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MYSTIC AURA

MAGAZINE

SKIN CARE
AI TOOLS

DURGA PUJA
Paying homage to Goddess

An exclusive interview
AMA NETHMI

AI
Fashion Designer

**TRADITIONAL
OR WESTERN**
CHOOSING THE PERFECT

Festive Fusion

Blend of Traditional and Modern Style

2024

MYSTICAURA

The Team



GITALI PATHAK DEKA

Proprietor & Editor-in-chief

She is a model, an educator and also a Master Trainer under the BRITISH COUNCIL. A lady with principles, positive vibes who always loves to inspire others to fulfill their dreams. Confidence, determination, will power and faith in God, her strength. Her indomitable talent in fashion world is known by all. She has been successful in winning many titles in State, National and in International level, Brand Ambassador of a few beauty pageants. Recently awarded with the most prestigious Nari Shakti National Award. She is Mrs India International (2nd runners-up) at Sri Lanka, Colombo.

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CONTACT

Office Address

Hatigaon, Brindaban Path, Hse No. 2
Opposite Bharat Petroleum
PIN-781038
PHONE: +9186386 84096
Email: mysticaura.fashion@gmail.com

FOLLOW US at

www.mysticauramag.com



MRIGAKSHI DUTTA BHARALI

Copy Editor

A model, Proprietor & Principal of Little Laurels Pre-school, Jorhat and a Master Trainer of English language under the BRITISH COUNCIL. She is the winner of Mrs Global Universal Queen International (1st runners-up) at Sri Lanka, Colombo.



BIREN NARZARY

Chief Managing Editor

He is a well known Graphic Designer and an employee of private commercial printing industry as a Sr. Graphic Designer.

From Editor's Desk



Durga puja celebration unfolds with grace, a timeless tradition, a sacred space beginning with zeal, pure and real where every Hindu's wait for it. It's no doubt a festival of the Bengalis but celebrated all over India & Globe. The aroma of incense and flowers fills the air, creating a sound ambience of love and care. A thin line and time to connect with the divine and seek perfection.

This special month's edition of our publication is dedicated to the festive celebration, with exclusive interviews, Aura pages, followed up by regular topics.

**WISHING EVERYONE A
BLESSED AND JOYFUL
PUJA SEASON.**

Regards

GITALI PATHAK DEKA

Proprietor & Editor-in-chief

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ON THE COVER

Dr Dipsikha Bhagawati

is a film critic, a published author and translator with a master's degree from North Eastern Hill University, Shillong and holds a PhD degree in English literature. She studied 'Film Appreciation' in FTII, Pune. As a member of the Film Critics Circle of India, she has been a jury member at various film festivals including the Kautik International Film Festival and the New York Indian Film Festival. Bhagawati's translated book "Film Appreciation" was released at IFFI, Goa in 2021. Her work "Literature and Film: From Mute to Motion" is awarded as the best book on cinema by Manda Publishers, Delhi. She has two more books to her credit and contributes to national & international film journals and in literary magazines in both English and Assamese. Dr. Bhagawati is also a member of 'Asia Pacific Writers and Translators.



Model : **Dr.Dipsikha Bhagawati**
Makeup : **Vijoy Das**
Photography: **Kaushik Brahma**
Designer : **Jimly J Bora**



FESTIVE SEASON

Choosing between traditional & western attire

By : Reshmi Srivastava

The festive season is a time of celebration, reflection, and cultural expression. The choice between traditional and western attire can be influenced

by various factors, including cultural significance, personal style, comfort, and the nature of the festivities being celebrated.

Traditional attire often holds deep

cultural significance and is a way to honor heritage and customs. For many, wearing traditional clothing during festivals is a way to connect with their roots

and celebrate their identity. For instance, in many cultures, specific garments are worn during festivals that symbolize prosperity, joy, and community. In India, for example, women might wear sarees or lehengas, while men might opt for kurta-pajamas during Diwali or other significant celebrations. These garments are often adorned with intricate designs and vibrant colors, reflecting the festive spirit.

On the other hand, western attire, which includes styles such as dresses, suits, or casual wear, may not carry the same cultural weight but can still be stylish and appropriate for various festive occasions. Many people choose western clothing for its versatility and comfort, especially in more casual or mixed cultural settings.

Personal style plays a crucial role in the decision-making process. Some individuals may feel more comfortable and confident in traditional attire, while others may prefer the modern aesthetic of western clothing. The festive season is an opportunity for self-expression, and the choice of clothing can reflect one's personality and taste.

For those who enjoy vibrant colors and elaborate designs, traditional attire may be the preferred choice. The craftsmanship involved in traditional garments often showcases the skills of artisans and can be a point of pride. Conversely, individuals who lean towards minimalism or contemporary fashion may find western attire more appealing.



The clean lines and modern cuts of western clothing can offer a fresh take on festive wear.

Comfort is another significant factor to consider. Traditional clothing can sometimes be elaborate and may require specific styling or accessories that could be cumbersome. For example, heavy fabrics or intricate embellishments might

be beautiful but can also be less comfortable for extended wear.

Western attire, particularly casual styles, often prioritizes comfort and ease of movement. For festive gatherings that involve a lot of socializing, dancing, or outdoor activities, opting for comfortable western wear might be more practical. However, it's essential to



note that there are also comfortable options available in traditional attire, such as lighter fabrics or simpler designs that can be just as festive.

