

Confidence, Composure, Caring & Civil: the 4Cs that make **Sonu Nigaam**

With his tour of Australia and New Zealand just 4 weeks away, we at Fiji Times decided to talk to Sonu Nigaam. CHARINDAA's Sensational Sonu Nigaam Tour of Australia 2008 presents Sonu Nigaam in Sydney (Friday 25 April), Melbourne (Saturday 26 April) and Adelaide (Sunday 27 April). The tour then moves to Brisbane, Auckland and Perth. So, we decided to talk to Sonu Nigaam about the tour in a wide-ranging interview. It was with some trepidation that we started talking to this superstar of Bollywood music. However, it was soon evident that this confident young man set us at ease through his caring and totally civil demeanour. Sonu Nigaam comes across as a man who has his feet planted firmly on the ground. What also struck us through the interview was his calm and composed disposition. We determined soon that there certainly was the 4-C concept – confidence, composure, caring and civil – that made Sonu Nigaam tick. Read more about the man and decide for yourselves.



Fiji Times: It seems your career as an artist has seen you evolve from performing on stage to playback singing, acting and working on independent albums. What else do you aspire to do?

Sonu Nigaam: I am more of a learner than an aspirer.. I evaluate what I am good at and then work towards that direction. The only thing that I consciously work on, aspire and keep a check on is my sanity. Too many forces exist in this industry to steal it and I don't want to part with it.

FT: You have so much energy. Where it comes from?

SN: Positivity and hopefulness. A negative judgemental and cynical mind is like an arid land. Nothing grows on it except weeds!

FT: Do you prefer one aspect of your career in music over the other?

SN: The world of Stage fascinates me more. Also it is sort of a litmus test for performers. There you come to know the real mettle of an artist, whether he/she qualifies to be called a singer or not, is decided on stage.

FT: Your live shows are always very well received. How do you prepare for a show?

SN: Preferably sufficient sleep, which is more of a luxury, but still I try to catch up on it before a performance. Vocal exercises, warm ups, work outs, and finally, an overall feeling of well being, gears me up for a performance.

FT: Is there one particular type of music that you like?

SN: No. I am not biased about any particular music. Just as a human being needs to be good -- his caste or race

doesn't matter -- similarly, music has to feel good, touch your soul; the genre doesn't matter.

FT: We know your father, has been a driving force in your life. Who else do you attribute your success to?

SN: Of course, no one takes away the credit of the entire family, in my case, my mother and sisters. They witnessed my struggles and were a part of it. Finally every success story is a collective result of perseverance, luck, goodwill, honesty, commitment, intelligence...and of course talent.

FT: What is your opinion on The Indian Idol?

SN: It proved to India that if marketed well, music has the potential to create as much hysteria, generate money and create country wide overnight superstars, just as in acting and cricket. It is a pity that except India, everywhere in the world, this doesn't need to be proved!

FT: Your name is synonymous with *Sa Re Ga Ma*..and you have since become a household name. That show brought you into the homes of every Indian living in India and abroad and made you an icon. Do you think young aspiring singers should participate more in such shows? Why?

SN: Of course they should. It not only gives them a platform to make a mark, it also enriches and uplifts the status of music and musicians across the country...

FT: What is the advice you would give singers waiting in the wings for a chance to make it as big as you?

SN: Don't aim to become a playback singer... Nowhere in the world do actors lip sync to other people's voices, except this part of the sub continent. Make your own music, come out with albums even if it means the small way, it will give you your own individuality.

FT: You are being compared to legends like Rafi *saab* and Kishoreji. Your thoughts on that?

SN: I don't compare two artistes... But if it means putting me up to a pedestal, I am thankful to the Almighty for this grace at such an early age..

FT: What does music mean to you?

SN: It is a 4th dimension which 99% of the world doesn't understand. Therefore there are such few real singers. You will find many more dancers, artistes, craftsman, but very few singers. And by the way it's funny since most of them seriously think they can sing! I am blessed to have been bestowed with an art which can not be seen, not even heard...but felt! For, everybody except a few can hear, but the art of getting a note, a pitch right, is blessed to a handful, who are called musicians! And then besides being able to play various instruments, I carry my personal instrument inside my throat. How much more luckier can one get!

FT: How would you like to be remembered when you leave the stage – hopefully that doesn't happen for a long time to come!

SN: Someone who fought all his life to make sure music gets its due in India.

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