Sayeed Siddiqui's 'Glorious Pixels'

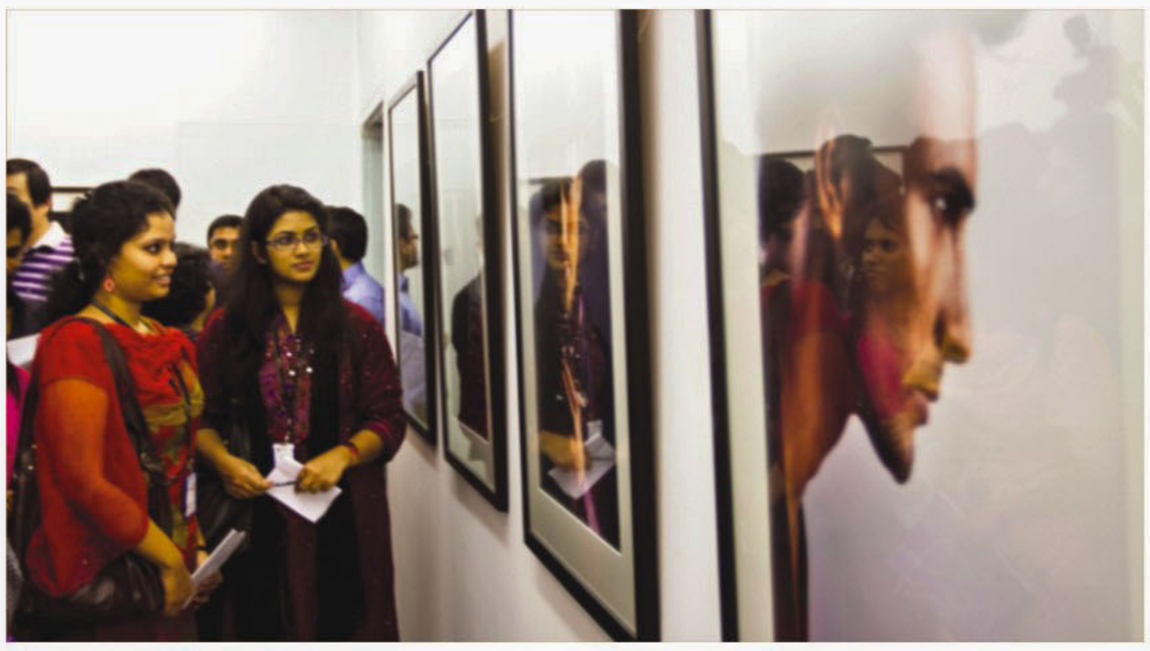
OSAMA RAHMAN

"Glorious Pixels", a photo exhibition by Sayeed Siddiqui, is currently the highlight of a visit to Dhaka Arts Center. The show was inaugurated by Abdul Latif Siddiqui, Minister of Jute and Textiles. Folklorist Dr. Ashraf Siddiqui, poet Belal Chowdhury and physicist Latif Chowdhury lent their weight to the show, adding another layer of prominence. Anwar Hossain, the renowned photo artist, introduced Sayeed Siddiqui's "artistic venture into light and shade through the lens".

Sayeed Siddiqui is the chairman and designer of Cats Eye.

The exhibition, backed by Team Cats Eye, is spread among four rooms of the Dhaka Art Center. The objects of the photographer's interest are primarily portraits and still life. This is evident by the choice of his subjects in each photograph.

The portraits, each of them, are captivating not because of the beauty displayed but rather due to the imperfections captured. The blemishes themselves are both obscured yet presented, striking a viewer immediately. There are emotions being displayed that are rarely frozen in photographs forever, ranging from happiness to outright distraught. The portraits aren't necessarily of any particular group of people, the photographer opting instead to capture a myriad of characters, from ravishing women, everyday people to artists and beggars. Each frame, then, freezes a different memory, a different emotion and ultimately tells a very different story. Sometimes, the absence of reason makes the still all the more interesting for the viewer. The realism and classical vibe on the photographs are quite cleverly executed adding another dimension to the clarity of the works.



