

#HUMOUR

# Situationships, breadcrumbing and ghosting – Gen Z lingo unearthed for the millennials

In the grand tapestry of human relationships, we've evolved from cave paintings to cryptic emojis, from love letters sealed with wax to disappearing messages on Snapchat. Yet, nothing has prepared us millennials for the labyrinthine lexicon of Gen Z dating. It's as if Cupid traded his bow and arrow for a smartphone and a proclivity for ambiguity.

Take *breadcrumbing*, for instance. In our carb-loving days, breadcrumbs led to deep-fried chicken cutlets, not ghosting. Breadcrumbing, dear fellow millennials, is not the charming Hansel-and-Gretel trail of carbs we once knew. No, it's the act of dropping vague flirtatious crumbs to keep you emotionally malnourished but still interested. Hooked but not cooked. Think of it as the Diet Coke of modern romance: all fizz, no substance, but equally lethal.

As a millennial woman who once thought relationships were defined by "Do you want to be my girlfriend?" scribbled on a napkin, with only YES/NO routes, I am baffled by Gen Z's romantic lexicon. Back in my day — yes, I've become the auntie who says "Back in my day" leave me alone — dating had structure. Sure, it was messy, but at least we knew the terms of engagement. Now? It's like being tossed into a group project where nobody knows their role, but everyone wants credit.

Take *situationships*, for example. If you've been wondering what that means, allow me to enlighten you. Back in simpler times, we had "friends," "boyfriends," and "people we avoid at reunions." A situationship is when two people like each other enough to text incessantly, binge-watch shows together, and maybe even cuddle — but not enough



to, you know, define anything. It's basically commitment phobia wrapped in vibes and anxiety.

"Why ruin it with labels?" they say, as if labels were the relationship equivalent of polyester. Spoiler alert: labels *are* important. Without labels, everything falls apart. Imagine a world where ketchup and toothpaste come in the same unmarked tube. Exactly. Absolute chaos.

Then there are *friends with benefits*. Now, this one's been around since the Neanderthal days, but Gen Z has repackaged it with a sprinkle of Instagram gloss. It's all about casual fun, no strings attached, and — this is crucial — emotional detachment. Except it's never *really* detached, is it?

One person always catches feelings, and

suddenly, you're knee-deep in awkward brunches where one half is dying inside while the other is dissecting the latest Marvel film. Friends with benefits? More like friends with beneficial therapy bills.

Speaking of emotional detachment, let's talk about *no strings attached* relationships. This is where two people mutually agree to avoid commitment. You'd think this would simplify things, right? Wrong. It's essentially a ticking time bomb where one party inevitably starts overanalysing text messages like it's a GCSE literature exam.

"What did he mean by 'K lol'?"

Answer: Nothing. He's emotionally unavailable and probably playing FIFA. Move on. Have a sandwich.

Now, let's not forget *being exclusive*. This used to be the warm-up lap before officially

dating. Today, it's the Olympics of modern romance. If someone says, "We're exclusive," it doesn't mean you're in a relationship — it means you're both deleting Bumble, but keeping Instagram DM requests open for emergencies. Hedging. Exclusive is like renting a flat: it's temporary, has no long-term security, and you can be kicked out at any moment.

And finally, we come to *ghosting*, the greatest invention of this century. A convenient way to avoid conflict, ghosting is when someone disappears from your life faster than my willpower in front of biryani. In a way, it's almost poetic — like the romance version of Avengers: Infinity War. One moment they're there, the next: *snap*. Gone.

So, what's a millennial to do in this dizzying landscape? How do we keep up with Gen Z, who somehow make everything — dating, skincare, plant care — seem so effortless? Well, my advice is simple: don't try. Instead, channel your inner granny. When someone says, "I'm in a situationship," nod wisely and reply, "Baba, dui nouka ay paa diye karo bhalo hoi na."

