



USHERING IN A NEW HORIZON OF INTERNATIONAL ART IN DHAKA THE 19TH ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH 2022 CONCLUDES AT BSA



Bulletin Correspondent

All roads lead to Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) as the month-long '19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022' concluded at the National Art Gallery building of the academy in the capital's Segun Bagicha area on Sunday. Amidst the shivering cold in Dhaka, there was a long queue of young, cheerful girls and boys at the premises of BSA, to attend the last day of the exhibition. The closing ceremony of the biennale was held at the National Theater Hall auditorium of BSA.

Presided over by BSA Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky, the chief guest of the event was Honourable Speaker of the National Parliament Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP. The ceremony was also attended by State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP, Secretary to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Abul Monsur and internationally famous artists -- Monirul Islam and Shahbuddin Ahmed as special guests.

The closing ceremony was started with a



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***- Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP.
Honourable Speaker of the National Parliament***

wonderful introductory video of the '19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh', where it was shown how the exhibition brought together 493 artists from 114 countries all over the world. The foreign artists expressed their love and gratitude in the video. They also called the Asian Art Biennale to be the second largest art biennale in the world, after Venice.

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The chief guest said that art and culture carries the self-identity of any country and nation. The overall situation of any country along with the contemporary artistic thought emerges from the artist's brush strokes. She said that artists have made important contributions in all democratic movements and struggles



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE 19TH ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH 2022



Bulletin Correspondent

Founded by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, has been organizing the largest art exhibition in Asia titled Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh (AABB) for the last 40 years. The exhibition is now open to all countries of the world. A total of 68 countries of the world participated in the 2018 edition of AABB. It was Shilpakala's dream to organize this event with artists from 100 participating countries of the world on the occasion of the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We are happy to announce that the dream has come true. This year 493 artists from 114 countries including Bangladesh have participated in the exhibition with their 648 artworks.

The greatest Bengali of all time, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who established Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on February 19, 1974 to flourish, expand and introduce refined Bengali culture to the world. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has been playing a significant role to blossom and foster the art as well as the culture of Bangladesh in the national and international spectrum along with the art activists of this country who have been nurturing the dream of Bangabandhu. Cultural arena of Bangladesh has been flourished by organizing such numerous national and international exhibitions and events. Since its inception, the Department of Fine Art of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has been organizing various national and international art exhibitions such as Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, National Art Exhibition, Young Artist Art Exhibition, National Sculpture Exhibition and National Photography Exhibition.

The "Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh" is



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the oldest and most prestigious international art festival in the Asian continent, which has been organized regularly for the previous four decades. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is proudly organizing this international art exhibition under the patronage of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Predominantly, to make the event well known to the art collectors, this international art event was initiated on a biennale basis. The Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh exhibits two-dimensional and three-dimensional artworks such as paintings, prints, photographs, sculptures, installations

and new media arts. Native and foreign artists are presenting their contemporary artistic thoughts to the visitors through their creative works. On the occasion of the exhibition, a two-day seminar has been organized on a specific theme "Home and Displacement" with the participation of native and foreign artists, art critics, jury members and observers. Native and foreign artists have been invited in Bangladesh with great hospitality to participate in the biennale. This grand event comprises the exhibition's opening ceremony, month-long exhibition, international seminar, International art camp, river cruise,



the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to commemorate his birth centenary. In that context, with the target of 100 participating countries of the world in the exhibition, on behalf of the Honourable State Minister KM Khalid of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the invitation letters were sent to the artists of 125 countries of the world. Simultaneously, on behalf of the Secretary to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the invitations were also sent to the honourable ambassadors of all foreign embassies in Bangladesh.

One National Committee and one Implementation Committee were formed for the pursuit of policy making, advice and taking important decisions for the smooth execution of the exhibition activities. Prominent artists from 114 countries confirmed their participation in the exhibition, among them a total of 149 are Bangladeshi artists and rest of the 316 are foreign artists. The Honourable Prime Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh gave her kind consent to virtually attend the opening ceremony of this exhibition as the chief guest on 08 December 2022.

PROMINENT ARTISTS FROM 114 COUNTRIES CONFIRMED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE EXHIBITION, AMONG THEM A TOTAL OF 149 ARE BANGLADESHI ARTISTS AND REST OF THE 316 ARE FOREIGN ARTISTS. THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH GAVE HER KIND CONSENT TO VIRTUALLY ATTEND THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THIS EXHIBITION AS THE CHIEF GUEST ON 08 DECEMBER 2022.

sightseeing of various historical places, cultural programmes and dinner, which are being attended by a number of foreign artists, guests and delegates. The 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 commenced at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka for a month long exhibition on 08 December 2022 and continued till 07 January 2023 under the patronage of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and organized by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. It is to be noted that according to the decision of the National Committee of the exhibition, the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 has been dedicated to



ANNOUNCEMENT!

Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh National Committee unanimously decided to organize the next 20th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh for two months. So, the 20th edition of the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh will start on 1 December 2024 and continue till 31 January 2025 at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

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E-MAIL REACTIONS OF FOREIGN ARTISTS AND JURY BOARD MEMBERS FOLLOWED BY THEIR REACHING HOME



Bulletin Correspondent

Over a hundred foreign artists, curators, guests and jury board members attended the 19th edition of Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022. Followed by their reaching home after a successful arrangement of the biennale, they replied to the e-mails of Liaquat Ali Lucky, the DG of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) and the chief coordinator of the biennale, along with the dynamic team of BSA, for the organizers' great hospitality and honour. Their e-mail reactions are as follows:

Jaroslav Suchan, Jury, Poland

Dear Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky,
Thank you for your very kind e-mail!
This is me who should rather thank you for your invitation and great hospitality we experienced during our stay in Dhaka. I am truly happy I could be a part of such an extraordinary event as the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh is.
I wish you further success with the biennale.

Avilla Damar, Mauritius

Dear Sir,
Thank you for your email- letter of appreciation. After leaving this event, my respect for Bangladesh has grown. I was swayed by the cultural items that educated me about the history and grief of Bangladesh. I learnt about the hard work and initiatives behind taking the people and economy from point zero to a decent stand today. It was new to me to learn about how your Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is given the title, "Mother of Humanity", and rightly so. I look up to her, to you, to everyone who is toiling to take Bangladesh to new heights. I have to admit that art and culture have been an evolved sector and the classiness of your Opening Ceremony was proof of that. I have been to

other international art events/biennales before. However, the Dhaka hospitality was by far the best one. You treated your artists like kings and queens. I am absolutely in love with your people and your country.

Reiko Shimizu, Japan

Dear Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky
Thank you for your e-mail. It was very nice to be able to share my work with you and the world. I am very happy that I had such a great opportunity to be present at the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022. My heartfelt thanks to you!
I also look forward to seeing you in the near future for the next event, the 20th edition of the



Jagath Weerasinghe, Jury, Sri Lanka

Dearest Lucky,
Thank you so much for your email. I can't say enough about the endless kindness and caring that the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy extended to us. We hope that we did meet your expectations in jurying for the show. For me, it was an exciting learning curve to see the heights the contemporary Bangladesh artists have reached.
Please convey my gratitude to your team, Fifa and Rabeema took care of us so well under your direction and Mini's thoughtful planning. Looking forward to working with your academy.

Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh in December 2024.

Mari Terauchi, Japan

Dear Liaquat Ali Lucky and everyone associated with the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh,
I thank you for your great hospitality, excellent events, seminars and the tours. You kind staffs took some photos of the visitors of my works and sent them to me. I also received photos from a family visitor. This family visited twice to see my works! I'm so impressed by them. I thank you again for giving me this great opportunity.

Raja Segar, Sri Lanka

I was so impressed and flabbergasted by the



Iwona Blazwick, Jury, UK

Dear Liaquat Ali Lucky and Team,
I am writing to express my thanks for the great honour and privilege of being invited to serve on the jury for the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh.
The warmth of the welcome I received made this, my first visit to Bangladesh, an unforgettable experience. The exhibition itself was a revelation and the themes artists were exploring seemed timely and in many cases very moving, reflecting as so many of them did, on the experience of lock down. My visit also exposed me to the work of many interesting South Asian artists that I had not been aware of, making this an important curatorial opportunity.

hospitality and the gifts given to us. We really enjoyed the events in the ship though there was a time factor! My sincere thanks to you all!

Gonzalo Rabanal (Bernardo León Gómez), Chile

I just thank all the organizers, attendees, producers, managers and directors of this great event. It was a great experience and privilege to have participated in this 19th Bangladesh Asian Art Biennale 2022. It presented high level of works and the presence of its guests show a great connection and open a window to the world allowing multicultural exchange.

Elmar Anton Peintner, Austria

Dear Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky,
The 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 was great and I want to congratulate you for this so big success! You were so hospitable and we artists could see so much art, culture and also the wonderful landscape by our travel to the Mausoleum of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Moosa Omar Al Zadjali, Oman

Good evening, dear ones, for your hospitality and generosity. Thank you from the heart for what you did for the biennale and its success. We hope for more progress and prosperity for art and culture. I will participate, God willing. I will participate even in the 20th edition of the 2024 biennale.

Sanghamitra Das, Santiniketan, India

Thank you Sir for your kind appreciation! I had a great time with your gracious hospitality and kind words of appreciation of my works. I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to you. Thank you for your invitation to join the upcoming biennale. I wish to visit again if I am selected.

Ajaya Deshar, Nepal

The entire world and leading art experts enjoyed the taste of Bengal Art during the exhibition. And people went back to their native land with one great message of persistent endeavour to achieve glory even in the gloomy days. Special appreciation goes to Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General and Chief Coordinator of 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022. I would like to express best wishes to Bangladesh Government to advance further.

