

Dipankar Dipon shares his success 'Formula' for Dhaka Attack

FAHMIM FERDOUS

With his debut film "Dhaka Attack" continuing its sweeping run in cinemas across the country, director Dipankar Dipon talks to The Daily Star about the conceptualization, design and inside stories from the film.

How did the idea and story of "Dhaka Attack" come about?

Dipon: I was meeting my friend Sunny (Sunny Sanwar, ADC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and story writer of "Dhaka Attack") at the Detective Branch of Police office for some other work, and I saw a group of policemen sitting with headphones on with laptops, kind of like a cyber café. I asked him what they are doing, and he told me they were analyzing phone calls. This was new to me; until then, for me the image of police was just in police stations. I had just come back from Mumbai and was looking for stories to make a film, and I felt like general people don't know this side of policing and it could be a premise. So we submitted a proposal and did a presentation to the erstwhile commissioner of police, and he was very interested. He told me that it should not become a documentary; it has to be a cinema. That day I felt like I found what I was looking for. Sunny wrote a very modern story, and a team of us started giving it cinematic structure; a screenplay, dialogue etc. At every stage we found a new challenge and we focused on that.

What was your target audience for the film?



PHOTO: STAR

Dipon: You cannot really plan it. If you make a film with a lot of care for one target group, others will also like it. "The Lion King" or "Shrek" were made for children only, but there is no age group that hasn't loved them. I thought what I wanted my film to be, and I ended up with a three-point formula. The first was: after entering the cinema, I wanted the audience to forget what problems he has at home. This is what people want when they go to a cinema: to be immersed in another world. So I had to make the audience believe that this world exists; these characters exist. The second was: the story has to be unpredictable. We naturally want to assume what will happen next. If I could do that, I would get the audience's respect, and keep them hooked to the film. The third was I wanted to create some experiences that can only be enjoyed on the big screen, and not on as phone or computer display. I have seen in India when

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"Dabangg" released, outside the cinema hall they were selling the film's CD for 20 Rupees, but people were buying a 400 Rupees to see it in theatres. I thought my target demographic will be ages 15-30. These are the people who have the time, energy and means to spend time with friends, and go out most. If I could get them to watch my film, I'd have a big audience.

"Dhaka Attack" is successful among audiences of all classes. Why do you

think it is?

Dipon: I believe the gap between the 'class' and the 'mass' is becoming smaller ... although I don't believe in those terms myself. I wanted to walk right down the middle of that gap. I have seen the film in many different cinemas, and realized one thing: the points in the film where the multiplex audience claps doesn't get the same response in single-screens; and vice versa. We designed the film in a way as to tap into the emotions of audience of all classes. You may ask why the heroine will try to stop his lover from going into danger at a climax moment, but it is true. At one point, we become selfish. We don't see the greater good of the country if it at the cost of our loved ones. And it may not seem realistic from the general storyline, but if you look at it from the girl's point of view, it is realistic.

The villain of the film was a big surprise to the audience. How did you end up casting Taskeen Rahman for it?

Dipon: We auditioned many people for it before casting him. At the auditions we would show a killing scene from "No Country for Old Men" with Javier Bardem. That is the character we wanted: looks normal from the outside but if you look at his eyes you'll know something is seriously wrong with him. Meanwhile, Taskeen's role model for this was Heath Ledger's The Joker (from "The Dark Knight"). So the character of Jisan became a combination of the two. We needed a villain who is not instantly recognizable by the audience, because he appears in disguise a few times before his reveal. But it had to be a character with a strong back-story and powerful acting so people would believe this one small-framed guy can cause so much carnage. And Taskeen played the role so well that it saved us; because if Taskeen failed in his role, it would be hard for the film to succeed.

ASK ME ANYTHING

FAROOKI-TISHA coming on TDS Facebook Live



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Save the date! Mostofa Sarwar Farooki and Nusrat Imrose Tisha are coming to The Daily Star's monthly Facebook Live Show, Ask Me Anything this Sunday, October 22 at 8pm.

The director-actor power couple is gearing up for their big film release, with "Doob" ("No Bed of Roses") set to hit the cinemas on October 27. With a lot of buzz surrounding the film, this is the perfect chance for all of you to ask them everything you have wanted to about it. And that's not all. Yesterday, there was some more exciting news from the two: Farooki's next film "Saturday Afternoon" will go on floors in December, and the high-profile project will also feature Tisha in a central role.

Any subscriber to The Daily Star's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/dailystarnews>) can join the Facebook Live session, and pour in their love, adulation and questions to Farooki and Tisha, and maybe get some insight on "Doob".

