

SELF AND  
HASURA AKTHER RUMKY  
OTHERS

*af*

Alliance Française  
Dhaka



I believe "Without the ability to actualize an idea or concept, art wouldn't exist." My artwork is always fascinated by the colours and shapes in my surroundings. This fascination turns into inspiration. My art is a constant search for the best way to interpret my ideas about myself and my surroundings. I tell my story through the strokes of the paintbrush. I don't limit myself to any medium. Art is my life, my dream, and my passion, and like many others, I am motivated to live my dream and make my surroundings even more beautiful.

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'SELF AND OTHERS'  
Solo Art Exhibition by  
Hasura Akther Rumky  
La Galerie, Alliance Française  
de Dhaka, Bangladesh  
27 Jan - 1 Feb 2023

Curated by  
Zahangir Alom

Design  
ARK Reepon

Photography  
ARK Reepon  
Md. Takib Uddin Sarker

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On Cover

**Self and Others**  
Acrylic on canvas  
51 x 41 cm, 2022

Opposite

**Rest in the Rain**  
Acrylic on canvas  
122 x 153 cm, 2023





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Alliance Française  
Dhaka

Hasura Akther Rumky's art captures the essentials that we find in our everyday lives. The artist's creativity focuses on subjects ranging from rickshaw pullers to mystic minstrels, pigeons, and self-portraits. Translating rickshaw art with rickshaw pullers into paintings is what the artist has set apart in her creative journey with a flourish.

The artist's works deserve applause as she has engaged her inner passion for portraying them. What she has tried to project is no less than a feeling swept up in her imaginary world. Finding solace in one's artistic venture ultimately helps an artist grow distinctively.

**M. François Grosjean**

Director

Alliance Française de Dhaka



Rickshaw Puller - 1  
Acrylic on paper  
53 x 31.5 cm, 2020

## Curatorial Note

# An artist's duality of 'self' and its encounter with 'others'

- Zahangir Alom

Individuals must understand how they relate to others to interpret and engage with the social world. Self-other understanding forms the backbone of social cognition and is a central concept explored into basic processes such as action, perception, empathy, cooperation and interaction. The duality of 'self' and its ultimate encounter with 'others' give birth to an artistic venture that Hasura Akther Rumky has offered us through her first solo art exhibition. She constantly searches for the best way to interpret creative ideas through the strokes of paintbrush, textures and forms. For Rumky, art is her life, dream and passion; like many others, she is motivated to live in her dream and make her surroundings more beautiful through her artistic muses.

Rumky's maiden solo exhibit incorporates several paintings series, including rickshaw pullers, the mystic bards, pigeons with portraits and self-portraits. The first thing the artist encounters while coming out from her home is a rickshaw puller. The advent of rickshaws in Dhaka dates back to the colonial period. As a new mode of commute was introduced, it quickly gained popularity, and so did the art form it brought along. Utmost care is taken to decorate a rickshaw with meticulous hand-painted portraits that take days to complete – a true labour of love. Seeing the vibrant colours, picturesque designs, and catchy motifs created by expert hands from afar, one will instantly identify it as a representation of Bangladesh. But this unique form of art we proudly call our own is on the verge of fading out. Original rickshaw art is rapidly being replaced with digital printing while motor rickshaw is taking the place of original rickshaw in cities across Bangladesh. Depicting rickshaw pullers and the rickshaw art through paintings is a timely artistic venture by Rumky, who feels hurt to see the pain and plight of the rickshaw pullers along with the dying art form.

The Bauls and the self-portraits by the artist are moving, lyrical and poised as if one was approaching them in real life. There is nothing stylised or static about the portraits. They sing the joy of human achievements as one re-calls the endeavours of the characters Rumky has delineated. Though the colours are vibrant, browns and black do not depress the viewer. The mood created by the lines and colours is a mysterious and magical combination of buoyancy and sobriety. Here, she has combined the female form with the fascinating pigeons with their marvel of feathers. Nevertheless, the wonderful birds – presented in the simplest of colours -- capture one's imagination and lend repose to the onlookers.

