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## Three days with Angelina Jolie



Liba Taylor smiles next to her Angelina Jolie photo at the African Art Museum of Yeongwol in Gangwon Province at the opening, last Saturday.

/ Korea Times

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Staff reporter

Liba Taylor has spent almost 30 years capturing the lives of vulnerable people in Africa with her camera lens. From time to time, however, she diverged, as in the case of Hollywood star Angelina Jolie.

Taylor and Jolie spent three days together in Sierra Leone in 2001. The actress was visiting the country on a fact-finding mission regarding the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Taylor was there also working for the UNHCR, photographing the refugee situation.

Eight years later this week, the two will both be in Korea.

Taylor arrived in Korea last week for her photo exhibition "The Innocents," and Jolie is arriving on Wednesday to promote her new film, "Salt."

In the photographer's memory, Jolie was a compassionate activist who was serious about helping the Africans, rather than a well-dressed celebrity on the red carpet.

Remembering the day she first met Jolie, Taylor said, "I didn't know who she was."

What became clear to her right away was that Jolie wasn't like any of the other celebrities or high-ranking officials who would visit the refugee camp for public relations reasons.

“She is probably the most concerned person that I have ever met about Africa,’ the photographer said. “She sat down with people, and listened to them individually.”

Why would she have been interested in learning about refugees? She wondered.

“Jolie explained that she wanted to do some good. It was a strong calling, which she probably inherited from her father, the actor Jon Voight, who gave most of his money to charity, even when the family wasn’t that well off.”

In August 2001, the actress was named a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador.

Taylor took countless photos of her, five of which eventually went out to the public domain. One of the five was later selected for the cover of Jolie’s memoir, “Notes from My Travels” published in 2003.

Her exhibition opened last Saturday at the African Art Museum of Yeongwol in Gangwon Province run by Cho Myung-haing, a former Korean diplomat.

“It is to tell the world that we have to do more,” for the African people, she said as to what she wants to express through the exhibition, which was first held seven years ago in the Czech Republic, her motherland.

She has been working for international humanitarian organizations such as the UNHCR, the United Nations Children’s Fund, Save the Children Fund, World Health Organization, and many others.

There are only two African countries that she hasn’t been to: Angola and Namibia.

To those who might only associate Africa with civil wars, poverty and HIV, she’d say, “that’s not all. It is a fantastic continent – beautiful landscape and people. Everyone should visit Africa.”

Her exhibition will continue through Aug. 22.

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