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legendary
composers
at the
**NCPA
Bandish**

The SOI Autumn 2023 Season
In conversation with
the Chairman

400 years of
Shakespeare's
First Folio

Resurrecting Swami in
Shekhar Sen's
Vivekanand

Rashid Khan

Pankaj Udhas

Ajay Pohankar

Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam



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ZERO

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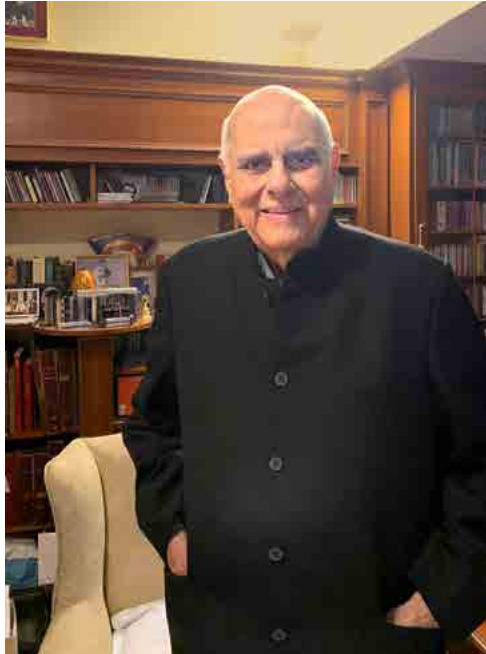
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Chairman's Note



The season is upon us and what a season it promises to be.

Our Indian music season, with its NCPA *Bandish* festival and other events of note, is the result of much deliberation over quality programming and diversity by our learned genre head Dr. Suvarnalata Rao and the very knowledgeable Indian music committee. The festival is considered a highlight of the Mumbai season and we must express our deep gratitude to the supporters of this genre.

It is these discussions that are essential to the process of curation. For the Symphony Orchestra of India, our international valued partners together with distinguished members of the community on the Western classical music committee offer their insights, which are important for the conversations on planning the programmes that I have with Music Director Marat Bisengaliev and Associate Music Director Zane Dalal, months ahead of our seasons. Possibilities are explored and challenges are overcome, so we can present fine concerts season after season. The details of the SOI Autumn 2023 Season included in this issue speak of the evolution of the orchestra. It is a matter of pride for us and our members who have reposed faith in this endeavour of 17 years.

The vibrancy of the season builds on the hugely popular performances we have presented in the recent months. Our International Music genre has been appreciated for inviting acclaimed artistes, the most recent being Colombian pianist Jesús Molina. Our Dance and Theatre departments continue to go from strength to strength and the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery, in its renewed look, is back in action.

So many more achievements to catalogue but suffice it to say that this should give you a flavour of the growth of the NCPA.

The unfortunate fire in one of the rooms above the gallery caused some damage but, thank Providence, there was no loss of life or even injury. All of you may be rest assured that the NCPA regularly carries out fire audits and makes sure all its areas are well protected.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. N. Suntook". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Khushroo N. Suntook

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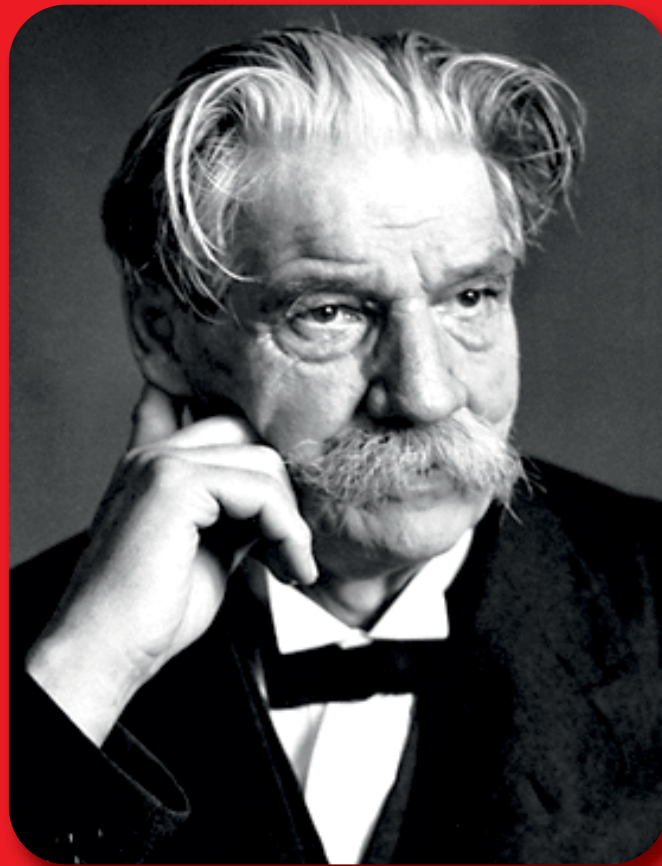
Accompanied by an all-girl band and dance group, Indian pop star Shweta Shetty is set to perform much-loved hits from artistes like Whitney Houston, Amy Winehouse, Lady Gaga and Beyoncé at the NCPA this month. *By Narendra Kusnur*

 NCPA

OGANGA!

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF Dr. ALBERT SCHWEITZER
A MEDICAL MISSIONARY WHO REVERED LIFE

WRITTEN BY
DR. FAROKH E. UDWADIA



A Staged Reading
Starring Jim Sarbh
Directed by
Sooni Taraporevala

16 July 2023 ▪ 5:00 pm ▪ Tata Theatre ▪ NCPA

Box office: 66223724/54 ▪ Tickets on [bookmyshow](#)



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VIVEKANAND

A mono-act musical play by

SHEKHAR SEN

1 July 2023


6:30 pm

Tata Theatre,

NCPA



Box Office: 66223724/54

Tickets on book  show



THE STRING THAT BINDS US TOGETHER





The annual NCPA *Bandish* celebrates works of legendary composers from different eras in time. We speak to the master vocalists who will bring these compositions to life, ahead of their performance at this year's edition of the festival.

By Aishwarya Bodke



GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from here:
Pankaj Udhas; Rashid
Khan; Ajay Pohankar;
Kavita Krishnamurti
Subramaniam

Bandish is the confluence through which music flows. Translating to the act of binding together, a *bandish* is where the elements of melody and rhythm, manifesting as raga and *tala*, along with poetry, metamorphose into a composition.

A poem, a symphony and a sonata are all compositions but the distinct place of the *bandish* in Indian music is central to every aspect of music-making. It is the edifice upon which a performance is sculpted and realised. The relationship is nurtured symbiotically as compositions are kept alive through performance and oral traditions. Generations of musicians preserve these treasures as they carry forward the traditions of their *gharanas*.

This musical trade of words and melody dictates the unfolding of the performance as every *bandish* embraces a playful tussle between the composed and the improvisational elements. Some forms allow for more of the latter, while some work in more contained ways. The recipe remains consistent, but the measure of ingredients is open to experimentation.

Pankaj Udhas, a name synonymous with ghazals, will present a bouquet of the poetic compositions in *Ghalib se Gulzar Tak* while the closing concert will feature the renowned playback singer Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam, who will pay a heartfelt tribute to Lata Mangeshkar. With myriad compositions, including classical music of diverse *gharanas*, ghazals and film music, the NCPA *Bandish* is where it all comes together.

GHALIB SE GULZAR TAK

Known for a velvety voice, Udhas has played a significant role in popularising the genre of modern-day ghazals. He will take the audiences on a musical journey beginning with classic poets like Mirza Ghalib, Meer Taqi Meer and Daagh Dehlvi to contemporary wordsmiths such as Zafar Gorakhpuri, Nida Fazli, Bashir Badr, Wasim Barelvi, Zameer Kazmi and Gulzar.

Ghazals, like most genres of music and literature, have weathered the evolution of language. The form of the ghazal gleams in the beauty of the languages it

“IMPROVISING IS DEDICATED TO MAKING THE GHAZAL SOUND MORE EMOTIONALLY EXPRESSIVE, SO MUSICIANS STARTED ADDING SARGAMS AND TANS AND OTHER ELEMENTS WITH VERY INTRICATE AND CHROMATIC WAYS OF SINGING, BUT IT IS PARAMOUNT THAT POETRY DOES NOT TAKE A BACKSEAT”

Complex definitions of the *bandish* are plenty but what it innately is, is the heart of the recital. The *raison d'être* of an art music performance is to personify a raga, and a *bandish* does just that. What could be seen as a mere song has the potential to transform into a story.

The NCPA *Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Composers* is an annual three-day festival showcasing cherished works of great composers traversing through different eras in the history of music in the Indian subcontinent. Renowned artistes bring these compositions to life onstage.

The first evening of the upcoming edition will feature noted vocalist Ajay Pohankar performing select compositions of his mother and guru, Sushila Pohankar, and Aman Ali Khan, vocalist-composer of the Bhendi Bazaar *gharana*. Rashid Khan, a virtuoso of the Rampur-Sahaswan lineage, will pay tribute to two stalwarts of the *gharana*, of whom he is a direct descendant. He will perform the works of Inayat Hussain Khan, one of the most celebrated vocalists of this *gharana* and a composer par excellence, and the illustrious Nissar Hussain Khan, the granduncle and guru of Rashid Khan. He will also present compositions of Amir Khan of the Indore *gharana*.

embraces—Urdu, Hindi, Arabic and Persian. Over time, the sociopolitical environment and newer generations of poets brought about a change in the parlance. The interlacing of Hindu and Islamic cultures during the period of Islamic conquests in the subcontinent led to the development of Hindustani as a product of the Ganga-Jamuni *tehzeeb*, which is evident in the poetic form. Udhas's performance will encapsulate the journey of Urdu poetry in India.

While poetry forms the bedrock of the *bandish* in ghazals, the harmonious interplay of words and melody allows room for improvisation. Udhas tells us, “I grew up listening to Begum Akhtar and Mehdi Hassan, who incorporated a lot of improvisation in ghazal singing. Improvising is dedicated to making the ghazal sound more emotionally expressive, so musicians started adding *sargams* and *tans* and other elements with very intricate and chromatic ways of singing. But it is paramount that poetry does not take a backseat.”

He elaborates, “There is a school of ghazal singers and enthusiasts—including me—who believe that improvisation should be to the extent of enhancing the word, making the ghazal even more effective and alive. The beauty of improvisation is that it is spontaneous.”

“LATAJI’S SONGS CUT ACROSS COUNTLESS GENRES AND HER SOUND IN EACH HAS BECOME AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF REFERENCE FOR US NOW; HER VOICE MAKES EVEN A LAYMAN UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE NUANCES OF THE RAGA IN THE SONG”

FOR THE NIGHTINGALE

Krishnamurti confesses that it is rather difficult to curate a tribute concert. The repertoire for the evening is a blend of different eras of Mangeshkar’s legacy. Her voice has immortalised compositions of the great masters, including Naushad Ali, Anil Biswas and Laxmikant-Pyarelal, as well as modern music composers like A.R. Rahman and Jatin-Lalit. The programme, in addition, does not fail to celebrate the many Meera *bhajans*, Marathi *abhangas* and regional music she lent her voice to.

“Her songs cut across countless genres and her sound in each has become an encyclopaedia of reference for us now. Her voice makes even a layman understand and appreciate the nuances of the raga in the song,” says Krishnamurti.

What binds Krishnamurti and Mangeshkar together transcends music. She grew up in a home where the radio was always on, which meant a Mangeshkar classic was always wafting in the air.

“Lata ji’s voice was the first one that moved me. I would drop everything for those four minutes. I was probably six and did not understand what spirituality was, but I had an emotional resonance with her voice. As I grew older, I sat patiently by the radio, ready with a pen and paper, to note down lyrics to her song as they played. After a couple of replays over several days, I would finally have the words to learn the song,” Krishnamurti reminisces.

Krishnamurti’s career in playback singing started alongside Mangeshkar’s presence. When music director Hemant Kumar spotted her singing at a college event and asked her to sing a few lines for a Bengali film, she did not know she would be accompanying Mangeshkar. “Ever since, Lata ji has been my lucky mascot,” she smiles.

During her initial years as a playback singer, Krishnamurti used to dub songs for Mangeshkar. “The final song would release in her voice and I’d be astounded by the beauty she added to it. This process improved my craft tremendously at a subconscious level. We were singing the same composition, but her voice and her delicate pauses added another dimension. I hope I am able to translate that onstage,” she tells us.

A MELODIC BLEND

Pohankar is an acclaimed vocalist of the Kirana *gharana*, a *khayal gharana* where the intonation of notes or *sur* is of the utmost importance. Ornate use of the *sargam*,

taan and *pukar* are cogent attributes of the musical experience. “But *sur* is the soul of the Kirana *gharana*,” says Pohankar.

Compositions by Aman Ali Khan of the Bhandi Bazaar *gharana* will be a part of the first musical evening of the NCPA *Bandish* as well. Named after the famous Bhandi Bazaar in what was then called Bombay, the *gharana* originated over a century ago and is a beautiful blend of words and melody. Pohankar asserts that the seemingly challenging programme infusing two diverse *gharanas* is a fulfilling joy for him.

Although the two *gharanas* to be presented by Pohankar lay emphasis on notes and rhythm, he believes that a *bandish* is incomplete without words. “Any expressive form of art, whether theatre, film or music, is only enhanced by words. They are the emotional quotient of a *bandish*,” he concludes. ■

The 2023 edition of NCPA Bandish will be presented from 4th to 6th August at the Tata Theatre.

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“HSBC’s journey in India is intertwined with the history and growth of our nation. Our presence in India, which is now 170 years old, has evolved in close connection with the rich cultural heritage of this diverse nation. Indian classical music lends a unique dimension to our heritage bringing together various forms of art and artistes. For us at HSBC India, it is a matter of pride to be associated with Bandish, the festival which celebrates the best of Indian music. Our association with the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), aims to preserve and propagate the vast repertoires of traditional compositions and other music forms available today in classical and semi-classical genres through training, performances and educative sessions thereby imparting overall skills to artistes and making them more employable in the future. We deeply value our association with the NCPA and appreciate its contribution to the promotion of India’s rich and vibrant artistic heritage.”

Hitendra Dave,
CEO,
HSBC India

A SEASON TO REMEMBER

Two concerts under the baton of Maestro Zubin Mehta to open the season in August. The premiere of a triple concerto composed by Zakir Hussain in September. A fiendishly difficult violin concerto played by Marat Bisengaliev. Maestros Richard Farnes, Alpesh Chauhan and Zane Dalal on the podium. The Symphony Orchestra of India's tour of the U.K. in December. The SOI Autumn 2023 Season is the longest and most ambitious of them all. In this interview with ON Stage, Chairman **Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook** reflects on the growth of the SOI and what it means for the city of Mumbai.



Building an orchestra is no mean feat—not even in countries with an established tradition of Western classical music, and certainly not in others. In India, which has its own rich heritage of classical and folk music, acquaintance with the symphonies of Mozart and

Beethoven was understandably limited and concentrated in a few circles that often overlapped: record collectors, amateur pianists and violinists, a few composers such as Salil Chowdhury and Vanraj Bhatia, known for their all-embracing approach to music and finally, aficionados.

Traditions, however, can coexist. Wouldn't a nation with an ear for music be more accepting of another rich tradition from another part of the world? Western classical music, after all, is music first. It was with this belief that Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, then Vice Chairman of the NCPA, embarked on the seemingly

impossible mission of establishing India's first professional symphony orchestra. The beginnings were made in London in 2003, when he happened to attend a concert led by violin virtuoso Marat Bisengaliev. Highly impressed by the quality of the ensemble's playing, he invited them to India to play a concert. Bisengaliev agreed and here they were, performing before an audience in Mumbai that included Dr. Jamshed Bhabha, then Chairman, NCPA. A true connoisseur, he lauded the choice of his friend and colleague Mr. Suntook, expressing faith in his plan of which this was the stepping stone. The invaluable encouragement and assistance received from Mr. Suntook's colleague on the NCPA Council, Ms. Brinda Khatau, who continues to apply her knowledge of organisations and business in an honorary capacity, has been a great factor in the success of this endeavour.

Having performed in the West and the East, Bisengaliev knew that classical music was burgeoning

in Asia with an exceedingly high number of soloists training in the tradition and with concert halls mushrooming to satiate the hunger for this music. His conviction found complete support in Mr. Suntook's vision and in 2006, the Symphony Orchestra of India was born, with Bisengaliev at its helm as Music Director.

It was an uphill task. There were the naysayers and then came the real challenge of venturing into uncharted waters. This was the Symphony Orchestra of India, but where were the Indian players, barring a few? Mr. Suntook insisted that the induction of Indian players in a reasonable period of time was essential.

However, with no conservatories imparting education in Western classical music in India, at least along the rigorous lines of schools abroad, opportunities to train, let alone perform, were limited. Give me 10 years and I will give you results, Bisengaliev promised Mr. Suntook. This, he proceeded to

do by systematically creating a training programme based on a method which is considered to be one of the best.

More musical minds, who believed in nurturing the dream of a world-class orchestra India could call its own, joined in. Noted conductor and musicologist Zane Dalal was invited to be the Resident Conductor of the SOI within months of its formation. Now Associate Music Director, Dalal is deeply involved in many aspects of the orchestra.

Every year, Mr. Suntook, Bisengaliev and Dalal would spend hours on end planning programmes, inviting soloists and balancing expenses and income with impressive results. Here, the knowledge and international music connections of the trio formed a powerful magnet to attract artistes who trusted their judgements.

In 2012, six years after the teething troubles—procurement of funds, quality instruments, even proper concert clothes!—



(From left) Zane Dalal, Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook and Marat Bisengaliev



Zubin Mehta

had been overcome to an extent, an academy was established to ensure budding musicians were trained in the Russian conservatoire method, the very method that Bisengaliev and other musicians of the orchestra were educated in to become masters of their instruments. The SOI Music Academy came with a unique focus on shaping students not only as soloists but also orchestral players.

ultimate endorsement comes from the artistes. Season after season, the NCPA has drawn soloists and conductors of international fame to perform with the SOI. The orchestra has also toured the U.K., Russia, Switzerland, the U.A.E. and Oman over the years to very encouraging reviews. It is now set for a tour of the U.K. in November and December with a stellar line-up and programme. This season is truly the culmination of it all.

“WHEN I CONCEPTUALISED THE FOUNDING OF THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA IN 2003, LITTLE DID WE REALISE THAT WE WOULD BE PLANNING A SEASON WHICH WOULD HAVE 15 MAJOR CONCERTS BY WORLD-CLASS MUSICIANS”

Eleven years later, several students are now pursuing higher education in music in prestigious international schools.

Meanwhile, promising artistes have been scouted across India, to be offered apprenticeship to perform in the orchestra alongside established musicians and learn on the job. Delightful discoveries have been made along the way; those that bear out Bisengaliev’s words at the inception.

Audiences, too, have warmed to the music. Concerted efforts have been made to widen the reach of Western classical music—music appreciation sessions, pre-concert talks, educational and outreach programmes are regularly organised and conducted by musicians of the SOI, Dalal, Dr. Cavas Bilimoria and Jimmy Bilimoria. Today, the theatres are filled with not only older connoisseurs but also curious young listeners who stumbled into the music and were awed by the magic that 80-plus musicians create onstage.

This perseverance and adherence to quality has long silenced the sceptics, but the

We spoke to Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, honorary Chairman, NCPA, about the journey he undertook 17 years ago, the milestones along the way and the upcoming season.

Could you please tell us about the SOI Autumn 2023 Season which commences next month on a rather special note?

When I conceptualised the founding of the Symphony Orchestra of India in 2003, little did we realise that in a short span of time, at least as far as the longevity of orchestras is concerned, we would be planning a season from August to December which would have 15 major concerts by world-class musicians, two of them led by our very own Zubin Mehta, who will be specially flying to Mumbai to conduct the SOI in August. We are co-presenting these two concerts with the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation which is doing wonderful work in the area of creating greater awareness and appreciation of Western classical music.

The next month will see the world premiere of a triple concerto—commissioned by the NCPA—by tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, who

“I WAS FORTUNATE IN HAVING TIED UP WITH MARAT BISENGALIEV, WHO HAS PROVEN TO BE AN INVALUABLE ASSET TO THE NCPA IN HAVING NOT ONLY ESTABLISHED A FINE TEAM BUT ALSO HAPPILY INTRODUCED FINE MUSICIANS AS TEACHERS AND PLAYERS IN THE SOI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA”

has not only composed it but will also perform it with the noted sitar and bansuri players Niladri Kumar and Rakesh Chaurasia. Our Zane Dalal, whom Mumbai loves, will embark on leading ambitious works by Rossini, Khachaturian and Tchaikovsky with Music Director Marat Bisengaliev, who will be playing the solo in the fiendishly difficult concerto by Khachaturian.

This season will also feature other world-class soloists, Steven Isserlis and Pavel Kolesnikov, and conductors Richard Farnes and Alpesh Chauhan who have helmed the SOI in earlier seasons and are happy to return to the NCPA.

