

A Virtual Exhibition on Life Journey of **Rabindranath Tagore**

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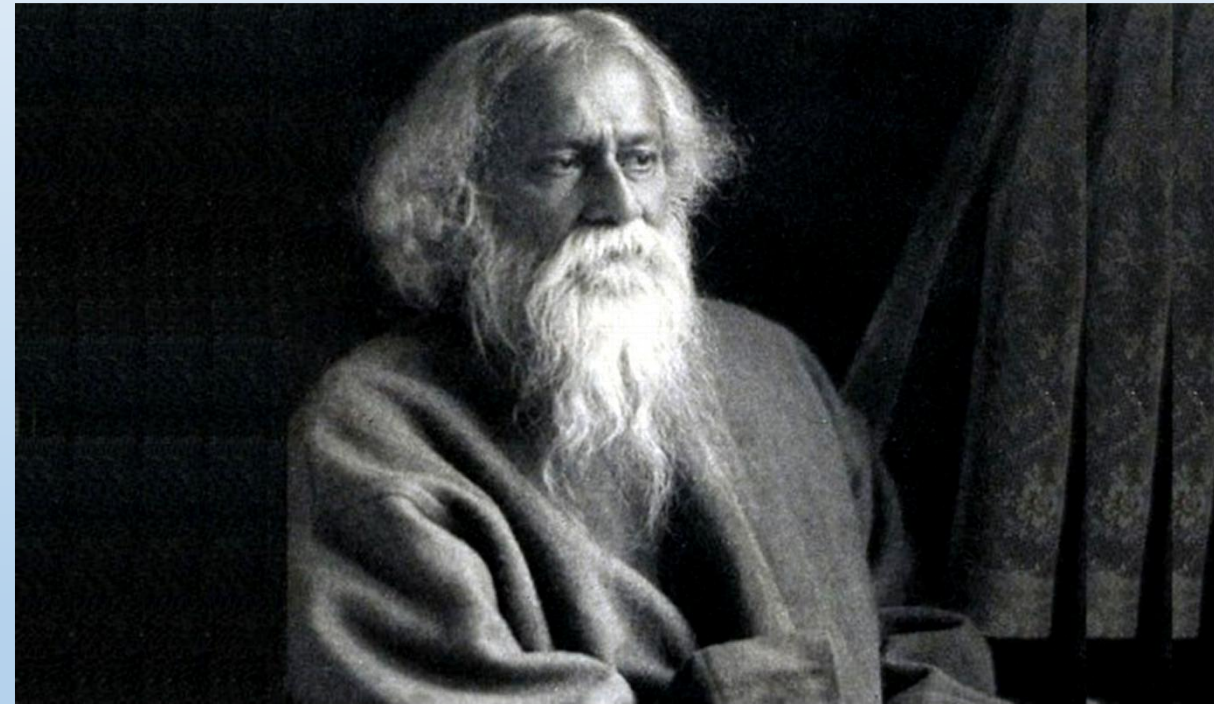


Rabindranath Tagore



Rabindranath Tagore was a poet, musician, polymath, Ayurveda-researcher and artist. who recast music, Bengali literature and Indian art in late 19th and early 20th century. He was the first non-European to win Nobel Prize in Literature. Rabindranath Tagore was also referred to as 'the Bard of Bengal'.

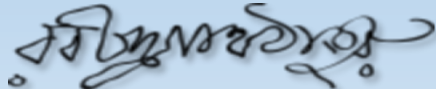
Rabindranath Tagore was a multi-talented personality with a great desire to learn new things. His contributions to the literature, music and his several works are unforgettable.

