

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

Fahmida Nabi

For the twelfth Standard Chartered - The Daily Star Celebrating Life gala, many talented musicians wowed the audience with their stunning performances. Renowned singer Fahmida Nabi composed the eight winning songs of Celebrating Life 2019. In this special interview with Star Showbiz, she talks about her experience with Celebrating Life and her performance this year.

Could you name the songs you composed for this year's Celebrating Life gala?

I composed eight songs on this year's theme – Folk Heritage of Bangladesh. The songs were *Kemon Kore Bhuli*, *Koi Haralo Koi*, *Basher Bashee Ar Baje Na*, *Jombe Ki Shei Rother Mela*, *Kothay Gelo Gaaer Mela*, *Aisho Amar Bari*, *Kothay Pabo Kather Chakar Gorur Gari* and *Dadir Purono Kaporer Paar Theke*.

Did anyone help you with the musical arrangements?

My brother, Pancham, greatly aided me with the musical arrangements for these songs. He's an exceptional musician. Shajib Das and Borno Chakroborty also helped. Although Borno is the youngest of the three, he's extremely skilled in the art.

Can you tell us about the songs you had for this year's performances?

I'm inherently a modern artist; I'm not associated with folk music. But, when I read the lyrics of these songs and when I gave thought about the arrangements, it took me back to the time where people derived entertainment from palas, jattras and different forms of games. The backing musicians were a group of very talented individuals, namely Sohel, Bullet, Akash, Babu, Shubho and Upol. We also had to choose four female and four male singers for the performances, along with assigning them with certain parts. It was quite a difficult task. We ended up with three male singers: Syed Abdul Hadi, Indra Mohan Rajbongshi and Shoeb, and five female singers: Chandana Mazumdar, Dilruba Khan, Shukonna, Eva and myself. We had to ensure that there was a folksy feel to our performance, but had to appeal to the younger audience as well. At the end of the day, I would say that everyone enjoyed the show, particularly the artists themselves.

Could you share your experience with Celebrating Life?

I have been associated with Celebrating Life for a long time now. From 2008, I think I did almost twenty-eight songs with the event. This is similar to a career propeller to me, working alongside so many talented musicians. This acts as a workshop as well, in the sense that I was able to further learn how to take a song, which can be enjoyed in solitude, to the stage to be enjoyed by the masses. The reverse is also true in this case. In short, it just is an amazing experience to be able to learn something, alongside receiving praise and appreciation in such events.

If you had to pick one favourite song from this event since 2008, what would it be?

That is quite near impossible, but if I had to choose one, I would have to choose an English song, *The Fragrance of the Soil*, which I gave the tune to. I did a song by Samina, which I loved as well. If I choose one from this year, I would have to pick *Ami Kemon Kore Bhuli*. That being said, as an artist, it really is quite difficult to choose favourites. For example, I really loved Achol and Ritu's songs last year.

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Amina Hossain