What is the curatorial process of a season of this magnitude?

The curation of seasons of this kind is an enormous effort and we cannot leave out all the people connected with the season as well as our valued partners Edward Smith, Gian Ganzarolli, Richard Nowell and IMG Artists. The vital support received from the NCPA’s Western Classical Music committee, consisting of distinguished members of the community with knowledge of the genre and who regularly tour internationally, cannot be denied. A team to sustain quality music-making season after season was essential and due credit must be given to persons, like Mr. Jehangir and Mrs. Binaifer Batiwala, who secure artistes internationally and manage classical music concerts in Pune, the SOI’s fine manager Xerxes Unvala and of course, the

indefatigable orchestra manager Onay Zhumabayeva.

How do you look back on the last 17 years?

It is no easy matter to have built an orchestra to this standard so that we may present it to world-famous musicians. The process itself was extremely hard, filled with difficulties of all kinds. I was fortunate in having tied up with Marat Bisengaliev, who has proven to be an invaluable asset to the NCPA in having not only established a fine team but also happily introduced fine musicians as teachers and players in the SOI Chamber Orchestra.

What does this mean for Mumbai, the home of the country’s first professional orchestra?

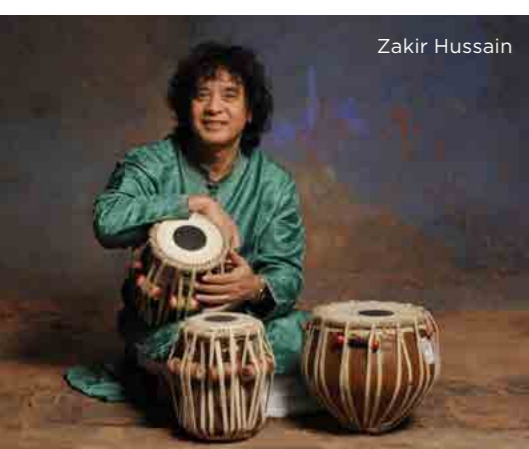
Providentially for the city, this team of fine musicians has proved to be a gift, for the first time creating an international-class orchestra worth of not only performing at a high level but also absorbing talented young Indians from all over the country and establishing its own academy which now forms an orchestra of its own.

Several diplomats and international businessmen have written to appreciate the performances of Western classical music at the NCPA as an invaluable adjunct to living in Mumbai.

Only people involved in reaching this kind of standard will understand the difficulties it entails and which our city and our country must be proud of. ■



Niladri Kumar



Zakir Hussain



Rakesh Chaurasia



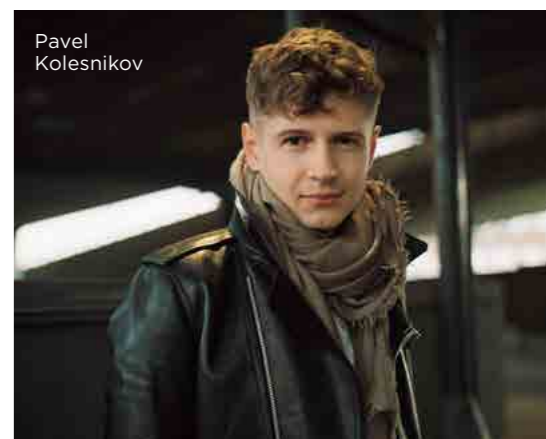
Marat Bisengaliev



Alpesh Chauhan



Zane Dalal



Pavel Kolesnikov



Richard Farnes



Steven Isserlis

THE MONK WITHOUT BORDERS

A philosopher, a social reformer and one of the most influential champions of Vedanta, Swami Vivekananda's life and words have inspired many. Singer, composer and actor Shekhar Sen discusses the process of resurrecting the great philosopher onstage for his play, *Vivekanand*.

By Akshaya Pillai

On a flight from Kolkata to Mumbai, acclaimed actor, singer and composer, Shekhar Sen found himself engrossed in the making of his new play, his laptop resting on the tray table before him. The pivotal scene dealt with the character's internal struggle with atheism.

Music pervades Sen's creative process, in that every time he sits down to write a scene, a tune accompanies the pen. When he craned his neck around to see if he would be disturbing co-passengers, he realised the first-class cabin was bathed in an air of tranquillity and there was just one lone passenger across the aisle. Thirty-thousand feet above the ground with billowing clouds for company, Sen tried to hum as softly as he could, yet attracted the attention of the only fellow passenger—an icon in the world of classical music, Hariprasad Chaurasia, who was quick to playfully interrupt with, "Kaa gaa rahe ho?"

Sen has many such fond memories of the years it took him to compose the mono-act play, *Vivekanand*. "I am an actor by accident," he says as we begin discussing the process of how he immerses himself in every aspect, from meticulous research to writing, composing, acting and directing. Previously, Sen's mono-act musical plays—*Tulsi*, *Kabeer*, *Saahab* and *Soordas*—have garnered widespread acclaim for their ability to deeply resonate with audiences and spark contemplation. With *Vivekanand*, Sen embarks on a journey to bring the philosopher to life, intertwining music, dialogue and profound



teachings to present the incredible transformation of Narendranath Datta, a mischievous child, into the towering personality the world came to know as Swami Vivekananda. Thirty-two songs are intricately woven into a factual narrative. Each note, scrupulously placed, becomes a vessel carrying the essence of the monk's journey—his triumphs, his trials and the eternal resonance of his teachings.

Sen's abiding interest in Vivekananda has its roots in childhood. Born and raised in Raipur, he lived a stone's throw from where a young Narendranath once spent a part of his formative years. "Swami Vivekananda was not just a great orator. He could play the sitar, sing *khayal*, *dhrupad* and *bhajans* as well as a professional classical singer," says Sen who was intrigued by his profound mastery of both words and music, and sought to understand the motivations, struggles and victories that shaped his transformative path. "Yes, Vivekananda is famous. We may wonder, what is there to say about him that hasn't already been said? The truth is, people know only a few facts, that too only to a certain degree of correctness. For instance, not many know

unhappy scholar: "Dharam charcha chhod pandit, karam ki charcha karo." Each syllable is carefully enunciated. The room becomes a stage.

The challenges inherent in capturing the essence of a historical figure's life in a solo performance are immense. It requires a delicate balance of factual accuracy, artistic interpretation and emotional resonance. While the play hasn't changed over the years, Sen diligently fixed all errors, even minor ones like the anachronistic presence of water taps and motor cars in the dialogues and more nuanced ones like the exact number of months Vivekananda was in Porbandar. "I always ask for proof when someone tells me I got a fact wrong, and in this instance, the monk who corrected me showed me copies of the letters written by Vivekananda who had the habit of writing the date followed by the location every time he penned a letter."

Sen deftly peels away the layers of time, unveiling the universal truths that lie hidden beneath the surface of history. His dedication to authenticity ensures that these legendary figures are not just portrayed, but truly resurrected, their essence

Vivekanand intertwines music, dialogue and profound teachings to present the incredible transformation of Narendranath Datta into the towering philosopher the world came to know as Swami Vivekananda.

that he lived for only 39 years and became a Swami at the age of 33. His life was fraught with challenges that he overcame and led the world to the path of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*," he says, referring to the Sanskrit phrase which means 'the world is one family'.

In many ways, Sen's fascination with historical heroes is born out of a yearning to unearth the timeless wisdom they embody. For him, this endeavour has become a labour of love and a profound spiritual journey. Sen goes on to narrate the critical points of Swami Vivekananda's historic speech at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions which resonated far beyond the confines of the event. With the powerful opening words, "Sisters and brothers of America," Vivekananda introduced Hinduism to America.

The one-hour phone call is rife with anecdotes, both of Swami Vivekananda and of Sen's personal journey with the play. Lines from it are uttered impromptu. "Agle pachaas saalo tak aap saare devi devatao ko apne taak (shelf) par rakhiye, hamara rashtra hi humara devta hai," he says, invoking the philosopher's fiery erudition and intense patriotism. Stories are told about how a monk, who had travelled far and wide and come to engage in a debate with Vivekananda, got annoyed when he realised the latter's priority lay in tending to plague-stricken citizens. Sen momentarily becomes Vivekananda and narrates the response that was given to the

made palpable for all who bear witness. A group of nuns who once attended his show hurried to tell him afterwards that they felt that they had witnessed Jesus Christ onstage. Moreover, the play transcends the boundaries of time and offers a poignant reflection on the philosophy of Swami Vivekananda that continues to resonate with contemporary audiences. Sometime in 2004, after Sen performed the play in Kolkata, he received an inland letter from a seven-year-old cancer patient. The boy was allowed to watch the play despite not being able to buy tickets. The letter, filled with innocence and gratitude, served as a reminder of the profound impact art can have on individuals, regardless of their age or circumstances.

"Swami Vivekananda's teachings on service to humanity and the upliftment of the marginalised hold particular relevance in today's society, inspiring individuals to make a positive difference in the world," adds Sen. Vivekananda's emphasis on self-belief, self-realisation and the unity of religions serves as a guiding light in a world that often finds itself in turmoil. The play, with an interplay of song and storytelling, loftily seeks to ignite a powerful collective awakening. ■

Vivekanand, a mono-act musical play by Shekhar Sen, will be presented on 1st July at the Tata Theatre.



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Mendelssohn: *Violin Concerto in E minor*

July 18 | 6:00 pm | Godrej Dance Theatre, NCPA

July 21 | 4:00 pm | Stuart-Liff Collection Library, NCPA

A REVERENCE FOR LIFE

Bachi Karkaria speaks to Dr. Farokh Udwadia about the process of writing and staging *OGANGA!*

Dr. Farokh Udwadia's DNA has its own distinctive strands. Champion of the humanities and evangelist of the art of healing as opposed to the science of curing. This double helix informs his many personae: legendary doctor, teacher, mentor, historian, musician. *OGANGA!*, which opened at the Tata Theatre in July 2022, premiered yet another facet. The three-act, one-man play he had written was on his lifelong hero, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who gave up Swiss orderliness to minister to the poorest of the poor in the steamy jungles of Gabon in equatorial Africa.

Under Sooni Taraporevala's taut direction, the talented young Jim Sarbh held the stage for a riveting hour. Heightened by Bach's music at pitch-perfect points, the controlled production brought to life Dr. Udwadia's essaying of Dr. Schweitzer's heroic achievement, his compassion, the hostility of native witch doctors—and most powerfully of all—his internal struggle with self-doubt. Sarbh never flagged, the pace never sagged. But then they did have a play scripted by a man who had seamlessly subsumed the title character. It was catharsis. As the last lights faded, the audience exploded with release.

There was a bonus. Dr. Udwadia came on stage and delivered a fluid, philosophical soliloquy. It was a subtle message to his tribe that theirs was a mission, not a mere profession, one that had to be guided by humane caring, not cold cash. Along with the city's who's who, Mumbai's entire top medical brass seemed to have been at the Tata Theatre that evening. One could sense a chastening.

As *OGANGA!* prepares to come back onstage, Dr. Udwadia explains the anatomy of his creation.



Why Dr. Albert Schweitzer?

I have admired this great human being for many, many years. His was indeed a unique life, and the more I've read about him the more I'm convinced that he was arguably the greatest man of the 20th century. I was drawn to his great humanity, his compassion, his sacrifice, his selfless services to the poorest of the poor, the sickest of the sick, and the unconditional universality of his love. Also, his great intellect, and his great love for music which helped him in so many difficult moments.

Would you say you've lived up to your hero in all your own acclaimed decades in medicine?

Oh, my dear, there is no way one can compare my life to his. He has always been a great inspiration to me. I have tried to practise humanity, compassion, empathy, charity, love—particularly to the very poor. I count my 30 years at the JJ Hospital as the most fulfilling ones of my life.

What sparked the idea of encapsulating his life and work in a play?

Actually, for a long time, I just felt that I should write a play. It was like a bee in my bonnet! 'On what?' buzzed the bumble bee. Suddenly, quite suddenly, the answer flashed, 'Why not Schweitzer?'

Why did you narrow it down to a one-man play?

I wanted it to be wholly Schweitzer's life story. So, I felt a one-man show would be best suited for this. Also, it would be easier to write, with fewer technical complications.

What were the challenges you faced?

Despite having studied his life's work for so long, to write a play on him I needed to know much more. A dear, dear lady, who was also a patient, but who unfortunately is no more, helped me search out the literature; she also procured some of Schweitzer's own writings and books. Every time she met me, even during her last illness, she would say, "Farokh, you have to write it. Don't abandon Schweitzer."

You are a legendary doctor; have given erudite and eloquent talks on your non-medical passions, you've even written non-fiction, but a play is a genre all of its own. How did you prep yourself for this? And what did you draw from your own experience to flesh out the character of Dr. Schweitzer?

Frankly, it required no preparation. I am reasonably well-versed in literature, drama, poetry, history and music. I have read many times over, the great plays



The premiere of *OGANGA!* at the NCPA in July 2022

The three-act, one-man play Dr. Farokh Udwadia has written is on his lifelong hero, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who gave up Swiss orderliness to minister to the poorest of the poor in the steamy jungles of Gabon in equatorial Africa

of the past and present, from the Greek tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides to those of our present age.

The second part of your question is indeed relevant. The Third Act constitutes what I deeply feel within myself. It is me speaking! I am certain Schweitzer would approve of the thoughts expressed. In fact, I wrote the Third Act before the First and Second. Also, I wrote it within a matter of a few hours, and by and large, it remained unchanged.

Being the perfectionist that you are, how many drafts did you work on before you were satisfied?

The First Act was redrafted once in its entirety. The Second Act had bits and pieces redrafted, parts of it were more dramatised. Jim (Sarbh, who solely holds the stage) pointed out a few lacunae, which I dutifully filled. Overall, the play was quite ready within a month.

That's all? Amazing. By the way, why did you name it 'Oganga!' And not the more recognizable 'Schweitzer'? That suggestion came from Sooni (Taraporevala, the director)—and it is a brilliant, catchy title. All native 'witch doctors' in French Equatorial Africa were called 'Oganga' and the patients who sought Schweitzer's help called him by that name too.

What made you choose Jim Sarbh for the title role? Did this busy actor take much persuading? And, at the end of the day, what made him an excellent choice?

Again, it was Sooni's idea. Outside my family, she was the first to read and approve of the play. After going through the first draft, she said Jim Sarbh would be a good choice. I had not heard of him, but then I have not heard of most actors, barring perhaps two or three. He was kind enough to come over to my home three times. On the first two visits, I read out the draft to him,



(From left) Actor Jim Sarbh and director Sooni Taraporevala with Dr. Farokh Udwadia

On the third, he read it aloud to us, and, to our delight, said he'd do it. To answer the last part of your question, it was his stage presence, his diction, and the right dramatisation. Without a doubt, he played the part of Schweitzer to perfection.

And why Sooni Taraporevala? Despite her prodigious talents, as photographer, screenplay writer, filmmaker, she had never directed a play.

Sooni is a very dear friend and a long-time patient. She was the other individual who egged me on to actually sit down and write a play after I had once casually mentioned my desire to her. So, when I did, I put the ball back in her court. I told her that if she could direct cinema, she could quite easily direct a play. She'd never done so, but she pulled it off brilliantly. The lighting, the sound effects, and the music of Bach (which I chose) at appropriate moments in the play.

So who was the 'other' individual who 'egged' you on? The lady who sourced so much material?

Yes.

Which parts of the performed play moved you the most?

The Third Act, particularly towards the end when Schweitzer reminisces about his wife, who helped him as much as she could, and who died some years before him. Also, some parts in Act Two, where the great doctor is demoralised, plagued by doubt and wonders whether he should continue or simply return to Europe.

And which scenes took a while to get right?

The First Act.

After the premiere last year, did you feel the need to make any changes for this July's revival?

None at all.

Bachi Karkaria is a noted journalist and columnist. 'OGANGA!' - A Tribute to the Life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer will be presented on 16th July at the Tata Theatre.

A Welcome Return

Ahead of her performance with pianist Christina Bjørkøe and the SOI Chamber Orchestra, the India-born Danish conductor Maria Badstue talks to *ON Stage* about her connection with India and the upcoming concert, while reflecting on her musical journey and mentors.

By Beverly Pereira

Danish conductor Maria Badstue has been celebrated for her intuitiveness, versatility and communicative abilities in Europe for several years now. Naturally, it wasn't long until the rest of the world learned of the talent and passion of this young conductor of Indian origin. Born in the village of Pandharpur in Maharashtra, she was adopted at five months by her Danish parents and brought up in the small town of Thisted, Denmark. Steeped in classical music from an early age, Badstue, a professional trumpeter, was mentored by acclaimed conductors like Jorma Panula and Marin Alsop. Winning the special prize in the Lovro von Matatic Competition in 2011, she soon went on to become one of the most popular young conductors, working with notable orchestras of the Nordic world.

An exponent of opera, Badstue has conducted productions like *Vanessa* by Samuel Barber in Neubrandenburg, *Don Quixote* by Massenet in Stockholm and contemporary operas like *Thumbprint* by Kamala Sankaram in Portland, among others. And, in 2017, her passion for the operatic field brought her closer to her country of birth when she was invited to conduct *Il Matrimonio Sagreto* in Mumbai. As a proponent of music education, she has been engaged in two remarkable initiatives to promote classical music. Badstue is the founding director of Nordic Masterclass for Conductors, a sought-after masterclasses in Europe, in collaboration with Jorma Panula and the South Denmark Philharmonic. Her association with the INDK Symphonic Collaboration, an initiative of cultural cooperation between India and Denmark, is commendable, despite the programme's postponement during the 2020 lockdown.

Excerpts from the interview:

ON Stage: Could you give us a peek into your musical journey?

Maria Badstue: My parents tell me that since I was about two to three years old, I would often sit in front of their big speakers in the living room listening to all kinds of music, especially classical. At eight, I started playing in the brass band for the local scout organisation FDF, that organises brass bands across Denmark. I played the cornet and later the trumpet. When I was around 14 or 15, I conducted a brass band for the first time; it was my first introduction to standing in front of an orchestra. At 19, I moved to a bigger city for a preparation course for the entrance test for the Danish National Academy of Music. Here, I studied the trumpet and met my first conducting teacher, music director of the Danish Chamber Players. He was so kind to give me a chance to conduct the ensemble in concert. This was my first meeting with a professional orchestra, and it made a deep impression on me.

OS: You were mentored by Finnish conductor Jorma Panula. What were your takeaways from this period?

MB: Jorma Panula, first and foremost, encouraged me and believed in me. He is a world-famous teacher, and I was so proud and motivated that he took serious interest in me and my development. He invited me to all kinds of courses and masterclasses, especially in Finland but also throughout Europe. He is an amazing teacher, and I learned so much from him—about the music, how to study and study fast and, especially, the psychology of working with many people. He taught us to respect the orchestra and always be prepared. He is a master of teaching people how to self-study. He does not give specific



I love Sibelius and Beethoven and I cannot wait to present this repertoire to the Mumbai audience ... I am also looking forward to reuniting with the musicians of the SOI Chamber Orchestra

rules to do it, but really encourages what you have, as everyone comes from different backgrounds.

OS: You visited India in 2017 for the first time since your birth to conduct the opera *Il Matrimonio Segreto*. Tell us more about your memories of the show.

MB: It was very special to visit India. Honestly, the most special thing was that everyone around me was 'brown'. I had never experienced that and it was a very special emotional experience for me. I will never forget that feeling of getting off the plane for the first time in Mumbai. I was very touched and cried a bit actually. Mumbai is a wild city and, to people who grew up in Europe, pretty chaotic! And then, in the middle of all the chaos with the traffic, we find the atmospheric Royal Opera House of Mumbai. We had a great show there and I hope to go back there some day.

OS: In retrospect, what was this homecoming like for you?

MB: What was really interesting was that I, before I had been in India, thought that people here would be very different from the Danes; but human character is the same all over the world. I've always loved to watch people and study their character—perhaps a bit like actors do. I met many nice people in Mumbai and it is really special to work with so many brown people around you. I did not expect that this would affect me the way it did, but it was a nice feeling.

OS: Tell us more about your role as Artistic Director and Founder of the Nordic Masterclass for Conductors founded in collaboration with your mentor.

MB: When I studied conducting with Jorma, I visited so many of his masterclasses all over Europe. In Denmark, we did not have such kind of masterclasses that enable the students to meet a real professional orchestra. I knew from my own experience how much this is needed for young conductors to develop. So, I founded the Nordic Masterclass to provide these opportunities. This season we have our 10th anniversary. I am proud of the initiative that attracts around 100 applicants every year and has established itself as one of the most prestigious masterclasses in Europe for conductors.

OS: Who are some of the composers you find yourself going back to from time to time?

MB: I always somehow go back to the symphonies of Beethoven and Haydn when I need to clear my mind music-wise. I could study the scores by Beethoven for the rest of my life and still find them enriching. Opening a score by Beethoven always gives me a fresh insight

into the other works I am studying or performing at the time. If I went to a deserted island, I would definitely bring the scores of Beethoven's symphonies.

