করোনায়-আত্ম সন্ধান

Self-quest in the time of Corona

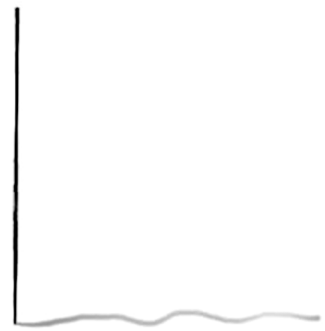
An installation exhibition by

Wakilur Rahman

Curator: Sharmillie Rahman

1-25 April 2023, Kalakendra







করোনায় - আত্ম সন্ধান
ওয়াকিলুর রহমান-এর স্থাপনা প্রদর্শনী
কিউরেটর: শার্মিলি রহমান
১-২৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৩
কলাকেন্দ্র, বাংলাদেশ

Self-quest in the time of Corona
An installation exhibition by Wakilur Rahman
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সারাদিন কাটিয়ে, ফেরার জায়গা, ঘর কিংবা আবাস আমার সবসময় ছিল। তবে এ জায়গাগুলিতে সারাদিন/রাত কবে একনাগারে কাটিয়েছি–জানিনা। অনেক দিন কাটাতে হবে জেনে, বুঝে এক নতুন সময় কাটাচ্ছি–
নিজের সঙ্গে নিজের এমন শরিরীক, মনস্তাত্বিক সঙ্গ কবে পেয়েছিলাম?
তা ছাড়া নিজের এই আবাসের পরিচয়, উচ্চতা, আকার, দেওয়াল, দরজা, জনালা, বারান্দা, আলো, ছায়া বাতাসে কবে দেখেছিলাম?
'করোনায় - আত্ম সন্ধান' শিরোনামে, ২২/০৩/২০২০ থেকে ২৩/০৫/২০২০ সময়ে করা কাজগুলি নিয়ে প্রদর্শনী। সেই সময়ের কাজগুলি ফেইসবুক এবং ইনস্টাগ্রামে প্রদর্শীত হয়েছিল।

ওয়াকিলুর রহমান, শিল্পী

At the end of the day, I always had a place to return to, a house or a home. However, I don't know when I have spent a whole day/night alone in these places. Now I am savoring a new essence of time with this understanding that I have to spend many such days as it is -
When did I ever find such a physical, mental company of myself before?
Apart from that, when was I acquainted with the familiarity of the height, size, walls, doors, windows, balconies, and the play of light and shadow captured in the air?
The works featured in the exhibition titled, `**Self-quest in the time of Corona**' were created over a period from 22/03/2020 to 23/05/2020. These works had already been hosted on Facebook and Instagram.

Wakilur Rahman, artist

এই প্রদর্শনীটি একজন শিল্পীর করোনা মহামারীর সময় গড়ে ওঠা ব্যক্তিগত স্থান এবং সময়ের একটি ধ্যান-ধর্মী উপস্থাপনা। উন্মুক্ত পরিবেশ থেকে বিচ্ছিন্ন, স্ব-নির্বাসনে প্রথা বিচ্ছিন্ন এক পরিবর্তিত গার্হস্থ্য দৃশ্য শিল্পীর জাগতিক সম্পর্কগুলো পুনরায় উদ্ভাবনের মঞ্চ হয়ে ওঠে। গ্যালারির স্থানটি করোনা সময়ের নানাবিধ নান্দনিক চর্চার উপকরণ ব্যবহার করে পুন:-স্থাপনা করা হয়েছে। শিল্পীর প্রতিদিনের অনুশীলন ছিল, এক অর্থে, সেই সময়ের ভয়াবহতা ও অনিশ্চয়তা এড়ানোর একটি উপায় মাত্র।

শর্মিলি রহমান, কিউরেটর, লেখক

This exhibition is a meditation on an artist's personal space and time as it were during the Corona pandemic.
Self-quarantined, hence, dislodged from the patterns and conventions of public space-time, the changed domestic scene becomes the stage for re-inventing its mundane materiality. The gallery space is variedly retro-installed with Corona-led aesthetic interventions by the artist who instrumentalized a daily practice to stave off the horrors and uncertainties of the time.

Sharmillie Rahman, curator, writer



22-03-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

Caught in a net between the virtual and the real
Sharmillie Rahman

At first glance the eyes are drawn upwards at the dishevelled mosquito nets, angularly criss-crossed at a measured distance from the ceiling, the lightness and permeability of the material creating an atmosphere of a shelter, fragile and malleable, it spreads outside its presupposed form and hence disrupts the rigidity of the architectonics of each room of the gallery. If taken in its geo-cultural significance, net of this kind connotes a protection against an anticipated and as such a constant threat of an apparent/palpable end. This notion of symptomatic existential vulnerability lies at the very core of Wakilur Rahman's current exhibition, *Self-quest in the time of Corona*.

Wakil re-creates the interior of his home which turned into a sanctuary in the time of Corona. Being a global phenomenon, the state-stipulated preventive measures of 'quarantine', in effect, heralded a tacit herd-mentality while uniting the world populace beyond their (hegemonic) borders in varied states of fear and anxiety as well as equal measures of hope and optimism to tide over to a 'revertible future'- looking back to look into the future. Home became a hybrid space where the public body reconciles with its private, with the latter becoming the dominant avatar. Where one also could convalesce from the horrors of the outside, the imminent threat of peril, the death counts.

Dislodged from the regimentation of civic life, time slowed down, allowing room to take in the walled environment of a home where one is to spend or rather serve time for days on end. The physical dimensions of the rooms kept changing with the change in light. Corners standing out in sharp contrast or blurring away into obscurity. Which Wakil voyeurises and sets out to question the behaviour that regulates the organization of objects in architectonically designated spaces. Wakil's current, physical re-iteration of an earlier 'on-line' exhibition spanning nearly two and a half months of the lockdown, manifests a celebration of a creative spur resulting in a crop of works quite distinct from his rest. On view is a slew of photographic images and installations created with contrasting materials, all simmering with a sinister undertone that wafts out of a mnemonic brew of a past, whose aftertaste still holds us hostage. The additional manipulations executed upon them are signs of a mind that seek refuge in patterns, shapes, forms, and predominantly in a rather poetic visual engagement with the play of light and shadow. Which goes to suggest that Wakil takes a keen interest in the sensory premises defined by the architecture of a space. At every turn of his visual realization of a perceived objective reality, there is an underpinning of conscious deliberation. He picks his subject with the intent of coalescing them into a narrative of one's intimation of time within an intimate space.

The urgency of a sudden change in the way of life cast a mood less celebratory and more cautionary over a world gone awry. Though, battling the unique health-threat, in some degrees called for a regulated life-practice which meant also to some extent, a suspension of collective agency to a system of (capitalist) central control wagging its peremptory finger (from behind a mask of disproportionate institutional charity); the pursuit of a meaningful purpose became ever more insistent. As new rituals began to take centre-stage, partially based on the ancient wisdom of survival alongside that which is scientifically recommended; a premonition of a faith (beyond its religious stretch) in something magical enough to transform the existing order began to surface at the edge of our consciousness. The ecology of existence felt more expansive and vibrant, spreading itself across our known/unknown sense of affinity with the world around while in reality this very world continued to squeeze itself with much unease to fit within the four walls of our home. Amidst an experiential landscape which projects both our psycho-physical and political inadequacy, Wakil, as a highly motivated and ready-witted individual, who wears multiple quills to his cap as artist-curator-gallerist-academician-researcher began to explore the field of installation artwork using household objects ready at hand. His years of experience in curating exhibits came in handy, not to mention the luxury of time that felt more personal than ever, to tweak with the otherwise neglected 'ready-mades' to explore the workings of his sensorial experience of an object in space with an intention of transposing it outside its utilitarian valence.

