



Contemporary Art IN Bangladesh

ARTISTS / EXHIBITIONS / GALLERIES



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The contemporary painters of Bangladesh usually opt for realistic subjects as dominant themes, although abstraction still has an obvious charm for many. To put in simple terms, they are increasingly following a representational style in delineating the life around them. These artists frequently voice their protest against the stagnating political climate and express their commitment to the ideals and values that have sustained people's faith in a better future. Equally strongly, many artists find a real attraction for the rich and colourful vegetation of the land with frequent climatic changes. The traditions of western art and the folk art of Bengal blend in their work. Through this blending, the artists have created a new language – a language that simultaneously reflects the characters of Euro-American art and the indigenous art that is peculiar to them. This is also present even in their abstracted compositions.

In spite of the variety and richness of their art, the broad human and social view of the contemporary artists however, cannot compare in terms of optimism with that of the pre-war, that is, pre-1971 artists. This has to do something with the overall social environment. Although the Bengalis' struggle for selfhood was going on with full steam against the backdrop of a repressive time, there were great expectations about the future which the artists also shared. The complexities of life had also not assumed such an intractable dimension. In the work of the post-war artists, one observes a quite natural and inevitable presence of war. There is the terror of war, but there is also the joy of victory and the inspiration derived from the acts of heroism of our liberation



Top MD ABDUS SOBAHAN HIRA, *Image of Life and Time 20*. Etching Aquatint, 1998. Above MD FARUK AHAMAD, *Tradition 12*, Mixed Media, 1998.