

# TEDxAIUB: A CELEBRATION OF INFINITE IDEAS

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Universities on weekends have usually a quiet and lifeless environment. However, on the morning of December 12, the American International University Bangladesh (AIUB) Banani campus was filled with the hustle and bustle of volunteers working diligently, all in preparation of the 2nd ever TEDxAIUB event. The event was organised by students of AIUB with guidelines set by the TED Conference.

This year, the theme of the event was "Ideas are Infinite". Here, we provided a platform for all the brilliant minds that have come up with ingenious ideas about science, philosophy, social work and life in general.

The event started with a speech by entrepreneur Arif Nezami who talked about solving problems using technology using empathy. Next up on stage was Leaping Boundaries founder Shagufe Hossain, who took the initiative to provide a platform for the much ignored madrasa students.

Following the first session was a quick snack break for attendees and speakers alike which also acted as a networking opportunity in disguise. People from



various different fields, students and professionals alike, mingled and talked about ideas they are interested in. During this break, the interaction was further enhanced by letting the attendees acknowledge their inner TEDster. They were asked to choose a stick with their names on it and were asked to give an impromptu speech on the idea mentioned behind the stick. This break was also utilised by the photo enthusiasts who used the photo booth to capture

some fun snapshots.

During the second session, the stage was graced by the respected faculty member of AIUB, Tabin Hasan. Next up was a short speech by North South University faculty member Khan Muhammad Saqiful Alam. The second session was by Samid Razzak, initiator of 10 Minute School, a web-based school. Following the second session, the lunch break was announced.

In the third session, first up was Fazlay

Rabbi, who manages the most popular Facebook page for the travelers based in Bangladesh. Next up was Maliha Mohsin, who talked about a different kind of homelessness and finding a place to belong to. After her, Shams Jaber was up on stage, who is the co-founder of The Tech Academy. The audience also enjoyed a musical performance by the lead vocalist of Black, Mofizul Haque Chowdhury, who performed two covers and one song from the band itself. Finally, the crowd was heavily entertained and charmed by magician and comedian Max Mystel whose stand-up comedy was as good as his card tricks. The event ended with crests that were handed out to speakers and certificates that were given to the attendees. The organisers closed the show by thanking the sponsors and the attendees for their presence, with the promise of an even better event in the upcoming year.

Overall, it was a momentous occasion for the university and for the local TED and TEDx enthusiasts. All those who believe in the power of intellect and creativity took some valuable lessons from each of the speakers. Because while our lifetimes may be finite, our minds are brilliant and ideas are infinite.

## Why Anthologies are the Future of Television

SHUPROVO ARKO

Setting aside the nostalgia goggles for a minute, I can safely say that we are now in the Golden Age of television. The sheer amount of well-written, well-acted and well-directed shows airing right now is proof that television is no longer the underachieving little brother of movies. While the TV Renaissance is itself a huge topic, what's more interesting is the format it gave new life to: the Anthology Series.

For the uninitiated, an anthology series is one where the plot takes place over just one season. The next season features a completely different story and characters and has little to no connection with prior seasons. This doesn't seem like a big change, but in an industry obsessed with cliffhanger finales and dragging things out, the new format is what made American Horror Story, True Detective and Fargo the fantastic shows they are. Here's why:

**Better Acting:** Until recently, television actors moving on to do movies was akin to graduating high school to go to college. You don't go back to high school if you're in college, right? Talented actors would much rather do movies than be tied down by a series for 4-5 seasons. But with an anthology series season lasting around 10 episodes, many high-profile actors are now showing an interest in television roles. From Martin Freeman in Fargo to Matthew McConaughey in True Detective, it's amazing to see how a single stellar performance can increase the quality of a show by so much.

**Time Frame:** We've all seen good movies suffer because of rushed endings and great shows lose track because they ran for one season too many *coughHIMYMcough*. The runtime for an anthology series is perfect because it gives the writers enough breathing room to plot a coherent story with character development while still having a definite point when it should end. No fillers, no abrupt endings. Truly the best of both worlds.

**Creative Control:** Picture this- you're the head-writer of the space zombie apocalypse series The Moonwalking Dead, and everyone's favourite character is a swash-buckling xenophobic space cowboy named Squirrel. Now Squirrel was supposed to die horribly in episode three, but since fans adore him, you give him a heroic death in the finale. Happy with yourself, you go home to see that fans have already started

an online petition to save Squirrel and #IfSquirrelDiesWeRiot is trending on Twitter. Executives swoop in and make you rewrite the ending at the last minute, and when the finale airs everyone complains oh how the season "ended in a stupid copout" and has the "worst writing ever!!1" Since they don't have the will of the fans swaying every decision, the executives of an anthology series have to put more faith in the artistic vision of the writer, and that's almost never a bad thing.

**Freedom of Choice:** Back in 2011 when American Horror Story first aired, the creators announced that AHS was going to be an anthology, an unprecedented move at the time. Now in 2014, AHS has had four seasons with completely distinct settings and is still going strong. If you like carnival themed horror you can start with season 4 or if you like asylums you could watch season 2. You could technically do this for every anthology. This level of freedom the viewer gets, where one could start watching from wherever one feels like is what made the anthology format famous. Continuity was no longer a necessity, and with every rule broken, the resurgence of the anthology had begun.

*Shuprovo Arko copes with the soul-crushing amount of studying he has to do by trying to be funny. He writes about movies, video games and music normal people don't listen to. This generic blurb was brought to you by facebook.com/shupro.arko*