The objects of the photographer's interest are primarily portraits and still life.

Two more rooms provide a feast of portraits for the eye but the jewel in the crown is to be found in the gallery displaying the still life photos. This is where the artist's genius really comes to the fore, as he crafts mystical and enticing stories out of the mundane. A thin veil of mystery also shrouds Siddiqui's still life images, alluding to concepts present beyond the eye's capability. While on one corner a simple rose bleeds to death, another nook displays a just-struck match while the voice of the artist begs for the flames, knowing the dangers. More pictures depict the purity of white while inviting the secrets of black. There is a constant sense of Yin and Yang and one can have an almost palpable sense of the struggle between good and evil represented by the colours. Apart from that, the most notable feature among these pictures, along with little quotations on the side, is the infectious feeling of melancholy permeating from each. Some also hold morals, like the composition of the wizened soldiers commanding an army of falling young warriors, reminiscent of the old men who start battles while the young suffer from it. While some pictures in this collection arouse curiosity others exude a sense of sadness trailed by a slight hint of hope. The questions these stills bring up are rhetorical in nature and without any correct answer, depending on the perspective of the viewer.

Sayeed Siddiqui's foray into photography isn't exactly unexpected and rather quite welcomed like a breath of fresh air. "The compositions are brilliant and the highlighting is exactly as required," Farid Hossain, a painter, gushed while enjoying the works. The exhibition concludes on March 4, currently on display at Dhaka Art Center from 3-8 pm everyday.

Tracing **Forgotten Roots**

SUFI FARUQ IBNE ABUBAKAR

When my dear friend Pradeep Bhattacherjee offered me a chance to spend three long weeks outside Dhaka, I just could not say "No". I travel out of the city quite often but never had the opportunity or the reason to spend an extended period of time outside the metropolis.

Pradeep had undertaken an interesting project -- directing a reality show titled "Forgotten roots", jointly produced by Pillar Productions and Delta Bay, both stationed in London, UK and he offered me the most interesting position, that of the host!

In due time I was also introduced to Dilara Khan, now resident of London. "Forgotten Roots" is her brainchild.

The community of third or fourth generation expatriates, have, for obvious reasons, lost touch with their Bangladeshi roots. They remain alien to the life, livelihood and culture of this land. Some of them have visited this country, their forefathers called their own, but they saw it with the eyes of 'foreigners'.

"Forgotten Roots" -- as a reality show -- proposed to present opportunity for a band of youth to experience the life of rural Bengal, travel around the country and soak their feet in the culture of Bangladesh -- all in the guise of challenges offered on reality television.

The entire show was scheduled to be aired on foreign TV channels and the primary selection of participants through auditions was already done in countries with sizable Bangladeshi expat population.

The writer (front row-4th from left) with the participants and the crew.

To give a solid patriotic start, the participants were to engage in a 16-day event, fighting for a net score of 1971 points involving 21 challenges. In total, 26 episodes had been planned with the competitors vying for a cash reward of 10,000 pound sterling.

From the very beginning, I was drawn to this project. As a host I would have the privilege of presenting Bangladesh to these youngsters. Nadia Ali, my co-host, had travelled from London to Dhaka and I learned the details of the project from the producer, Mainul Hossain Mukul.

Participants, from the UK and the USA arrived in Dhaka on December 25, 2011. A press conference was scheduled in the evening, the very same day.

Upon returning to the hotel, a long chatting session ran deep into the night although the entire team of participants were ready to leave for Lalakhaal, Joyinta Upazila, Sylhet at 10 am sharp the next day. The advance team had already camped at the spot way ahead in time to make arrangements for food, lodging and selecting the locations for the shooting.

D-Day and it was time to move for Lalakhaal. The adventurists got their wake up call early in the morning. Enthused by the thrill of the whole affair they became busy updating their current status to friends and family via phone, and also on Facebook.

As the cars moved through the snaking highway, the participants and the entire crew broke into songs. Some of the participants knew a few lines of popular Bangla tunes and they took this opportunity to profess their vocal prowess.