The Nature of the Festivities

The type of festivities being celebrated can also dictate the choice of attire. Formal events, such as weddings or religious ceremonies, may call for more traditional clothing, while casual gatherings with friends or family might lend themselves to a more relaxed western style.

In multicultural societies, it's common to see a blend of both styles, where individuals might mix traditional and western elements to create a unique look that honors both their heritage and contemporary fashion trends. This fusion



can be a beautiful representation of cultural diversity and personal expression.

For those who cherish their cultural heritage, traditional attire may be the preferred option, allowing them to celebrate their roots and share their culture with others. Conversely, individuals who favor modern aesthetics or prioritize comfort may gravitate towards western clothing.

In many cases, the best approach may be to embrace a combination of both styles, creating a look that is uniquely personal and reflective of the festive spirit. Whether one chooses traditional or western attire, the essence of the festive season lies in the joy of celebration, connection with loved ones, and the expression of one's identity.

Ultimately, the choice between traditional and western attire during the festive season is a personal one, influenced by cultural significance, individual style, comfort, and the nature of the celebrations. Both styles have their merits and can be worn with pride.



DURGA PUJA

CELEBRATION IN ABROAD COUNTRIES

Compiled by: **Rosy Das**

Durga Puja, one of the most significant festivals in Hindu culture, primarily celebrated in West Bengal, India, has transcended geographical boundaries and is now observed



in various countries around the world. This vibrant festival, which honors the goddess Durga and her victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura, symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. The celebration typically spans over ten days, culminating in the immersion of the idol of Goddess Durga in water bodies, marking the end of the festivities.

In recent years, the global Indian diaspora has played a pivotal role in bringing the essence of Durga Puja to foreign shores. Countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and several others have witnessed the establishment of community-led Durga Puja celebrations, which not only serve as a means of cultural preservation but also foster a sense of community among

expatriates.

In the United States, cities with significant Indian populations, such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, host grand Durga Puja celebrations. Organizations like the Bengali Cultural Association and the Durga Puja Committee organize events that attract thousands of attendees. These celebrations often feature elaborate decorations, traditional music and dance performances, and a variety of Bengali cuisine, including the much-loved bhog (offering) that is distributed to devotees.

The festivities also include cultural programs showcasing traditional art forms, such as dance and drama, which narrate stories from Hindu mythology.

Similarly, in Canada, cities like

Toronto and Vancouver have become hubs for Durga Puja celebrations. The Bengali community comes together to organize events that reflect their cultural heritage. The festival not only includes religious rituals but also serves as a platform for cultural exchange, where people from different backgrounds are invited to participate and learn about the significance of the festival. The involvement of local artists and performers adds a unique flavor to the celebrations, making it a truly multicultural event.

In the United Kingdom, particularly in London, Durga Puja has gained immense popularity over the years. The London Durga Puja, organized by various Bengali associations, attracts thousands of visitors from diverse backgrounds.



observance; it is also a celebration of identity and heritage. For many expatriates, participating in Durga Puja provides a sense of belonging and connection to their cultural roots. It serves as a reminder of home and offers an opportunity to share their traditions with the next generation. The festival also acts as a bridge, connecting people from different backgrounds and fostering a spirit of inclusivity.

In conclusion, Durga Puja has evolved into a global celebration that transcends borders and unites people through shared cultural values. The festival's rich traditions, vibrant rituals, and communal spirit resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds, making it a significant event in many countries. As the diaspora continues to grow, the celebration of Durga Puja abroad will likely expand, further enriching the cultural tapestry of the host nations while preserving the essence of this cherished festival. Through these celebrations, the spirit of Durga Puja lives on, reminding us of the universal themes of good triumphing over evil and the importance of community and cultural heritage.

The event features a grand procession, traditional music, and dance performances, along with stalls offering authentic Bengali food. The festival serves as a reminder of the rich cultural heritage of Bengal and provides an opportunity for the diaspora to connect with their roots.

Australia has also embraced Durga Puja, with celebrations taking place in cities like Sydney and Melbourne. The Australian Bengali community organizes events that include traditional rituals, cultural performances, and food stalls. These celebrations not only cater to the Bengali community but also invite people from various cultural backgrounds to experience the festivities. The emphasis on inclusivity and cultural exchange has made Durga Puja a celebrated event in Australia.

In addition to these countries, Durga Puja is also celebrated in several other nations, including

Singapore, Malaysia, and the Middle East, where there are significant Indian populations. In these regions, the festival often takes on a unique flavor, incorporating local customs and traditions while retaining the core essence of the celebration. The involvement of local communities in these celebrations further enriches the experience, fostering a spirit of unity and understanding.

The global celebration of Durga Puja is not just about religious



"Studying will help me refine my skills, enhance my abilities, and grow as an artist ."

Interviewed by UTPAL DATTA

Photography: Sarasi Nethmini



Ama Nethmi loves to play the drums, dance Kathak and Ballet, compose dances, and much more.

I was captivated by your on-screen presence and dance movements in the film 'This is not Pearl'. I'm curious to learn about how you prepared for that character, including the imagination, conceptualization, execution, and the result.

I was involved in building the concept with the director, Tharindu Ramanayaka, which made things more accessible than I initially thought. We divided each part of the story according to the music, which helped guide the flow. We had to establish a fixed idea for some segments, while other parts allowed room for improvisation.