Harald Schole, the Netherlands

Many friends and cultural organizations in the Netherlands and abroad have congratulated me on winning the Grand Prize of the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh. It is of great significance to me and a confirmation of mutual friendship and our cultural ties. 🙏

THE MANY FACETS OF ART UNDER ONE ROOF THROUGH THE LENS OF THE 19TH ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH

Bulletin Correspondent

The 19th edition of the 'Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh', the oldest and the most prestigious international art biennale in the Asian continent, was supposed to be organized by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in 2020. At that time people's minds were silent due to the fear of COVID and uncertain life. The situation is now normal. The festival of joy has returned to the soul. On the occasion of Bangabandhu's birth centenary, the preparation and expectation was that this international exhibition would be organized with artworks from 100 countries. A total of 114 countries participated beyond expectations, which is our joy and pride. Although named Asian, its scope is now open to all countries of the world.

There are many socio-economic, political and cultural achievements in this festival of arts, there is guidance for liberation. The biggest achievement—as we can easily see the artworks of hundreds of countries around the world, through this exhibition we have the opportunity to show the artworks of our country's artists all over the world. Through this seeing and showing, an opportunity is being created to evaluate their position in a comparative prove. This exhibition is instructive not only for the general audience but also for the artists themselves. In a word, it is an open window of art education. Foreign artists, art lovers and tourists have arrived in this event. International seminars with local and foreign artists, river cruises, visits to various historical places, international art camp, cultural programmes and dinners are all a festive art scene. It is a matter of introspection to see how successful this arrangement has been.

Among the participation of about 500 artists, one-fifth of them are Bangladeshi artists. A few things are clear from perusing the gallery. Among which there display the artworks of the invited renowned and expatriate artists, the artworks of the artists selected through the open call, the installation art of the young generation artists in various forms and mediums and performance art. It can be said that the research-like presentation of some of these works of art has enthralled the audience.

Artist Abdul Momen Milton's installation art 'Harpat Sammelan' is research style in terms of different materials and presentation. The artwork showcases the agricultural crafts of agrarian Bengal. Semi-circular or crescent-shaped, most harpats are aesthetically pleasing in texture. The artist termed the simple tools of various regions as 'crafts', widely used in the process of drying paddy or grain in the courtyard. However, next to the paddy spread across the gallery floor, these harpats are the messengers of Bengal's agricultural heritage. Artist Debashis Pal's pottery entitled 'Reflection of Time: 1952 to 2020' also analyzes Bengali language movement, liberation war and contemporary context. The research narrative is observed in the installation work of the honourable mention award-winning artist Maynul Islam Paul. The work depicts a Dochala Ghar, which is covered with various postcards of the glorious narrative of Bengal's history and culture.

The atmosphere of a festive fair has been created in gallery number 7 with the combination of various materials. Where 10 installations selected through an open call, sometimes silence, sometimes sound, sometimes light projection, feel like entering a treasure cave and finding something new. Unraveling the mystery of artist Abhijit Chowdhury's installation titled 'Box Life' is like seeing a magic box. Contemporary artist Yasmin Jahan Nupur received the grand prize for her brilliant installation. Apart from this, young generation artist Ratneshwar Sutradhar, Md. Imtiaz Islam, Soma Surovi Jannat, Sajib Sen, Md. Mojahidur Rahman Sarkar and Sagar Dey's artworks reveal a potential aspect of the contemporary art practice in the diversity of materials and the way they are used.

Another special aspect of this exhibition is the artworks related to Bangabandhu. Eminent artist Shahabuddin Ahmed's oil painting titled 'Faster Than Sound' shows the freedom fighter carrying the red-green flag at full speed. In the background is the face of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with his hand on his cheek. Padma Bridge of dreams lies in the distant border. Bangabandhu's pale

face appears in the magic of ink and cotton in the drawing of Shahjahan Ahmed Bikash. The aesthetics of the typography of the March 7 speech can be seen in the installation art entitled 'Shreshtha Bikal-er Galpa' by SM Mizanur Rahman. This presentation of the epic in eco-friendly and simple materials is commendable. Not only by the Bangladeshi artists, Bangabandhu has also been appeared in the works of foreign artists as well like a painting by Sri Lankan artist Raja Caesar. Bangabandhu is the centerpiece of this oil painting titled 'Bangabandhu's Last Supper: 14 August 1975'. On both sides, the perpetrators of the August 15 massacre lined up. The artwork is in 'Gallery 4', which showcases the artworks of foreign artists selected through an open call.

The artist has a dream to build the sculpture on a large scale with the involvement of 5 lakh people. Artist Sushanta Kumar Adhikary's grand award-winning oriental painting titled 'Self-Realization Inside Out' stands out among the Bangladeshi artists selected in the open call. The equation of self-realization and self-analysis in tempera paintings soothes the viewer. Sculptor Suman Kumar Das (Kuasha Bindu) received Honourable Mention Award for Sculpture. People of the society are getting divided and separated, that statement has also come up in his sculptures. Artist Alaptogin Tushar has shown the difference between light and shadow, good and

bad, sin and virtue in black and white lines. In this way, the irregularity of the country and international affairs, lawlessness, man-made suffering or individual psychological thoughts have come up in the narratives of the artists. Looking at these works of art, questions arise in the mind, and answers can also be found. One can be inspired by creating a beautiful world.

