

The voice of Akshay Kumar

HE is the voice of Akshay Kumar in Khakhee and now the soon-to-be-released Family. He is Arnab Chakraborty, the singer whom director Rajkumar Santoshi repeats in his ventures for Akshay Kumar. With three numbers in Family, Arnab is here to stay. A tete-a-tete with the singer—

How did Family happen?

My song 'Wada Raha' from Rajkumar Santoshi's earlier film Khakee was a huge hit and earned me a nomination for best male playback singer at the Zee Cine Awards 2005, held at Excel Arena, London. I was lucky to get another opportunity to work with the same team in Family. Music director Ram Sampat was so happy with the prior performance with my singular song 'Wada Raha' in Khakee that this time he gave me three songs in Family!

Three songs rendered for Akshay Kumar as against the one in Khakee...

Yes, and interestingly, 'Qatra Qatra', 'Janam Janam' and 'Quick Byte', are distinctly different from the other.

Though recognition comes to you now, it is not like you are a new entrant. Ad films, remixes and full-length films – was this a planned move? And which of the mediums would you consider most satisfying? Each medium has its own attraction and creativity in any medium is always a satisfying experience. Yes, remixes are great testing grounds as one gets to recreate legendary songs. There is always a comparison drawn between the two versions, which helps a lot in self-analysis.

Singing jingles is a different challenge as you have to convey emotions within a few seconds and also do justice to the concerned brand of product.

Can we know some of the brands where we have heard your voice?

Well, I have done jingles for Airtel, Ponds, Vimal, Samsung, ICICI Bank, Revital, Horlicks, Mortein, 7Up, Siyarams, Fortune Cooking Oil, Suncity, Manikchand, Odonil, Britannia and various others.

Of course, the most satisfying are film songs, where you get the maximum freedom to express your creative abilities, lend an original touch and cre-

ate your own distinctive style. The onus is on you to make or break an original song. It gives one the highest recognition, as it is the most popular form of music in India.

You are basically from Kolkata. Was it difficult entering the Hindi film industry?

Six years back, I came to Mumbai from Kolkata. And the beginning was normal and humble. I made a demo tape and started my rounds of music directors' offices, and went on to sing remixes, jingles and regional movie songs. And today, here I am.

How effective is formal training in singing?

I have done formal training in music under the tutelage of Shri Gautam Mukherji. I also did a two-year PG in light music from Mumbai University under the guidance of Pandit Achyut Thakur.

Does training help make singers?

No, it helps mould them. Music is God-gifted. Training helps polishing a singer's skills.

How much has modern tech-



Arnab Chakraborty

nology changed the way music is created?

It helps save studio time and costs. Technology is best when put to good use. And the music industry has surely done that.

Music transcends languages. But you have sung for Bengali, Telugu, Assamese and Oriya languages among others...

Yes, after 'Wada Raha' became popular, I also sang in Assamese, Oriya, Bengali and

Telugu, the south foray was with Mr M M Keerem. The foray into different languages is because it gives me a different satisfaction and confidence to sing in various languages.

You are being talked about as the Voice of Akshay Kumar, and feel to get such adulation?

I am grateful to God, my listeners and all those who have helped me reach where I am today. I am

enjoying every bit of recognition, but the key is in focusing on my work and not getting carried away by the adulation. I have a long journey ahead...

What next?

I want to better myself as a singer with each passing day, sing more and more meaningful and melodious songs and spread the message of love, peace and unity through music.