

Festival for a cause

Seasoned rock musician Ayub Bachchu on "Desh Music Fest 2007" and more...

NADER RAHMAN

AYUB Bachchu is an iconic figure of the Bangladeshi music firmament. For over two decades he has wowed audiences through the length and breadth of the country. His music, much like his flamboyant style has continually evolved through the passage of time—from rock to metal to alternative, his variations seem endless. His rock anthems have the quality of immortality and nobody can perform live better than him. *The Daily Star* caught up with him prior to the much hyped "Desh Music Fest 2007" and chatted with him on a range of issues from the festival to his future plans.

Tell us about your favourite new bands?

Of the new bands I like Nemesis, Arbovirus, Artcell and Black, along with many more. However, I have one message for them—don't stay under the logo of the underground scene, come into the mainstream. Their music is simply fantastic and they should be heard by a wider audience.

Has music evolved in Bangladesh?

Music has changed considerably in Bangladesh. However, the fact remains that a musician has to keep reinventing himself. Since I have been around the sound of music has changed.

Have some bands become stereotyped?

(laughs) Maybe, but I can't be specific.

Could you tell us about the Desh Music Fest 2007?

The Desh Music Fest 2007 is set to be a great event! Lots and lots of talented bands will be playing and most importantly it will be for a noble cause. But I have a question to pose to the other



sponsors: Why didn't they come forward? This will probably be the largest music fest organised for flood relief in Bangladesh and only Banglalink raised their hands to help out. I would term them as pioneers for this kind of event. For the sake of the flood affected

people I hope they continue such endeavours. As musicians we can extend support but a sponsor makes it all possible. My message to everyone out there: Don't hesitate, just come along to the fest, it will be for a great cause.

Can you amplify on this sub-

ject?

In my opinion we need to go further than just music and funds. Every individual must contribute his or her mite to the flood relief. However, for those who are hard pressed for time, Desh Music Fest is the best alternative. Come and enjoy good music as well as help a pressing social cause. I have a word of advice for Banglalink: If this is truly a Desh Music Fest they should also tour the country with the musicians and truly make it symbolic of the word "Desh".

Aside from music, what are your other hobbies?

Well one great hobby of mine was driving, and not just driving but driving fast. However, since I sold my sports car I don't drive that fast anymore. I really do enjoy driving and of course watching cricket. If I was not a musician I would love to be a cricketer, (laughing) I would be anything but the wicket keeper.

What are your future plans?

We are already working on a new album. We are not sure about the release date but Eid seems likely. It will probably have 10 new songs and they will be entirely different from what people are accustomed to; it will be alternative rock. The great thing about this album is also that Sajjad Hussain has written the lyrics for the songs. I am sure all LRB fans will love it.

Finally where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

I see myself in front of great orchestra with a guitar in my hand, with thousands of fans cheering me on. Ten years from now I just might get there.

Heart to Heart with Priya and Tony

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Tony apparently has always been fascinated with cultural personalities: "Growing up, I'd always admired actors like Uttam Kumar and Amitabh Bachchan. Right after my S.S.C, I joined a cultural organisation. In 1989, I joined a theatre group, Nagorik Natya Sampradaya. I got the opportunity to learn from seasoned thespians like Asaduzzaman Nur, Aly Zaker, Abul Hayat, Jamaluddin Hossain and others."

"As for me," says Priya, "It was totally inspiration from Tony. He explained that acting would be rather easy for me since I'm a dancer. Dancing shares certain common aspects with acting, for instance a dancer must know how to convey different emotions through facial expressions and body language. Tony also encouraged me to host TV shows. He egged me on by saying I have a pleasant voice and an attractive way of speaking."

Dancing, acting and anchoring, which one does she find most interesting?

Priya: "I'm comfortable with anchoring. Acting is also intriguing in the sense that it offers variety. Dancing, however, is my passion. Though these days it's hard to find time, I never miss a chance to be a part of a dance recital."

Tony has recently acted in two films by Nargis Akther. Does he want to continue?

Tony: "Well, both the films are very well made. I would certainly like to continue working in quality movies in future."

The couple is currently hosting a talk show *Bhalobasha Kare Koy*, but what is it like to work in TV plays together?

Priya: "Though we've acted together in several TV plays, I don't feel comfortable working with him. It's difficult to overlook our real relationship when acting." Priya's hurried answer seems to amuse Tony.

How did they meet?

Priya: "Tony's sister was a friend of a friend. She gave Tony my photo



Tony and Priya Dias are familiar faces to the TV audience. Tony is one of the leading TV actors in the country and Priya has attained popularity through the TV show "Tiffin Phakey". Priya, a talented classical dancer, has also appeared in several TV plays recently. The couple recently spoke to *The Daily Star* about their career, family life

and phone number. After several phone conversations we met. We continued seeing each other and after five years we got married."

Tony gets nostalgic: "I was very attracted to her, specifically the dimples when she smiles. She is an epitome of the perfect Bangalee girl. After hearing her voice over the phone, I knew I was in love. It was 1997, and the cell phone culture was yet to come. We used to send each other messages on our pagers and spend many hours at night talking on the phone."