Harun ar Rashid Tutul's video installation feels like watching a movie. He has shown the society and humanity in a very symbolic way. Basically, his artwork shows the path of truth-beauty-goodness. The challenge is to build a livable world substituting peace for greed, envy, hatred and war, and protecting nature from man-made threats. We should hope that this concerted effort of artists in social reform is open to people of all generations. It is important to bring people outside the circle of art and culture to this biennale. It is expected and assured that the concerned authorities have taken initiative in this regard. The young generation of school-college-university level should be stimulated with aesthetic sense to enjoy this art biennale. At least through documentaries and specific planning in next year's events, students across the country should be encouraged to enjoy this art fiesta. The change of consciousness that will happen through art and cultural practices is not possible in any other way. ☺

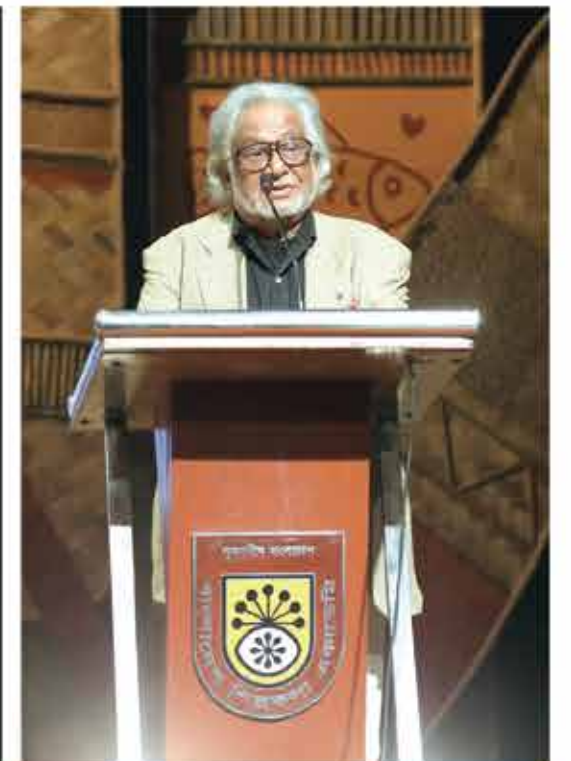
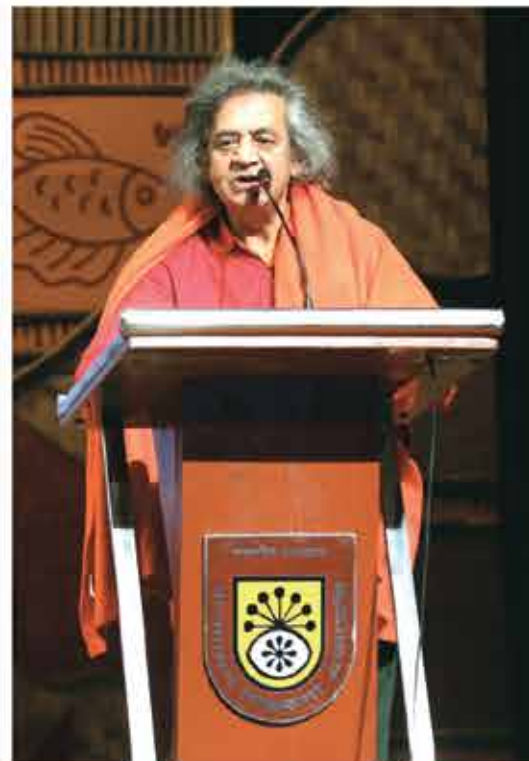




People from different strata of society, with a shared love for art, come to the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy where the '19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022' takes place. The biennale, dedicating to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, attracts a huge crowd everyday with its colours and contours. Art enthusiasts, students from different educational institutions and representatives from various socio-cultural and economic organizations, not only see the artworks, sculptures, installations and performance art displayed at all the floors of the National Art Gallery building, but also enjoy various culinary delights, visit craft fair. The month-long arrangement also includes an international seminar, an international art camp, river cruise, sightseeing of historical places, cultural shows along with a folk-themed decoration at the entire premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. 🇬🇧



Former Cabinet Secretary Kabir Bin Anwar coupled with his wife visited the 19th edition of the 'Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022' at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on Wednesday. Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Liaquat Ali Lucky and Syeda Mahbuba Karim Mini, Director, Department of Fine Arts, of BSA, along with other officials of the academy accompanied him during the visit.



▲ Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, MP, visited the 19th edition of the 'Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022' at the National Art Gallery of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on Monday. Md. Abul Mansur, Secretary of Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Syeda Mahbuba Karim Mini, Director of the Department of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, along with other officials of the academy accompanied her during the visit.

AT THE CONFLUENCE OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH BRINGS HARMONY IN DIVERSITY



Bulletin Correspondent

Entering into the space of National Art Gallery building of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, art lovers could but wonder with seeing diverse artworks displayed every nook and cranny of the premises as the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 went on. The Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, the pioneering biennale of Asia and the Asia Pacific regions, has so far boasted of making an artistic breeze among the artists from around the world thanks to the bold and visionary decisions of diffusing the biennale globally. Initiated in January 1981 with the participation of just 14 Asian countries, the biennale in the course of time, grow into a unique umbrella of artists from across the world, earning for it an international name.

