



TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON

'HOME AND DISPLACEMENT' EXPLORES FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND HUMAN PLIGHT

Bulletin Correspondent

Artists, critics, scholars, curators, professors, connoisseurs and dignitaries from both home and abroad participated in a two-day international art seminar titled, 'Home and Displacement' organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at the National Art Gallery Auditorium on December 09 and 10. The International seminar on 'Home and Displacement' was held as a significant part of the month-long 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022.

Artists and art critics explored the causes of forced displacement and how various artists have addressed it through artworks in the seminar, which was inaugurated by Liaquat Ali Lucky, director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and also chief coordinator of the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022.

'The history of civilisation consists of human migrations. Forced migration has become reality now-a-days due to man-made and natural disasters. A large-scale forced displacement took place in this region during the partition of India. During the Liberation War in 1971, 10 million people of the country took shelter in India as refugees. In recent times, we have also given shelter to the Rohingya, who have been displaced from their homes. We want to talk about them in the international arena,' said Liaquat Ali Lucky.

Renowned artist and art critic Mustafa Zaman presented the keynote paper titled 'Places of Belonging, Stories of Displacement' at the seminar on the opening day. The opening session of the seminar also features Luya Nahid Choudhury and Constantin Migliorni from Italy. They talked about the keynote paper. The opening ceremony was chaired by writer, art critic and the convener of the seminar committee Syed Manzoorul Islam.

'Migration, be that forced or otherwise, is a reality today and has remained so since time immemorial. Human history is replete with stories of displacement. If war, famine and even political pogrom enforced migration in the past, in recent history human-induced climate crisis is displacing millions who continue to flood the cities leaving behind their erstwhile homes in coastal areas,' said



RENOWNED ARTIST AND ART CRITIC MUSTAFA ZAMAN PRESENTED THE KEYNOTE PAPER TITLED 'PLACES OF BELONGING, STORIES OF DISPLACEMENT' AT THE SEMINAR ON THE OPENING DAY. THE OPENING SESSION OF THE SEMINAR ALSO FEATURES LUYA NAHID CHOUDHURY AND CONSTANTIN MIGLIORNI FROM ITALY.

Mustafa Zaman.

'The word "home" carries both actual and metaphorical meanings. In every instance, at the core of the word 'home' lies in the idea of a sense of 'belonging'. In abject circumstances, when people are uprooted from their homes, this

sense of belonging is challenged. For displaced people, what used to be a full-fledged life-world, can only be returned via vignettes of memories. Therefore, the psycho-ethological context is lost forever since words can never fully reconstruct real-life

experiences,' he said on his introduction.

'If the mass outflow of people from their territory in modern times is a sign of the failure of political governance and the concurrent collapse of social justice – as in the case of the Rohingyas in Myanmar who sought refuge in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh in recent times – there have been many other instances of such lapses in South Asia. They all led to human disasters of similar, and even greater, scale.'

His speech addresses displacement concerning art and artists. 'Bangladeshi modern painter Zainul Abedin work, titled, Nabbana, new rice in literal

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translation, refers to the celebration of the new harvest. The migrating destitute in Nabanna, in the shape of the uprooted families from an unknown rural region, have an obvious link to the counter-colonial optics Zainul devised in response to the Bengal famine in 1943 in the face of the official silence of the British Raj in the last few years of its colonial rule. The series on the Bengal Famine depicting the starving, skeletal victims forced to embrace death on the streets of Calcutta (now Kolkata) first attracted the attention of the official organ of the Communist Party of India, Janajuddha (People's War), and, later, The Statesman, an elite daily. They popularised the famine sketches. The artist, then only 26, stirred the national conscience by paying attention to the plights of the people. Out of sheer nationalist zeal, the eminent Indian leader Sarojini Naidu interpreted Zainul's work as a 'homage of love and pity to the vast anonymous legion of hunger-stricken and heroic people of Bengal.' He said about the work of Zainul Abedin on the issue of famine. 'In August 1947, when, after two hundred years in India, the British finally decided to leave, the subcontinent was partitioned into two independent nation states: Hindu majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. Immediately, there began one of the greatest migrations in human history, as millions of Muslims trekked to West and East Pakistan (the latter now known as Bangladesh) while millions of Hindus and Sikhs headed in the opposite direction. By 1948, as the

