

ART EXHIBITION

# ‘Satoborsher Dhaka’

## A tribute to the evolution of OUR FAVOURITE CITY

AISHWARYA RAIHAN

Artist Al-Akhir Sarker's solo art exhibition *Satoborsher Dhaka* — a visual journal of our beloved Dhaka city and its transformation over the past few centuries — is underway at Bhumi Art Gallery in association with Shilpangan. Inaugurated last Friday, the ceremony was attended by the trustee of the Liberation War Museum and writer Mofidul Haque as the chief guest, and prominent architect Mustapha Khalid Palash as the special guest. The exhibition is dedicated to Foyez Ahmed, a Bikrampur-born legendary journalist, who grew up in Dhaka. Ahmed held onto the memoir of the city and its changes while becoming a pioneer of art galleries in Dhaka himself.

Al-Akhir Sarker, on the other hand,



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PHOTOS: RATUL CHOWDHURY

is a modern-day impressionist visual artist, who graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. After taking part in various group exhibitions at home and abroad, and one prior solo exhibition in Dhaka, he decided to illustrate the city in remarkable ways. Mofidul Haque in his speech on Friday, mentioned that Sarker despite not being born in Dhaka, has looked at and painted the city with a true artist's soul — that in itself is the beauty of the capital, it embraces everyone. Mustapha Khalid Palash praised Sarker's artwork by explaining, "They possess graphical qualities that stand out in a crowd and are easily recognisable as his art."

The urban history of Dhaka dates back

to the seventh century CE. It has seen Hindu and Muslim rulers alike. It was made the capital of Bengal in the 17th century by the Mughals. Later, it was invaded by the British. Dhaka has maintained its glory for centuries with its nature, landscapes, and architecture. Moreover, West Asian, and European addition to our city added to its architecture. The artist explained that Dhaka city has versatile architecture, some parts have Hindu influences, whereas others have arches like Mughal, Persian, and overall Muslim architecture. He added that the Armenians, the British, and the French have also left their marks on our city, creating a blend that makes Dhaka a wonderful mix of art and cultures.



The walls of Bhumi Art Gallery are adorned with paintings, drawings, and sketches by Sarker. There are large paintings like that of Ahsan Manzil. There are narrow lanes and corners of Old Dhaka. There are glimpses of Beauty Boarding, Mridha Mosque, Barrister House, and Armenian structures on his canvases and papers. The river Buriganga, which is the heart of Dhaka city, flows in all its former glory in his paintings. I was pleased to see the interior staircases of Ruplal House. However, the most intricate, sensitive, and colourful paintings were those of Poush Sankranti, commonly known as Sakrain — depicting vivid scenes of people flying their striking kites on their rooftops.

**Satoborsher Dhaka** as an exhibition is like a trip down memory lane for individuals who have witnessed several decades of the city's transformation. The details, brushstrokes, lines, use of light and shadowy hues, and angles of perceptions in Sarker's artworks were visually indulging, especially for someone with a background in architecture, like myself. People from every generation can take a closer look at our heartwarming city that has harboured several centuries of history on its soil.

Bhumi Art Gallery will run this open-for-all exhibition until January 31.

## Trump taps Stallone, Voight, and Gibson as 'Special Ambassadors' to revitalise Hollywood

President-elect Donald Trump has unveiled a plan to rejuvenate Hollywood's global influence by appointing Sylvester Stallone, Jon Voight, and Mel Gibson as "Special Ambassadors" to revive the entertainment industry.

In a statement shared on Truth Social, Trump expressed his confidence in the trio's abilities: "I am proud to announce Sylvester Stallone, Mel Gibson, and Jon Voight as Special Ambassadors to Hollywood, California—a region filled with potential but facing significant challenges. They aim to reverse the trend of losing business to foreign markets and restore Hollywood to its former glory."

"These remarkable individuals will be my trusted advisers, bringing me their insights and solutions. Together, we will usher in a new Golden Age for Hollywood, aligning it with the



greatness of America itself," Trump added.

