



**Urban Sight**

Karl Saharudin Ahmed

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Solo Painting Exhibition

**Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed**

## ***La Galerie***

Alliance Francaise

3rd-20th September 2004

## **Spitalfields Gallery**

6th Dec. 2004 - 10th Jan. 2005

## **Jehangir Art Gallery**

27th Dec 2005 -2nd Jan. 2006

**This Exhibition is Dedicated to :**

Late Khaza Habibulla

Photography : Kazi Sayed Ahmed, Design : Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed

Computer Graphic : Munir Chowdhury, Rupantor Graphic

Printing : Graphosman Reproduction & Printing



La première exposition personnelle de Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed date de 1987. Il ne cesse depuis d'interroger la ville, son sujet de prédilection. L'évolution de son travail est fascinante : ses premiers tableaux de peintre confirmé représentent l'espace urbain comme une structure écrasante, vu par un piéton perdu dans l'obscurité menaçante d'immeubles qui lui cachent le ciel.

Ensuite, l'artiste a changé son point de vue pour se placer loin au-dessus du réseau urbain, dans une série d'œuvres remarquables exposées au Musée National en 2003. Villes tentaculaires qui rongent la campagne environnante, comme un cancer inéluctable, vues aériennes hypothétiques, sublimées par la virtuosité du pinceau.

Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed, bizarrement sujet au vertige, n'est pas effrayé par l'innovation. Sa recherche le pousse aujourd'hui à se rapprocher de la cité pour en dresser la carte, à l'aide du collage de papier journal, medium par excellence du grondement urbain, dont les articles et les publicités s'harmonisent dans une composition réfléchie du chaos.

Il en résulte une œuvre qui laisse l'œil jouer avec les lignes et les couleurs, errer dans les labyrinthes d'un artiste qui parle de son environnement avec une rare pertinence.

### **Pascal Janovjak**

Directeur-adjoint, Affaires culturelles  
Alliance Française de Dacca

## The invasion of the representative reality

We live in a world where the political, the cultural and the economic merge in a vortex of confusion. These spheres "fuse in the same marketing and merchandising of objects and ideologies," to quote Baudrillard. So, in this time of tremendous flux in values – be it moral or aesthetic – what would the task of an artist be? What would an artist living in Dhaka with his eye set on all the goings-on of both the real and the representative worlds do? Salahuddin Ahmed simply could not remain untouched by all this.

As reality keeps changing over time, incessantly growing in tissues and complexities of nerve system, it becomes more and more unrecognisable in the context of its past characteristics. At present, it almost resists definition. It has, it seems, dawned on Salahuddin that the reality he himself is part of, now seems like an enigma of sorts. Therefore, he hovers over the surface and maps the intricate circuits that make up the never-ending landscape of reality examined through the media.

Salahuddin's recent paintings are more about images culled from the print-media than about sweeps of brush that used to create the spectacles akin to landscapes, – his signature imagery. Considering his latest forays, one may say that he has made a swift journey from 'landscape' to 'mediascape' – where a plethora of bits and pieces of newspapers are collected in a harmonious whole.

His ideas, as usual, take off from the visual ground, and once they reach a final stage they end up being visually intricate pattern-like paintings. The present mode of his art is plainly recognised as collage. Though the system of putting a layer of newspaper and then gradually dividing the picture plain into closely-knit islands marked by dark borders, which makes many of the news items and printed photographs stand out as his main components, seems unique. The process makes his work look more like solved puzzles with all the pieces in the right place.

This time around, the 'swirl' of what is real is what the artist has striven to encapsulate in his mural-like all-over pieces. As for the viewers, they are subjected to a mindless glut of spontaneously selected ads, news items, cartoons, and most of all photos. None of these retain their original character; none are even left to communicate what they were originally meant to communicate. Instead of leaving them alone, Salahuddin tampered with them to construct his grand theme, which is the map that resembles a city seen from above where areas are replaced by his partially painted or unpainted collage elements.

Confrontation with one such picture of Salahuddin is like experiencing a head-on collision with the intermediary source, which is the news-media. Each painting draws on the interminable appetite we have for information and how the media appeases that voracious hunger. In many a piece the reference to eating pops up. Whether it is a mere ploy on the part of the artist to make the pieces look filled with playful engagement with the subjects the artist sets out to tackle is unimportant, what is important is the question of being served and enervated

by the sheer glut of it all is brought to the fore.

