An exhibition of images and first-hand accounts give a glimpse into the harrowing times of the Partition

by Antara Raghavan

If you get off the train at the Mandi House metro station and stop to look at the black and white photographs placed on the walls there, you will see haunting entries beneath them. One reads: ‘My maternal grandparents were killed in a small village, Mukhtasar, in the midst of the Partition riots. My mother would sit by the door in anticipation for her deceased parents.’

This account by Mannona Mustansar, who was born in Lahore in 1948, is one of the many diary entries placed as part of ‘The 1947 Partition Archive’ at the station. These stories must be read to be believed—especially raw, says Dr Guneeta Singh Bhalla, founder and director of the exhibition. ‘I heard stories about the Partition from my paternal grandparents who actually migrated. They never got over leaving their ancestral home behind,’ repeats a car to realise that first-hand accounts give a palpable and accessible account of painful experiences at a time of the Partition.

An exhibition at the Mandi House metro station is especially symbolic since millions of people fled and migrated during the Partition, and have been doing so across 14 countries. The ones on display here are by the students of Bindu Bhalla and Aurgho Jyoti, and displayed at the city’s Mandi House metro station.

Photographs that are part of ‘The 1947 Partition Archive’ exhibition, which is curated by Dr Guneeta Singh Bhalla and Aurgho Jyoti, and displayed at the city’s Mandi House metro station.

1947 Beyond the tracks

A still from the play, (inset) Director Amar Sah

ONE of the most iconic books on the Partition, Khushwant Singh’s Train to Pakistan, has been brought to the stage by director Amar Sah. “This play and the novel it is based on, reminds us of the cost of our freedom struggle. The message is more relevant today than before,” explains Sah.

The director who also playing the role of Hukum Chand adds, “Most of the viewers who come to the play have read the book, so they can see that we’ve stayed close to the novel. We’ve tried to convey the sense of the crowd and the chaos, the scenes of footloosing, the state of the bodies in the trains, all through the use of a chorus.”

Translated by Usha Mahajan and dramatised by Dr Eeman Rana, this play is presented by Bela Theatre and was performed at The Little Theatre Group Auditorium, tonight at 7 pm.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIN OF THOUGHT

An artwork by A Rani who is showcasing at ‘From Pain to Paint’ exhibition, until February 10.

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For Dornik, it all started in 1977 during his maiden visit to India. ‘I met people affected with leprosy, and I was shocked by their condition,’ adds Dornik. He concludes, ‘They have incredibly hard lives, they’ve been thrown out of their homes, and they have no way to earn their living because of their appearance.’

Bharatapuram leprosy colony, By painting and selling their works, these students, who are now leprosy free, can be financial independent.

An artwork by A Rani who is showcasing at ‘From Pain to Paint’ exhibition, until February 10.

EXPRESSION INNER BEAUTY THROUGH ART

by Antara Raghavan

Musicians performed classics by Bryan Adams. This time around, the concert was a tribute to Canadian singer Bryan Adams. Vocalist Divyam Deb and a few other city-based musicians ensured the crowd went on a nostalgic trip as they belted out a few Bryan Adam’s classics that tugged at one’s heartstrings.

—Mail Today Bureau

WEINER Dornik, acclaimed Austrian multimedia artist and curator, expected the inauguration of his exhibition ‘From Pain to Paint’ at India International Centre on Tuesday evening to be attended by only about 30 people. But he was surprised as not only did he witness about 200 people that day but also did he sell a number of his paintings.

What could be better for Dornik, who has been working to make lives better for leprosy patients since 2005, Inaugurated by Austrian Ambassador Brigitte Öppinger-Walchshofer, the exhibition is a culmination of the artist’s efforts. “I was inspired to make this display here are by the students of Bhind Art School, which was founded in 2005 by Dornik and activist Padma Venkataraman, daughter of former president President R Venkataraman, and is located at the