OS: Your thoughts on the journey as a woman who conducts?

MB: I believe that nowadays opera houses and symphony orchestras worldwide are more seriously committed to casting a broader variety of artistes in principal roles and positions like soloists, singers and conductors. There are more female conductors who are qualified to be cast for bigger stages than there have been in the past.

I do believe there are people in the industry who want to change the narrative and open up and invite all talent to create a space where a more diverse pool of people, including the performers and the audience, can feel at home and included. And I think this is needed simply to make classical orchestral music and our wonderful repertoire relevant even 200 years from now. One of the most important things to have happened in my lifetime in the music industry is that globally we have started to have these important and much-needed conversations.

OS: What can you tell us about the programme for the evening of 28th July at the NCPA?

MB: I love Sibelius and Beethoven and I cannot wait to present this repertoire to the Mumbai audience. I also very much look forward to reuniting with the great and sweet musicians of the SOI Chamber Orchestra. I've wanted to perform the *Battalia* by Heinrich Biber for a long time. This will be paired with two melancholic pieces for strings by Sibelius that I love. Then, we have the momentous third piano concerto by Beethoven. We'll also bring surprises that I cannot speak about yet.

OS: Have you collaborated with Christina Bjørkøe in the past?

MB: When I was still a student some 15 years ago at the Danish National Academy of Music, one of Bjørkøe's piano students asked if I wanted to conduct the Ravel Piano Concerto for her final exam. Bjørkøe, already a famous and well-established pianist, was teaching us and giving advice. I was honoured when she said that she'd love to play with me some day. Of course, I was so sad when our performances were cancelled in Mumbai in 2020 due to the lockdown. But here we are! Fifteen years after we met at the Danish National Academy, we will finally perform together for the first time, and I am looking forward to it very much. ■

Maria Badstue will perform with the SOI Chamber Orchestra and pianist Christina Bjørkøe on 28th July at the Tata Theatre.



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LEGENDS



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Shweta Shetty



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Powerful Voices

Accompanied by an all-girl band and dance group, Indian pop star Shweta Shetty is set to perform much-loved hits from artistes like Whitney Houston, Amy Winehouse, Lady Gaga and Beyoncé at the NCPA this month.

By Narendra Kusnur

When one speaks of singer Shweta Shetty, one immediately thinks of Indian pop hits like 'Johnny Joker', 'Jalne Mein Hai Mazaa' and 'Deewane to Deewane Hain', or the Hindi film songs 'Rukmani Rukmani' from *Roja* and 'Mangta Hai Kya' from *Rangeela*. However, she doesn't plan to sing any of them at the NCPA Legends show at the Tata Theatre on 22nd July.

The concert will bring together an all-girl band and dance group to pay tribute to the international legends who have left an indelible mark on the music scene. Cutting across retro-pop, soul, R&B, jazz and funk, Shetty will sing songs by Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Beyoncé, Mariah Carey, Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Amy Winehouse, Adele and others. She will also present her own take on the Andrea Bocelli-Sarah Brightman song 'Time to Say Goodbye' and the Prince hit 'Purple Rain'.

"It's an honour to do a concert of only English songs, as that's what my upbringing has been. Growing up, I did stage musicals with Celia Lobo and Ronnie Screwvala, but then I moved to popular Hindi music. At my show last year in Mumbai, I did a mix of styles in both Hindi and English. But I was returning to the stage after a gap, and I chose a lot of my Hindi hits, which the audience recognised. It was more about the thrill of coming back on stage, and gaining the confidence to do regular shows," says Shetty, who spent 18

years in Hamburg, Germany, before returning to India in 2015.

For the show at the NCPA, Shetty is excited to be singing her favourite English numbers. "My repertoire is very wide, and this is one aspect the crowd will enjoy. I will add my own flavour. I never copy anybody's manner of singing but adapt songs to suit my own style. The good thing is today's youngsters are very discerning listeners, and the older

"It's an honour to do a concert of only English songs, as that's what my upbringing has been. Growing up, I did stage musicals with Celia Lobo and Ronnie Screwvala, but then I moved to popular Hindi music"

generation will enjoy these songs because they've grown up listening to them," she says.

The show will feature artistes like Pratika Prabhune, Brecilla Dsouza and Larissa Coelho and also have guest appearances by other singers, including Clinton Fernandes. According to Shetty, a lot of hard work goes into detailing. She elaborates, "I am doing 95 per cent of the stage preparations myself, from choosing the musicians and the dancers, selecting the songs and their order, choosing the costumes and managing the rehearsals."

For someone who has been on the scene since the early 1990s, Shetty has many stories to tell. Her album *Going Wild*, which had music by Ronnie Monsorate and Tabun Sutradhar, and lyrics by Rani Malik, was released in 1990. Though the album title and some of the song names were in English, the songs were in Hindi, as the industry was trying to build non-film pop music at the time. On the next album,

Johnny Joker, she worked with composer Biddu, who was then known as the biggest name in Indian pop, or Indi-pop as it is commonly known, and disco. She recalls, "I knew that singing in Hindi wasn't in my DNA, but working with Biddu was something any singer looked forward to." The lyrics for the 1993 album were written by Rajesh Johri, and the title song and 'Aaj Naye' became hits.

Simultaneously, Shetty recorded for A.R. Rahman in *Roja* and *Rangeela*. She says, "Because of them, I was flooded with Bollywood offers. The money was good too, but I wasn't sure whether I wanted to do item numbers, which was the trend those days. I earned a reputation for being arrogant, but I wanted to be known more for a good body of work than for churning out a large number of average songs."

The year 1995 saw the release of Phil & Jerry's remix album *Oorja*, where Shetty appeared on three numbers, including the multi-artist 'Q Funk'. With Indi-pop gaining popularity, she collaborated with



Cutting across retro-pop, soul, R&B, jazz and funk, Shweta Shetty will sing songs by Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Beyoncé, Mariah Carey, Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Amy Winehouse, Adele and others

Salim-Sulaiman on *The New Album*. The songs 'Bekaraar' and 'Jalne Mein Hai Mazaa' became hits, and the latter was released in a new version two years ago by New Delhi-based house music producer Addy S.

The 1997 album *Deewane to Deewane Hain* yielded big hits in the title track and 'Main Dekhne

Ki Cheez Hoon', whereas 'Jaan-E-Jaan' impressed with its soulfulness. That year, Shetty married German resident Clemens Brandt, and though they parted after five years, she continued to stay in Hamburg. Recovering from an accident there, she got into yoga professionally, and stuck to that line of activity.

She says, "Hamburg was a lovely place, but as a singer from India, it was always a struggle. Germany was too influenced by the U.S. and England, and Germans accepted what worked in those regions. For me, it was an uphill task, and though I came and recorded songs in India, they were few."

Shetty remembers some memorable moments from when she got a chance to work with British singer Sarah Brightman, electronic duo Jam & Spoon, and German producer Frank Peterson, who had collaborated with Brightman, Enigma and the group Gregorian. Back home, she had hits in 'Dil Tote Tote Ho Gaya' from the film *Bichhoo*, 'Dilli ki Sardi' from *Zameen* and the club mix of 'Oh! What a Babe' from *Rakht*. "I got commercial songs, but they suited my voice and style," she says.

In 2021, Shetty released a new independent single 'Daro Na' in collaboration with Addy S. Written as a motivational song in the wake of the pandemic, it was shot on iPhone and edited entirely at home. While she plans to release more songs, she is looking for the right promoters.

A name inseparable from the burgeoning Indi-pop genre of the 1990s, Shetty has continued to evolve with the times. When asked about her views on the evolution of the non-film music scene in India, she feels that labels scouted for the right talent those days. They built the artiste and took complete charge of releases. "It's not the same any more," she says.

The stage will, of course, be a priority. She says, "I feel happy that I am doing shows with themes that are close to my heart. I have had my challenges, but I have faced them boldly, and come back. That's the way it should be. Madonna, Mariah and Whitney have all had flops and bad phases, but one has to move on. And for an artiste, there's no feeling that's better than being loved by your audience." ■

NCPA Legends with Shweta Shetty will be presented on 22nd July at the Tata Theatre.

MELODY IN MOVEMENT

In *Ram Ratan Dhan*, classical dancers pay homage to Lata Mangeshkar's lilting voice with choreographies that celebrate her musical legacy.

By Aishwarya Sahasrabudhe

The death of Lata Mangeshkar in February 2022 sent waves of sorrow across the nation, a loss that reverberated through a vast community of artistes too, whose creative meditations are profoundly impacted by the melodious soprano of the spellbinding singer. Lata Didi, as she was fondly called, recorded thousands of songs during her lifetime, spanning diverse genres from *bhajans*, *abhangas* and patriotic verses to ghazals, film and folk tunes in 36 Indian languages. For Odissi exponent Shubhada Varadkar, she is the image of *nirguna*, a pure and soulful artiste whose voice is a formless echo that pervades across temporal and spatial boundaries.

Such admiration inevitably prompted Varadkar to pay tribute to Mangeshkar during the 2022 Women's Day celebrations by conceptualising and curating a stunning spectacle of her songs as interpreted by Indian classical dancers. *Ram Ratan Dhan — Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar* was born out of a desire to invoke the musicality and strength of the singer, whose diverse oeuvre becomes the common thread tying varied classical dance forms. Mangeshkar's cannon transcends the barriers of genre, Varadkar explains, of "classical, semi-classical, folk" and in a truly unifying experience, the recital itself marks a two-fold purity, of her soulful voice and the movement vocabulary of classical dance.

A two-hour-long rendition of this presentation will be presented at the NCPA this month, with prominent artistes and dance schools across Mumbai performing to Mangeshkar's songs in various languages and across classical dance forms of Kathak, Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Manipuri.

Interpretative voice

The vibrancy characteristic of classical recitals lies as much in the zeal of the performing artiste as in the live musical accompaniments which heighten the rhythm and urgency of the choreography. "As classical artistes, we don't really perform to film music," Varadkar concedes, so this performance is distinctive, not only because it retains the movement vocabulary of classical dance but because it is also shaped by the dancers' interpretations of Mangeshkar's lyric and verse. For Varadkar, using recorded tunes in *Ram Ratan Dhan* is then made possible only because of the transcendental allure of the voice that flows into the proscenium, leaving the audiences transfixed and mesmerised.

So too, the essence of classical choreographies is enhanced by dissociating the film songs from the movie scenes in which they appear, enabling the artiste to engage in a dialogue with the verse. When Varadkar choreographs 'Tu Chanda Main Chandni'





Pooja Pant (centre)

for an Odissi recital, she interprets the song as the *nayika's* longing to meet her beloved, Lord Krishna. "Everybody has that Krishna in their heart," she continues, and she interprets the lyric such that the heroine sees him even in the moon.

Sometimes, highlighting the abstractness inherent in the verse poses a challenge, Varadkar elucidates, as with the Marathi song, 'Gagan Sadan Tejomaya', an evocative prayer urging the divine to imbue our existence with wisdom and fearlessness.

Varadkar's curatorial effort covers several dimensions of the melody queen's musical repository and most dancers have selected songs with a personal connection leading to a meaningful thought process behind choreographic endeavours. The Odissi stalwart elaborates, "I gave the choice to dancers," who brought to her multiple *bhajans*—a comfortable space for classical artistes—and a host of favourites they were quite unable to choose from. In the end, Varadkar says, they arrived at a mix of popular songs, *abhangas* and folk tunes to render them in the classical rhythm.

Bharatanatyam artiste Pavitra Bhat attests to Mangeshkar's pervasive musicality and says, "When I was a kid, I remember coming from school, putting on the tape recorder and dancing to many of her songs," all of which have a soothing effect resonating with the classical idiom.

A classical ode

In *Ram Ratan Dhan*, artistes like Amruta Khanvilkar and Urmilla Kothare are also part of the line-up of dancers along with Latasana Devi, who will blend Mangeshkar's voice with Manipuri choreographies. Varadkar adds that *bhajans* like 'Ram Ratan Dhan Payo' and 'Allah Tero Naam', Marathi verses such as 'Sundar Te Dhyaan' and popular film songs make up the homage to the singer.

Mumbai-based Kathak danseuse Pooja Pant, who will be performing at the recital, recalls how as a child, she was very intrigued with 'Piya Tose Naina Laage', so along with the evergreen song, 'Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya', she has chosen this number for a group choreography.

Vaidehi Rele, a third-generation danseuse and granddaughter of Kanak Rele, the Mohiniattam stalwart and Founder and Director of Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyala, says that Varadkar's careful curation gives the Bharatanatyam artiste's troupe the freedom of being in their own skin while simultaneously paving the way for an exploration different from the traditional *margam*.

Nalanda's troupe will be showcasing the *bhajan*, 'Thane Kai Kai Bol Sunava', written by saint-poet Meera Bai, whose folk melody rendered in Mangeshkar's lilting voice highlights the *bhakti* element integral to all Indian classical dance forms. Choreographed by

Ram Ratan Dhan will see prominent artistes and dance schools across Mumbai performing to Mangeshkar's songs in various languages and classical dance forms of Kathak, Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Manipuri

Bharatanatyam exponent Uma Rele, the *bhakti rasa* of this *bhajan* is brought forth through Kathak and Bharatanatyam movements danced to folk music.

For the artistes, Rele suggests, reconciling the varied idioms of Kathak and Bharatanatyam has been an enriching experience. Kathak, she elaborates, has "impeccable footwork," yet the footwork of Bharatanatyam has its own flavour. So, a harmonious choreography blending these complex movements into folk rhythm becomes an invigorating study of the expansiveness of dance vocabulary.

As Pant suggests, each classical dance style has its own quality, so what is particularly enjoyable while performing to Mangeshkar's songs is the process of each artiste interpreting "the same voice in such varied ways." To that effect, Rele says that in the *bhajan*, with "Bharatanatyam dancers dressed up as Sri Krishna and Kathak dancers as the gopis," what manifests is a *maharasa* (divine emotion) that taps into the omnipresence of devotion in diverse dance forms.

Art is malleable, she continues, and through such recitals, becomes an ode to an earnest form of strength

and empowerment epitomised in Mangeshkar's remarkable voice. For the young artiste, it is also a way of taking forward the vision of her grandmother, whose affirmation of women's power has been the driving force of Nalanda.

Ultimately, Varadkar asserts, the recital, along with a tribute, is also a salutation to the musical magic of Mangeshkar which has cast a spell on generations of listeners. Interestingly, she exalts in how this enduring legend is drawing more and more audiences to their first classical dance recitals where her songs act as the entry point to experience the magnificence and complexity of the classical repertoire.

Such is the pull of Mangeshkar's voice that, as Bhat says, "Every song is a gem, from lyrics to the detailing of the background score," so that within the classical genre too, "every *swara* pattern" gives dancers "the scope to bring in grace." ■

Ram Ratan Dhan – Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar will be presented on 7th July at the Tata Theatre.



Pavitra Bhat's troupe

Chasing the Monsoon

There comes a time every year when the Maximum City that stops for nobody has to bow down to the relentless deluge of the monsoon. The rains of Mumbai bring with them a myriad of affairs, of poetry, metaphors and relief from the scorching heat, but also of mayhem, squalor and swampy potholes. How can one even begin to map out the intricacies of the tumultuous relationship between a city so vulnerable to the wrath of nature and its ever-resilient citizens?

The Dilip Piralal Art Gallery welcomes the showers of July with a new exhibition, titled Mumbai Monsoon: Beyond 24/7, which grants a unique perspective on

the annual phenomenon through the hawk-like lens of 36 photojournalists, spanning across several decades and publications. The exhibition has been curated by the Head of the gallery and veteran photojournalist and editor, Mukesh Parpiani, who has lived through many monsoons of the megapolis and chronicled them year after year, with an unforgiving eye. "Little has changed unfortunately," he observes.

We bring you some breathtaking shots of this experience, vexing yet evocative, captured by those who braved the weather to chase the stories the rains left behind. All of these photographs and more will be featured at the NCPA from 3rd to 16th July, 2023.



↑ Health workers put on their protective gear, against the rain and the pandemic, and head out for duty in Malad, Mumbai. Photo by Satej Shinde for *Mid-Day*



↑ Rainfall threatens to swallow a milestone on the Western Express Highway, Mumbai. Photo by Neeraj Priyadarshi for *The Indian Express*



↑ Dadar railway station on the deluge of 26th July 2005. Photo by Sanjay Hadkar for *The Times of India*



↑ A couple was amongst the families rescued by the police from areas surrounding the flooded Mithi river on 26th July 2005. The pregnant wife had to give birth to twins on the rescue boat.
Photo by the late Mahendra Parikh for *The Indian Express*



↑ The lens takes a peak at the Bombay Stock Exchange through a broken umbrella.
Photo by Mukesh Parpiani for *Mid-Day*



← People walking from Sion to Suman Nagar seek elevation on the road divider for safety, during the floods of 2005.
Photo by the late Prashant Nadkar for *The Indian Express*



↑ Young girls enjoy a game of roadside football.
Photo by Hanif Tadvi



↑ Lord Ganesha gets a grand goodbye at Lalbaug.
Photo by Rane Ashish for *Mid-Day*



↑ Lightning strikes with a promise of a thunderstorm over the dome of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus.
Photo by Pradeep Dhivar for *Mid-Day*



↑ A trackman measures the railway track under rainwater at Currey Road.
Photo by Atul Kamble for *Mid-Day*

The Book of the Bard

This year marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s First Folio, a massive project that collected 36 of his plays in a single volume for the first time.

Dr. Shefali Balsari-Shah presents a broad overview of the economics and politics of the First Folio, and why it was crucial to Shakespeare’s legacy.

Almost 400 years ago, in November 1623, was published the first collected edition of William Shakespeare’s plays, better known simply as the First Folio. This volume, compiled by two of Shakespeare’s theatre associates, John Heminge and Henry Condell, was a literary landmark for several reasons. Their preface avers: *As where before you were abused with diverse stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious imposters, that exposed them: even those, are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbs; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them.*

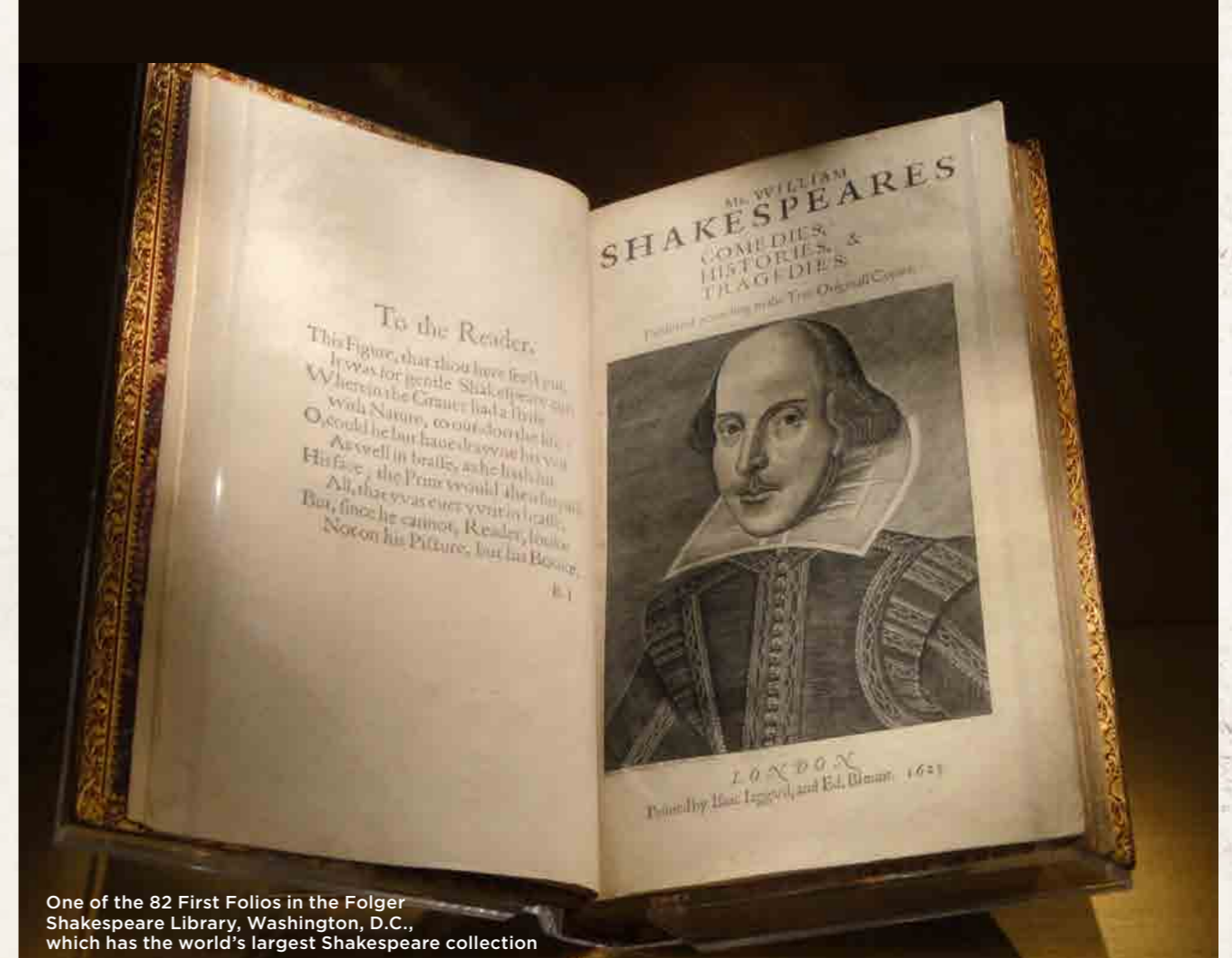
Indeed, of the 36 plays that are part of the First Folio, as many as 18 had not been published before, raising the distinct possibility that they could well have been lost over time (the 37th, *Pericles*, was only included from the Third Folio onwards). Without the First Folio, we might never have known “All the world’s a stage” (*As You Like It*) or “If music be the food of love, play on” (*Twelfth Night*), never have heard the rousing “Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears” (*Julius Caesar*) or the philosophical “Life... is a tale told by an idiot” (*Macbeth*). In the definitive First Folio, all of Shakespeare’s known plays are not only present but also grouped together as comedies, tragedies and histories—though Shakespeare himself would probably have disagreed with this arrangement for he, like most Elizabethan dramatists, didn’t follow strict genre distinctions.

