



# LAILA HASAN

*As a legendary dancer, choreographer, actress, theatre and television personality, Laila Hasan is a much revered name in Bangladesh. She completed her MA in Philosophy from Dhaka University. She was taught dance by Manibardhan Mahashay, Ajit Sanyal, Babu Ram Singh, GA Mannan and Shamar Bhattacharya from Bulbul Academy for Fine Arts (BAFA). She has earned praise for social activism as well. She has been the presenter, choreographer and theme-maker of the TV show 'Rumjhum' on BTV since 1980. Some of today's well-known performers, Eshita, Tarin, Tamalika, Chayanika, Srabonti, Riya and Nadia, were some of her students on the show. In childhood, some of her stage dramas are 'Neel Darpan', 'Kongkobotir Ghatay', 'Keranir Jeebon', 'Chhuti' (by our Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore) and 'Ferdousy'. In 1961, she earned praise for presenting the dance dramas from Rabindranath's 'Mayar Khela', 'Chitrangoda' and 'Shyama'. Her work on the dance dramas 'Shyamal Matir Dhoratole' and Rabindranath's 'Chondalika' are remarkably renowned. Some of her self-directed dance dramas are 'Shyama (1974)', 'Chitrangoda (1977)', 'Shaap Mochon (1977)' and 'Chondalika (1980s). Some of her dance dramas from our rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's 'Bidrohi', 'Shindhu', 'Badolo Borishono', 'Shilpi' and also from our beloved poet Sukanta Bhattacharya's 'Priyotomeshu', 'Runner', 'Obak Prithibi' and 'Nakshi Kathar Math' which was directed by her dance guru GA Mannan. In 1969, her performance in 'Roktokorobi' was staged on Bangla Academy premises by Dhaka University Shangskriti Shongshod; it was directed by Syed Hasan Imam and earned a huge response. Some of her TV dramas are 'Mukhora Romoni Boshikoroni' from the drama 'Taming of the Shrew' by the legend William Shakespeare and 'Roktokorobi' by Rabindranath Tagore. The first serial of BTV 'Dompti' and a TV opera 'Mon Poboner Nao' were introduced by her. Her self-directed remarkable plays include 'Kajol Rekha', 'Behula Shundari', 'Mahua', 'Rani Bhabanir Path', 'Ratnadwip' and 'Amir Sawdagar' produced by Abdullah Al Mamun. Her acted films are 'Ei To Prothom', 'Moner Manush' and short films are 'Chhuti' of Rabindranath Tagore and 'Shada Kalo Prem'. She is the member of Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, the President of the female committee of Sector Commanders Forum – Liberation War '71 and the President of Khelaghor. She founded the dance organization 'Nataraj (1990)', which started theatre stage drama with Nayeem Hasan Suja (secretary), Ashok Dutta (director) and A. D. Dulal in 1996. Laila Hasan is the President of Nataraj and a lifetime member of Bangla Academy and West Bengal Dance Federation. She is also a member of Asiatic Society and President of Bangladesh Nritya Shilpi Shangstha. She has published two books 'Hridoye Bajey Nupur (1996)' and 'Mohonrupey'. She received many prestigious awards including Bachshash Award (2001), Kazi Mahbub Ullah Begum Zebunnessa Trust Award – Gold Medal (2001) and Ekushey Padak (2010). Her tireless contributions have made her a unique and honorable personality of our country.*

## INSPIRATION

I was born into a family of cultural enthusiasts. Thus, my first inspiration is my family. I started dancing at a very early age where everything was framed under the heavenly grace of arts and culture. My grandparents were involved in politics; simultaneously, they were very cultural-minded. My parents and siblings were also very inspirational. As far I can remember, at that time, everyone used to call me "Dancing Doll" as I used to dance gracefully like a doll. That compliment was also my inspiration. After marriage my husband Syed Hasan Imam has always been extremely supportive by flourishing my potential. My dance instructors, all my co-artists and audiences have become my inspirations.

## PHILOSOPHY

Life is momentary. In this evanescent jour-

ney, my motto is not to hurt anyone. It steers me toward the path of morality. I think such a philosophy can greatly motivate a person to become a generous human being. I also believe in loving others. It gives me sanity as well as ethereal peace.

## VIEWS ON HER PROFESSION

Dance is one of the most expressible forms of art which has an immeasurable depth. It is the mother of art with a divine beauty. Joy, anger, sorrow and what not can be expressed by the grace of spontaneous motions. Introducing the young generation to the root of dance may help them wear and feel the glory of dance. Nowadays, some of the newcomers are doing exceptionally good and I am very hopeful to them.

## MUSIC

I love listening to different types of music

in my leisure hours. Undoubtedly, Rabindra Sangeet is on the top of my favorite lists. Whenever I go through this, I find celestial peace.

## FILMS

I always love to watch the movies of Satyajit Ray. Pather Panchali is one of my most favorite movies. Also, Ora Egaro Jon by Chashi Nazrul Islam and Jeebon Theke Neya by Zahir Raihan are some of my top most favorite movies of our country.

## BOOKS

Reading books was like an addiction to me. Since childhood, I used to read a lot of books. The novels and short stories of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam are my absolute favorites. The writings of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay and Sunil Gangopadhyay are some of my favorites.

## FUTURE PLANS

To me, dance is a form of display that is empowering. I have a dream that one day the empowerment of women will be established in our society. I want to find out how dance empowers people to think differently and independently. It has been my aspiration to remove all the barriers amongst people of the world. I hope, someday my dream will come true through the spiritual beauty of us.

## IDOLS

All the great personalities who have left signatures in the empowerment of women are my idols. Remarkably, Begum Rokeya and Jahanara Imam are some of those who have left deep impressions on me.

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By Shawreen Rahman