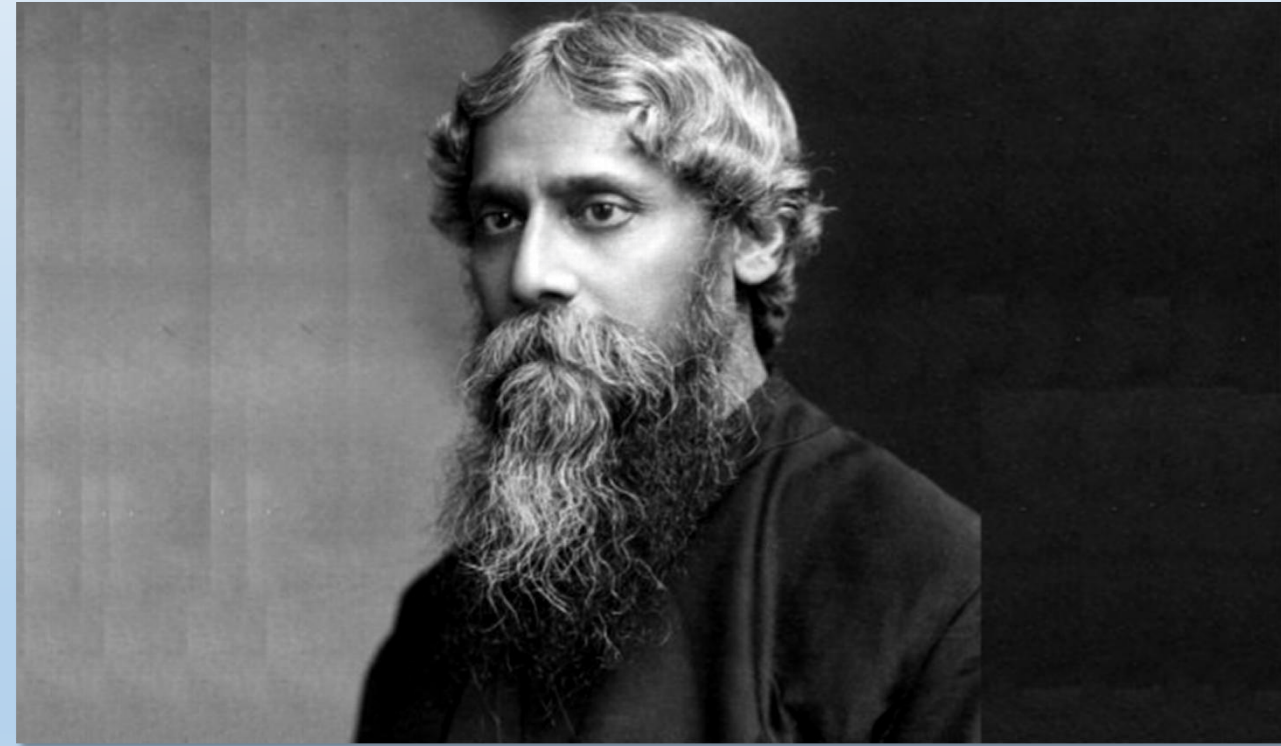




Introduction of Rabindranath Tagore



- **Born: 7 May, 1861**
- **Place of Birth: Calcutta, British India**
- **Penname: Bhanu Singha Thakur (Bhonita)**
- **Father: Debendranath Tagore**
- **Mother: Sarada Devi**
- **Spouse: Mrinalini Devi**
- **Children: Renuka Tagore, Shamindranath Tagore, Meera Tagore, Rathindranath Tagore and Madhurilata Tagore**
- **Died: 7 August, 1941**
- **Place of Death: Calcutta, British India**
- **Profession: Writer, song composer, playwright, essayist, painter**
- **Language: Bengali, English**
- **Award: Nobel Prize in Literature (1913)**
- **Literary movement - Contextual Modernism.**
- **Signature -** 





Rabindranath Tagore Childhood & Early Life



He was born on 7 May, 1861 to Debendranath Tagore and Sarada Devi in the Jorasanko mansion which is the ancestral home of the Tagore family in Kolkata (Calcutta). Among his siblings, he was the youngest. He lost his mother when he was very young, his father was a traveller and so, he was mostly raised by his servants and maids. At a very young age, he was the part of the Bengal renaissance and his family also took active participation in it. At the age of 8, he started writing poems and by the age of sixteen, he also started composing artworks and started publishing his poems under the pseudonym Bhanusimha. In 1877 he wrote short story 'Bhikharini' and in 1882 the collection of poems 'Sandhya Sangit'.

