

Appendix one – Student Feedback

Manoora Sharifi

The Otolith Group and the Dhaka Art Summit program were my first experience, the greatest, totally supersizing experiences, and the new knowledge about film making and documentary, different kinds of arts in my life because I have a small amount of information about art. I was thinking that art is just painting, dancing not more, by participating in Dhaka art Summit I found no is not just painting and dancing, but our whole life is art, every day we are living is art.

As I am finding myself being and watching the arts, so the Dhaka art Summit was the best opportunity for me to enjoy from being with arts. At first, when I reached, I surprised by seeing a bundle of arts, at the time I just wanted to shout because of high excitement, even I could not control and could not keep myself calm. From the Dhaka art Summit I have learned that nothing is useless and from old things we can make somethings. Secondly, I learned by a single piece of art we can show the whole story of the country. I learned by art we can stand and we can change the perspective of people throughout a topic or a society.

In four days, workshop with members of the otolith group, I learned that film and documentary itself can have a powerful message which we never think about it deeply. Before I had a simple idea about film documentary that never think about how a film can have political, social messages to people. The second, I the new vocabularies which are using special in film and documentary, that word has deep meanings that explain a situation. Third, the music used in a film that wants to tell the people. The 4th, the documentary is not about we have to always show how the people are suffering. Finally, I found the art world a completely different world from the other world.

Samira Abser

The experience I had in the Dhaka art Summit 2020 is one of a kind and most memorable one of my life. I never thought that I would have experienced art of this scale in Bangladesh. There were many installations in the Summit from which I got to know about many cultures and different aspects of politics which I was not aware of before. One of them specifically would be the installation by Adebunmi Gbadebo, which I later found out was “True Blues”. The artist used hair from black people and made a connection to her roots through the use of hair. The story behind the art is a whole another world and seeing the interpretations of artists taught me how to see things beyond what you see just on the surface. Another work that moved me was on the first day, Performative Action, led by Héctor Zamora, where the artist has shown how women can change the course of patriarchy by stomping the vessels of oppression. This experience gave me something to experiment with myself. There were many arts and performance about which I didn't have any context. I wanted to try to have my own interpretation of the art before I find what the artist's interpretation was. I wanted to go into it blind. This was a challenge I gave myself which taught me a lot of things about art and about me as well. Another one of the art that I truly appreciated and grateful that I got to see it with my own eyes was, Sugar Zucker by Elia Nurvista. The artist had crystalline sugar which looked so beautiful in the gallery, but the history of sugar involved enslavement and exploitation of laborers we didn't see. The moving representation of how beautiful and such sweet things can have such a dark history. Lastly, the one which overwhelmed me was the installation dedicated to the liberation war of Bangladesh. I was very amazed and moved how the emergence of Bangladesh, my own country, was described and presented beautifully in the gallery. Although I didn't get to see the art Summit till the art last day but those 4 days were very fun and educative. As for Dhaka art Summit is the first exhibition I attended I will forever hold this memory close to my heart and always will be thankful to this experience for making my love and respect for art grow more.

Manisha Khadka

It was really an amazing experience to be part of Otolith group workshop and then getting chance to go to Dhaka Art Summit. Starting with workshop that we got from Otolith team, I had never seen films like those before that were shown to us. It not only made me watch but also made me analyze the films. I was impressed with the way they made their films and those were quite

impactful too. I loved the team and films. Then, we went to Dhaka Art Summit which was another amazing thing. I had heard a lot about it but never had been part of it. I watched great films presented by Otolith team over there and I went to look over other arts that were presented. All the arts were awesome and had really great message. For me, it was more like learning and exploring new things that I had never come across through. After this whole experience, I kind of feel enlightened in the arts field. I am really thankful to Otolith team, British Council and Dhaka Art Summit team for giving us such a wonderful opportunity.

Shahnooz

I am Shahnooz student of Asian University for Women Chittagong, Bangladesh. I attended four days long workshop with the Otolith group. There we watched eight films based on different topics. These films were different from the other films which I watched so far. Here we watched various sites of a film that includes politics, spirituality, social problems, economics, culture, art, moving images and many more. After watching a whole film we had a discussion session where we asked different questions about the films and the speakers answered in a very professional way. From the discussion, we became familiarized with many new ideas and concepts. After completing the workshop we went to Dhaka Arts Summit 2020. There we examined different types of artwork. Some artists explained their work orally and answered all of our questions. In some of the artworks, the description was written and that description gave us a clear idea about the artwork. Apart from this, we had a film screening session's every day where we watched different types of the film made by different artists. Beforehand they provided a notebook where all the descriptions of the events were written and it was very useful because we read the description of the films and then we watched them, by doing this, we got clear ideas of the filmmakers and their purpose behind making the film.

Overall, these two workshops were very interesting, informative and enjoyable. These films and artworks gave us a different perspective on life and compelled us to question our existence.

Rubina Rahman Chowdhury

It has been a wonderful experience. I appreciate the Otolith Group for coming to Chittagong and letting us have this opportunity. Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun were absolutely amazing as our mentors during the four day film-making workshop. I absolutely loved watching all their films and the discussions based on them. Those four days were very informative and didactic. And many thanks to Ms. Waseka and British Council Bangladesh for taking us to Dhaka Art Summit 2020 for four days. It was my first time visiting DAS and I absolutely loved everything about it. Each and every installation was unique and mesmerising. Hats off to the curator and the team of DAS 2020. My favorite installation was Movimientos Emisores de Existencia by Héctor Zamora, the performance we got to witness on the very first day. I found it very powerful and moving. The four day workshop and the four days at DAS2020, and the team altogether, everything and everyone was uplifting. Hoping to meet my lovely mentors when I attend DAS 2022.