great migration drew to a close, more than fifteen million people had been uprooted, and between one and two million were dead. The comparison with the death camps is not as far-fetched as it may seem, wrote William Dalrymple in 2017. Two artists of West Bengal, who had already earned considerable fame in Kolkata, Quamrul Hassan and Safiuddin Ahmed, also settled for a new home across the border.' He mentions about the new art era of East Pakistan. His also discusses about International Migration in Contemporary Art, 'Artists in both North and South began to interrogate the very idea of territorial borders while others felt compelled to devise ways to bring to light the distress and displacement of people trying to flee conflict zones. While wars were waged in vulnerable parts of the world, especially in the Middle East where global powers have colluded to bring down subsequent governments in the past twenty or so years on the pretext of a 'civilizing mission' Noam Chomsky once dubbed as 'military humanism,' artists too are being forced to look at the eye of the storm. When the body of a three-year-old Syrian boy named Aylan Kurdi washed up on the shore of the Turkish resort town of Bodrum in September 2015, it sent shock waves through the world. The scene of the boy lying face down on the beach spurred artists across the world to pick up the paintbrush or resort to other contemporary forms of expression. The toddler Aylan Kurdi was among the 12 refugees who drowned attempting to reach the Greek island of Kos. Aylan Kurdi's image which rapidly circulated through news and social media 'had a significant effect on shifting public perception to the Syrian refugee crisis.' Mustafa Zaman talks about the

Rohingya issues, 'In Bangladesh, photographers took the lead in highlighting the Rohingya refugee crisis. Artist Kamruzzaman Shadhin's 'Elephant in the Room' began in Bangladesh in 2017 and later travelled to Dubai. Seven hundred thousand Rohingya people displaced from their homes in Myanmar due to religious pogrom and acres of forest land that transformed into red, barren earth within a few months as these displaced people began to settle in the temporary camps in Cox's Bazar. Shadhin's elephants had the clothes of the refugees for their skins. The artist followed the principle of Kantha stitching, an age-old rural tradition of making quilts out of bits and pieces of old saris when creating the sculptural pieces. The artist, who seems 'loyal to the theme', also visited the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and filmed a feature-length documentary titled 'Rohingya' (between 2016 and 2020), which is a continuation of his previous films Human Flow (2017) and The Rest (2019) on the plight of refugees. The film focuses on

Rohingya refugees, who were forced out of Myanmar in August 2017,' 'Migration is the one truly universal, the anti-immigration politics of contemporary New Right parties is an effect of what can be characterised as the territorialisation of identity politics. Art and its various interdisciplinary offshoots may have covered a huge ground over the past fifty years to address the issue of displacement and the associated human disasters, but it may not leave any desired effect on real life, not at least in near future. The changing patterns of art might continue to draw peoples' attention to both their content and form, but this is not enough to change the way world leaders continue to operate on the political stage.' He mentioned in his speech. The paper addresses displacement or deterritorialisation concerning art and artists. 'Art and its various interdisciplinary offshoots may have covered a huge ground over the past fifty years to address the issue of displacement and the associated human disasters, but it

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INTERNATIONAL ART CAMP MARKING 19TH AABB HELD AT BABGABANDHU MAUSOLEUM PREMISES, TUNGIPARA, GOPALGANJ



