

Heart to heart

# Anusheh and Buno: Popularising Baul songs among urban youth



The chemistry between the husband-wife team of guitarist Buno and vocalist Anusheh Anadil is apparent when one drops into their recording studio Dhun on Kemal Ataturk Avenue. Here they soulfully perform a Baul song, titled 'Nadir kooler lagi ami kandi' and talk about their passions, their band Bangla and their propensity for 'alternative folk' music

## Their genre

**Anusheh:** We call our genre alternative folk. This also gives us a lot of freedom; sometimes the compositions are jazzy, sometimes very funky. It is a kind of fusion because it has elements of the East and the West. We blend Lalon songs with bass guitar. Also we sometimes experiment with indigenous instruments such as do tara, flute, dhol, mandira, khol and ek tara.

**Buno:** "We do sing Lalon songs but we arrange the music differently. We try our best to keep the original song intact, but play around with the music and the arrangement."

## On their band Bangla

**Buno:** Our band Bangla, which comprises of a core team of Arnob, Shantanu and Kartik along with both of us, has an enduring appeal for the younger generation with its fusion element and catchy rhythm. Our latest CD, a tribute to Lalon Shahi, is called 'Protupponnotitto' (2006). Prior to that the group released 'Kingkottobobimurho' in 2002. The latter featured relatively unknown folk songs. It also had two of Lalon's songs.

## Why Baul songs?

**Buno:** "Initially it was the rhythm of Baul songs that appealed to me. I started listening to the words much later. They (Anusheh and Arnob) were more into the words. Later on as I began to understand these songs I realised that these sing-

ers were visionaries. You could say that Bangla is clearly a trend-setter in popularising Lalon and Baul songs among the younger generation. The genesis of the band goes back to its beginnings in 1997-1998 when group members were engaged in soul searching and looking for an identity. The biggest achievement of Bangla is that it has bridged an information gap. At a time when many young people would ask ill informed questions about Lalon, the group was successful in veering people towards folk music and thus revive this culture.

**Anusheh:** For us the Baul culture and its philosophy were great discoveries. As youngsters you look for more freedom in your expression than most spiritual schools of thought can offer. One of the reasons why we undertook the tribute to Lalon was because we thought that Bangladesh faces rampant fanaticism and this genre is a great tool with which we can fight this evil.

## Their division of responsibilities

**Anusheh:** I am busy with my retail outlet Jatra and our one-and-a-half year old baby boy Arash -- while another one is on the way in January. Buno is a considerate father and husband. **Buno:** I spend all my time in the studio. However, even if I come home at 2:00 am, I wake up to take care of the baby.

by Kavita Charanji

In conversation

# "I can't act in real life"

-- Sanjida Preeti

MAHMUDA AFROZ

Vivacious, young and down to earth -- Sanjida Preeti has been involved with the media world for quite a while. She embarked on this path when she got herself enrolled at the Tarangakala Lalit Academy for singing. In her words, "I was so enthusiastic about it that I took the initiative myself. My parents were neither supportive nor unsupportive. The academy groomed me overall and I started leaning more towards acting than singing."

Sanjida has just completed the mega-serial *Kachher Manush*. She became so involved with the script and character of the serial that in real life she started calling her co-stars in by their small screen names. "I call Shuborna Mustafa *ma* and Humayun Faridi *baba* since they were my parents in the serial. I take the characters right to my heart. This is not only in the case of this serial but any serial I do." However she added with a naughty gleam in her eyes, "If I end up taking all my real life boyfriends seriously in real life that might cause some problems."

When this very talented actress is not acting she is either sleeping or hanging out with her friends. "I just love sleeping. I can sleep at any time any place. Besides that I love spending time with my friends. I am the easy going type who loves dressing casually and hanging out on the foot path with friends."

Asking her to describe herself in one sentence, Sanjida said that she was transparent and non-pretentious. "While people say I act well, I can't act in real life. Maybe I am not such a good actress after all. If I am sad I can't show that I am happy. Even when I go for a shoot if I am depressed it becomes tough for me to overcome that immediately and be all chirpy."

Though Sanjida has never faced any objection from her parents on acting, there has been a lot of expectation from her academically. Being the youngest among five siblings was not just about being pampered. "My four elder siblings are well educated and in the professions of engineering or business. So there have always been high expectations from me. It has taken me years to explain to them what I am really



passionate about and they have finally understood," she asserts.

What Sanjida is really passionate about is the theatre. She is a member of the Prachho Natak theatre group. "No matter what happens I try to make it for the practice. I'm in my final year of BBA at NSU; it gets tough juggling so many things but theatre is something I can't give up. When I initially joined the theatre I used to sweep the floor and make tea for everyone. From there on I have been involved with the make-up, set design and obviously acting. It is like my second family. That is also one of the main reasons I am seen less on

the small screen."

