

Times that Spoke/ Times that speak

সময়ের স্রোত ও জীবন প্রবাহ

From Ayan Mukherjee

‘ঘন মেঘে ঢাকা সুহাসিনী রাকা তুমি কি গো সেই মানিনী ভিড়ে মিশে থাকা, স্মৃতিদের
পাখা পরাজিত এক বাহিনী’

The times left behind in the course of life breathe in the form of our memories; they may profoundly help develop and formulate our present, educate us, help us build notions and judgements, formulate philosophies, create experiences, and push us to understand and realise ‘life’ as a ‘**continuing practice**’.

Various living/non-living entities and objects that were integral parts of our lives yesterday shift and often get redesigned circumstantially. The abandoned spaces of our lives, an old friend who gave time and taught us the meaning of friendship, the ancient house that saw us grow, a book that provided vitamins for life, an old song that drew the shape of our hearts, the dress we loved wearing so much, a food preparation by the mother, an incident that gifted us experience of a lifetime, the diary that recorded the lines of our soul may turn out to be a few of many that cry out loud, not like vampires but like an ex-lover, and the blotted-out lines who are the anecdotes of our lives and times. They carry and contain our memories, reciting our life logs, and thus often turn into memory containers. They are the crucial elements and spaces behind the evolution of our beings.

I believe memories may also exist as translucent shapes and whispering forms of elements that never take a single breath. They may not relay their existence as physical entities, instead like non-living norms; like in the invisibility, like a reverie, rumination, remembrance, or also in the angst of an unforgiving memory, a suspended nostalgia that echoes with us throughout the time we exist.

Again, with the progression of our lives, these memories often get deserted and distorted, getting lost in the crowd of our new-found experiences and newer wheels of memory. In an ironical realm of thought, we repeatedly tend to defeat them. They suffer in exile like a band of **defeated army men**. They still care for us, though, as these memory objects contain our life traits and practices and have helped construct who we are today. Sometimes as a teacher and sometimes as a friend who gave us the informal training we survive with, as our perennial partner in the journey called ‘Life’.

What about revisiting and identifying them, reigniting our relationships with them, recollecting and receiving them more profoundly, and creating moments with them all over again through an eclectic medley of artistic interpretations and dialogues??

The context gets explored and translated through contrasting artistic senses and vocabularies of art practices. Through a cognitive search that may create spaces for rewinding of the memoryscapes, reactionary commentaries triggered by the perspectives and narratives of multi-dimensional collaborating agents and sources, such as the collaborating/participating independent art practitioners, the local community of '**Behala 14 No Bus Stand Area**' and also spaces, establishments, elements, and the individual characteristics of the site for **BEHALA ART FEST 2024**,.

Digging deep to excavate, map, and mark lines of identity about the 'Defeated Army' (the times we have left behind, the old memories, the life stocks, both living and non-living entities that periodically get replaced and released by us) in our lives and practices from the context of personal memories, experiences, and estimates as well as the local community of the project space (**Behala 14 No Bus Stand Area**) should paint a holistic picture while independent forms of 'art practices' become a voice and vehicle for storage and communication.

We may need to take a few steps back to profoundly discover and decide on the steps we should take to march forward again. Steps taken forward may sometimes walk back for the sake of a future filled with wisdom and clarity.