Bulletin Correspondent

It was a wonderful morning. Artists from home and abroad were eagerly waiting to attend the day-long event to be held on December 11, 2022. The day-long event included an official visit to Tungipara, the holy land of the Father of the Nation to pay tribute to the mausoleum for the commemoration of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by putting wreaths by all the artists from home and abroad. Starting from Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, a disciplined procession of vehicles beautified the trip while passing through the green fields of the countryside and crossing the Padma Bridge. After reaching the mausoleum premises, the entire team found the environment very peaceful which was arranged by the administration of Gopalganj district. An international art camp was held on the bank of the river of Madhumati after a short visit to the Mujib Museum situated there. After completing the formalities there, the team started for Mawa Ghat where the river cruise took place. Reaching the bank of the Padma river

the team got into the ship and started the river cruise. Completing the lunch on the ship, the team arranged a significant art camp where artists from home and abroad took part spontaneously and made the event successful by creating different paintings on different themes. It was almost evening then. In the mean time, the cultural repertoire of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy was ready to perform in the honour of all the artists including songs and dances of multi-cultural genres throughout the world. All the audience present there enjoyed the entire session thoroughly. Their enjoyment got doubled by the random dancing of the team members. The cultural programme concluded after that with the declaration of the vote of thanks by the honourable Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Liaquat Ali Lucky. It made a very positive vibe to the team that was full of fun and vigour. Finally, the team started journey for Dhaka after the completion of a successful day-long event. 📸

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organised a vibrant river cruise event along with action painting session in honour of foreign artists and delegates as a part of the ongoing 19th Asian Art Biennale 2022. Bangladeshi singers -- Sohan, Rupsa, Himadri, Talbida and Shakib rendered various songs in 37 languages at the river cruise event held on December 11. The singers rendered songs in 37 languages including Bangla, English,

Bhutanese, Nepalese, Hindi, Pashtun, Moroccan, Italian, Turkish, German and others. The songs capture traditional, patriotic and modern genres of the countries. The five singers were accompanied by Yasmin Ali, Suchitra, Ishita, Rafi, Mehek and Roushon. The participating foreign artists enjoyed the river cruise thoroughly and several of them took part in the action painting session. 📸



The entire premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has got a new lease of life with the exquisite folk themed decoration, a grand display of diverse arts at the different floors of the National Art Gallery, demonstration of cultural performances, performance art and more marking the ongoing 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, dedicating to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Art aficionados from both home and abroad are gathering everyday to see the multifarious modes of artistic expressions at the biennale venue with fervour.







The ongoing 19th edition of Asian Art Biennale surpassed every other biennale held before in terms of size, dimension, festivities, and glory making Bangladesh appear as a strong patron and cultivator of art especially, contemporary art in a global platform. Performance art, the newly-discovered passion of artists across the world, has caught wide attention among artists in Bangladesh, and the inclusion of it in the 19th Asian Art Biennale, in a greater scale, will popularise, it further among both artists and art lovers as they continue to search for newer interpretations of that they think, believe and perceive. Not only the biennale, performance art has also found its place in other art initiatives of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy too, thanks to the strong support from the academy's director general Liaquat ali Lucky.

As part of the biennale, two phases of performance art show titled "Bohu+Matrik" (Multidimensional) is taking place under the plan and advice from Liaquat Ali Lucky and curated by Abdus Salam. 🌐



As part of the ongoing 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organized a sightseeing programme on December 11. A number of foreign delegates visited the Central Shaheed Minar on the day to pay tribute the Language Movement Martyrs. 🌐





A number of foreign artists and delegates visited the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on December 11 and paid their homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who the ongoing 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 is dedicated to. As part of the biennale, Bangladesh

Shilpakala Academy organized the sightseeing programme. Bangabandhu Memorial Museum, also known as Bangabandhu Bhaban or simply as Dhanmondi 32, was the personal residence of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who was assassinated with most of his family members in this residence on 15 August 1975. 📍

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may not leave any desired effect on real life, not at least in near future. The changing patterns of art might continue to draw peoples' attention to both their content and form, but this is not enough to change the way world leaders continue to operate on the political stage,' he added.

Bengal Foundation director general Luva Nahid Choudhury and Constantin Migliorni from Italy talked about the keynote paper.

The opening ceremony was chaired by writer, art critic and the convener of the seminar committee Syed Manzoorul Islam.

'Artists have always played an active role in civil society, offering irreplaceable contributions during crises, wars and moments of collective despairs. In the age of globalisation and interconnectedness, ideas migrate quickly. In its history, Italy has played the role of both an escape territory and a host nation. And still, migration is an

urgent issue, which the country must address and manage,' said Constantin Migliorni.