Answering the question whether she would like to work in movies, Sanjida replied, "All the small screen actors say they would like to work in movies if they get a good script. I am no exception. The channels are bringing out good movies for that matter. However I also believe I could do well in a commercial movie. But most probably I will not go for it. As a child in my academy we used to mimic Bangla movies, I am pretty good at it, but maybe it is best left at the level of imitation and not application."

## 'Closeup 1' enters third round

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

*Closeup 1* tomaklei khujchhe Bangladesh is in its third round. Starting from October 5, the current round is aired on ntv every Friday and Sunday at 9pm. The second episode of this round is to be aired tonight. Two contestants out of eight will make it to the next round from this episode.

About 55,000 contestants participated in this year's competition. Renowned judges selected 100 contestants from audition rounds held in 11 regions of Bangladesh. They were provided training in Dhaka. Out of these 100, judges chose firstly 55 and then 41 contestants for the third round. Judges solely selected the contestants up to the third round. Now the viewers' opinion will be reflected along side that of the judges to zero into a selection of 10 contestants to make it to the next round.

Viewers can send their votes



The judges (L-R): Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, Fahmida Nabi and Kumar Bishwajit through SMS. Anyone can cast highest 10 votes to any contestant from any mobile. In this process, this year's *Closeup 1* will draw to a conclusion.

Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, Fahmida Nabi and Kumar Bishwajit are the judges in this round. The programme is produced by Tanvir Khan.

## Shaonli Mitra in 'Ami Tumi R...'

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Stage artist extraordinaire of India Shaonli Mitra is the guest artiste of the next episode of *Ami Tumi R...*, a talk show featuring renowned cultural personalities from both Bangladesh and West Bengal. The show is aired tonight at 8pm on Rtv.

Shaonli recalls the days with her father Shambhu Mitra, a celebrated director, dramatist and actor, and her recent works in the development sector. She elaborates on her daily work as an actor. She also shares her views on theatrical practices in an international context in both Bangladesh and West Bengal. The show is hosted by Nima Rahman.



Shaonli Mitra in the TV show

## Eid fashion show by weekly 2000 on Banglavisión

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

'Banglalink-Weekly 2000 Eid Fashion Contest 2006' will be aired tonight at 8pm on Banglavisión.

Organised by the weekly magazine '2000', the fashion show held at Spectra Convention Centre in Gulshan recently, also included musical performances by Mahmuduzzaman Babu and two of the *Bengal Bikash* winners -- Halima Parveen and Farhana Rahman Kanta. This year's 'Shadat Chowdhury Lifetime Achievement Award' went to artist Imdad Hossain.

The event was anchored by Abdun Noor Tushar.

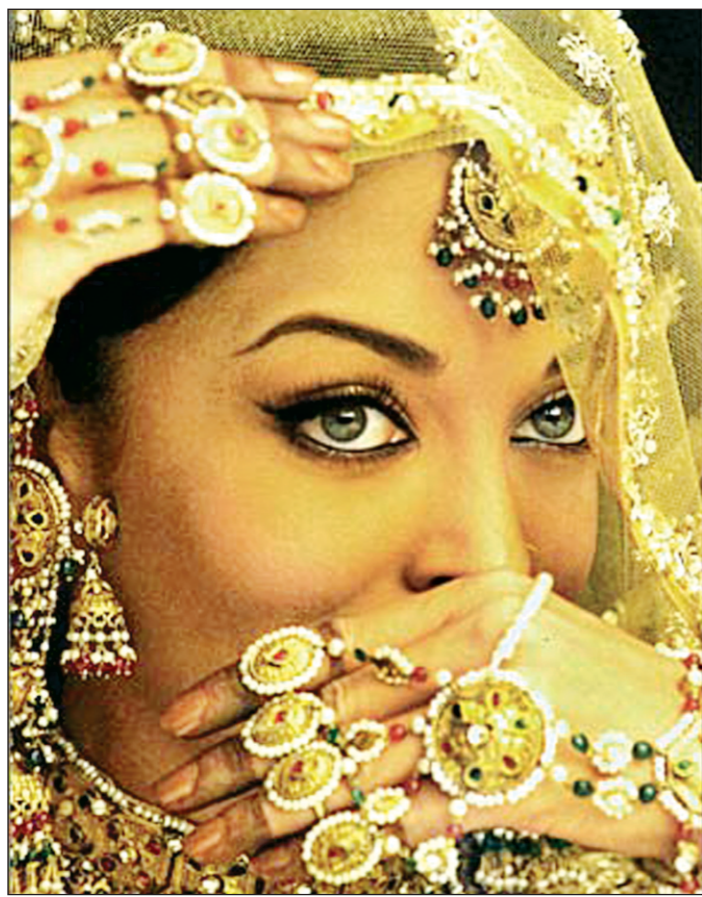


Models display Eid designs at the fashion show

## Cross Currents

# "I became Umrao Jaan"

Aishwarya Rai on the role of a lifetime



Aishwarya Rai in *Umrao Jaan*

When you do a google search on Aishwarya Rai, you will find more than three million web pages dedicated to her. This, considering she has had only three hits (*Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam*, *Taal* and *Devdas*) in her nine-year career.

