

*(Date extended
due to Covid-19)*

29.03 – 05.04. 2020
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Mapping the Unseen

Mapping the devoid of
subjecthood of the invisible
Rohingya refugees



What is Mapping the Unseen?

Mapping the Unseen is an artistic research project, which is planned to be realized in four countries: Croatia, Bangladesh, Iran and Austria. It constitutes of artistic interventions on unseen, hidden topics - topics that are not discussed in public by the mainstream society. These interventions will be shown in the respective cities for several days during the space of one week.

The project strives for a programmatic visual and discursive treatment of a chosen topic, which will be identified and selected by participating art groups. Following this, parts of the project will be invited to Austria to enable an intercultural dialogue questioning the relevance of the topic there. The connection between the two countries is a person who lived in both cities where the venue takes place.

In the last step, a virtual web-based room will be developed. Through this virtual mapping, an artistic artefact that relates directly to the chosen topic is created.

Mapping the Unseen tries to answer the question: how it is possible to create a dialogue of and make visible both the unspoken and unseen through artistic research? This research is accompanying by transdisciplinary qualitative social research, auto-ethnography and depth hermeneutics.



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Curatorial Note by Ebadur Rahman:

প্যারিসের শেক্সপিয়ার এন্ড কোং বহির দোকানটিতে বাইবেল-এর একটা বাণী খচিত আছে। সবাই জানেন এই কোং-এর লেসবিয়ান, এনার্কিস্ট দোকানি জয়েসের ইউলিসিস প্রথম ছাপান। তিনি আতিথ্য দেয়া নিয়ে আমাদের স্মরণ করিয়ে দিয়ে বলছেন, কোন তিথিতে ইস্টদের তাঁর ফারিস্তা সমবাহারে অ-পরের রূপ পরিগ্রহন করে যে অতিথি হয়ে আসবেন তা কে জানে! দুনিয়া কাঁপানো ১০ দিনের প্রাণবায়ু বন্দী আছে "অতিথিসেবা"-র বাঙালীআনা ব্রতে। ব্রত শব্দে অবন ঠাকুর স্মরণ হচ্ছেন? বা, আব্দুর রাজ্জাক? বেশ! এর সাথে "ড্যাডিক্যাল হসপিটালিটি"-র ঈসায়ী ধারণাটি--যা আমি প্রথমত খ্রীষ্টান ওয়ার্কাস মুভমেন্ট-এর ডরোথি ডে, ফ্যাসিস্ট দার্শনিক হাইডেগার ও আফ্রিকান ইহুদি দেরিদা থেকে পড়ে পেয়েছি--জুড়ে দেয়া যায়। এখানে একটু বুঝে নিতে হবে যে, আমাদের গাঙ্গেয় বঙ্গোপসাগর, গেস্ট, হোস্ট, আর রেফিউজি ওতপ্রোত হয়ে যান। আপনারা কী জানেন দেশভাগের পর, ১৯৪৭/৪৮ ঈসায়ীতে, চাকায়, কলকাতা থেকে আসা মোহাজেররা, যেমন বেদারউদ্দীন, আবদুল লতিফ, মোমতাজ আলী খান ইত্যাদিরা শুধু পল্লীগীতি গাইতেন। কেন? আর আমাদের স্থানীয় মহিলারা, লায়লা আর্জুমান্দ বানু, আফসারী খানম, হুসনা বানু খানম প্রভৃতি গাইতেন রবীন্দ্রসংগীত। কেন? বেঙ্গল-আসাম রেলওয়ে স্থাপিত হবার পর ভাইজানকে নাইয়ের নিতে অনুরোধ করা বোনটির ভাওয়াইয়া প্রাণে কী নূতন অর্থ তৈরী হলো? এখন এর সাথে মিলান, কেন কলকাতার বানানো পদ্মা নদীর মাঝিতে, মাঝি নাও বাইতে বাইতে লালন সংগীত গায় আর আহমদ হুফা বলেন যে, মানিক পদ্মা নদীর মাঝিতে ইউরোপিয়ান এনলাইটেনমেন্ট-এর আদর্শ প্রতিমূর্ত করেছেন? তাহলে পদ্মা নদীর মাঝি নামধেয় চলচ্চিত্রটির সাথে "মনের মানুষ"-এর বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিক সংঘর্ষ কী আদৌ আছে?

