Digital Photography Workshop at IUB:

Lights, Camera, Shoot!

Photos and story by: Sabhanaz Rashid Diya

WHEN I interviewed Shahidul Alam from Drik last year, I remember he told me that Dhaka was the 3rd photographic capital of the world. How photographers from all parts of the world came to Dhaka to capture its contrasting dimensions of vibrant colours and unforgiving poverty. Ever since, Dhaka changed its face for me. It became more than crowded roads and over populated urban boxes. It sang a new song to me, and when I met Geoffrey Hiller a couple of months back, I was pretty sure it sang the same song to him.

Geoffrey Hiller is a Fulbright scholar currently teaching 'Interactive Media' at Independent University Bangladesh (IUB) in Baridhara. He's been in Dhaka for 9 months and recollects this period as one of the most exciting times of his life. He's also a photographer and multimedia producer from the United States, and recently conducted a Digital Photography Workshop for his students at IUB. The workshop was organized by the Department of Media and Communication at IUB under the coordination of Shams Quader, a lecturer from the same department. With a group of twenty enthusiastic students, the workshop lasted for 12 hours (3 hours per day) on 29th and 31st March, and 5th and 7th April respectively. The workshop aimed to teach students about digital photography theories and techniques, and give them a broader outlook on post processing and how to make photography presentations.

"At first I wasn't so sure how it was going to come together with so many different people," confessed Hiller at the interview. "However, it soon became apparent that most of the participants were really enthusiastic about improving and experimenting with their photographic skills."



Indeed, they were. As the workshop progressed and Hiller took the participants through the basics of light and composition, the students became more thrilled about experimenting with their cameras. As an instructor, Hiller encouraged the participants to have fun and experiment. Doing self-portraits or going out in the streets, every assignment seemed like a new adventure; and it was wonderful to see everyone was excited about it!

Hiller recalls the load shedding to be an obstacle during the workshop. "The power cut was a huge challenge but we all took it in a stride," said Hiller. "Salmon Saeed helped out with his laptop and in the remaining hour on the day of the closing, I showed the students how to edit and sequence their photos, add audio and make a multimedia presentation of their work."

The closing ceremony was held on 7th April at the IUB Library. The event was chaired by the Vice Chancellor of IUB, Professor Bazlul Mobin Chowdhury; and attended by Pro VC Professor Omar Rahman, Director of School of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Professor Nazrul Islam, Head of Media and Communication Dr. G.M. Shahidul Alam and Registrar Dr. Tanvir Khan. The multimedia presentation made at the last hour gave the guests an overview of what the participants were doing through the 12 hours at the workshop, showcasing their photographs. Indeed, it was quite a spectacle! To imagine the kind of images shot in the space of only 12 hours was applaudable and the students' and their instructor, Hiller's dedication and hard work was reflected through their works.