What about the other curious assertions by Heminge and Condell claiming a distortion of Shakespeare’s works? For that, we have to go back in time. Imagine opening night, an expectant buzz among the spectators, quivering aristocratic ruffs and sparkling jewels in the balconies, in the pit, the nut-cracking apprentices and commoners, while pickpockets and prostitutes ply their trade with insouciance. Spread out among them is a curious band, planted by savvy owner-managers from rival companies who know they stand to lose custom when there’s a new play from a successful dramatist like Shakespeare. But they have a business plan, and

it’s always worked. Their spy-scribes will infiltrate the audience, divide up the parts between themselves, and furiously transcribe the entire play: the “stolen and surreptitious copies”. Once the usual run of about five performances is over, the rival company will stage a barely disguised version of the same play, often even with the same title.

There were other reasons for the proliferation of “foul papers”. The prompt copies with the theatre manager might be different from Shakespeare’s “fair copies”, the actors’ scripts even more so, and of course, the writer might have revised his play several times both before and during performances. All these inconsistencies would only be compounded by the printer’s errors. Several of these could creep in unwittingly during the manual setting of type, others because of the printing process itself. Those of Shakespeare’s plays that were printed in his lifetime were, as was the norm, in the quarto format. For this, the compositor would set pages 1,4,5 and 8 on one side of a larger sheet of paper, and pages 2,3,6 and 7 on the reverse. This necessitated a certain amount of guesswork as to how much text could be accommodated on each page, and if a few words or lines should prove inconvenient to fit in, they’d simply be knocked off, whereas if there was suddenly space to spare, lines would either be repeated or interpolated from a totally different play that might be at hand. This quarto would usually be sold as unbound, with its pages uncut—a cheap but conveniently sized and portable volume that has often been compared to a modern paperback. Few of these quartos, “bad” or otherwise, have survived.

The folio format, on the other hand, was a large, bulky tome meant to be perused at a desk. Hence it was reserved for weighty subjects like religion and history, the most famous example at that time being the King James Bible. Using it for a collection of plays marked a significant shift aimed to legitimise writing for the theatre as a serious activity. To establish the stature of the author and add gravitas to the book, the title page of the First Folio also, unusually, displayed a portrait of Shakespeare. This engraving by Martin Droeshout is



One of the 82 First Folios in the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., which has the world’s largest Shakespeare collection

considered an authentic likeness since it was approved by Heminge and Condell, and for over 450 years this is the image that has been identified with Shakespeare.

It is estimated that around 750 copies were printed in the first edition of the First Folio. An unbound copy would have cost 15 shillings, a pound for a plain calf binding (approximately £160 today), a high price considering that the cheapest entrance ticket for a performance (or a loaf of bread) would have been just a penny. Today, there are at least 235 known copies, each priced in the millions, some in private collections but most in public as well as university libraries around the world. The Asiatic Library, Mumbai, is reputed to have owned a copy or facsimile, but this could not be verified. In 2017, of the five copies of the First Folio that the British Library holds, one, which belonged to King George III, was given on loan for three weeks to the CSMVS museum in Mumbai via the British Council.

No two copies are the same: each book was proofread only superficially as it was printed, and if minor errors were found, the printer went ahead anyway to save costs, which is one reason for the variations between copies. Moreover, drawings, notes and occasional calculations of household finances have been added by various owners, and page edges have been trimmed differently resulting in varying page sizes, while torn or missing pages, even cigar burns and wine stains, are part of the ravages of time.

The First Folio is indubitably one of the foundational texts of the English language. Perhaps its greatest effect was to elevate the plays of Shakespeare from

entertainment to literature. “Read him,” urged the editors, “and again, and again,” while also exhorting the reader to purchase the book first! But such reading was not entirely unproblematic: by the 18th century, the plays were more read than performed, and by the 19th century, Shakespeare became canonised as “high” literature. This bardolatry, combined with language that seemed increasingly archaic, often worked to alienate successive generations of hapless students and turn Shakespeare into a nominal National Treasure as inaccessible to most common people as the crown jewels. Fortunately, contemporary creative approaches to performing Shakespeare, whether in the theatre, on screen or in public parks, have bridged rigid distinctions between high and popular culture and re-invented Shakespeare for the masses, even while he remains an icon for the cognoscenti. Clearly, there is no longer a single Shakespeare, and a sacrosanct text is “not the answer,” Emma Smith, Professor of Shakespeare Studies, University of Oxford, has argued in various interviews. “It’s not the Bible, it’s not a book of scripture ... It’s a book of ideas and possibilities and alternative plays waiting to happen ... [but] no First Folio means no Shakespeare. And, whether you enjoy his works or not, that’s a hard reality to imagine.” ■

Dr. Shefali Balsari-Shah is former Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, St. Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Mumbai. Her doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania was on Shakespeare’s The Taming of the Shrew.

In focus: The Classical Era

In a series that explores a particular facet of the performing arts, Resident Conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of India, **Mikel Toms** discusses the era that came to lend its name to all art music from the West.

Synecdoche. It's a lovely word. *sin-ECK-dock-ee*. It burbles off the tongue like a waltz. It's a thoroughly musical word. Except it isn't, really. It's a figure of speech in which a part of something refers to the whole. "He asked for her hand in marriage" although one assumes he wanted to marry the rest of her too. "I'll just do a head count" although one hopes that there will be torsos and associated limbs included in the final tally.

In the West, when we talk about "Classical Music", we usually mean all art music composed in the last millennium or so. Strictly speaking, though, the Classical Era refers only to a short but incredibly fertile period which lasted around 75 years (roughly from the death of J.S. Bach in 1750 to the death of Beethoven in 1827) sandwiched neatly between the end of the Baroque Era and the start of the Romantic Era. Its significance is so huge that the word "Classical" has also come to refer to the entirety of the West's output of art music since medieval times.

In some ways, the Classical Era can be viewed as a sort of act of musical patricide. Johann Sebastian Bach represents the zenith of achievement of the preceding Baroque era, but it was two of his sons who did as much as anybody to wrest musical language away from this earlier style and to forge something completely new.

Carl Philipp Emanuel (or C.P.E. as he's almost universally known these days) Bach was a master of the new *Empfindsamkeit* or "sensitive style". In the Baroque period, each movement of a piece usually had one "mood" or "texture" from beginning to end but C.P.E. introduced greater emotional contrast (often shockingly so) between different sections of the same piece. His symphonies and concertos have a new, conversational style—the listener is taken onboard an often unpredictable emotional rollercoaster as the movement progresses. There is a much more direct connection with the vagaries of the human psyche than before.

Johann Christian Bach (who spent much of his career in England and acquired the nickname "The London Bach") was a prime exponent of the *Style Galant* and was a huge influence on the young Mozart. The *Style Galant* represented a step back from the complexities and intricacies of the Baroque period. There was a new emphasis on long, flowing melodies, simple textures and clear distinction between melody and accompaniment. The music of J.C. Bach isn't performed all that much these days but it's worth listening to, if only to hear how similar

At the heart of the Classical Era was a wider attempt to return to the values of classical antiquity, in particular Ancient Greece, in which art, literature, architecture and music all aimed for clarity of expression, for a renewed emphasis on open formal structures

his music sounds to Mozart's. We tend to think of Mozart as a great innovator or visionary but the broad brushstrokes of his mature style were already in place before the young Wolfgang ever dipped quill in ink.

This isn't meant to minimise Mozart's achievement at all. In fact, you can't study the Classical Era without acknowledging the overwhelming importance of "The Big Three": Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven. The careers of these three composers (sometimes

called the First Viennese School) not only trace the transformation in musical style from Baroque to Romantic but they also reflect the shifting role that music played in European society during this period.

During the Baroque period, the great patron of new music was the Christian Church, but the economy of music-making began to alter during the mid-18th century and the great courts of the nobility became the prime funders of new work. Haydn spent the greater part of his career at the court of Prince Esterházy in modern-day Hungary. The courts demanded increasing amounts of secular (i.e. non-religious) music from composers and this led to a huge increase in the amount of purely instrumental music composed. Haydn almost single-handedly established the symphony and the string quartet as the major forms that would dominate concert halls for the next couple of centuries. So great was his achievement (he penned a colossal 104 symphonies and 68 string quartets) that he simultaneously acquired the sobriquets "Father of the Symphony" and "Father of the String Quartet".

After a prodigious childhood, Mozart began his working life at the court of Salzburg but soon left to pursue a freelance career in Vienna—evidence that not only had music been secularised when it moved away from the Church but that the general public (with all its vagaries of fashion and taste) was fast becoming the driving force behind music-making. He had an adoring public and he needed to feed them!

Beethoven made a similar transition from court musician (in Bonn) to freelance composer in Vienna but, by the end of his life, had become the archetypal Romantic, traipsing across stormy heaths, the tortured artiste who finds his musical inspiration while grubbing about in his psyche—in other words, setting the stage for the various shades of soul-searching that composers would undergo in the 19th century.



The Big Three: Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven

At the heart of the Classical Era was a wider attempt to return to the values of classical antiquity, in particular Ancient Greece. Art, literature, architecture and music all aimed for clarity of expression, for a renewed emphasis on open formal structures—everything needed to be orderly, hierarchical and well-articulated. The density of Baroque works where several voices and instruments all vie simultaneously to be heard was the antithesis of this. Composers followed these ideals in the structures they used to write their pieces, creating greater internal contrast, greater drama, more of a sense of storytelling. They orchestrated their works to produce a clear separation between melody and harmony and with a clearer hierarchy of instruments within the orchestra—some instruments were purely melody instruments; others secondary. C.P.E. Bach modelled his works on the rhetorical principles of antiquity—linking instrumental music to human speech—and these declamatory and

structural devices became part of the language that Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven all employed.

These formal innovations were accompanied by major developments in instrumental technology. The harpsichord (which only had one volume setting—usually loud) was gradually replaced by the piano which could play an almost unlimited range from very loud to very quiet and which was ideally suited to this new music of contrasts. Mozart, who in his time was as well known as a keyboard player as he was a composer, brought the piano concerto (a work for piano soloist accompanied by an orchestra) to a new level of sophistication. This form, with its clear distinction between soloist and accompaniment, with its internal drama of contrasts and with an instrument with a dynamic range that can reflect the mood (defiant, lyrical, exuberant, etc.) of the protagonist was something that could never have been achieved without the musical and instrumental innovations of the Classical Era.

In short, music became more human. Its impact on listeners was more immediate, less intellectual but equally, if not more, moving.

In some ways, the Classical Era seems to stand alone. So many of its innovations can be seen to be a rejection of the preceding Baroque period but, at the same time, it can seem formal and stylised in comparison to the emotional maelstrom that followed in its wake during the Romantic Era. Another way of looking at it is that all Western art music led up to the Classical Period (with Mozart as its most perfect expression) and all subsequent music led away from it.

One last example of synecdoche might be "he scaled the highest peak" when presumably our mountaineer in question clambered up the lower parts of the mountain also. If Mozart is our metaphorical peak, then perhaps lumping together the past thousand years of music under the one name "Classical" isn't quite so unreasonable after all? ■

 NCPA

MEHLI MEHTA
MUSIC
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SOI symphony
orchestra of
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SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

conducted by

Zubin Mehta

Presented by the NCPA and
Mehli Mehta Music Foundation

Mozart: Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 "Unfinished"

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 "Titan"

Aug 19 & Aug 21 | 7:00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, NCPA

Box Office opens on 25th July for Friends of the SOI, NCPA members and MMMF members & 28th July for public.

Box Office: 66223754

book  show



The NCPA Summer Fiesta is a long-standing tradition that offers arts and cultural experiences for children during the holidays. This community-focused festival aims to inspire and empower young minds by providing interactive workshops conducted by local and national talent in areas such as acting, public speaking, music and writing. The Summer Fiesta not only provides entertainment but also promotes the value of performing arts by offering high-quality workshops that are affordable for families.

The 2023 edition comes with a vibrant mix of workshops, plays and screenings for young minds and a day full of activities that celebrate the environment.



TINKLE STORY CREATION WORKSHOP

Conducted by: Poonam Da'silva - Amar Chitra Katha
Age – 6 to 9 years

Date – Monday, 26th June to Sunday, 2nd July
Venue – Little Theatre

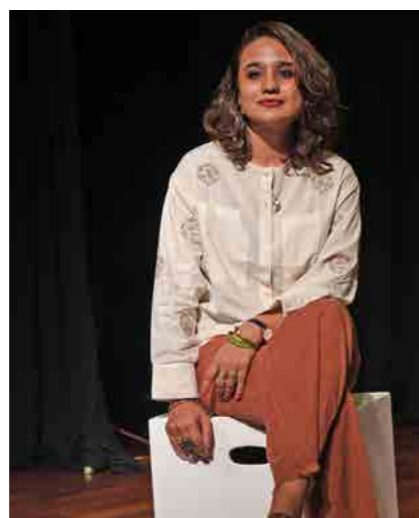
Time – 11.30 am to 12.30 pm
Duration – 7 days – 1 hour each day
Fees – ₹7,000/- + GST

A super fun, seven-day story creation workshop in which children learn how to create main characters, heroes, villains, craft interesting plots, build the character's world and write their own story.

What will children learn?

- Nurture their imagination and develop interesting characters and plots
- Hone their writing skills and learn how to edit their stories
- Understand the creative process of how stories are conceptualised, characters developed and how the world is built in which the story unfolds
- Develop communication skills
- Boost self-esteem and encourage self-expression

On the last day of the workshop, all participants will enact and narrate their stories. The top three participants stand a chance to see their stories published on the official Tinkle app.



A DREAM 'STAGED'

Conducted by: Gurleen Judge
Age – 13 to 16 years

Date – Monday, 26th June to Sunday, 2nd July
Venue – Little Theatre
Time – 2 pm to 4 pm

Duration – 7 days – 2 hours each day
Fees – ₹7000/- + GST

What does it take to bring a scene to life on stage? From understanding the text to bringing out performance to directing, from lighting and set design to the right background score, this masterclass will focus on how different elements come together in the most exciting way to create a moment of magic on stage.

This workshop will introduce participants to all the elements of theatre-making, from script to stage.

The session will focus on:

1. Script Analysis: scene breakdown and analysis
2. Directing
3. Design: light, sound, costume, stage
4. Scene work: students will create a scene using all the various elements explored in the workshop.

Gurleen Judge works as a writer, director and light designer in the theatre. She also works as an educator and teacher-trainer, in addition to writing and directing several annual-day productions at schools and after-school centres. She was a part of Connections India in association with the NCPA and the National Theatre, UK.



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Conducted by: Priyanka Babbar
Age – 4 to 6 years

Date – Monday, 3rd July to Sunday, 9th July
Venue – Sea View Room
Time – 10.30 am to 11.30 am
Duration – 7 days – 1 hour each day
Fees – ₹6,000/- + GST

Through the power of drama, using elements of mime, rhythm, movement and storytelling, the workshop will help young drama enthusiasts discover performers within, and make their favourite characters, stories and scenes come alive in a short skit on the final day of the workshop. By working together on a common goal, the students learn the importance of teamwork, develop focus, gain confidence, learn to communicate effectively, making it easier for them to adapt to new situations and bring their creativity and imagination to life.

Priyanka Babbar is a workshop leader, theatre director, performer, drama-based educator and storyteller specialising in school and corporate theatre productions. She is the founder-director of the Small Tales Academy and has conducted over 500 workshops, training programmes and performances for young people and educators at schools, NGOs and various organisations across the world over the last 10 years.



THE SONGMAKERS

Conducted by: Priyanka Babbar
Age – 9 to 13 years

Date – Monday, 3rd July to Sunday, 9th July
Venue – Sea View Room
Time – 12.30 pm to 2 pm
Duration – 7 days – 1½ hours each day
Fees – ₹6,000/- + GST

Welcome to the world of songwriting. This workshop is designed to equip learners with tools to develop language skills, use appropriate vocabulary and write their own lyrics for a song, understanding rhythm patterns,

and the art of composition. What an exciting way to create a new generation of composers!



TINKLE STORY CREATION WORKSHOP

Conducted by: Komal Narwani - Amar Chitra Katha
Age – 9 to 14 years

Date – Monday, 3rd July to Sunday, 9th July
Venue – Little Theatre
Time: 11 am to 12.00 noon
Duration – 7 days – 1 hour each day
Fees – ₹7,000/- + GST

A super fun, seven-day story creation workshop in which children learn how to create main characters, heroes, villains, craft interesting plots, build the character's world and write their own story.

What will children learn?

- Nurture their imagination and develop interesting characters and plots
- Hone their writing skills and learn how to edit their stories
- Understand the creative process of how stories are conceptualised, characters developed and how the world is built in which the story unfolds
- Develop communication skills
- Boost self-esteem and self-expression

On the last day of the workshop, all participants will enact and narrate their stories. The top three participants stand

a chance to see their stories published on the official Tinkle app.

Komal Narwani is a quirky storyteller who can bring complex ideas to life with her captivating narration. Over the last decade, she has mastered the end-to-end content chain. From conceptualisation to creation and from delivery to distribution, she enjoys both, the creative and business sides. As part of Amar Chitra Katha, she looks after licensing, brand partnerships and educational initiatives. She is an author, a resident storyteller and a story creation workshop mentor.



DRAMA WORKSHOP WITH AMEY MEHTA

Age – 8 to 12 years

Date – Monday, 3rd July to Sunday, 9th July
Venue – Little Theatre
Time: 2 pm to 3.30 pm
Duration – 7 days – 1½ hours each day
Fees – ₹6,000/- + GST

The workshop will be divided into individual and group learnings. In the first part, the participants will learn to create fun and quirky characters using different voices and body language. They will also learn how to write and perform a monologue. We will work on their speech, projection and voice clarity using different tongue twisters, voice exercises and theatre games. The second part will focus on group activities such as improv, action-reaction between group performers, group scenes with text and without text (mime and movement).

The focus of the workshop is to help participants combat the fear of public speaking, to help them express themselves, to build their confidence

and performance skills and to inspire their creativity.

Amey Mehta is an actor-choreographer-artist based in Mumbai and was a part of the Terence Lewis Contemporary Dance Company for five years. He has trained in contemporary, jazz and musical theatre from Broadway Dance Center, New York. He works as a director for Connections India in association with the NCPA and National Theatre, UK. He teaches Theatre at the Cathedral and John Connon School and is a faculty member at the Drama School Mumbai. Mehta has recently launched his own production company called Sunny Side Up Productions.

PLAYS & SCREENINGS

The NCPA in collaboration with Akvarious Productions presents

GO WITH THE FLOW

English
Age: 6 +
Venue: Experimental Theatre
Show:
Sunday, 2nd July, 5 pm
Duration: 2 hours with intermission
Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)

Synopsis:

The country is facing water shortage. The rivers have dried up and the

government is rationing water. Devina, a young girl, and her ragtag team of kids are water pirates—stealing water from pipelines and selling it at higher rates. Times are tough, risks are very high and things are seeming very bleak till a mysterious girl shows up, telling tales of her home where there is an abundance of water and greenery. A land where the Great River still flows. The kids agree to undertake a perilous journey to get the lost girl home. They are unaware of what lies ahead or who is behind them and what their ulterior motives are. Filled with song, dance and interesting characters, *Go With the Flow* is a thrilling adventure set in the not-too-distant future.

Written by **Siddharth Kumar** and **Sarthak Kakar**
Directed by **Adhaar Khurana**
Music by **Rajat Tiwari**
Choreography by **Shivani Mistry**

PEGGY PANE - OH WHAT A PAIN!