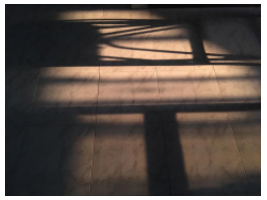
Wakil's exhibition unfolds more as a study in contrast, be it light and shade, or hard and soft-properties or principles of materials which, however not treated much as opposites but placed on a spectrum to suggest an alchemy or interaction at varied degrees. The framed images represent already and always an inter alia (among other things), letting the perceiving body off the hook to explore and indulge in free-associations. Geometric shapes against white tabula rasa is more redolent of suggestions than the grille of the window which meanders fluidly across the soft, wieldy curtain pulled over a sombre light of a withering afternoon. His exhibition is teeming with visual interests-the installation of shoes in circular, yet multi-dimensional formation, the jumble of paper shopping bags yawning cavernously under the studio light, or what resembles a fishing net pulled to a tethered end, weighed down with the bottom reaching for the ground, and to extend the visual field-the dark pair of pinned askew pants barely standing one-legged on the floor, surrendering to the pull of gravitation-all seem to point to a carefully honed down clinical study in the relational attributes determined by the materiality of objects in certain spatial contexts. Something that was brought to bear heavily on the possibilities of re-organizing the objects in the photographs in actual space of a gallery, that too exposed in all their vulnerabilities arising out of being affixed in a certain location exposed to a certain angle of natural and artificial light, not to forfeit the thought that without the aid of digital manipulations as well, these objects appear in all their glory to reclaim their spot (read space) in light (read time).

Wakil (re)created a quiet landscape of being in one's own space. The yellow band of fabric swaying freely in the occasional wind, while confronting a cross shaped with suspended bags made of fabric indicates a playfulness with which he connects to the historical time via a kind of quirky representation. As he does to the works of artists from the global north (intentionally de-capitalized). The sub-text of politics of over-consumption or necro-politics that decides which lives are more dispensable, 'inter alia', undergirds that of the visual; here one should pause…

Suffice is to say, Wakilur Rahman pulled off one brilliant show!











23-03-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

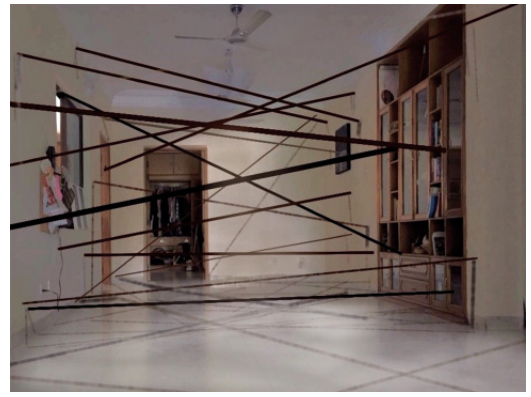
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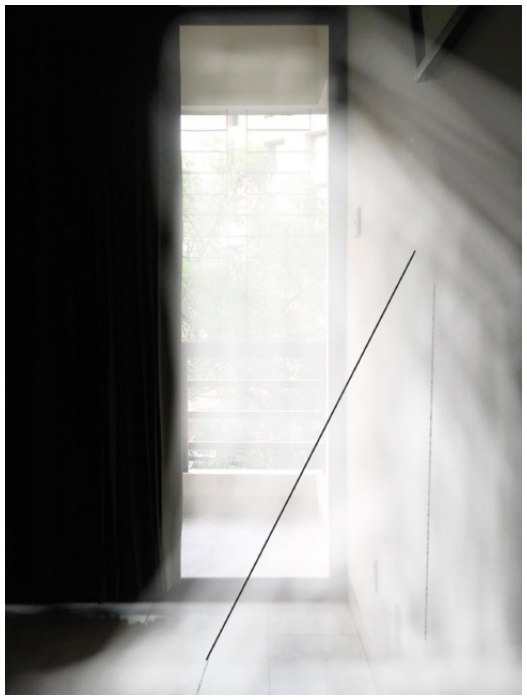
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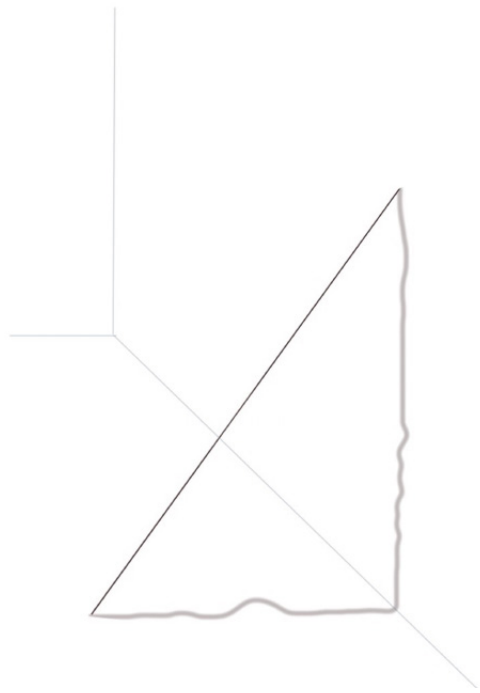


26-03-20
27-03-20
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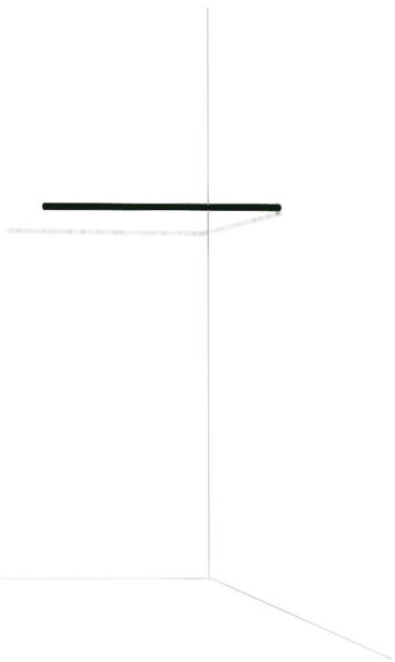




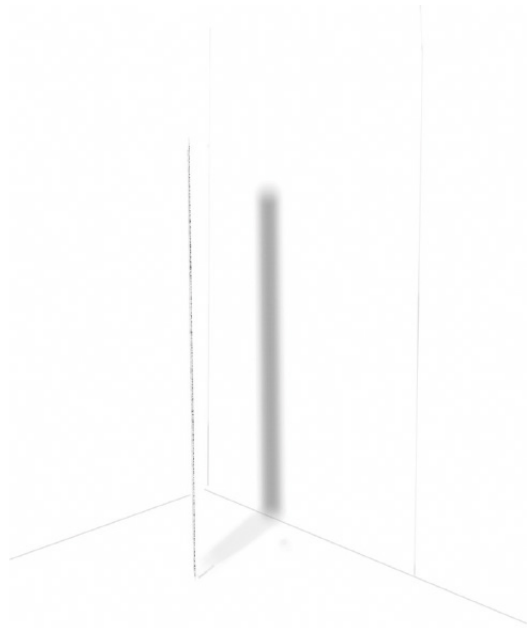
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29-03-20
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30-03-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable



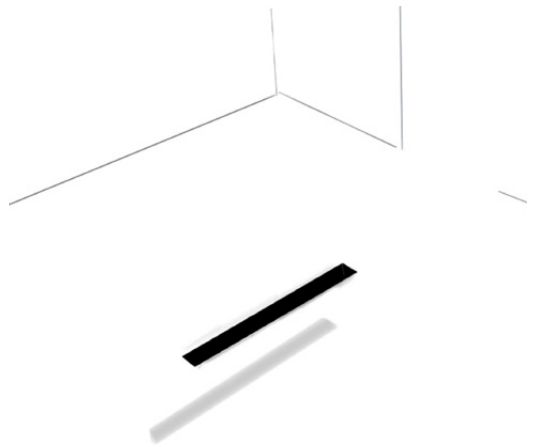
31-03-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable



01-04-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable



02-04-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable



03-04-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable

04-04-20
Digital drawing, printed on photo paper, size- variable

CONTEMPLATING OBSERVATION
Reframing enthusiasm
JAVED JALIL

The presence and the moment is an arrangement of movement in time that beholds us with a shifting temperament where a sequence, object, or the much ignored mundane can amplify into a captivating connotation. As if our mind perception is continuously playing elusive modes of perceiving where parallel routes of intangible associations meet the material and physical with an enigma. State of being and the influences from the external probes an illusion of alertness that is almost an edge of perplex seen and unseen.

Observation in its versatile approach seeks attention according to our need to initiate a situational response. Artist wakilur Rahman rediscovers his existential surroundings intensely as his experiential physical realms become more captive into a monotonous undertone. The limitation phase at times can evoke a potential of apprehending things from their known content to a configuration of unlimited grasp.

The pandemic days of 2021 and 22 were a time of self-quarantine. Where the artist's domesticity became the world in itself. His methods of awareness were redirected more toward himself and the presence of his immediate moment and environment. Being stagnant in a repetitive scenario is attributed to sensory stimuli for the artist's conscious appeal. Where contemplative observation became the source of psychic survival and an approach to reframing enthusiasm.

