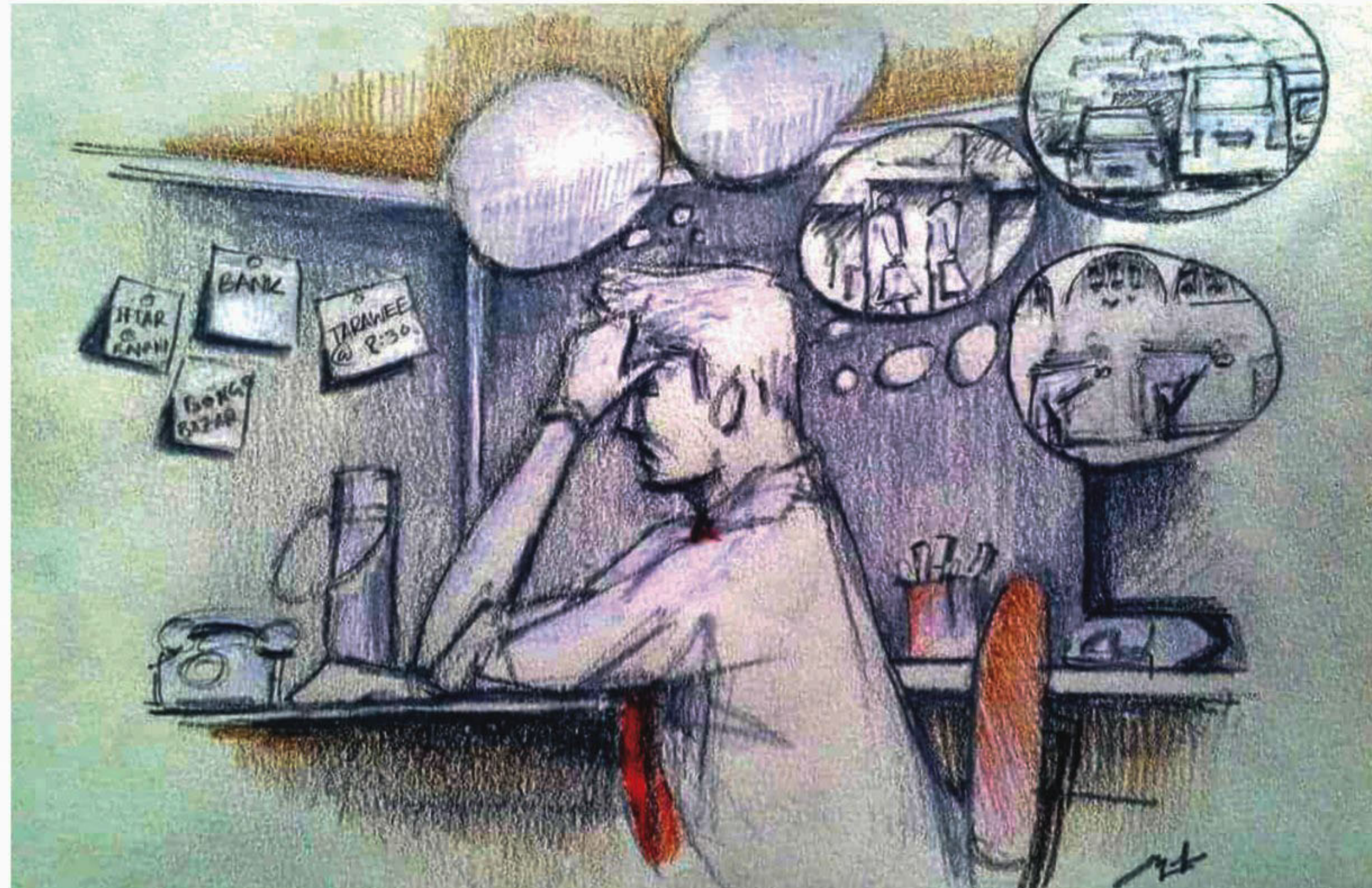


| RAMADAN |

KEEP CALM AND FAST

M H HAIDER

ILLUSTRATION: YAFIZ SIDDIQUI



Ramadan is essentially a whirlwind myriad of activities. On one hand, it is the blessed month when we seek spiritual solace and strive to strengthen our connection with the divine. And on the other, there're a million things like shopping, attending parties, going out for iftar and sehri, etc. And, there's work! The 'thing' that pays for those million things!

Balancing work with so many activities - whilst embracing the spirituality of the month - can be a challenge. Follow these simple rules for a smooth Ramadan.