# Beauty in the embodiment of thirst

- Moinuddin Khaled

One of the primary motivations for painting is the fascination with form. The source of this fascination is the visible world around us. What we constantly see takes on a new form in the chemistry of the artist's mind. And there are different types of the charm of forms. I want to learn about myself and know myself beyond all the nature and other wanderings of life around me. Hasura Akther Rumky has portrayed paintings pursuing these two types of emotions. People are the main subject of this promising artist's paintings. The characteristic of Rumky's anthropomorphic paintings can be understood in the light of the adage of Da Vinci, "A man's face is the window to his/her soul". She often painted the visages of her mother, Rabindranath and self-portraits. The self-portraits are the main means of her self-discovery - to test her ability to create art. The viewer can easily feel this while looking at the artist's paintings. However, not only 'I', 'Rabindranath' and 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman', but also designed rickshaws and rickshaw pullers, Bauls and the marginal people have become the subjects of Rumky's artistic practice.

Skilled in pastel, acrylic, charcoal, and other mediums, Rumky did not draw superficially familiar subjects; rather, she wanted to touch beyond form, the invisible world. And in the painting, there lies illusion, lust for form and longing for human connection. Rumky has seen and painted herself from different perspectives. The artist has portrayed herself and her reflection in the self-portraits we see in her double-portrait form. Rumky's treatment of self-infatuation is also reflected in the artist's paintings. However, Rumky did not want to paint the unhappiness of life. In her works based on 'Rickshaw and Rickshaw Puller', the dialectical formula that we find in the bond or conflicting presentation of blackness and colour reveals the essence of life. The viewer's mind is enlightened with this sense that life is moving on, not disturbed by sadness.

In Rumky's work, the expression of the couplet of mother and child, the fluttering of pigeons' wings, is only the embodiment of joy and sound. The mystery of beauty is infinite. To portray that immensity, Rumky has tried to liberate the subject from the linear and morphological bonds of form. This promising painter, starting paintings in her childhood, has won awards from many institutions. The artist is haunted by the cloistered form of 'I', and the people around her, especially Hasura Akther Rumky has looked at the rickshaws and rickshaw-pullers of the rickshaw city Dhaka with deep compassion. Illusion, compassion, the thirst for beauty and in search of the secret sources of all these, Rumky's paintbrush is zealous.



# My journey into the realm of art

- Hasura Akther Rumky



**Mother**

Acrylic on paper  
37 x 26 cm, 2020

My journey into the realm of art started in my childhood. My mother Jesmin Nahar continues to inspire and support me like a powerhouse in my artistic pursuit. At my tender age, I received awards twice for participating in the National Children's Art Competition at Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Dhaka. From then on, I passionately dream of being a professional artist and pursue my higher studies in Oriental Art at the University of Dhaka.

After completing my MFA, I worked as an Assistant Coordinator at the 19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. During that time, I visited many art exhibitions. I have got fascinated with the soft treat to the canvas of renowned artists Jamal Ahmed and Kanak Chanpa Chakma. Though initially, I would work following the wash technique, later, I started acrylic painting with pastel and mixed-media to appease my artistic thirst. I love to portray portraits as they ultimately express the inner feelings of humans. I come across rickshaw pullers sleeping, resting and relaxing in Dhaka streets. I enjoy doing the series as the subject attracts me. I have tried to translate their facial expressions into my canvases.

Besides, I fervently listen to music, especially folk numbers and Tagore songs. The simple lifestyle of the mystic bards also fascinates my artistic realm. The clashes between the desired collective behaviour of society and my reaction to it make me think of our dual personality, and I begin my self-portrait series, which illustrates the conflict between the 'self' and the 'others'.