The fear of the pandemic becomes a focused phenomenon of entrapment and a routine of uncertainty, where one becomes overpowered and loses a sense to foresee. Wakilur Rahman took all these intrusive thoughts that engulfed the mind into a psycho-somatic remedial as he started to observe the insignificant into its glorious exploring and representation… The essential, thriving, and the goal become a bridge to salvation. The thirst for the ultimate core of approaching, integrating mind, body, and soul.

The artist's extroversion started to look inward as to the source of existence, to a point where self-reflecting became compulsory. He looks upon things, daily objects, and accessories more like a torch mediating the thinking mind to the objects and elements to its surrounding into a projection. Where the insignificant turn into an existential question by its prevalence. And also onto an inclusive merging where the observation is not evaluated to its limited identification. Humanizing with the unanimated elements, an interactive visual abridgment. The artist rehearses every single element of the material to its defining singularity. As the home space becomes a reciprocal stage of the outside world, where one initiates the elements as an illustrative manifestation of the relationship to its content of internality.

Space and minimalism have been artist wakilur Rahmans allure, a methodology that blends into his lifestyle, work, and home ambiance. This contributed to his observing and he explored his premeditated ways of approaching space and utilities into merging with his present situational dilemmas due to the pandemic. Where the introspection became a reinventing and reassesses of his home space. The artist realizes our daily

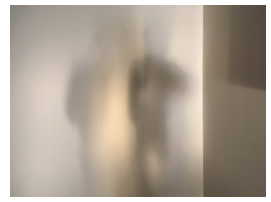
associated objects and still, lives lose their meaning and content and become more of the object of decor. The objects find validity in their structural exteriority or as a fabricated image itself. The restricted moving space gave birth to a way of life, where the objects in themselves lose their past identity to be questioned and fathomed for another. Also realizing identity itself is limited and relative. The quest for meaning is a relative consequence of our thinking mind. Where the most significant becomes insignificant as it lacks its pre-given content. The way about functionalities of objects or things rehearses an unimagined purpose of possibility.

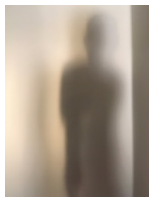
In this exhibition, the gallery space is incorporated to give the essence of the artist's experiences with his perceptions, temperament, and interactions. The home space experiences convert into a contextual reappearance within the gallery. Due to the isolation, the artist's moods of communication became more tuned to the objects and elements as a silent transaction where the perceptive and sensory were amplified. A union of monologue, and dialogue, between the living and the still. He explored the discourses with photography, temporarily installing sculptures through rearranging and conversing with the materials as to their usefulness to decadence…most relevant transcending into irrelevant commodities of things.

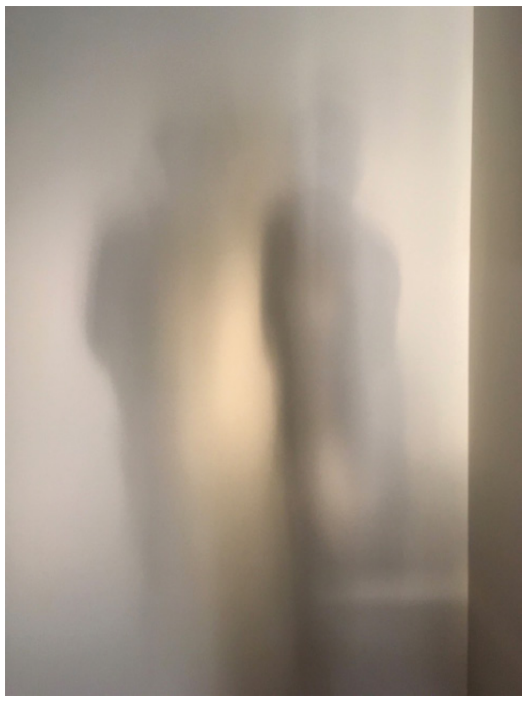
The artist explores the interior décor of his personal space into the illusion of mosquito net clouds with kinetic light scaping on the wall, creating a moving shadow tale of the unanimated. The shopping bags as a metaphoric echo of a lost human crowd waiting for an answer. Soaps in its rapid transitions, hyper functionality. ……..The crucified wall installation of bags, material changing its given identity purpose into art interpretation. A transcending of materiality to its functional displacement. Shoes under the net as a circle of boundary pointing in various directions denotes a yearning, anguish, as in there is no place to go.

His photographs carry out the visual messages of his engagement and awareness of himself, in his space recalling isolation and time. Where Wakilur Rahman initiated his past studies and references into a conjunction of sensual observation and rehearsing with the present. His usage of the line as a direction into the vanishing point of limitation or a highlighted linear expression of his physical space. Circles on images as complimenting boundaries and also a graphical sensitivity to the eye.
The shadow and its play with portraits and scrutinizing objects in space, relating, and separating the fragments into a focused distinctiveness. A state of minimal objective depiction, simultaneously celebrating the sensation of being and the given significance. A retroactive inquiry of the self in space, a retreat to non-verbal affirmation.

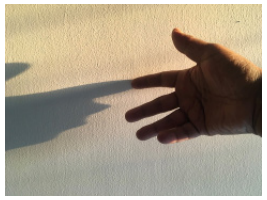
The representation within the gallery probes with multiple directions of insight. A look back at scenarios digging into the past, like archeological materiality And gives a certain reminiscence to the daily objects as to how they are displayed in museums. And installations provoke the artist's imagination and a feel for personal space. Images as doorways and references to his visual environment of that intimate awareness and also staged and intervened and modify according to the artist's intentions. Where the intense epochs of life aspired an opportunity to meet oneself, AS for the artist the conversation with the self through absorbing the attributes of the familiar into unfamiliar absurdity.







06-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable





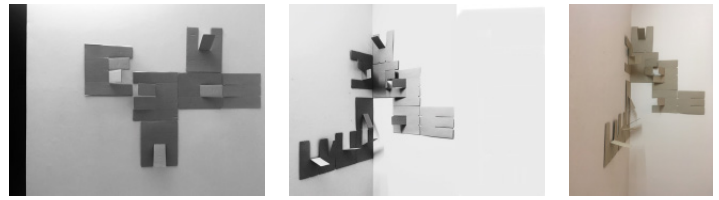


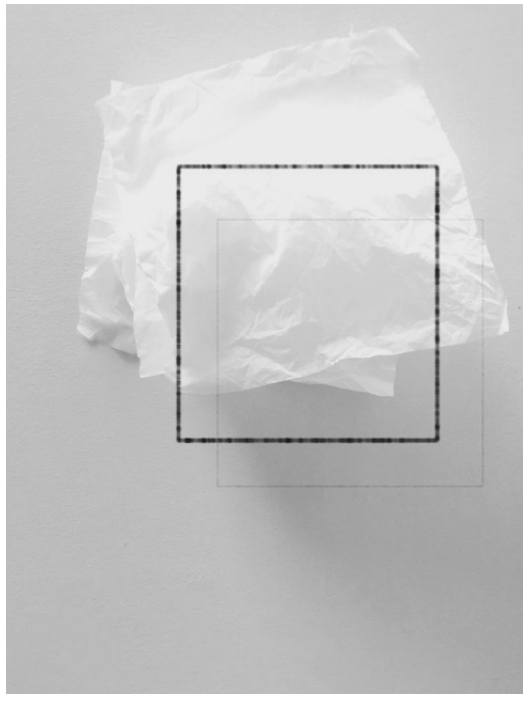


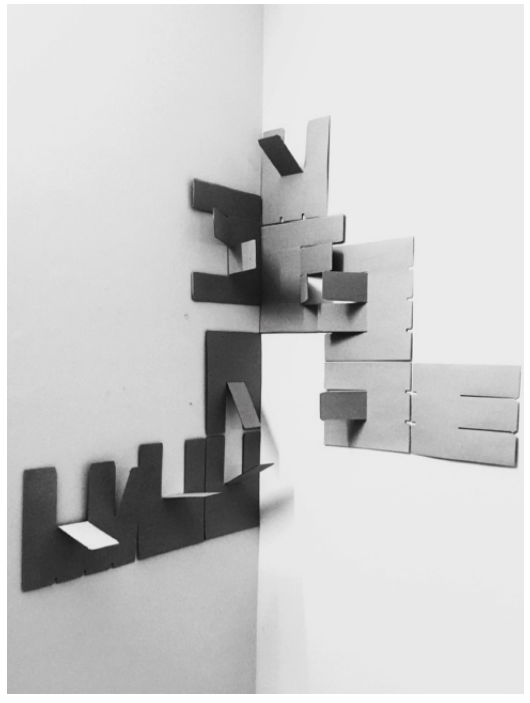
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08-04-20
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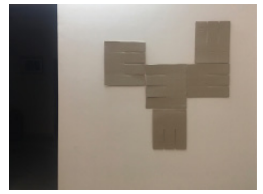