The real events and their authors have real effects on our everyday existence. One way or the other, the media puts a veil upon both – the events and their authors. Text in itself has an abstracting effect on the readers.

If reality doesn't stand on its head in the mirror that is the media, it at least is considerably altered. Salahuddin harps on this principle, he also alters the very reality presented by the media. Not that he is out to shatter the myth of the media as the purveyor of truth. While looking at Salahuddin's recent work that is the last thing one will be bothered with. Rather, it is the very 'chaos' where facts, fables and other real or textual matters are disintegrated that Salahuddin fixes his eyes upon. He draws on that chaos and churns out works that tend to marry that idea with a compositional solution that he developed over the years.

If in his last show Salahuddin was inclined to make his landscape look like a complete picture seen from the vantage point of a cartographer, at present he tries his hand on constructing a capacious diagram, where pages of newspapers, magazines and even scraps from discarded paperbags are agglomerated.

Does the artist live in an aesthetic delirium of the sources he works with? Does the artist question the idea of representation, or does he only show what we are bombarded with on every day basis? Even if Salahuddin intends to amass elements from the media to serve his own aesthetic end, each of his pieces carries the baggage of the emotional ambivalence born out of the conflicting relationship we have with our surroundings. Reality and its perception are never the same; they, in fact, are two different domains. This realisation may not inform the recent pieces, but with their superfluity of extraneous items lifted from newspapers, they veer one's attention to the futility of remaining informed. Thus the relation between information and the one who craves for it is examined.

Salahuddin's world that was previously been subjected to the realities of Old Dhaka, the place where he resides, has been invaded by the print media with the same forcefulness he used to wield his paint-heavy brush while working on his landscapes. As he let that tide take him to reach a new destination, he also enforces his hand-picked elements to maintain a certain order. This order is manifested mainly in the black lines that divide the picture plain into myriad of components. It is the circuitous lines that in the end contribute to the final look.

Cityscapes they are not. Yet they seem like camouflaged top-views of a city revealed frame by frame. This is the only mystifying element that one finds in the artist's recent work, and the rest remains as revealed as reality to the naked eye.

**Mustafa Zaman**



urban sight - 10 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 11 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 12 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 13 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004





urban sight - 14 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 17 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 18 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 25 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



urban sight - 19 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 15 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 16 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 26 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004





urban sight - 20 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



urban sight - 27 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



urban sight - 21 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2001



urban sight - 28 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004

Acknowledgment Pascal Janovjak, Mustafa Zaman, Kabir Ahmad, Kazi Farid Uddin Ahmed  
Cover urban sight - 4 mixed media on canvas 180 X 320 cm 2003



