

NOORAN SISTERS

The Nooran Sisters- Sultana and Jyoti Nooran are a Sufi duo, hailing from the Sham Chaurasia gharana of music. They are renowned for their outstanding work done in Coke Studio and various other platforms.

Is this your first visit to Bangladesh?

No, this is our second time in Dhaka. We really enjoyed the last year's crowd. People were enjoying our songs a lot. That is why we have brought some new songs with new music this time 'round.

How did you feel when you got the chance to sing for the Bangladeshi audience again?

It is a great experience for us. We don't really differentiate the love we get in India and Bangladesh. The warmth is always the same. It is because of the songs we practice. Sufi songs give us the strength to make a heart to heart connection with the audience. These songs sooth our heart and that enables us to work harder.

Can we expect anything new from this year's performance?

Yes, you can. We try to come up with new songs and music every time we perform. We have com-

posed new renditions for the Dhaka International Folk Fest 2017. You will get to listen to some fantastic music this year.

How much support do you get from your family?

We started singing since we were children. Since then, music has been our life. We never travelled much, did not see much of the world. We were always busy with music. Even after our marriage, except for our husbands, children and music we do not have anything else in life. Even Jyoti's (Jyoti Nooran) son accompanies me in my performances. My in laws are very supportive of my music, I always find my husband beside me. My grandmother, Swarn Noora is the pioneer of Sufi songs in our family. With all the family members' support we have come this far. She is a true legend and we have learned a lot from her. Amongst all the family members, however, our father expects the most from us. He always mentioned that if my grandmother could do such a splendid job at her time, why can't we? He never differentiates between boys and girls in terms of performance.

Do you have any particular story of your grandmother that inspires you?

My grandmother was very precise in her singing. Her father always inspired her to be the best in what she does. He never allowed us to concentrate on anything else while practicing.

Do you listen to any Bangladeshi artists?

We have heard Runa Laila's songs. They are lovely. We would love to hear songs from more artists.

What, in your opinion, makes a song good?

The lyrics have to be good. The lyrics should be something that every listener will understand and like. To us, folk is the proverbial father, and music is the mother. Thus, it is a holy combination. We always prefer lyrics over melody.

Do you ever plan to do anything other than Sufi music?

Not really, we find peace in Sufi songs. This is our forte. Sometimes we try some new things for our audience but we will always stick to our roots. Sufi music is something that an entire family can enjoy together. Sufi songs are more than art; it is a form of gratitude to the creator.

By Sadi Shahnewaz