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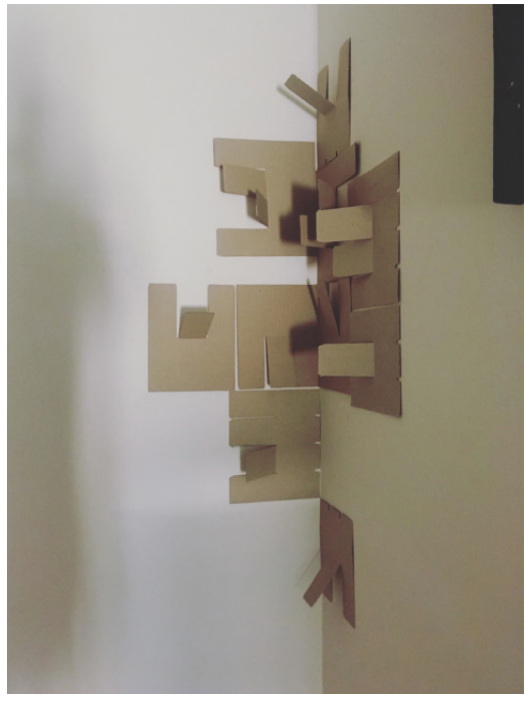
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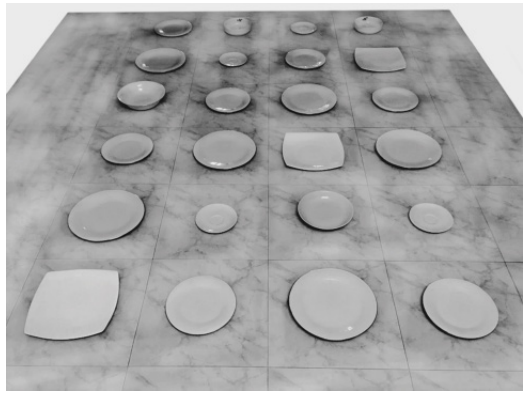




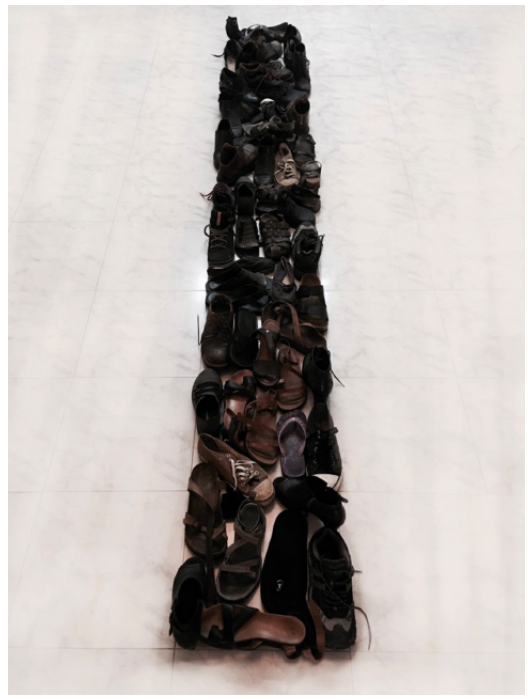
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15-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable











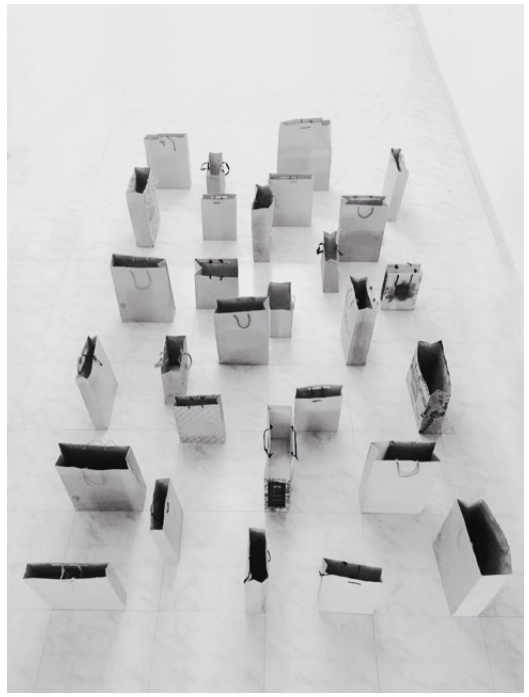
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18-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable



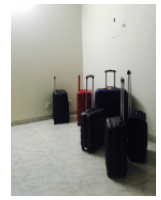






19-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable



















20-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

20-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable









21-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

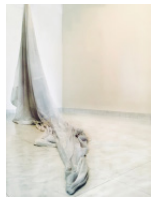








22-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable













23-04-20
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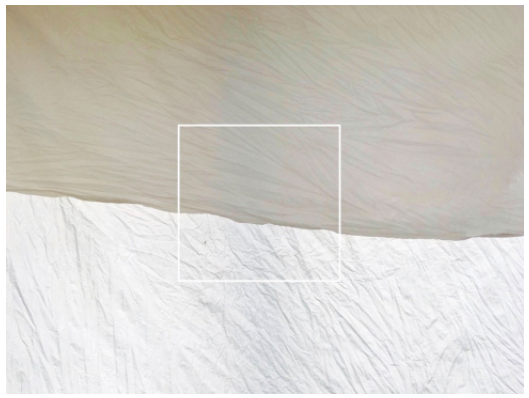
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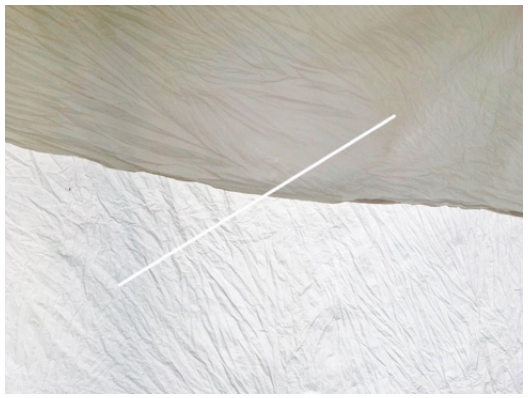






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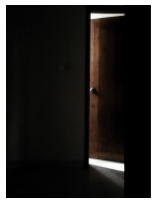








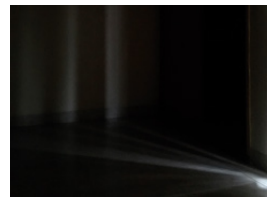
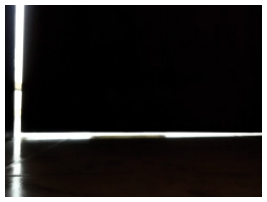
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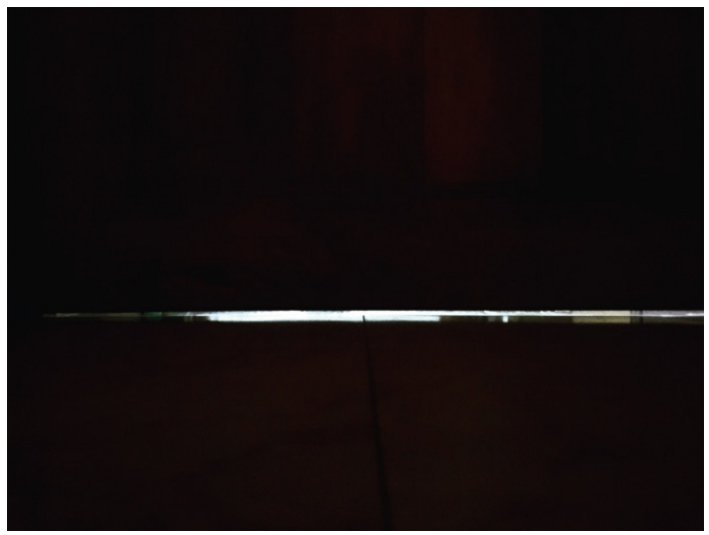


