

When cinema became real with **GULTI**



'Gulti' — a protagonist of the movie *Hawa*, went to explore Chitra Mahal in Old Dhaka recently, where she met a high-octane energetic crowd, queuing up to watch the most trending film of the year.

Gulti, as the name suggests, was already in character, clad in a faded, purplish-red cotton sari, with hair tied in a hasty top knot. With a persistent, mysterious grin spread across her face, she sat amongst the crowd. Initially, the crowd did not recognise 'the mystical lady' and carried on discussing the movie themselves, sitting right next to her.

"I heard there's a lot of gritty rural drama," said one young boy in his early twenties, who looked like he had run away from the day's

angle towards Gulti, who was sitting cross-legged and comfortably enjoying every bit of the riveting conversations and the frenzied anticipation regarding the movie.

Suddenly everyone in the cinema hall turned their heads around to a rather amused Gulti sitting amongst them, with her feet up on the dusty green seat in front.

The crowd went wild, the young boys stood up from their chairs, not believing their eyes.

Their beloved heroine was right in front of them all this time, and they didn't even know. Some even crossed lines to express their emotions in the heat of the moment. They

classes to join his friends on a movie expedition. Another young man, probably his friend, shouted back, "Move the curtains over — it's almost time!"

The buzzing went on for a few minutes more, until Star Lifestyle was done setting up the lights and fixing the camera

got up on their seats and started waving their t-shirts to catch the attention of 'Gulti'.

Guards barged in for crowd control, in vain, and were waylaid by the horde. "One selfie with us ma'am. Please one selfie here," screamed the pack.

And the crowd went ballistic when Gulti walked amongst them, taking pictures patiently and signing autographs, one by one.

The show that was supposed to start at 12:30PM sharp was stalled for the moment, because 'the mythical lady' from the *Hawa* movie had 'walked out' of the screens to greet the audience. To bring a pause to the commotion, the bulky halogen troffers overhead were adjusted by the management, giving way to a softer tone, and the hall suddenly became darker than usual, as if in anticipation of something more significant.

The crowd was abruptly forced to look away from Gulti when an ear-piercing music drummed through. The beat familiar, and super catchy.

"Shada Shada, Kala Kala..." whirrs through

the air and the crowd couldn't be happier, they start clapping hands, requesting Gulti to come to the forestage and join in a collective dance.

She agreed of course, immersing in their energy as if she were one of them. Not a mythical creature, but a hot-blooded human who roams amongst the free.

This, and many other similar events also explain the popularity behind the movie. The easy-going nature of the script, the relatability of the characters, the sociability of the actors, the captivating music, the affinity for colloquial language, the authenticity as a whole, hopefully makes 'Hawa' one of the few Bangla movies to make it to the big leagues.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo: Shahriar Kabir Heemel

Model: Nazifa Tushi as Gulti

Wardrobe: Aniq Zaheen

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