



Une Soirée Pleine d'Histoires

An Evening of Stories 2018

Alliance française du Bengale
Park Mansions, Park Street
September 28, 2018

List of Stories & Storytellers

af
Alliance Française
du Bengale



Painting the Monalisa

Soumyadeep Roy

The Story

She almost never smiled. He tried to get her involved in the painting process so that she would grow an interest in painting. But she seemed as disinterested in it, as she was for the sitting. She was tired mostly. He was not exceptionally kind to her either. That smell of turpentine in a stuffed room on a winter evening would get anybody nauseous. This whole sitting business always felt uncomfortable. For both. He recalled his initial years when he felt too shy to ask people to pose. So he would draw objects. Or dead people (the only consistent sitters who wouldn't move). It was funny how all the great painters painted Gods. Or pretended they painted Gods while they actually painted their patrons. And naked women. Their fantasies. Only because it delighted them. Men liked seeing these fantasies come alive, so they painted them. Those women might as well have been flowers or a vase, it wouldn't matter. He often wondered if he had any right to draw women like that. He had met a painter who had argued that only women should paint women. It seemed like an impossible theory though. That would render anything other than self portraits useless. Then again, every painting was a self portrait. But here he was, confronted by a disinterested sitter. She visited on and off. Her looks changed over time. His painting changed over time. But now it had been years since she had left. And there was very little chance of her coming back. This painting was finally his. Another self portrait. His own work had kept him busy. Paintings he started later finished before this portrait ever would. Would it ever end? Did any painting ever really end? Was there ever an end to the painting process? Maybe each of them were individual paintings as he painted. That first drawing. That first layer. Every time a new layer was painted, the previously existing version of that painting died. By this time this painting had died many deaths and was reborn as many times. The more this happened, the more he grew fond of it. His child. Small paintings allow for this intimacy that large ones almost never do. He knew this little piece of work better than anything else. Sometimes he would just keep it beside his bed before going to bed. He'd change it before that and then wake up to it as if it was a new painting, and then change it all over. He sometimes wondered if it even looked like her anymore. Her memories lingered. She became more comfortable over time. They shared jokes, stories, experiences and soon he had become her confidante. And now she finally started enjoying the painting process too. But her husband found work in another town. They would have to leave. It was a bittersweet parting. They joked how this painting was destined to remain unfinished. She left with a smile.

About Soumadeep Roy

A visual artist, a literature graduate, a copy editor, and someone who is interested in history, narratives, and anachronism, and how Art binds all of them together.

Forgiveness

Ramit Chakraborty

The Story

A love story where the girl returns to beg forgiveness for the sins she committed six years ago.

About Ramit

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RAMIT CHAKRABORTY aka Rohit is a bilingual poet. He completed his BA and MA in English from university of Calcutta. He's passionate about theater, performative arts, storytelling etc. He hails from a joint, conservative brahmin family. Current he's working (private).

A Distant Love

Shabina Nishat Omar

The Story

A chance encounter sparks into a long distance relationship

About Shabina

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Professor of English and Creative Writer. Dreamer and Doer.

Hues of a solitary century

Dipanjana Das

The Story

What is solitude? What is disillusionment? Is it always dark and dreary? Or light shines through the lattices of hope and optimism? How does one befriend solitude and bring oneself to smile? That's the quest of life.

About Dipanjana Das

A postgraduate in English literature and a student of french language. French teacher by day and a wonderer by night. Blends everyday experiences, observations, feelings and realisations into words and frames, giving shape to a train of thoughts.

Forms of Mental Illness

Ritam Talukdar

The Story

"We as human beings are never complete even if all of our feelings are seen to be. Within each of us there lies a small portion of unsatisfactory statement that slowly over the passing time, turns onto us. Even if we try to be significant we find some part of it to be missing. This feeling of "lack of being" kind of acted as a strange phenomenon, in which people like us lie submerged. People's identity is rooted in their identification; in what they associate themselves with. Identity is not just what you know but also how you know. This "how" matures with the progression of one's age. It is evolving in nature. Still there are certain clinical problems existing in this era, which can cause difficulty in a person in taking an appropriate perspective towards other tasks in life, creating varieties of problems within one. But then the question remains are we vulnerable?"

