

**PDB:** I moved to France in 1980, shortly after the release of my film...

**USM:** The film is what actually started Paban going off to the West...

**PDB:** After the film was released, some Bauls were taken to France. In 1980, Radio France invited me to perform at a concert held at their own Hall. 1000 people attended that concert. I have been travelling back and forth between France and India since 1980, and started residing in Paris about fourteen years ago. However, I do return to Calcutta once or twice a year.

**SWM:** Regarding your various musical ventures... Funk guitarist Sam Mills lent his talents to 1997's 'Real Sugar', your most celebrated album to date, which

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included the sensational 'Dil Ki Doya'. Your 1998 follow-up release 'Inner Knowledge' incorporated fewer fusion-infused elements, rather striving to achieve a more traditional, purer 'Baul' sound. And then we have your latest effort, April 2004's 'Tanatani', which combines State of Bengal's Anglo-Asian breakbeats with your own folk-inspired melodies... That's a lot of creativity! What's next on the agenda?

**PDB:** Though my songs are mainly folk and traditional songs, I take pleasure in all kinds of music and delight in combining my work with those of other artists to create new sounds. My wife Mimlu is writing the story for a feature film called 'Black Maria', which she will also be directing. On the film soundtrack we will be collaborating with an African musician called Sheik Tedian Sheik. Mimlu and I will be writing songs for that film. My sister

has never sung professionally before, so we would like her to sing on this movie, as this is our very own project.

**SWM:** We hear you are a very accomplished painter indeed! Please do elaborate on your art... What are your specific preferences with regard to subjects and media in your work?

**PDB:** I usually work with pastels and oil paints, occasionally pencils, and have experimented with acrylic paints as well. I paint on paper, not canvas. Some of my paintings will be displayed in an exhibition soon in Kolkata.

**SWM:** We all know you as Paban Das Baul, Baul-fusion music maestro. But now let us hear something about Paban Das Baul the person... Let us in on some aspect about yourself that people don't already know about...

**PDB:** When I get the time, I love to cook!

**SWM:** What kinds of cuisine are your specialties?

**PDB:** I can cook all kinds of food! French, Italian, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese... you name it!

**SWM:** We presume all your fans who are now reading this will be longing to go over to your home to feast on your cooking!

**USM:** Welcome, welcome! Anytime!

**PDB:** You know, Mimlu and I occasionally have to cook for a thousand people. We occasionally cook for all the guests at one of the largest theatres in Paris. About eighty people work there, and they help us out during those times when we have to cook for so many visitors. On one of those nights, perhaps twenty-five people

will be cutting onions, potatoes, garlic, meat and so on. We essentially give the directions, add spices and are in charge of the whole cooking session. Someone else will be stirring the food in enormous vessels. We might have to cook eight to ten different dishes this way in one night!

In 2000, there was this all-night concert of Indian classical music. It was 24 hours long. There was one raag assigned to each hour; 24 'raags' for 24 hours. The responsibility of cooking for the whole event was given to Mimlu and me. We cooked for 1200 people, but the meals were served to 1500 people!

**SWM:** Would you like to say something to your fans in Bangladesh?

**PDB:** I would like to send all of them my love. And I shall be elated if they will go on loving music more and more.