Launched with the aim to explore Asian modern and contemporary art with an additional focus on internationally circulating practices, the month-long exhibition today serves as a display place for diverse modes of artistic creation

ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH, SINCE ITS BEGINNING IN 1981, HAS ATTEMPTED TO DISPLAY THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF VARIOUS ARTISTIC ENDEAVOURS OF OUR TIME IN WHICH CONTINUITY AND CHANGE COME TOGETHER.



and discursive intervention. The platform has attempted to display the various artistic endeavours of our time in which continuity and change come together. The geographical parameter is important only in a generic sense and for identification of sponsorship in this pioneering venture. It was inevitable that with time, other regions that share similar artistic impulses and face identical challenges of identity would be included in the exhibition the way it has happened in the recent years.

The exhibition is showcasing the artistic heritage and contemporary aesthetic trend in Asia and the beyond. The organizers believe that with each biennale, a milestone will have been crossed showing progress achieved by established and young artists in dealing with both continuity and changes in their works. A folk inspired decoration coupled with a craft fair, a food court, a children corner and more have attributed the arrangement of artistic fullness. Installation and new media works have got a prominent place at the

biennale. Performance art pavilion was one of the main segments of the arrangement.

Truly, the 19th Asian Art Biennale highlights Bangladesh in the world of the art arena, as the discussants said at the opening ceremony of the month-long biennale at the National Theatre Hall of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on 08 December. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was virtually inaugurating the grand art fiesta from her official Ganabhaban residence in Dhaka. "Artists made an effect with their artworks on mass movements from the British era to the recent autocrat movement. We always supported promoting the Bengali language, culture, drama, film and creativity at the grassroots. The government had built Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in 493 Upazilas alongside constructing new buildings in 64 districts of Shilpakala Academy to preserve and display local and foreign artworks. The biennale will exchange views and ideas on contemporary art among nations," said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her speech.

The Asian Art Biennale is an important platform for the convergence of regional and international art. Since 2012 this biennale is open to the world. We invited 125 countries to participate in this biennale to celebrate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu, while 493 artists from 114 countries including Bangladesh are participating in the exhibition. The 19th edition of the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh has been dedicated to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The most encouraging thing for us is that the number of participating artists are increasing every year, this year, 156 artworks by 149 artists from Bangladesh are being displayed. This number and diversity show the development of art practice in the country. Our progress and success not only in the economic field but also in the field of arts and it's appreciated all over the world. The Asian Art Biennial has now marked a milestone in the cultural calendar of the region.

The month-long exhibition organized by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is being held at the National Art Gallery of the academy till 07 January, 2023 under the patronization of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. President of the jury board of the event artist Rafiqun Nabi announced the name of the awardees and on behalf of the PM, State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP handed over the awards to the recipients.

The 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 is featuring 649 artworks including paintings, prints, photographs, sculptures, installations, new media arts, and performance arts from 114 countries. Besides, a two-day international seminar on the title 'Home and Displacement' with the participation of local and foreign artists, art critics, jury members, and observers was held on Friday and Saturday at the National Art Gallery Auditorium and Seminar Rooms of the National Theatre Building of the BSA.

Asian Art Biennale was conceived by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy with the assumption of continuity and



change and the co-existence of modernity and tradition in the arts of Asian countries.

Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, since its beginning in 1981, has attempted to display the kaleidoscope of various artistic endeavours of our time in which continuity and change come together. The geographical parameter is important only in a generic sense and also for identification of sponsorship in this pioneering venture. It was inevitable that with time other regions that share, more or less, the same artistic impulses and face the same challenge of forging an identity of their own, would be included in the exhibition as has happened in recent years.

Countries invited for participation are

responsible for the selection of quality works of their artists that best represent the contemporary trends and practices in those countries. But because of space restriction, countries are requested to limit their number of artworks to correspond to allotted wall and floor space.

There are two committee panels selected for the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh. One panel is to select the art pieces on display and the other to be the judges for the competition, which awards Honorable Mention Awards and Grand Awards to the winners. The first group is made up of art critics and artists, and at least a member from Bangladesh and four foreigners are selected for the five member jury. 9



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THE 19TH ASIAN ART BIENNALE BANGLADESH 2022 CONCLUDES AT BSA

including our great language movement and liberation war. International events like the Asian Art Biennale promote creativity, benefit countries and civilizations and, above all, promote humanity.

Simeen Hussain Rimi, MP, Chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was supposed to attend the event as a special guest, but, due to sudden illness she couldn't attend the programme and send her speech to the BSA authority. The emcee of the event read out the speech on her behalf.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP; Cultural Affairs Secretary Md. Abul Monsur coupled with renowned artists – Monirul Islam and Shahabuddin Ahmed also attended the event as special guests. Director, Fine Art Department of BSA Syeda Mahbuba Karim delivered the welcome speech at the ceremony.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs KM Khalid, MP said, "Just like our literary sector is awakened by organizing the Amar Ekushey Book Fair every year, our art sector has also been awakened by the Asian Art Biennale exhibition, which is organized in every two years. With the participation of local and foreign artists, this exhibition has become a rich platform for creativity, knowledge, experience and exchange of hearts and minds."