Depression can be termed as an epidemic negative view of the self, the world and the future generated by biases in processing the gathered information. This negative reliance, rooted in a pessimistic self-schema gives rise to thoughts that a depressed individual experience every single day. This not only dismantles your state of confidence but also attempts to reedit your life story twisting the meaning of every successful event in your life, with repressed memories from your past projecting the losses and embarrassments. We begin to question our ability.

We all have got broken, faced the bruises and have experienced the phase of being heartbroken, disappointed by the so called fake attempts or decisions that we have taken in our life. In other words this particular state of sadness can be termed as Depression. But this particular condition of melancholy feeling of being abandoned is not the end, rather it's the sadness that changes our condition to perceive the way we see ourselves, our past, present and the future. In other words, it changes the core of your very own identity which binds us to the thumb and takes away all of the key factors of staying happy.

The way this particular illness discredits every single good feeling moment from the pages of your memory is truly heartbreaking. It makes you feel that somehow or the other you simply got lucky on your way. Even the affectionate approach by your friends seems to be challenging and hard to digest. It questions your success at every step that you take.

This all started to happen in the year of 2016, when I first left home for job purpose and had to stay alone for more than a year, away from the family members. Sudden nightmares and unnecessary cramps seemed to surround me always and a feeling of haunted past always played hide and seek with me. Slowly the happiness faded away as workload began to increase and I was always in a mood that made me realize that I had no existence of my own. After being diagnosed with General Anxiety Disorder and Depression, I felt that I started to worry about everyday life events without any particular reasons and I always expected disasters to happen no matter how soothing the situations were. I started talking on my own and felt the burden of stress along with palpitation and chronic nervousness wherever I went. There was a strange euphoric rush regarding the feeling of always being left alone, which was becoming hard to control. At that time I realized that this is not a general feeling, but a condition faced by most of the people now days. I decided to document it.

Till now I have always looked for ways to express myself through the photographs that I try to take. I believe this strange phenomenon of mine as a gift through which I am able to send messages in a sort of thought provocative way, that I am not the only one out there. People like us exist and this is a common scenario, currently faced by a lot of people.

This is merely a subjective approach of mine towards a project that I have been doing for quite a long time. I am merely showing the situation of my mind at this moment through the plethora of caliginous feelings. These are all how I see my surroundings and the nature when I am down with anxiety attacks. I am searching for the eternal euphoria amidst all these construed illusions of the habitat existing between me and my feelings. For which I have termed this project as Forms.

Expressing all of these through a series of photographs kind of makes me feel happy but momentarily.

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About Ritam

Ritam Talukdar, is a freelance photojournalist and a story teller who likes to tell stories through the various visual narratives he uses while depi. He has been featured in The Edge of Humanity Magazine (UK), Private Photo Review and in the Fstop Magazine Gallery Exhibit and in a lot of local newspapers of Delhi for various news regarding contemporary art residencies.

Musical Neighbours

Tapaswinee Mitra

The Story

This story is about the narrator's neighbours, and how her equation with them funnily changes over a period of many years, even though they hadn't ever interacted.

About Tapaswinee

She is a History honors student of Jadavpur University, and my stories and pieces are deeply personal. Sometimes funny, sometimes emotional, they are definitely relatable to any middle class Indian woman.

Cleaning the Mess

Tapaswinee Mitra

The Story

My story is about domestic violence in a home, both mental and physical, and a daughter's dynamics with her mother, as it keeps on changing and evolving.

About Tapaswinee

She is a History honors student of Jadavpur University, and my stories and pieces are deeply personal. Sometimes funny, sometimes emotional, they are definitely relatable to any middle class Indian woman.

Sugar Free 'SLAP'(thappad)

Teddy

The Story

The story is about a slap which a boy receives from a girl as a sign of love..and how the boy feels about the situation,and the boy also elaborates the innocent ,childish interaction with the girl just after they finish their tuition.But the most exciting part is the end of the story which has a quite and laughable twist finishing with a slap...which is hoped to be liked by many..

About Teddy

Teddy is 20 year old new freshman storyteller,who likes to play and mix words with both the old as well as modern thoughts,

"Kya kabhi socha iss baare mein"

Shivam Agarwal

The Story

The first story deals with some social issues like seeing bad things happening but still keeping quiet, making rich richer and poor poorer.

About Shivam

He is a 3rd yr computer science student who in the process of fighting with Physics, chemistry and maths became a storyteller instead with lots of stories to share and lots of experiences to experience.