Navigating this new world requires a dictionary and a therapist. But fear not fellow millennials. When faced with the perplexities of Gen Z dating, remember when someone offers breadcrumbs, ask for the whole loaf. Life's too short for crumbs. Or you're not into it then simply respond with, "Sorry, I'm keto." Cause, you know, fitness is the ultimate passion.

By Noshin Nawal  
Illustration: LS Desk

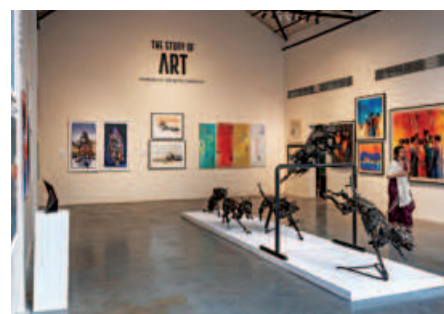
#EVENTS

## "Story of Art" brings Bangladesh's artistic legacy to life

Dhaka Storytellers is a platform that curates exhibitions showcasing diverse artistic forms and preserving cultural heritage. With a keen focus on storytelling through visual expression, it brings together artists, collectors, and art lovers, fostering a deeper dialogue on creativity. Through endeavours like the recently concluded "Story of Art" exhibition, it raises awareness about the significance of art and aesthetics in our lives. It also works to cultivate a deeper appreciation for art, serving as a driving force behind creative growth and appreciation.

The country's art scene is now more dynamic than ever, with both emerging and established artists finding new audiences. Over the decades, people have learned to appreciate the finer aspects of paintings and other art forms. There is a significant number of collectors who do not hesitate to make large investments, as artworks by some of the leading names have reached great heights. This growing enthusiasm has also led to an increase in the number of exhibitions.

"The primary thought behind "Story



of Art" was to offer art enthusiasts an unforgettable experience while contributing to a meaningful cause," said Syeda Adiba Hussain, Curator and Co-founder, Dhaka Storytellers.

Proceeds from the exhibition will directly support rural education in Bangladesh as the organisers believe the best way to help the community is through education. By intertwining artistic appreciation with philanthropy, the event highlighted how art can be a vehicle for social change.

The exhibition attempted to bring to the forefront the vibrant and diverse art scene of Bangladesh. It aimed to showcase

the richness of Bangladeshi art, featuring some of the most celebrated names. Each artwork told a unique story, reflecting themes ranging from heritage and identity to contemporary struggles and aspirations.

*Story of Art* also served as a testament to how the visual art scene has evolved in Bangladesh. From Rafiqun Nabi to Jamal Ahmed, Kanak Chanpa Chakma to Azmeer Hossain — the organisers successfully brought together some of the most eminent artists from different generations under one roof.

"The exhibition has received exceptional response and appreciation from art enthusiasts and collectors. A large number of visitors, which includes visits by multiple educational institutions, explored a diverse collection of artworks that capture the depth and richness of contemporary artistic expressions," said Safius Sami Alamgir, Co-founder, Dhaka Storytellers.

The artist's talk that featured Rafiqun Nabi gave attendees a glimpse into the life of the maestro as he participated in a candid discussion on art, his work, and how he sees life in general.

Including some of the biggest names in the Bangladeshi art scene for a group exhibition is no mean feat. The exhibition gave viewers a rare opportunity to witness the signature style of prominent local artists. For many, it was an immersive experience — one that deepened their connection with Bangladeshi art and its powerful narratives. And perhaps this was their biggest achievement. Students and young creatives, in particular, found inspiration in the curated collection, making the exhibition an enriching experience beyond just viewing art.

With almost a hundred artworks on display, the setting added a magical touch to the experience. At night, under the starlit sky, the paintings appeared ethereal, while the interplay of light and shadow accentuated the details of each piece, creating an almost theatrical viewing experience.

The "Story of Art" exhibition took place at the Aloki Greenhouse, 211 Gulshan-Tejgaon Link Road, Dhaka, from 8 to 13 February 2025.

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Photo: Ratul Paul