeling the fabric on our skin - the roughness of khadi, the softness of mulmul, and how it plays with warm, cold, light, and dark. I think embodying that beauty through those sensations is integral to being humans”.

Atma Bala was not just a fashion exhibition, but a representation of the



my thoughts,” shared Faiza.

The collection delved into unspoken aspects of pregnancy, motherhood, menstruation cycles, divorce, and much more. The ten designs played with a colour palette including black, white, red, beige and gold.

The event was also graced by architect Mustapha Khalid Palash, Founder of Dhaka Gallery and Chairman of Delvistaa Foundation. He opined, “Atma Bala is not just a fashion exhibition, but the mystic environment here today is an indication towards a greater vision surpassing fashion.

essence of womanhood in its ability to break free from societal stigmas. In a world filled with peer pressure and suffocation, it is also a declaration and refusal to be confined by society’s expectations, shedding light on the strength and resilience it takes to navigate through difficult times of life.

**By Fariha Amber**  
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**Live voice: Rashid Khan & Tanvir Shwajib**  
**Choreography: Rima Naz**