The State Minister made these remarks in the closing ceremony of the biennale, organized by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy under the auspices of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

The State Minister also said that the Father of the Nation believed wholeheartedly that political and economic freedom is meaningless without cultural freedom. In 1974, Bangabandhu said in his speech as the chief guest at the literary conference organized by Bangla Academy, "The joys and pains of the suffering people of this country should be expressed in literature and art. Literature and art should be used for their welfare. People are the source of all literature and art. No great literature or advanced works of art can ever be created in isolation from the people." The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is working relentlessly under the direction of the Honorable Prime Minister to develop the people-oriented culture promised by the Father of the Nation.



Cultural Affairs Secretary Md Abul Monsur said that any kind of art exhibition is important for Bangladesh. A knowledge-based, thoughtful, humane and creative generation is needed to build a smart society, which is one of the elements of establishing a smart Bangladesh by 2041. This international art exhibition has created an immense opportunity for creative and contemplative knowledge practice. Echoing the spirit of 'Joy Bangla', eminent artist Shahabuddin Ahmed said, "I have been so many art exhibitions and art biennales of different countries. However, I smell the essence of my motherland through the Asian Art Biennale, organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. This smell reminds me of the rich culture of our country." "Through this exhibition, our country's name is spreading beyond the border, and that's our ultimate success," he added.

"The Asian Art Biennale is so popular among the youth that the line to enter the premises reached up to the main road every day. This proves today's generation has that thirst for the arts and culture of our country," said Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General of BSA.

He also stated that they will arrange the exhibition for two months instead of one month from next year. The grand exhibition of the biennale will continue until 13 January 2023.

Followed by the speech giving, there was also a short cultural segment where the performers from the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy displayed the plight and pain of leaving the motherland of Rohingya people through their performance titled "Rohingyanama". The Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh exhibited two and three-dimensional artworks including paintings, prints, photographs, sculptures, installations, new media works and performance arts. This art exhibition is one of the most popular art exhibitions in the country especially among the young generation. The exhibition was jam-packed the whole month with young boys and girls who came to visit with their friends and family. They were seen dressed up in traditional wear, clicking photos with the artworks.

"I visited this place at least three times with my friends and family. Although I am not an art enthusiast, this exhibition is very fun and thought-provoking. It's sad that now I have to wait two more years to enjoy this exhibition again," said Turanur Islam, a student of the University of Dhaka.

Maria, who came to visit the Asian Art Biennale with her younger sister, thinks that these types of exhibitions can really make the youth interested in the arts and culture instead of glued over cell phones.

This year the theme of the exhibition was "Home and Displacement."

Famous artists from different countries portrayed the gut-wrenching pain of leaving the motherland through their artworks. The artworks also depicted the anguish and plight of refugees all over the world.

Apart from this, the biennale featured interesting segments including-Children's corner, an International art camp, two-day international seminar on the titled 'Home and Displacement', Bangabandhu and Liberation War and performance arts.

Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, MP, inaugurated the exhibition as the chief guest at the National Theatre auditorium of BSA on December 8. Organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in association with the Cultural Affairs Ministry, the month-long exhibition displayed over six hundred artworks by different artists from 114 countries of the world. The biennale showcased varied arts including two and three dimensional artworks like painting, print, photography, sculpture, installation, performance and new media art.

The 114 countries including Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Afghanistan, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, The Philippines, The United States of America (USA), United Kingdom, Mongolia, Peru, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Egypt, Kenya, Turkey, Ukraine, Iran, Russia and Germany participated in the event.

Earlier, a jury panel comprising five members with one from Bangladesh and one each from UK, Poland, Turkiye and Sri Lanka were responsible for the judgment of the displayed artworks in the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh as well as selected best artworks for three grand awards and six honourable mention awards.

Jury Board President prominent artist Rafiqun Nabi announced the names of winners at the inaugural session and later awards were given to winners.

The Asian Art Biennale exhibition is the most prestigious and biggest art festival of Bangladesh as well as the oldest international art biennale event in Asia. From the beginning to 2014 the event was the platform only for artists of the Asian and Pacific region. In 2016, the organising committee of the exhibition has decided to expand its glory throughout the world. As a result artists from 55 countries from around the world had participated in the 17th edition. And in this year participating countries number 114 including Bangladesh has broken the previous record. 🎉

19TH
ASIAN
ART BIENNALE
BANGLADESH
2022



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দ্বিবার্ষিক এশীয়
চারুকলা প্রদর্শনী
বাংলাদেশ
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BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY
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“THIS IS THE SECOND LARGEST BIENNALE IN THE WORLD AFTER VENICE BIENNALE”

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warming, pandemic, lockdowns economical inequalities, ecological catastrophe. All those aspects are interested for artists from this region. And they are elaborated in a very original way. More than 100 countries, I must say that I'm impressed by the scale of this. Even right now in this edition of Asian Art Biennale, more than 100 countries are represented by artists. Many works are exhibited in several galleries that are located in the premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. So, it is a really enormous effort. First to collect all those works and then to curate them, really moving and meaningful entities, so it's really impressing work that is done by organizers of this event.”

