

*Bridging cultures
through clay*

Workshop and Exhibition

on Delft Ceramic Traditions from the Netherlands and Bangladesh



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Bridging cultures through clay



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Department of Ceramics
Faculty of Fine Art
University of Dhaka



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Workshop and Exhibition

on Delft Ceramic Traditions from the Netherlands and Bangladesh

Workshop: 28 October to 03 November 2024

Department of Ceramics, University of Dhaka

Exhibition: 07 to 12 December 2024, Zainul Gallery,
Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka



Project at a Glance: Bridging Cultures Through Clay

Collaboratively organized by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Department of Ceramics, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, and the Art Bangla Foundation, the project "Bridging Cultures Through Clay: A Collaborative Workshop and Exhibition Celebrating Delft Ceramic Traditions from the Netherlands and Bangladesh" provided a vibrant platform for artistic exchange. It fostered creative growth among young Bangladeshi ceramic students and faculty members by introducing them to the iconic Dutch Delftware ceramic style. Held from 28 October to 03 November 2024, the workshop brought together 29 students (BFA 4th year, MFA 1st and 2nd part) and 6 faculty members. Participants explored Delft Blue techniques—cobalt blue motifs on white glazed backgrounds—while infusing their work with Bangladesh's rich artistic heritage. This unique blend encouraged experimentation and innovation, resulting in ceramic works that married Dutch precision with the cultural depth of Bangladeshi artistry.

The workshop culminated in an exhibition inaugurated at 4 PM on Saturday, 07 December 2024, at Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, continuing until 12 December 2024. The exhibition featured over 72 ceramic pieces created by students and teachers alike, showcasing their ability to merge two distinct cultural traditions into visually stunning works of art. Each piece reflected the transformative impact of cross-cultural collaboration, highlighting the possibilities for creative exchange and innovation. Designed to enhance the technical and creative abilities of emerging ceramic artists, the program also encouraged participants to see ceramics as both an expressive art form and a viable career path. By integrating global techniques with local traditions, the workshop provided an opportunity to develop a distinctive artistic voice and explore the potential of ceramics in Bangladesh's growing creative industry.

The success of the project was driven by the dedication of its facilitators and organizers. Led by Professor Dr. Md. Azharul Islam Sheikh and Swapna Kumar Sikder, the workshop benefited from the invaluable support of co-facilitators Professor Md. Robiul Islam, Debasish Pal, Chinmaye Sikder Pappy, and Mohammad Subbir-Al Razy, all from the Department of Ceramics. Curation was led by Md. Harun ar Rashid Tutul, Associate Professor of Graphic Design and Director General of the Art Bangla Foundation. The Department of Ceramics provided studio facilities, equipment, and expertise, while the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands played a crucial role in facilitating international collaboration. To further enrich the initiative, professional ceramic artists, gallery owners, and entrepreneurs were invited to observe the exhibition, fostering opportunities for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and industry networking, creating lasting connections within Bangladesh's ceramics community.

"Bridging Cultures Through Clay" exemplified the powerful synergy of cultural collaboration, celebrating the harmony between Dutch Delftware and Bangladeshi ceramic traditions. It equipped young artists and faculty members with new technical and creative insights while elevating their works to a broader audience. This project stands as a testament to the value of cross-cultural artistic dialogue in advancing both creative expression and Bangladesh's evolving ceramics landscape.

Curatorial Note

Bridging Cultures Through Clay: A Collaborative Workshop and Exhibition Celebrating Delft Ceramic Traditions from the Netherlands and Bangladesh

The interplay of art, heritage, and culture often leads to profound creative discoveries, and this program, Bridging Cultures Through Clay, exemplifies this synthesis. Rooted in the globally celebrated tradition of Dutch Delftware and enriched by the vibrant ceramic artistry of Bangladesh, this initiative brings two distinct yet harmonious artistic heritages into dialogue.

Organized collaboratively by the Department of Ceramics, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Art Bangla Foundation, this workshop and exhibition aim to explore the confluence of tradition and innovation. The program engages students from the Department of Ceramics at the University of Dhaka, who will delve into the refined techniques of Delft Blue ceramics while incorporating the vivid cultural motifs and storytelling inherent in Bangladeshi artistry.