Imagining the character wasn't difficult, but translating that into dance was the real challenge. I spent much time thinking about the character's appearance since I had to represent something like an oyster. This involved changes in costume, makeup, and hairstyle without harming the dance or the style of the dance.

We completed the shoot in just two days, most of which took place at sea, which made it especially tough. As for the choreography, I didn't want the dance to look the same throughout, and the director shared this vision. We divided the story into different chapters and choreographed each accordingly.

I'm quite happy with the final result, though I feel I could have choreographed more with the camera movements in mind. Despite some

challenges during filming, I believe we did our best given the circumstances.

Why dance? Did you choose to dance, or did dance choose you?

I believe dance chose me. From childhood, I had a clear goal—to be a dancer. I've always loved dancing because it's the best way to express myself. It brings me so much joy; whenever I dance, I feel like the happiest person on earth. I forget about the audience and lose myself in the movement in those moments.

Dance also helped build my self-confidence, not only as a child but later in life as well. It's something I could never give up. I never had any other goals or doubts about my career; I always knew I wanted to be a dancer.

Why did you choose the Indian dance form, Kathak?

As a kid, I was a huge Bollywood fan, and I loved listening to all the Bollywood music. Some songs featured a bit of Kathak, and that's when I fell in love with the dance form. Ever since then, I dreamt



of going to India to learn Kathak. While growing up, I also loved Sri Lankan traditional dance, but I never had the opportunity to study Kathak. I was always eager to learn, so I applied for a scholarship and went to India to pursue my studies.

I studied at Rhythmosaic Dance Institute in Kolkata, a Kathak-contemporary dance company, where I had the privilege of learning Kathak under Dr. Mitul Sen Gupta. Her style mesmerised me, and I've remained a Kathak fan ever since. Later, I completed my Bachelor's degree at Bhatkhande University under the guidance of Dr. Veena Singh Ji.

What have you learned from your journey, which covers folk music to Western classical music?

I began my journey as a Sri Lankan traditional dancer, deeply influenced by music from a young age, thanks to my father, who was a music teacher. Growing up, I listened to a lot of Sri Lankan songs, and I quickly learned that in traditional dance forms, music is indispensable. The same is true for Sri Lankan dance; we cannot separate music from the dance. Drumming is essential, and my interest in Sri

Lankan drums led me to learn to play them as well.

Later, I started learning Kathak, an Indian dance form with a structure similar to traditional Sri Lankan dance, where music plays a vital role. While studying classical Kathak at Rhythmosaic Dance School Kolkata, I also explored classical jazz, ballet, and

contemporary dance. Balancing all these forms was challenging, but it allowed me to recognise their similarities and differences.

In contemporary dance, for instance, you can mix elements as you like, but you can only do so effectively if you have a solid understanding of the various styles. I've also learned that silence is a part of music, emphasising the importance of every element in a performance.

How do you see your near future and distant future?

Currently, I am working on building something unique that I can design specifically for myself. I'm in the process of researching and discovering my identity as a dancer. I feel that I'm not yet at the point I aspire to reach; it's a continuous journey I'm still navigating.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I realised that there may be times when we cannot perform on stage. This insight has prompted me to focus more on dance films and expand my knowledge. I aim to pursue studies that will refine and enhance my dance style, allowing me to grow as an artist in both familiar and new ways.



AURA Photography

PHOTOGRAPHY: KAUSHIK BRAHMA





Models: Bhaswati Kalita, Mampy Shari and Priyestha Pompee

MUA: Dipanjali Lahkar

Photography: Kaushik Brahma

Cinematography: Partha j Sharma and Arup Das

Assisted by Surajit

In Bengali folk culture, Agamani and Vijaya songs are an integral part of the celebrations surrounding the Hindu autumn festival of Durga Puja. The songs narrate the story of Goddess Parvati's return to her parental home, highlighting her role as a daughter, and later, her departure back to her husband Shiva, evoking the sorrow of separation. The theme of eternal friendship and the quest to collect lotus flowers for Maa Durga's worship is a significant aspect of this tradition. The collection of 108 lotus flowers, an auspicious number in Hinduism, is a crucial part of the preparations for the festival. Puja songs and traditions bring people together, strengthening community bonds and celebrating the beauty of nature, friendship, and devotion.





AI FASHION DESIGNING

By :

Asish Debnath

Software Engineer
Warangal

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed various industries, and the fashion sector is a exception. The integration of AI technologies into fashion design and production processes has streamlined operations, enhanced creativity, and improved decision-making. This

essay explores how AI has helped fashion designers make their work easier, focusing on design assistance, trend forecasting, supply chain optimization, and personalized customer experiences.

One of the most notable ways AI has aided fashion designers is through design assistance. AI-powered tools can analyze vast amounts of data, including historical fashion trends, consumer preferences, and social media activity, to generate design ideas. For instance, platforms like Adobe's Sensei utilize machine learning

algorithms to assist designers in creating patterns, color palettes, and even entire collections. By automating repetitive tasks, such as resizing images or generating variations of a design, AI allows designers to focus more on the creative aspects of their work.

Moreover, AI can facilitate the design process by providing real-time feedback. Tools like Stitch Fix use algorithms to analyze customer feedback and preferences, enabling designers to refine their collections based on actual consumer data. This data-driven



approach not only enhances creativity but also ensures that the designs resonate with the target audience.

