

THROUGH THE EYES

# ANDREW KISHOR

*A living legend who is one of the most popular playback singers of Bangladesh, Andrew Kishor has an astounding portfolio which can easily baffle anyone. He is considered as the playback king of the musical industry of our country who had already played back 15,000 songs. He has been active in the Bangladeshi music industry since 1980s. He started taking music lessons under Ustad Abdul Aziz Bachchu, the then chief music director of Rajshahi Betar. After the Liberation War, Andrew Kishor was enlisted in the radio In Nazrul Sangeet, Rabindra Sangeet, Folk, Modern and Patriotic songs. His first playback song was in the Shibli Sadik directed film 'Mail Train', where he first started working alongside music director Alam Khan. However, the studio went bust and the film and songs were never released. Andrew Kishor would have to wait until the successful release of the A.J. Mintu directed 1977 film 'Protigga', once again working alongside Alam Khan, which included the hit 'Ekchor Jay Choley'. His remarkable library of playback songs include 'Amar Shara Deho', 'Amar Buker Moddhekhane', 'Jiboner Golpo Achhe Baki Olpo', 'Dak Diyachhen Doyal Amare', 'Bhalobeshe Gelam Shudhu' and 'Haire Manush Rongin Fanush', with the last song (written by the multi-talented virtuoso Syed Shamsul Haque) winning him the first of eight National Film Awards. His playback work goes beyond borders, having been featured in films from Bangladesh, India (Calcutta and Mumbai) and Pakistan, with one of his greatest honors being singing a Hindi song by the legendary R.D. Burman for the film 'Shotru' - the only Bangladeshi playback singer with this distinction.*

## INSPIRATION

Of course, my parents have inspired me since my childhood. They are my idols. My mother never blamed others for anything, rather she always tried to cope with the difficult situations with dignity and poise, and my father's caring, steadfast and disciplined lifestyle has always inspired me to perfect my craft, even at this point of my life. I have also been inspired by the late great Ustad Abdul Aziz Bachchu. He was always a very talented and skilled artist, who was never afraid to let his voice be heard, even in times of crisis, to show his support of the arts. He was also a great teacher, and had incredible eye for identifying not only the hidden talent a student possessed, but how that potential could be tapped into. Last, but certainly not least, I have always been inspired by the great music director, Alam Khan. He has been a great teacher and a great friend all these years, and even after all these years of working with him, I am still in awe of his genius.

## PHILOSOPHY

I am a simple man with a simple life. My father always taught me to live without over indulgences. He always taught me that "excess of anything is bad". I also try to always keep an open mind, as we are all people and we all have different experiences, emotions and trains of thought. I like to believe that anyone's heart and soul can be touched through the power of music. I personally feel that the greatest award I have ever received is the joy that shines down on me like incandescent sunlight every time I get to perform on stage. Their love of my music is one of the fulfilling aspects of my life.

## VIEWS ON HIS PROFESSION

To me, music is like food for the mind and soul, and while I am honoured to be able make a living from music, I would probably still be involved with music somehow even if I hadn't been successful. The industry has been constantly evolving, and the



newcomers are showing some promise; I wish them well on their personal journeys. Moving forward, I hope that the senior artists and the government will take necessary steps to groom aspiring artists and to continue to maintain a high standard for music.

## MUSIC

My thirst for music is ceaseless, and I like

to indulge in as much variety of music as I can, to keep broadening my horizons. If I had to choose my favourite artists, that too is very difficult, but the shortlist would include our honourable Mehedi Hasan, Lata Mangeshkar, Mohammad Rafi, Manna De, Kishore Kumar, Asha Bhosle, Sabina Yasmin and Runa Laila. I cannot say enough great things about

their incredible bodies of work throughout the years.

## FILMS

I have watched different movies of different languages. Of them, *Parinda* is remarkably memorable for its background music. *Gupi Gain Bagha Bain* by Satyajit Ray is another amazing movie that I have watched for several times.

## PASSION BEYOND MUSIC

It has been an aspiration of mine to make lasting contributions to the people of my home town of Rajshahi and beyond, particularly through music. I have also always dreamed of spreading the name of my Ustad Abdul Aziz Bachchu to everyone's hearts, and so I have been hard at working trying to establish the "Ustad Abdul Aziz Bachchu Sriti Shongshod." It is an organization that doesn't only provide aid to the deprived folks in Rajshahi, but is also dedicated to supporting cultural organizations in Rajshahi by providing equipment, venues and helping to promote events centered around music, poetry, drama, dance and other culturally significant arts. This is not only for protecting the rich, cultural history of Bangladesh, but also to help inspire a new wave of creativity. The organization also hosts memorial events for and provides aid to the families of deceased artists, and casts spotlights on local heroes who fought in the war for the Independence of Bangladesh. I hope that in the future, this Shongshod will receive more sponsor support, and will start a new wave of cultural growth and prosperity.

## IDOLS

Of course, my parents are my idols. My mother never blamed others for anything, rather she always tried to cope up with the situation very politely. And my father is the person in my life have left deep impressions on me.

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By: Shawreen Rahman