This initiative goes beyond technical skill development; it fosters cultural exchange, encouraging participants to explore ceramics as a medium of personal and collective identity. Through this cross-cultural exploration, the students will produce works that merge precision and tradition with local creative ingenuity, offering new interpretations of ceramics as both an art form and a viable professional practice.

The culmination of this workshop is an exhibition showcasing over 80 original ceramic works that reflect the dynamic fusion of Dutch and Bangladeshi traditions. This collection not only celebrates artistic excellence but also symbolizes the potential of cultural exchange to inspire innovation.

This program reaffirms Art Bangla Foundation's mission to support the development of Bangladeshi art and artists through international collaboration and knowledge sharing. It also serves as a testament to the Department of Ceramics' pivotal role in shaping the ceramics industry in Bangladesh and providing students with opportunities to engage with global audiences and ideas.

The works presented here are not merely objects; they are narratives of shared heritage, artistic curiosity, and creative unity. Through this initiative, we hope to inspire artists, audiences, and industry professionals alike to embrace the transformative power of cultural exchange and innovation in art.

Curated by:

Md. Harun ar Rashid Tutul

Associate Professor

Department of Graphic Design, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka
Director General, Art Bangla Foundation

Message from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Art has an extraordinary ability to connect people, transcending cultural and geographical boundaries to create shared stories and experiences. It is in this spirit of connection and collaboration that the "Bridging Cultures Through Clay" project was conceived—a creative dialogue between the rich tradition of Delft Blue ceramics from the Netherlands and the vibrant artistic heritage of Bangladesh.

The timeless artistry of Delft Blue, celebrated for its intricate cobalt blue patterns on white porcelain, is a hallmark of Dutch cultural heritage. Since its origins in the 17th century, Delft Blue has symbolized the essence of craftsmanship, creativity, and cultural exchange. This project reimagines that legacy by blending it with the unique motifs, forms, and narratives of Bangladeshi culture.

Over the course of the Delft Blue Ceramics Workshop, 29 talented young artists and six esteemed mentors from the Department of Ceramics, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, embarked on an artistic journey. Guided by the timeless techniques of Delftware, they integrated their own rich traditions and creative visions to produce a stunning collection of over 80 ceramic works. The pieces on display in this exhibition are a true testament to the boundless potential of artistic collaboration—where Dutch tradition meets Bengali storytelling to create something new and meaningful.

This initiative is not just an artistic achievement; it is also a confirmation of the common values of craftsmanship, creativity, and innovation that unite Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

Our Embassy partnered with the Art Bangla Foundation and the Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University, exemplifying cultural exchange to foster understanding and strengthen ties between our two countries. As you explore this extraordinary collection of ceramics, I hope you will be as inspired as I am by the talent and dedication of these artists.

Let this project serve as a source of inspiration for further exchange of ideas and creativity.

André Carstens

Head of Mission

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Bangladesh

A Celebration of Heritage, Innovation, and Artistic Harmony

In the quiet rhythm of hands molding clay, cultures meet, stories intertwine, and traditions find new life. "Bridging Cultures Through Clay" is more than a workshop or exhibition—it is a celebration of artistic harmony, where the delicate precision of Dutch Delftware meets the vibrant spirit of Bangladeshi ceramics. This initiative marks a beautiful collaboration of heritage and innovation.

At its heart were 29 young artists and 6 dedicated teachers from the Department of Ceramics, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Over days of exploration, these participants immersed themselves in Delft Blue techniques—its signature cobalt blue on pristine white porcelain—while blending it with the earthy traditions and rich cultural motifs of Bangladesh. Under the guidance of mentors, they experimented, pushed boundaries, and forged connections between two distinct artistic heritages.

The culmination of their journey was showcased at Zainul Gallery, where over 72 ceramic pieces stood as testaments to the power of collaboration. Delft Blue florals bloomed alongside traditional Bengali patterns, and bold strokes of cultural heritage found balance in refined forms. Each work told a story—of tradition reimagined, of global and local influences merging into something entirely new.

Yet, "Bridging Cultures Through Clay" holds a deeper purpose. It builds bridges between cultures, generations, and traditions, reminding us that art, like clay, is fluid and resilient—constantly shaped by history while embracing change. It reflects a shared vision, a commitment to nurturing creativity that transcends borders.