Who proposed?
Both pointing fingers at each other: "You."

Tony explains, "Actually there was no formal proposal. We knew that we were in love and there was no need to be formal about it."

Interesting incident?

"One night, before we got married," Priya recalls, "it was almost 2:00am and we were talking on the phone. I had to whisper because my parents were in the next room. Suddenly Tony said he is going to hang up the phone. I asked why and he screamed 'I'm calling you from a public phone booth in Tejaigan, the mosquitoes are devouring me.'"

What are the attributes they like and dislike about each other?

Priya: "I adore Tony's voice. I am

impressed by his personality as well. He takes his responsibilities very seriously and is precise about everything. His negative side is his anger. When he gets angry, he gets mad. Secondly, he needs to work on his punctuality. If he says that he will come home at 5pm, what he really means is that he'll arrive around 7."

Tony: "Priya is very modest, she is never harsh or aggressive. However, she is disorganised at times. Of course she is improving. She is also very sensitive and gets hurt easily."

"Dhanyo Shei Purush" TV special commemorates Poet Shamsur Rahman



Poet Asad Chowdhury performs at the programme

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On the first death anniversary of poet Shamsur Rahman, today, ATN Bangla will air a special programme *Dhanyo Shei Purush* at 10:30am. In the programme eminent artist Mortaza Basheer, poet Rabiul Hossain and Abdur Rauf Sarkar will take part in a discussion on the poet. The poet's

wife, his granddaughters Dibita and Nayana will focus on the familial aspects of the poet's life. The programme will also feature recitation of Rahman's poetry by poet Asad Chowdhury and performers of Bishwa Kalakendra. The programme is directed by Shaheena Akhter and hosted by Rezaur Rahman.

"Amar Bela Je Jaye": Fahmida Nabi's 'adhunik' interpretation of Rabindra Sangeet

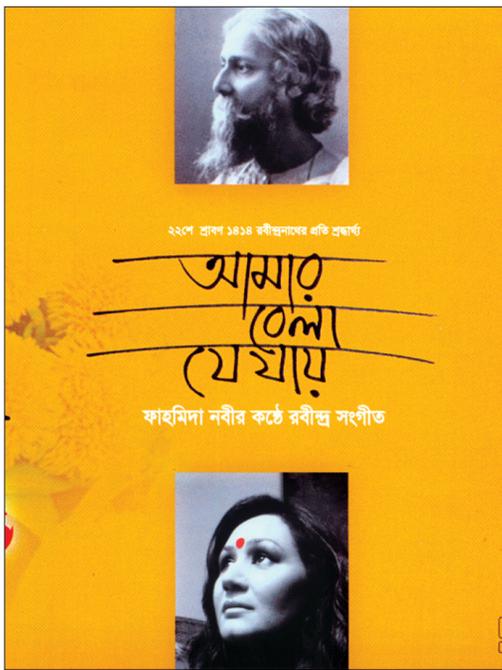
KARIM WAHEED

Fahmida Nabi's latest album *Amar Bela Je Jaye* stands out among the new releases. This is Fahmida's first album of Rabindra Sangeet; the artist is renowned in the *adhunik* genre. An Impress Audio Vision Ltd. production, the album was released on the occasion of Tagore's 66th death anniversary.

This album follows the trend of "personal interpretation" of Tagore songs -- a style quite often under fire. "Pundits" have laid down the law: Rabindra Sangeet must be rendered in a certain way. Artists trying to experiment or break free of the tradition have been ostracised in the past. A dispirited Debabrata Biswas, who could not record Rabindra Sangeet without obtaining prior permission from Visva Bharati, entitled his autobiography *Brattojon-er Rudhosangeet* (Suppressed Songs of the Ostracised).

Did Tagore, in his lifetime, imagine that a day would come when his disciples and followers would turn into fanatics? Did the Maestro specify anywhere that his songs must be accompanied with harmonium and *tabla*? Should culture be so staunchly guarded that in time it becomes a stagnant pool? What is it about the Bengali psyche that compels us to put things we admire on a pedestal and then virtually make them inaccessible for anyone with a different point of view?

According to Fahmida, "I've tried to articulate the way I envision *Kabiguru's* songs." Thirteen tracks are included in the album, a majority



The cover jacket of the album

of them being familiar songs. Partha Majumdar's approach to music arrangement is minimalist.

The opening track is *Tumi kon*

kanon-er phool. This is a song fit to fall in love with. Fahmida's wispy vocals effortlessly glide through the notes, breathing life to each word.

The way she utters "*Tomaye kothaye dekhchhi...*" exudes desperation, yearning. It's like poetry in motion.

The second song *Boro asha korey* maintains that feel. The otherwise instantly recognisable *Phooley phooley* is upgraded from a children's favourite to a carefree humming by some young urbanite on a train, moving away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

The high point of the album is perhaps *Amaro poran-o jaha chaye*. Fahmida's rendition portrays a rainy evening, a melancholy admirer and her unconditional love. The vision is quite surreal, yet subtle and relatable.

