

Eminent Personalities from Northeast: Jitu-Tapan



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Way back in the late 1960s, there were two individuals in the then sleepy town of Jorhat who were making and dreaming music in the confines of their homes. The young boys used to go to the local music school, perform in programmes in Assam and create music with rich melodies. Gradually they started capturing the heart and soul of Assam and came to be known as Jitu-Tapan.

It so happened that one day the great Mohammad Rafi visited Jorhat in Assam for a show and on the same show there was an orchestra that was presented by the young duo of Assam. Rafi was more than impressed. He called both of them the next day and requested them to teach and compose Assamese songs for him. And “Asomir sotalata”, a trendsetter was composed. Rafi gave lips to the song and the rest is history.

Jitu- Tapan moved to Mumbai in 1972. They were the first Assamese representatives in the real sense who moved into Bollywood.

The duo has composed music for 34 Hindi Feature Films till date, by far the highest by any Music Director from the Northeast.

With the foray of television into India, Bollywood personalities moved into the Television arena. Jitu – Tapan gave some blistering title tracks and music to serials like Air Hostess (remember Kitu Gidwani and the fabulous title track), Reporter (which made Shekhar Suman the first Telly Star) and many others like Ajooba, Choti Badi Baaten, Kal aur aaj, Ehsas to name just a few. Telefilms like Guru, Aarti, Gumrah and numerous others were centered on their music.

At around the same time, the Indian Album music came of age with the advent of T series and the foray of other small time players. The duo delivered the smash Ghazal hits Nasha, Nazrana and Nasheela with

Kumar Sanu and Pt Razdan. The other top albums are the assorted pop hits in the album - O jaaana and various devotional albums like Sai Samran, Sai Ka Darbar with singers like Anuradha Paudwal and Anup Jalota.



The most noteworthy aspect of Jitu-Tapan's musical career has been the variety in music and the different mediums in which they have given music. From Ghazals, Bhajans to Dance Ballets and Pop they have covered all aspects of modern music. They have composed music in a variety of regional languages across India like Bengali, Bhojpuri, Dogri, Gujrati and various South Indian languages. The focus of their music has always been on melody and they have never compromised on originality.

People from Assam would remember them for their music in movies like Manab Aru Danab, Adalat , Megh, Anutap, Nayanmoni, Manchghar etc. Though based out of Mumbai, they never lost touch base with Assam and their music continued to flow to Assam through Movies and Albums like Tyaag, Deuta Diya Bidai, Bohagota Nahila etc.

The most significant aspect of Jitu Tapans contribution is their role in bringing Bollywoods attention to Assam. They have worked with legends like Subhash Ghai, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Kishore Kumar etc. They are widely respected in Mumbai by the Bollywood fraternity.

In the recent National Games held at Guwahati, Jitu- Tapan presented a live orchestra the first musical programme of the widely acclaimed musical show which set the right tempo for making the games in Assam a grand success.

As I sat with them in Tapans residence at Andheri in Mumbai, I asked them two questions which I thought would be the most important for the readers of AssamTimes, reproduced below.

Their message for the young generation of Musicians:

Hard work and creativity are the keys to success. Being sincere in your work is important. Music has to be original and not copies. Copies are a temporary formula which may pay dividends in the short run but in the long run to succeed you need your own style and originality in music.

Their message for the Assamese and the Northeast people

We should be proud of our heritage. It is a great culture. We are second to none. In our work we have always tried to portray the Northeast in the best way without losing touch of realities. We are living in trying times but it is important to believe in yourself in these times and success is bound to come. Our success means success for our motherland.

Arindam Garg

(In this section we salute the great contributors from Northeast who have made a significant contribution or impact in any field)

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