

CENTRE STAGE

TÊTE-À-TÊTE WITH THE BEAUTIFUL NADIA

PHOTO:
SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



You started off your career as a child artist in *Baro Rokom Manush*. Tell us about your journey in the showbiz industry.

Back then, it was like a hobby for me. Over the years it has turned into my passion and profession. At the beginning, I was not much into acting; rather dance used to fascinate me a lot. *Notun Kuri* brought out the actor in me. After working in *Baro Rokom Manush* which was on air in 1992, I got busy with my studies and dance, where acting did not get any significant space. In fact, I would have probably dismissed acting. There is a story behind my coming back to acting in 2000. I always had an irresistible inclination towards dance. At that time, only the well known faces of television used to get chance to perform in dance events. I decided to show in some television dramas in order to find a place in dance shows. Gradually, adopting completely different characters, portraying them realistically before the camera and the love and support of my seniors, co-artists nurtured my interest in acting. Since 2004, I have been working as an actor on a regular basis.

We hardly see you in TV commercials these days. Why is that?

At the beginning of my career, I worked in multiple television commercials. The primary problem of working in TV commercials these days is the inadequate remuneration. The companies use my face-value for advertising their products hence I would not like to compromise my honorarium at this stage of my career. I have appeared in two TV commercials this year, *Sharif Gas Stove* and *Hair Code* hair color. In August, I worked in another commercial of *Hitachi Refrigerator*, though it was an online video concept. Last year, I appeared in just one TVC which was of *Pran UHT* milk. I give importance to the story, director and remuneration while deciding to work in a TVC.

How is your journey going on with *Nrityokotha*?

We shifted our school to Banashree at the beginning of this year. My sincere gratitude to Likhon Roy for his relentless

endeavours to nurture *Nrityokotha*. Since he is a full-time dancer which I am not, he puts a lot of efforts and invests ample time in our school. We have recently performed in a show of BTV. *Nrityokotha* has always prioritized quality over quantity. Many potential dancers have emerged from our school. We still cannot afford to have a lot of students in our school since the capacity is somewhat limited. Our students frequently perform in television shows as a team.

Tell us about your recent works.

I am preoccupied with shooting for TV dramas these days. Right now I am acting in *Akkelganj Home Service* of J R Akash, *Chatamghar* of Ratan Hasan. Both these serials are comedy and my co-artist is

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Mosharraf Karim. I have recently been signed for *Mr Tension* which is ongoing on NTV. Jahid Hasan is acting in it. Altogether, I have a hectic schedule shooting for more than five serials at a time.

What are the prerequisites for you to act in a drama or serial?

This is our failure that we have created a big audience that only looks for comedy materials in any form of artwork. I personally relish working in dramas with credible storyline and relatable direction. I am all for comedy dramas as well, but as long as those are not some sort of

buffonary. Years ago, I acted in a serial *Chor Knata*; despite its convincing and comprehensive story, it could not arrest people's attention, as *Alashpur* – another drama I worked in – could. I worked in a drama by Mizanur Rahman called *Golpogulo Amader*. This had a wonderful script. Another prerequisite for a drama is its script. We have very few originaive playwrights in our industry. Brindaban Das is one of them. If you have watched *Bhaager Maa*, you would know what a dynamic script can look like. Pantho Shahriar, Masum Reza are some of the other potential playwrights of our television industry.

The audience is gradually getting detached from the television. Some of your dramas like *Home Minister*, *Bhaager Maa*, *High Pressure 2* have millions of views on YouTube. What's your view on this?

We have to embrace this wind of change. Like every other thing in the world, this change has both positive and negative aftermaths. On YouTube, we get an evident notion about how many people are watching us and as well as their opinions which help us to determine the curves of our work. The negative side is, followers of some selective artists upload their preferred actors' works only. It seems, the number of fans and followers online would decide the credibility of an actor. As for myself, I have a separate fan page, other than that I keep my social media profiles as personal as I can. Thus a lot of budding young actors as well as brilliant senior actors are being kept in the dark, out of the limelight. This is problematic. I shoot almost every day of the week. Quite a few serials starring me are currently on air. Yet at times people ask me in a huff that they don't see me work. The reason is obvious!

You have recently acted in an online drama called *Debor* for Sanjay Barua's YouTube channel *Nakshi TV*.

Yes, this is my second work in an online video concept. I acted in another one for Eid-ul-Fitr which was directed by ASM Ahsan. The best thing about online video concepts is the freedom of artists. Also, since these days a part of our audience has

completely moved to online based entertainment, as an artist I have to appear in some of these online videos to prop up the balance.

You have already made your debut as a host. Any further plans regarding it?

I get a lot of offers for anchoring. But since I am already carrying on two professions altogether, I do not want to indulge in any further responsibility. Also, I somewhat feel like a fish out of water while doing anything other than dance or act. It is equivalent to coming out of my comfort zone. I recently got an offer of doing a show on a radio channel. I am still not sure if I would actually do it.

What is your opinion about the present situation of our television industry?

It is actually going through a crisis phase. We have insufficiency of budget in every sphere. The advertisements are devouring both our time and interest of watching a show on television. If somehow the expenses of slots could be augmented, they will play the advertisements less frequently. Also, our presentation is bereft of quality. If you consider the serials of West Bengal, they have the same horse-and-buggy storyline and yet they get along it and even have audience across the border. This becomes possible just because they know the art of presentation. Their screenplays are well-crafted and their artists are well-trained. We undoubtedly are lagging behind in terms of presentation compared to them.

Any message for our readers?

My biggest achievement in the television industry is the love of my co-artists and fans. I do not know if I am deserving of all these love and affection, but I have a 'sweet girl' image which I treasure. I have stumbled many a times, my associates in the industry and my followers have always stood by my side; they have always held their belief in me. My only request to everyone who reads this, would be to love our country! There is no greater love than this. Our country has sheltered us, we too have some accountability towards it.

by Sharbani Datta