

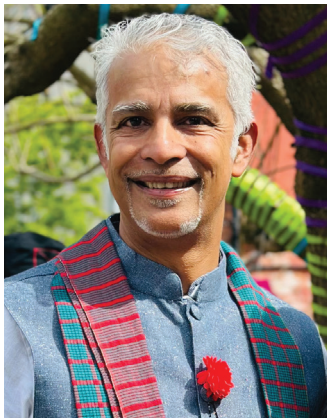


**Banglar
Lok Rang**



A group art Exhibition
of Bangladeshi Artists
2025





MESSAGE

Welcome to one of the signature events of Bangla Month 2025 - the exhibition “**Banglar Lokorang (Folk Colours of Bengal)**”, a creative journey where tradition and contemporary meet in a rich dialogue of colour, symbol, and thought.

Curated by Faim Islam, this exhibition presents Bengali folk art not merely as a marker of heritage, but as a living, dynamic form of expression. Through their works, the artists explore how folk traditions continue to resonate within contemporary social realities, belief systems, and political landscapes, revealing new layers of meaning.

“Banglar Lokorang” reminds us that folk art is never static. It is a living current of thought, continually reborn and reinterpreted by each generation, bridging the past and present while inspiring the future.”

Aftab Rahman

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Legacy West Midlands





MESSAGE

Welcome to the Bangla Month 2025 exhibition “Banglar Lokorang”. Curated by Faim Islam, this exhibition presents Bengali folk art not merely as a symbol of heritage, but as a living, dynamic form of creative expression. Visitors will witness how folk traditions continue to resonate within contemporary social, political, and cultural contexts, revealing new layers of meaning.

The exhibition reminds us that folk art is never static; it is continually reborn by each generation, connecting our past, present, and future. It is an invitation to dialogue, where art and culture come together to inspire viewers to think, feel, and engage in creative reflection.

Junna Begum

BADA Strategic Manager & Artistic Director (Bangla Month)





Banglar Lokorang

Unveiling the Vibrant Folk Motifs of Bangladesh

As we celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh through the “Bangla Month 2025” festivities, the Soho House Museum in Birmingham is set to become a canvas of vibrant colors and intricate patterns with the exhibition “Banglar Lokorang” (Folk Colours of Bengal). This two-week-long extravaganza, scheduled from November 2, 2025, promises to transport art enthusiasts on a journey through the folk motifs and art forms that define the essence of Bangladeshi culture.

Folk art is the heartbeat of a nation's cultural identity, reflecting the lives, traditions, and stories of its people. In Bangladesh, folk motifs are woven into the fabric of everyday life, adorning pottery, textiles, and wall paintings. These motifs are not just aesthetically pleasing but also carry deep symbolic meanings, often reflecting the country's agrarian roots, mythological tales, and communal harmony.

“Banglar Lokorang” is more than just an art exhibition; it's a celebration of the folk traditions that have been passed down through generations in Bangladesh. The exhibition will feature an array of artworks by talented Bangladeshi artists who have studied fine arts and are currently based in the UK. Their

pieces will showcase the diversity and richness of Bangladeshi folk art, from the intricate designs of traditional pottery to the vibrant colors of rural textiles.

The exhibition is part of the broader “Bangla Month 2025” celebrations, organised by Legacy West Midlands and the Bangladesh Artist Development Association (BADA). This initiative aims to promote Bengali culture in the UK, providing a platform for artists to showcase their work and connect with a wider audience.

“Banglar Lokorang” is a testament to the enduring legacy of Bangladeshi folk art and its relevance in contemporary times. The exhibition invites viewers to immerse themselves in the colors, patterns, and stories of Bangladesh's folk traditions. As we come together to celebrate this aspect of our shared cultural heritage, we are reminded of the power of art to bridge communities and foster understanding.

Let's celebrate the folk colours of Bengal together!

Mohammad Imam Hossain
Exhibition Co-ordinator

MESSAGE



Folk art is not a residue of the past; it is a living dialogue between memory and imagination. Within every motif, rhythm, and colour of Bengal's vernacular tradition lies the pulse of a collective consciousness – an invisible philosophy that transforms ordinary life into poetic form.

Folklore of Bengal re-examines this aesthetic legacy through a contemporary lens. The artists in this exhibition reinterpret folk symbols not as imitations of heritage but as conversations with it – questioning, transforming, and rediscovering personal and cultural identity through the process of making.