The team broke the tranquillity of Lalakhaal as we reached base camp at a nearby school. Our participants were welcomed with garlands, as they entered a remote setting, truly far from the maddening crowd.

It is safe to say that the serene atmosphere of Lalakhaal took different forms as the days of the competition progressed. Combining all the teams that were part of the show -- the directorial, art, creative, costume, event, DOP, production -- there were over 200 people involved in this project.

The large crowd that poured in to watch the shooting, the innumerable cups of piping hot tea, the sound of "light…camera…action" made the whole affair one not devoid of excitement and pure fun.

Not just the routine schedule, each experience by the adventurists was a revelation for them. The lodging, food, entertainment and the environment were like new discoveries for each of the participants.

As the days passed by, the usual course of reality television took us to new levels of excitement. There was shooting all day; in the evening there was music, fun and frolic. Sunburnt and exhausted, our final day was drawing near. As the band of "foreign", expatriate generation featured in the show experienced Bangladesh, we had a chance to encounter their world.

It was our sincere effort to uphold values like the mother tongue, the opulent culture, the heritage and the history of Bangladesh to our young participants. Our success, or failure, is for the audience to judge, for they shall be our ultimate critics. But this I can say, "Those who came to their native land as foreigners left the country taking a part of it with them."

Starting tonight, "Forgotten Roots" will be on air across the globe on ATN Bangla. You are all cordially invited to watch.

Translated by Mannan Mashhur Zarif

18th Young Art Exhibition '12 opens today

A CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) is holding 18th Young Art Exhibition '12 at National Art Gallery. The exhibition opens today at National Music and Dance Auditorium, BSA.

Communications Minister Obaidul Kader will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest. Artist Hashem Khan and Dr. Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, secretary, Ministry of Education will be present as special guests. Liaquat Ali Lucky, director general of BSA, will preside over the programme. Mohammad Anwar Hossain, director of Fine Arts Department, BSA will deliver the welcome speech at the inauguration of the exhibition.

The exhibition will feature 1,111 artworks of 463 artists in different mediums -- painting, drawing, sculpture, prints, graphics and installation. The Young Artists Award '12 will carry a cash prize of Taka 75,000 and three other awards in three mediums will carry Taka 50,000 each. Four honorary awards will bear Taka 15,000 each.

The exhibition will continue till March 16.

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

ATN BANGLA
09:45 Amar Bhasha Amar Garbo
03:05 Bangla Feature Film
05:00 Gram Gonjer Khabor
08:00 Drama: Mon I Puri Para

CHANNEL i
01:05 Prokriti O Jibon
01:30 Hridoyer Gaan
02:40 Tele-film: Biral Chokh
07:50 Nescafe Get Set Rock Grand Finale (Live)

ETV
10:02 Sonamoni Shukh-e Oshukh-e
01:30 Bangla Feature Film
06:30 Musical Programme: Tanana
10:10 Drama: Dui Duguney Char
12:05 Phone O Live Studio Concert
09:45 Drama: Triratno
11:45 Call-er Gaan

Boishakhi TV
10:30 Shorashori Doctor
11:10 Tele-film: Genduchora MNIBS
08:45 Drama: Uchit Katha
12:30 Ekusher Pongtimala

Maasranga Television
10:02 Bangla Feature Film
05:02 Children's Programme
06:30 Nirer Kabyo
08:00 Drama Serial: Poth-er Dabi
11:00 Band Music: Gaan Poka

Z Studio
10:45 The Hot Chick
03:46 Sniper 2
05:40 Halloween H20: 20 Years Later
07:30 Clan of the White Lotus

RADIO

abc radio FM 89.2
06:00 Bhorer Janalay
09:00 Mukhorito Jiboney
12:00 Darun Dupurey
03:00 Duranto Bikeley
05:00 Shondhatara
07:00 Shajer Maya
09:00 Raat-er Akashey

