

WEEKENDER

“We often have to brave harsh weather....”

- ALVEE

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

Alvee's graceful presence was well known before taking her talents to the small screen. She rose to popularity as a contestant on Lux Superstar beauty pageant, where she secured the second position. Now an active actor, Alvee is a regular face on drama serials across TV channels. She is currently spending a well-deserved break in her hometown Kushtia, and in a conversation with The Daily Star, shared stories of the various challenges and pressures she faces, and more.

Dream weekend getaway vs. current reality?

Alvee: With a bit of planning ahead and time, I would much rather prefer to spend my time off traveling outside Dhaka, or even the country. However, as an actor who focuses on drama serials, my weekend schedules are unpredictable and I end up spending the day at home with family. After long, arduous days of shooting, I look forward to sleeping in, and maybe going out for shopping in the evening.

What is the one beauty essential you cannot do without?

Alvee: I can't go out without kajol (kohl). But I would say the most important part of any beauty regimen is to work on one's mental health and happiness. It is also important to know how to dress appropriately for any place and occasion.

What are you currently working on?

Alvee: I am currently working on a number of TV serials. The ones currently on air are "Oloshpur" on Rtv, "Comedy 420" on Boiskhahi TV, "Bashontipur" on Channel i, "Rupani Prantor", "Jhulanto Babura" and "Chaander Gari" on ATN Bangla. "Astha" is being aired on ntv, and Bangla TV is airing "Bou Bibi Begum". "Mohaguru" is being telecast on Banglavisision. There are 7-8 other serials that will go on air soon.

Who is your celebrity crush?

Alvee: Shah Rukh Khan has made an impact on me like no other. Although my parents are artistes themselves, watching him and Kajal on screen gave me my dreams of being an actor.

What do you wish people knew about your work?

Alvee: Unlike sets abroad, actors here have to go through a lot during filming, especially during outdoor assignments. Basic necessities are a far cry during those times, let alone comfort. The filming sessions can take up to a day or more, leading to various issues such as access to proper bathrooms or clean water. We often have to brave harsh weather conditions such as rains and storms to get the job done. I have even waded through knee-deep mud and swamps to reach a shooting location. This often takes a toll on our health, and at times we are subjected to illnesses and various infections. After all this, the only thing we desire from the audience is their feedback. We do what we do to popularise local entertainment so Bangladeshi productions get more airtime over foreign, dubbed shows.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

“It's now my responsibility to take our music to international platforms”

IN CONVERSATION WITH EMON SHAHA

NAZIBA BASHER

Four-time national award-winning music director, and also the younger son of the illustrious composer Satya Shaha, Emon Shaha's journey with music had begun in his nest. But the path he has taken it on was self-made. The prolific composer recently shared his story with the Daily Star.

Did you always want to be a music director like your father?

Emon Shaha: I initially wanted to be a film director when I was younger. I always felt being one would make me feel like a 'leader' of some sort. In third grade, I told my father I wanted to learn singing. After persistently bugging him for 6-8 months about wanting to learn music, I was able to prove my consistent desire to him and he finally took me seriously. My first guru to teach me Hindustani Classical sangeet was Guru Satindra Nath Halder.

When did the thought of directing or composing music come to mind?

Emon Shaha: Even though I learned to sing, it never appealed to me as much. I would be meddling with the instruments – keyboards and tabla. I began accompanying my father to the studio and observing what he would do. I would observe the work of Shawkat Ali Emon, who was my father's assistant then, and also Manam Ahmed. Eventually, I was immersed in composing. When I was doing my BBA in the USA, I confessed to my father that my heart was not in business administration. My father insisted that I finish my education, and I told him that I'd rather finish it in recording engineering, to which he agreed.

Did you get the chance to work with your father? How did his death affect your career?

Emon Shaha: I came back to Bangladesh and began assisting my father. I also got my first break through Gazi Mazharul Anwar – for which my father was my mentor, for the blockbuster "Poradhin". Everyone believed it was actually my father's work but I was credited in it. It wasn't the case.

Unfortunately, within a year after my return, my father passed away, and I felt completely lost. I just knew that I began this journey and there was no way I was going to quit midway. I began going door-to-door. At that time, the bulk of directors working were all new generation directors, who hadn't worked too much with my father. I was totally new to them, and they were a little apprehensive to have me on board.

When do you think you began gaining recognition?

Emon Shaha: In 2001, I did "Shoshur

ble to provide the best quality to each film. I was working so much and without any satisfaction, so I decided to take a break. I realised that the veterans of the industry, were expecting a lot from me- being the son of Satya Shaha. I wanted to live up to that expectation, for which I had to learn more. I began searching for universities or conservatories when I suddenly came across KM Music Conservatory run by AR Rahman. I immediately flew to Chennai and enrolled myself for a year-long course on western classical music.

and getting more knowledge revived me and my love for what I do. In 2012, I did another year-long course there, and I want to go and study again in Berkeley, MI or Full Sail soon.

What kind of change do you think you were able to bring to the industry, and what do you believe is your next move?

