

THROUGH THE EYES

FERDOUS WAHID

Veteran singer, Ferdous Wahid has enthralled the music lovers of all ages with his flamboyant and charismatic performances for decades. Every time he walked on stage to perform, he was known for bringing electrifying vibe to wow his audience. In this interview with Star Showbiz, the king of pop talks about his life and his values.

GENESIS

I grew up in an environment seeped in music. My father was a cultural enthusiast and every Sunday he hosted a musical gathering at our place where he invited reputed artists of that time to sing. Echoing harmony at every corner of our abode, the enthralling musical performances ignited my passion for music. Later, when we migrated to Canada, I started to learn about their culture and music. I wanted to introduce western music in Bangladesh, so after the Liberation War I decided to do pop music for our country's people.

PATHBREAKERS

My inspirations are my family and my trainers. My parents have been my greatest support and they always encouraged my passion for music. I was also blessed with wonderful teachers whom I looked to for motivation and knowledge. During my childhood, Ustad Madon Mohon Das, Ustad Shourav Hossain and Ustad Fazlul Haq coached me and nurtured my musical skills.

CROSSROADS OF LIFE

I reached the peak of my musical career through one of my songs, *Emon Ekta Ma De Na*. And I must mention an incident related to this. During the late 90s, Abdullah Abu Sayed was doing a television show called *Soptoborna*. One day when he came up to me and told me about the show, I requested him to let me sing right at the end of the program. I also told him that I would be lip-syncing the song. Back then, lip-sync was not very popular and songs were recorded on-air. My first lip-synced song was, *Emon Ekta Ma De Na*. After conveying my proposal, I sang it for him and he appreciated the song. He then told me that, this song will reverberate through time and will hold a place in the hearts of the audience. And his



prediction did come true. The song was aired on Bangladesh Television (BTV) on December 23, 1975. It was a hit and I realized that pop music was being appreciated and well received by the Bangladeshi music lovers.

LOVE AND GRATITUDE

My book of memories is filled with many wonderful stories and experiences that I have made and gathered over the years. I was at the prime of my career when I went to perform in Kurigram. I was staying at the circuit house there and after my performance I was very tired, so I went to bed. In the morning

a woman came to visit me with a bag in her hand. As I was asleep, my manager collected the bag and later handed it to me. The bag contained a 16-feet long garland that she made all by herself. The amount of love I received from my fans are beyond measures and this particular memory fills my heart with gratitude for them. I also have another fond memory with the Guru of Pop, Azam Khan. Back then, Majid Khan sir was working at the Dhaka Record company. He was very fond of me and one day he asked me, whether he should release my record or Azam's

record first. I replied he should go for Azam's one. The best part was Azam was unaware that his record got released. When I was handed his record, I wanted to surprise him. So, I decided to head over to his place along with few of our friends. When we reached there we asked for a treat first and then showed him the record. He was so happy; I still remember his face gleaming with happiness when he received it. Our memories help us nurture our skills and they are testimonies to our struggles and successes. When we look back at them, we see the lessons we have learned and try to reflect on them for our better future.

FINDING THE SILVER LINING

Life is not always smooth; hurdles and obstacles are an integral part of it. When we entered the industry, we were trying to introduce something new and there were so many people who did not appreciate our music. We were criticized and told that by promoting western culture we were disrespecting our own. However, all those negativities didn't stop us, and eventually pop music was appreciated by the masses.

PERSONAL PREFERENCES

I am a bookworm and thriller books are my favorites. My favorite writers are Nihar Ranjan Gupta and Humayun Ahmed. Besides, I thoroughly enjoy reading novel series like James Bond and Sherlock Holmes. Nowadays, as I am living in my ancestral house, I spend most of my leisure time enjoying the nature. I grew up listening to many wonderful artists and was fortunate to sit beside Abdul Alim and hear him sing. I love all of his songs. Besides, among the older generation, Syed Abdul Hadi, Khurshid Alam, Subir Nandi, Mahmud Un Nabi, Khondokar Faruq Ahmed are my favorites. I also like Habib, Hridoy Khan, Arefin Rumi and Imran when it comes to the younger generation.

GUIDANCE

Many new artists are doing good work and the only word of advice I have for them is, never stop practicing. Success may come in a tiff, but holding on to it is a challenge and to survive in this industry one must learn to embrace the art of music with sincerity, commitment and dedication.

Interviewed by Robiul Kamal

Transcribed by Joana Nomrata Mazumder

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