

WEEKENDER

I had a passion for stamp collecting...

BIJORI BARKATULLAH

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

Bijori Barkatullah has been gracing the screen with her performances for over two decades. A dancer, singer, model and actor, the multifaceted professional has won over fans with her talent, style, and grace. Recently, The Daily Star got in touch with the actor about how she enjoys spending time outside the limelight, and more.

As a professional who dances, sings, models, and acts, what made you choose acting as your main career?

Bijori: I hadn't really planned it that way, I just took up whatever felt right to me at the time. To me it is important that I enjoy the work I do.

Do you have a special hobby that your fans don't know about?

Bijori: I don't have the time to pursue hobbies now, but when I was younger I had a passion for stamp collecting. It was something many people did at the time. Now whenever I have the time I prefer settling down with a good book, or watch TV.

How do you wind down after a long day's work?

Bijori: The first thing I do is clean off my makeup! Then I have dinner and spend some quality time with my family.

What is the perfect weekend getaway for you?

Bijori: Traveling during weekends is impossible here because of heavy traffic. But my ideal getaway would be out of the country and preferably someplace far away from the cities. Beaches are my favourite place to go.

What are you currently working on?

Bijori: There is not much yet so far. I am working on one drama serial and have just wrapped up work for an hour long telefilm which is yet to be titled.



PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

Ellen makes history with 20th win

Stars in music, TV, film and digital media gathered at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles on Wednesday for the People's Choice Awards, hosted by Joel McHale.

McHale called the show "the one night a year when Hollywood reacts positively to what the middle of the country thinks" in his monologue and talked about an egotistical billionaire trying to take over the world -- he assured the audience he was talking about the plot of "Captain America: Civil War".

Justin Timberlake took the stage to honor Ellen DeGeneres, who made history at the ceremony with the most People's Choice Awards ever. Wins for Favorite Daytime TV Host, Favorite Animated Movie Voice and Favorite Comedic Collaboration brought her up to 20 awards.

Earlier, Favorite TV Crime Drama Actress went to Jennifer Lopez, while Favorite Actress in a New Series Kristen Bell and Favorite Actor in a New Series Matt LeBlanc presented Favorite Comedic Movie Actor, which went to Kevin Hart.

Ali Larter and Ruby Rose presented Favorite Song, which went to Justin Timberlake for "Can't Stop the Feeling". Timberlake said to his baby son at home, "You're the reason why I wrote this song."

Molly Shannon and Fred Armisen presented Favorite Premium Series Actor, which went to Dwayne Johnson. Favorite Network TV Drama went to "Grey's Anatomy" before Luke Hemsworth presented Favorite Dramatic Movie Actress to Blake Lively.

Victoria Justice introduced Blake Shelton, who won Favorite Country Male Artist and Favorite Album, onstage to sing "Every Time I Hear That Song".

Bill Paxton and Justin Cornwell from "Training Day" presented Tom Hanks with the award for Favorite Dramatic Movie Actor. Ryan Reynolds expectedly won "Favorite Movie Actor", while "Deadpool" was named Favorite Action Movie.

"When it comes to the person the fans love the most ... Ellen DeGeneres is the People's Champ," said Timberlake as a reel of DeGeneres winning

People's Choice Awards over the years played.

The Favorite Comedic Movie Actress went to Melissa McCarthy, who thanked the other actresses who were nominated and claimed that it was a cutthroat fight. Favorite Premium Series Actress went to Sarah Jessica Parker, while Priyanka Chopra picked up her first major award for her work in the US, winning Favorite Dramatic TV Actress for "Quantico".

Kristen Bell presented Tyler Perry with Favorite Humanitarian for his work with the NAACP, with Charity: Water to bring clean drinking water to villages in Africa and Cambodia and more. After playing a heartwarming video of people talking about Perry's charity work -- with some referring to him as a "guardian angel" -- Bell announced that Enterprise was donating \$100,000 to Perry's charity of choice, Global Medical Relief Fund.

"The Voice" won Favorite Competition Show for the fourth year in a row, with producer Mark Burnett accepting from backstage, as he was also producing the awards show.

Favorite Action Movie Actor went to Robert Downey Jr., his sixth People's Choice Award. Margot Robbie won Favorite Action Movie Actress.

DJ Khaled introduced Fifth Harmony to the stage to perform "Work From Home", who later thanked their fans for voting them Favorite Group.

Favorite New TV Comedy went to "Man with a Plan" and Favorite New TV Drama went to "This Is Us". Jimmy Fallon, meanwhile, won for Favorite Late Night Talk Show Host.

Favorite Comedic TV Actress went to Sofia Vergara for her work in "Modern Family", while the Favorite Network TV Comedy went to "The Big Bang Theory". Jim Parsons, one of the frontline stars of the series, also picked up Favorite TV Comedic Actor.

Favorite Movie Icon went to Johnny Depp, who sported a blond mustache and several earrings.

