



# FERDOUS ARA

A leading exponent of Nazrul Sangeet and a teacher and television personality of Bangladesh, Ferdous Ara was born to A.H.M. Abdul Hai and Mosharrefa Begum. She completed her Honors and Masters in History from the University of Dhaka. In 1973, she started her career as a regular vocal artist in Bangladesh Radio and afterwards in Bangladesh Television. She has released many albums of Nazrul Sangeet, contemporary and patriotic songs. Her first tape with 12 Nazrul Songs was released by SARGAM in 1985; long play and tape released by Nazrul Institute in 1986. She is the one whose audio CDs were released by India's famous record label, HMV. An audio CD with 13 Nazrul Songs named "Tumi Ki Dokhina Pobon" and audio CD of Nazul and modern songs named "Tumi Ashley Jey Ki Bhalo Lagey" are some of these. She is the first person in Bangladesh whose music video of Nazrul Sangeet was released. Besides that, she contributed as a background vocal in films and also hosted in TV shows such as "Sanchita" on Channel I and "Ei Shomoy" on NTV. In 1986, she performed at the International Gala Concert in Royal Albert Hall invited by London Inner Education Authority. In the 5th Folk Festival, the one who uplifted Bangladesh through her majestic vocal artistry by winning the prize in the competition among 52 nations was none other than Ferdous Ara. Her talent in writing has also been revealed to us with examples such as "Sangeet Bhubaney Nazrul" and "Sanchitar Katha Barta". She has achieved many prestigious awards including 'Bachshash Award', 'TRAB Award', 'Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Gold Medal' and 'Channel I Lifetime Achievement Award'.

## INSPIRATION

I think, a singer's first inspiration comes from the family. I am blessed with such a harmonious family in which everything was framed under the heavenly grace of arts and culture. Since childhood, I had always been the champion in sports and dancing in inter-school and inter-college competition. After that, in my university life, I discovered that I am more into music. My father, A.H.M. Abdul Hai, who was the Chief Engineer of PWD and also a majestic classical singer, has always been my first inspiration. He is the eminent founder of 'Sangeet Mahavidyalaya' and mercifully its first few classes were taken at our home. Our home is the signature of many histories. My uncle, A.B.M. Abdus Shakur, who was the Secretary CSP, had tremendous proficiency over music and its grounding. As a consequence of his vigorous researches, we are endued with the precious "Rabindra Rachanabali"; and he is the last person who has written it from the Bangla Academy. Also, "Sangeet Sangeet" and "Sangeet Sambit" are two of his written books in which some references of music and our musical family can be found. His splendid contributions always motivate me a lot. Additionally, my brother and sisters are extremely inspirational and their contributions in my life are not even expressible in words. Also, Ustad Abdul Jabbar, Ustad Qadir Jamini and all my instructors are my inspirations.

## PHILOSOPHY

In my view, everything starts from music. To go through the path of success, everyone has to embrace the melody of life. Behind every need, want, or failure, there is a melody. And by attaining it, one can

reach to the creator. I believe in the ideology of our national poet, Kazi Nazrul Islam. Therefore, I believe, 'Sobar upore manush sotto tahar upore nai'. I think, the love and respect of the people is the most precious award in a person's life. This is the thing which boosts me to serve more for the people of our nation.

## VIEWS ON HER PROFESSION

Music has a divine magnetism with me. Singing is both my passion and profession. I have been teaching music for so many years. I always try to introduce the students with the roots of our culture. I think an artist should be very humble and should transmit the arts to the next generation to conserve its glory. Currently, many of the singers of our new generation are extraordinarily talented and I am very hopeful of them. I have a thought in mind that if the artists of our country could be rewarded within their life span, it may inspire them a lot more to serve for the nation.

## MUSIC

My taste for listening to music keeps changing from dusk till dawn. "Jonomo Jonomo Gelo", "Anjali Loho Moro", "Prothomo Prodip Jalo", "Amay Nohe Go" and "Ami Chitrore Dure Chole Jabo" are some of my most favorite songs.

## FILMS

I feel a childlike thrill in watching horror films. The movies of Suchitra Sen charms me a lot, especially for the honeyed songs of Sandhya Mukhopadhyay.

## BOOKS

At my early age, I was a die-hard fan of "Feluda" by Satyajit Ray. The books of Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay and the "Masud Rana" series by Qazi Anwar Hussain had

never failed to amaze me. I also love to read the books of Rabeya Khatun and Selina Hossain. And of course, all the novels and dramas of our beloved poet Kazi Nazrul Islam are on the top of my favorites.

## FUTURE PLANS

I love teaching at Nazrul Institute, Dhaka University, Dhaka Music College and I founded my own music school, 'Sur Saptak' in 2000. The toughest endeavor I have taken is 'Ekok Konthe Hajar Gaan', which is collecting all the songs with accurate lyrics and tunes of our beloved Kazi Nazrul Islam presented by me. Impress Audio Vision Limited is producing a series of albums titled "Nazrul Sangeet Samagra". Besides all that, I am raising voice for preserving the Nazrul Sangeets in the Nazrul Institute which is a step by our Government. These steps have been taken to conserve the songs properly as technology has been updating day by day. Moreover, our young generation will be more interested in listening to the updated versions with clear and proper tunes. It is my aspiration to outspread the love for Kazi Nazrul Islam and his marvelous contributions among the people of our nation.

## IDOLS

Unquestionably, my father is my first idol. Jannat Ara and Hure Jannat, two of my beloved sisters, are also my idols. I have an immense respect for Sudhin Das who has gifted us with the precious "Nazrul Er Kothamala". Also, our honorable Firoza Begum, Sohrab Hossain and my Ustads are my idols.

By Shawreen Rahman