Set Spiritual Goals

What do you want to accomplish this Ramadan? Would you aim to do a certain level of charity work? Would you commit to reading taraveeh prayers? Fix your goals, and make a realistic plan keeping in mind your nature of work - so that your office does not come in way of your spiritual journey.

Sleep Well

The importance of adequate sleep is something that is talked about all year round, but during this month, it becomes a more pressing concern. Be it for the sehri timing or for the fast itself, many people experience drowsiness during work, feeling 'down' and lethargic. In order to solve that, make sure that you have a good night's sleep. Easier said than done, right? Enter powernaps: shut down and doze off for a few minutes at office to replenish energy.

Keep Good Health

You already know that you should not overstuff during iftar and that you must opt for a healthy meal. Adding to that, watch you sehri menu too. These days, we go out to have sehri at a restaurant or attend one of those so-called 'sehri parties'. If you don't eat sensibly, you may feel very thirsty later or even have digestion problems, thus affecting work. Moreover, it's a good idea to visit your doctor before Ramadan starts; fasting may require some changes on your prescription.

Make Work Hours More Productive

Many organisations cut down on office timings. But that obviously does not give you the right to escape from your responsibilities. We need to make the best use of time.

Instead of raging over the insane traffic, use the time to make important calls or answering emails. Getting a certain level of work done in the car can give a big boost towards accomplishing a day's things-to-do list.

When you connect to the internet at office, do not instinctively log into Facebook! Social media sites are significant in our lives, but they are highly addictive too. You won't even realise how you have spent so much time accomplishing so little. It's a problem you can't afford to have during the tightly scheduled Ramadan. So, unless there is something important, get some work done prior to visiting social media sites.

Try to find out when you feel the most energetic. Perhaps it's during morning, or

in the early afternoon. Find that time and deal with the most difficult tasks in that period.

Despite all these, let's not forget Murphy's Law! Anything that can wrong, will go wrong. When that happens, try to mend the situation instead of fretting over it. In most cases, you will be back on track soon enough.

Keep calm and fast. And perhaps keep a water bottle and a couple of snacks in your bag in case the 'adhan' breaks and you have to open your iftar on the road?

HERITAGE

Lal Mia' was born on 10th August, 1923 in a poor family living in Masimdia village, beside the river Chitra, under Narail district. Sheikh Mohammad Messer Ali, the father of Lal Mia was a mason by profession. Who then knew that Lal Mia, an apprentice to his father's masonry, would become the magician with paint and colours? Many of you must be wondering who this Lal Mia is. It is my privileges to let you, dear readers, know that Lal Mia is none other than legendary artist Sheikh Mohammad Sultan, popularly known as S M Sultan, who is considered one of the greatest painters in the sub-continent.

In 2006, in memory of the legend, 'S M Sultan Memorial Museum' was established next to river Chitra, Narail.

Upon entering, you would find a mosaic portrait of S M Sultan, created by Bimanesh Chandra Biswas, Chairman, Department of Drawing and Painting,

some clothes, paint brushes, a canvas, musical instruments, stick, torch, mirror, vases, photos and many more.

He had the amazing variety of styles, with ample use of vibrant colours, and it is proved in all of his paintings. A quick glance at the artworks may help you discover the subject matters of his paintings-- villages and people, the sky, fields, riverbanks, clouds, trees and cottage shelters. You will notice that muscular figures of the farmers depicted in his paintings, and for that even, Sultan had an inspiring reason.

Popular painter, print maker, writer, and Professor of Department of Oriental Art and Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, Dr Abdus Satter mentions, in his book, "Bangladesher Shilpee O Shilpo" that, "He wanted to awaken the people who are exploited and deprived. He wanted to strengthen the confidence of Bangalis. And that is why; he depicted the muscular men of his imagination with his brushes."

Apart from the drawings and paintings, there are some sketches of notable personalities on the 2nd floor of the museum. Among the 77 artworks, there is an incomplete one as well. Just a little distance from the museum, a boat is kept, with which Sultan used to take trips on the river Chitra with the children he used to teach drawing and painting.

The one and only staff Golap Kazi, a 50-year-old man, has been working here for past thirteen years with a very minimal salary. He alone has been performing the duty of gallery guard, sweeper, and caretaker of the museum. He believes that if the government paid some attention to the museum, and appointed some more staff members, it would be convenient for him and the museum as a whole.