Rickshaw Puller - 2  
Pastel on paper, 84 x 58 cm, 2022



Rickshaw Puller - 3  
Pastel on paper, 84 x 58 cm, 2022



Napping - 1 (top) . Paddling (bottom)  
Pastel on paper, 56 x 83 cm, 2022 (each)



Napping - 2  
Mixed media on paper, 84 x 103 cm, 2022





Waiting for the Passengers  
Mixed media on paper  
84 x 109 cm, 2022



Rickshaw Fleet

Mixed media on canvas, 112 x 150 cm, 2023





Relaxing after Work  
Mixed media on paper, 109 x 84 cm, 2022



Rickshaw Puller 4, 5, 6, 7  
Pastel on paper, 48 x 38 cm, 2022 (top)  
Pastel on paper, 38 x 48 cm, 2022 (bottom)



On the Move

Pastel on paper, 83 x 56 cm, 2022

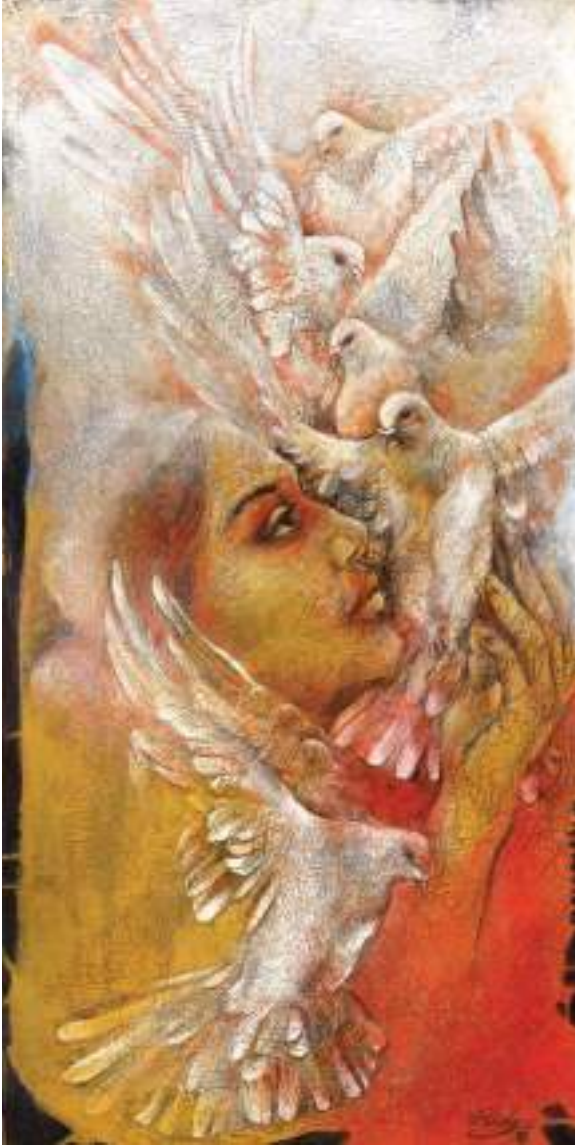


Napping - 3  
Pastel on paper, 58 x 84 cm, 2022





Fancy in the Twilight 1, 2  
Mixed media on paper, 109 x 84 cm, 2022 (each)



Interlude 1, 2

Acrylic on canvas, 102 x 52 cm, 2022 (each)