The next track, *Ami keboli swapon-o*, however, is rather unimpressive. *Amar mon kemon korey*, shares the theme and feel of the fourth track, *Amaro poran-o...*

Ami hridayer kotha bolitey byakul and *Majhey majhey tobo dekha pai* stand out; the latter in particular, becomes a serene yet poignant prayer.

The album wraps up with a rendition of *O amar desher mati*. The music director and the vocalist have done justice to this beautiful patriotic song.

The USP of *Amar bela je jaye* is the effective incorporation of the *adhunik* style in popular Rabindra Sangeet. More endeavours like this will surely be appreciated by music enthusiasts seeking variety.

A tour with a mission

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The popular musical duo, Rafiqul Alam and Abida Sultana, will be leaving for a two-week international tour today (August 17). First stop is at the music festival in Cardiff where Rafiq and Abida will be performing for a massive crowd along with many others from the international musical arena. "A musical show will be held shortly in Milan, Italy to raise money for flood relief in Bangladesh," says Rafiq. "We have

been asked to perform there as well." Live performances in Germany are also in the duo's schedule. Rafiqul Alam and Abida Sultana are household names in the realms of music in Bangladesh. For years they have been mesmerising the audience with their heart felt compositions and melody. Musical icons of the arena, they have been inspiring and encouraging younger artists to come up with newer blends and tastes in music.



The musical duo, Rafiqul Alam and Abida Sultana

Recycling at its best

Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker return with "Rush Hour 3"



Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker in the film

In terms of creative content, *Rush Hour 3* may be one of the most conservation-minded movies ever made. Hardly a joke, stunt, musical interlude or special effect is deployed that doesn't seem to directly reference one or both of the earlier *Rush Hour* movies.

Director Brett Ratner, screenwriter Jeff Nathanson and stars Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker appear to be trying to save the planet one gag at a time by recycling as much material as humanly possible.

The action buddy-comedy franchise feels worn out, and its insistence on relying on "greatest hits" doesn't help matters, but it still probably possesses enough action set-pieces and mismatched partner humour to satisfy fans of the first two *Rush Hours*.

In the new movie, Tzi Ma's consul-general from 1998's *Rush Hour* has been promoted to ambassador and calls upon Chan's Inspector Lee to provide security while he delivers

an important speech to the World Criminal Court in downtown Los Angeles. His plan to reveal a piece of secret information that could lead to the downfall of the Triads -- China's dangerous crime organisations -- is thwarted by an assassin's bullet, leading to a reunion of Inspector Lee and Tucker's hyper LAPD detective, James Carter.

Chan and Tucker still project the same chemistry borne of complementary talents that helped establish the franchise in the first place, but the culture-clash conflict between them has given way to the complacency of an old married couple.

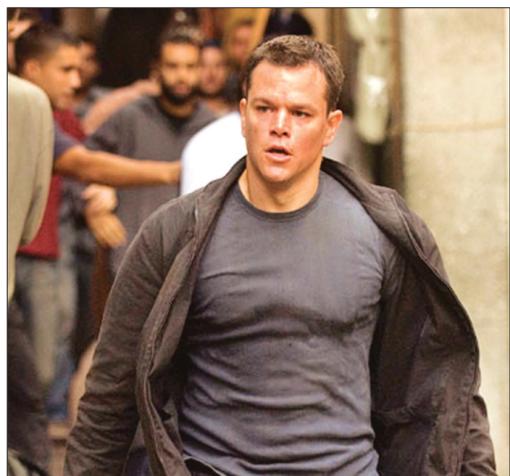
The duo promise the ambassador's daughter (whom they saved as a child in the first movie and is now played as an adult by Zhang Jingchu) that they will protect her and capture the man who tried to kill her father.

Source: Internet

Matt Damon dismisses 'dated' Bond

BBC News

Hollywood star Matt Damon has dismissed James Bond as being



Matt Damon

stuck in the past.

The actor, who appears in the Bourne thrillers, said: "The Bond character will always be anchored in

the 1960s and in the values of the 1960s."

The suave spy was "so anachronistic when you put it in the world we live in today", he said, but added that Bond was no better or worse than Bond.

Damon was speaking in London, where *The Bourne Ultimatum*, the third film in the franchise, was having its UK premiere.

"Bond is an imperialist and a misogynist who kills people and laughs about it, and drinks Martinis and cracks jokes," he told reporters. "Bourne is a serial monogamist whose girlfriend is dead and he does nothing but think about her."

He added that Bourne "doesn't have the support of gadgets, and he feels guilty for what he's done".

The first two Bourne outings - *The Bourne Identity* and *The Bourne*

Supremacy - made more than \$500m (£250m) at the worldwide box office.

The latest instalment went straight to the top of the North American box office chart.

Damon said he had not ruled out returning for a fourth film - provided that the British director Paul Greengrass also returned to the project.

Greengrass said: "The Bourne franchise is not about wearing Prada suits and looking at women coming out of the sea with bikinis on. It's about essence and truth, not frippery and surface."