তাহলে আহমদ হুফা ও কলকাতার গৌতম ঘোষের বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিক সংঘর্ষ কী আদৌ আছে? রেকর্ড কোম্পানিগুলো তীব্র বর্ণবাদিতার কারণে রেকর্ড শিল্পীদের মুসলিম নাম ব্যবহার করতে দিতেন না। এমনকি গীতিকার হিসেবে নজরুল-এর নাম পর্যন্ত রেকর্ডে খুঁজে পাওয়া মুশকিল হয়। অথচ গায়ক, শিল্পী, কবিরা মুসলিম সমাজের আক্রমণ ও অবহেলা থেকে আতিথ্য ও আশ্রয় পেতেন মেট্রোপলিটন আধুনিকতায় যা তাঁদের শিল্প বা সাহিত্যের মূল্যচেতনাকে, প্রকৃতপ্রস্তাবে, নাকচ করে দেয়। এই আধুনিকতা আর প্রাণ উচ্চাসের ফল্টলাইন, দ্বিভ্রত, বাঙালী মুসলমানের কিভাবে "তোমহারা রুটি, হামহারি গোস্ট" বা নিজ গতরের গোস্ট কেটে অতিথিকে খাইয়ে মেরামত করতে হয়? একরকম গরিবি ধরণের আর্ট-এপ্রোচ অধিগ্রহণ করে, দুনিয়া কাঁপানো ১০ দিন, তাঁর প্রধান কার্যক্রম হিসাবে "ড্যাডিক্যাল হসপিটালিটি" আর এর সম্পূর্ণ সামাজিক লেনদেন, কুটুম্বিতা, প্রতিবেশীর সাথে সদাচার ইত্যাদি দিয়ে, এই প্রবল ধনতান্ত্রিক, বাণিজ্যিক সম্পর্ক প্রধান সময়ে, চাকার বুক থেকে এক টুকরো ক্ষণস্থায়ী বেহেস্তি আশ্রয় হিসেবে স্থাপিত হতে চায়। এই আশ্রয়ে যতক্ষণ থাকবে, আমার উদ্দিষ্ট হলো, ততক্ষণ যেন, মানুষ শুধু একসাথে খাওয়াদাওয়া করে, আড্ডা দিয়ে, কবিতা পড়ে, একটু শান্তিতে দুটা চোখ বন্ধ করেই, একে ওপরের সাথে, বা বস্তুর সাথে বা খাওয়া-খাদ্যের সাথে, খাদক-খাদ্য, দালাল-খন্দের ইত্যাদি বাণিজ্যিক বিজাতীয় সম্পর্কের বাইরে মধুর ও আরামের কিছু সম্পর্ক রচনা করতে পারে। আমাদের সমবায়ী চর্চা, মূলত: তিনটি অভিমুখ গ্রহণ করবে: সাধন-যাপন, লেনদেন-আড্ডা ও সর্বোপরি চুপচাপ সব লিপিবদ্ধ করা--লেখা আয়ু, লোখা আয়ু, চুপ করা, শব্দহীন হও...

A virtual archive was created by the artist to get in touch with the project: www.10daysthatshooktheworld.com



“Your body must be heard.”
— Helene Cixous, *The Laugh of the Medusa*

“In *10 Days That Shook The World*, to perform the dual role of artist and curator, I attempt to collaborate with a generation of architect, archaeologist, anthropologist, writer, filmmaker, performing artist who interrogate the cartograph of displacement—of body, labor, language—from the contemporary reality, on the societal level; together, we will (re)write, and/or (re)organize connections between grand narratives of *living* histories—in organic and ephemeral forms—vis-à-vis displacements; we will trace the physical, behavioral, political and chemical realities enacted through these grand narratives in the Bangladeshi society. We will, at the same time, describe and appraise the underlining *relationships* of world-making—that displace feminized labor, erase genocide and activate politics of erasure—that sustain these grand living histories, by investigating and making visible the organic and synthetic relationships that composes these histories, rather than with strictly social or personal facts or artistic objects.

Without abandoning our positions of intersectional artists and collaborators, we submit our practice to participate in a performative architecture that shows a keen grasp of different strata of displacement by utilizing Rohingya refugee crisis as a central and polemizing issue in Bangladeshi society which is, ironically, virtually invisible in the US agenda dominated international news cycle.

Since late August 2017, more than 740,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled Burma’s Rakhine State to Bangladesh to escape the military’s large-scale campaign of ethnic cleansing. The atrocities committed by Burmese security forces, including mass killings, sexual violence, and widespread arson, amount to crimes against humanity. The United Nations described the military offensive in Rakhine, which provoked the exodus, as a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing”. Before August, there were already around 307,500 Rohingya refugees living in camps, makeshift settlements and with host communities, according to the UNHCR.