Alongside its celebration of form and colour, the exhibition reflects the shifting social and political climate of present-day Bangladesh — the resurgence of religion-based politics, the rise of extremism, and

the tensions these forces impose on artistic freedom and cultural plurality. Through their works, the artists expose how these realities shape the evolving language of art and the human condition it mirrors. Here, light and shadow, myth and modernity, memory and material coexist in a single current. Folklore of Bengal is not an act of nostalgia but an affirmation of continuity – a recognition that tradition is not static but alive, reborn through every act of creation.

Through this exhibition, we celebrate not only the visual richness of Bangladeshi folk art but its enduring spirit – the spirit that renews ancient wisdom in the language of contemporary art.

MD Faim Islam

*Curator & Artist Development
Officer
Legacy WM*



Within this artwork lies a quiet universe of emotions and untold stories. The two masks stand like timeless guardians, silently watching over human feelings, fears, and memories. The fusion of worn jute textures and painted wooden faces bridges the past and the present. This piece is more than mere decoration it is an echo of the human soul, where silence speaks, and the hidden world behind the masks whispers its own eternal truth.



Artist Name: Tahmina Akhter

Department: Craft

University : University of Dhaka

University Session: 2008–2009

Home District: Dhaka

Current Residence: Plaistow, London

Title of the Artwork: Silent Guardians of the Masks

Medium: mixed

Size: 35cm x 45cm

Inspired by the folk art Sora Chitro, this mixed-media creation combines acrylic and recycled materials to honour the cultural heartbeat of Bangladesh. The composition unites many motifs into a single frame — a symbol of how heritage and identity intertwine across generations.



Artist Name: Tasrina Nargis

Department: Graphic Design

University : University of Dhaka

University Session: 2008–2009

MA in Graphic Design and Branding,
University of Hertfordshire(2023-2024)

Home District: Kushtia, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Plaistow, London

Title of the Artwork: **Sora Chitro Reimagined**

Medium: Acrylic on recycled paper on canvas

Size: 60cm x 75cm

Myartpracticeisrootedinintrospection and the visual language of Bengali folk traditions. In my series “The Mind-Elephant,” I reinterpret the mystical philosophy of the Charyapada through folk motifs, earthen tones, and symbolic color. The elephant becomes a metaphor for the restless human mind-tethered by desire and fear, yet seeking release through wisdom and meditation.

The canvas surface carries the texture of clay walls, evoking the warmth and memory of Bengal's rural life. Through vivid acrylic hues, alpina-inspired lines, and rhythmic ornamentation, I seek to create a meditative space where color and consciousness meet.

Ultimately, my work invites viewers to encounter their own mind-elephant to pause, reflect, and experience the quiet illumination that lies within stillness.



Artist Name : Md Mashud Hasan

Department : Drawing and Painting

University : University of Dhaka

University Session : DU 2010-2011

Home District: Chuadanga, Bangladesh

Current Residence: East ham, London

Title of the Artwork: মনরূপ হাতি / The Mind-Elephant.

An Inner Journey through the Charyapada

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 50 × 70 cm

Through my weaving, I express a deep reverence for folk lore and traditions. Each pattern and motif carry the essence of folk stories, embodying the rich tapestry of cultural heritage and communal bonds. My work weaves these narratives into tangible

form, preserving and honouring the timeless wisdom and emotional depth of folk traditions. In every thread, I capture the heartfelt connection between past and present, illustrating how folklore's beauty and meaning continue to inspire and resonate.

Weaving and folk traditions have intertwined since ancient times, with textiles reflecting cultural stories, values, and identities. Across centuries, weaving has preserved folk patterns and motifs, serving as a medium for storytelling and maintaining heritage, thus

connecting generations through the art of crafting shared cultural history.



Artist Name : S M Meela Pasha

Department : Graphic Design

University of Dhaka

Session : 2009-2010

Home District : Narayanganj

Current Residence: Enfield , London

Title of the Artwork: : Beauty of Bengal

Media : Acrylic on canvas

In a world where identities shift with circumstance, we are all hiding behind masks. Every face we show is shaped by place, by moment, by expectation, each one a fragment of who we are. I believe that within every person lies a hidden self, nurtured quietly by their culture, traditions, and surroundings.

My work explores this layered identity, the contrast between who we are inside and who we appear to be. Through the language of folk art, I express emotions rooted in my heritage, drawing strength and truth from the rhythms of my community. Folk becomes my voice, a bridge between the personal and the collective, between the hidden and the seen.