AI has revolutionized trend forecasting, a critical aspect of fashion design. Traditionally, trend forecasting relied heavily on human intuition and experience, which could be subjective and prone to error. However, AI can analyze vast datasets from various sources, including social media, fashion shows, and online retail platforms, to identify emerging trends with greater accuracy.

For example, companies like Edited and WGSN leverage AI to track consumer behavior and predict future trends. By analyzing patterns in purchasing behavior and social media engagement, these platforms can provide designers with insights into what styles, colors, and fabrics are likely to be popular in the upcoming seasons. This predictive capability allows designers to make informed decisions, reducing the risk of produc-

ing items that may not sell well.

The fashion industry is notorious for its complex supply chains, which can lead to inefficiencies and increased costs. AI has emerged as a powerful tool for optimizing these supply chains, making it easier for designers to manage production processes. AI algorithms can analyze data related to inventory levels, production schedules, and shipping logistics to streamline operations.

For instance, AI can predict demand for specific products, allowing designers to adjust their production accordingly. This not only minimizes waste but also ensures that popular items are readily available to consumers. Additionally, AI can enhance communication between different stakeholders in the supply chain, from manufacturers to retailers, ensuring that everyone is aligned and informed.



Personalized Customer Experiences

In today's competitive fashion landscape, providing personalized customer experiences is essential for success. AI enables designers to create tailored offerings that resonate with individual consumers. By analyzing customer data, including purchase history and browsing behavior, AI can help designers understand their target audience better.

For example, AI-driven recommendation systems can suggest products to customers based on their preferences, increasing the likelihood of a purchase. Brands like Zara and H&M utilize AI to analyze customer interactions and preferences, allowing them to curate collections that align with consumer desires. This level of personalization not only enhances customer satisfaction but also fosters brand loyalty.

Virtual Try-Ons and Augmented Reality

Another area where AI has made a significant impact is in virtual try-ons and augmented reality (AR). These technologies allow consumers to visualize how clothing items will look on them without physically trying them on. AI algorithms can analyze body measurements and create realistic 3D models, enabling customers to see how different styles fit their body shapes.

Brands like ASOS and Warby Parker have successfully implemented virtual try-on features, enhancing the online shopping experience. This not only reduces the likelihood of returns but also empowers consumers to make more informed purchasing deci-

sions. For designers, this means that they can receive immediate feedback on how their designs are perceived by customers, allowing for quick adjustments and improvements.

Sustainability and Ethical Practices

As the fashion industry faces increasing scrutiny regarding sustainability and ethical practices, AI can play a crucial role in promoting responsible design and production. AI can analyze the environmental impact of various materials and production methods, helping designers make more sustainable choices. For instance, AI can assist in selecting eco-friendly fabrics or optimizing production processes to reduce waste.

Additionally, AI can help brands track their supply chains to ensure ethical practices are upheld. By monitoring suppliers and pro-

duction facilities, AI can identify potential issues related to labor practices or environmental compliance, allowing brands to take corrective action.

In conclusion, AI has profoundly impacted the fashion industry, making the work of fashion designers easier and more efficient. From design assistance and trend forecasting to supply chain optimization and personalized customer experiences, AI technologies have streamlined processes and enhanced creativity. As the fashion landscape continues to evolve, the integration of AI will likely play an increasingly vital role in shaping the future of design, production, and consumer engagement. By embracing these technologies, fashion designers can not only improve their workflows but also create more innovative and sustainable collections that resonate with consumers.





HOW AI & TECH ARE REVOLUTIONIZING SKINCARE

By :

Brian La Cour
(Author/writer)
United States

In an era where technology is transforming every aspect of our lives, the beauty industry is no exception. Once driven pure-

ly by intuition and tradition, the skincare world has evolved into a field shaped by science, data, and artificial intelligence (AI). Whether it's personalized product recommendations, virtual try-ons, or AI-powered skin analysis, tech advancements are reshaping the way we approach beauty and skincare. This revolution is not only enhancing our ability to take better care

of our skin but also democratizing access to effective and personalized beauty solutions.

AI-Powered Skin Analysis: A New Era in Skincare

One of the most exciting developments in skincare is the rise of AI-powered skin analysis. Traditionally, people relied on dermatologists or beauty consultants to

diagnose their skin concerns. Now, with advancements in machine learning and computer vision, apps, and devices can analyze your skin in seconds, offering real-time insights into everything from hydration levels to fine lines and hyperpigmentation.

How does this work? Using a combination of selfies and advanced algorithms, AI systems can detect

Using a combination of selfies and advanced algorithms, AI systems can detect issues invisible to the naked eye, such as UV damage, uneven texture, or early signs of aging.

issues invisible to the naked eye, such as UV damage, uneven texture, or early signs of aging. These insights are far more accurate than simple visual assessments, making it easier to tailor skincare routines to individual needs. Major beauty brands like L'Oréal, Olay, and Neutrogena have already launched AI-driven tools that analyze skin tone, texture, and problem areas. Based on this analysis, they recommend customized products that suit your skin type and concerns.

This level of personalization takes skincare to a whole new level. Instead of trial and error or relying on broad product categories (like "oily" or "dry" skin), customers receive data-backed suggestions, minimizing the risk of irritation or ineffectiveness. It's a game-chang-



er for people who struggle with choosing the right products, leading to better outcomes and more satisfied consumers.