This initiative, led by the Faculty of Fine Art, in collaboration with the Art Bangla Foundation and supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, is a testament to the transformative power of cultural exchange. It inspires young artists to embrace their roots while engaging with the world, encouraging them to dream beyond boundaries.

To the students, teachers, and organizers, this is more than an achievement; it is a promise—a vision of art that connects, uplifts, and empowers. May these works inspire generations to come, reminding us all of art's ability to shape not just clay, but the connections, dreams, and stories that unite us all.

Dr. Md. Azharul Islam Sheikh

Dean, Faculty of Fine Art

University of Dhaka

Delft Ceramic Workshop and Exhibition

The Delft Ceramic Workshop and Exhibition stands as a testament to the dedication, creativity, and talent of the students and teachers of the Department of Ceramic, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

Ceramic art in Bangladesh holds a unique identity, seamlessly blending modern artistic styles with traditional practices. The richness of our soil, abundant in iron oxide, naturally gives our ceramics a distinctive reddish-brown hue. Iron-free white clay, though less commonly used, opens up new possibilities for creative exploration. In the current context, where much of this soil is used in industrial production, this workshop has provided a vital space to experiment, learn, and innovate within the realm of ceramic art.

The collaboration between the Embassy of the Netherlands, Art Bangla Foundation, and our department has allowed students and faculty to engage deeply with the renowned Delft ceramic techniques. This cross-cultural learning experience has not only enhanced their skills but also introduced new perspectives into their artistic practices.

The works displayed in this exhibition are the result of immense effort, dedication, and creative thinking. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the students, teachers, and my colleagues for their active participation and commitment to making the workshop such a success. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Honorable Dean of the Faculty of Fine Art for their unwavering support.

My special thanks go to the Embassy of the Netherlands and Art Bangla Foundation, whose invaluable cooperation made this workshop and exhibition possible. I would like to sincerely thank the curator of this event, for his vision and dedicated effort in bringing this program to life. His thoughtful curation has beautifully showcased the creativity and hard work of our participants.

Finally, my appreciation goes to all the officers, staff, and contributors whose tireless efforts ensured the success of this program. I extend my best wishes to everyone involved and hope that this exhibition serves as a source of inspiration for the future of ceramic art in Bangladesh.

Chinmaya Sikder Papy
Chairman
Department of Ceramic
Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

Remarkable achievements through Delft Ceramic

Since the inauguration of this delft workshop on the 28th of last month, I have eagerly anticipated the results of this exciting and enriching journey. Today, I am delighted to witness the culmination of a month-long process, where we can reflect on the remarkable achievements of all the participants. Throughout this workshop, I have been deeply impressed by the participants' enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and creativity. It has been inspiring to observe how their ideas evolved, starting from the initial shape, progressing through the modeling process, moving on to the complexities of firing, and finally, the intricate designs and glazing. This journey has been a hands-on experience and an intellectual one, offering insight into the fusion of cultures under one creative umbrella. I have no doubt this unique experience will have a lasting impact, enriching the participants; future work and innovative ventures. Moreover, this workshop has been a beautiful example of collaboration—an unforgettable experience for teachers and students. The opportunity to work side-by-side, exchanging knowledge and encouraging mutual growth, embodies the essence of education at its finest.

On behalf of the Art Bangla Foundation, we are honored and delighted to have participated in this wonderful initiative. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the dedicated members of our team, as well as to the curators and facilitators who have worked tirelessly to bring this event to fruition. A special thank you is also due to the Embassy of the Netherlands, whose support has been invaluable in making this event successful. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and the Chairperson of the Department of Ceramics for their wholehearted support and collaboration throughout this journey. We are confident that this exhibition will be a grand success, and we look forward to further strengthening the cultural ties between the two countries.