English: Children's Musical Comedy
Age: 4 to 10 years
Venue: Godrej Dance Theatre
Show:
Sunday, 9th July, 12 noon
Duration: 1 hour 15 min approx.
Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)

NCPA in Collaboration with Theatrewaalas



Inspired by the famous Amelia Jane series by Enid Blyton, the play is a cute little story of toys inside a toy nursery. Penny's toy nursery has many toys like Teddy, Annie, Gollywog. One day a new toy called Peggy Pane arrives and turns the peace of the nursery upside down. Being a very naughty doll, Peggy keeps getting into mischief in the toy nursery and makes life difficult for all the toys. They finally decide to teach Peggy a lesson, but the entry of a mysterious creature scares the bejesus out of the toys and then Peggy bravely helps them out, making a new friend in the end.

Adapted & directed by: **Sheetal R** and **Rohit Tiwari**

CINDERELLA

Theatre Screening by Jules Massenet
Sung in English with English subtitles
Age: 6+
Venue: Godrej Dance Theatre
Shows:
Sunday, 2nd July, 11 am
Wednesday, 5th July, 4 pm
Duration: 1 hour 35 minutes with no intermission
Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)

Get ready for a magical day at the opera. An abridged, English-language version of Massenet's enchanting fairy-tale opera from The Metropolitan Opera, New York, makes this screening the perfect way to experience the joy and wonder of opera, with its breathtaking staging and beautiful music. Charles Perrault's classic tale of Cinderella is a timeless story that captures the hearts of audiences young and old with its themes of love, hope and perseverance



with stunning visuals. Do not miss out on this spectacular staging that brings the fairy tale to life like never before. So come along and be swept away by the beauty and wonder of this timeless classic.

Conducted by: **Emmanuel Villaume**
Production: **Laurent Pelly**
Choreographer: **Laura Scozzi**
Set Designer: **Barbara de Limburg**
Costume Designer: **Laurent Pelly**
Lighting Designer: **Duane Schuler**
Projection Designer: **S. Katy Tucker**
Cast: **Jessica Pratt (Fairy Godmother), Isabel Leonard (Cinderella), Emily D'Angelo (Prince Charming), Stephanie Blythe (Madame de la Haltière), Laurent Naouri (Pandolfe)**



LIFE OF PI

Theatre Screening
Age limit: 6+
Venue: Godrej Dance Theatre
Shows:
Wednesday, 5th July, 11 am
Sunday, 9th July, 4 pm
Duration: 3 hours
Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)

Adapted by **Lolita Chakrabarti**
Directed by **Max Webster**

Puppetry, magic and storytelling come together in this unique, Oliver Award-winning stage adaptation of Yann Martel's best-selling novel of the same name. After a cargo ship sinks in the middle of the vast Pacific Ocean, a 16-year-old boy named Pi is stranded on a lifeboat with four other survivors—a hyena, a zebra, an orangutan and a Royal Bengal tiger. Time is against them, and nature is harsh. The question is: who will survive? Filmed live in London's West End featuring state-of-the-art visuals, the epic journey of endurance and hope is brought to life in a breathtaking new way for cinema screens.

NCPA & SANCTUARY

SAVE THE TIGER 15th July 2023

This series of workshops and events seeks to educate tomorrow's adults about the importance of saving our environment and introduces them to the wonders of the natural world in a fun, engaging way. From art installations to nature walks, from poster painting to games, children will explore many aspects of nature in fun, accessible ways.

The day-long event includes free and paid activities:

- Sanctuary photo exhibition:



Winning images of Sanctuary Wildlife Photography Awards

- Fancy dress where children will dress as an animal in a tiger habitat.
- Face painting
- A talk on solar energy illustrated with the solar panels installed at the NCPA
- Art installations
- Nature walks
- Games
- Nature photography: Walking through the NCPA, students will be taught how to develop their understanding of nature photography. Fee: ₹500/-
- Poster painting on the theme: Save the tiger
- Film: *Delhi Safari* with a Q&A session.
- It's a tiger jungle in here! Stories of endangered animals told through role play, improvisation, bizarre costumes and Panchtantra tales. Fee: ₹500/-
- Save the tiger - signature campaign on scrolls
- Leaf art

To register please call **9137076369/9372098112**, or email: **theatre@ncpamumbai.com**, or visit **www.bookmyshow.com**

Draupadi's French Accent

In her recently published memoir, Mallika Sarabhai writes about a life of privilege and struggle, the body and the mind, and about healing and acceptance with her characteristic candour. We present an excerpt from *In Free Fall: My Experiments with Living* in which the dancer, actress and activist writes about playing Draupadi in Peter Brook's *The Mahabharata*, a role she inhabited for five years.

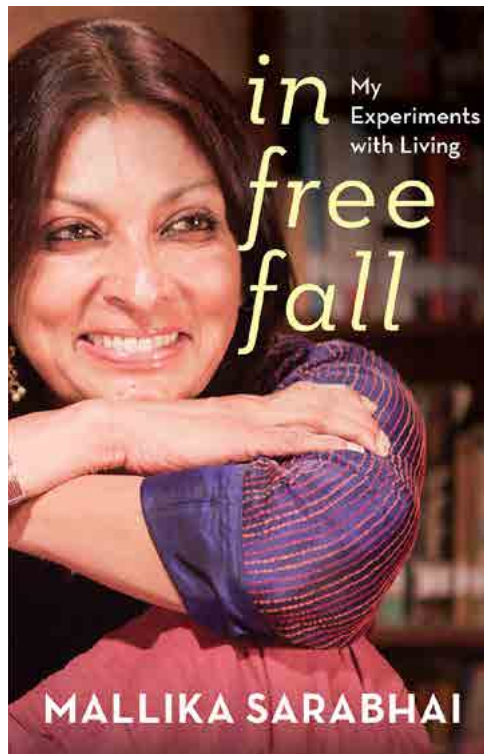
The year 1984 turned out to be a momentous one for me. First pregnancy, first time as a producer of an international dance event, first international theatre job—and a dunking into the French language.

After I accepted the role of Draupadi in *The Mahabharata*, and before I left for Paris for the rehearsals and previews—the last few months of my pregnancy—I was busy doing multiple things. After the summer break at Darpana, at the end of June, I started performing again. I was in my sixth month of pregnancy and not showing at all. We were also preparing to host Mahotsav '84. And I was trying to familiarise myself with the playscript and French...

... The production was to be eleven hours long, and I had a long part—and five husbands and others to speak to in the play. So I needed to learn, and learn fast. Achille Forler generously took time off from his duties at the Alliance Française d'Ahmedabad and took on the task of reading and explaining the script to me and helping me learn my part before I left for Paris. And he tried and I tried and we managed to get me to memorise about half of what I was supposed to.

I arrived in Paris with five-week-old Revanta, five weeks late for rehearsals as I had to be in Ahmedabad for Mahotsav '84. What with the pangs of leaving home for a long time, the exhaustion of the Mahotsav, a newborn baby that I was breastfeeding, and setting up home in Paris, I found it difficult to focus on the rehearsals. I had taken along help from India—Lizzy, my aunt Dr Lakshmi Sehgal's best-trained Malayali nurse, to look after Revanta. I had had the foresight to ask that my fees should cover the cost of her travel and stay, so finance was not an issue. Learning French quickly was.

To add to my discomfort, the group had bonded in the weeks before I arrived and I, as the only Indian, was looked upon with some trepidation and slight hostility. On the first day I got two shocks—the script that I had been learning with such earnestness was only provisional, and Achille's careful French was not what anyone in the group spoke. I couldn't understand most of the rapid-fire instructions and conversations, made more difficult as the actors spoke everything from Canadian French to that from Côte d'Ivoire. Luckily, Peter Brook's accent was very British, in spite of his many years of living and



working in France, and he spoke with great deliberation.

About three weeks into this bewildering and daunting experience, Peter called me to his office. 'Your French has the possibility of becoming perfect. I want you to go to the Centre Tomatis for an hour every day. You don't need to do anything. Just go.'

I had no idea what this institution was, nor what to expect. And why would it make my French better? Armed with the address, I set off the next morning. I was expected and they took me into a room full of small booths with headphones, rather like record shops used to have in the days of vinyl records. There were lots of people in the booths, all wearing headphones, most with their eyes shut. I was placed in an empty one and asked to put on the headphones. 'Just relax,' I was told. 'Don't read.'

I put on the headphones. In each ear I began to hear different things. Music in one ear and text in the other. But sounding like a bad phone connection, unrecognisable, with some syllables heard and others not, scratchy, off again, on again. After a while I figured out that I was hearing a Mozart symphony in one ear and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* in the other. One hour went by. The earphones fell silent. I made my way out, baffled. Had this happened in the internet and Google period I would have looked up Tomatis immediately, but it was much earlier. Peter was pretty unapproachable but I asked everyone else I met about it. No one had heard of it. I continued going, taking my knitting with me. Day after day I sat listening to gibberish—different some days, the same or similar on others. And with no idea how this was going to improve my French.

On the sixth day, at rehearsal, one of my French co-actors said to me, 'Your French is improving. How?' Soon everyone was noticing this and Peter just smiled. Once I had finished my one-month course, and everyone was telling me what beautiful accentless French I was speaking, Peter gave me a book about Tomatis. ■

This is an excerpt from In Free Fall: My Experiments with Living by Mallika Sarabhai. No part of this excerpt may be quoted or reproduced without prior written consent from its publisher, Speaking Tiger.

An NCPA presentation in collaboration
with Sapan production

ती राजहंस एव

Marathi play

Written by Datta Patil

Directed by Sachin Shinde

Produced by Pramod Gaikwad

Cast: Prajakt Deshmukh, Anita Date, Amey Barve,
Hemant Mahajan, Dhananjay Gosavi

July 8 | 7:00 pm

EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA



Box Office: 6622 3754 | Book now on [bookmyshow](https://bookmyshow.com)

A Man of Many Firsts

Like many successful artistes, Harry Belafonte was outspoken, innovative and had a finger on the pulse of the public. What set him apart was a clear-cut priority he identified for himself—that despite fame and success, he was an activist first.

By Anurag Tagat

When Harry Belafonte released his career-defining album *Calypso* in the mid-1950s, the world was yet to see artistry of this level. With sweet songs for the working class, Belafonte became not just one of the first black artistes to top the charts in America, but also gained the distinction of becoming the first artiste to sell one million copies of an album in a year.

When Belafonte passed away this April at the age of 96, he was living in New York City, not too far from his birthplace in Harlem. The son of undocumented Jamaican immigrants, Belafonte would go on to become a cultural icon. He was the first black performer to win an Emmy in 1960 for his show *Tonight with Belafonte*. In 1961, his collection of chain gang work songs, *Swing Dat Hammer*, won a Grammy for ethnic or traditional folk album, a feat he repeated in 1965 with his collaborative album featuring South African folk artiste and activist Miriam Makeba, titled *An Evening with Belafonte/Makeba*. In addition to music, his work in cinema and as a civil rights activist was equally, if not more, significant.

The plaudits were plenty for Belafonte, but it never stopped him from being outspoken and, more

importantly, being ever active in espousing causes linked to racial discrimination. Often supporting American leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., Belafonte knew that the best way to prove one's intentions as an activist was beyond just spreading awareness. Throughout his life, he is said to have funded movements, such as the Freedom Riders, and was a co-organiser of the March on Washington in August 1963, a historic event in the civil rights movement in the U.S.

The goal was social justice all over the world, even as the battle for equal rights took different turns in the U.S. Belafonte's reach throughout his career as a musician and in films was unshakeable because he had core beliefs in place that did not allow him to shy away from criticising whomever was in power. Whether it was speaking out against George W. Bush

for the country's military presence in Iraq or the racial profiling that took place all over the world, there was a searing conviction in the dissent in Belafonte's statements, even if they divided fans and followers.

Meanwhile, he earned his musical stripes in some of the most sacred spaces for any musician—in jazz clubs as a singer supported by the likes of Charlie Parker. 'Matilda' from 1953 gave us a glimpse of just how popular calypso can be. Shipped from Jamaica, where Belafonte was raised, the genre spotlighted current events with wit and humour. In *Calypso*, the authenticity and attention to detail was spectacular. One could arguably say it was among the first times that a style rooted in another country's culture was being popularised in America, and that Belafonte broke barriers and brought the world just a little bit closer with music. After all, we need only to look at our own memories attached to Belafonte's most popular songs in *Calypso*. Depending on what age bracket

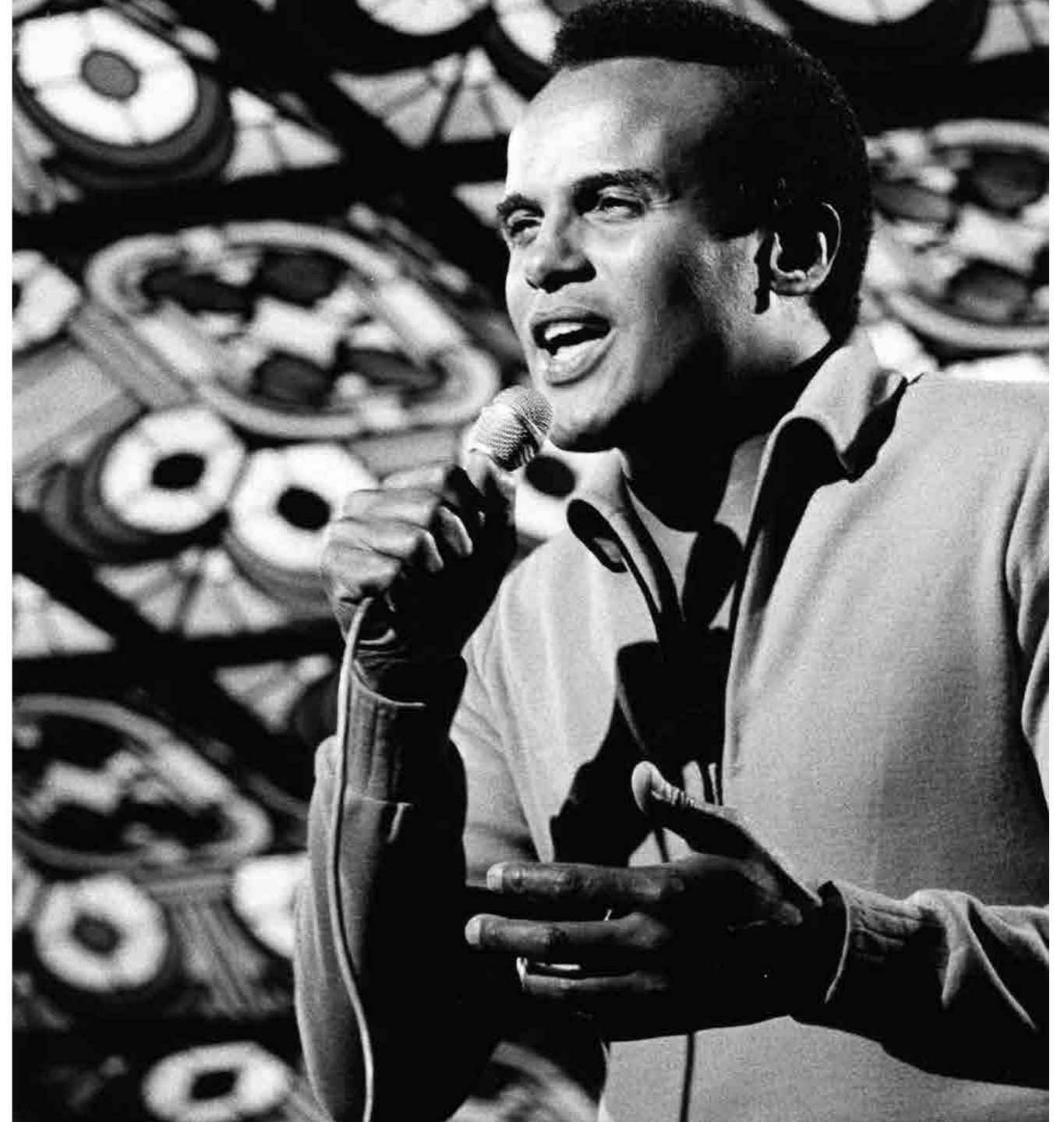
you belong to, you have either heard the bittersweet 'Jamaica Farewell' on the radio, or from one of your parents. Such was the universal message of the song, but then there were also local references to Jamaican food when Belafonte sings, "Ackee, rice, saltfish are nice". It brought Jamaica to the world in a way, making people

familiar with the culture of a vibrant land. Belafonte may not have been the first artiste to sing 'Jamaica Farewell', but he was certainly the one to popularise it, along with a new wave of folk music.

Elsewhere, on songs like 'Banana Boat (Day-O)' and 'Island in the Sun', the singer was at his sublime best across styles, conjuring a transportive mood above all things. Belafonte was known for calming, almost escapist sort of songs, but then at the centre of the lyrics were often stories of everyday labourers and the hardworking common person. That way, the songs were calling out to anyone's ears, across class, race, status and other divisive strata.

Even two decades and a few pop albums down the line, when Belafonte returned to his folksy side with *Turn the World Around*, the album's title track proved the power that the artiste held as a singer all along. In

Harry Belafonte was known for calming, almost escapist sort of songs, but then at the centre of the lyrics were often stories of everyday labourers and the hardworking common person



1979, he performed it on *The Muppet Show*, explaining to viewers—across all age brackets considering the universal appeal of the show—that he discovered 'Turn the World Around' through a story he heard on a visit to Guinea in West Africa. He has said, "In a little village, I met with a storyteller. That storyteller went way back into African tradition—into African mythology. He began to tell a story about the fire—which means the Sun—about the water, about the Earth. And he pointed out that all of these things put together turn the world around. And that all of us are here for a very, very short time. And in that time that we are here, there really isn't any difference in any of us if we take time out to understand each other. And the question is, Do I know who you are? Do you know who I am? Do we care about each other? Because, if we do, together we can turn the world around."

By 1985, Belafonte had another incredible piece of legacy attached to his name, one that is

remembered by music fans even today. He was part of organising the recording of the star-studded song 'We Are the World', which raised funds for fighting famine in different parts of Africa. Inspired by the British charity song 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' by Band Aid, Belafonte roped in Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie as songwriters and convinced a gamut of entertainers, including Bob Dylan, Tina Turner, Bruce Springsteen and Ray Charles, to be involved in its making. The United Support of Artists for Africa's website states that the recording of the original 'We Are the World' sold more than seven million records worldwide which generated more than \$60 million. The money has been used to assist Africa and Africans affected by the famine and other critical issues since 1985.

This is Belafonte's legacy today and for the years to come—he made music that moved not just bodies, but also minds and spoke to our hearts. ■

Flight of Fantasy

Manav Kaul's *Tumhaare Baare Mein* tells the story of three modern relationships, with penguins and birds in the fray. **By Prachi Sibal**



Manav Kaul's new play *Tumhaare Baare Mein* opened at the NCPA last month. On the posters, a penguin and a bird sit atop a table at a café. It leaves a lot to the imagination. If you were to take a guess, you would assume that the play is modern, absurdist and about relationships. It is all of that and more.

As an actor, writer and director, Kaul's understanding of characters and relationships is often exacting. In interviews ahead of the play, he has referred to the work as a devised piece of writing, not a devised performance. This is to say that the scenes came first and the writing was part of the rehearsal process. This is quite evident when you watch *Tumhaare Baare Mein*.

The play opens with a series of rhythmic movements, coordinated to perfection with five of the six actors in the cast. The sixth actress (Sakhi Gokhale) looks on, as if she's having an out-of-body experience. Gokhale soon joins the rest of the cast and the narrative begins at a coffee shop. There are three couples, at different stages in their lives and relationships, having a conversation. They are also at different

stages of a conflict. Hot coffee and cold coffee are used as a metaphor to enable a deeper conversation about changing individuals and evolving relationships. The strife is palpable in one of them, evident in the other, and at its hilt in the third. The display of emotions and body language corresponds to these situations and relationships.

The café is strewn with papers that crinkle and draw attention to themselves. They create a certain tension in the room that you hope will be addressed sooner rather than later. Instead, Kaul introduces a situation in the form of a power cut that creates some confusion and brings to the fore a subtle comic tone. There are a few laughs, mainly brought on by Ghanshyam Lalsa's ably played brooding-man archetype.

A closer look reveals that Lalsa's abandonment is not of the ordinary kind. His partner (Manasi Bhawalkar) did not just leave him but flew away. This leap into the fantastical realm comes through dialogue and evokes surprise, comedy and empathy all at once. The other couple, played by Gokhale and

Hrishabh Kanti, seem middle-aged and have clearly spent a lot of time together. But they have grown apart. As actors, they are perfectly in sync and bring to life on stage the kind of relationship you are only too familiar with, especially at coffee shops.

At some point, the strewn papers on the floor are addressed. Gokhale breaks the fourth wall to tell us that they are all poems written by men. Bhawalkar quickly points out that the two of them are also figments of a man's imagination, in his own play. This rare moment of unexpected self-awareness catches you off-guard and you are even more interested in the direction the play is about to take. Unfortunately, it tapers off and doesn't do much else except establish that the women characters refute their roles as pawns at the hands of a male playwright. Shortly after, Gokhale is seen reading a piece of poetry, we assume, written by Kaul.