In the Digital Media department, Favorite Social Media Star went to Cameron Dallas, Britney Spears won Favorite Social Media Celebrity (and Favorite Comedic Collaboration for her collaboration with Ellen in "Mall Mischief", and Lilly Singh, known better to her fans as Superwoman, won Favorite YouTube Star.



PHOTO COURTESY: CBS NEWS

Ellen became the most-decorated person on the award show's history on Wednesday.

Source: CBS News

Masum Reza: Back to the stage after 17 years

"Surgaon" to premiere today at BSA

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Masum Reza is one of the popular playwrights of the current time, with hits like "Ranger Manush" under his belt. Besides TV dramas, he has directed plays for theatre. He recently directed a stage play after a 17-year pause. The first staging of the play, "Surgaon", will be held today at 7pm at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). The Bangla Academy award winner talked about his fresh venture in a recent chat with The Daily Star.

Tell us about your new stage play, "Surgaon"?

Masum Reza: "Surgaon" is a village where an elders teach everyone, even the criminals, how to play flute. The criminals get a new life through the learning.

When did you write the play?

Masum Reza: Although I wrote it last year, the idea clicked into my mind three years ago. When I started the play, I completed it within a week.

What's your expectation from "Surgaon"?

Masum Reza: I'm really very optimistic about it.

"Surgaon" is new trend of stage plays and I hope that it will amuse the audiences.

You are directing a stage play after 17 years. What's your feeling about this?

Masum Reza: I'm really excited. I last directed the play "Nityo Puran" for my troupe Desh Natok. After a long gap, it's a special feeling to be working for the stage.

What type of hurdles did you face during direction on stage?

Masum Reza: There's no big problem, but there are some points to consider over rehearsals every day. As most cast members have a day job, it is a bit tough to join rehearsal in time regularly. Amid the time constraint, everyone tried to join the sessions with love and passion.

Who's your favourite character from the play?

Masum Reza: Aushto Kala is one of the central characters; he lives his life in poverty. At one stage, he is asked to 'eat sunlight' standing in scorching heat. And then he is given the lure of metal coins, but he does not fall for the greed. His honesty really touches me.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Raj Kapoor off his pedestal

Rishi Kapoor chronicles father's colourful life

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Raj Kapoor was not only Bollywood's consummate showman but was a connoisseur of cinema, booze and his leading ladies, according to a soon-to-be-launched book penned by his son Rishi Kapoor.

Called "Khullam Khulla: Rishi Kapoor Uncensored", Rishi opens up about his father's affairs with co-actors and his passion for films, besides capturing the evolution of their father-son relationship.

The book virtually starts with a reference to Raj Kapoor's affair with yesteryears' actor Nargis Dutt, who together, he writes, continue to be widely acknowledged as the most iconic pair onscreen.

"My father, Raj Kapoor, was twenty-eight years old and had already been hailed as the 'showman of Hindi cinema' four years before. He was also a man in love at the time, unfortunately, with someone other than my mother. His girlfriend was the leading lady of some of his biggest hits of the time, including Aag (1948), Barsaat (1949) and Awara (1951)."

Nargis was Raj Kapoor's "in-house heroine", according to Rishi who in his book has also talked about the relationship the senior Kapoor shared

with co-star Vyjayanthimala who had denied having an affair with the actor.

He writes, "I remember moving into the Natraj Hotel on Marine Drive with my mom during the time Papa was involved with Vyjayanthimala. From the hotel, we shifted for two months into an apartment in Chittrakoot. My father had bought the apartment for Mom and us. He did all he could to woo her back but my mother wouldn't give in until he had ended that chapter of his life."

He remembers getting "livid" when Vyjayanthimala claimed that his father had "manufactured the romance because of his hunger for publicity".

The son says Raj Kapoor had a fascination for a particular brand of whisky, which he refused to share.

"My father loved his cinema, his booze, his leading ladies and his work. But for a man legendary for his hospitality, he was very possessive of his whisky. When we started drinking together, for him it was always Johnny Walker Black Label bought in London, while we were served locally procured whisky," he writes, adding that "heaps of unopened Black Label bottles stashed away in his cupboards" were found after Raj Kapoor passed away.

Much like his own relationship with son Ranbir Kapoor, Rishi too shared a bond with his father that was one of reverence. He says that it evolved from being driven by fear to one laden with "an indescribable love and respect that just kept growing".

Bollywood actor Ranbir Kapoor, who has written the foreword to his father Rishi's autobiography, also speaks about the "formal" relationship between him and his father.

The 34-year-old actor says that the father-son relationship is "one of complete reverence" and that he has never crossed a "certain line" with Rishi.

The actor goes on to say that he would not want to share a similar relationship with his own children in the future and unlike his father, spend more time with him.

"Sometimes I wish I could just pick up the phone and ask him, 'Dad, how are you doing?' But we do not have that. We do not have a phone relationship."

At the same time, Ranbir writes, "I'm inspired by him and never want to let him down. I know he has only my best interests at heart. He also takes care of the financial side of my work. So we are more connected now."