Disavowed by history, and devoid of subjecthood the invisible Rohingya refugees, do not even qualify as what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri call “Multitude”, which proclaims the “multitude” as an “active social subject, which acts on the basis of what the singularities share in common”. In fact, multitude turns out to be a class concept. The multitude is a whole of singularities. On these premises we can immediately begin to trace an ontological definition of the concept of the people which took shape within the hegemonic tradition of modernity and precludes Rohingya as a category of people or subject.

Adopting a low-brow relational account, *10 Days That Shook The World* is one of the most prominent operational activities inaugurating a performative architecture to embed a temporary autonomous zone for community interaction formed as radical hospitality: for cooking and sharing meals, teaching, reading, watching or making film, playing music, sleeping. Within this space, the power dynamics between host and guest or self and other interchange and dissolve into those of multitudes in spontaneous social action. Building *10 Days That Shook The World* as a site of open ended experimentation, we set up the conditions for which social interactions—in all its possibilities, uncertainties and paradoxes—are negotiated and continuously performed and re-performed by invisible bodies, spoken and re-spoken in inaudible voices—*10 Days That Shook The World* carries important voices that celebrate years of resistance – of resilience – of making more visible voices and stories that must be heard.

10 Days That Shook The World clears new paths for discourse via a form of sensuous knowledge production: food, spiritual traditions, erased oral histories, modern myths, as well as scholarly research. Our collective practice is based on three activities: performance, adda-social interaction and documentation-dissemination.“



Ebadur Rahman



Shafiqul Islam Chandan



Shahabuddin Helaly

Ebadur Rahman is a California-Dhaka-Paris based theoretician, filmmaker, curator, and artist. Ebadur was the artistic director and chief curator of Samdani Art Foundation and, one of the founders of Dhaka Art Summit; he was the Executive Editor of both Depart and Jamini, the only two English language art journals published in Bangladesh. Recently he has been employed, as a researcher, by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Austria.

He is a Ph.D. candidate in the Film and Digital Media Department, at the University of California, Santa Cruz; he studied Publishing at the University of Arts, London, and engaged Buddhism at the Naropa University, Colorado. Also, he trained in various monastic setting in Burma, India, Japan, Thailand and USA, with teachers like tetsugen Bernard Glassman sensei, Sasaki Roshi, and Nobel prize nominee Sulak Sivaraksa, the founder and director of the Thai NGO “Sathirakoses-Nagapradeepa Foundation”. Ebadur leads a publishing collective and, is the minister of propaganda of Gulmoher Republic, a micronation associated with People’s Participatory Museum.

He helped organize an international symposium at MAMUZ, the Lower Austrian museum of prehistory, in association with the Akademie; he presented his research on “pre-history” and paleolithic art at this symposium. Ebadur was commissioned, by Governor of Lower Austria, Johanna Mikl-Leitner, the German Ambassador to Austria H.E. Dr. Johannes Haindl, Zuecca Projects and the PhotoPhore to make a film based on a collateral project at the Venice Biennale 2019.

Alpha, a film Ebadur co-wrote, is representing Bangladesh, in 2020’s 92nd Academy Award for Best International Feature Film category.

Team of „10 Days that Shook the World“:

Shalahuddin Helaly (Assistant Curator)

Helaly is the son of a freedom-fighter, of the liberation war of Bangladesh, and a renowned local politician. An experienced screen based journalist, Helaly, pioneered investigative reporting for primetime television programs, in Bangladesh and has been working as a researcher with more than 10 years in different televisions stations and other medium and is known for his actual, ethical and impactful reports.

He is a local of Maheshkhali, Cox's Bazar, a coastal town, where world's largest refugee camps are located.

He has been the executive-editor of 'Probasshi-patro' an online news portal.

He has worked with the Al-Jazeera, BBC, AFP, ITV, South-Korean daily newspapers, a Riyadh based TV, Kaladan Press, Aajtak TV, and Thai PBS in different capacities.

Tanvir Ahmed Chowdhury (Assistant Gallerist)

Chowdhury is an experienced filmmaker, video artist, writer, creative content generator and a local of Chittagong.

Tahera Tabassum (Key Researcher and Collaborator)

Tabassum is a practicing architect who is vastly experienced in research and academia.

She is the executive director and founding member of Coastal Research and Development Foundation and the studio head and co-founder of Harappa Architects.

She had been a key member of the executive bodies and editing committee of D: the Architecture Magazine.

