

COVER STORY

FLASHES OF FLAMBOYANCE POPY



Popular Dhaliwood actress Popy is a woman who, in truth, needs no introduction. Her incredible beauty and talent have given her a country-wide following. She has been working in this industry for more than a decade, and in this versatile career she has experienced branching out into television, modeling and music videos. Her outstanding performance in 'Karagar,' 'Megher Koley Rod' and 'Gangajatra' crowned her the National Award for the Best Actress, showing how behind that flamboyance lies serious dedication to her craft. Star Showbiz presents to you an interview with Popy where she talks about her career, personality and much more!



Thank you so much for your time. Tell us something about your upcoming film *Juddhoshishu*. *Juddhoshishu* is a movie about the Liberation War. The plot is based on 1971 and post-war Bangladesh. I am working under the direction of Shahidul Haq Khan in this film. This film is about a "Birangona" and her child struggling with all the odds that a post-war country offers. The film shows how a child develops itself amidst a chaotic political surrounding, and it revolves around the lives of the mother and the child. It is a film with history, plot and climax. I hope my viewers appreciate this work!

We have been witnessing your absence from commercial film for quite a while. Why is it so?

This absence is actually an accumulated reaction of some actions. I started my career with commercial movies and for a long period, I did nothing other than that. But after working for some years, I realized that everything I had been doing was making me a popular heroine, not an actress. I wanted to become an actress. This realization changed my life and my career quite actively. Another reason behind taking such a decision was that I didn't like some of the directors' approach towards the mainstream commercial productions. Some of them misused our talents and made movies that had nothing new to offer. Changing my genre was a big risk for me, yet I took it. I did this to give my viewers something new, something different.

Script, cast, director-which one do you value the most before signing a film?

Script is the most invaluable object to make a good movie. Director and cast are also important, but they come later. If a director is experienced and confident enough to make a good movie, a weighty script is the most precious tool for him. We have more than 50 years of glorious history of Bangla Cinema because we had films with good scripts. If we go through all the remarkable films of Dhaliwood, we would observe the reign of significant scripts. Sometimes a good story can make us overlook the small gaps in the film.

Why didn't you do the movies you signed with Partho Ghosh and Mahesh Bhatt?

I was supposed to do two movies in Bollywood – one with Partho Ghosh and another with Mahesh Bhatt. I even attended some formal sessions at Jagdish Mali's place. He was very pleased with my acting. As a result, I got two films offered by two renowned directors from India. Right before leaving Bangladesh for shooting, all my Bangladeshi directors and producers sat together and discussed the annual loss that they were going to face due to my absence. After thinking about their schedule I could not do those movies. I

valued my root and set my preferences here.

How do you prepare yourself as a 'certain' character after reading a script?

I think this is the time when an artist goes through a mixed feeling – a feeling of joy and nervousness. The same goes for me. I always think from different angles to portray a character on-screen. Before doing *Gangajatra* I had to go through a series of training. I played the role of a 'Dom' (Pathologist) in that movie. It was a very non-glamorous character for which I studied the lifestyle, language and culture of the Dom community and molded myself into one of them. These are the home works an artist needs to do after signing a film.



You have been maintaining body fitness for a while now. What made you lose so much weight in so less time?

Gaining or losing weight actually depends on the character I want to portray in the film. For example in *Gangajatra*, I portrayed the character of a healthy village woman. I deliberately gained some extra weight for that film. But for the next film *Rani Kuthir Baki Itihash*, I had to cut down that excess fat. Irrespective of movies, I think everybody should maintain a healthy and sound body. I know it's a tough job to maintain but the appreciation from people is worth all the pain.

Interviewed by Sanjida Chowdhury
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