



"Performing Tradition and Text"

Since the last couple of decades, performance as a form of practice has become part of most art events in the region. Sometimes it even serves as a staple engaging a wide gamut of artists willing to cross boundaries to become performance artists. But often performances are a way to mirror what contemporary trends are producing through some fixed frameworks. To expand the horizon of this nascent art practice, D'LAB would take this opportunity to appeal to all to return to some of the traditional practices of our respective cultures and lands.

Stories or text are the carriers of tradition, so are some of the rituals and performances that are either linked with religious or folk beliefs, or are carryovers from life lived amidst nature. Thus tradition can be traced in both written and aural forms, and many other agrarian and pre-agrarian performances that were, and still are, part of a lifestyle of a given people. If prayers, *pujas* and festivals are attached to religious tradition, amassing hays in a haystack is a secular performance that we might not refer to as performance since it is considered to be a utilitarian task. Telling mythic stories by referring to pictures is another performative act, which reside between the religious and the secular. We are set to explore all such performances and stories that are invested in both religious and secular life-making.

So, our aim is to initiate such "returns" to rewire our mind and reinvigorate our body. Through acts of reminiscence, rethinking, we feel that we will have open the horizon for new languages of expression, new acts and performances.

D'LAB 2017

"How The Body Traces Language and Culture: Profiles of Performativity".

32 artists from 13 countries have created their performance art in the first edition of Dhaka Live Art Biennale / D'LAB 2017. This bi-annual performance art festival is a giant leap for the Bangladeshi Contemporary Art Movement towards a better future where art would be in proximity with the people as well as with the global trends.

Through this International performance event, Back ART Foundation wants to establish and represent the importance of our tradition and culture to the advantage of various forms of Performance Art. Though the term 'Performance Art' is a modern category, there are numerous ways to verify that it's very essence prevailed in our cultural past and dominant in the present. Our traditions of rural origin provide us a robust foundation. We focus on linking historical heritages like palagaan, jatrapala, puthi path, sonkranti and local ritual dances with our contemporary cultural practice.

Back ART believes that this Live Art Biennale will be a platform for all Live Art mediums where artists from all background and countries of origin can join with all types of living Art and it will transform into a magnificent global event in near future for performance art, voice art, and theatre. In the long run, Live Art Biennale will create a common space for global Live Artists where Bangladesh will be the ambassador of Live Art.

Back ART envisions to flourish as an art collaborator by continuing to organize this multinational Live Art Biennale. Back ART Foundation plans to represent Bangladeshi artist community and to expose our own culture and its recent extended form in the shapes of live art to the world in the upcoming "Dhaka Live Art Biennale 2019".

Back ART Foundation

Despite the challenge to initiate contemporary art projects in Dhaka alone, *Back ART Foundation* was formed in 2013 as an endeavour to link heritage with modern culture, combine diverse forces and develop activity which would open up the city's art scene, providing emerging contemporary artists opportunities to expand their practice, and exhibit their experimental and performative work deemed too ambitious for conventional institutions. Believing in the transformative power of art, the group promotes new languages for art within Bangladesh by developing a variety of programmes ranging from exhibitions, workshops, and to the recent international performance art festival, *Dhaka Live Art Biennale (D'LAB)*.

The name *Back ART* derives from the group's university days when the founding members would carry their belongings in backpacks. In this bag all their arts equipment and ideas would be stored, almost like a portable studio. The name also has connotations with 'bringing back' native art, including folklore and traditional art forms, to the contemporary art scene.

Back ART Foundation envisions bringing art to the public; and it has already organized several public art projects, where many emerging and young artists were promoted to allow them flourish and help them reaching their full potential. Back ART creates innovative art project on diverse fields including mythology & rural lifestyle, urbanization, refugee & migration, memories, and language & performance, where artists incorporate various disciplines of art and science both.

About the Venue:

Campus : The University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The University of Dhaka, also known as **Dhaka University** or simply **DU**, is the oldest university in modern Bangladesh. Established in 1921 during the British Raj, it has made significant contributions to the modern history of Bangladesh. After the Partition of India, it became the focal point of progressive and democratic movements in the then East Pakistan. Its students and teachers played a central role in the rise of Bengali nationalism, which subsequently led to the independence of Bangladesh. Today, it is the largest public university in Bangladesh-- a green campus full of lively atmosphere providing an easy access to all and sundry.

Expectation from participant artists:

In this project the performance artists are expected to enjoy their time in Dhaka, exploring its culture, enjoying the melt that would transcend the languages barrier, meeting local people and tasting local foods. It is also expected that artists might focus on collaborations crossing the cultural boundaries and traditions in their performance framework and works, as an ambassador of their own countries and regions.

D'LAB 2019 Timeline

2nd February – 5th February 2019.

Who can apply

1. Any art loving, creative individual or group around the globe, who creates artworks as performance / Live artist.
2. Bangladeshi artists are eligible to apply in this segment (They are eligible for curatorial projects and workshops, please follow FB page for next Open Calls.)
3. Applicants should be at least 21 years old.

Supports by Back ART Foundation

1. Local transports within Dhaka regarding Live Art Event and Activity
2. 7 days Accommodation in local residence and 3 Meals daily
3. Modest budget for art materials purchase

Artists should pay

* International travel, visa fee and personal expenses.

Back ART Foundation will provide invitation letters to the artists, so that they can apply for international travel grant.

What to Send

1. 1 Portrait photo
2. 1 Scanned copy of passport
3. 1 Page short bio (250 word max.)
4. 1 Page artist statement and idea proposal
5. 3-5 Artworks' images & descriptions (live art done later 2015)

Guidelines for Submission:

Registration fee : Registration is FREE

Send documents via email: info.backart@gmail.com

Please mention **“(Artist’s name) : D’LAB 2017”** - in the subject line.

OR Post to: Back Art Foundation, 4axiz IT Ltd. House 589, Flat 4B, Avenue 4, Road 9, Mirpur DOHS, Mirpur 12, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh.

Submission deadline & Notifications

- **MAY 5th, 2018** : Artists must submit their DOCUMENTS
- **MAY 20th, 2018** : Artists will be notified of selection via email
- **JUNE 1st, 2018** : Formal Invitation letter will be sent via email.

* Please visit ‘Dhaka Live Art Biennale D’LAB’ Facebook Page to get updated information about ‘D’LAB 2019’. / www.backart.org / info.backart@gmail.com