urban sight - 29 , mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



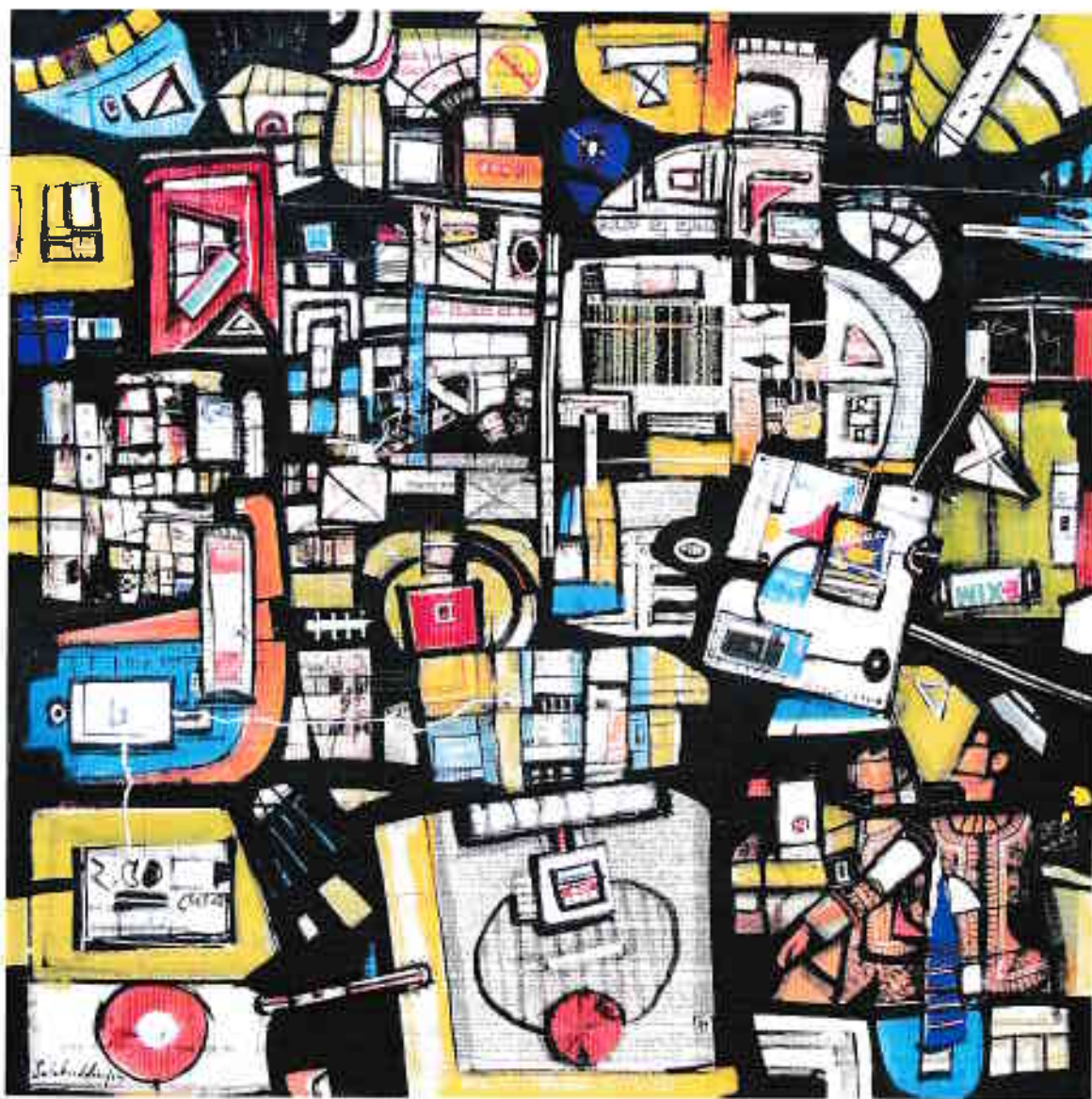
urban sight - 30 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



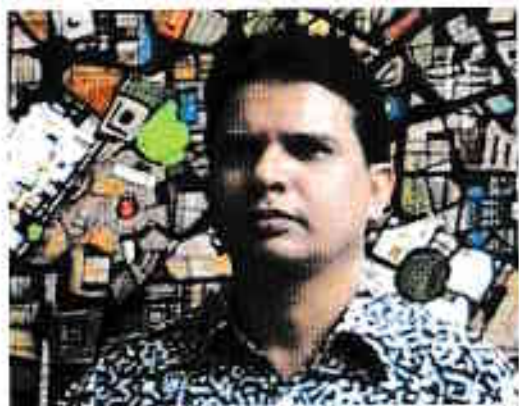
urban sight - 31 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



urban sight - 32 mixed media on canvas 60 X 120 cm 2004



urban sight - 22 mixed media on paper 60 X 60 cm 2004



## Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed

1963 : Born in Dhaka, Bangladesh

### Education

1986 : M.S.S International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

1985 : B.S.S (hons.) International Relations, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

### Workshop

1999 : India-Bangladesh Art Camp, Organized by Kolkata Nandanik, India.

1995 : Metal Workshop, Conducted by Suzanne Benton at Institute of Fine Arts University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1989 : Art History And Art Appreciation Course Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.

### Award

2002 : Honorable Mention Award, 69th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.

2000 : 2nd Prize In Abstract and Surrealism, 25th Anniversary International Miniature Art Show. MASF, USA.

1998 : Honorable Mention Award, 65th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.

1998 : 2nd Prize In Abstract Art and Surrealism, 1st Tone International Miniature Art Exhibition, Bangladesh

1997 : 1st Prize In Abstract Art 12th Georgia Miniature Art Inc. USA.

1996 : 4th Prize In The 12th Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island USA.

1995 : Honorable Mention Award In The 10th Georgia Miniature Art Society Inc. USA.

### Solo Exhibition

2005 : Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, India.

2004 : La Galerie, Alliance Francaise, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Spitalfields Gallery, London, UK.

2004 : Hilton Beijing Gallery, Beijing, China.

2003 : Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka Bangladesh

2002 : Chuwa Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo, Japan.

