



Kazzmatazz! Interview with Ali Kazmi

by Ahmed Hayat (ahmed@raw.com.pk)

Who is Ali Kazmi?

A simple man who wants to entertain; an artist whose canvas is the world.

As William Shakespeare once said "the world is a stage and we all have our roles to play" this is just the beginning.

Keep watching. As Robbie Williams once said "let me entertain you"

Does luck play some role in showbiz?

It surely does but luck can get you in, it cannot take you very far! One must have talent and passion for whatever one does. Hard work is what counts in the long run.

Is media playing an important role in developing our showbiz or not?

It is the age of the media boom and media plays an important part in every walk of life from banking to production.

Pakistan is finally becoming aware that one must give importance to media and it is working in our favour, it will put showbiz on the map. Everybody is watching and it is a global phenomenon!

How did you enter showbiz?

I first came in a play at the age of two. It was love at first sight! I knew what I wanted to do- ACT. Since then I have watched the great actors act.

How was the experience of acting in your first play?

Besides the time when I was two, I had done a lot of music videos and some modeling. When I was fifteen my mother cast me in a long play called "Zikr hai kai saal ka" with my father Rahat Kazmi and Attiqa Odho.

It was an amazing experience working with such professionals at an early age. I learned so much and had fun doing it. I still get praises for that play. MashAllah I am surprised people still recognise me! It is all thanks to the great actors I have worked with and what they have taught me.

Don't you think it was easier for you to enter the showbiz because your parents have been very successful in the showbiz?

Hmmm well yes and no. I did know all the right people to work with and how to get into the field but to stay in it and do well is the key. If one does not have talent and passion for acting one cannot do justice to this field. One must work hard to get ahead. Especially in this day and age of competition one has to make ones own name count! I am trying my best. Keep watching!



Ali Kazmi
Raw - The Magazine

Did you get any advice from your parents on how to survive in the showbiz?

I got loads of advice from my parents on life issues but not for showbiz. They let me fight my own battles and told me that whatever you do just do it well. I love them for it.

When you grow up with media all around you, you learn how to really absorb it and use that knowledge when it counts.

Your parents being in the showbiz must've played an important role in your grooming?

Growing up with stylish parents is the best thing because style comes naturally. But you must then develop your own style. It's all in the genes! For survival in this media world you got to make every action count and give it your all! I am trying my best.

Do you think a play shot in a foreign country has a better viewer ship than one made locally?

Not at all! It may seem glamorous and glitzy but actually it is not a real play. Drama must be real and true to life which all depends on the story and direction.

There is so much beauty here why go abroad. We must be proud of our own country and our work and stop depending on our neighbours. The audience has to be tuned to watch real stories and well made quality dramas. Quality comes from the matter in the play not how slick the trailer looks. Pakistan was known for its dramas we have to reestablish the popularity of Pakistani dramas.

Do you criticize yourself when watching your own drama?

Oh yes! I am my biggest critic. Seriously I cannot even sit through to watch myself. When you watch yourself you think 'damn I could have done that a little like this or that' or 'I wish I wore that other shirt'. Too many little things bother you.

No actor feels they are perfect, the day you do and stop questioning, it is the end my friend.

You started with your career so early; did you get to complete your higher studies?

As we speak I am completing my BBA from CBM (College of Business Management) and then will get a degree in film making.

It is a must to finish your education. You learn so much about diversity and how things work around the world. The college experience really expands your mind. No matter what you do, you have to get a degree first. Oh and my dad is an educationalist band he would kill me if I did not complete my education. I have got to make my parents proud. Haha ...

If you had to choose between knowledge & fame. Which one would you choose & why?

Knowledge can bring you fame but fame cannot bring you knowledge. Unless you become really rich and hire a professor to tutor you everyday.

There is no escaping the importance of knowledge. I know it is strange coming from an actor but no matter what job you do knowledge is the key to be the best at it. Fame is temporary but knowledge is forever. Hey nice one I can be remembered by this quote someday I like it.

Which do you prefer the most acting, modeling or hosting & why?

I really enjoy all but if I have to choose one it has to be acting. Acting challenges you physically mentally and emotionally. It makes one think and there is more diversity, depth and work involved. As they say variety is the spice of life so when you can play so many different people in so many different ways why not. Try it you'll like it. One daily dose of acting recommended by AK.

I enjoy acting, really it is my passion. I hope everyone enjoys watching me as much as I like performing for them.

While acting what kind of roles do you prefer doing?

I really prefer all kinds of roles. I said it before and I say it again variety is the spice of life (Just don't say that to your wife/girlfriend she'll kick you out. Please be careful)

I have played a taxi driver, an evil brother, a boxer, a rebel son, a husband and more. I have enjoyed them all. It is fun to go to work and pretend to be in someone else's shoes; just for a while. It makes one grow as a person.

When you become an actor you start to become more observant and notice things many people would overlook. To use these observations in your roles is pure fun. We play so many different roles in everyday life anyway then why not enjoy the diversity on screen as well.

**Are you comfortable with criticism?**

Don't even think about it. No way! Try it and I'm going to kill you. I am kidding!