Regions in the Blue  
Acrylic on canvas, 107 x 61 cm, 2022





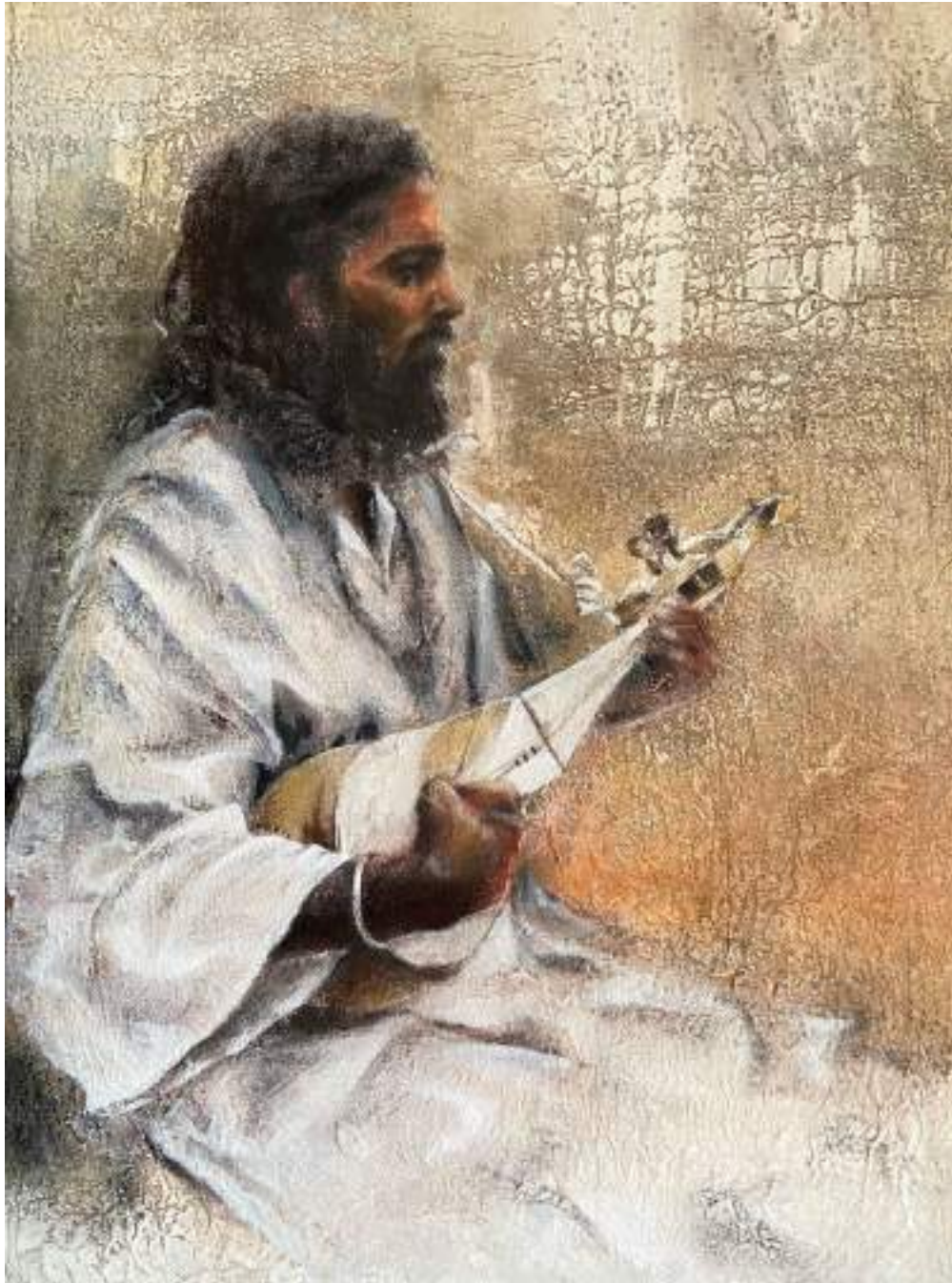
In Search of Peace  
Acrylic on canvas, 71 x 72 cm, 2022