As we move through a world fractured by conflict and cruelty, I turn to art and culture as acts of unity and resistance. They remind us of our shared humanity, our capacity for empathy, and our longing for connection.

This work is my search for light, a soulful journey toward a more beautiful, compassionate future world, where masks fall away and we can face one another as we truly are.



Artist Name: MD Arfin Hossain

Department: Drawing and painting

University : University of Dhaka

University Session: 2008–2009

Home District: Rangamati, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Nottingham, UK

Title of the Artwork: Behind the Mask

Medium: Digital drawing and mix media

Size: 92 cm x W: 92cm



Full Name: Md Faim Islam

Department: Drawing and Painting

University: University of Dhaka

University Session: 2013-2014

Home District: Naogaon, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Birmingham, UK

Title of the Artwork: Looking Back at the Bengali Genocide

Size of the Artwork: 22" x 27"

Medium: Screen Print on Paper.



Artist Name : Afruza Aktar

Department : Graphic Design

University: University of Dhaka

University Session: 2006-07

Home District: Chandpur, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Cheltenham, London

Title of the Artwork: : Banglar Shapla

Medium : Acrylic on canvas



Through my weaving, I express a deep reverence for folk lore and traditions. Each pattern and motif carry the essence of folk stories, embodying the rich tapestry of cultural heritage and communal bonds. My work weaves these narratives into tangible form, preserving and honouring the timeless wisdom and emotional depth of folk traditions. In every thread, I capture the heartfelt connection between past and present, illustrating how folklore's beauty and meaning continue to inspire and resonate. Weaving and folk traditions have intertwined since ancient times, with textiles reflecting cultural stories, values, and identities. Across centuries, weaving has preserved folk patterns and motifs, serving as a medium for storytelling and maintaining heritage, thus connecting generations through the art of crafting shared cultural history.



Artist Name: Nabila Nabi

Department: Craft

University of Dhaka

University Session: 2009-2010

Home District: Sirajgonj, Bangladesh

Current Residence:: Manchester, United Kingdom

Title of the Artwork: Folk tale in Weaving

An Inner Journey through the Charyapada

Medium: Tapestry

Size: 20"X 12"



Full Name: Zayed Ahmed Khan
 Department: Ceramics
 University : University of Dhaka
 University Session: 1989-1990
 Home District: : Sylhet, Bangladesh
 Current Residence: Birmingham, UK

Title of the Artwork: Fisherman
 Size of the Artwork: 55cm x 85cm
 Medium/Media Used: Mix media



Artist Name : Sumita Sultana
 Department: Graphic Design
 University : University of Dhaka
 University Session: , 1989-1990
 Current Residence: Birmingham, UK

Title of the Artwork: Colour of Harmony
 Size of the Artwork: 55cm x 85cm
 Medium/Media Used: Acrylic

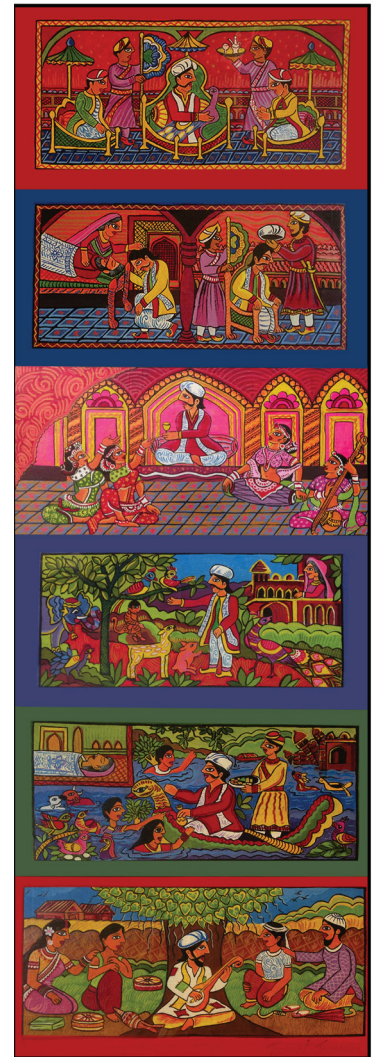


This artwork is a traditional Patachitra (scroll painting) created using vibrant acrylic colours, portraying the life and philosophy of the legendary mystic poet and songwriter Hasan Raja of Bengal. Known for his spiritual songs and deep reflections on nature, humanity, and the divine, Hasan Raja (1854–1922) remains a powerful cultural icon in Bangladeshi folk heritage.