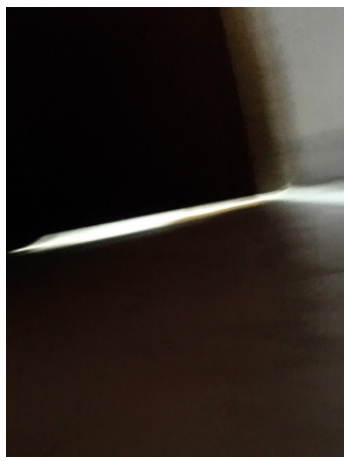
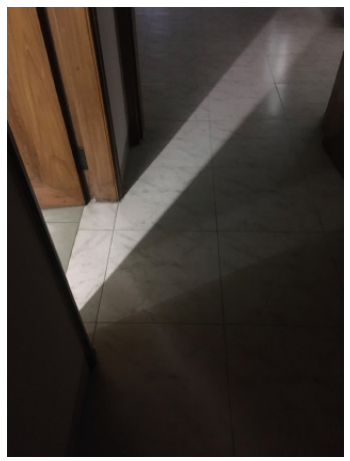
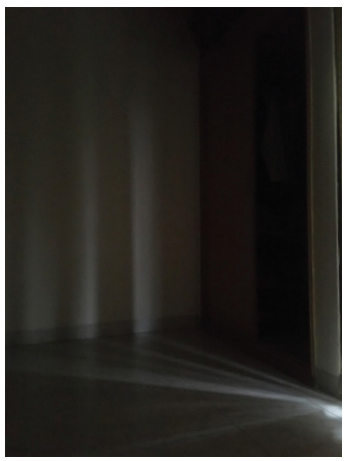








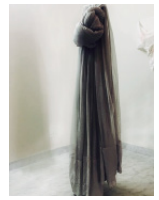




25-04-20
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26-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable













27-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

28-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable



























29-04-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

1-05-20
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“It is the right time to practice minimalism” – Wakilur Rahman

Priyanka Chowdhury
Thu Apr 30, 2020 02:45 PM Last update on: Thu Apr 30, 2020 02:50 PM



Photo: Courtesy

Award-winning painter, printmaker and sculptor Wakilur Rahman has been addressing social issues through his artworks since the early eighties. He is one of the founding members of the art group, 'Shomoy', which initiated a discourse on contemporary art in Bangladesh. He also runs the non-profit art gallery, Kala Kendra. Rahman spent a significant amount of time in East Germany, where he experienced the initial years of German unification. Although he is self-isolating at the moment, he has taken to social media to showcase his different projects, created with home objects. In a recent chat with *The Daily Star*, the artist shares what he has been up to.

As isolation has become the need of the hour, how are you, as an artist, coping with the current crisis we are going through?

Initially, the crisis was truly shocking for me, since I am an outgoing person who follows a busy schedule. But I recognise that I am privileged to have a comfortable home. I feel that I am getting to know my own house and surroundings quite closely. The empty spaces have sparked my imagination and creativity.

Was it a conscious decision to make social media your provisional space of exhibition at this time?

Not really. I always share my artistic interventions on my social media accounts. Now that I am staying at home, I have started to explore the space, both physically and psychologically. I have never experienced the evening light in my living space, because I am hardly ever at home! I am spending more time with the objects that I have collected over time, and it has been a fascinating experience so far.



Wakilur Rahman's work from everyday objects.

What are some of the projects and concepts that you have recently worked on?

Initially, I made some romantic drawings on photographs, exploring concepts like clouds in my living room and the light and shade on different objects. I have also used my own reality as the central subject in some of the works. As the thought of the virus is constantly at the back of my mind, my own body feels unknown to me. I am compelled to wash my hands over and over again. I have also made installations with objects that I usually use, such as my suitcases. They are a symbol of my desire to travel and explore different places. The other objects in my home collection have histories of their own, but placing them in a certain pattern gives them a different meaning. I like working with the seemingly banal objects around me.

How else are you spending your time at home?

I have been getting in touch with my old friends and I have turned to cooking. I have also been educating myself on different kinds of music. Lately, I have been listening to sounds of the Sahara Desert, as an alternative to my physical travelling.

Do you think the isolation could help artistes to discover different ideas?

We are facing an unsolicited situation at the moment. However, it does have certain benefits. Usually when artistes are under pressure with serving the consumers and with biennales and festivals around the globe, they have less time for self-reflection. Realistically speaking, we waste a lot, both in art and in life. But now, we are becoming more mindful of every step we take. I believe that it is the right time to practice minimalism – and numerous artistes can embrace this approach. For instance, poets just need a piece of paper and a pencil to pour their hearts out.



Wakilur Rahman's work from everyday objects.

How would you like to see the art scene change in a post COVID-19 world?

Although we are hoping for good changes, our reality is fragile and unpredictable right now. Several artists are exploring the virtual space for different opportunities, but essentially, we need to have an integrated society and dialogues about investments. Freelance artists who enjoy the independence in the virtual space may also have to rethink their ideas. We also don't know if art institutions will ever run in the same way again.

The Daily Star
Priyanka Chowdhury
Thu Apr 30, 2020

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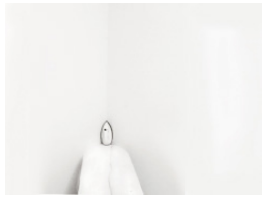
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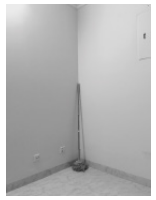
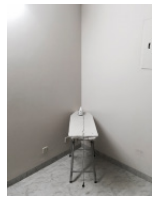
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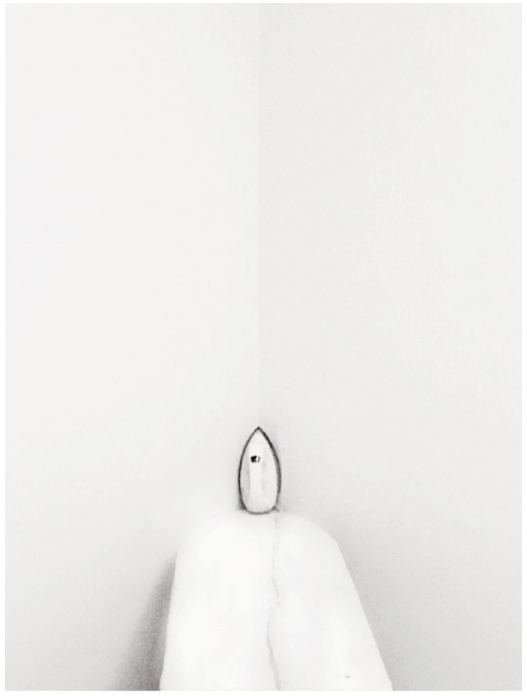
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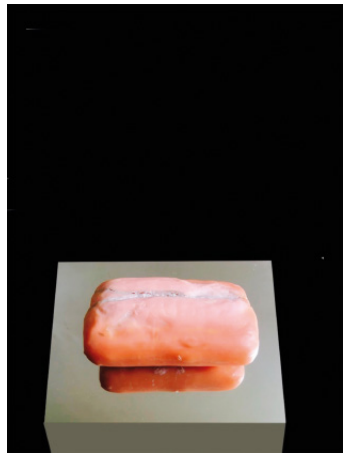




02-05-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable







04-05-20
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06-05-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable