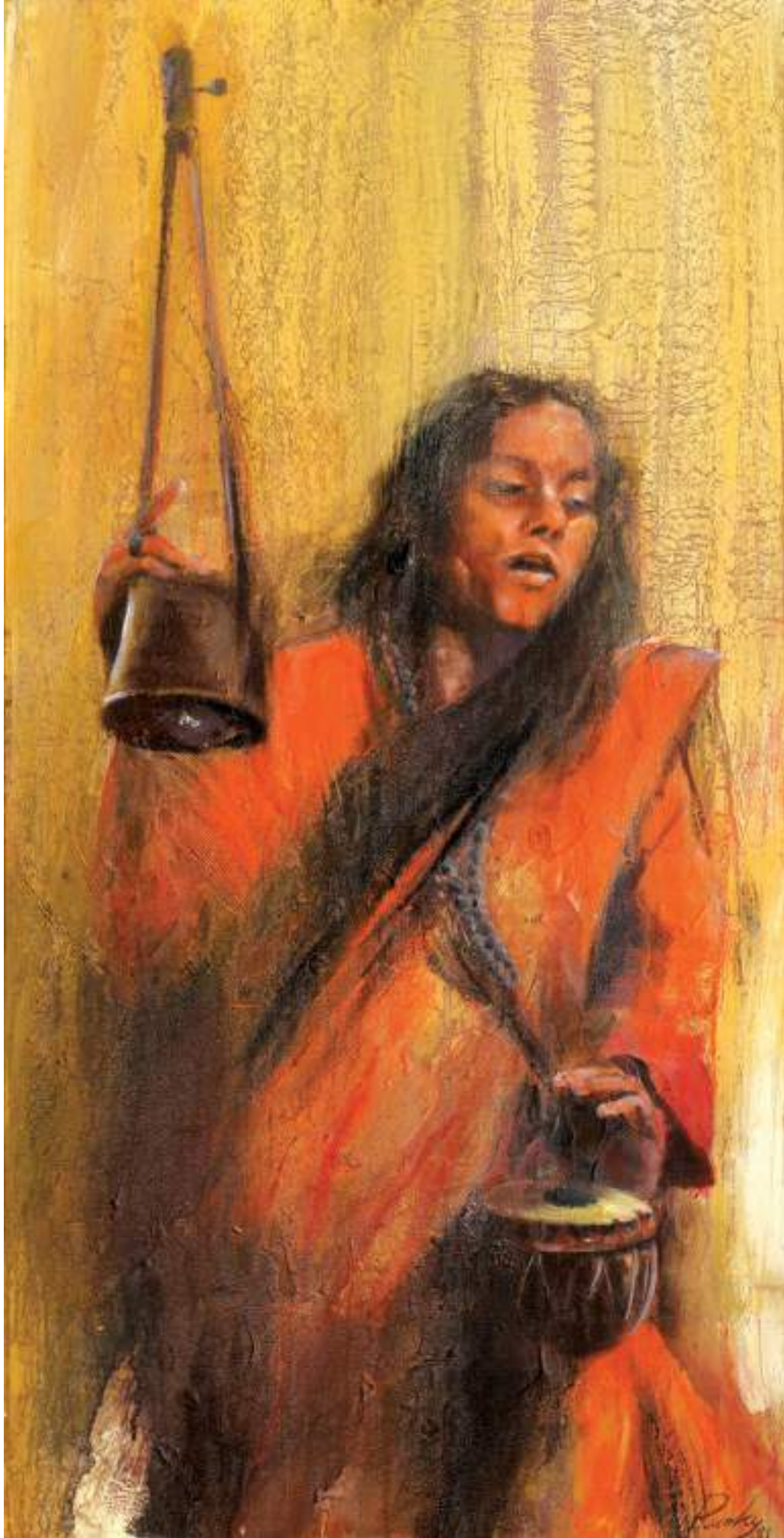
Paban Das Baul  
Acrylic on canvas, 61 x 66 cm, 2021