WEEKENDER

"I always look towards others for advice"

...SHANAREI DEVI SHANU

A CORRESPONDENT

Former Lux Superstar Shanarei Devi Shanu is a popular face on the small screen, and the actress is also known to be a talented dancer. The actress is currently occupying many a role in a few drama serials across different television networks, and is gearing up for more. In a recent conversation with The Daily Star, the artiste opens up about her life, and more.

How do you like spending your weekends?

Shanarei Devi Shanu: Being a person who is always on the run, the first thing I always look forward to on my days off is sleeping. However my first priority is my son, and I try to give him as much time as possible. We love going out to all our favourite places, and enjoy rickshaw rides. For shorter trips we often frequent TSC, or other places near our house, but on longer holidays we all make plans for trips.

What are you currently working on?

Shanarei Devi Shanu: I am currently working on a few on-going drama serials. "Jolrong," directed by Sohel Rahman is currently being aired on ntv, and the Manik

Manabik helmed play "Mon Chhuyech Mon" is currently aired by SATV. Rtv is airing "Oloshpur", directed by Al Hazen, and recently I am working on a new play to be aired by channel i, titled "Shaah Bhai Chompa."

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

Shanarei Devi Shanu: I always look towards others for advice, whether it be regarding my personal life or my career. But when I was starting out in my career, I was struggling and disheartened a lot. My little brother gave me a book, and in it he wrote something I always remember to this day whenever I feel down- "Didi, tui kokhono dana jhaptano bondho korish na" - because I can only fly if I take the leap.

If you had a time machine, what time period would you like to revisit and why?

Shanarei Devi Shanu: If I had a time machine, I would go back to my childhood years in Sylhet.

Are you a morning person, or a night owl?

Shanarei Devi Shanu: I am neither- because I need to cope with whatever my schedule demands!



PHOTO: STAR

SALMA

set to head out for London

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Popular singer Salma has her hands full, with stage shows, playback singing and television appearances. Now, the busy artiste is packing her bags for a trip to London, where she is scheduled to perform in four stage shows.

"I am going to be touring for 12 days," Salma told The Daily Star. "Performing overseas gives me a different kind of joy."

However, the singer is determined to finish off other pressing ventures here first. The artiste will make a short trip to Barisal next week for a stage performance. She is also working on a new music video, which is being on a grand scale, she revealed.

Aside from live performances, the singer recently completed recording songs for two new films, and is currently in talks for more.

Salma is also set to release two new original folk singles composed by Shawkat Ali Emon, and described them as melancholic songs. "These songs are a gift to my listeners, and I hope to see them received well," she said.

Heath Ledger wanted Christian Bale to hit him on the set of "The Dark Knight"

Heath Ledger's performance as the Joker in "The Dark Knight" is one of the all-time greats. He owns every frame he's in and dominates the picture to the point where Batman almost becomes a supporting character in his own movie.

Ledger's death following production added an unnecessary mystique to the performance, providing a bizarre mythology that Ledger got in too deep and that it cost him his life. While that may play into the notion of great art require sacrifice, it disregards the actual work acting requires as well as the personal demons Ledger probably wrestled with.

In Joseph McCabe's new book "100 Things Batman Fans Should Know & Do Before They Die", Christian Bale recalls how Ledger wanted to be physically beaten during the interrogation scene because he didn't want to break character, according to a report on Collider. It quotes:

"Our first scene was in an interrogation room together, and I saw that he's



a helluva actor who's completely committed to it and totally gets the tone that Chris [Nolan] is trying to create with this. We're not going for actors revealing their enjoyment of playing a wacky caricature. We're treating this as serious drama. You go into character and you stay in the character. I love

that. I find that so ridiculous that I love it, and I take that very seriously. Heath was definitely embracing that. When he was in the makeup and the garb he was in character the whole time; and when he took it off he was absolutely fantastic company to be around.

"As can be seen in the movie, Batman starts beating the Joker and realizes that this is not the ordinary foe. Because the more I beat him the more he enjoys it. The more I'm giving him satisfaction. Heath was behaving in a very similar fashion. He was kinda egging me on. I was saying, 'You know what, I really don't need to actually hit you. It's going to look just as good if I don't.' And he's going, 'Go on. Go on. Go on...'. He was slamming himself around, and there were tiled walls inside of that set which were cracked and dented from him hurling himself into them. His commitment was total.

The anecdote, coming from Bale who himself is known for his incredible commitment to his roles, definitely adds a layer to the person Ledger became while filming "Dak Knight", and is sure to have fans of his work busy in discussion over the character and the film.

Source: Collider

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED