

RAFIQUL ALAM

A legendary singer of Bangladesh, Rafiqul Alam is mostly known for his heart-melting melodious voice. He has recorded over 300 playback songs for Bangladeshi films. He grew up in Rajshahi and trained under Pandit Haripada Das, Ustad Abdul Jabbar Khan and Ustad Sagiruddin Khan in Kolkata. He also learnt Rabindra Sangeet and songs of Atul Prasad from Kanika Bandyopadhyay and Ajit Roy. He has received many prestigious awards including the Bangladesh National Film Award (twice) and Cine Journalist's Association Award. He will always be cherished for his remarkable contributions in the liberation war and the music industry of Bangladesh.

INSPIRATION

I am favored with an indisputably cultural backdrop; and my inspiration probably transmitted through gene. Since my childhood, I had a feeling that music is the art which I was born for. I don't even know the exact phase when I started getting into music. My father and my uncle used to play radio and gramophone which were very inspirational to my musical journey. My sister and brothers are also my inspirations. My elder brother, Sarwar Jahan, the former Chairman of the Bengali Department of Rajshahi University, had an incredibly melodious voice. He was a very talented performer and has always been my inspiration. My younger brother, Khalequzzaman, is very motivational and is one of the most outstanding guitarists in Dhaka. Unquestionably, my ustad, some of my relatives and friends, Badol mama, Laili apa and my audiences have been my life-time inspiration.

PHILOSOPHY

I want to see everything very analytically. Since childhood, I had a thought that life should be framed as beautifully as possible. One's happiness can't depend only on the property he owns, it's not mandatory to live in luxury. Rather, one can be happier with a small hut if he has the vision for dazzling dreams. I can feel the depth of it because I have hailed from a fairly rich economic background. I always keep in mind that as a human being, I have some responsibilities to my surrounding, my society, my country and to the world as well.

VIEWS ON HIS PROFESSION

It is an unassailable fact that every artwork comes from passion. Though it is true that for livelihood, everyone needs some financial backup, but one should not lose the path of ethics. The artists from our young generation are really very talented and I appreciate their creativity. But, it is my request to the young generation that they establish themselves as sustainable singers. To achieve this there is no alternative to constant practice. Together, we should take necessary steps to enrich our culture and uplift the taste of our future generation.

MUSIC

My everlasting thirst for music never makes me tired. It's a very difficult job to choose a specific song as my favorite one. Since childhood, *Bashi Dao Mor Hatete* has been one of my most favorite songs. It has an amazing melody. *Ogo Nithur Dorodi* by Kanika Bandyopadhyay is another song from my topmost favorite list. Last but not least, I can't ever forget the majestic melody of the song *Ke Kandere Nodir*

movies which make me wonder a lot.

BOOKS

To me, books have the strength to frame one's personality. My first read novel is "Mejodidi" by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay which is still amazing me. *Kori Diye Kinlam* by Bimal Mitra is another book with a wonderful story. I also love to read the short stories of Hasan Azizul Haque.

FUTURE PLANS

I never had any specific plan with

Sultana, in a program which is a tribute to the legend "Kishore Kumar". It will probably held on the 18th August at Sydney in Australia. We have planned to sing Lucky Akhand's song on that stage with proper tune and lyric but in a different approach.

IDOLS

My idols have been changing from phase to phase. Of course, my elder brother has always been my idol. At a very early age, I dreamt to sing like



Kinaray sung by the legend Abdul Alim. Also, *Tumi Kokhon Eshe Dariye Acho Amar Ojante* by our great singer Mahmudun Nabi is another wonderful song which never fails to baffle me.

FILMS

Watching movies is another thing which always pleases me. *Bridge on the River Kwai* is a film with an amazing script. *Repulsion* and *Titanic* are other

music, but I do update myself. Say for example, 20 years back, the style of using microphone, the pattern of delivering voice, expressions and so on was different from now. Therefore, updating is a necessity nowadays. One month ago, I performed in three states of America where I have sung various songs according to the demand. I have planned to perform along with my better half, Abida

our honorable Abdul Alim and the heart-melting melody of his *Mono Re* is still in my heart. Our beloved Mahmudun Nabi, Shahnaz Rahmatullah, Ferdousi Rahman, Amir Khaa, Manabendro Mukhopadhyay, Shyamal Mitra and Hemanta Mukhopadhyay are my other idols in my entire musical life.

By Shawreen Rahman