On Fridays, children come here to learn drawing from the teachers. Also, every year, with the initiative of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the Narail District Shilpakala Academy arranges 'Sultan Festival' in the museum

premises. The festival includes a number of segments featuring cultural shows, art exhibitions, discussions, art competitions for children, river cruises in Chitra, and much more.

Every day, people from all over the country come to visit the marvellous creations of the artist. The museum remains open seven days a week from 9 am to 1 pm and 3 pm to 5 pm for visitors, without any entrance fee. ■



TO WATCH THE VIDEO SCAN THE QR CODE

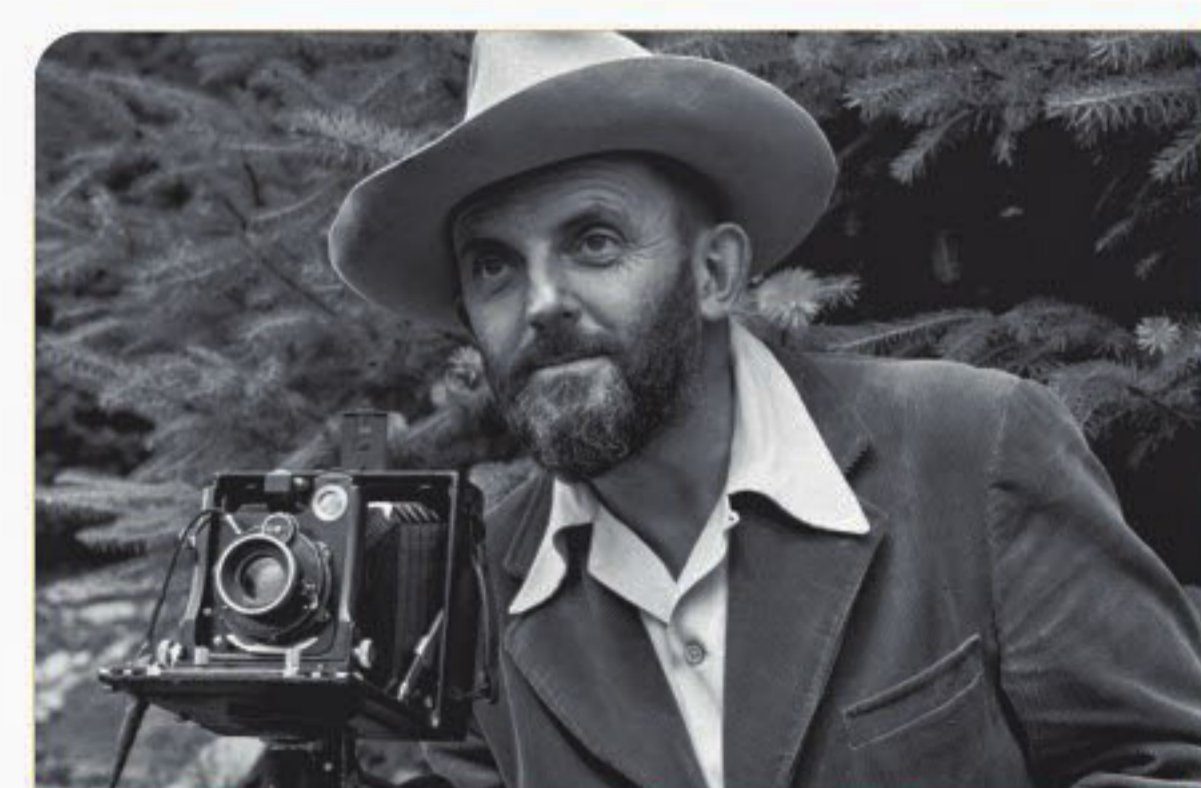
EMPIRE OF S M SULTAN

TEXT AND PHOTOS: NILIMA JAHAN

Institute of Fine Arts, Khulna University. He was also a student of the Institute of Fine Arts (Shishu Swarga) founded by S M Sultan. S M Sultan is resting in peace just next to it. On the other side, there is the house, where the artist lived with his adopted daughter, Nihar Bala and his pets. The garden surrounding by the house creates a gorgeous and fascinating environment for the visitors.

Inside the house, there is a small library of the artist with a few books and memorabilia. A ramshackle wooden bed, in which he used to sleep and a wooden rack for putting his clothes are still in the next room. Furthermore, there is a heavy metal chest next to the wooden rack.

