

THROUGH THE EYES

AFROZA BANU

To Live Is To Love

A very dear face of the Bangladeshi showbiz industry, she has contributed to the growth of theater, TV and cinema with a heartfelt and unfeigned approach. Winner of numerous prestigious accolades, Afroza Banu shields her inborn touchstone of benevolence and plans to remain in the hearts of her admirers as an epitome of espousing true art and pure compassion.



MADE OUT OF SOFT CLAY

I used to be very mischievous as a kid, full of curiosity and playfulness. My parents have also been very encouraging; they never tried to trap the bubbling butterfly. My grandfather's hobby was to write plays. He would often make us read his scripts and rehearse the plays. So, I had a total artistic setup in my surrounding, which, little by little, helped me fall in love with acting. I would notice all the hustle and bustle around me with snooty eyes, and experiment with whatever was available in my toy-bucket. I was truly lucky to have been brought up in such a culturally motivated surrounding. Not all the parents have the eyes to recognize the artist in their children, not all possess the will to patronize. I never had to face any such difficulty in my journey.

COMPASSION IS THE COMPANION

As Tagore said – *Shobare bashre bhalo, noile tor moner kalo, ghuchbe naa re*; all my life, my philosophy was to love and let love. I love my city, my state, my country, my compatriots and my family; and always try to be compassionate in every way possible. For example, I often

check if my cooking stove is properly turned off, because otherwise I might contribute to the wastage of my country's precious natural gas. Similarly, my goal always remains to cause the minimum damage and extract the maximum utility, from each and every element of life. And my father has been my idol who has greatly inspired me to choose such a lifestyle.

LIVING FOR THE MOMENT

I don't really have any long term plan for television acting. Apart from acting, I have pursued different career paths from time to time. However, I eventually ended up coming back to acting. So if you ask me what am I doing all these for, the easiest way to answer would be – for nothing worldly. I have only felt this hunger for acting inside me, and proudly allowed myself to follow where this dire hunger takes me to. At the same time, I have long been a part of theater dramas as well. Theater acting requires certain level of body fitness, which I am not sure for how long I can keep up with. But on stage or off, I will always be in touch with my theater associates. Our actors are now doing marvelously well. The whole the-

ater scenario of Bangladesh is now evolving to see better days ahead. And it will be my pleasure to be a part of this uprising journey in every way possible. These days, I am busy with *Jokhon Kokhono* and *Shonabhan*, two TV dramas currently on air. And also acting in two other dramas, although I am not sure when they will be aired.

DEAR TO MY HEART

Choosing one or two favorite books would really be difficult. When I first read *Pother Daabi* by Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay, I had felt as if there could never be a better novel than this. One novel that has left a deep impression is *Bharat Bhaager Oshrukona* by Dr. Korunamoy Goswami. I think I have yet a whole realm of literary masterpieces left to explore. I haven't seen too many foreign films. *Jibon Theke Newa* and *Kokhono Asheni* are two of my favorite Bengali films. I also admire the recent wave of Indian-Bangla art films. Our films may not be of international standard yet, but judging by the context and social scenario where the films are made, I think we are seeing the best possible outcomes now. I am a huge admirer of Uttam Kumar. Had

I been born earlier, I would definitely have endeavored to work alongside the maestro. I also love to listen to music, I am fairly open to all kinds of genres. From modern contemporaries to old classics, I have a diverse taste depending on the diversity of my mood. However, for me, Tagore songs work like elixirs. We listen to music in our house mostly during the morning, and the mood of Tagore's ageless creations fit just perfect with our morning routines.

FOR THE MEMOIR

I want to work till the last day of my life. Work is worship – I believe in this motto wholeheartedly. It is my work and devotion, for which people know me today. It is through my work that I have come thus far. I absolutely despise sitting idle. It is not that I do not need brakes. For family and other purposes, I have taken breaks as well. But the breaks never stopped me from coming back; they only helped me to rejuvenate. I would request the dear audience and readers to pray for me so I can continue to serve them with my performances.

By Tasbir Iftekhar