Trump's announcement comes mere days ahead of his inauguration in Washington, DC, amidst a dire situation in Southern Los Angeles, where raging wildfires have left a trail of destruction. Thousands of homes and businesses lie in ruins, with recovery efforts facing significant hurdles as the estimated damages have soared to an alarming \$250 billion.

## Tahsan visits Rohingya refugee camps after returning from honeymoon

Renowned Bangladeshi singer, actor, and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Tahsan Khan recently visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, just a few days after returning from his honeymoon in the Maldives with his newlywed wife, Roza Ahmed. The couple went on their honeymoon on January 7.



the refugee community.

His post from his verified Facebook page reads, "I visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, including an area where a devastating fire tore through hundreds of shelters a few weeks ago."

"It was a humbling experience to see the aftermath of the tragic incident. It was also inspiring to see how the firefighters and emergency volunteers responded to save lives. Only a few weeks later, people have begun rebuilding their lives from the rubble, supported by refugees and other humanitarian organisations."

Tahsan toured the camps, including areas devastated by a massive fire that destroyed hundreds of shelters weeks ago. He described the visit as a disturbing experience, witnessing both the aftermath of the tragedy and the resilience of



PHOTO: COURTESY

## ‘The Cage’ unleashes a new generation of musical talents

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The roots of Bangladesh's band music scene stretch back to the 1970s, emerging from a spirit of rebellion and creativity that followed the Liberation War. Over decades, rock and roll became a defining feature of the nation's cultural identity, inspiring waves of young musicians to take the stage.

Band reality show *The Cage* offers a new kind of space for young musicians to explore their talent, connect with others, and grow under the guidance of industry stalwarts.

Over 500 talented musicians from all over the country auditioned, and were later integrated into bands that moved on to the later stages.

For Asif Asgar Ranjan, the lead

guitarist of Arboviru and a judge for the programme, the experience was profoundly moving. "We didn't think these kids, who didn't know one another, could form such strong bands in such a short time. Their hard work and passion were undeniable. It was a reminder of the magic that happens when people come together to create music," he said.

This sense of community was central to *The Cage*. Judge Raef Al Hasan Rafa reflected on how the show reminded him of the early days of Bangladesh's band music scene. "It's incredible to see how the sense of community we grew up with is being revived here. These young talents have shown extraordinary skill, and I know many of them will become leading musicians in the years to come," he shared.

**Tashfee**, a rising star and judge at the show, stated, "Despite working with strangers and tight deadlines, they produced exceptional songs and displayed incredible talent. I'm excited to see where their hard work and originality take them, as this new wave of musicians is set to shape the future of our music industry."

Guest judges of this show included Saeif Al Nabi Cézanne from Artcell, journalist and singer Elita Karim, lyricist Shahan Kabondho, and Warfaze members Babna Palash Noor, Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu.

Deepto TV is the broadcast partner of the show, while Femina Flaunt Salon is an event partner.

*The Cage* will be broadcast on Deepto TV on January 28, at 11:30pm.



## EMON'S ‘Bengal Symphony’ debuts with ‘Phul Neya Bhalo Noy’

Celebrated composer and singer Emon Chowdhury has introduced his latest musical venture, *Bengal Symphony*. The project's debut track, *Phul Neya Bhalo Noy*, came out yesterday.

Inspired by poet Jasimuddin's poem *Holud Boroni*, the song has been voiced, composed, and directed by Emon Chowdhury himself.

In 2023, Emon left the popular band Chirkut to focus on his solo career. With *Bengal Symphony*, he brings exciting news for his fans. The project has already launched its official Facebook page and YouTube channel to connect with listeners.

Apart from his contributions to band music, Emon has also made his mark in cinema. Songs like *Shada Shada Kala Kala*, *Atta Baje Deri Korish Na*, *Dhire Dhire*, *Ghumta Tule Bodom Khule*, *Teka Pakhi*, and *Tor Sathe Namlam Re Pothe*, have won widespread acclaim under his music direction.