The painting is composed of multiple horizontal panels, each narrating a different aspect of Hasan Raja's life and his connection with people, music, and spirituality. In the top section, the painting illustrates scenes of royal life, reflecting Hasan Raja's early days as a zamindar (landlord), enjoying worldly pleasures and wealth. The middle sections depict his spiritual awakening — leaving behind the material world to embrace mysticism, singing songs under trees, and interacting with common people. He is shown surrounded by villagers, musicians, and nature, emphasising his shift from luxury to a life of reflection and devotion.

The bright red, blue, and green backgrounds reflect the festive and lively nature of Bengali folk traditions. Intricate linework and rhythmic compositions follow the stylistic features of traditional patachitra, blending storytelling with decorative patterns. Each scene is filled with symbolic elements — trees representing enlightenment, musical instruments symbolising divine connection, and rivers reflecting the flow of spiritual wisdom.

Through this artwork, the artist pays tribute to Hasan Raja's philosophy of humility, love for humanity, and closeness to nature. It not only celebrates the visual



Artist Name: Tazrian Tabassum

Department: Drawing and Painting

Department: University of Development Alternative, Dhaka

University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom -2024

University Session: 2016

Home District: Chittagong, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Upton Park, London

Title of the Artwork: Hasan Raja (Potchitra)

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 16" × 45"

Culture is like an open sky without borders or walls. The free expression of the human mind forms the very essence of culture, and art serves as its creative embodiment. Art and culture flow together like parallel streams, yet today this flow faces growing obstacles. Artists must consider carefully how their colors, sounds, and ideas will be perceived before they even share their work. The joy of creation is often veiled by fear.

This artwork reflects that harsh reality a narrative of an artist's lost freedom of thought, silenced expression. What was once the highest form of self-expression has been transformed into an instrument of political power and commercial interests. Artistic creativity, commodified and shaped by capital, often loses its authentic soul.

When artists lose the liberty to think and create freely, society's mental and cultural progress slows. Culture cannot survive in isolation; it thrives through people's free thinking, courage to question, and the open flow of creativity. When political ideologies seek to dictate art's language, art risks becoming mere propaganda, and the artist a symbol of enforced silence.

Yet within art lies the enduring potential for freedom. Artists who silently resist through brush or pen bear witness to history. Regardless of obstacles, the spirit of art persists because the human yearning for freedom endures forever within creative expression, transcending ideology, power, and time.

The "tepa putul", a traditional Bangladeshi clay doll, is portrayed here with hands bound tightly by ropes a potent symbol of suppressed freedom and enforced silence. Alongside it stands a human figure in yoga meditation, its skin engraved with rope-like marks, signifying internalized restraint and a quiet but persistent struggle. Together, these pieces capture the delicate tension between the impulse for self-expression and the weight of imposed limitations, embodying the fragile balance between creativity and control.

The hands are bound and the thoughts are bound.



Artist Name: Tanvir Mahmud

Department: Sculpture

Department: University of Development Alternative, Dhaka

University Session: 2016

University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom - 2024

Home District: Chittagong, Bangladesh

Current Residence:

Title of the Artwork: Bound Silence—art loses its voice")

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 16" × 45"

Bangladesh always reminds me of the river, its endless rhythm, its fishermen, and their simple, timeless lives. It's a sight so common, yet so achingly beautiful, a song etched into the land itself.

When I think of the landscapes of my country, I see the fishermen casting their nets, their tiny boats drifting like verses on a vast, breathing poem. The river hums a melody of labour and love, of survival and serenity.

I have left behind that song, but it still sings within me. Whenever I think of home, I long to soar like a bird over those waters, watching their quiet struggles, their graceful, everyday poetry. This artwork is my way of returning, to that river, to that song, to the eternal life that flows within Bangladesh.



Artist Name: Urmī Roy

Department: Printmaking

University: University of Dhaka

Session: 2012-2013

Home District: Khulna, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Cambourne, Cambridge.

