

## E x c l u s i v e



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**Would you please tell us about your experience at the 58th Cannes Festival of Creativity? How did you come up with the idea of showcasing Bangladesh through jute bags?**

Actually the idea of jute bag came out as we participated previously in Cannes Lions from Bangladesh Brand Forum and we noticed Cannes distributed few welcome elements which were exclusively designed. Among all these promotional items bag was the most important as the whole 7 days all the participants carry the bag. So we thought it would be a great platform for us to promote Bangladeshi Jute and also market our design. Both clicked, everyone loved it (according to their appreciation) and we are happy that we did that.

**Why did you pick Jute bag to promote Bangladesh?**

Bangladesh produces the finest quality jute in the world, but over the last few years we have lost the edge as a quality jute producer in the world. We felt we need to use some creative platform to showcase our unique products made out of this fiber. At the same time we also wanted to promote Bangladesh at the backdrop of Jute. So it was important to choose the right platform to showcase jute and get the attention from the world again. Since participants from 150 countries were there in Cannes Lion, who are market leaders in their own field - Communication, design, media, web, agency etc, we thought this fiber will create a buzz and definitely will make a difference to how Bangladesh is perceived.

**What did you try to capture through the bag, what was the message to the participants?**

The message was to capture the authenticity. Jute is a kind of a fiber that is eco-friendly. So it has a very earthy attitude ingrained within. As Cannes is a place of purity, creativity- the Jute bag blends with the atmosphere. I thought it would blend with Cannes intense energy. It feels great, it looks cool and most of all it does not harm our environment at all.

**What was the reaction of the bag at Cannes?**

The reaction was fascinating. People loved it, they wanted to have it and keep it. People loved to walk around with the bag unlike before. Most of all Bangladesh received very special attention through this bag, I must admit.

**Country's present them prominently at Cannes? Which countries caught your eye?**

This time Brazil, China, England and Argentina were very prominent as they came up with new innovation, idea and concept. Brazil - made sure that they are visible in every possible way. They were aggressive to put their name in next level of innovation. They offered few interactive sessions where they shared their unique methods of creativity and promotion of their concept. It is very intelligent on their part to showcase their authentic culture. Even at art they are able to identify their uniqueness and that is quite a clever approach.

**What are the major areas of improvement for Bangladesh in the field of creativity and design?**

In my opinion we need to work on our strengths more to flourish our creativity. We have to identify our authenticity, be it design, art, and be it aesthetics. We have to improve on our learning. Also we need certain level of exposure which will help us improve. We need institutional training at international level. We are good; our creative minds are free, dynamic and individual. But we need to take it to the next level. We need a jump, a social movement in creative field.

**How would you describe Cannes as a city, what is so special about the place apart from the beautiful beach?**

NAP:As two important international events take place in Cannes the city has already acquired a special energy. Apart from the lovely weather and beautiful beaches these exclusive events are all over the place. So it has a very creative, arty atmosphere wherever one looks around. This is what I like about art, it always has this capability of spreading a sense of beauty. Cannes beauty is unparalleled as the

vibration is always floating in the air, which inundates your imagination to high esteem.

**You also joined Venice Biennial, how the experience there, any specific work or country showcasing that caught your attention?**

Venice Biennale' is one of the most prestigious Art Biennale in the world. This time it is our pleasure to have Bangladesh pavilion as well. It is a global platform to promote a country through their art. The festival also celebrates the fresh and young creative concepts from all over the world. The experience was spectacular as it is the most creative endeavor for art and artist. A place like Italy with great historical, cultural and sociological background is the host of the Biennale. Contemporary and conceptual art represented by each of the nations. The huge premises of the exhibition area with extravagant inspirational works speak about them all. A platform to learn the global art trends, contemporary movements which mostly cherishes the modern renaissance in art. Anish Kapoor (British Indian) was mind blowing, China did fantastic job with a critical installation, so did Italy (the host country), Saudi Arabia with its installation was noteworthy, Korea represented young hip hop culture of their own, British artists proved their detail craftsmanship. And five participants of Bangladesh represented the new and contemporary media of art, which was commendable as an effort to take Bangladesh to the next level in the trends of modern art practice. Yet I missed the technological effort in art presentation which could give the biennale a very exclusive dimension.

**Did you witness any direction where the global art movement is going; does it have any relevance to Bangladesh?**

Modern art movement is getting to its highest degree of experimentation now. Exploration of concept, media & philosophy is taking world art in the next level of our civilization through art. And we as artists from Bangladesh are also doing our part. But one thing makes me worried- that easy access of technology may result in losing the logical progression; there is a chance for countries like us to jump into something where we might lose our authenticity by the pressure of global trends.

**Any message to those who are working in the creative or design industry on how they can elevate themselves to world-class level?**

Be fearless in creativity and be innovative. In today's world creativity is just not enough whatever we do. We have to be original and blend that originality with the global trend. And most of all always think something different and try to break the 'black box' that never allows us to grow. In my opinion, creativity that does not make any difference to people's lives are not innovative enough. In Bangladesh we have numbers of great creative minds but if you are not intelligent enough to make a difference to our society that will take us nowhere! Do not play safe, be dynamic, be sharp, be the example. ■



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