Nguyen Le Anh Phuong

First of all, I want to send a big thanks to Otolith Group, AUW, professors, and my friends for providing, supporting and making my fantastic trip. For me, 4 days at Dhaka Art Summit gave me many FASCINATING works of art, EXPERIENCES and FUN. Everything is meaningful to me, and I love all of them. I love our breakfast, I love a rooftop party at Jatra Biroti, I love Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, I love every artworks here, and of course I love the way you treated me. Two artworks that impressed me the most are Mute Grain - A Vietnamese film of Thao Nguyen Phan at Dhaka Art Summit, and an exhibition about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman - the first president of Bangladesh and also was known as Father of Bengali Nation.

Mute Grain helped me to understand more about the 1945 famine in Vietnam (my home country) during the Japanese occupation (190-1945), in which over 2 million people died of starvation, partly due to Japanese demands to grow jute over rice to support their war economy. An exhibition about Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave me more information and knowledge about him. I really admire him after knowing what he did for Bangladesh. I really like a quote of him, "My greatest

strength is the love for my people, my greatest weakness is that I love them too much.”

This was a great trip, and more than what I expected. I believe that it will be one of my best memories in Bangladesh.

Zahra Hussaini

Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) was one of the informative opportunities that I was looking for, in area of art. Firstly, DAS reflected a diverse community that connected international organizers with local people of Bangladesh. Secondly, I travel as a group from Asian University for Women (AUW) with my professors. It was also a great opportunity to share our experiences among each other and discuss about them. Also, I had the chance of asking questions regarding the arts that I was not familiar with it. Thirdly, some of the shows used historical backgrounds and, then, they connected with present. So, it can express that each of shows spend a lot of effort and time. Besides, I could learn more communication skills in an artist and academic environment with international directors of films, especially with Ms Rania from Lebanon. I learned that some countries are excluded from world of Cinema. However, I had the chance of watching movies with director, Ms. Rania, and it was amazing when people shared their feedbacks and thanked her because of her work. Some of the shows, painting and other works were related to gender stereotypes, patriarchy and it was kind of revolution for me. Hence, it linked art with society, politics, economics, and culture of Bangladesh. Specially, it was a pleasure to meet with Otolith group once again.

Jasmine Shrestha

First and foremost, I am very thankful for being provided with the opportunity to become a part of the workshop with the Otolith Group and Dhaka Art Summit. It was really a great experience filled with emotions, exposure, fascination, and serenity. In the Otolith workshop, I got to meet amazing icons such as Anjalika and Kodwo, who showed us their films that pushed my way of thinking to the whole another level. The movies consisted of deep concepts and theories by various philosophers that were not common among the films that I usually watch and therefore, these movies were something new to explore for me. Also, from this workshop, I got to know about the time and effort that a filmmaker needs to invest in their movie and it was clearly visible in their movies. So, the workshop was greatly knowledgeable for me.

Now, moving towards to Dhaka Art Summit, I would like to thank you for managing the amazing hotel and the party for us. The four-day journey for me was the one I enjoyed a lot. The Summit consisted of artworks, projects, handicrafts, sculptures, and various other creations that carried great worth, conveyed deep messages and made me think, "how can someone be this talented?" with every section I moved towards. So, I would take this Summit as a great initiative to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of talented people in this field and educate and inspire the viewers regarding topics that expanded to various degrees. Overall, this Summit was great.

I wish you all the very best for your future endeavours.

Zariza Hannan Chowdhury

From the 7th to the 15th of February, 2020 the Samdani Art Foundation hosted the Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) 2020 in the premises of the Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka. DAS was the epicenter of art that attracted contributions from over 500 artists, scholars, curators and thinkers, in the form of panel discussions, performances and symposia as well as opportunities for participation from the 300,000 visitors focused on one broad theme: what is a movement and how do we ignite one beyond the confines of an art exhibition?

The installations varied in their form and medium. One of my personal favourites was Existence-Emitting Movements by Hector Zamora. It was a performative piece that featured women methodically stepping over clay vessels one by one, squashing them to the ground. I found it symbolic to my personal struggle against the patriarchy.

Another installation, A Volume Within Which It is Not Possible for Certain Classes of Action to Rise by William Forsythe and Muzharul Islam was a particularly moving, political piece. It featured an

enclosed space with the ceiling about 3 feet above the ground through which people had to crawl to get to the other side. It was metaphorical for political oppression and the restrictions certain classes of people face when they try to rise above certain political structures and barriers. I found this piece particularly moving since it also called the audience to participate.

Amid the politically engaging pieces there was also one more culture piece that got my attention. One corner of the premise was decorated with traditional Bangladeshi games that are going extinct where visitors could play and bathe in nostalgia.

The one week of the art Summit provided city dwellers an escape from their busy lives. Art enthusiasts from all over the world flocked to the exhibition, which allowed for the interaction of various perspectives and takes on the displayed works. It was where like minded people could come together and find relief in the political engagement and most of all, the beauty that art has to provide its beholders.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the Dhaka Art Summit and British Council for inviting and hosting us for 4 days, allowing us to take part in this amazing spectacle.