

Chris Cornell

[1954-2017]

Breaker of the Rusty Cage



FAHMIM FERDOUS

In the mid-70s in a basement of his neighbour's house in Seattle, Washington, a nine-year old Christopher John Boyle finds a big stash of Beatles records, and is engrossed by the music. In the next forty years, that kid became one of rock music's most recognisable voices, fronting bands like Soundgarden and later Audioslave, winning Grammys and being named Rolling Stone's 9th best lead singer of all time.

That man, Chris Cornell, died in Detroit yesterday at the age of 52, hours after performing a show in Detroit. The cause of death was not immediately known.

A loner since his early days, Cornell became severely depressed in his teens and resorted to rock music to deal with the illness. With his teenage bandmate from the Seattle-based cover band The Shemps, Cornell founded Soundgarden in 1984. Along with Alice in Chains, Nirvana and Pearl Jam, Soundgarden became one of the most successful acts to emerge from the Seattle Grunge scene, their debut album "Ultramega OK" earning a Grammy nod for Best Metal Performance in 1990. He also formed the supergroup Temple of the Dog in 1990 for a one-off album as a tribute to his friend and lead singer of the band Mother Love Bone. Members of that band, Stone Gossard, Jeff Ament, Mike McCready, Matt Cameron and Eddie Vedder (who appeared as a guest vocal) would eventually go on to form another iconic grunge rock band, Pearl Jam.

But it was with their 1994 album "Superunknown", featuring songs like "Black Hole Sun" and "Spoonman", that they gained international acclaim, and breaking out of the heavy metal identity that they had accepted previously. The album was termed as a "hard-rock milestone" in an Entertainment Weekly review, and both the aforementioned songs won at the 1995 Grammys. After Soundgarden disbanded in 1997 over creative differences between Cornell and Kim Thayil, Cornell worked solo for a while, releasing "Euphoria Morning", before forming Audioslave in 2001 with members of Rage Against The Machine (after their vocal Zach de la Rocha left the band). The band achieved success with albums "Audioslave", "Out of Exile" and "Revelations". Cornell wrote all the songs for Audioslave, and it was also at this time his battle with alcoholism and drug use peaked, forcing him to rehabilitation and eventually sobriety. In 2007, Cornell left Audioslave as Rage Against reunited with la Rocha. Audioslave did play a reunion show as recently as this year, though, at the Anti-Inaugural Ball protesting Donald Trump's inauguration as the US president. Meanwhile, Cornell also recorded "You Know My Name", the theme song for the 2006 James Bond film "Casino Royale" that was also nominated for a Grammy and won a number of awards.

Since 2007, Cornell pursued a solo career. It was in this period that he released albums "Carry On" (2007), "Scream" (2009) with hip-hop producer Timbaland, "Songbook" (2011) featuring acoustic versions of songs of his entire career that he performed in his Songbook tour and "Higher Truth" (2015). He also played with Linkin Park and Aerosmith on tour in that time. Throughout his career, he also collaborated with numerous musicians of repute, Alice Cooper, Slash and Carlos Santana to name a few.

Cornell's musical style was also, at least for most parts of his career, unique and mold-breaking. The use of non-standard chord progressions, open and major-only chords and multiple key changes can be heard in his most-known compositions like "Black Hole Sun", "Pretty Noose" and "Like A Stone". In one of Soundgarden's earlier songs, "Rusty Cage", from their third album "Badmotorfinger", the guitar is tuned way off with a wah pedal used in the low position as a filter, creating a unique sound. The rhythmic and melodic scales also go through unconventional changes.

But Cornell will probably be most recognised to the general audience for his voice. A baritone vocal with a near-four octave vocal range, his voice generates grit and power on one side, and soul and feel in equal proportions in the other. His combination of rasp and power makes his voices instantly recognisable, even when he is trying out different vocal techniques -- from soft falsettos to full-blast screams, or even blues or neo-soul.

The late '80s and early '90s was a transforming time for rock 'n' roll, and Chris Cornell is one of the giants on whose shoulders that era stands on. His influence is worldwide among musicians, spanning genres and musical styles, and his music will live on as long as rock 'n' roll does. But he was only 52, and been sober for a decade and a half. It is quite safe to say he had a lot of music left to give to the world, and that is where his fans' mourning will really be.



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

"Lights! Camera! Action!" How the three words have changed a village in Gazipur's Pubail, widely known as the shooting village, (shooting palli). Shooting for TV plays continues at almost every household in the village round the year.

When you will talk about shooting for any TV play based on rural life, TV directors' first choice is Pubail because the village is beautiful and secondly, and it is close to Dhaka. The artistes can easily return to the capital within a day after wrapping up shooting. There are all kinds of accommodation arrangements for the artistes too.

The village is situated 25 kilometers away from Dhaka, about nine kilometers from Tongi Station. Besides shooting for TV plays, films and music videos are also shot here.