Prof. Mohammad Eunus
Chairman, Art Bangla Foundation



Exhibition on Delft Ceramic



Dr. Azharul Islam Sheikh
Professor
Department of Ceramic



Internal Strength Size : 42 x 30 x 32 cm



Md. Robul Islam
Professor
Department of Ceramic



Nature Size : 27 x 24 x 35 cm

12



Swapan Kumar Sikder
Associate Professor
Department of Ceramic



Jar Size : 11 x 11 x 25 cm

13



Debashis Pal
Associate Professor
Department of Ceramic



Untitled Size : 30 x 26 x 30 cm



Chinmaye Sikder Papy
Associate Professor
Department of Ceramic



Bengali Heritage Size : 14 x 19 x 25 cm



Mohammad Subbir-Al Razy
Associate Professor
Department of Ceramic



Mug - Wave of Nature Size : 25 x 25 x 18 cm



Biprojit Roy
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Yasmin Akter
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Sabiha Sultana Akhi
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Ram Prosad Kritonia
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Size : 48 x 46 cm



Size : 33 x 38 cm



Size : 33 x 20 cm



Size : 30 x 30 cm



Md. Rifat Uzzaman Joy
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Lekh Nesa Khatun
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Koushik Sarker
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Sadia Afrose Piya
MFA 2nd Part 2022-2023



Size : 28 x 33 cm



Size : 26 x 49 cm



Size : 20 x 33 cm



Size : 3 x 18 cm



Arnab Chandra Deb
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Isfat Sultana Tanni
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Hadayat Ullah
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Naba Chowdhury
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Size : 40 x 30 cm



Size : 8 x 23 cm



Size : 18 x 18 cm



Size : 40 x 16 cm



Sumiya Samanta
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Monira Anzum
MFA 1st Part 2022-2023



Aysha Siddika
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Samura Alam
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Size : 20 x 20 cm



Size : 30 x 18 cm



Size : 38 x 14 cm



Size : 48 x 19 cm



Mahbub Alam Ridoy
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Rezwana Mallick Barsha
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Tahasin Tabasum Oishi
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Md. Riaz Rahman
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Size : 42 x 20 cm



Size : 34 x 18 cm



Size : 28 x 17 cm



Size : 48 x 18 cm



Md. Jawadul Islam Joy
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Hiran Roy
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Hrishik Majumder
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Bishal Saha
MFA 1st Part 2023-2024