2001 : Seas Art Studios And Gallery, Adelaide, Australia La Galerie, Alliance Francaise, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2001 : Birla Academy of Arts and culture, Kolkata, India

2000 : Art Konsault, New Delhi, India

2000 : Solo Miniature Painting Exhibition, Gallery De Alliance Francaise, Dhaka

1999 : Gallery 21, Dhaka, Bangladesh

1998 : Tourist Service Center, Katmandu, Nepal.

1998 : Shajahan Art Gallery, New Delhi, India.

1997 : High Commission of Indian Cultural Center Gallery Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1997 : Gallery De Alliance Francaise, Dhaka Bangladesh.

1995 : Zainul Gallery Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka Bangladesh.

1994 : La Gallery, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1993 : Gallery De Alliance Francaise, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1987 : T.S.C, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

### Group Exhibition

2004 : 5th Art Now Asia, Las Vegas Art Museum, Las Vegas, USA.

2004 : 9th Art Mirai International Art Exhibition, Tokyo, Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

2003 : 21st Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island USA.

2003 : Orient Color and Shape in Jakarta

2003 : 7th International Biennial of Miniature Art Yugoslavia

2003 : 11th Asian Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2003 : 8th Art Mirai International Art Exhibition, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan.

2003 : 27th Anniversary International Miniature Art Show, MASE USA.

2002 : 2nd Biennial of Contemporary Painting of the Islamic World, Tehran, Iran.



- 2002 : 15th National Art Exhibition of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Bangladesh
- 2002 : 69th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.
- 2002 : 20th Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island USA.
- 2002 : 5th International Exhibition of Miniature And Small Pictures, SAMAF France.
- 2002 : 39th Annual Lake Oswego Festival the Arts International Miniature Art Show, USA.
- 2002 : 10th Asian Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 2002 : 26th Anniversary International Miniature Art Show, MASF USA.
- 2001 : 19th Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island USA.
- 2001 : 1st Contemporary Young Artists Exhibition from Bangladesh Chuwa Gallery, Giza Tokyo, Japan.
- 2001 : 4th International Exhibition of Miniature And Small Pictures, SAMAF France.
- 2001 : Paper Mill Playhouse International Miniature Art Exhibition, NJ, USA.
- 2001 : 14th National Art Exhibition of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh.
- 2001 : 1st Biennial Art Exhibition, Bangladesh Charushilpi Sangad National Museum, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 2000 : Contemporary Art from Bangladesh, Exhibition in China.
- 2000 : The sixth International Biennial of Miniature Art Yugoslavia.
- 2000 : 3rd International Exhibition of Miniature & Small Pictures, SAMAF France.
- 2000 : Paper Mill Playhouse International Miniature Art Exhibition, Nj, USA.
- 2000 : 25th Anniversary International Miniature Art Show, MASF USA.
- 1999 : 9th Asian Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1999 : 17th Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island, USA.
- 1999 : The Art of the Miniature VI, The Snow Gooses Gallery, USA.
- 1999 : "Sonar Bangladesh" at Artoday, New Delhi, India.
- 1998 : "Remembering Vigo" International Mail Art Exhibition Argentina.
- 1998 : 1st Tone International Miniature Art Exhibition, Bangladesh.
- 1998 : 13th National Art Exhibition, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1998 : 65th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.
- 1998 : 30th painters Exhibition From Bangladesh\* Osaka, Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Japan.
- 1998 : 65th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.
- 1998 : 12th Young Artist's Art Exhibition Shilpakala Academy Chittagong, Bangladesh.
- 1997 : 12th Georgia Miniature Art Inc, USA.
- 1997 : 64th Miniature Painters, Sculptures And Grovers Society of Washington D.C. USA.
- 1997 : 8th Asia Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1996 : 12th Annual Juried Miniature Art Exhibition, Long Island, USA.
- 1996 : 12th National Art Exhibition, Bangladesh, Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1996 : 11th Young Artist's Art Exhibition, Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1996 : Three Man Show, Zainul Gallery Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1995 : 10th Georgia Miniature Art Inc USA.
- 1995 : 2nd Tone National Miniature Art Competition Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1995 : Metal Sculpture Exhibition Zainul Gallery Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University, Bangladesh.
- 1994 : 11th National Art Exhibition, Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1994 : 10th Young Artist's Art Competition Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1993 : 1st Tone National Miniature Art Competition Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1993 : 6th Asian Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1993 : 15th Montana Miniature Art Society International Show, USA.
- 1992 : 10th National Art Exhibition, Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1988 : 8th Young Artist's Art Exhibition, Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 1987 : Victory Day Art Exhibition, Shilpakala Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Present Position : Freelance Artist.

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Spitfields Gallery



JMWALKER ART GALLERY