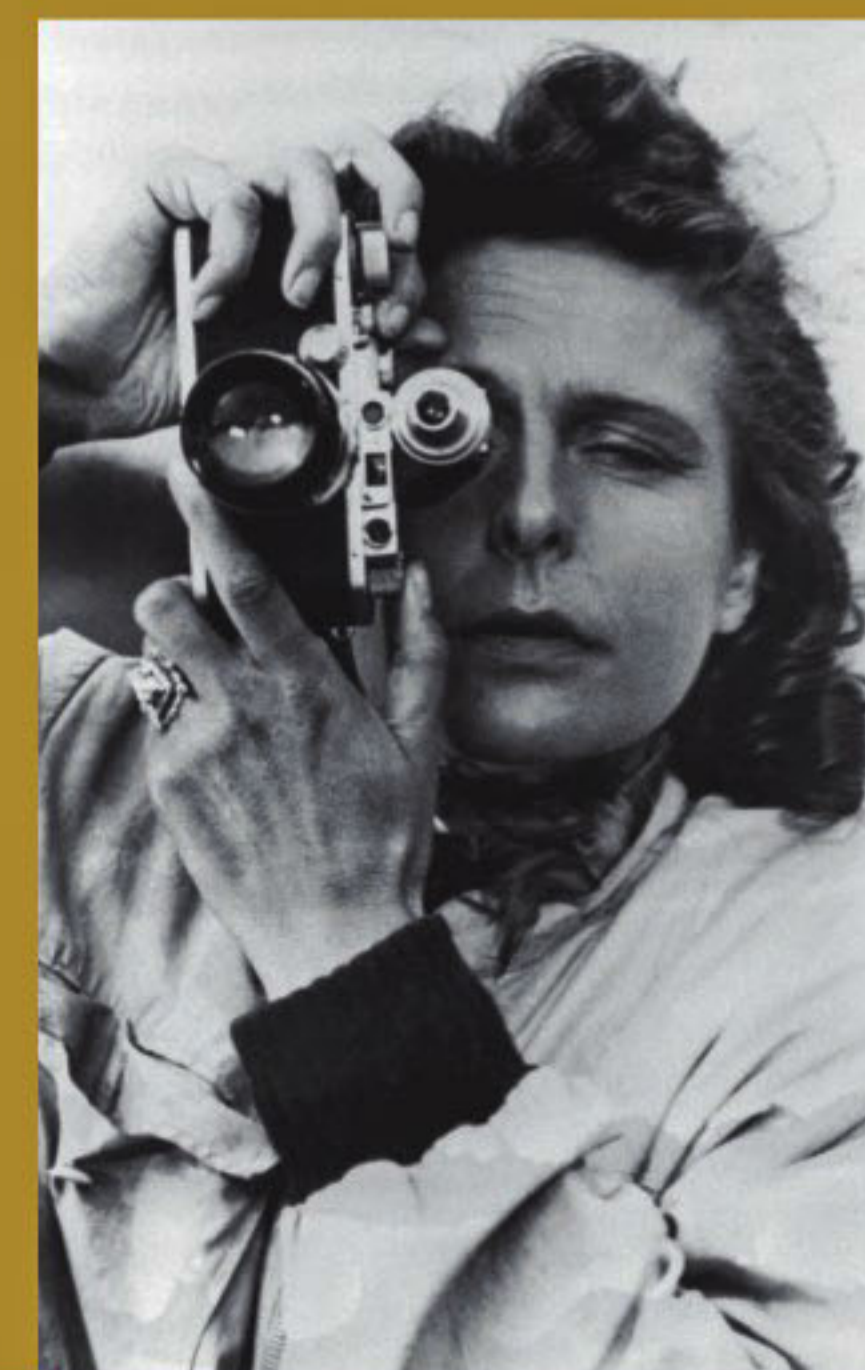
The two-storied museum is filled with memories of the legendary artist, which carry the rich reminder of his artworks. Although some of the items have disappeared over the years, there are still some belongings of Sultan- - a Quran,



"WHEN WORDS BECOME UNCLEAR, I SHALL FOCUS WITH PHOTOGRAPHS. WHEN IMAGES BECOME INADEQUATE, I SHALL BE CONTENT WITH SILENCE."

ANSEL ADAMS
American photographer and environmentalist

PEARLS OF WISDOM



"THE CAMERA IS AN INSTRUMENT THAT TEACHES PEOPLE HOW TO SEE WITHOUT A CAMERA."

DOROTHEA LANGE
American documentary photographer and photojournalist



"A PICTURE IS A SECRET ABOUT A SECRET, THE MORE IT TELLS YOU THE LESS YOU KNOW."

DIANE ARBUS
American photographer and writer