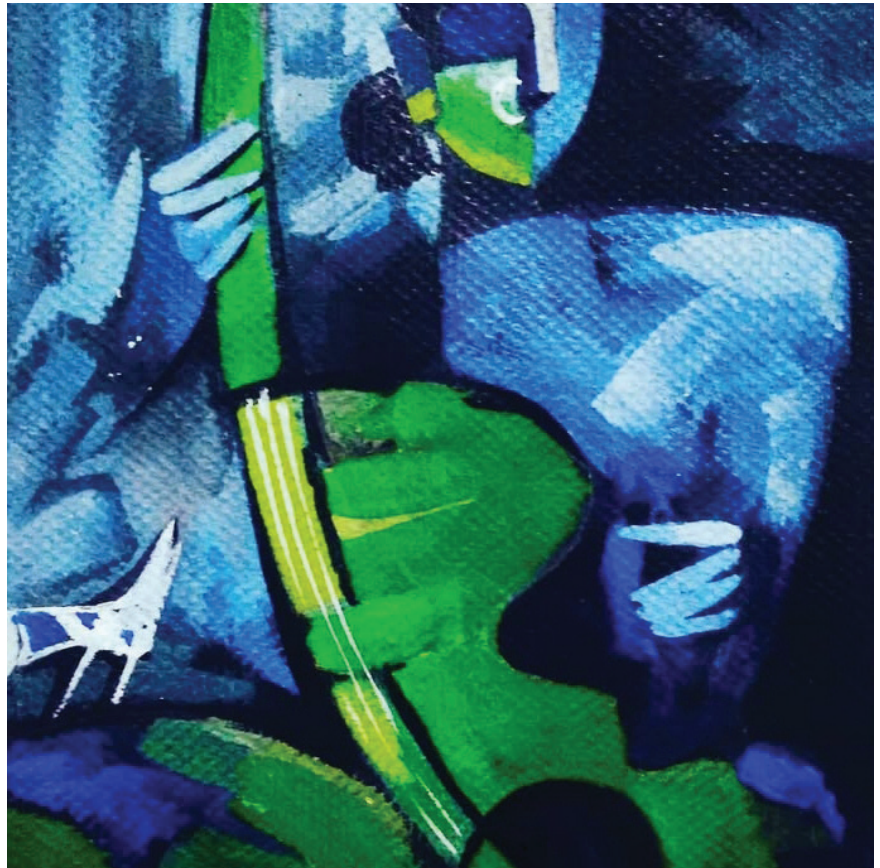
Title of the Artwork: নদী মাতৃকা / **Nodimatrika-01**

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 60cm x 60cm

Bengali women are deeply connected to the vibrant cultural of Bangladesh. They embody grace, resilience, and creativity, playing a vital role in preserving and celebrating the nation's rich heritage. Through festivals such as Pohela Boishakh (the Bengali New Year), Durga Puja, and Nabanna (the harvest festival), Bengali women express their joy and devotion with color, rhythm, and art. Clad in bright saris—often in shades of red, white, and gold—they sing folk songs, decorate their homes with alpana (floral floor patterns), and share homemade sweets with family and friends.

Nature and womanhood intertwine beautifully in Bengali culture. The changing seasons marked by monsoon rains, golden harvests, and spring blossoms mirror the emotions and strength of women who nurture both family and community. Their celebration of life through dance, song, and rituals reflects an unbreakable bond with the land and its cycles.



Through my artwork, I seek to represent this spirit—the colors of festivity, the rhythm of nature, and the essence of womanhood in Bangladesh. Each brushstroke captures the laughter, the energy, and the quiet power of Bengali women, celebrating their timeless connection to culture, community, and the natural world that surrounds them.



Artist Name : Ananya Das

Department : Crafts

University : University of Dhaka

Session : 2012 –2013

Home District : Dhaka, Bangladesh

Current Residence: Salisbury Avenue, London

Title of the Artwork: Ramya

Medium : Acrylic

Size: 24" x 30"



Komola Sundory.”

Performance Art

I'd like to present a traditional Bengali love story called “Komola Sundory.” This can be performed either as a group piece or as a solo performance.

The story is deeply rooted in our folk culture and is expressed through dance, song, and storytelling, making it a powerful way to engage audiences from diverse backgrounds.

Synopsis

Komola Shundori, the beautiful daughter of a wealthy landlord, lives a life of privilege and admiration. Among her household servants is Karakun, who secretly falls in love with her after seeing her at the pond. Aware of the social divide and the dangers of his feelings, Karakun confides in his fellow servant, Gwalini. Out of sympathy, Gwalini writes a love letter on his behalf and delivers it to Komola Shundori when Karakun is too afraid to do so himself. However, the consequences are swift and brutal. The next day, the community is shaken to find the bodies of Karakun and Gwalini hanging from a tree silent victims of the rigid boundaries of class, power, and forbidden love.

Jay Deb (Dulu)

Guest Artist

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