'If we investigate the contemporary world, many artists, Europeans and non-Europeans, have addressed the theme of departure and arrival of migrations, creating installations and works,' added Constantin Migliorni.

'Artist SM Sultan also drew migrants during the Bengal famine. Displacement is a common theme in the writings and artworks of the Indian subcontinent's litterateurs and artists,' said Luva Nahid Choudhury.

'The keynote paper with multiple panel discussions and round table discussions attempts to explore the notion of home and the longings and belongings it entails. Any displacement from home is tinged with the deep stirrings of dislocations. The anxiety remains until another location comes into sight. The anxiety continues when the familiar space comes in contact with the unfamiliar. The border between private

space and public space is fluid as it goes through constant negotiation. Home is more than a domestic space defined by the social and historical attributes of the world. Home connotes shelter and comfort and displacement causes discomfort,' said Syed Manzoorul Islam. Besides, architect Saif ul Haque, writer Ahrah Ahmed and Dhaka University English department teacher Shamsad Mortuza participated in the seminar on the concluding day.

Mustafa Zaman's keynote paper was brief details about migrations, and displacements for many reasons like famine, the partition of the Indian subcontinent, liberation war, and also refugees of contemporary times addressed by artists and art practice in the national and international arena.

'Artists have always played an active role in civil society, offering irreplaceable contributions when facing suffering, wars and moments of collective despair. In the age of globalization and interconnectedness, ideas migrate quickly, and just like the immigrants who leave their homes to go elsewhere; they bring new knowledge and unexpected comparison. In its history, Italy has played the role of both an escape territory and a host nation, and still, today migration is an urgent issue to address and manage. If we investigate the contemporary world, many artists, European and non-European, have addressed the theme of departures and arrivals of migrations, creating installations and works in Italy or inspired by it. The works clearly refer to Gericault's "The Raft of the Medusa", the figures appear quite stylized and they will become even more so with time,

turning into an active part of the underwater environment, said Constantin Migliorni.

'Artist S M Sultan also draws the migrants during the Bengal famine and also the destruction of the tornado of his time. Displacement is common in the writings and artworks of this subcontinent artists and literature. It's an important issue because home is a unique concept about the world,' said Luva Nahid Choudhury.

'The keynote paper with multiple panel discussions and round table discussions to understand what home means, and the longings and belongings it entails. Any displacement from home is tinged with the deep stirrings of dislocations. The anxiety remains until another location comes into sight. The anxiety continues when the familiar space comes in contact with the unfamiliar. The border between the private space and public space and public space is fluid as it goes through constant negotiation. Home is more than a domestic space defined by the social and historical attributes of the world. Home connotes shelter and comfort and displacement causes discomfort. I thank all discussants and dignitaries participated in different sessions of the seminars,' said Syed Manzoorul Islam.

Renowned academic and art critic Nazrul Islam, noted art critic Moinuddin Khaled, writer Nazma Khan Majlish, architect Saif ul Haque, writer Ahrah Ahmed and Professor Shamsad Mortuza together with the participants from different countries discussed on the theme titled 'Home and Displacement.' 📍





THE WINNERS TAKE IT ALL... THE AWARDEES OF THE 19TH AABB AT A GLANCE

Bulletin Correspondent

Suspense reigned supreme among the participating artists when eminent artist Rafiqun Nabi, the Chairman of the Jury Board, declared the names of award winners at the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 at National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on December 8.

The Grand Award winners are Sushanta Kumar Adhikary and Yasmin Jahan Nupur from Bangladesh and Harald Schole from the Netherlands. They all received Taka five lacs, gold medal, crest, and a certificate each.

Six Bangladeshi artists – Fareha Zeba, Jayatu Chakma, Mamur Ahsan Mahtab, Maynul Islam Paul and Sumon Chandra Das from Bangladesh and Ana Silvia Malhado from Portugal -- received the Honourable Mention Awards. Each of the Honourable Mention Award winner received Taka three lacs, gold medals, crest and certificates.