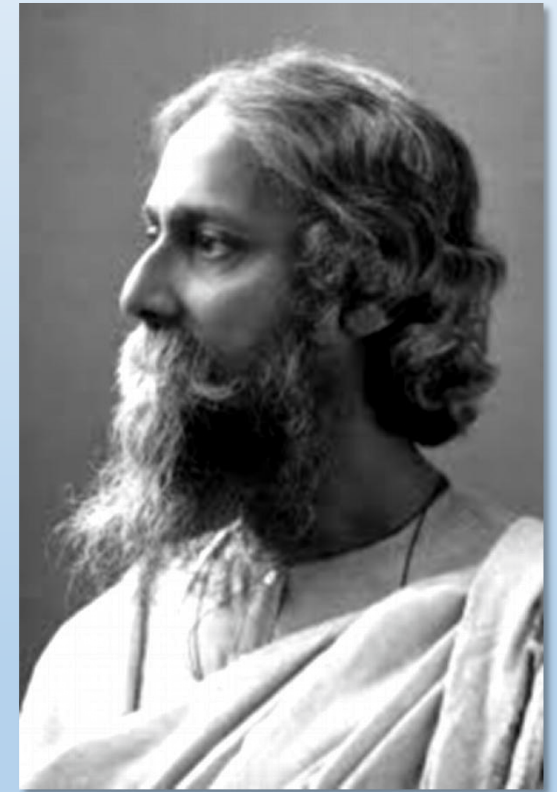
He was influenced by the classical poetry of Kalidasa and started writing his own classical poems. His sister Swarnakumari was a well-known novelist. In 1873, he toured with his father for several months and gained knowledge on several subjects. He learned Sikhism when he stayed at Amritsar and pen down around six poems and many articles on the religion.



Rabindranath Tagore Education



Rabindranath Tagore traditional education began in Brighton, East Sussex, England, at a public school. In 1878, he went to England to become a barrister to fulfil his father's wish. He was not much interested in school learning and later also he joined University College in London to learn law but he dropped this and learned various works of Shakespeare on his own. He also learned the essence of English, Irish and Scottish literature and music; he returned to India and married Mrinalini Devi.





Establishment of Shantiniketan



His father bought a huge land for meditation and named it as Shantiniketan. Debendranath Tagore founded an 'Ashram' in 1863. In 1901, Rabindranath Tagore established an open-air school. It was a prayer hall with marble flooring and was named as 'The Mandir'. It was also named 'Patha Bhavana' and started with only five students. Classes here were held under trees and followed the traditional Guru-Shishya method of teaching. This trend of teaching revival the ancient method of teaching which proved beneficial when compared with the modernised method. Unfortunately, his wife and two children died and he left alone. At that time he was very disturbed. At the meantime, his works started growing and became more popular amongst the Bengali as well as foreign readers. In 1913, he gained recognition and was awarded the prestigious Nobel Prize in Literature and became Asia's first Nobel Laureate. Now, Shantiniketan is a famous University town in West Bengal.