07-05-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

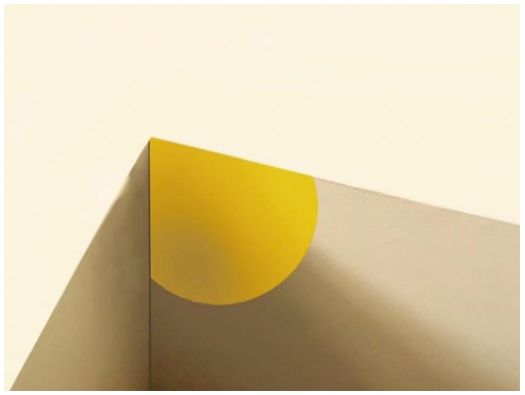


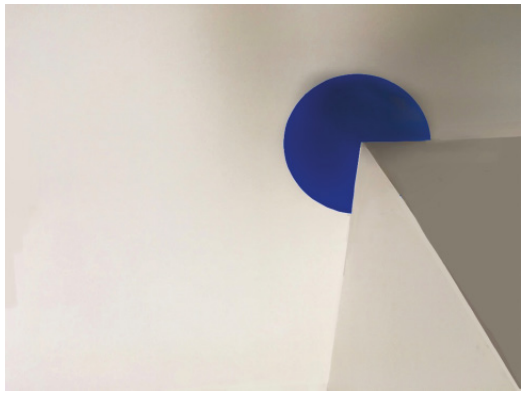


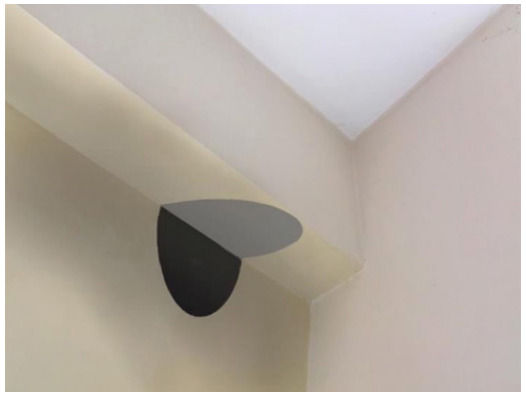




09-05-20
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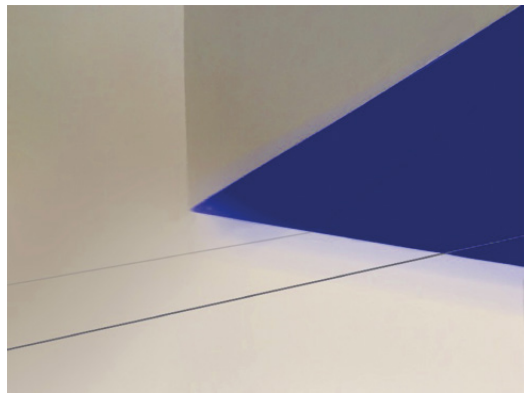


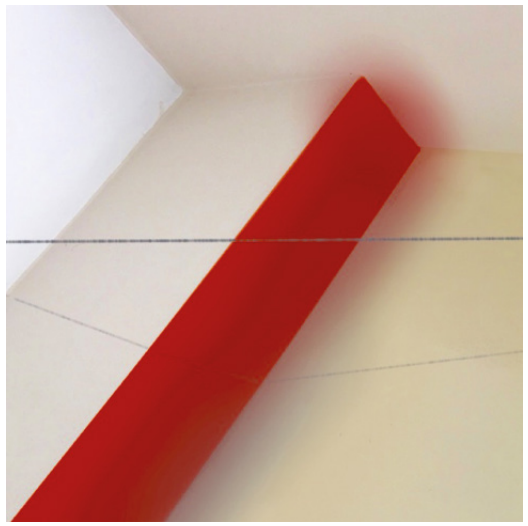




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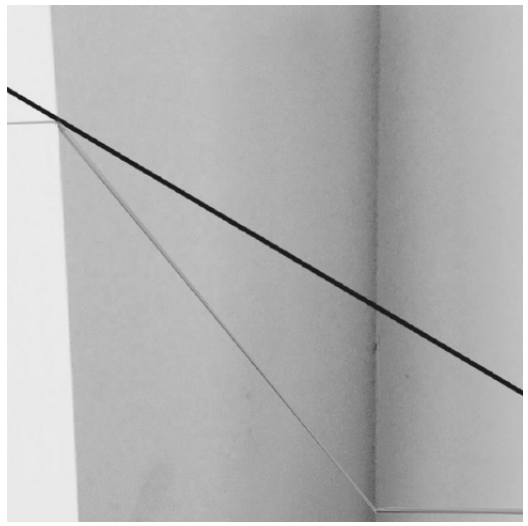


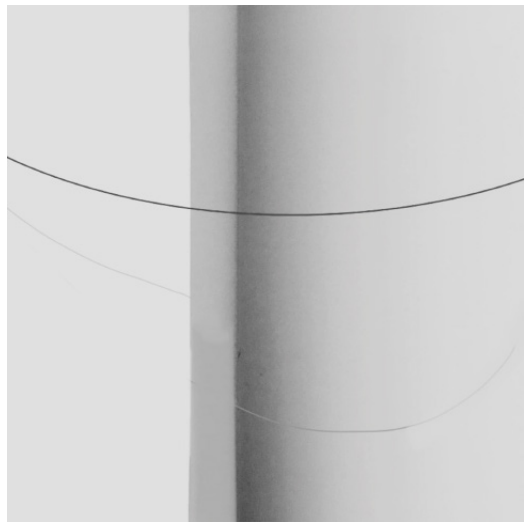


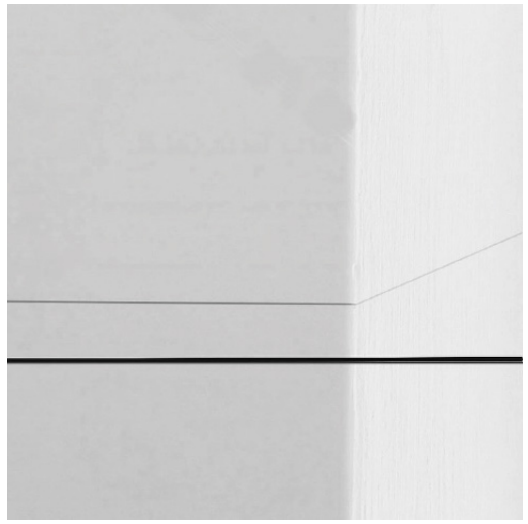


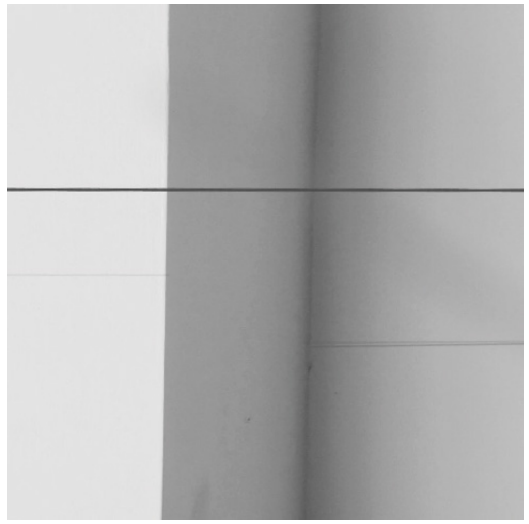


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12-05-20
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13-05-20
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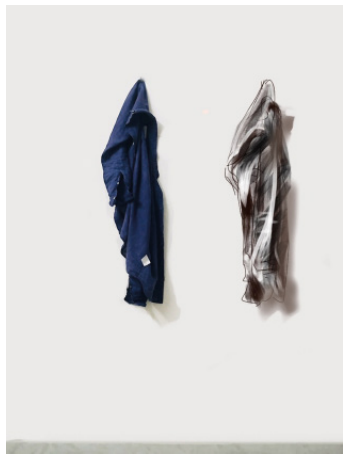






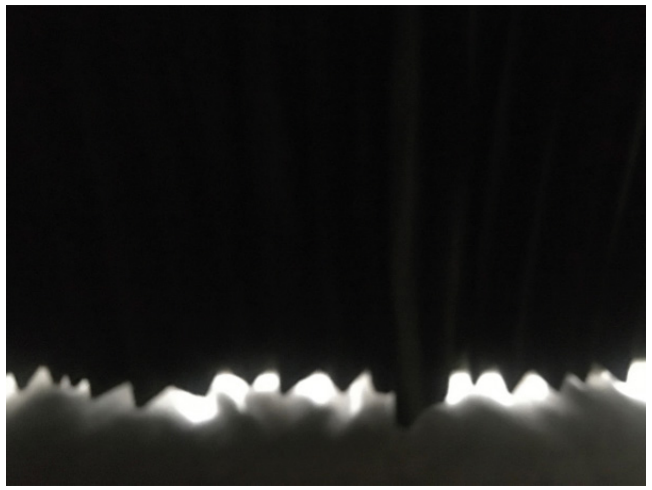
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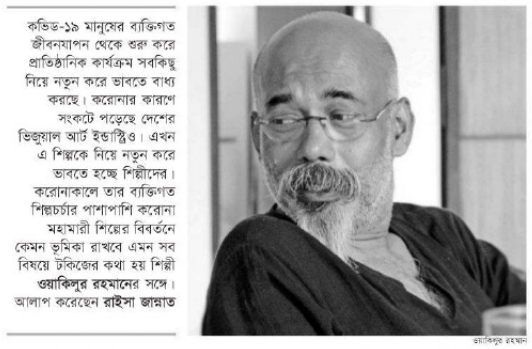