Personalized Beauty Regimens: Tailored for You

Building on AI-powered skin analysis, personalized beauty regimens are another area where technology is making a significant impact. Today's consumers are no longer content with one-size-fits-all products. They want solutions tailored specifically to their needs, and that's exactly what AI is offering.

Several companies have already embraced the trend of bespoke skincare. Take Proven Skincare, for example. This brand uses AI to analyze over 20,000 scientific papers and customer reviews to develop personalized formulas based on your skin type, lifestyle, and environmental factors like pollution or UV exposure. After filling

out a questionnaire, the algorithm creates a unique formula just for you.

Another example is function of Beauty, known for its customized haircare products, which have expanded into personalized skincare. The idea is simple: technology-driven skincare that adapts to each individual's unique biology, environment, and lifestyle. This approach not only enhances the user experience but also improves product efficacy by targeting specific concerns more precisely.

Virtual Try-Ons: Merging Reality with Technology

Virtual try-ons, powered by augmented reality (AR), are changing the way we shop for makeup and skincare. Thanks to AR apps, customers can now test makeup shades, hairstyles, and even different skincare products without stepping foot into a store or ap-



create products that cater to underrepresented groups, ensuring that everyone has access to effective skincare solutions.

The Democratization of Skincare

Perhaps the most significant impact of AI and technology on skincare is its ability to democratize beauty. Advanced skin diagnostics, personalized regimens, and high-tech beauty tools were once available only to those who could afford expensive treatments or consultations with dermatologists. Today, anyone with a smartphone can access this level of expertise, making effective skincare more accessible than ever.

Moreover, AI-powered skincare is adaptable. As your skin changes with age, lifestyle, or seasons, the technology evolves with you, offering recommendations and adjustments in real-time. This ensures that your skincare routine is always optimized for your current needs, eliminating the need for constant product switching and simplifying the path to healthy, glowing skin.

The intersection of AI, tech, and beauty is more than just a trend—it's the future. As skincare becomes increasingly data-driven and personalized, consumers are empowered to make smarter, more informed decisions about their routines. From AI-powered skin analysis to virtual try-ons and personalized regimens, technology is making skincare more effective, accessible, and inclusive than ever before. With these innovations, the future of beauty is not only in our hands—it's in our pockets, just a tap away.

plying anything to their skin. This not only provides a fun, interactive shopping experience but also helps customers make more informed choices before making a purchase.

One of the best examples of this technology is L'Oréal's ModiFace. Acquired in 2018, ModiFace uses AI and AR to let users try makeup virtually, with highly realistic results. Whether you're curious about how a new lipstick shade will look or want to experiment with bold eyeshadows, you can do it all through your phone. Sephora, MAC, and Estée Lauder have also adopted AR for virtual try-ons, offering consumers a seamless and safe way to test products.

In the skincare realm, AR allows customers to visualize how certain products will affect their skin over time. For instance, Olay's Skin Advisor tool offers insights into how your skin may age and recommends products to address

future concerns. These try-ons remove guesswork, giving customers confidence in their purchases while reducing waste from buying products that don't suit them.

Data-Driven Skincare: The Role of Big Data

Data is the backbone of AI-driven skincare, and as consumers use these tools, companies are collecting vast amounts of information on skin conditions, preferences, and responses to different products. This big data allows brands to continuously improve their offerings by refining their algorithms and developing new products based on trends and needs identified through the data.

Additionally, data-driven insights are helping companies address specific concerns for diverse skin types and tones, a crucial factor in a world where beauty standards are increasingly inclusive. Brands are leveraging this information to

JIMLY J BORA

A
very creative
designer, her
Odyssey
in fashion
world.



Jimly J Bora,

an innovative designer with a passion for blending local and Western fashion, giving a new dimension to her dreams.

As a accomplished designer, she has made an indelible mark on the fashion industry, gracing runways and beauty pageants with her breathtaking creations. Jimly's journey serves as a spark of inspiration, illuminating the path for aspiring designers and underscoring the transformative impact of dedication and hard work.

Her achievements include winning the first prize at the 2014 designer competition at the Kuhi National Trade Expo and receiving specialized training from the Handloom and Textile Office in Guwahati. Currently, she is exploring sustainable materials, such as water hyacinth, to create unique products like bags, sandals etc.

Jimly has ambitious plans to establish an institute of design and art in Nagaon, where she aims to include deeply various aspects of design. She is focusing on the indigenous clothing of various ethnic groups in northeast including Miching, Manipuri, Karbi, Dimasa, and Boro-Kachari tribes. By studying the roots of these traditional garments, she hopes to create innovative designs that blend cultural heritage with modern aesthetics creating something new that can give a fresh perspective look for fashion lovers.



Model
PANCHIPRIYA

Photography
SWAPNAJIT BORKAKOTI

MUA
EZABELLA BUNGRUNGPE

Designer
MEGHNA RAI MEDHI



WHAT IS THE VALUE OF YOUR WORK ?

By:

Vanessa Jacqueline Dcruz
Loani Chairperson.
(Singapore)

Working to make a living is part of our lives. From being janitors to being top professional workers, we have different attitudes towards our jobs. It ranges from liking our jobs to disliking it. Some of us like our jobs until we are

obsessed by it. Every time we do our job, we calculate its value. We think of how much time is lost if we do not work or even worse how much money is lost. It can become detrimental to the way we live in the sense it can come to a point whereby our health is affected and our relationships with our friends and relatives are also affected in a bad way

This article is directed to those who put a value to their work and is afraid to lose that value. When was the last time you had a

holiday with your family and told yourself that the amount of money not earned is less important than the value earned being with your family. When was it the last time, you just took a time off to be with yourself or spent a day with your family just for the fun of it.