"Uss Safar ki baat hi kuch aur thi"

Shivam Agarwal

The Story

I try to share a memorable journey of mine with such a person which just changed my vision towards the world through his thinking.

About Shivam

He is a 3rd yr computer science student who in the process of fighting with Physics, chemistry and maths became a storyteller instead "with lots of stories to share and lots of experiences to experience.

Mussolini at Mussoorie

Anirban Sadhu

The Story

How would life be if a dictator like Mussolini be put in a place where he is not even recognised.

About Anirban

Works as Graduate Engineer Trainee at TIL Limited, Kolkata. Ex-Mechanical Engineering Student of Jadavpur University.

"Bargad Ka Ped

Nivedita Majumdar

The Story

Nature doesn't belong or owns any social status. It is independent and having its own law. Society needs to learn those laws and go accordingly to save own self.

About Nivedita

Nivedita Majumdar is a film maker, loves to call herself social reformer. She is music lover, plays musical instrument, sings, dances, "inclined to art and craft. Her documentaries and short films has earned quite prestigious accolades around the world.

Meg And Her Chicks

Alka Agarwal

The Story

Attitude Formation, High lighting the mother- child bond. Any one can easily relate themselves with the story.

About Alka

An educator, Child pedagogy specialist, a trained counsellor and play therapist for special need children.

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The Insomniacs Dream

Abira Das

The Story

The story is an insight into the complex world of various shades of love. Love is an extremely complicated thing, entangled by expectations, attachments, demands, refusal etc. Our perspectives towards love changes depending upon our current situation. But is that what love and affection is all about? My story talks about the various colours of love, and should we allow ourselves to be intoxicated by this drug called--love.

About Abhira

A 17 years old high schooler, a journalist at The Telegraph In Schools. She loves to paint and play violin, and is on a pilgrimage to find the world's best coffee.

Random Rant Of A Mad Girl

Abira Das

The Story

The story revolves around the stream of consciousness of a person, who is suffering from depression and other mental diseases. This story is a peek into the world of a depressed person, and the constant thoughts of self harm and suicide chronicling him.

About Abhira

A 17 years old high schooler, a journalist at The Telegraph In Schools. She loves to paint and play violin, and is on a pilgrimage to find the world's best coffee.

Together with a tiger

Ritushree Sengupta

The Story

The story is about a motherless child who befriends a tiger sitting close to his study table in a house full of distant relatives mourning his mother's death. The story involves a play of reality and imagination and narrates the course of his older days even when the tiger has not left his side.

About Ritushree

Ritushree Sengupta is working as a PhD scholar in the Department of English, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan and her area of research is children's literature. She is a writer and poet apart from being a freelance storyteller.

"One hundred balloons

Sagnik Sanyal

The Story

The theme of the story is the crisis of urban youth about dreams and life struggle.

About Sagnik

"Sagnik started writing from his childhood and I love photography also, in this story I like to present my thoughts on crisis and cause of depression in urban youth. Recently I am pursuing Bsc economics."

"

The red pelt

Kasturi Bhattacharjee

The Story

A college go er primarily a loner with a history of abuse, get struck by a girl and gets engulfed in her world , only to wake up and realize that's her reality and not her "friend's" . There is an ambiguity in terms of the protagonist's choice of partner. There is nothing overt in the story, however the protagonist gets ensnared by a person of same sex but the relationship is of a deep dependency and not sexual

About Kasturi

Engineer by profession and Director in multi-national company. Passion lies in theatre and arts

Waiting

Sandip Sarkar

The Story

Waiting is like a dead time. Just like a fetus is waiting to become a human being, like a girl is waiting to become a mother, like a mob is waiting for the bus, a boy is waiting to achieve his dream. If we think closely all those stories of waiting is like to wait for the right time. In my photostory I am trying to capture those moments of waiting.

About Sandip

Sandip Sarkar is a ,student of a film school (Roopkala Kendro) studying Sound Design. Photography is the story I fail to put into words so when words become unclear, I shall focus with photographs. When images become inadequate, I shall be content with silence.

The Fat Life

Tandrima Bhattacharya

The Story

it is about this woman who is stuck to her childhood figure of being thin. Whatever happens she just cant get out of tgat childhood. Every moment of her grown up life is a part of the childhood

About Tandrima

"Tandrima is a theatre director, a director for plays and short films. She has directed the short film Alive Again foe which she won the Best Emerging Woman Director and the Best Director in the DadaSaheb Phalke Film Festival and Sand Sunes Film Festival.

