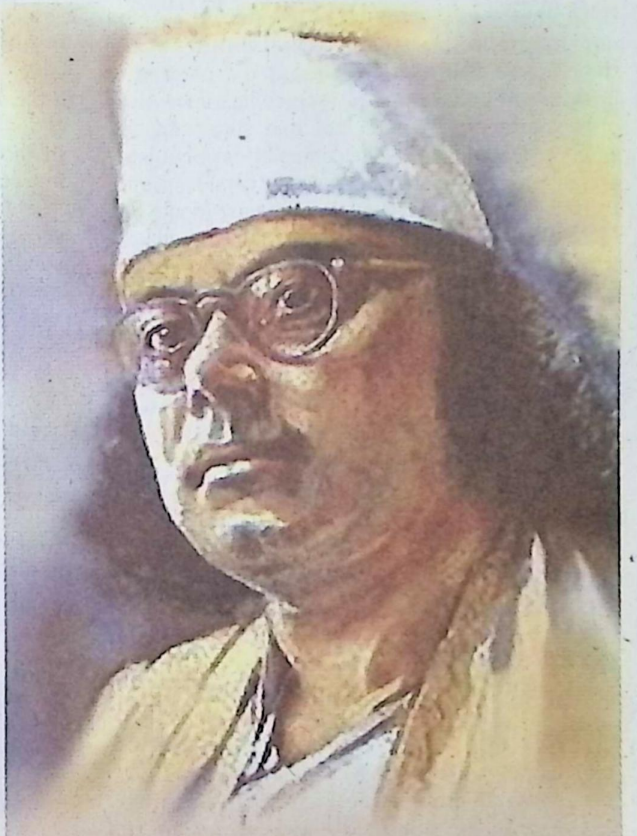
these two recording stores. Mozammel Bhai of *Soor Kallal* would introduce and explain songs and genres of Tagore and Nazrul. It was through Mozammel Bhai I discovered Debabrata Biswas and many years later Manabendra Mukhopadhyay, my two all time favourite Tagore and Nazrul singers. Ever since my encounter with those three LPs in my Father's collection, I have asked myself time and time again - what is there in the music of Tagore and Nazrul that make people want to hear them again and again?

In other cultures there are composers whose compositions have stood the test of time. *Auld Lang Syne* by the Scottish Poet, Robert Burns (1759-1796) is one example. This wonderful pentatonic tune influenced two popular compositions in Bangla. Tagore himself composed *Purano Shei Diner Kotha* based on the same composition. Suparnakanti Ghosh did the same many years later by injecting the tune verbatim to introduce the lyrics of Gauriprasanna Majumder's *Coffee House-r Shei Adda,* which Manna Dey made the anthem of the youth. The story of Burns ends here. Very little of the rest of the genius of Burns lives on.



Magic in

Be that his poetry or his music. For many other popular Celtic songs, the tune or composition has survived while the composer has gone into oblivion.

There are very few cultures where so many compositions of a single composer have stood the test of time and still keep on inspiring the audience. The works of Tagore and Nazrul, especially their music, have survived through the decades because they are simple yet so complex. Both kept things simple. They both focused on universal Bengali emotions and aspirations. Yet in all this simplicity Tagore and Nazrul both express a complexity that makes visiting and re-visiting their works worthwhile each time.

Every time I would listen, I would be left bamboozled as to how was it possible to narrate a story so wonderfully with verse and music? Although the Feeroza Begum LP introduced me to the music of Nazrul, it was *Kanon Giri Shindhu Paar* that ignited fascination towards Nazrul's music.