In a recent interview the actress talked about her new film, *Umrao Jaan*, which comes out next month. On being compared with Rekha, star of the original *Umrao Jaan*, Aishwarya says, "For me it's a special experience to get the opportunity to play Umrao Jaan who has been already iconised on our celluloid. When I played *Paro* in *Devdas*, I went through the same area of questioning about how my role will be compared with the ones played earlier.

"Thanks to the support of the audience, an incredible film like *Devdas* made by Sanjay Leela Bhansali was appreciated. That strengthened my belief that in the world of cinema, we are here to tell a story for today's audience. Each time a story is told or retold, it is the interpretation of that director, told in his language of cinema.

"But it's an honour to be even spoken about in the same breath as Rekha. I am inspired by her performance. But I cannot ape her."

On playing Umrao Jaan, Aishwarya says, "*Umrao Jaan* was a demanding emotional journey. The process was satisfying, inspir-

ing and challenging. I had always been greedy to work with this combination of director J P Dutta, lyricist Javed Akhtar and music composer Anu Malik. Performing to the songs was very memorable. Each song is a part of the narrative, part of Umrao's journey.

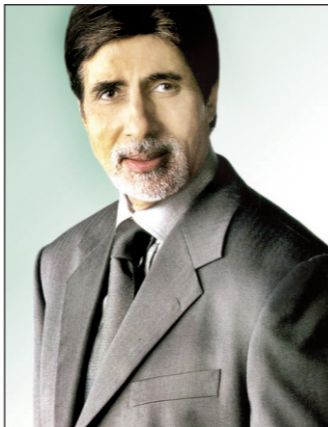
"Since our generation speaks English, we are not very fluent in Hindi, leave alone Urdu. I loved those dialogues and the experience to work and know about that era. For me, it was a study of Urdu on the sets under the guidance of JP and Javed saab."

On director J P Dutta, Rai comments, "JP is a committed taskmaster. I have danced to songs before. But he always added to choreographer Vaibhavi Merchant's steps, and that was quite challenging. He would shoot an entire *mukhda* in one shot. To do all the songs at that level required remaining focused at all times. In that moment, I felt I became 'Umrao Jaan'."

It was interesting to deliver a performance that narrates her passionate, tragic story. The film is also reflective of the art that was at its zenith in that era. The sex trade was associated with performing arts then and not merely prostitution."

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

## Amitabh Bachchan turns 64



No other actor in the history of Indian cinema has won so much love, respect and loyalty from cine fans as Amitabh Bachchan.

Ram Gopal Varma calls him "an addiction". Sanjay Leela Bhansali describes him as "an enigma". Yash Chopra once called him a "legendary star". His fans have made temples in his name. Others have sculpted statues and painted record-setting drawings.

As Bachchan turned 64 on October 11, this year's birthday was not an ideal one for the star. There weren't any celebrations as his mother Teji Bachchan is not well.

So, for Bachchan, it was just a normal day spent with family.

Source: Internet

## 'Ishq Daa Waaris': The legend of a Sufi saint

With their last three ventures bagging the Indian National Award, Sai Productions are credited with reviving the staid perception of Punjabi cinema. The expectations then, for *Waris Shah - Ishq Daa Waaris* were high from the outset. Starring noted Punjabi singer and actor Gurdas Maan and Juhi Chawala, the film recounts the legend of Sufi saint Waris Shah and the real-life love that informed his epic poem *Heer Ranjha*. Presented against an authentic canvas, the film beautifully renders the pathos and poetry of the artiste.

On his ascension to the throne, Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb declared that music be outlawed as it distracted from devotion to God. Facing certain death for his brazen celebration of music, revered saint Makhdoom calls upon Waris Shah (Gurdas Maan) to continue his legacy. Waris' growing love for village girl Bhagpari (Juhi Chawala) forms the basis of his poem *Heer Ranjha*. Their love is, however, thwarted by Bhagpari's betrothal to another and the meddling of Saabo (Divya Dutta). Betrayal, mistaken identity and murder ensue as art imitates life.

From the glossy opening frames, *Waris Shah* bears the hallmarks of a quality production. While Gurdas Maan's performance is deeply touching, it is the beautifully crafted

script, penned by Maan himself which is the cornerstone of the film's success. The dialogue is poetry in itself, encapsulating the prevailing mood, while simultaneously portraying an authentic picture of early Punjabi life. While Juhi Chawala is characteristically endearing, Divya Dutta's is the stronger role, bringing a more

sinister edge to the proceedings. With its allusions to history, the film is deftly executed, while the emotive songs add to its spirit. *Waris Shah* is an imaginative and heartfelt portrait of Punjab's most celebrated poet.

Source: Internet



Gurdas Maan as Waris Shah in the film