15-05-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

23-05-20
Manipulated photography, printed on photo paper, size- variable

বণিক বার্তা, শুক্রবার, ০৫/০৬/২০২০



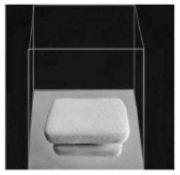
ওয়াকিলুর রহমান

‘শিল্পীদের অস্তিত্ব, কার্যক্রম নিয়ে নতুন করে ভাবতে হচ্ছে’

কভিড-১৯ মানুষের ব্যক্তিগত জীবনযাপন থেকে শুরু করে প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক কার্যক্রম সবকিছু নিয়ে নতুন করে ভাবতে বাধ্য করছে। করোনার কারণে সংকটে পড়েছে দেশের ভিজুয়াল আর্ট ইন্ডাস্ট্রিও। এখন এ শিল্পকে নিয়ে নতুন করে ভাবতে হচ্ছে শিল্পীদের। করোনাকালে তার ব্যক্তিগত শিল্পচর্চার পাশাপাশি করোনা মহামারী শিল্পের বিবর্তনে কেমন ভূমিকা রাখবে এমন সব বিষয়ে টকিজের কথা হয় শিল্পী **ওয়াকিলুর রহমানের** সঙ্গে। আলাপ করেছেন **রাইসা জান্নাত**

করোনাকালে আপনার জীবনযাপন সম্পর্কে বলুন।

প্রায় দুই মাস ধরে সেলফ আইসোলেশনে (স্বেচ্ছা সঙ্গনিরোধ) আছি। এখন সরকারিভাবে কিছু জিনিস উন্মুক্ত হয়েছে। মানসিকভাবে এটা একটা নতুন পরিস্থিতি। প্রথম দিকে ঘরে থাকতেই হবে এ রকম বাধ্যবাধকতা ছিল। সেভাবে সবকিছু গুছিয়ে নিয়েছিলাম। এখন মানসিকভাবে একটু নড়বড়ে আছি। বিগত জীবনযাপনের মাধ্যমে সঞ্চিত স্মৃতিগুলো আবার নাড়াচাড়া দেয়া শুরু করেছে। পেশাদারিত্ব, অর্থনীতি–এসব নিয়ে টানা দুই মাস এক ধরনের ভাবনা ছিল। এ ভাবনাগুলোও এখন নড়বড়ে। বুঝতে পারছি না কী করা উচিত।





লকডাউনে করা ওয়াকিলুর রহমানের কাজ

ঘরবন্দি সময়টাতে আপনার শিল্পচর্চা নিয়ে জানতে চাই।

প্রথমে যে জায়গায় নিজেকে আইসোলেশন করি, সেখানে সচেতনভাবেই কোনো শিল্পোপাদান ছিল না। কারন আমার স্টুডিও আছে প্রথম থেকেই চিন্তা ছিল, হাতের কাছে যে উপাদানগুলো আছে তা দিয়েই কিছু না কিছু করার। আর ডিজিটালি কিছু কাজের প্রবণতা আগে থেকেই ছিল। কিন্তু এতদিন পর একটা বিষয় লক্ষ করলাম যে কাজের মধ্যে এক ধরনের পরিবর্তন ঘটছে। প্রথমে ড্রয়িং অন ল্যান্ডস্কেপ নিয়ে কিছু কাজ শুরু করি। ঘরের কিছু জায়গা ফাঁকা করে। আর প্রকাশ করি সামাজিক মাধ্যমে। পরে দেখি আর্কিটেকচারাল স্পেস গুরুত্বপূর্ণ হয়ে উঠলো। তখন কিছু থ্রি-ডাইমেনশনাল অবজেক্ট নিয় কাজ করি এবং এক ধরনের নতুন অনুভূতি পাই। তারপর ঘরের অনেক স্পেস নিয়ে কাজ করি। এরপর দেখি বিভিন্ন বস্তু ভিন্ন মাত্রায় হাজির হচ্ছে। সেগুলো গুছিয়ে কিছু কাজ করলাম। যেমন–সুটকেস, জুতা, সাবান ইত্যাদি। এখন দুই মাস ধরে যে কাজগুলো করলাম, সেগুলোকে একত্র করে একটা ন্যারেটিভ বলা যায় কিনা, এ ধরনের কাজের চেষ্টা করছি।

কাজের প্রসঙ্গ ধরেই বলছি, কভিড-১৯ আপনার শিল্পকর্মের ওপর কোনো ধরনের প্রভাব বা নতুন কোনো অনুপ্রেরনা তৈরি করেছে কিনা?

একটা নির্দিষ্ট জায়গা থেকে একটা বিশেষ সময়ে এভাবে কখনো কাজ করিনি। এটা আমার জন্য বড় অভিজ্ঞতা। প্রথমত, কনসেনট্রেট একটা সময়, একটা অভিজ্ঞতা কীভাবে আর্ট ওয়ার্ক হতে পারে। দ্বিতীয়ত, হাতের কাছে যা আছে তা দিয়ে কতটুকু কাজ করা সম্ভব। এগুলোকে কীভবে প্লেসমেন্ট করলে বিশেষ হয়ে ওঠে। এখানে একটা সংজ্ঞা গুরুত্বপূর্ন হয়ে উঠছে। আর্ট আর কিছুই না, একটা জিনিসকে বিশেষভাবে দেখনো। এতে যে অর্থ ও অভিজ্ঞতা তৈরি হয় আমার মতে, সেটাও আর্টের একটা সংজ্ঞা। তৃতীয়ত, বস্তুর বিষয়ে অনেক সচেতন হয়েছি। কেননা প্রতিটি বস্তুরই টাইম, ম্যাটেরিয়াল, কালচারাল কনটেক্সট আছে। বস্তুর এ বিভিন্ন প্রকাশভঙ্গি অর্থ তৈরি ও স্মৃতিকে স্পর্শ কারার জন্য যে কতটা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ, তা এ দুই মাসে নিজের কাজের মধ্য দিয়ে বুঝতে পেরেছি। এ কাজগুলোকে আমি কনসেপচুয়াল ইন্টারপ্রিটেশন বলতে পারি।

করোনাকালে ভিজুয়াল আর্টের ক্ষমতা...

কিছু কিছু শিল্প এ সময় মানুষকে নতুন অভিজ্ঞতা দিয়েছে। এর মধ্যে চলচ্চিত্র, সাহিত্য ও সংগীতের কথা বলা যায়। ভিজুয়াল আর্ট আমার কাছে সবসময় অভিজ্ঞতার মনে হয়। রঙ, ফর্ম, টেক্সচার, সাইজ, ভলিউম–সবকিছু মিলে নির্দিষ্ট উপস্থপনার মাধ্যমে আমরা এটাকে উপেভোগ করি। কিন্তু এ রকম একটা পরিস্থিতিতে ঘরে থেকে এর মাধ্যমে যোগাযোগ করা নিয়ে আমার সন্দেহ তৈরি হয়। প্রযুক্তিগতভাবে আর্ট মানুষের কতটুকু কাছকাছি যেতে পারে? এর মাধ্যমে কিছু তথ্য হয়তো আমরা দিতে পারি। এর বেশি কিছু নয়। নতুনভাবে এগুলো নিয়ে ভাবছি। এক ধরনের সীমাবদ্ধতাও অনুভব করছি, আবার নতুন কিছু ধারণারও।

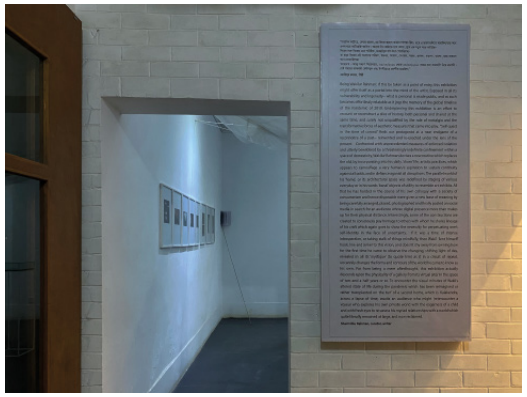
ভিজুয়াল আর্ট একটা ইন্ডাস্ট্রি। করোনা-পরবর্তী সময়ে এর চেহারা কেমন হতে পারে বলে মনে করছেন?