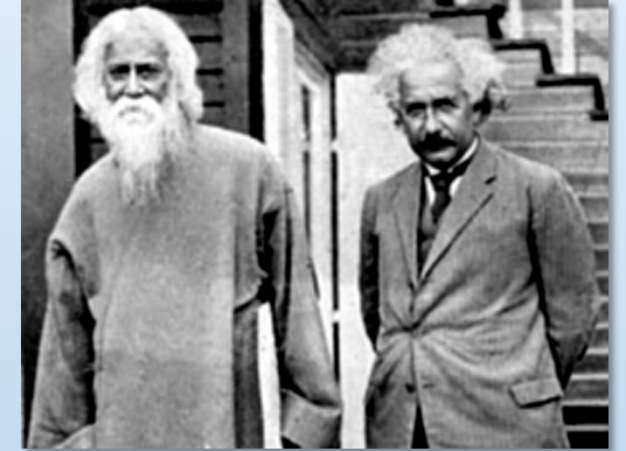
Rabindranath Tagore envisioned a centre of learning which would have the best of both the east and the west. He established the Visva Bharati University in West Bengal. It consists of two campuses one at Shantiniketan and the other at Sriniketan. Sriniketan focuses on agriculture, adult education, village, cottage industries and handicrafts.



The World Tour of Rabindranath Tagore



Since Rabindranath Tagore believed in the concept of one world, he set out on a world tour, in an attempt to spread his ideologies. He also took along with him, his translated works, which caught the attention of many legendary poets. He also lectured in countries like the United States and Japan. Soon after, Tagore found himself visiting places like Mexico, Singapore and Rome, where he met national leaders and important personalities including the likes of Einstein and Mussolini. In 1927, he embarked on a Southeast Asian tour and inspired many with his wisdom and literary works. Tagore also used this opportunity to discuss with many world leaders, the issues between Indians and the English. Though his initial aim was to put an end to nationalism, Rabindranath over a period of time realized that nationalism was mightier than his ideology, and hence developed further hatred towards it. By the end of it all, he had visited as many as thirty countries spread over five continents.





Rabindranath Tagore Literary Works



During his lifetime, Rabindranath Tagore wrote several poems, novels and short stories. Though he started writing at a very young age, his desire to produce more number of literary works only enhanced post the death of his wife and children.

Short stories – Tagore began to write short stories when he was only a teen. He started his writing career with 'Bhikharini'. During the initial stage of his career, his stories reflected the surroundings in which he grew. He also made sure to incorporate social issues and problems of the poor man in his stories. He also wrote about the downside of Hindu marriages and several other customs that were part of the country's tradition back then. Some of his famous short stories include 'Kabuliwala', 'Kshudita Pashan', 'Atottju', 'Haimanti' and 'Musalmanir Golpo' among many other stories.

His short stories are Bhikharini, Kabuliwala, Kshudita Pashan, Atottju, Haimanti and Musalmanir Golpo etc.



Rabindranath Tagore Novels



Novels

It is said that among his works, his novels are mostly under-appreciated. One of the reasons for this could be his unique style of narrating a story, which is still difficult to comprehend by contemporary readers, let alone the readers of his time. His works spoke about the impending dangers of nationalism among other relevant social evils.

- **Japajog:** Published in 1929, His novel is a compelling take on marital rape.
- **Nastanirh:** Published in 1901. This novel is about relationships and love, both requited and unrequited.
- **Ghare Baire:** Published in 1916. It is a story about a married woman constricted in her household trying to find her own identity.
- **Gora:** In the 1880s, it is an expansive, exhaustive and extremely relevant novel which deals with several themes like religion, gender, feminism and also tradition against modernity.
- **Chokher Bali:** In 1903, a novel which consists of various facets of relationships.



Rabindranath Tagore Poems



Poems –

Rabindranath drew inspiration from ancient poets like Kabir and Ramprasad Sen and thus his poetry is often compared to the 15th and 16th Century works of classical poets. By infusing his own style of writing, he made people to take note of not only his works but also the works of ancient Indian poets.

Interestingly, he penned down a poem in 1893 and addressed a future poet through his work. He urged the yet to be born poet to remember Tagore and his works while reading the poem.

- Balaka
- Purobi
- Sonar Tori
- Gitanjali.

No doubt he has changed the dimensions of Bengali literature as it was earlier viewed. Many countries have even erected their statues to pay tribute to the legendary writer. Around five museums are dedicated to Tagore out of which three are situated in India and remaining two in Bangladesh.