At the heart of the play lies a woman's conundrum. She wants to be a bird and fly away. The man, on the other hand, wants to be a penguin. He likes the idea of having wings but has no desire

to fly. This absurdist reimagining of characters is left to interpretation and can easily be seen as social commentary. The wings are a man's inherent entitlement, and the woman's desire is to fly away from the shackles of gendered society and the misogyny in her romantic relationship.

Kaul's sharp writing says a lot without spoon-feeding complex arguments. And his gaze, although still male, strives to understand a woman's. Gokhale goes the extra mile by making the lines and desires of the character her own. *Tumhaare Baare Mein*, at its worst, is an interesting dramatic experiment, and at its best, a biting satire set in a familiar, contemporary world. You could well be witnessing some of the early conversations at an Aram Nagar café.

As the play progresses, the coffee metaphors are dropped and the penguin-bird conversation is addressed head-on through a series of events preceding the woman's flight of freedom. These events are recreated several times in the lead-up to a dramatic climax. The treatment of the repetition is admirable. Different actors from within the cast of six take turns to play the two characters in the incident. The narrator also stops at a different part of the story in each of the repetitions. During two such recreations, the fourth wall is broken again, this time by Lalsa, to peals of laughter from the audience.

Kaul's dramaturgy aided by the devised writing is on point. Rhythmic patterns are created and broken with ease. Stories switch between realms through dialogue, movement and, in

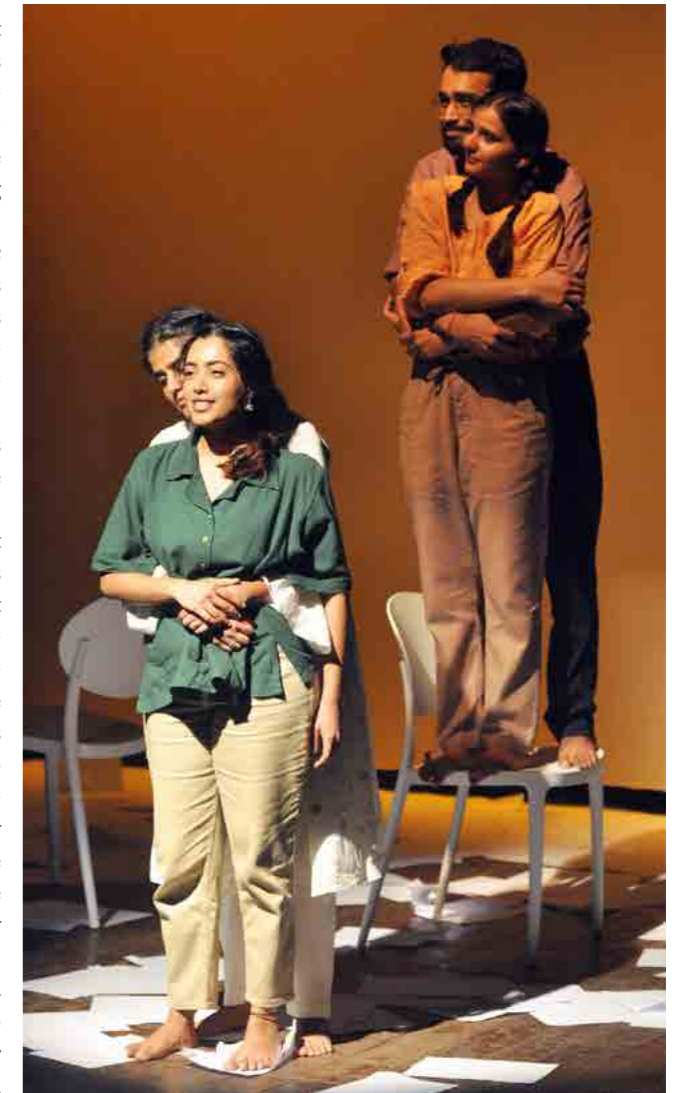
some cases, set changes. It feels somewhat like Gokhale's out-of-body experience from the opening scene.

But *Tumhaare Baare Mein* suffers from fatigue in its second half. The metaphors have been established, the absurdism is clear and little else is left to be said. The plot, almost in its entirety has unfolded in the first half, and though the tension peaks in the second, there are no new elements or plot points to take it ahead. The woman wants to fly like a bird, we see her literally take flight, supported by the other actresses. We wish we had a deeper insight into her thoughts over a simplistic, even if well-executed, physical representation of it.

Lalsa's comic timing, Gokhale's dreamy portrayal of a jaded woman, Kanti's Instagram obsession and Kaustubh Harit's earnest enactment of a man on a first date are some of the most memorable parts of the

play. The stage and lighting design support the script and cast with optimum grace.

Tumhaare Baare Mein is worth watching as much for the images it creates in your mind as the ones it presents onstage. ■



Chairman's Recollections

An authority on Western classical music, Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA, is well known in the record collecting world. He speaks to international audiences on old and rare vocal recordings and has a fine collection of vintage records. Over the years, his passion has led him to visit numerous international classical music and opera festivals, and his treasure trove of anecdotes never runs dry. We bring you a nugget:

During the crossing of the annual ship, which took the great singers from Europe to the Met season in New York, Enrico Caruso, considered the greatest tenor of his time, met John McCormack, the great Irish tenor who was also on board the same ship. As they crossed each other, McCormack saw Caruso and said, "And how is the greatest tenor in the world today?" Caruso, in characteristic modesty and real admiration, turned around to McCormack and said, "And since when have you become an alto?"



John McCormack

The Performing Arts Dispatch

A series on houses of culture from around the world. In focus this month: Jacksons Lane Arts Centre.

By Aishwarya Bodke



A Christmas Circus Fairytale, 2021

In January 2020, the gorgeous façade of Jacksons Lane Art Centre was faced with a completely overturned reality on the inside. As severe winter flooding across the U.K., and an exploding boiler that bled hot brown liquid down the office walls painted a grim picture, a sold-out edition of the London International Mime Festival was unfolding adjacent to the mayhem.

Another stormy afternoon in 2006 had left behind sore memories. An indistinct patter on the ceiling—slowly getting louder—turned into chunks of stone crashing down through the roof. The building had to be evacuated.

“When the pandemic struck, it seemed like the end was near,” Adrian Berry, Artistic Director of Jacksons Lane, tells us. But the arts centre, housed in a converted Methodist church in North London, has had a history of resilience.

Jacksons Lane, a multi-arts centre and among the U.K.’s leading circus venues,

has served as a creative and cultural hub for nearly five decades. Boasting a charming theatre with a seating capacity of 170, five studio spaces and a café and bar, the venue is known for its innovative work in experimental visual theatre and contemporary circus.

The current programme at Jacksons Lane infuses ballet, cabaret, drama, technology, stand-up and more with traditional circus acts to craft unique productions

For many who have known only a traditional circus set-up, Jacksons Lane’s work is a breath of fresh air. While elements of traditional circus like clowning, juggling, acrobatics and trapeze acts still prevail, the idea is to use them in ways not

imagined before. The current programme infuses ballet, cabaret, drama, technology, stand-up and more with traditional circus acts to craft unique productions.

The building first opened in 1905 as the Highgate Wesleyan Methodist Church. The church was closed in the 1970s and the building remained unoccupied for a few years. All artistic movements are intrinsically citizens’ crusades. Jacksons Lane’s emergence as a cultural hub, too, was a community effort. A group of residents and campaigners shared a vision for the space as a nucleus for the local artistes. It was once again made open to the public in 1975, run entirely by a devoted team of volunteers determined to create something special. Even when plans were afoot to widen the Archway Road that would result in a range of buildings—including Jacksons Lane—being knocked down, activists campaigned and succeeded in saving them from being bulldozed.

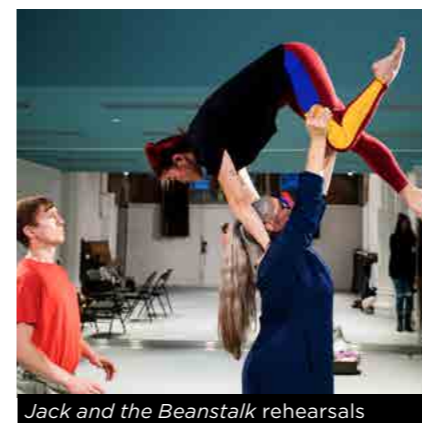
STEVE GREGSON



Jack and the Beanstalk, 2022



Jacksons Lane Youth Circus rehearsal



Jack and the Beanstalk rehearsals



Jacksons Lane Youth Circus rehearsal

ALEX BRENNER



Jacksons Lane Arts Centre is housed in a converted Methodist church

“I am not sure why I went for a much lower-paying job at a struggling arts centre when I joined in 2006. The place draws you in. But it was failing. I wanted it to stand for something and have a unique voice,” Berry explains. Fifteen years on, it is synonymous with contemporary circus, not only churning new productions but also sustaining sundry educational and outreach initiatives, including a youth circus programme.

Jacksons Lane turned the pandemic, which first looked like an inevitable doom, into a quiet metamorphosis within its walls. Before closing their doors, they used contingency funding to give 100 circus artistes two months of free space to train, rehearse and develop new work. It was followed by a massive redevelopment project to transform the venue with the key objective of greater accessibility, as well as more spaces for workshops, classes and recreation. A film titled *Encore* was produced, shot entirely on campus. Circus artistes hanging around on scaffolding and the roof was a site to behold. Through the film, the centre was able to employ nearly 20 artistes—the first project the artistes had received in a year. “It was our responsibility to reopen and to be an even better home for circus. So, we ensured we would give more residencies, more support, more time, and help them get the funding,” asserts Berry.

The relationship between the arts and funds is mostly symbiotic but always undeniable. Historically, patronage has

been vital to the survival of all art forms. To balance the economics of the arts centre requires its own kind of artistry. Can a house of performing arts then be truly self-sufficient? Perhaps it is an objective that is redundant today. “If we lost our funding, Jacksons Lane could still exist, but it could not be doing anything interesting artistically. We would exist simply because we have spaces to rent out. We wouldn’t put up the kind of work that we do now. I wouldn’t be here now,” Berry propounds.

Jacksons Lane is a testament that art centres are not merely a stage for performances but a source of cultural rejuvenation for the city. They can be radical, often becoming the backbone of the local community. Among all the inspiring work under its belt, Jacksons Lane is also fondly looked upon as among the friendliest venues in the city. “Artistes are faced with rejection a lot. There are too many ways of saying no but we try to find different ways of saying yes,” Berry tells us with a smile.

Every Christmas day, for 47 years now, Jacksons Lane opens its doorways to about 300 older and disabled people, who would otherwise be alone. Artistes from Cirque du Soleil performed on one such Christmas evening, embracing the festive season.

Even when structures crumble and time seems to freeze, places like Jacksons Lane espouse hope. They do more than just put up a show. ■

Performing Arts: Music

A monthly column that explores any and every aspect of the performing arts. This month, **Roysten Abel** talks about his journey with the Manganiyars, and perceiving music from a theatrical lens.

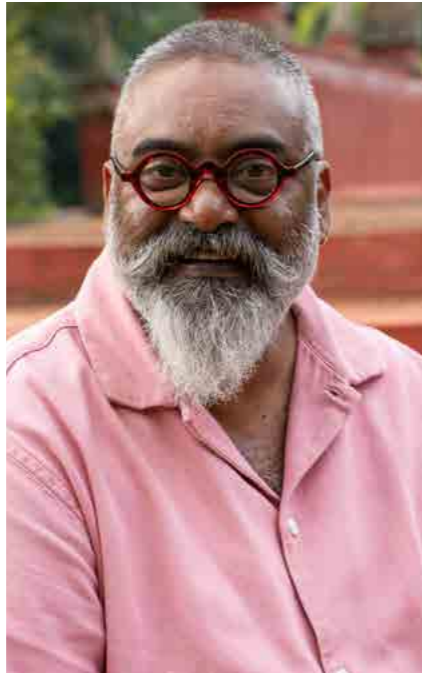
Looking back at the choices I have made throughout my career, blending theatre with music has never been a conscious decision. I will begin by expressing my handicap—I am neither a music composer nor have I studied music to be able to read it like words on a sheet of paper. What I have studied is theatre and the only way I can look at music is theatrically. The way I arrange music is how I would devise a play. I ‘compose’ a story and mould it into an arc with a beginning, a middle and an end, and within this arc there is exposition, conflict and resolution that unfolds through notes of music. Over the years, this process has become more intuitive.

An abstract form like music calls for an abstract approach, where you connect with a piece of music by relying on your intuition rather than mere calculation. However, intuitional skills can be honed, and I honed mine through my association with the music of the Manganiyars.

My first real encounter with the Manganiyars was in 2006, in a medieval Spanish city called Segovia, where I was touring another of my productions that involved street performers from all walks of life. Two of them, Mame Khan and Devu Khan, were Manganiyar musicians who promised me a strange service: they would never repeat a song they had already sung for me.

In all my productions, there is an underlying sense of longing—longing to be with yourself because I believe that is the greatest form of longing. The fortnight that followed in Spain consisted of them singing to me in all sorts of places, all the while reducing me to tears. Music, for the first time, had taken over all my physical senses. My body was reacting to it in ways I couldn’t imagine. One thing was simple: I had been seduced.

Only a few other experiences had left me this awestruck, the red-light district in Amsterdam being one of them. The stacked windows, brimming with activity and bedazzled with lights, had resurrected the Parisian Pigalle of the 1930s in the street I had stumbled across that night. It was like walking into a live installation. The allure of music held the soul of the



Manganiyars and the voyeurism of the red-light district together. In search of a grand exposition, my intuition had led me to imagine these artistes singing to me from windows of the Hawa Mahal, invoking their archaic status of courtiers.

My journey began on the turf of the Manganiyars in Rajasthan, and I realised that vocals weren’t their only weapon. To see 150 Manganiyars perform together was far more theatrical and truthful than looking at an actor. The movements of their bodies created a melody of their own, luring you into their world. I was dealing with a group of people for whom music had always been about survival, where each performance needed to be impressive enough to sustain their families through a large reward. The Manganiyars would sing in groups of five or six, and no song would be sung the exact same way by another group. Improvisation would emerge from the reactions of their peers as well as their audience. I had to translate this dynamic fluidity into theatre, where listening becomes the central goal.

The process was not without its struggles. The Manganiyars needed a conductor, an alien concept in Indian music. The windows representative of the red-light district limited their line

of sight and interaction, and the set-up had obviously created apprehension. I also had the challenge of quelling the internal competition within the community. It took me over two weeks to get my conductor, Devu Khan, who was completely oblivious to the job, to stop contesting with the other Manganiyars. He had to learn how to command and communicate, rather than get into a battle of the khartal. My role as the theatre director was to structure the music into something theatrical. The arrangement of the production had to make space for the musical within the visual spectacle. It had to be a voyage, the same one that I had experienced in Spain.

The opening ceremony of the Asian film festival saw the premiere of *The Manganiyar Seduction*. The performance was a precursor, so to speak, of what we do today. Over the years, the seduction has evolved, Devu Khan has blossomed into a beautiful and riveting conductor, and the world has been introduced to the magic of the Manganiyars.

Travelling during the first set of tours in Europe and America was peculiar and memorable, with Manganiyar chefs cooking in the Juilliard kitchen at the Lincoln Centre, constant singing in the buses and the inevitable homesickness that tinged these songs. I lived, travelled and grew beside the Manganiyars. *The Manganiyar Seduction* has shaped a chapter of my life, filling it with new experiences and new opportunities.

I approach music with the intuition of my lived experiences, which itself has been so infused with grand theatricality. I do not abide by the rules of classical music, because I simply do not know them. I was always out of the box because I had never been in the box. ■

Roysten Abel is a noted theatre director and playwright. He is the mind behind productions like The Manganiyar Seduction, A Hundred Charmers and Othello: A Play in Black and White. His latest production, Weaving Voices, is an immersive musical experience that premiered in October 2022 in Bengaluru.

For the Record

In a new series, **Jimmy Bilimoria** discusses a work from the Stuart-Liff Collection he oversees at the NCPA. This month, he writes about Rosa Ponselle, one of the greatest sopranos in the history of music.

“No more lush outpouring of sound has been heard in our time than the Ponselle voice at its prime.”

- Julian Moses

(in Guide to American Recordings)

When one says, ‘greatest singer of the 20th century’, one thinks of two artistes: Enrico Caruso, as the greatest male singer, and Rosa Ponselle, as the greatest of the women. “So unique was the voice and artistry of Ponselle that in the 20 years of her career at the Metropolitan, she had no rivals. She reigned as Queen just as Caruso did as King of the operatic world,” wrote Edward J. Smith, an operatic music label owner. It has been mentioned that the three major requisites for an operatic career are, “voice, voice and voice”. Fortunately, Ponselle had all three ‘voices’—her vocal range was in excess of three octaves. No dramatic soprano was able to match her flexibility—her runs, trills, scales—she had them all.

Ponselle used to appear in theatres and vaudeville with her elder sister Carmela. In 1918 her voice coach William Thorner brought her to the attention of Caruso and opera manager Giulio Gatti-Casazza, who chose to cast her as Donna Leonora in the Metropolitan Opera’s revival of Verdi’s *La Forza del Destino*. This was the first operatic performance of Ponselle’s life. Her debut took place opposite Caruso on 15th November 1918 at the Met. In *Forza del Destino*, Ponselle says “I arrived at the theatre in a state of cold panic. I was numb. I couldn’t lift my arms.” However, that panic did not hinder her performance. A reviewer in *Musical Courier* wrote: “It is no exaggeration to say that she made a sensational impression and was sensationally received.”

She went on to enjoy extraordinary successes in *Ernani*, *Don Carlos*, *La Gioconda* and *La traviata*, among many others. The *Ernani* aria was guaranteed to send the audience into a frenzy. Nobody in living memory has sung that aria with such a command of tones and a prolonged trill. The audiences waited for the famous trill that brought the house down.

Her singing of arias and duets from *Aida*, *Forza* and *Il trovatore* are legendary. She is said to have regarded *Aida* as the



greatest opera ever written. Ponselle’s greatest role was, according to many, in *Norma*. With the revival of the Vincenzo Bellini opera at the Met in 1927, Ponselle achieved perhaps the greatest triumph of her career. The eminent critic W. J. Henderson wrote that with *Norma*, “she added to her repertoire an embodiment which will increase her fame and which deepens the impression created in recent seasons that the ripening of her talent has been the result of a growing sincerity of purpose and earnest study.” The story goes that Maria Callas once told her friend, the English critic, Ida Cook, “I think you know that Rosa Ponselle was the greatest singer of us all. I listened to her constantly and wore out countless recordings. As soon as one was worn, I would hasten to replace it.”

Throughout her career, Ponselle had the advantage of working with great conductors like Bodanzky, Bellezza, Ettore Panizza and Serafin. She says, “It was their belief that if an artiste could thoroughly identify herself with her role, the stage action would be a natural outcome of her impersonation. It would express itself with a sincerity and conviction that the most painstaking stage direction would not give. Stage action should depend to a great extent on spontaneous interpretation.”

Ponselle was the first American without European training to make her debut in a major role at the Met. But the “agony of nerves” never left her and was responsible

for her premature retirement. Baritone Robert Merrill narrates an episode about *Aida* and Ponselle. In 1947, ten years after her premature farewell, she made a rare trip to New York and was a guest at a dinner party. Merrill is said to have recounted the incident as: “We were sitting in the salon after dinner, all gathered around the piano. Lenny Bernstein sat down and began to noodle the keys. Rosa sat next to him. Blanche Thebom and I stood in the curve of the piano. Lenny played the entrance to *Ritorna Vincitor*. Then, suddenly out of the blue this tremendous voice rang out. Everyone just stared, open-mouthed. Then they started to cry. Rosa sang the entire aria with astounding vocal opulence, feeling and drama. That moment of dark, glorious song still remains a thrilling memory.”

Luciano Pavarotti has written: “Rosa Ponselle, almost more than any other singer, had the unique combination of voice and musical profundity to advance operatic interpretation by decades, simply by the sheer genius of her artistry ... Whenever young singers approach me and ask whom they should pattern their singing after, I always respond: ‘Make a sincere study of the recordings of Rosa Ponselle.’ To every young singer in any age, ours, or some distant one, this will always be excellent advice. Rosa Ponselle is the Queen of Queens in all of singing.”

Besides the many of her recordings available in the Stuart-Liff Collection, I would recommend her arias from *Aida*, *Norma*, *Il trovatore*, *Ernani* and *La vestale* from the record set, *The Art of Rosa Ponselle* (RCA Camden). ■

The NCPA houses the world-famous Stuart-Liff Collection of 6,000 books, 11,000 LPs and 12,000 CDs on Western classical music. This collection was generously donated to the Centre in 2009 by Vivian Liff, on behalf of George Stuart and himself, as a gesture of their friendship with Chairman Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, an avid collector and connoisseur himself. The collection is an invaluable source for research by musicologists and students as well as for general music lovers. The library housing the collection is open from 10 am to 5.15 pm on weekdays.