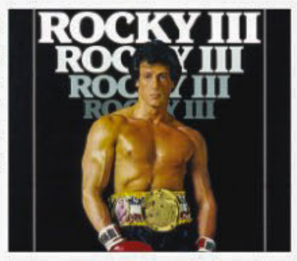
RADIO FOORTI
08:00 Addabazi
12:00 Boier Poka
02:00 Foorti Unlimited
06:00 Bumper to Bumper
10:00 Club Foorti

RADIO TODAY FM 89.6
06:00 Green FM
08:00 Good Morning Dhaka
11:00 Flash Back
12:30 Islamic Program
02:15 Rupali Gaan

Kobi
On ntv at 09:45pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Anisur Rahman Milon, Tarin

Rongila
On ETV at 09:30pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Shahiduzzaman Selim, Nawsheen

Rocky III
On HBO at 7:20pm
Genre: Action
Cast: Sylvester Stallone, Talia Shire



BANGLAVISION
10:10 Bhalo Thakun
11:05 Amader Rannaghar
04:20 Protidin-er Boimela (Live)
06:15 Gaan O Fun
11:25 Ami Ekhon Ki Korbo (Live)

ntv
12:35 Concert-Bamba
02:30 Tele-film: X Factor
06:15 Shubhoshondhya
11:30 Musical Programme

Rtv
10:10 Doctor's Prescription (Live)
03:45 Natuner Jayogaan (Live)
05:30 Game Show: Ghar-e Bairey
07:00 Diamond World Rtv Star Night (Live)

Desh TV
03:00 Live Musical Programme: Priyojon-er Gaan
06:25 123 Sisimpur
07:45 Drama Serial: Mayer Doa Poribahan
09:30 Tamara Drewe
11:55 Secuestro Express

HBO
10:35 The Dream Team
12:55 The Mummy Returns
05:20 Turbulence
07:20 Rocky III
09:30 Crank: High Voltage
11:20 The Blair Witch Project

Star World
11:30 Desperate Housewives
02:30 Supernatural
03:30 Achievers Club
10:30 The Shield
11:30 The Big Bang Theory

National Geographic Channel
02:30 Mega Cities
03:30 Big, Bigger, Biggest
09:00 Dangerous Encounters
10:30 Construction Zone
12:00 Mad Scientists

Discovery Channel
02:30 Man Vs. Wild
03:30 I Shouldn't Be Alive
04:30 Swamp Brothers
07:30 Man Woman Wild
10:30 One Man Army
11:30 Get Out Alive

DRAMA SERIAL

ATN BANGLA
09:20pm Motijheel C/A
11:00pm Hawai Mithai

ntv
08:15pm Rupkotha
09:45pm Kobi

BANGLAVISION
08:15pm Harkiptey
09:45pm Gulshan Avenue

ETV
09:30pm Rongila

Boishakhi TV
08:10pm Istikutum

Desh TV
08:15pm Kuashar Ondhokar

Maasranga Television
09:02pm Sontoron

NEWS BULLETIN

BTV
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am 2:00 pm.5:00 pm.8:00 pm.
News (English) at 10:00am, 4:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla): 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 am

ATN BANGLA
NEWS (Bangla): 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm, 1:00 am, 4:00 am
01:00pm, 3:00pm, 04:00pm
News (English): 9:00 am, 6:00 pm.

BANGLAVISION
News (Bangla) at 7:30am. 1:30pm. 5:00pm. 7:15pm. 10:30pm.
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00am. 12:00am. 4:00pm.
News (English) at 6:00pm

Rtv
News (Bangla): 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 am

ntv
News (Bangla):7:30am, 12:02pm, 2:00pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm, 1:00am

ETV
News (Bangla): 9:00am, 11:00 am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 11:00pm

TALK SHOW

ATN Bangla
12:30am Lead News

CHANNEL i
01:00am Tritio Matra

Boishakhi TV
11:00pm Saatkahon
12:00am Zero Hour

Rtv
10:40am Tarokalap

BANGLAVISION
12:05pm Moha Shatto Al-Quran
09:05pm Moner Kotha

Desh TV
07:45pm Mukh O Mukharota

Maasranga Television
07:30pm Prime Issue