Rabindranath Tagore Drama



Rabindranath Tagore along with his brother Jyotirindranath started experiencing drama at the age of sixteen. At the age of 20, Tagore wrote his first original dramatic piece 'Valmiki Pratibha'. In 1890, Tagore wrote 'Visarjan'-- his finest drama. In 1912, Tagore wrote 'Dak Ghar' where the child Amal defying his stuffy and puerile confines by ultimately fall asleep. Tagore defined death as 'spiritual freedom from the world of hoarded wealth and certified creeds'. Tagore's other play was 'Chandalika' the story of an untouchable girl and described how Ananda (disciple of Gautama Buddha), asks a tribal girl for water.



Rabindranath Tagore Songs



Rabindranath Tagore composed nearly 2,230 songs which are known as 'Rabindrasangit'. Tagore was highly influenced by the thumri style of Hindustani music. In 1971, Rabindranath Tagore wrote a poem 'Amar Sonar Bangla' (National Anthem of Bangladesh), to protest the Partition of Bengal in 1905 on communal lines. The Bengal partition made cut off the Muslim majority East Bengal from the Hindu majority West Bengal. Tagore wrote 'Jana Gana Mana' (National Anthem of India) which was first composed as 'Bharat Bhagyo Bidhata'. In 1911, 'Jana Gana Mana' was first at Calcutta (present-day Kolkata) session of INC and was adopted as National Anthem of India in 1950. 'Sri Lanka Matha' is the National Anthem of Sri Lanka and was inspired by Tagore's work. Sitar maestro Vilayat Khan and sarodiyas Buddhadev Dasgupta and Amjad Ali Khan are all inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's work.



Contemporary Dance form in India



Contemporary dance is a style of expressive dance that combines elements of several dance genres including modern, jazz, lyrical and classical ballet. Contemporary dancers strive to connect the mind and the body through fluid dance movements.

Contemporary dance stresses versatility and improvisation, unlike the strict, structured nature of ballet. Contemporary dancers focus on floorwork, using gravity to pull them down to the floor. This dance genre is often done in bare feet. Contemporary dance can be performed to many different styles of music. Dance can be conceived as a new way of thinking about dance today, a form of expression through movement that processes memory, experience and imagination. The emphasis of contemporary dance is on:

- **Originality**
- **Innovation**
- **Creativity**
- **Interdisciplinarity**



Rabindranath Tagore Artistic works



Rabindranath Tagore at the age of sixty years started drawing and painting. After the encouragement by artists of France, Tagore's work made a debut appearance in Paris. It is said that Tagore was red-green colour blind and his artworks reflect strange colour schemes. In 1900, Tagore wrote to Jagadishchandra Bose about his drawings. Tagore withdrew from painting as he was using eraser more than the pencil and was dissatisfied with his artwork. Currently, Tagore's 102 works are listed by India's National Gallery of Modern Art lists in its collections.

Tagore also had an artist's eye for his own handwriting, embellishing the cross-outs and word layouts in his manuscripts with simple artistic leitmotifs.

India's National Gallery of Modern Art lists 102 works by Tagore in its collections



Political Views



Though Tagore denounced nationalism, he also vouched for the Indian independence through some of his politically charged songs. He also supported Indian nationalists and publicly criticized European imperialism. He also criticized the education system that was forced upon India by the English. In 1915, he received knighthood from the British Crown, which he later renounced citing the massacre held at Jallianwala Bagh. He said that the knighthood meant nothing to him when the British failed to even consider his fellow Indians as humans.





Adaptations of novels short stories in cinema



Many of his novels and short stories were made into films by the renowned filmmaker Satyajit Ray. Other filmmakers too, over the years, have drawn inspiration from his works and have incorporated his stories into their movies. As many as 39 stories of his were made into films by various directors and a few other stories were made into TV series. Some of the recent movie adaptations include 'Detective', 'Postmaster', 'Jogajog', 'Shesher Kabita' and 'Tasher Desh.'