Train

Sudeshna Moitra

The Story

Encouraging and empowering an underprivileged young woman to find her identity

About Sudeshna

Retired Bengali teacher, writer and translator of 33 years of experience; passionate about child engagement and storytelling

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Freedom and individualism

Jhilik Sen

The Story

An individual's aspiration to be free and holding on firmly to her identity

About Jhilik

14 years of experience in brand, marketing and communications

Diversity and inclusion

Jhilik Sen

The Story

4 Americans, 1 Indian all coming together at a British heritage spot in Kolkata

About Jhilik

14 years of experience in brand, marketing and communications

Ghuri (Kite)

Sudeshna Moitra

The Story

Saving our environment

About Sudeshna

Retired Bengali teacher, writer and translator of 33 years of experience; passionate about child engagement and storytelling

The music box

Soumyadeep Roy

The Story

An account of the monotony of travelling every day and its breaks.

About Soumyadeep

A visual artist, a literature graduate, a copy-editor, who is interested in history, anachronism, and Art, that make it possible for all of it to come together.

"

The Fat Life

Soumyadeep Roy

The Story

We make our own bubbles, our own boxes. The abruptness with which college ends is only overcome by the disappointment that follows. The music fades and all seems awry and directionless. Until you get into a job. Another box, another bubble. You get your own cubicle, your own computer. New boxes. Innumerable boxes. Even days get divided into boxes. Each time divided into different boxes. Like school (the boxes that you now feel nostalgic about). Everything gets packed in these boxes. Office hours, your lunch, your work, your tired, impatient journey on the way back home, your anxious, impatient journey to work. Early mornings. Co-passengers. Strangers you know every little habit of. Their salary, or about their promotion. But never their names. Boxes. You travel with these boxes inside another box. Same time. Same compartment. Same routine. Then you hear a random beat in another box. You change your compartment to hop on to that the next day. It's a band of musicians who sing and play. Of God, of Life. Prayers. It changes everything. It doesn't seem like a box anymore. You are transported. Then it becomes your box. For a day. A week. A month. A year. You realize it's just another box as well. But at least it has music.

"

About Soumyadeep

A visual artist, a literature graduate, a copy-editor, who is interested in history, anachronism, and Art, that make it possible for all of it to come together.

The World in a polythene bag/written by Madhu Kakriya Poonam Sonchhatra

The Story

This is the story of a woman who was in a mental asylum and had not spoken for last three months. Doctors were in a big dilemma because there were no reasons which had been told by the family. The only thing which they got to know was that the lady had gone through an abortion a few months back and she was completely agreed for that. Doctors tried different types of medicines but nothing could help. At last after three months she speaks and brings out everything from her heart. With her story a doctor gets attached with her emotions and with that woman he takes himself in the campaign against abortion.

About Poonam

A mathematics teacher by profession, a national level speaker, poet by passion.

Star-crossed Rajatish Banerjee

The Story

A first-eye point of view showing how society deals with relationships it doesn't want to exist.

About Rajatish

A 22-year-old med student with a penchant for poetry and the spoken word.

Regret Rajatish Banerjee

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The Story

Do ghosts regret?

About Rajatish

A 22-year-old med student with a penchant for poetry and the spoken word.

TEAR... EXPRESSED ,, TEAR US LESS

Alka Khanna

The Story

Emotional expression too is biased . One gender has a social licence while the other wilts by its non expression.

About Alka

Alka is an aspiring storyteller.

BEESH: the poison

Vidyapati Chakroborty

The Story

The story revolves around the idea of superstition prevalent in rural Bengal. The protagonist is a victim of his own faith and prejudices. He is a social construct that needs a serious jolt to evolve out of the bondage of Animus and preconceived narrow-mindedness. How the light of education can eliminate this predominant darkness is the crux of the story.

About Vidyapati

Vidyapati holds a master degree in Theatre Studies . He is a theatre/film actor and a storyteller,

The Curse

Debarati Chakraborty

The Story

The story is about the greed of a priest who worshiped at a beautiful Shiva Parvati temple in the Burdwan district of West Bengal. This temple of beautiful architecture was once a work of art and attracted dancers, painters, musicians and lovers of art from all corners of the world. Rumours had it that anyone who entered the temple would be transformed by the magic it exuded and instantly fall into a deep trance, while their faces revealed a glow of ecstasy. However, the priest on observing this for a long time felt he was depriving himself of the perks of earning fame and money out of it. The story is about how one negative and selfish thought can bring about the destruction of an art form as well as mankind as a whole...

