



COVER STORY

MUSIC in every breath

Renowned musician Imran Mahmudul is known for his passionate and versatile music. He has won several awards, noteworthy among which is winning the 'Meril Prothom Alo Award' twice in the Best Singer (Male) category. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, he talks about his passion for music, and how he came to be where he is today.

Rafi Hossain: Welcome to Uncensored with Rafi Hossain. Today, we are here with popular singer Imran Mahmudul. Thank you so much for being with us. You are extremely popular among music lovers now, and are even compared to Arijit Singh. How do you view that?

Imran Mahmudul: Thank you so much for having me. Everyone has a different way of expressing their love, and I realise that comparing me to him comes from a place of love, so I respect it. However, I think that Arijit Singh is far more talented than I am. Comparing me to him doesn't seem fair, in my opinion.

Rafi Hossain: Can you talk about your journey into music?

Imran Mahmudul: As a child, I used to listen to music on the TV and of different artists and be inspired to follow their footsteps. I started learning music from fourth grade and kept practising. I later found out about a reality show, *Closeup 1 Bangladesh*. I participated in it for the first time in grade nine, but I got eliminated soon as I was so young. I knew I wasn't good enough yet to win the show, but I had this drive to succeed at some point. Then, I got to know about another reality show, *Shera Kontho*. I liked the judges there, so I decided to participate. I somehow managed to become the first runner-up even though I never thought I could. From then, my struggle began to establish my career. I was completely new in this scene, so I had no idea about the ropes of the industry. It took me 2008-2009 to slowly find my way and make original music.

Rafi Hossain: We don't see many artists making it who participate in reality shows. How were you able to beat that?

Imran Mahmudul: I can't speak for anyone else. My main target was making original music and taking them to the audience. I worked on my music from 2008 to 2014. I didn't do many stage performances during that time as many people do. I utilised it to groom myself and learn what to do to stay relevant in the industry. That really helped me in my career. I think this is what every musician coming from reality

shows should do.

Rafi Hossain: You are very popular among female music listeners and have definitely received many proposals. How do you deal with that?

Imran Mahmudul: I know their love is coming from a place of loving my music, and I appreciate all the love my fans shower me with. It inspires me to work harder on my music. However, I haven't received that many proposals as I'm not on social media often. Even if I do receive some, I very respectfully respond to them.

Rafi Hossain: You have shown interest in music direction very early on in your career which isn't very common. Why is that so?



want stick with this pairing or stray away from it?

Imran Mahmudul: It really isn't up to me which pair of me with another singer the audience will love and accept. I have worked with many people, but fans saw something in our pair. The entire credit goes to the audience. Whether I stick with it or stray from it, is totally up to them. I don't think we have much of a hand in it.

Rafi Hossain: People say that some music has a techno or electronic sound to it which they seem to not like. What is your take on it?

Imran Mahmudul: It depends on how we use these sounds. Habib bhai and Fuad knows how to utilise these sounds well and incorporate them into his music. Even if we talk internationally, the song A. R. Rahman received an Oscar for, *Jai Ho*, has many electronic elements to it. If used correctly, we should definitely appreciate and accept it.

Rafi Hossain: Do you ever approach senior artists to sing to their tunes?

Imran Mahmudul: I have had the fortune of working with Bulbul chacha on a film's song. I haven't been able to work with some artists who I would have loved to.

Rafi Hossain: There is this saying that you aren't fully a singer if you aren't a playback singer. What do you think about it?

Imran Mahmudul: Being a playback singer is the ultimate dream of any singer here. We did not have the concept of albums back when we were little; we used to listen to the songs in films. However, I do not agree with that thought. Films' music does do a lot to establish a singer, but it isn't everything. If a singer doesn't get to sing for a film, their music is still worthwhile. Not being a playback singer can be just as fulfilling.

Rafi Hossain: Have you been able to make music for films?

Imran Mahmudul: Yes, I have made music for a number of films, both through singing and composing.

Rafi Hossain: Is there something specific you have always wanted to be asked in an interview that you have unfortunately never been asked?

Imran Mahmudul: I haven't ever thought of it like that. In my career of twelve years, I would like to think that my fans have been able to know quite a bit about me. Right now, I really don't have anything specific I want to talk about.