There are times, when it is important that we do not put a value on what we are doing. I know of people who do this and they tell me that a day off means a few thousands lost. I used to do salsa dancing and there were times

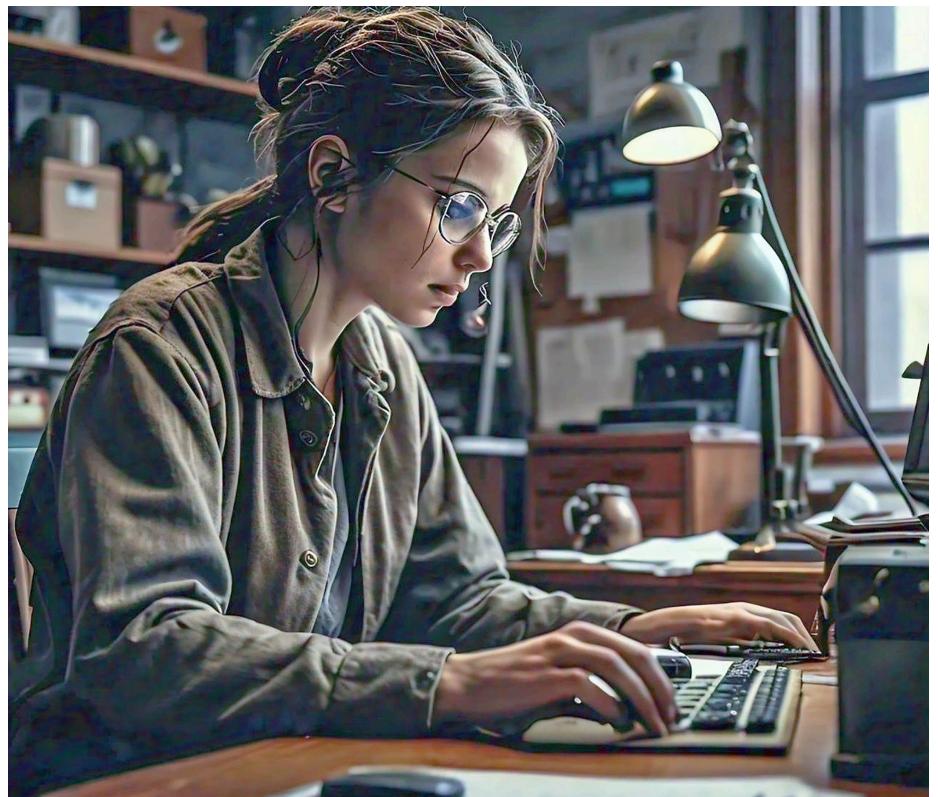
when I saw a friend of mine at the club banging his hands against his laptop instead of banging his feet with a pretty girl on the dance floor. I asked him what he was doing and why he was not enjoying himself. He told me if he did not close the deal by midnight he will lose a million dollar deal. In my brain I was telling myself, then don't be here dude. These people even if they are out to enjoy themselves are not even relaxed.

I once woke up & saw my dad relaxing on the couch. I asked him why he was not at work. He told me he took off since it was my birthday to be with me (incidentally my dad always took a day off to be with me on my birthday).

I asked him whether that would cost him some money and his answer to me was that money cannot replace love.

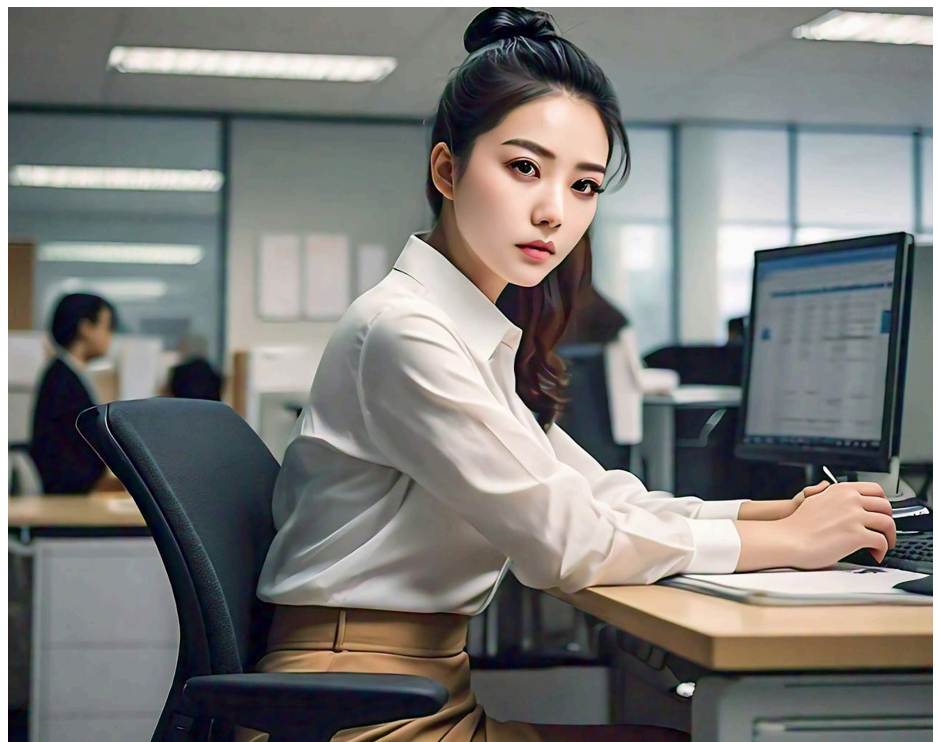
If you are always thinking of work even during the times whereby you should be relaxing, you are taking away the chance to have calm and inwardly rich life. To be healthy and without stress. To enjoy the richness of life that it provides. Wonder why so many professionals suffer from stress and heart related diseases. A friend of mine who is a psychiatrist sees a lot of professional businessmen during recession period because they have become suicidal due to loss of their money.