Emon Shaha: What I did, solely from my responsibilities towards the industry, was to watch films and create compact scores -- a trend that died out in the 80's due to the horrendous use of stock-music to save money. They even created a new term for it called the "jackground" because they'd use a jack to extract the music from the tape recorders. It's someone else's music, someone else's intellectual property. Ethically, it's wrong. I did scores for films like "Rajdhani", and then "Mollabari'r bou", "Poramon", and "Agnee", before people recognised the importance of an authentic background score. I now feel it is my responsibility to take the music of my country to an international platform. That, I feel, is my next step. My country has already given me the national award four times, so I owe it a lot.

Which films are you most proud of working on? And what are some of your upcoming works?

Emon Shaha: I'm proud of "Molla Bari'r Bou", "Shoshurbari Zindabad", "Khairun Shundori" amongst a few. From recent works, I did the background music of "Nuru Mia o Tar Beauty Driver", "Onek Shadher Moyna", which was the remake of "Moynamoti", and Animesh Aich's "Zero Degree". I'm also looking forward to my work in Animesh's "Bhoyonkor Shundor". And I'm very excited about upcoming film "Cohin Baluchor", for which I did all the songs and the background score.

What advice would you like to give to upcoming composers?

Emon Shaha: Music is bigger than the ocean. You can never stop learning. Youtube tutorials can only take you so far, but actual institutionalised education is what will build you and your career.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Bari Zindabad" by Debasish Biswas, which was a big hit. Then in 2003, "Khairun Shundori" was released and it was a massive hit and the title song's popularity spread like wildfire and then there was no looking back for me. From 2004 to 2007-8, every year I would have 30-40 film releases each year.

Was it easy to maintain quality with that kind of workload?

Emon Shaha: I realised then that being busy wasn't really supposed to be the target; maintaining quality was. And when you're that occupied, it's impossi-

How did the tutelage under AR Rahman bring a change to your career and work?

Emon Shaha: Everything changed: my views, my thoughts, and my musicality. When I listened to the background scores and music of movies such as "ET" and "Jurassic Park" by John Williams, I would often wonder how on Earth he produced such beautiful things. These questions were answered once I did my higher studies in music. The monotony of my own work was beginning to kill me and taking that break

YOGA FOR WORLD PEACE Indian filmmaker Benoy Behl's quest

KAVITA, New Delhi

To highlight the relevance of the ancient science of yoga in an increasingly fractious world, prolific Indian filmmaker, art historian and photographer Benoy K Behl, together with his partner Sujata Chatterji, have been shooting their latest film, "Yoga for World Peace:" across India, USA, Japan, Germany, Vietnam, Bahamas, Argentina and Columbia.

The travels have been an eye-opener for the filmmakers. "It was wonderful to shoot in South America as the people are exceptionally interested in philosophy, and very open minded. The whole world can learn an important lesson from the frankness and open minds that I saw in South America," says Behl.

Behl is particularly enthused about Columbia. In this violence-ridden society, techniques like yoga and meditation are being increasingly used to foster a climate of peace, harmony and compassion in society. The most traumatized sections like victims of armed conflict,



former members of death squads, children from families disrupted by violence, prisoners and inmates in reform schools are learning what it means to connect with the self and find healing.

Behl has a large body of highly appreciated oeuvre behind him. He has made 26 films on "The Paintings of India", 26 films on the "Sculpture of India" and a photographic exhibition

on The Buddhist Heritage of the World.

Behl's works are reflective of a deep spirituality. "The compassionate philosophy of life which is enshrined in the ancient traditions of South Asia inspire me to work and to share these with the world," he says. His travels to the famed ancient Ajanta Caves in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra in India were especially life-changing. As he says, "I came out of the caves, a person with something to share. I had come to realise that much beyond individuality and the personal needs and egos, there was something more important. There was this marvelous, marvelous philosophical understanding of the unity of all living things."

The travails of being an independent filmmaker haven't dissuaded Behl from following his heart. His work on Ajanta opened up new doors and gave him worldwide recognition. It gave him flexibility in his choice of subjects and along with making films he lectures and exhibits extensively.

Will the Batman movie lead into a trilogy?

Once press for "War for the Planet of the Apes" wraps up in the next week or so, Matt Reeves will be dedicating his full attention on the DC Extended Universe's Batman movie. With nearly 80 years of comic book history, there's more than enough material to sustain the Dark Knight across numerous movies, and given the character's cinematic history, one wouldn't be jumping the gun assuming that this won't be his only DCEU standalone tale. While Reeves has given some thought about what could happen in sequels, for now he's focusing on telling just one good Batman story as opposed to plotting out an entire trilogy. He explained: "I have ideas about an arc, but really, the important thing is just to start... you have to start with one. You know, you have to start with a story that begins something."

The only specific plot information that has been revealed about the Batman movie is that it will see the eponymous protagonist battling Slade Wilson, aka Deathstroke, although since Matt Reeves is reportedly re-writing the script, it's unclear if the orange and black-garbed assassin will still appear. Reeves has also expressed interest in telling a "noir-driven, detective" story that shows the audience what's going on in his head and heart.

The Batman movie still doesn't have a release date assigned yet.

Source: Cinemablend



IT'S TRUE!



Vivien Leigh, who won an Oscar for her 1939 performance in "Gone With The Wind" auctioned the trophy for \$563,000 at Sotheby's in New York in 1993. Winners since 1950 have been made to pledge not to sell their statue.