

THROUGH THE EYES

# KABIR BAKUL



*After writing over 5000 lyrics for both Bangladeshi and Indian singers, Kabir Bakul has made a name for himself as an esteemed lyricist and journalist. He is the recipient of four 'Bangladesh National Awards' for the category of 'Best Lyrics'. This week, in an interview with Star Showbiz, he talked about his love for Bengali songs.*

## FIRST VERSE

Life in suburban areas gave me a lot of opportunities to pursue my hobbies. So, I had the complete freedom of following my passion. I used to write poems back in eighth grade. I also used to sing at the events hosted by the *Shilpakala Academy*. I learned singing from my *Ustad*, Shital Kumar Ghoshal. In 1987, when I first came to Dhaka, I gave Tapan Chowdhury thirteen of my songs. He wasn't associated with the *Souls* band back then. My first song was featured in Ayub Bachchu's album, *Moyna*. The second was sung by Nasim Ali Khan from *Souls*. At that time, I was completing my masters from *Dhaka University*. Then, I started working with Monowar Hossen Tutul.

## SIGNATURE SONGS

If I talk about the band songs, *Keno Ei Nishongota*, *Bestota Amake Dei Na* and *Chandrima Ratri Te* are the ones that speak to me. Other than that, I like Ayub Bachchu's *Akash Chuyeche Matike* and *Deewana Deewana*. Kumar Biswajit's *Akta Chad Chara Rat* earned me my first national film award. I have written a lot of songs with Tapan Chowdhury, like *Prithibir Moto Hridoy Thake*, *Jodi Bhul Kore* and *Priyar Moner Kotha*, among others. I also really like Kanak Chapa's *Eto Valobesho Na Amai*, Habib's *Lajuk Patar Moto* and Sabina Yasmin's *Preme Poreche Mon*.

## SPARE TIME ACTIVITIES

There was a time when I utilised my spare time to the fullest. It used to start in the evening, right after I was home from the office. I used to spend my entire leisure on music. But now, I don't get much time to myself. So, after coming back from the office, I spend some time with my son, watch a movie or listen to some music.

## A DIFFERENT IDENTITY

I used to write telefilm scripts alongside writing songs. I had to let it go due to my busy schedule. I had a lot of proposals coming my way, which I had previously refused. But now, I have the time and opportunity, and those who wanted me to write scripts for them earlier, have renewed their proposals. That is why I'm currently a little busy with writing.

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## DREAMS THAT AREN'T REALITY

I have always felt that my life's achievements are beyond my expectations. Life has always given me things that I could only dream of. Still, there are two wishes that I haven't been able to fulfill. One is to work with my favourite artist, Shahnaz Rahmatullah, and the other is to make a song with Khandaker Nurul Alam.

## HUMMING INSPIRATION

My definition of inspiration is a little different. Back in my home town, no one liked the fact that I used to compose the songs that I've written myself. At that time, *Shilpakala Academy's* Kumar Bhowmick, Jahangir Alam and Harunur Rashid were the ones who inspired me. Tapan Chowdhury has really been an inspiration for me as he taught me how to write better songs.

## POETS AND WRITERS

My favourite poets are Nirmalendu Goon and Sunil Gangopadhyay. My favourite writers are Shirsendu Mukhopadhyay and Humayun Ahmed.

## BITTER NOSTALGIA

The most memorable event of my life is based on two songs that I've written in the past. One of them is *Rappi Ke Mone Pore*. Rappi was an artist who died just six months after the song's release. The other one is *Ashbar Kale Ashlam Eka*, sung by James. It was from the movie, *Moner Shathe Juddho*. Eighteen days after the movie got released, Manna bhai died. There was a scene in the music video where he was seen lying in the grave. These two songs forever engulf me in melancholy.

## NATIONAL AWARDS

I have won the *Bangladesh National Film Award* four times. First, in 2008, for the songs in the film, *Megher Kole Rod*. Then, in 2009, for the songs of film, *Swami Strir Wada*. After that, I won the award for writing the songs for the film, *Nishhashe Tumi Bishhashe*. Lastly, in 2013, I received another award for the song, *Ami Nishhash Hoye Jabo*, from the film, *Purno Doirgho Prem Kahini*.

Transcribed by Reina Ahmed