Size : 35 x 23 cm



Size : 33 x 18 cm



Size : 9 x 22 cm



Size : 8 x 27 cm



Mst. Farjana Yesmin Eisha
4th Year BFA 2023-2024



Methela Farzana
4th Year BFA 2023-2024



Md. Ashikuzzaman
4th Year BFA 2023-2024



Md. Mashrafi Islam
4th Year BFA 2023-2024



Size : 10 x 10 cm



Size : 30 x 30 cm



Size : 30 x 15 cm



Size : 35 x 55 cm



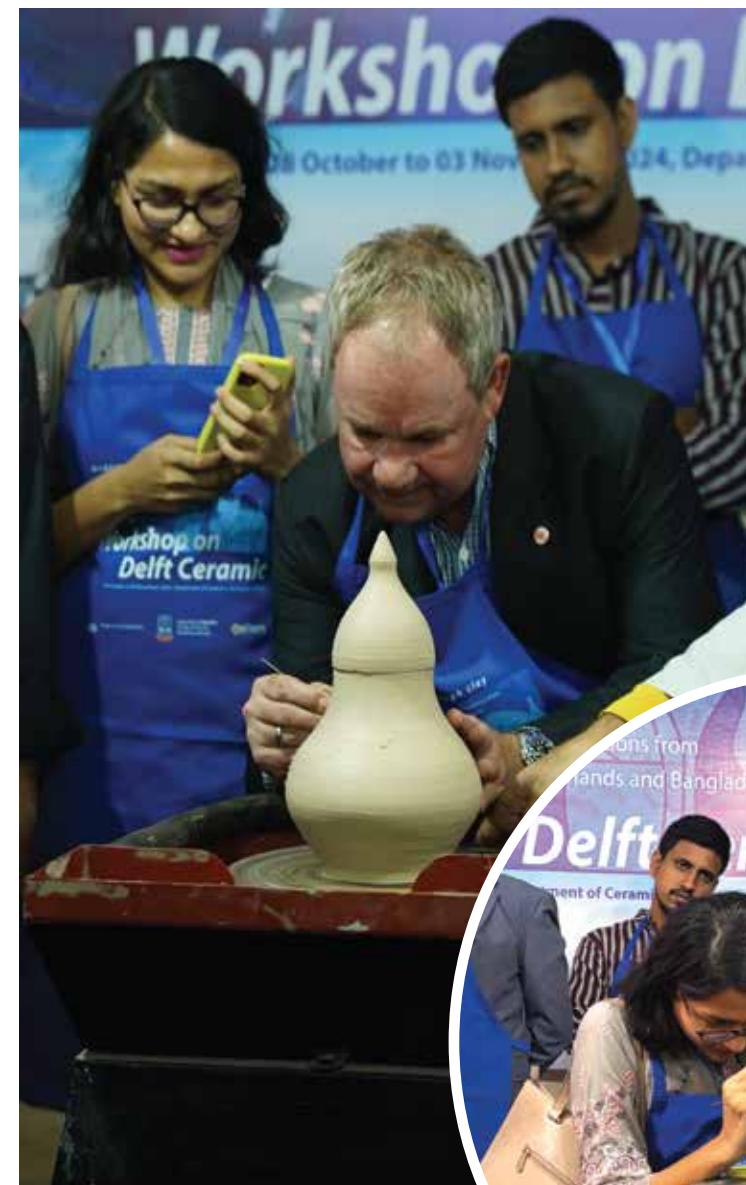
Bidhan Gaine
4th Year BFA 2023-2024



Size : 8 x 38 cm

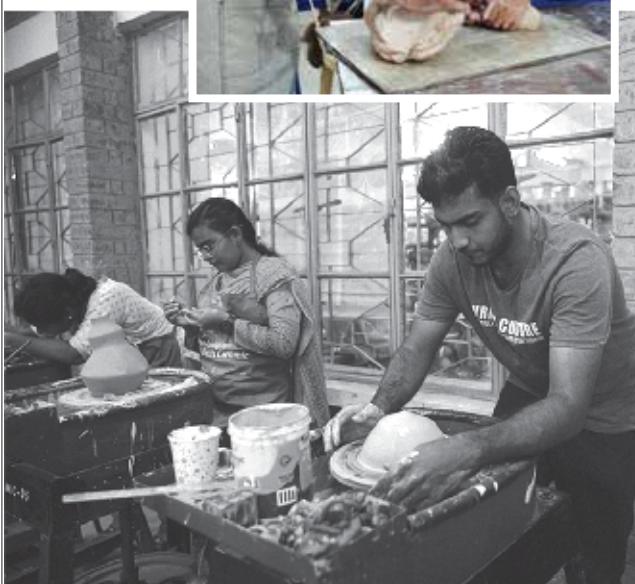


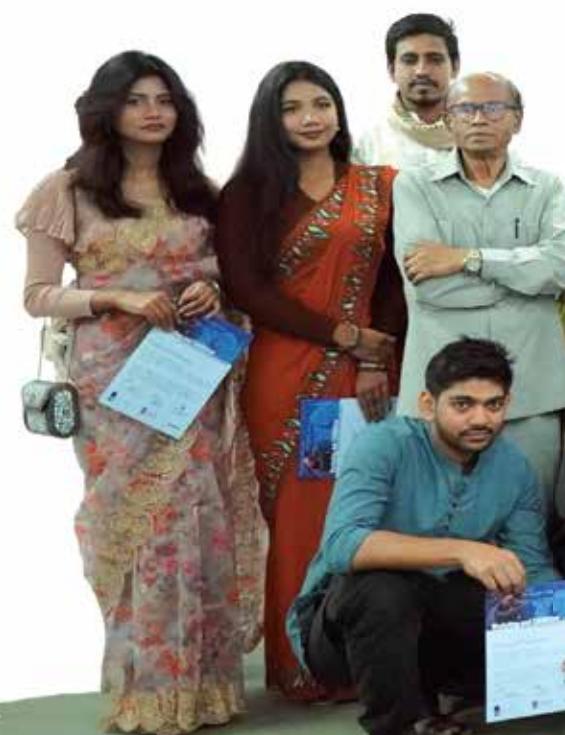
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Acknowledgement

Dr. Azharul Islam Sheikh

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Prof. Mohammad Eunus

Namia Akhtar

Thijs Woudstra

Natasha Ratri

Md. Bulbul Hossain

Md. Zillur Rashid Dollar

Rashedul Islam Rana

Joy Mridha