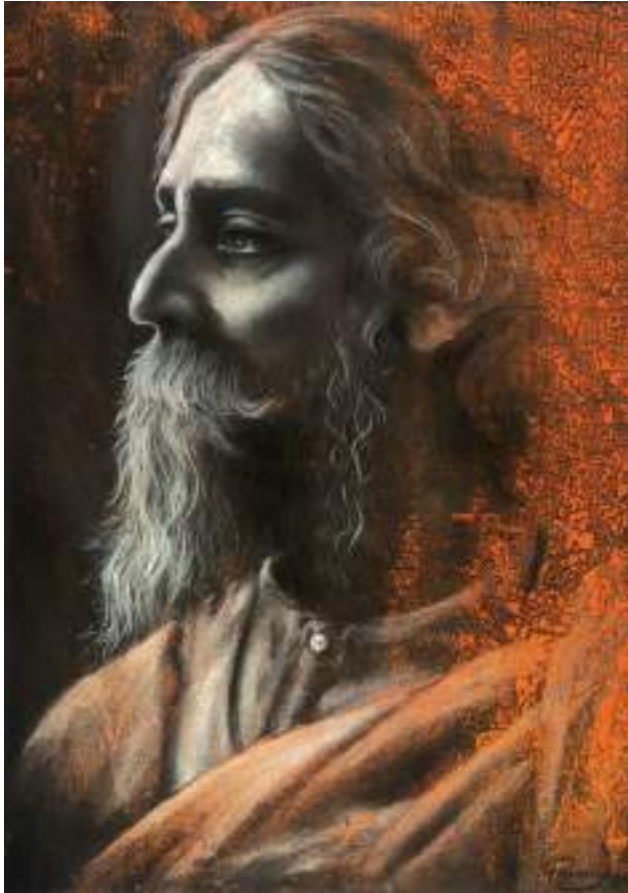
Immersed in Melody  
Acrylic on canvas, 71 x 72 cm, 2022