Kaleidoscope

Your window to the latest in the performing arts across India and the world.



A Breakthrough Moment

In March 2023, Guillaume Diop made history as the first black person to be awarded the title of “danseur étoile” at the Paris Opera Ballet, the most coveted position for a ballet dancer in the company. This marks a breakthrough moment in not only the company’s 354-year-long history, but also in the strictly hierarchical world of ballet. Diop’s promotion from sujet to premier has made him part of a small, exclusive club of dancers who directly bagged the position of ballet’s highest rank. This milestone is another addition to the 23-years-old’s growing list of accolades since he joined the oldest national ballet company of France when he was 18 years old. Diop has danced in several étoile roles, with lead performances in *La Bayadère*, *Swan Lake* and *Romeo and Juliet*. José Martinez, the Paris Opera Ballet’s dance director, has cited Diop’s exceptional artistic qualities, charisma and potential as the reasoning behind his choice. As part of the Bonjour India festival, a host of famous stars of the Paris Opera Ballet had performed at the NCPA in 2018. For more information, please visit www.operadeparis.fr/en

Beyond the picket line

On 2nd May 2023, the Writers Guild of America (WGA)—a nationwide alliance that represents over 11,000 film, television, news, radio and online writers—went on strike for an indefinite period. Organised as a form of protest against the current “existential crisis” for writers across the entertainment industry of the U.S.A., the strike has been dubbed as the last resort after failed negotiations between the guild and major Hollywood studios and production houses. The strike has evoked a range of emotions across various groups of people: risen anxieties about the halt in production of

beloved shows and multimillion dollar franchises, the possibilities of poorer scripts, and revisiting the damages of the last writers’ strike in 2007. More than anything, the strike is both a warning and a battle against the bleak present and a hazardous future for the arts. The negotiation list addresses the steep pay gap, exploitative time-bound contracts and fears of being potentially replaced by AI, issues that have been endangering the sustenance of writers and threaten to further render them powerless. The foundation of the written word has shaken the suits of the boardroom, notorious for their absence from the sets. In a historical act of solidarity, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA) has also voted in favour of a strike against the studios, marking the first actors’ strike to occur after 23 years. For more information, please visit www.wgacontract2023.org

Collector’s delight

At the Tarisio Fine Instruments & Bows, a relic from the world of classical music is up for auction: a 1708 “golden-era” Stradivarius violin, straight from the catalogue of musical instruments manufactured and designed by the Italian master luthier, Antonio Stradivari. This violin has traversed centuries, from sitting neatly in the collection of various monarchs to being a lavishly priced possession of a tropical fish expert. Referred to as “Empress Caterina”, it is nicknamed after one of its owners, the Russian empress, Catherine the Great. The quest to find the instrument’s next owner commences a year after one of its companions, the “Da Vinci, ex-Seidel” from 1714, was auctioned for \$15.3



million. For more information, please visit tarisio.com/auctions. To read more about the famed violin-making families of Italy, please refer to the Archives section of this and the June 2023 issue.



Maharaja,
Metal alloy,
37cm x 24cm
x 18cm, Air
India
Collection
- NGMA

From the Vault

In April 2023, *ON Stage* carried the news of Air India’s exquisite collection of artworks being handed over to the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) in New Delhi for public display. Before they reach their destination in the national capital, the artworks are being exhibited at the NGMA in Mumbai. Courtesy of the Ministry of Culture, the exhibition titled *Maharaja’s Treasure: Select Works of Art from the Famed Air India Collection*, boasts paintings and sculptures from artistic giants like V. S. Gaitonde, B. Prabha, M. F. Husain, G. R. Santosh, K. H. Ara, Pilloo Pochkhanawala and Raghav Kaneria, including rarely seen early works that were acquired over a period of eight decades by the airline. The exhibition also features the Phad and Pichwai paintings of Rajasthan, Kalamkaris from Andhra Pradesh, Thanjavur gilded and glass paintings, various forms of textiles, jewellery, decorative art spread across the subcontinent and the now legendary ashtray designed by Salvador Dalí. The exhibition is a result of the transfer of the entire Air India collection of around 4,000 paintings and sculptures to the NGMA earlier this year for preservation. For more information, please visit ngmaindia.gov.in ■

- Neelakshi Singh



An NCPA Presentation

Ram Ratan Dhan

Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar

A classical dance homage to the immortal singer

Concept and curation by

SHUBHADA VARADKAR

PERFORMERS

Shubhada Varadkar and Sanskrita Foundation

Latasana Devi | Sarmistha Chattopadhyya | Piyush Raj

Amruta Khanvilkar | Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya

Pooja Pant and Pooja Pant Dance company

Pavitra Bhat and Disciples | Urmila Kothare

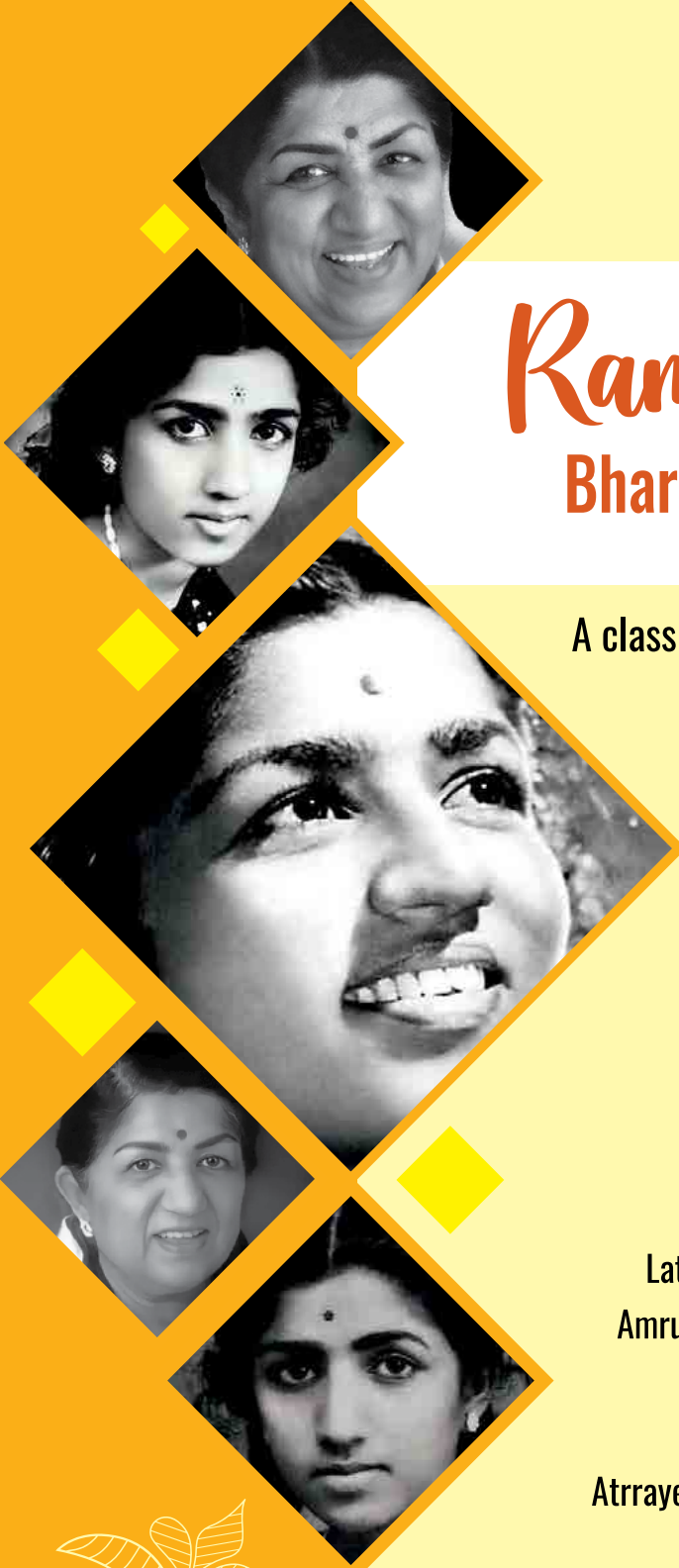
Attrayee Chowdhury | Mitali Varadkar | Shreya Sabharwal

Purbita Mukherjee | Sama Burte Nadkarni

7 JULY 2023 | 6:30 PM

TATA THEATRE, NCPA

Box Office: 66223724/54 | Tickets on [bookmyshow](#)



The Curve and the Pitch

ON Stage brings you edited excerpts from the *NCPA Quarterly Journal*, an unsurpassed literary archive that ran from 1972 to 1988 and featured authoritative and wide-ranging articles. In the concluding instalment of a two-part series, **T. C. Satyanath** compares the intricacies of the violins used in Indian and Western music.

The bow of the violin is made of a wooden stick strung from one end to the other with horsehair. Originally, the bow curved outwards and it was the greatest bow-maker of them all, François Tourte, who died in 1835 at the age of 88 and who devised the modern bow with an inward curve, which gave the player greater control. On the cheaper bows available today, horsehair has been substituted by artificial fibre.

An important rule of bowing, which is not always observed by our violinists, is that the bow should be held at an angle with the wooden stick facing away from the player and the hair facing him. And not all the hair should touch the strings; only thus can he get the maximum modulation of tones from the violin. He can, occasionally, hold the bow at right angles to the strings to get all the hair in contact and apply some pressure. Bowing plays a vital role in determining the texture and quality of sound a player can extract out of it. For instance, he can just caress it. By drawing the bow smoothly and slowly, and, if he so requires, increasing the pressure or decreasing it as the hand moves, he can produce several connected (legato) notes with his left hand in one single continuous movement of his right hand. He can *strike* on the strings and produce staccato notes. By a vigorous and determined lateral movement, he can produce a powerful single note either on the downstroke or the upstroke. The possibilities for variations are infinite and the bowing technique alone assumes considerable importance in the individual style of a violinist. In Western music, while an experienced ear can unmistakably

recognise a Heifetz or an Oistrakh from the bowing, in Indian music one can pick out a T. N. Krishnan, an Lalgudi, an M. S. Gopalakrishnan, a Rajam or an M. Chandrasekaran, on the one hand, or a Jog or a Kunnakudi, on the other. It is

Violinists in India have so well mastered this Western musical instrument that, with a single finger moving up and down the fingerboard, all the required notes are produced without a break ... M. S. Gopalakrishnan is sometimes wont to perform a whole varnam on a single string, sometimes using a single finger to cover a whole gamut of gamaka notes

astonishing, however, to see some of our prominent violinists allowing the bow to stray away from the position it should always move in, namely between the bridge and the fingerboard.

In Western music, the violin is tuned to G-D-A-E equivalent to Sa-Pa-Ri-Dha, that is if the Sa is the G note. But, in Indian music, the four strings are turned to G-D-G-D, that is Sa-Pa-Sa-Pa, the third and the fourth string being exactly one octave higher than the first two respectively (see table below).

The various notes are produced on the violin by pressing the fingers of the left hand against the fingerboard, starting with the index finger. The thumb is not used, although it is in the case of the cello. In Western music, this operation is called stopping. The pitch of the note is determined by the length of the string, which is allowed to vibrate between the finger and the bridge. Violinists in India have so well mastered this Western musical instrument that, with a single finger moving up and down the fingerboard, all the required notes are produced without a break. M. S. Gopalakrishnan, for instance, is sometimes wont to perform a whole *varnam* on a single string, sometimes using a single finger to cover a whole gamut of *gamaka* notes. Such glissandos are not much in evidence in Western music. The most difficult feature of the violin, which makes it at once unique and challenging, even to experienced violinists (and exasperating to beginners and to those out of practice), is that, as mentioned earlier, it has no frets, and, therefore, one has to know the placing of the fingers from memory, or almost by instinct to get the correct pitch. And the distances between notes contract progressively as the fingers move higher and higher up the fingerboard. A millimetric deviation is enough to produce the wrong note and ruin a whole sequence.

Several techniques are required to be employed in Western music. There is the double stopping (seldom used or needed in Indian music), and even triple and quadruple stopping playing two, three or even four melodies at the same time. A Flageolettone (in German) or the Flautando (Italian), which means the sound of a flute, can be produced by barely touching the open string precisely at the middle, resulting in a tone one octave higher. These notes so produced are the natural harmonies. By pressing the finger for a particular note,

at the same time ever so gently touching the string with the little finger, spanning the distance of a perfect fourth, gives a note which is two octaves higher—the artificial harmonies. Then there is the pizzicato, which involves the plucking of the strings instead of bowing. The formidable Paganini even had a pizzicato playing for the left hand—bowing on one string and playing notes while plucking another string with the left hand to give the impression of two instruments playing at the same time.

In Indian music, a musician is at liberty to choose any pitch (*shruti*) he likes to suit the range of his voice. Furthermore, mid-concert, he may also shift the pitch to that of the fourth note (Ma) depending on whether the raga or the composition lends itself to it (e.g. the Raga Jhenjuruti) or requires his singing mostly in the lower registers. The violin accompanist then duly readjusts the 2nd and the 4th strings to the same Ma notes in the lower and the higher octaves. Similarly, if he is accompanying a female vocalist who has chosen to sing at a very high pitch, one to which he cannot tighten the strings of his violin (or any normal violin), he makes similar adjustments to his 2nd and 4th strings which then become his Sa strings instead of the usual 1st and 3rd strings which then automatically become the Pa strings.

There is the trill and the vibrato in Western music, the quick and the slow rocking movement of the finger. Here is Menuhin on how Georges Enesco played: “He had the most expressively varied vibrato and the most wonderful trills of any violinist I have ever known. Depending on the speed and lightness of a trill, his trilling finger struck the string higher than the actual note, thus keeping in tune although the light, fast motion of the finger did not push the string to its full depth on the fingerboard.”



has been adopted by Carnatic music so totally that it is doubtful whether there is even a vernacular word for it yet, but it is nevertheless an indispensable and integral part of that style of music today. Except for the late Mysore T. Chowdiah, who improvised a seven-stringed version of the violin, which did not catch on despite the novelty of its double reed tone, the violins in use in this country still remain the exact equivalent of the ones used in the West. Some enterprising Indian musicologists with an enquiring mind are reportedly carrying out experiments to produce a violin, say, with sympathetic strings.

The violin came to India some 200 years ago with the British. I have heard the story, not quite authenticated, that the brother of the great Muthuswami Dikshitar saw this instrument being played by the East India Company's band in Madras and became fascinated by its tone and its capacity to simulate the human voice and its immense potential in the context of Carnatic music.

One does wonder, however, what bowed instrument would have supplanted the violin in Carnatic music but for Dikshitar's brother's discovery. While Hindustani music has had the sarangi, an indigenous instrument for obbligato, apart from other bowed instruments,

it is surprising that Carnatic music decided to graft a Western instrument for its needs. The violin is supposed to have Eastern origins. The violin bow “is claimed by the Hindus to have been invented by Rabana, King of Ceylon, who, according to tradition, lived five thousand years ago,” said the admirable Captain C. R. Day of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry in his highly enterprising book, *The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and the Deccan*, published in 1891. It is arguable. ■

This article first appeared in its entirety in the NCPA Quarterly Journal in June 1981 (Vol 10, Issue 2).

An attachment sometimes used to dampen the tone, and often during practice, is the mute (sordino), a small metal prong which is slipped on to the bridge to reduce some of the vibrations the bridge carries from the strings to the body of the violin.

While, in Western music, the violin is held up with the aid of a chin rest attached to the body of the instrument, in Indian music, the player sits cross-legged and rests the scroll-end on his inside ankle thereby enabling the free movement of his left hand so necessary for producing *gamakas*.

This Western musical instrument

Programme Guide

July 2023

(Programmes are subject to change. Please check the website and refer to our emails for updated information.)



THEATRE



Priya Malik, 1st, Godrej Dance Theatre

Priya Malik Live

Ishq hai, Ishq hai, Ishq hai

Hindi (100 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 1st – 5.00 pm & 8.00 pm

An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation

Have you ever experienced the art of poetry, storytelling and music stir your soul? If not, here's your chance to experience it with one of India's leading award-winning poetesses, Priya Malik, who once explained the difference between *pyaar* and *ishq* and made chai an emotion whose warmth we have felt. *Ishq hai, Ishq hai, Ishq hai* is Malik's solo poetry show that will make you feel things you have never felt before, will make you laugh and cry and sing along. Malik will be accompanied by a singer-songwriter whose soul-stirring voice will be music to your ears.

Performers: **Priya Malik & Abhin Joshi**

Suggested age: 16+

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

25 early bird tickets of ₹450/- each available for the 5.00 pm show

Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC



Shekhar Sen, 1st, Tata Theatre

Vivekanand

A mono-act musical play

by Shekhar Sen

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 1st – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

A spiritual personality of fiery erudition and intense patriotism, and possessing an innate musicality, Swami Vivekananda raised interfaith awareness with his divine message of love, *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*—meaning the world is one family. Even today, the Ramakrishna Mission founded by Vivekananda is ceaselessly engaged in social and charitable work.

Vivekanand, a musical mono-act, is conceptualised, written and presented by Shekhar Sen, a celebrated singer, composer, lyricist and actor, who is internationally known for his super-hit mono-act musical plays such as *Tulsidas*, *Kabeer* and *Soordas*. Having 32 song sequences that are skilfully woven through a fact-based narrative, the presentation unfolds the incredible transformation of Narendra, a child born and raised in a modest yet artistic family, to the towering philosopher whom the world came to know as Swami Vivekananda. Equally appealing to intellectuals and the spiritually inclined, this well-crafted presentation

brings home the global impact of Vivekananda's unforgettable speech at the first World's Parliament of Religions in 1893 in Chicago, that put India and the timeless wisdom of Hinduism on the world map.

Tickets:

₹720, 540 & 360/- (Members)

₹800, 600 & 400/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office now open

SCREENING



Cinderella, 2nd & 5th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Cinderella

by Jules Massenet

Opera Screening (95 mins)

Sung in English with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Sunday, 2nd – 11.00 am

Wednesday, 5th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Get ready for a magical day at the opera. An abridged, English-language version of Massenet's enchanting fairy-tale opera from The Metropolitan Opera, New York, makes this screening the perfect way to experience the joy and wonder of opera, with its breathtaking staging and beautiful music. Charles Perrault's tale of Cinderella is a timeless story that captures the hearts of audiences young and old with its themes of love, hope and perseverance

with stunning visuals. Do not miss out on this spectacular staging that brings the fairy tale to life like never before. So come along and be swept away by the beauty and wonder of this production.

Conductor: **Emmanuel Villaume**
Production: **Laurent Pelly**
Choreographer: **Laura Scozzi**
Set Designer: **Barbara de Limburg**
Costume Designer: **Laurent Pelly**
Lighting Designer: **Duane Schuler**
Projection Designer: **S. Katy Tucker**
Cast: **Jessica Pratt, Isabel Leonard, Emily D'Angelo, Stephanie Blythe & Laurent Naouri**

Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)
Box Office now open

THEATRE



Go with the Flow

English Play (120 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 2nd – 5.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Akvarious Productions

The country is facing a water shortage. The rivers have dried up and the government is rationing water. Devina, a young girl, and her ragtag team of kids are water pirates—stealing water from pipelines and selling it at higher rates. Times are tough, the risks are high and things seem very bleak till a mysterious girl shows up, telling tales of her home where there is an abundance of water and greenery. A land where the Great River still flows. The kids agree to undertake a perilous journey to get the lost girl home. They are unaware of what lies ahead or who is behind them and what their ulterior motives are. Filled with song, dance and interesting characters, *Go with the Flow* is a thrilling adventure set in the not-too-distant future.

Written by **Siddharth Kumar & Sarthak Kakar**
Directed by **Adhaar Khurana**
Music by **Rajat Tiwari**
Choreography by **Shivani Mistry**

Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)
Box Office now open

PHOTOGRAPHY



Mumbai Monsoon, 3rd to 16th, Dilip Piramal Art Gallery

Mumbai Monsoon: Beyond 24X7

A Group Photo Exhibition
Curated by **Mukesh Parpiani**
Dilip Piramal Art Gallery
Monday, 3rd to Sunday, 16th – 12.00 noon to 8.00 pm

Thirty-six photojournalists from Mumbai are going to take part in a group photo exhibition titled *Mumbai Monsoon* at the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery. About a total of 100 photographs of the monsoon in Mumbai will be on display, including some of the deluge of 26th July 2005.

Entry free

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Talks on Western Classical Music

Godrej Dance Theatre
Tuesday, 4th – 6.00 pm
and
Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Friday, 7th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet* (Fantasy Overture)
Borodin: *In the Steppes of Central Asia*
Borodin: *Notturmo* from String Quartet No.2

"Western classical music is heavy."
"The music of Beethoven and Mozart is difficult to understand."