Sushanta Kumar Adhikary (Bangladesh) received the grand award for his work, titled, “Ins and Outs of Self Realization,” a mixed media work (Tempera on Paper and Mirror). The wayfarer walks the road, passes over spends it and sometimes travels. He obtains the experience from the ups and downs he faces meantime. Sometimes he opens up about it, sometimes he doesn't. The wayfarer artist of this piece of art has crossed almost fifty years of his life, and now, started adding up. All his realizations and experiences are reflecting with colours in this painting. All his happiness, sorrow, sufferings, etc gathered in his memories and the current unexpected occurrences are repeatedly reviving his feeling and realization. He is searching for himself. For that he is inquiring himself and immersing himself into deep thoughts. Here he tries to reflect the inner and outer expressions of his mind. It may seem like the artist himself but it is not his intention. The idea is to recognize the expression, feeling, and realization of the artist.

Yasmin Jahan Nupur



State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP receives the 19th AABB memento on behalf of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from Liaquat Ali Lucky, DG, BSA.

THE GRAND AWARD WINNERS ARE SUSHANTA KUMAR ADHIKARY AND YASMIN JAHAN NUPUR FROM BANGLADESH AND HARALD SCHOLE FROM THE NETHERLANDS. THEY ALL RECEIVED TAKA FIVE LACS, GOLD MEDAL, CREST, AND A CERTIFICATE EACH.

(Bangladesh) has bagged the grand award for her fantastic installation work called “The Time couldn't Keep at Bay”. Through the work, the artist has befittingly captured the pandemic time that actually kept us all at bay. Yasmin Jahan Nupur's contemplative thoughts on death, silence decay and morbidity during the pandemic time, have been nicely captured in the work. Truly speaking, the work is thought-provoking and deserves the recognition what the artist is bestowed with.

Artist Harald Schole from the Netherlands has also received another grand award for his outstanding work at the opening ceremony of the biennale.

Among the Honourable Mention Awards, Fareha Zeba's artwork, titled ‘A Bird's Nest... Nature and Nature’ is also themed on the dark time of COVID 19 pandemic. In her words, “At the beginning of the outbreak of COVID-19, I felt depressed and restless. I did not know what to do. In the middle of the year, I got infected with COVID and in the long isolation period, I could neither read nor draw. During this period, I started knitting with jute thread. Knitting is an old hobby of mine that also gives me a scope to think and contemplate how I could create and blend my art with the natural environment around me. My art is an attempt at stitching, time and

sewing to create an oversized biomorphic sculpture of a bird's nest. It is an attempt to visually represent my art in an organic way using painting, sculpture, wire, jute thread, fabric, wood etc.”

A painting installation titled ‘The stories around me’ by Jayatu Chakma is a presentation of the stories that happen around the artist in his own way. “As I belong to the hills or Chakma community, the problems of the hills come up in my canvas. The cries of people who lost their land due to Kaptai dam or the destruction of mountains in the name of tourism and the adverse effects on the biodiversity there are repeated in our midst. So I have no chance to avoid these things. The stories around me are depicted with the spirit of these things together,” said Jayatu Chakma.

Sumon Chandra Das' installation work breaks the silence of establishments. We all are encircled or demarcated in some certain areas and periphery. Very few of them can think out of the box. Sumon Chandra Das, popularly known as Kuasha Bindu has shown two side by side installations – one group of people following the conventional system while another group try to come out of the box.

Maynul Islam Paul represents our glorious history of what is now present Bangladesh. The installation work shows a roof that shelters our history ranging from the Pal era to the sublime liberation war of 1971. The artist collected various post cards and envelopes of different times to portray the work.

Ana Silvia Malhado from Portugal and Mamur Ahsan Mahtab also received the Honourable Mention Awards for their artworks at the biennale.

Eminent Artist Rafiqun Nabi from Bangladesh, Jagath Weerasinghe from Sri Lanka, Nurseren Tor from Turkey, Iwona Blazwick from UK and Jaroslaw Suchan from Poland were the jury members who selected the awards for this edition of the biennale. ☺