Baul with Dotara  
Mixed media on canvas, 91 x 76 cm, 2021



Parvathy Baul  
Acrylic on canvas  
102 x 52 cm, 2022



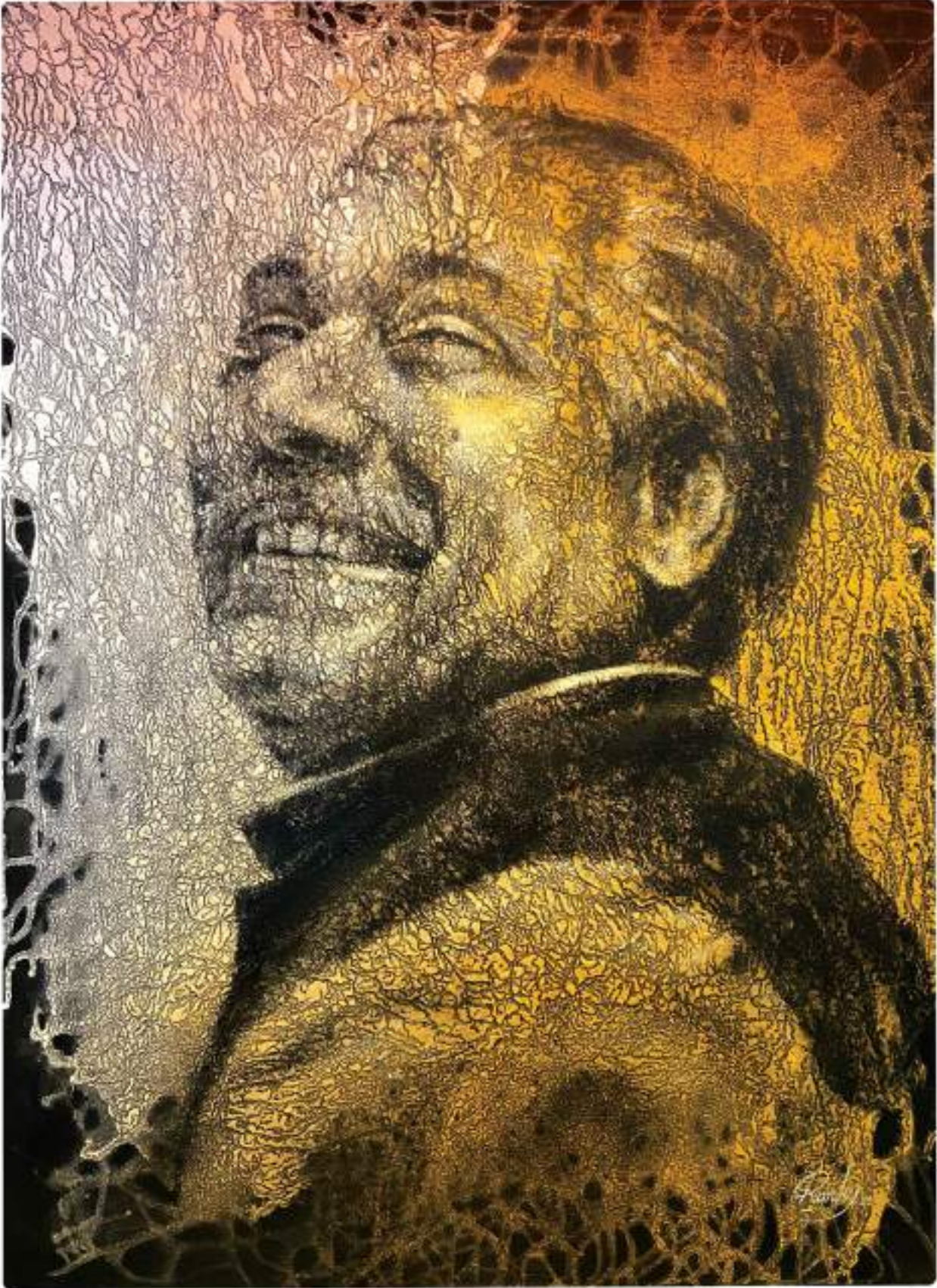
**The Great Bard 1, 2**

Mixed media on paper, 42 x 30 cm (left), 83 x 56 cm (right), 2022

Opposite

**Bangabandhu**

Mixed media on canvas, 122 x 92 cm, 2022





Self Portrait  
Acrylic on canvas, 145 x 145 cm, 2020



## HASURA AKTHER RUMKY

b. 1994

Lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh

### EDUCATION

2017 MFA, Department of Oriental Art, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

2015 BFA, Department of Oriental Art, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

### AWARDS

2021 Grand Award, Bangabandhu International Art Exhibition, KAHAL Art Gallery, Japan

2016 Honourable Mention Award, 6th Oriental Painting Exhibition, OPSG

2015 Artist Shafiqul Amin Smriti Puroskar, Annual Exhibition, Dept. of Oriental Art, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

2006-7 National Children Award, Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Dhaka  
And more than 50 Children awards in different art competitions.

### SOLO EXHIBITION

2023 Self and Others, La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka

### MAJOR GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 'Tune of Bangladesh', Celebrating 50 Years of Bangladesh-Greece Diplomatic Relations Exhibition by Bangladesh High Commission, Athens, Greece

2022 Celebrating 50 Years of Bangladesh-UK Diplomatic Relations Exhibition by Bangladesh High Commission, British Museum, UK

2021 'Chittrogronthoboni of Bangabandhu', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2021 '24th National Art Exhibition', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2021 'Shekh Hasina Joy Bangla Uttorsuri', Bijoy Art Gallery, Dhaka

2021 'OIC Youth Capital', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2021 'Bangabandhu Youth Art Exhibition', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2021 'Sheikh Hasina Bissojoye Nondito Neta', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2021 '22nd Young Artist Fine Art Exhibition', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2020 'Bangabandhu Art Exhibition', Bangladesh High Commission, London, UK

2020 'Art Against Corona', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2020 'Manobotar Ma', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2019 '1st Acuarela Fiesta', Kolkata Watercolour Festival, Kolkata, India