Under the direction of noted filmmaker Amjad Hossain, the drama serial "Agun Laga Sandha" was the first TV play shot at Pubail, back in 1996.

"At that time, Pubail looked very different from what it does now. It was like any other village. As the area is not so far away from

Dhaka, we could easily find it for shooting," Amjad Hossain told The Daily Star.

There are 15 shooting houses at present. Besides, some old clay-made houses are rented for shooting unit.

The shooting houses include Shaheener Bari, Jannat, Hasnahena, Haruner Bari, Lavlur Bari, Meghla, Panirer Bari, Doktor Bari, Bhuyia Bari, Badhoner Bari, Chayanir and Sharafater Bari. Film star Shakib Khan is the owner of one of the shooting houses.

Hasnahena Shooting House is favourite of many artistes like Zahid Hasan. "I feel comfortable to shoot here as director and actor," said Zahid Hasan. Hasnahena is about 100 meters away from the Pubail College Gate, and has accommodation facilities for 40 people. It has four VIP rooms and one generator, said Musa, staff of Hasnahena.

Another noted shooting house is Shaheener Bari. Arannya Anwar's "Amader Nurul Huda" was shot here. Humayun Faridi, Afzal Hossain, Moushumi and Zahid Hasan worked in the serial.

Acclaimed TV director Salahuddin Lavlu's noted creations -- "Alta Sunduri", "Sakin

How a village transformed into TV stars' hotspot

The story of Gazipur's Pubail

Saisuri" and "Gharkutum" were shot at Shaheener Bari. Mostly long-running drama serials are shot at the house. At present, Syed Shakil's new drama serial is being shot here.

Haruner Bari has also attracted actors and director. During the shoot of "Monpura", the entire unit stayed here. Imdadul Hoque Milon's "Meyeti Ekhon Kothai Jabe" was shot here. Besides, shooting for another noted drama serial "Lodging Master" that aired on Banglavisision was shot at the house.

Meghla, one of the newer shooting houses, has a big open field. Recently, a six-episode Eid play was shot here. Shamim Zaman directed the play.

Another new house is Salahuddin Lavlu'r Bari. Although the noted director has leased the shooting house now, everyone now knows it as his house.

"Pubail is very eye-soothing village, filled with scenic beauty. Most of my plays are shot here," said Salahuddin Lavlu.

"Pubail is first priority for shooting purpose as it is close to Dhaka," said TV personality Mamunur Rashid.



A director briefs his cast before a shot (above); A crew films a TV play.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

An evening of nostalgic serenades

Richard Marx' takes Dhaka audience on a joyride



PHOTO COURTESY: CREINSE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Richard Marx, filled the air at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre with nostalgic tunes on Tuesday, interlaced with his wit and surprisingly good comic timing. The 90's global music star, on his maiden performance in Bangladesh, took the audience on a smooth ride down memory lane, and along with sharing stories about his music, he even brought a Bangladeshi artiste to play alongside him in a song.

"Richard Marx Live in Dhaka" was organised by consumer engagement, music and entertainment company Creinse.

Marx walked on to the stage, all by himself and strapped on an acoustic guitar to open with "Endless Summer Nights". Without a lot of fuss, he moved on to "Take This Heart", and it was only mid-performance that "Satisfied" did he start interacting with the audience, getting them to hum back a chorus. Next on his set-list was the 1991 hit "Keep Coming Back", followed by one of his biggest songs, "Hazard", Marx called on Kazi Faisal Ahmed, who long-time followers of Bangla rock music would recognise as the guitarist for the early-2000s band Metal Maze, to perform with him on his next song, "Hazard". He even quipped "He is a better guitar player than I am."

Marx switched between the piano and his acoustic guitar to perform his hits -- as recent as "When You Loved Me" (from the

2010 album "Stories to Tell") to vintage classics like "Angelia" and "Don't Mean Nothing". He performed "The Way She Loves Me", "Hold on to the Nights", "Now and Forever" and "Dance With My Father" (the Grammy-winning song he wrote for Luther Vandross). Musically, it was a clean, soulful performance in true stripped-back essence, but it was his conversations with the audience that made the night thoroughly enjoyable. He responded to the love from the audience, smoothly dealt with the odd heckler or two, and showed that he's a great storyteller as well: whether it's the endearing story of his three sons performing with him in "Save Me" (a video of his sons playing and singing along was on the background as he sang it) or about the time he wrote "This I Promise You" for NSYNC and young girls followed the band members into a secluded recording studio. His self-deprecating humour about his age and an older following was a definite boon for the audience, who sang and cheered him on throughout the entire show.

Marx closed the show, to no one's surprise, with "Right Here Waiting", as the entire audience sang along to their heart's content. Maybe to today's young demographic Richard Marx is just a singer-songwriter from the yesteryears, but to those who grew up listening to his songs on the cassette players, it was a special experience to see a childhood musical hero at touching distance.

The Daily Star was the print partner of the concert.