Rafi Hossain: Do you have a parting message?

Imran Mahmudul: I would like to request the readers to pray for my wellbeing and theirs as well. During this pandemic, being safe is the top priority. I hope that everybody maintains safety precautions. I would request you all to keep supporting me, so that I can keep making more music.

Rafi Hossain: It was lovely having you today.

Amina Hossain

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Imran Mahmudul: When I was in the reality show, I was asked by interviewers what I wanted to do as a career. I would always say that I wanted to be a music director which would surprise them since I'm a singer. However, even as a child, I always wanted to direct music and was really interested in the music and composition. Previously, we used to only make the singers the centre stage at the expense of the music directors. Habib bhai and Fuad bhai were the ones who brought the concept of giving credit to the music directors where credit is due and that inspired me to pursue it. I even got the chance to learn from and work with Habib bhai who I'm a huge fan of. This really helped me.

Rafi Hossain: You have worked with many people, but fans seem to love the pairing of you and Kona. Do you

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

TAISH

Taish is an Indian Hindi-language thriller drama film. It has been directed by Bejoy Nambiar, produced by Deepak Mukut Bejoy Nambiar and Nishant Pitti, and stars Pulkit Samrat, Kriti Kharbanda, and Jim Sarbh, among others. The film explores friendship, love, and loss, and focuses on two friends who get involved with criminals, while attending a wedding. It was released on October 29, 2020.



POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

ANOTHER ROUND

Another Round is a Danish-Swedish drama film. It has been directed by Thomas Vinterberg, produced by Sisse Graum Jørgensen and Kasper Dissing, and stars Mads Mikkelsen, Thomas Bo Larsen, Magnus Millang, and Lars

Ranthe, among others. The story focuses on the experience of four teachers, who, as an experiment, begin drinking at work, and gradually increase the alcohol content overtime. It was released on September 12, 2020.



GRAPE VINE

TANVIR TAREQ'S PROUD MOMENT



PHOTO: COLLECTED

A popular name in the entertainment journalism, Tanvir Tareq, is a singer, composer and television anchor. He has been associated with the music industry for more than two decades. Recently, the singer received the *Bangladesh National Film Award 2019* as the best composer for the song *Amar Mayer Aghol* in the movie *Maya: The Lost Mother*. Tanvir said, "I feel overwhelmed to have received this prestigious award. I thank the jury board for honouring me. I consider an artist's life fulfilled upon receiving a *National Award*. It is one of the biggest achievements of my career. I lost my father thirteen years ago. He would have been the happiest to see me get the award."



Release of the film 'Bishwa Bundori'

Popular actor Siam Ahmed is currently passing a busy time with his film shoots. His film *Bishwa Sundori* directed by Chayanika Chowdhury is releasing tomorrow, December 11, 2020. In the film, Siam will be sharing his screen with actor Pori Moni. Siam said, "The movie is family friendly and has a great storyline. I hope the audience will appreciate it. My job as an actor is to perform and I have given my best. The success of the film depends on how the viewers will connect to it." Besides, Siam is still awaiting release of *Shaan*, *Operation Sundarban*, *Adventure of Sundarban*, and *Paap Purno*. Currently, he is shooting for the film *Damal* directed by Raihan Rafi.

Sarika in the Unknown

Recently, actor Sarika was spotted shooting in different locations in Dhaka for a new drama, *Chena Mukh Ochena Thikana*. The drama is directed by Shalkhawat Manik and scripted by MD Saifur Rahman Kajol. The cast includes Irfan Sajjad, Mili Bashar and Fakhruddin Bashir, among others. The director said, "It is made based on a romantic story which I feel the audience will enjoy. Each and every moment in the story will connect to the viewers. I hope this project becomes a success." The drama will be released on *Silver Screen YouTube* channel, and also be telecasted on a private television channel.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Tale of the Nine Tailed

Tale of the Nine Tailed is a South Korean television fantasy, action, and romantic drama. It has been directed by Kang Shin-hyo, produced by Park Jin-hyung and Park Seung-woo, and stars Lee Dong-wook, Jo Bo-ah, and Kim Bum, among others. The series focuses on the human form of a mountain guardian searching for the reincarnation of his lost first love, while also fighting evil forces. It was released on October 7, 2020.

Shreya Shomoyeta