2019 'Indo-Bangla Art Exhibition', Zainul Gallery, Dhaka

2018 '21st Young Artist Fine Art Exhibition', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

2018 'Miniscope', miniature art exhibition, Dwip Gallery, Dhaka

2018 'ICCR India & Bangladesh Intl. Watercolour Painting Exhibition', Nandalal Bose Gallery, Kolkata, India

2018 '2nd International Watercolour Festival', IWS-Nepal, Kathmandu, Nepal

2017 'The Oriental', 9th Oriental Painting Exhibition, Abinta Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhaka

2017 Installation and Performance Art Exhibition, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

2017 'Group Art Exhibition' by Bangladesh Oriental Art Society, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka

2017 'Artist Rashed Commemoration Art Exhibition', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

- 2017 'Goa Affordable Art Fest', Museum of Goa, India
- 2017 'Turkey-Bangladesh Calligraphy Exhibition', Bangladesh Ministry of Religious Affairs, National Mosque Baitul Mukarram Gallery, Dhaka
- 2016 'Group Art Exhibition' by Oriental Art Society, Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka
- 2016 'Annual Exhibition' by Faculty of Fine Art, Zainul Gallery, Dhaka
- 2015 '6th Friendship Art Exhibition', by Youth Society of Art, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
- 2015 '7th Kahal Art Fair', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
- 2015 '60 Years of Oriental Art Department', Zainul Gallery, Dhaka
- 2015 'Commemoration of 40th Death Anniversary of the Father of the Nation', Zainul Gallery, Dhaka
- 2014-22 '4th-9th Oriental Painting Exhibition' by OPSG, Zainul Gallery, Dhaka

## PROJECT

- 2022-19 Assistant Coordinator, '19th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh 2022', Department of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
- 2021 Collaborator, 'Chittrogrontho Jiboni of Bangabandhu' by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at the Birth Centenary of Bangabandhu, National Parade Ground, Dhaka

## WORKSHOP & ART CAMP

- 2022 'Art & Crafts Festival', Gallery 29, Dhaka
- 2022 '75th Birthday Celebration of Sheikh Hasina', Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
- 2021 'Winter Art Camp', Gallery Kaya, Dhaka
- 2021 'EDGE Art Camp', EDGE Gallery, Dhaka
- 2021 'Sheikh Hasina', Art Camp and Exhibition, Gallery Cosmos, Dhaka
- 2017 'Becoming Landscape, the Potential of Place-Bared Art' by Sandy Hsiu-Chih Lo (Taiwan), Dept. of Oriental Art, University of Dhaka
- 2017 'Fresco and Tempera Workshop' by Dr. Prof. Nandadulal Mukhopaddhay, Rabindra Bharati University, India, organized by Dept. of Oriental Art, University of Dhaka
- 2014 'Absorbed Oriental', Oriental Art Workshop, Dhaka Art Center, Dhaka
- 2014 'Wash Painting Workshop' by Artist Shopon Roy, Kolkata Art College, Kolkata, India
- 2013 'Wash Painting Workshop' by Dr. Malay Bala, Oriental Painting Study Group, Dhaka

## RESIDENCY

- 2022 'Chitrashaala', an international art residency, JUSTA Rasa, Rishikesh, India
- 2022 'UNESCO 7th International Action Art', Athens, Greece

## COLLECTION

Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh Taka Museum, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bengal Foundation, Dhaka University Alumni Association, Bangladesh High Commission in London, Bangladesh Embassy in Greece, Bangladesh Prime Minister's Office, and many private collections in home and abroad.

## CONTACT

Website [www.hasuraakterrumky.com](http://www.hasuraakterrumky.com)  
 Email [artistrumky1971@gmail.com](mailto:artistrumky1971@gmail.com)  
 Phone +8801771118099



Shankhamala  
Acrylic on canvas, 62 x 62 cm, 2020

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