Bengali

- Natir Puja – 1932 – The only film directed by Rabindranath Tagore
- Gora — 1938 Gora (novel) — Naresh Mitra
- Noukadubi– Nitin Bose
- Bou Thakuranir Haat – 1953 (Bou Thakuranir Haat) – Naresh Mitra
- Kabuliwala – 1957 (Kabuliwala) – Tapan Sinha
- Kshudhita Pashan – 1960 (Kshudhita Pashan) – Tapan Sinha
- Teen Kanya – 1961 (Teen Kanya) – Satyajit Ray
- Charulata - 1964 (Nastanirh) – Satyajit Ray
- Megh o Roudra – 1969 (Megh o Roudra) – Arundhati Devi
- Ghare Baire – 1985 (Ghare Baire) – Satyajit Ray
- Chokher Bali – 2003 (Chokher Bali) – Rituparno Ghosh
- Shasti – 2004 (Shasti) – Chashi Nazrul Islam
- Shuva – 2006 (Shuvashini) – Chashi Nazrul Islam
- Chaturanga – 2008 (Chaturanga) – Suman Mukhopadhyay
- Noukadubi – 2011 (Noukadubi) – Rituparno Ghosh
- Elar Char Adhyay – 2012 (Char Adhyay) – Bappaditya Bandyopadhyay



Adaptations of novels short stories in cinema



Hindi

- **Sacrifice – 1927 (Balidan) – Nanand Bhojai and Naval Gandhi**
- **Milan – 1946 (Nauka Dubi) – Nitin Bose**
- **Dak Ghar – 1965 (Dak Ghar) – Zul Vellani**
- **Kabuliwala – 1961 (Kabuliwala) – Bimal Roy**
- **Uphaar – 1971 (Samapti) – Sudhendu Roy**
- **Lekin... – 1991 (Kshudhit Pashaan) – Gulzar**
- **Char Adhyay – 1997 (Char Adhyay) – Kumar Shahani**
- **Kashmakash – 2011 (Nauka Dubi) – Rituparno Ghosh**
- **Stories by Rabindranath Tagore (Anthology TV Series) – 2015 – Anurag Basu**
- **Bioscopewala – 2017 (Kabuliwala) – Deb Medhekar**
- **Bhikharin**



Last Days of Rabindranath Tagore



Rabindranath Tagore spent the last four years of his life in constant pain and was bogged down by two long bouts of illness. In 1937, he went into a comatose condition, After years of chronic pain and long term illness, which relapsed after a period of three years. After an extended period of suffering, Tagore died on August 7, 1941 in the same Jorasanko mansion in which he was brought up.





Museums of Rabindranath Tagore



There are eight Tagore museums. Three in India and five in Bangladesh:

- Rabindra Bharati Museum, at Jorasanko Thakur Bari, Kolkata, India
- Tagore Memorial Museum, at Shilaidaha Kuthibadi, Shilaidaha, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Memorial Museum at Shahzadpur Kachharibari, Shahzadpur, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Bhavan Museum, in Santiniketan, India
- Rabindra Museum, in Mungpoo, near Kalimpong, India
- Patisar Rabindra Kacharibari, Patisar, Atrai, Naogaon, Bangladesh
- Pithavoge Rabindra Memorial Complex, Pithavoge, Rupsha, Khulna, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Complex, Dakkhindihi village, Phultala Upazila, Khulna, Bangladesh



Legacy of Rabindranath Tagore



Since Rabindranath Tagore changed the way Bengali literature was viewed, he left an everlasting impression on many. Apart from many of his busts and statues that have been erected in many countries, many yearly events pay tribute to the legendary writer. Many of his works were made international, thanks to a host of translations by many famous international writers. There are five museums dedicated to Tagore. While three of them are situated in India, the remaining two are in Bangladesh. The museums house his famous works, and are visited by millions every year. In 1913, Tagore won Nobel Prize in Literature





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