It is time to reduce our work stress and enjoy our lives and be happier. Take some time to nourish yourself. Take regular walks, visit nature, read more books, write more, learn to meditate, get a

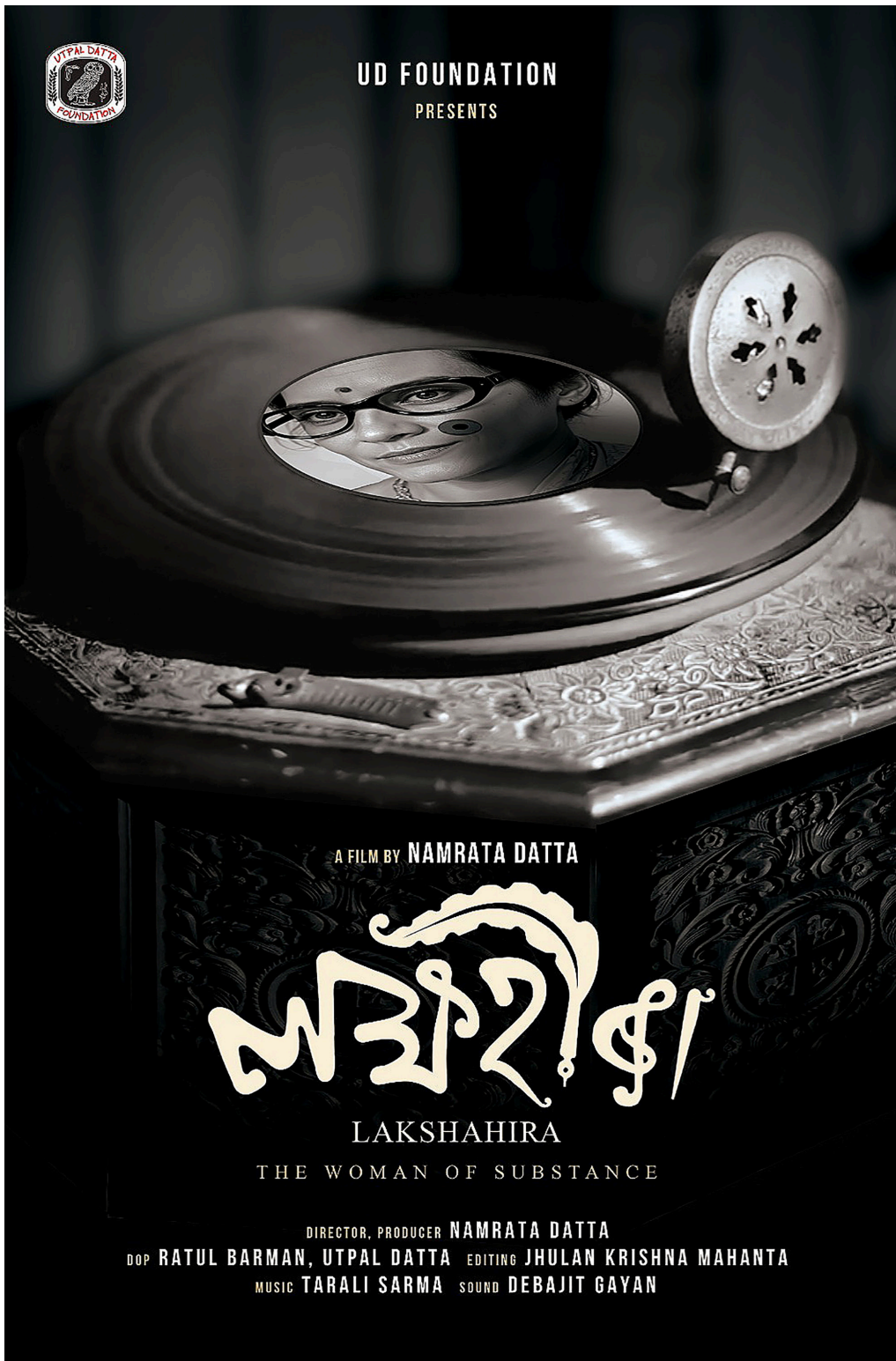


massage and find great quality time to be with love ones. All these will help you take a look at the way

you lead your life and allow you to make changes to it.