About Debarati

She is a software professional with Cognizant and has passion for writing, public speaking and story telling. Her work has been published by muse India, earthen lamp journal and readomania. She is a blogger at poeticfrivolities.blogspot.com.

About Evening of Stories

Evening of Stories is an annual storytelling event jointly organized by Culture Monks and Alliance française du Bengale. This event is supported by Iris Home Fragrances.

Culture Monks is committed to providing a platform for the development of contemporary storytelling. We conduct storytelling events, workshops, residencies. Please find more information by visiting culturemonks.in . Do get in touch with us at sudipta@culturemonks.in or call 9830260233/8697919308.

Schedule for the Evening of Stories

S.No	Category	Storyteller	Story	Place	Time
1	Children story	Alka Agarwal	Meg And Her Chicks	Room 1	06:00 PM
2	Children story	Ritushree Sengupta	Together with a tiger	Room 1	06:30 PM
3	Children story	Sudeshna Moitra	Ghuri (Kite)	Room 1	07:00 PM
4	Folk Stories	Debarati Chakraborty	The Curse	Room 1	07:30 PM
5	Folk Stories	Vidyapati Chakraoborty	Beesh (Poison)	Room 1	08:00 PM
6	Bar Counter Story	RAMIT chakraborty	Forgiveness	The Bar	06:30 PM
7	Bar Counter Story	Tapaswinee Mitra	Musical Neighbours	The Bar	07:00 PM
8	Bar Counter Story	Teddy	Sugar Free 'SLAP'(thappad)	The Bar	07:30 PM
9	Travel Stories	Shivam Agarwal	"Kya kabhi socha iss baare mein"	Room 3	06:30 PM
10	Travel Stories	Jhilik Sen	Diversity and inclusion	Room 3	07:00 PM
11	Travel Stories	Soumyadeep Roy	The Music Box	Room 3	07:30 PM
12	Photo Stories	Ritam Talukdar	Forms of Mental Illness	Exhibit	NA
13	Photo Stories	Sandip Sarkar	Waiting	Exhibit	NA
14	Photo Stories	Jhilik Sen	Freedom and individualism	Exhibit	NA
15	Whispers	SHABINA NISHAT OMAR	A DISTANT LOVE	Library	06:00 PM
16	Whispers	Dipanjana Das	Hues of a solitary century	Library	06:30 PM
17	Whispers	Jhila Roy	She Glides Through The Slumberous Corridors	Library	07:00 PM
18	Whispers	Abira Das	The Insomniacs Dream	Library	07:30 PM
19	Whispers	Sagnik Sanyal	One hundred balloons	Library	08:00 PM
20	Whispers	Kasturi Bhattacharjee	The red pelt	Library	08:30 PM
21	Whispers	Soumyadeep Roy	Painting the Monalisa	Library	09:00 PM
22	Story for a cause	Tapaswinee Mitra	Cleaning the mess	Room 2	06:00 PM
23	Story for a cause	Anirban Sadhu	Mussolini at Mussoorie	Room 2	06:30 PM
24	Story for a cause	Nivedita Majumdar	Bargad Ka Ped	Room 2	07:00 PM
25	Story for a cause	Abira Das	Random Rant Of A Mad Girl	Room 2	07:30 PM
26	Story for a cause	tandrima bhattacharya	The Fat Life	Room 2	08:00 PM
27	Story for a cause	Sudeshna Moitra	Train	Room 2	08:30 PM
28	Story for a cause	Soumyadeep Roy	The music box	Room 4	06:30 PM
29	Story for a cause	Poonam Sonchhatra	पोलिथीन में पृथ्वी/ लेखिका-मधु कांकरिया	Room 4	07:00 PM
30	Story for a cause	Rajatish Banerjee	Star-crossed	Room 4	07:30 PM
31	Story for a cause	Rajatish Banerjee	Regret	Room 4	08:00 PM
32	Story for a cause	Alka Khanna	TEAR... EXPRESSED ,, TEAR US LESS	Room 4	08:30 PM