



COVER STORY

Rising to fame in the eighties, the evergreen diva mesmerised millions over her illustrious career with her charm and grace on screen and secured five 'National Film Awards' for movies, like 'Padma Nadir Majhi', 'Anya Jibon' and 'Uttarer Khep', among others. In an interview with Rafi Hossain, she talks about her family and how her career has shaped itself throughout the years.



Balance of LIFE



Rafi Hossain: Welcome to *Uncensored* with Rafi Hossain. Today, we are here with Champa. Is there any reason for avoiding us this long?
Champa: I have not been avoiding you; it's just that after working as a glamorous person for so long, the thought of putting on makeup and getting ready has become very exhausting for me. That's why I haven't been able to give you time.
Rafi: You enjoy gardening, right?
Champa: Not just me, all of my sibling's love gardening as well. My parents used to do gardening a lot, and that was passed down to us. I think everyone knows well about Bobita Apa's garden. We sisters do this thing where we cook food at home and then we go out and look for a place with a beautiful natural scenery and sit there to have lunch and talk. When we are on our way back, we find the nearest street market and go shopping.
Rafi: I hear many new actors say that because of their careers they can't spend time with their families. How can you be able to do that?
Champa: I disagree with them; it's about effort and how you balance your life. When I used to work in films, I was busy throughout the year. I would still manage to give time for my family. When my daughter was very young, I would even take her to shooting with me. When she started schooling, I would make sure to always call and check up on her whenever I was away. Mobile phones weren't available then, but I would make sure to call on landlines and

always see how my family was doing. If you have the will, it is very possible to have families and be with them even if you're in the showbiz industry. I even went with my daughter when she was taking her O and A level examinations.
Rafi: How close are you to your grandchildren?
Champa: I have two grandchildren – my daughter's twins. I'm very close to them, and I really enjoy playing with them. Whenever I get to play around with them, I feel younger. They are like my best friends.
Rafi: Does your daughter paint?
Champa: She paints and also plays the piano. When she was young, I never stopped her if she wanted to learn something. I let her sing, dance, paint and also play the piano. Ultimately, she only stuck to playing piano and drawing as she enjoyed those the most.
Rafi: You got the opportunity to work with the top-level directors. What did you learn from them?
Champa: They taught me how to be a better actor. There's more to acting than just showing up for a role. I am very fortunate to have been able to work with directors like Gautam Ghosh and Buddhadeb Dasgupta. I also worked with Sandip Ray for a Hindi film where I had to work alongside Om Puri. I was very nervous at first because he was a very big star and I was doing a project in a different language. But, Om Puri was very helpful. He would always sit down with me after shooting and help me out with my script for the next day. I was uneasy at first working on such a large-scale project,

but eventually, I started to feel comfortable working there. He was a great person to work with and I feel very fortunate to have been able to share the screen with Om Puri.
Rafi: Can you tell us about your favourite projects?
Champa: Firstly, I must mention *Padma Nadir Majhi*. Then comes *Padma Meghna Jamuna*, directed by Chashi Nazrul Islam. I also have to mention the film which brought me into the limelight: *Teen Kanya*. I have so many other films which I consider myself so fortunate to have been able to act in.
Rafi: Even though you don't work on many films anymore, you recently worked on a film, called 'Rickshaw Girl'.
Champa: Yes, I worked on that recently.
Rafi: When you work with new directors, do you find any major difference between the old directors and the new ones?
Champa: The new directors have a very different mindset. It's very interesting to work with new directors and learn new things from them. In some cases, however, I feel that the old directors were much better. But, there are few directors from the new generation whose work I love. I have always been a fan of Amitabh Reza's work,



and wanted to work with him. I recently got that chance for his film *Rickshaw Girl*. It was a great experience working with Amitabh, and working with him taught me discipline. I also have to add that everyone is a newcomer in the showbiz industry at one point. That's why I always try to be welcoming to newcomers. When I used to play lead roles, I worked with many new actors. Many others might not have been willing to do that, but I wanted to give them the opportunity.
Rafi: I had a great time talking to you. Thank you for giving us your time, Champa Apa.
Champa: Thank you for your time. I really enjoyed talking to you too.