Afsana Latif (Key Researcher and Collaborator)

An architect and researcher Latif is a partner of PALOLIK. She specializes in different characteristics of disaster managements in urban spaces and community building.

Shafiqul Kabir Chandan

(Key Researcher and Collaborator)

A Milano, Italy based fiber artist, Chandan is a graduate of Kala Bhavana, Visva bharti, Santiniketan, India. He has shown his work all over the world but most recently at Fondazione Orestyadi di Gibellina, Palermo, Italy. Galerie Evropskeho domu The Europa House Gallery, Plzen, Republic of Czech; arte tessile, societa umanitaria, Milano.

He is an avid writer and researcher and his new book just came in 2020's Book Fair in Bangladesh.

Proshoon Rahmaan (Key Researcher and Collaborator)

Rahmaan is Dhaka based Writer & independent Filmmaker from Bangladesh. He established his Production Company, Imation Creatora, in 2007. His debut film 'Her Own Address' (Sutopar Thikana) was National Grant winner which portrayed womanhood of South Asia. 'The Birth Land' (JonmoBhume) is his 2nd feature Film based on the true stories of the lives of Rohingya refugees. He also made a feature length documentary on Rohingya crisis titled 'Long Period of Persecution' which had been result of long research and sensitive close look from that persecuted minorities point of view. He is working on a narrative feature titled 'Dhaka Dream', at this point; this film is intended to be the first part of a trilogy.

Apart from that there will be 2 gallery assistants and an art handler, a cleaner and a cook fulltime and few part time food handlers, kitchen helpers and a bus driver in the team.



Afsana Latif



Poster "10 Days That Shook The World"



Proshoon Rahmaan



Shatahuddin Helalytg



Tahera Tabassum



Shafiqul Islam Chandan

Role of the members in the project *Mapping the Unseen:*

Katrin Ackerl Konstantin is artist and psychologist, specialized in theater and participatory art. She is doing the artistic research in the project and is responsible of the concept, the implementation and moderation, as well as the artistic creation of the mapping.

Rosalia Kopeinig is a psychologist, whose work largely focuses on research in migration. She will lead the biographical work in the project and the depth hermeneutic analysis.

Andreas Hudelist is a researcher in performative art as well as in participation and democracy. He will do interviews with audience-members in the project and he is in charge of the dissemination part.

Regina Klein, sociologist, is moderator of the depth hermeneutic analysis.

Martina Ukowitz, a specialist in intervention research and transdisciplinarity at the University of Klagenfurt, focuses on the understanding of participation within the project.

Hadiuzzaman Syed is the so-called guide in the project, the link between the two regions, because he lived in both cities, Dhaka and Villach. He is an electronic engineer by profession, is interested in practices that transforms and affirms LIFE.

Due to Covid-19 the team (except Ebadur Rahman and Hadiuzzaman Syed) could not go to Bangladesh but we could stay in contact via Zoom or other virtual medias.

Claudia Six is a visual artist. She is doing the sketches and set designs, as well as the illustrations of the virtual equivalent, which aspires to be a mapping of the real rooms.

Philipp Luftensteiner, a Graphic designer who is creating the animation of the virtual mapping.

Ebadur Rahman is a California-Dhaka-Paris based theoretician, filmmaker, curator, and artist. He is involved as a partner in an artistic and curative aspect in the project, as well as in the decision making, as he takes part in the identification and selection of the marginalized topic.



Tentative Timeline and Themes:

29th, 30th, 31st March

Venue: Dhaka

(Rented house and some street side places where performance will take place.)

Themes:

- Introduction: Sharing of Identity and Experience
- Why there is no Audience
- Why everybody is an Artist
- Workshop with Rosalia Kopeinig
- Core theme: Displacement: Arakan-Kashmir-Palestine : Muslimder body-r displacement;
- Bengali and Rohingya historical relationships' Contextualization
- Film shows with live Concert
- Poetry reading/ Performance

*Because of Covid-19 the venues changed, also the timetable.
www.10daysthatshooktheworld.com*



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1st April

Venue: Norshingdi & Wari-Boteshshor

Archeological site

Themes:

- Art, Craft, Tradition vis-a-vis Bengali history

2nd, 3rd April

Venue: Dhaka

(Rented house and some street side places where performance will take place.)

Theme:

- Tradition and the process of displacement; erasure

4th April

Venue: Narawangonj-Mawa

Theme:

- Film and screen based arts and displacement

5th April

Venue: Rented house, church and few other place

Theme:

- Palm Sunday, Ending, Meeting and greeting with all participants