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UD FOUNDATION
PRESENTS

A FILM BY NAMRATA DATTA

লক্ষহিরা

LAKSHAHIRA

THE WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER NAMRATA DATTA

DOP RATUL BARMAN, UTPAL DATTA EDITING JHULAN KRISHNA MAHANTA

MUSIC TARALI SARMA SOUND DEBAJIT GAYAN

LAKSHAHIRA

THE WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE

By : Dr Dipshikha Bhagawati, Writer/critic /author

"Eri diya priya moi
jau jau/ Okoni
ghoror ei bondho
baayut moi aatmaar
tripti naapao/ Eri
diya priya moi jau
jau..."

("Let me go my love/
My soul feels claus-
trophobic inside
this caged air/ Let
me go my love...")

The valiantly beautiful face of an octogenarian woman in the frame, An intelligent palm playing harmonium in an aesthetic shot – the transparent anatomy of the veins of that slice of determined skin says, biologically this person is old, but eternally young in spirit, eternally enlightened, eternally creative. This shot can be analysed as the POV of the entire documentary, which captures the vivid life and incomparable mettle of an undaunted, timeless trailblazer with pristine cultivated clarity. Lakshahira: The Woman of Substance - writer and translator Namrata Datta has made her power debut as a producer cum director with this documentary that captures many important aspects

of a consistently honed life. Dr. Lakshahira Das – A well-known educationist, poet, composer and vocalist of Assam. She worked as a professor and head of the newly established Department of Education at Cotton College from 1957 to 1977 and wrote 14 books in both English and Assamese for the students of her department. He was a recognized lyricist of the Guwahati Radio Station. He sang in the films 'Sarapat' and 'Lachit Barphukan' She won the Best Background Singer Award for Lachit Barphukan in 1968 and the Sangeet Natak Academy Award (2022) for her overall contribution to the performing arts. The director has executed a balanced camaraderie of chiaroscuro to tell the story of the earlier part of Das. Scenes portraying her present life are captured in bright colours. Past and present, old and new generations – these two temporals are intertwined like a helium through the silky movement of camera, without stumbling through the corresponding lighting. Flowing through the interludes of many of her melodious songs in her own voice, she talks about her life, that was full of challenges, ups and downs and successes; her family and her husband who was a constant proton in her journey. The flow of time from the past to the present is symbolically expressed by several evolving models of audio media. For example, first an old radio, then a new model, then a CD player. The Mise-en-scène of the book shown in her hand carries further worth in the plot pro-

gression. The director portrays the whole of this phenomenon of art in a mature style of soft cinematic language. If a documentary is utterly flat or based on exposition, it remains prone to get lethargic for the audience. Lakshahira: Woman of Substance is free from this monotony. The avid director Namrata Datta has made no mistake in portraying Lakshahira Das with all her grace, who is known for her sober fineries. In gourmet attires, her illuminated inner beauty is a sheer joy to the explorers. The film describes a successful and strong woman with the same strength. Through non-exaggerating frugal shots, sweet expanse of shadows and lights, the documentary will delight the audience and introduce the students to a great educator and unique woman whom it is very important to know about. The audience will find the unforgettable artistic entity hidden in a professor and writer through her signature songs like “Eri Diya Priyo Moi Jao, Dalim Oi Dalim Amalai Aniso Ki, Komal Komal Duti Nayan, Dhol Bai Kot Ratanpurot”. The song 'Eri Diya Priyo Moi Jao' represents the melodies of the fifties and the popular musical instruments of the time. These songs in the documentary play a very close role in making the audience nostalgic through a fine time travel. It is worth mentioning that many talented artists voiced her songs, including revered Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. Despite her enviable success, Dr. Lakshahira Das says in a shot of the documentary, “I am a small person...”, perhaps

her infinite knowledge and glory are covered by her own humble creation – “I am the poet of life... Jeewonor Kobi Moi..”. Director Datta captures this humble tone with the same humility, establishing her observational maturity to nuances. Lakshahira: Women of Substance has DOPs Ratul Burman and Utpal Dutta, music by eminent musician Tarali Sharma, editing by Jhulan Krishna Mahanta and sound by Devajit Gayan. The purpose of the documentary is to introduce the unmatched talent of Dr. Lakshahira Das, her conscientiousness, her inquisitive mind and her work in an organized method. Director Namrata Datta deserves a sweet ovation for presenting a beautifully didactic and aesthetic documentary.

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AGE

Am I getting old
Like the old tree
Breathing slow with the evening wind
Fragranceless
Heavy with the joyless dew
Moaning the loss of day
Why my khol highlight my wrinkles
The age spots
No longer hide beneath
the make-up
But are shameless
Dance naked on my skin
But Why then dreams whisper
Hold my hand
Takes me on date
To watch the colours of the sun
In hues of gold and red
Fills my heart with roses that are
so soft gentle and fresh .

By:

Vijaylaxmi Sarmah

A SOLITARY NIGHT

As I sat by the window listening to the sounds of the night.
The music of the night caused ripples in my mind.
I looked around me,
The shadows of the night seemed to be sneering at me.
I dared to dream, but thoughts unknown made me sink.
The horizon of my dreams crumbled down.
Life denied my dreams, the night scorned at me.
I slowly withdraw myself as a snail hiding back in its shell.
Sinking into a unknown Land.
My dreams remained half woven.
Suddenly my ears touched chants of Ma Durga.
The fragrance of the night air was filled with Shiuli Flower.
My half woven dream could see the light of hope.
And I felt the Goddess's blessings.

By:

Monali Bhuyan

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