I really think criticism is the key to growing as an actor. It is very constructive and makes you think how you can improve. It is a must for any actor. It is the audience that has to watch you and if they don't like something then they must say it. Just don't be too harsh yaar (buddy). I am sorry, please!

What is your big dream?

And the Oscar goes to.... Ali kazmi. Yeah!

What did you say big dream! Really that (Oscar) is what I want. I also want to have a family of my own and just be the best at what I do. Basically I want it all!

Who or what has given you the greatest inspiration?

As cliché as it sounds it has to be my heroes Rahat and Sahira Kazmi (they happen to be my parents, by the way). They managed great careers and kept a great family life. They came, they conquered and they created me. To put it simply they're great and I love them.

Just to add on; in Bollywood Mr. Amitabh Bachan and in Hollywood Mr. Al Pacino.

Any plans to act in movies or going into production/ direction?

Well why not! As soon as some good directors come into this medium of Pakistani film and there are some. So maybe very soon I might be acting in movies too. I would love to do some jhatkas and matkas.

My dream is to make at least one big movie in Hollywood . InshaAllah! Production and direction in the future at least 10 years down the line. Right now it is all about being in front of the camera.

Any regrets so far?

None. MashAllah! God has been very kind.

Was there ever a time during your acting career you considered changing completely and doing something else?

Hmmm... Never during my acting career. But before I did at one point in my life I did think of becoming an engineer. Acting to me is truly fulfilling. Maybe some future script writers can read this and I can act as an engineer. Haha...

What do you think about the Pakistan Academy of Performing Arts? What advantages does the showbiz have?

I think it is a stroke of genius, a phenomenal idea. What we need in the industry are people with technique and skill. Basically trained professionals to come in and make a difference. With greats like Mr. Talat Hussain, Mr. Zia Mohiuddin, Mr. Arshad Mehmood, Mr. Rahat Kazmi and many more, teaching you the ropes. There is nothing better. Infact I am joining very soon. It is refreshing to see such an institute for the arts. All praise to them.

Up to now, you have done quite a few characters across many different serials; which character do you think was your favorite?

I don't really have a favourite because I still have a long way to go and many characters to play. For now my favourite would have to be the boxer I am about to play for a Tele film. It is a role I have trained hard for and I hope you all will enjoy it.

Of the people you have worked with on these shows, whom did you enjoy working the most with and learn the most from, etc?

Hmmm as a co star my favourite is Tooba Siddiqui because we get along well and have a blast every time we have worked together. We have created memorable scenes out of nothing.

I have had the privilege of working with Mr. Talat Hussain, Mr. and Mrs. Kazmi, Ms. Badr khaleel, Ms. Saba Parvez, Ms. Rubina Ashraf and Shakeel Sahib that taught me the proper technique used in acting like the angle at which to stand, not to speak too fast, blocking of a scene. The best part is that I have grown up in front of them. I mean they have seen me in diapers and so working with them is like a dream come true.

Ok there are two, The God father and Superman. I love them both and they're both tough to play. I have dreamt about it as a child and you never know maybe someday I might play them.

How different it is doing a family project, then working with others?

Honestly. I have grown up in the showbiz industry and so they are all my family. I feel at home in most productions.

Considering we did our first all family production "kaisay kahoon" the difference is just the fact that it doesn't feel like your working. It is just fun. The work gets done and you don't even realise it. Its comfortable and a blast. It is like being at home especially if your mom is the director (she is strict at both places).

This time my sister and I got to play siblings for the first time. It was amazing. Good fun to fight with your sister on and off screen. But I love my crazy sister.

People say that you are a look alike of Ali Zafar. Your comment?

Haha a good one! Ok the funny part is he is a good friend of mine and we never thought that we looked alike.

People think so all I can say is he is a big pop star and when people say I look like a big pop star then why not. Thanks Ali! Seriously he thinks he is better looking and I think I am. Haha... Ali you go brother. One day you will win a Grammy and I will win the Oscar and it won't matter if we look alike.

What is your relationship with Anoushey Ashraf?

Oh deadly question. I have known her since we were thirteen and if there is some onscreen chemistry then good because I am an actor it's my job to create chemistry. Seriously we are good friends and had a smashing time working together. "kaisay kahoon" was her first play. She is a great VJ and a great girl. More power to you Ms. Ashraf.

What is fashion to you?

Fashion is what you make of it. Fashion is what you feel looks good and comfortable; it's all about your personal style. I have always felt that one should wear what one feels. Don't just go for the trends that are out there, make your own personal statement. It doesn't matter what you wear as long as you wear it with style. Try it!



Your favourite musician?

Internationally it is Dave Mathews band and locally it's the Mekaal Hassan band. Both amazing and a treat for your ears.

Any message for the readers!

Always keep love first. Always be true to yourself, follow your instincts. Keep smiling and enjoy life. Oh yeah! Keep watching! Lots of love A.K

I want to tell my family and a very special lady (my chothu) how much I love them and thank you for everything. Some special love for my jaan my nani!



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