ALEXEY KANIS, Russia

For me this is an honour to present my artwork in this biennale, my sculpture, I have so many connections with Bangladeshi artists and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. It's very important for me. I have so many trips for different countries in the world, and in Bangladesh, I'm a first timer. It's very interesting for me. So thank you Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.”

CONSTANTIN MIGLIORINI, Italy

“The level of this biennale is very high. You might have seen really very great artist and very good quality of installations and very good paintings, graphics are exhibited. I don't know exactly from which country, but I would come back to see again to watch better. This organization is very good. I think that it's much better than it was in the

six years ago.”

ELMAR ENTON PEINTNER, Austria

“It's for the first time I'm here in Bangladesh at the Asian Art Biennale. I like this biennale very much as it is a prestigious biennale and I like that there are artists from all over the world. If you go through the floors, you can see diverse facets of arts. But regarding contemporary art, I would like to mention that this biennale is important. I want to congratulate the organizers for presenting such a big biennale.”

SHEFALI RANTHE, Denmark

“It's a great work. And I have got amazed every time when I'm here. Actually, being an artist, I am even more proud as I was born in Bangladesh. So for me, this is my root. This is my family, this is my place. I'm really pleased being here. And for the art scene, it's been very high level, so it's well done. Yes, this is a great way to meeting with international artists and sharing what's going on. And sometimes when we are so many different painters, we still somehow have the same idea in our mind. And the best way to see it is how we actually think different for the same subject.”

PARETAS HUTANGGURA, Thailand

“It's my first time visit to Bangladesh. I've never seen such kind of great, wide exhibition. Even the inauguration was very much impressive.”

MOHAMMAD HAFIZ, Malaysia

“This is a good opportunity, because this is my first time, my first experience in this biennale. So, when I came to Bangladesh early this year, it gave me a



“THIS BIENNALE IS MAGNIFICENTLY ORGANIZED AND TOTALLY DIFFERENT AS WE EXPECTED. IN SINGAPORE, WE KNOW BANGLADESH THROUGH HARD-WORKING AND GENTLE WORKERS OF BANGLADESH, BUT WHEN I'M HERE L, I'M REALLY SURPRISED THAT THERE ARE LOTS OF ARTWORKS. WE HOPE TO SHOWCASE THE IMPRESSION OF BANGLADESH TO THE REST OF THE WORLD. WHEN I WILL COME BACK TO SINGAPORE, WITH SOME OF THE FELLOW ARTISTS, IN JANUARY, WE WILL TRY TO ARRANGE AN EXHIBITION LIKE THIS ONE.”
RAMLEE BIN NAWEE, Singapore

great exposure for my experience and also my practice because I can see a lot of contemporary artworks that were displayed in this Asian Art Biennale 2022. I think, everything is perfect from the management. So maybe, I hope that my country can also organize the big event like this.”

SHANGHAMITRA DAS, India

“This is my fifth times in the Asian Art Biennale. I'm impressed enough seeing the diversification of artworks. This year 114 countries are participating. This is huge area of work, huge span of work. I'm surprised that how Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy made it successful.”

ALAK RAY, Bangladesh

“This year 114 countries and many foreign artists are participating which is

more three or four times than the previous one. What does it mean? It means the culture of Bangladesh is flourishing and the people of Bangladesh are art and culture lover that news is spreading across the world.”

PHILIO HERMANN, Cyprus

“I'm very excited to be here. I'm very impressed with the organization of 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022. I really think Bangladesh is going through a beautiful renaissance. I never expected to find this organization with such standard. Here, people are amazing and the hospitality is so unique. I wish I had more days because I'm enjoying every single moment.”

RAJA SEGAR, Sri Lanka

“Before visiting Bangladesh, I thought Bangladesh is not a big country, it's an underrated country, but when I am here I am fascinated with seeing the hospitality, cooperation and knowledgeable people. Even I'm fascinated with your government for their contributions and support to the field of art and culture. I can say that frankly, you won't get such kind of support from Sri Lankan Government. We are passing through a crisis moment. Your Government has provided us with a 200 million dollar loan. I also should do something for your country though my painting.”