এখানে কিছু প্রশ্ন চলে আসে। আমি কলাকেন্দ্র আর্ট গ্যালারি চালাই। এর মাধ্যমে বিষয়টি বুঝিয়ে বলছি। প্রথমত, যদি আমি গ্যালারি উন্মুক্ত করি, যে কাজগুলো আগে করতাম, সেগুলোর সঙ্গে দর্শকের সম্পর্ক রয়েছে। প্রদর্শনী করলে শিল্পর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে হবে। শিল্পীরা নিজস্ব কিছু আগ্রহের কারনেই আমাদের সঙ্গে কাজ করেন। এখন আগামী ছয় মাসে শিল্পীদের এ আগ্রহগুলো কাজ করবে কিনা? ধরে নিই, শিল্পীর আগ্রহ আছে। প্রদর্শনী করলাম। আমরা অবশ্যই চাইব এটার উদ্বোধনী অনুষ্ঠান হোক, দর্শক আসুক । প্রচারণা ও বেচকেনা হোক। এ ধরনের কাজের মাধ্যমে সমাজে এক ধরনের প্রতিক্রিয়া হোক। এটাকে কেন্দ্র করে আলোচনা এবং সেখানে অনেক মানুষ উপস্থিত থাকুক। কিন্তু আগামী ছয় মাস আমরা এ ধরনের মানুষ পাব কিনা? দ্বিতীয়ত এ ধরনের কাজ না থাকলে আমি গ্যালারিতে গিয়ে কী করব? প্রোগ্রাম না হলে আমি জায়গাটা রাখবো কিনা? কারণ আমাকে তো ভাড়া গুনতে হবে। লাইভ আলোচনা করে অনুষ্ঠানগুলো সফল করা যাবে না। কাজেই সব মিলিয়ে আমাদের অস্তিত্ব, কার্যক্রম নিয়ে নতুন করে ভবতে হচ্ছে।

আমার শেষ প্রশ্ন, করোনা কি কনটেম্পোরারি আর্টের ক্ষেত্রে কোনো পরিবর্তন ঘটাচ্ছে?

হ্যাঁ। সমাজের এ ধরনের প্রতিটি পরিস্থিতিতে শিল্পীরা প্রতিক্রিয়া জানায়। আমার একদিকে ব্যক্তিগত ও সামষ্টিক অভিজ্ঞতার প্রকাশ করি। অন্যদিকে এটা একটা বড় শিল্প। মার্কেট, ভোক্তা, অর্থনীতি, গ্যালারি, সমলোচক, কিউরেটর–আরো অনেক কিছু যুক্ত থাকে। পুরো প্রক্রিয়াটার মধ্যে পরিবর্তন ঘটবে তা বুঝতে পারছি আমরা। আরেকটি বিষয় হলো, কনটেন্ট। শিল্পীরা কী করছে, করবে? আমি কিছু জিনিস পর্যবেক্ষন করেছি। দেশে কনটেম্পোরারি আর্ট বলতে আমরা যা বুঝি, সেখানে তরুন প্রজন্ম এ ইস্যুটা নিয়ে কাজ করছে। কিন্তু কী কাজ করছে? এখানে আমার একটু সমস্যা আছে। যে তথ্যগুলো নিয়ে তারা কাজ করছে, এর সঙ্গে তার ব্যক্তিগত অভিজ্ঞতার সম্পর্কটা কী? একটা উদাহরন দিই, করোনার যে মোটিফ আমরা আঁকছি, সেটা কিন্তু কিউ দেখিনি। এট একটি মাইক্রোস্কোপিক অভিজ্ঞতা। এর সঙ্গে আমার ব্যক্তিগত অভিজ্ঞতা নেই। ভয় আছে। তো ইমেজ তৈরিতে কী ধরনের তথ্য দিচ্ছি ও আবহ তৈরি করছি, এগুলোর সঙ্গে সমসাময়িক একটা গুরুত্ব আছে। একটা সমসাময়িক হয়ে ওঠার জন্য সমসাময়িক চিন্তা, অভিজ্ঞতার সঙ্গে কতটুকু সম্পৃক্ত, সে জায়গা থেকে খুব কম শিল্পী পর্যবেক্ষন করছেন বলে মনে হচ্ছে। আমার মতে, শারীরিক ও বুদ্ধিবৃত্তিক অভিজ্ঞতা ছাড়া কনটেম্পোরারি আর্ট মুসকিলের ব্যাপার। আমার মনে হচ্ছে, করোনা নিয়ে যে সমসাময়িক কাজ, তার জন্য আরো অপেক্ষা করতে হবে।

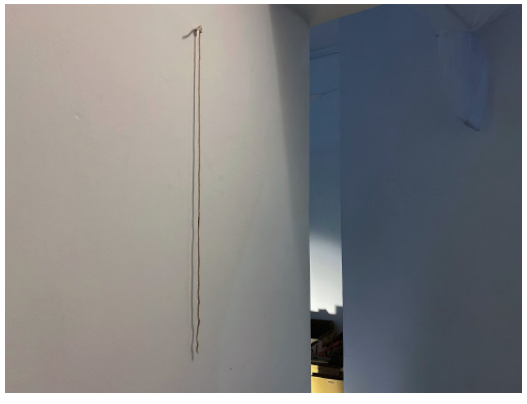
Exhibition view, Self-quest in the time of Corona, 1-25 april 2023, Kalakendra





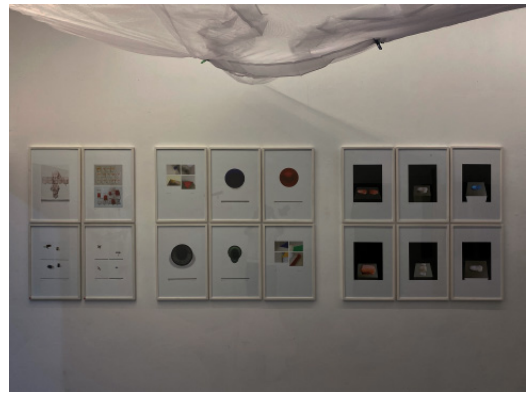








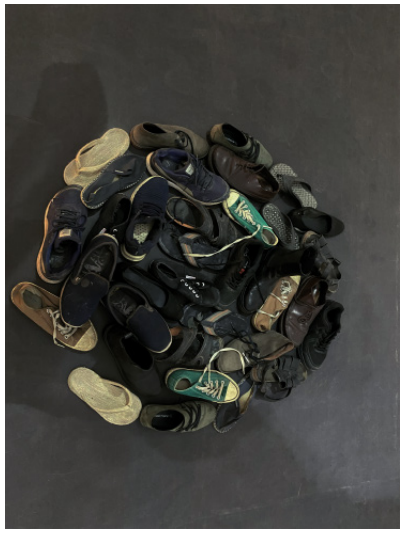





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1993-1997: Art in context, UDK, Berlin, Germany
1984-1986: M.F.A. at Central Academy of Fine Arts Peking, P.R. of China
1976-1981: B.F.A. at Dhaka Art College, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Present Position
Freelance artist, Independent Curator.
Visiting faculties of Architecture department in Asia Pacific University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Since 2014 Curated Exhibition in Dhaka art center, and now Kalakendra, Dhaka. (Curated more than 56 solo and group art exhibition)

Since 1982 Founding member of the artist group SHOMOY, participated in most of the group exhibitions.
From 1986 more than 61 solo exhibitions in China, Bangladesh, Germany, England.
Since 1991, participating in international fairs, Art festival, biennales and triennials in Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Cuba, France, Germany, India, Japan, Lithuania, Macedonia, Myanmar, Norway, Poland, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates & United States of America.
Since 1979 – 2012 Participated in most of the Young, National and Asian Artist's Exhibitions, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

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Self-quest in the time of Corona
An installation exhibition by Wakilur Rahman
Curator: Sharmillie Rahman
1-25 April 2023
Kalakendra
9/4, Block-D, Lalmatia, Dhaka 1205, Bangladesh

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