“I AM IMMENSELY SURPRISED WITH SEEING THE PARTICIPATION OF SO MANY COUNTRIES, ARTISTS, DIFFERENT ARTWORKS AND DEMONSTRATION OF VARIOUS CULTURES. THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH ARE SO KIND AND PEACEFUL. IN EUROPE, PEOPLE SOMETIMES THINK THAT THESE KINDS OF COUNTRIES ARE NOT SAFE, BUT I FEEL IT'S VERY SAFE. I WANT TO SAY THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO WORK DAY AND NIGHT TO PRODUCE SUCH A HUGE EXHIBITION. THIS YEAR I WENT TO VISIT VENICE. I CAN SAY THIS IS THE VENICE OF ASIA. THIS EXHIBITION IS VERY SIGNIFICANT FOR THIS COUNTRY, BECAUSE PEOPLE OF EUROPE SOMETIMES THINK THAT OTHER COUNTRIES ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT AS THE EUROPEAN ONES. I DON'T AGREE WITH THIS. I SAW MANY ARTWORKS BY THE ARTISTS OF 114 COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. SO, IT CAN BE SAID THAT THIS IS THE SECOND LARGEST BIENNALE IN THE WORLD AFTER VENICE BIENNALE.”

ANA SILVIA MALHADO, Portugal



“THIS IS THE SECOND LARGEST BIENNALE IN THE WORLD AFTER VENICE BIENNALE”

The 19th edition of Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022 put together international artists, curators, jury, critics, connoisseurs and art lovers from all over the world. Our bulletin correspondent catches up many of them who shared their thoughts and reflections about the biennale, organized by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Excerpts from the foreign and Bangladeshi artists:

TONINO MAURIZI, *Italy*

“I really enjoyed the time together here in Bangladesh. I started my artistic career when I was 16-year old at Milano in Italy and during the last 20 years I exhibited my arts all around the world including Paris, Germany and Switzerland. But, this is really a great event for the cultural exchange, because it has engaged all the efforts by the collective work force of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Bangladesh is a young country, but it has shown some sort of maturity of rringing the biennale. To my knowledge from the worldwide visit, I consider this biennale is the second largest biennale worldwide with regards to its large number of participating artists, high level of quality artworks, and for the cultural exchange. I realize the symposium is great treat to the exchange of inter-cultural dialogue among nations. I am truly thankful to Bangladeshi Government and the authority of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy for inviting me and for the great hospitality.”

IWONA BLAZWICK, *also a Member of the Jury,* *England*

“I'm exploring such incredible body of works. We have paintings, sculptures, videos, photographs and diverse volume of works. We also have artists of different generations. So it's a great snapshot of what's happening across the Bengal region today. It is a very difficult decision for us to choose anyone as because each of these works has its own exciting, dynamic and aesthetic composition and merit.



However, we did find some unifying factors. One of the key elements of all our lives over the last two years has been the impact of pandemic. And we saw in this biennale, many works of art made by artists about the experience of living through lock-down. Many of them are expressing that sense of isolation or loneliness but also of self-reflection of thinking about the nature of being. Many artists also, during that time, has become hyper aware of the natural world. There are many works that feature animals and in particular birds. I think, we all over the world had this experience for the first time of a world that was silent. So, this was a major factor in many of the works that are represented here. Another aspect is the relation with history. This year marks an important anniversary in the history of Bangladesh. And there are many artists



who want to pay tribute to that process of independence and how it shapes contemporary life today. I think this is a great exhibition for the general public, anyone coming here will find something that they can relate to which speak to their lives and their way of being. We also saw great surprises. Some works are quite challenging, others are taking very traditional ways of making, but I believe there is something here for everyone. So, I do wish to express my gratitude for having this opportunity to discover the great wealth of art from the region and also to be a visitor of Bangladesh.”

JAROSLAW SUCHAN, *also a Jury Member and Curator,* *Poland*

“I'm here as first curator and art historian from Poland. And what I would like to say, first of all, about

biennale, that is pretty amazing opportunity to meet excellent works coming from different countries. So, to get a deeper knowledge, especially about those art scenes, which are not very well known in Poland or in Europe in general. For me, the most interesting was meeting with local art scene with art of Bangladeshi artists. I discovered that this art scene is extremely diversified, that is extremely vivid. And what is interesting from my perspective is the fact that contemporary artists from Bangladesh and also from this region, on the one hand, referring to the local traditions to local techniques to local crafts materials that using them to create a statement about contemporary problems, about the issues that are important for us today. And not only in this region, but everywhere is global

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“I'M FROM THE NETHERLANDS, ONE OF THE FOUR PARTICIPATING DUTCH ARTISTS IN THE 19TH EDITION OF THE BIENNALE, AND I BROUGHT IN MY BIRDS, MY DRAWINGS. THEY TRY TO SHOW YOU HOW WE ARE ONE ECOSYSTEM TECHNOLOGY, MAN, NATURE AND THE ALL PARTS. AND I ALSO THINK, IF I WALK AROUND AND I SEE ALL THE OTHER ARTISTS THAT I HEAR THERE'S A GREAT CONNECTION AND IT COMES, SOMETIMES FOR SOCIAL, SOMETIMES POLITICAL, SOMETIMES FROM NATURE, HOW PEOPLE ACTUALLY ARE SHARING. WE ARE ONE ECOSYSTEM AND I'M VERY GRATEFUL THAT I CAN BE HERE. THE ORGANIZATION IS GETTING ME IS VERY GOOD, VERY FRIENDLY AND I'M MAKING OUT.”

JESPER KOOPER, Netherlands