There are several misconceptions about this rich tradition of music. But from the chords of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata which inspired the hit Beatles' track 'Because' to countless films where snippets of classical compositions have heightened the joy, drama or pathos, we are surrounded by classical music. In a new series of talks, **Dr. Cavas Bilimoria** will take participants through musical concepts, the lives of composers and their famous works, sprinkled with examples of recorded music.

In the third talk of this series, he will discuss the beloved works of two Russian composers. Starting with Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* Fantasy Overture and its three main themes, he will move to Borodin's classics. These include 'In the Steppes of Central Asia', a symphonic poem describing a caravan passing through the grasslands of the Steppes and *Notturmo*, the third movement of Borodin's String Quartet No. 2, which is thought to be a 20th-anniversary present to his wife.

Register on www.bookmyshow.com
Entry free

SCREENING



Life of Pi, 5th & 9th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Life of Pi
by **Yann Martel**
Theatre Screening (180 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Wednesday, 5th – 11.00 am

Sunday, 9th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA – National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

Puppetry, magic and storytelling come together in this unique, Oliver Award-winning stage adaptation of Yann Martel's best-selling novel of the same name. After a cargo ship sinks in the middle of the vast Pacific Ocean, a 16-year-old boy named Pi is stranded on a lifeboat with four other survivors—a hyena, a zebra, an orangutan and a Royal Bengal tiger. Time is against them and nature is harsh. The question is: who will survive?

Filmed live in London's West End and featuring state-of-the-art visuals, the epic journey of endurance and hope is brought to life in a breathtaking new way for cinema screens.

Adapted by **Lolita Chakrabarti**

Directed by **Max Webster**

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office now open

FILM

Short Film Corner

Short Film Screenings

Little Theatre

Wednesday, 5th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with White Wall Screenings



The Astronaut and his Parrot, 5th, Little Theatre

The Astronaut and his Parrot Hindi Film with English Subtitles (16 mins)

An accident causes a spaceship to explode and an astronaut tumbles out of it. He starts floating and falling in space and frantically tries to connect to someone.

Directed by **Arati Kadav**



Ravan, 5th, Little Theatre

Ravan Hindi Film with English Subtitles (5 mins)

A hilarious mockumentary on the last surviving descendant of Ravan who is a struggling actor and refuses to marry.

Directed by **Arati Kadav**



Chuski, 5th, Little Theatre

Chuski Hindi Film with English Subtitles (14 mins)

Sangita is a middle-aged housewife in a lower middle-class household in Mumbai. Her world is limited to the 12/12 apartment. She has selflessly contributed to her family all her life and has found solace in the monotony of it. Her contributions are often overlooked by her patriarchal husband Rajeshwar. Her clumsy behaviour leads to her forgetting things. She has not been able to serve her husband a perfect cup of tea for the longest time. She still has hope that the spice of her marriage would revive some time. But it is the same cup of tea that leads to a revelation that makes her question her own set of beliefs. Will she be able to cope with this sudden break of monotony?

Directed by **Utsav Sarkar**

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 6.20 pm.

DANCE



Shubhada Varadkar, 7th, Tata Theatre

Ram Ratan Dhan – Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar

A classical dance homage to the immortal singer

Tata Theatre

Friday, 7th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Odissi, Kathak, Bharatanatyam and Manipuri, conceptualised by Shubhada Varadkar

A classical dance presentation on immortal melodies of Lata Mangeshkar conceptualised by Odissi exponent Shubhada Varadkar.

Ram Ratan Dhan is a soulful presentation of the evergreen melodies sung by Mangeshkar and performed on stage for the first time by classical dancers of Mumbai. An array of songs in various languages ranging from film to devotional and patriotic have been curated to give a wholesome experience to the audience.

Shubhada Varadkar is an exponent of Odissi. A disciple of the legendary Kelucharan Mohapatra, Varadkar is a recipient of Senior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Varadkar's dance is a union of eloquent expressions and graceful movements right out of Odissi's rich heritage. Some of Varadkar's major productions include *Kanupriya*, based on Dr. Dharmvir Bharti's poetry by the same name; *Miracles of Splendour*,

based on Kalidasa's *Ritusamharam*, and Rabindranath Tagore's *Chitrangada*. Her dance productions have been well received for their rich tapestry of music, choreography and literature. Within the boundaries of the traditional format, she has enthralled the audience with her artistic excellence and creative spirit.

Tickets:

₹360, 270 & 180/- (Members)

₹400, 300 & 200/- (Public)

Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC



Girija Devi, 7th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Music Mirror

Screening of NCPA's archival recording of Girija Devi

Direction: Sumantra Ghoshal

(100 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Friday, 7th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The Benaras *gharana* of vocal music is known for its wide repertoire including classical and semi-classical genres. These genres have flourished side by side and have also influenced one another. In addition, the repertoire also includes folk forms like *chaiti*, *jhoola*, *hori*, etc., which not only add a lilting quality to the music but also help bring music closer to the common man. The compositions are mostly in the local Bhojpuri dialect with occasional traces of Urdu, an influence brought in by the Nawabi culture of nearby Lucknow.

Trained by maestros Sarju Prasad Mishra and Srichand Mishra, **Girija Devi** (1929-2017) was a versatile prima donna of the Benaras *gharana*. Armed with a wide repertoire ranging from *khayal* to *Purab ang thumri* and several folk forms, her inimitable style aesthetically combined the classical idiom with the regional flavour of folk songs from Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh.

This screening is based on a live thematic concert presented by Girija Devi at the NCPA in July 2012. It included select works of two prominent composers of the Benaras *gharana*: **Shambhunath Mishra** alias **Nath Piya** (c. 1855-1918) and **Shyamcharan Mishra** alias **Shyamdas** (c. 1810 – 1900).

The presentation included two *khayal* compositions in Raga Bageshri, *thumris* in Raga Khambavati and Mishra Khamaj, and a composition each of *dadra*, *jhoola* and *tappa*.

Book now on BookMyShow

Free Entry. Admission on a first-come-first-served basis

SCREENING



Champion, 8th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Champion

by Terence Blanchard

Opera Screening (180 mins)

Sung in English with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 8th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Terence Blanchard is a celebrated composer whose works express his roots in jazz but defy further categorisation. A prolific creator in a wide variety of forms and genres, he is especially celebrated for his close collaboration with director Spike Lee and his accomplishments as an award-winning composer of more than 60 film scores. When Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* opened the Met's 2021-22 season to universal acclaim, it marked a historic moment in the annals of the company. Now, the six-time Grammy Award-winning composer's first opera will be screened at the NCPA. In Hempstead, Long Island, Emile Griffith suffers from dementia, and is confused and haunted by his past. Luis, his

adopted son, acts as his caretaker along with Griffith's mother, Emelda. Emile moves to New York to fulfil his hopes and dreams of becoming a world-class fighter. *Champion* showcases the various stages of Griffith's progression during his lifetime—from the 1950s up until the 1980s.

Conductor: **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

Cast: **Latonia Moore, Stephanie Blythe, Ryan Speedo Green & Eric Owens**

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office now open

THEATRE



To Rajhans Ek, 8th, Experimental Theatre

To Rajhans Ek

Marathi Play (70 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 8th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

To Rajhans Ek is an authentic portrayal of the situation every young Indian farmer is faced with. It brings to light the many problems that come their way and how they take a toll on their mental and physical health.

A young farmer in a rural area is going through a strange phase due to a change in the socio-economic framework. He is caught between the land of numerous dreams on one side and life slipping out of hand on the other. He is tired of accepting life in a cage as a way of living. In it, one creates an elusive life of one's own on the vast expanse of the mind and in turn, gets stuck in the dense forest of the mind to save himself from the penetrating reality. It is the story of a young farmer trapped in such a 'forest' through the frame of a play.

Produced by **Pramod Gaikwad**
Written by **Datta Patil**
Directed by **Sachin Shinde**
Cast: **Prajakt Deshmukh, Anita Date, Amey Barve, Hemant Mahajan & Dhananjay Gosavi**
Lights by **Prafulla Dixit**
Music by **Rohit Sarode**
Set Design by **Chetan Barve**

Tickets:

₹315/- (Members)

₹350/- (Public)

Box Office now open

THEATRE



Peggy Pane - Oh What a Pain!, 9th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Peggy Pane - Oh What a Pain!

Children's Musical Comedy in English

(75 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Sunday, 9th – 12.00 noon

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Theatrewaalas

Inspired by the famous Amelia Jane series by Enid Blyton, the play is the story of toys inside a nursery. Penny's toy nursery has many toys like Teddy, Annie and Gollywog. One day, a new toy called Peggy Pane arrives and turns the peace of the nursery upside down. Being a very naughty doll, Peggy keeps getting into mischief in the toy nursery and makes life difficult for all the toys. They finally decide to teach Peggy a lesson, but the entry of a mysterious creature scares the bejesus out of the toys. Peggy helps them out, making a new friend in the end.

Adapted & directed by **Sheetal R & Rohit Tiwari**

Age: 4+

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office now open

THEATRE

Much Ado About Nothing

English Play (100 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 9th – 6.00 pm

Ank presents its first production in English—*Much Ado About Nothing*, a scintillating romantic comedy by William Shakespeare, directed by J. Brandon Hill. *Much Ado About Nothing* is a love story full of darkness and light, of what cannot be spoken and the delights of speaking, about the mingling of laughter and sorrow, peppered with witty repartee.

Prince Don Pedro has won the war of succession with his brother Don John and, along with his lieutenants Benedick and Claudio, arrives in Messina to be welcomed by Governor Leonato, his daughter Hero, niece Beatrice and sister Antonia. While Beatrice and Benedick both claim they are determined never to marry and grow increasingly sharp in their sparring, Hero and Claudio claim undying love for each other and cannot wait to plunge into marriage. Suddenly schemes abound, dangerous misunderstandings proliferate, and matches are eventually made and unmade in this dazzling comedy of love and second chances.

Written by **William Shakespeare**

Directed by **J. Brandon Hill**

Cast: **Priita Mathur Thakur, J. Brandon Hill, Aman Gupta, Mayank Malik, Akshay Jha, Kaustubh Sawant, Toyshree & others**

Produced by **Ank Theatre Group, Mumbai**

Tickets:

₹630, 450 & 360/- (Members)

₹700, 500 & 400/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office now open

FILM

Rajnigandha

Hindi Film with English Subtitles (110 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Tuesday, 11th – 6.30 pm



Rajnigandha, 11th, Godrej Dance Theatre

The Indian Express Film Club screening in association with NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation.

Deepa Kapoor lives with her brother and sister-in-law in Delhi. She studies in college. One day she meets Sanjay and after a series of meetings, both fall in love and decide to get married after Sanjay gets a promotion. Deepa goes to Bombay for a job interview and meets with an old boyfriend Navin. This meeting rekindles her love for Navin, who is the very opposite of Sanjay, being punctual and attentive, and well-settled as a commercial film producer. Deepa now has the task of choosing to live with either Sanjay or Navin.

Director: **Basu Chatterjee**

Producer: **Suresh Jindal**

Cast: **Amol Palekar, Vidya Sinha, Dinesh Thakur, Ranjita Thakur, Veena Godh, Master Chicoo, Manju Maini, Naresh Suri, B.B. Sahni & Raj Prakash**

The film screening will be followed by a discussion with Shubhra Gupta, Film Critic, *The Indian Express*.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members do not have to register and will be given entry on display of membership card.

SCREENING

Sunflowers

Exhibition on Screen

(Approx. 85 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 12th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA-Seventh Art Productions (UK) Presentation



Sunflowers, 12th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Vincent van Gogh's works featuring sunflowers are some of the most iconic paintings in the world. In an extraordinary exhibition, the Van Gogh Museum took a new and revealing look at the five publicly-owned versions of sunflowers in a vase. And once again, the Van Gogh Museum opened its doors exclusively to Exhibition on Screen.

They are immediately recognisable, but our film goes beyond the surface to explore the many questions and mysteries that surround these works. Why, for example, did Van Gogh choose the exotic sunflower with its long stem and golden crown? Indeed, when did the flower itself arrive in Europe and how had previous artists reacted to it? What was Van Gogh trying to say with his works and how does that differ from version to version? And what secrets did scientists discover when they analysed the work in detail? All this is revealed in this fascinating film, which travelled beyond Amsterdam to Tokyo, Philadelphia, London and Munich to film, in incredible high-definition detail, all five of the works.

Each painting is different and has its own unique story, spanning one of the most famous and turbulent periods in art history. The paintings are also now considered to be in such a delicate state that there will never be a show with all five alongside one another ever again. Only in this film will you have a chance to see them come together on the screen in our virtual exhibition. In doing so, the film brings to audiences many new levels of understanding

both of the paintings and of Vincent van Gogh.

Directed by **David Bickerstaff**

Tickets:
₹360/- (Members)
₹400/- (Public)
Box Office now open

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

The Jazz Masters Listening Sessions
conducted by Sunil Sampat
The Best Jazz Standards
Little Theatre
Thursday, 13th – 5.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

From over a hundred years of jazz recordings, we pick the very best performances to play for you, with some history and some stories around the creation of these timeless standards—to the delight of the sophisticated jazz connoisseur.

Curated and narrated by **Sunil Sampat**

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 5.20 pm.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Movies Under the Stars
Red River (1948)
Film Screening
(B&W – 127 mins)
Little Theatre
Friday, 14th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation Presentation

Howard Hawks's *Red River* has been described by renowned film critic Roger Ebert as "one of the greatest of all Westerns" often drawing comparisons to *Mutiny on the Bounty* in a Western setting. The film stars John Wayne in one of his greatest roles as an embittered, tyrannical Texas rancher, whose tensions with his adopted son, played by Montgomery Clift in his first screen role, reach epic proportion during a cattle drive to Missouri.

Fourteen years after starting his cattle ranch in Texas, Tom Dunston



Red River, 14th, Little Theatre

(**John Wayne**) is finally ready to drive his 10,000 head of cattle to market. Back then, Dunston, his sidekick Nadine Groot (**Walter Brennan**) and a teenaged boy Matt Garth (**Montgomery Clift**), who was the only survivor of an Indian attack on a wagon train, started off with only two heads of cattle. The nearest market, however, is in Missouri, 1,000 miles away. Dunston is a hard taskmaster demanding a great deal from the men who have signed up for the drive. Matt is a grown man now and has fought in the Civil War. He has his own mind, and he soon runs up against the stubborn Dunston who won't listen to advice from anyone. Soon, the men on the drive are taking sides and Matt ends up in charge with Dunston vowing to kill him.

Director: **Howard Hawks**
 Screenplay: **Borden Chase & Charles Schnee**
 Cinematography: **Russell Harlan**
 Cast: **John Wayne, Montgomery Clift, Joanne Dru & Walter Brennan**

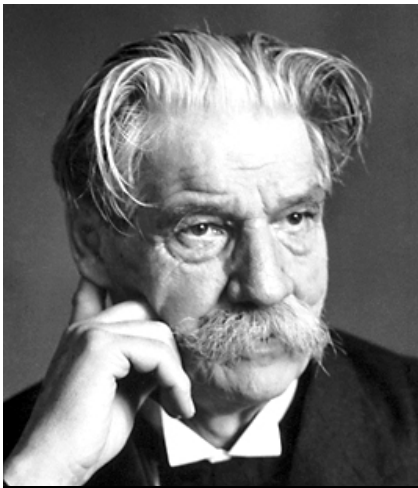
Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 6.20 pm

THEATRE

'OGANGA!' – A Tribute to the Life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer
A medical missionary who revered life
Written by Dr. Farokh E. Udawadia
A Staged Reading (90 mins)
Tata Theatre
Sunday, 16th – 5.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

This tribute explores the extraordinary saga of an extraordinary man, Dr. Albert Schweitzer. 'Oganga' brings



Dr. Albert Schweitzer, 16th, Tata Theatre

to life the journey of a man who forsook a comfortable life and felt impelled to live and work as a doctor in the jungles of Equatorial Africa, a man who offered unconditionally, a lifetime of service to the poorest and most wretched of his fellow human beings, with great compassion, humility and love. Remarkably, he was also a true Renaissance man, a theologian, a musician, a virtuoso organist, a prolific writer and author, a profound philosopher, but above all, a great humanist. This work, written by **Dr. Farokh E. Udwardia**, eminent physician and author, is a meditation on a life of selflessness, heroism, sacrifice and above all, universal love for all God's creation. Interspersed with Bach's compositions, this is also a work where the love of music that binds the two good doctors—the subject and the writer—comes alive onstage.

Starring: **Jim Sarbh**
Directed by **Sooni Taraporevala**

Tickets:
₹900, 675 & 450/- (Members)
₹1,000, 750 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Talks on Western Classical Music

Godrej Dance Theatre
Tuesday, 18th – 6.00 pm
and
Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Friday, 21st – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Mendelssohn: *Fingal's Cave* overture
Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E minor

"Western classical music is heavy."
"The music of Beethoven and Mozart is difficult to understand."

There are several misconceptions about this rich tradition of music. But from the chords of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata which inspired the hit Beatles' track 'Because' to countless films where snippets of classical compositions have heightened the joy, drama or pathos, we are surrounded by classical music. In a new series of talks, **Dr. Cavas Bilimoria** will take participants through musical concepts, the lives of composers and their famous works, sprinkled with examples of recorded music.

The upcoming talk in the ongoing series is all about Mendelssohn. Dr. Bilimoria will discuss the *Fingal's Cave* Overture, also known as *The Hebrides*. The composition was inspired by one of Mendelssohn's trips to Scotland, especially the uninhabited island of Staffa, wherein lies a cave with peculiar natural acoustics. Next is Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, arguably the most famous one in all of Western classical music. The great Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim called it the jewel of the heart.

Register on www.bookmyshow.com
Entry free

DANCE

Khud Mein Kabir – Kabir Mein Hum

A dance-drama by **Ranjana Gauhar** and
Samanvay
Kathak by **Pooja Pant Dance Company**
Experimental Theatre
Wednesday, 19th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Concept, Creative Director & Choreography: **Ranjana Gauhar**

The musical *nritya natika* (dance-drama) *Khud Mein Kabir - Kabir Mein Hum* is a presentation that touches upon the life and times in which Kabir lived in Benaras. The production is



Ranjana Gauhar, 19th, Experimental Theatre

a fusion of his poems and bhajans performed to music, which is moving. It has been dramatised with dialogues from eminent playwright Bishma Sahni's acclaimed drama *Kabira Khada Bazaar Mein*, which depicts the environment and struggles of Kabir in the medieval period. The dance-drama will be rendered in a creative format with Odissi dance form as its base.

Ranjana Gauhar is a renowned Odissi dancer, guru and choreographer whose interests include theatre and painting. She is also the Founder-President of Utsav – Educational & Cultural Society. Gauhar is well known for extensive training in *Chhau*, Kathak and Manipuri and has also authored the book *Odissi – The Dance Divine*. She is a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award from the President of India, Senior Fellowship for her research in the temple tradition of Odissi dance by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, the Indira Gandhi Priyadarshini Award and Mahari Award among others.

Samanvay – Kathak by Pooja Pant Dance Company

Samanvay explores the scope of choreography in fast paced, pure dance renditions that run along the time cycle, as well as in the gentle poise of the melodies that flow along the streams of rhythm. From the technical aspects of Kathak to the subjective perception of *abhinaya*, it encapsulates a synthesis of movements beyond space. Of



stories beyond time. Of searching for love in the dense grey clouds that contain within them, the waters of the oceans. Of planting hopeful seeds of tomorrow, in deserted yesterdays. Of carving promising narratives through the blossoms of spring. Through dance, this confluence aims to bring together the learnings of the past and the seekings of tomorrow.

Pooja Pant is a performer, choreographer, mentor and Founder-Director of the Pooja Pant Dance Company. Known for her technical finesse, delicate *abhinaya* and unique choreographies, she is the first Indian classical dancer to have performed at the Lawrence Olivier Awards in London. Holding a master's degree in Kathak, Pant is a recipient of prestigious awards such as the V.D. Paluskar Award, Menaka trophy, Singaar Mani, and Nritya Nipun to name a few.

Tickets:

₹270 & 180 (Members)

₹300 & 200/- (Public)

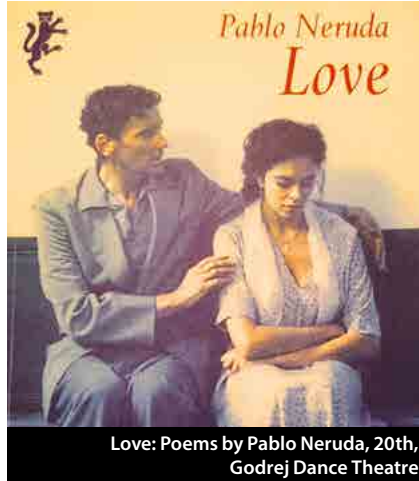
Box Office now open

MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION

Book Reading

Love: Poems from the Film *Il Postino*
 Poems by Pablo Neruda
 Reading Designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar
 Godrej Dance Theatre
 Thursday, 20th – 4.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Metamorphosis Theatre and Films



Pablo Neruda (1904-1973) was probably the greatest and certainly the most prolific of 20th-century Latin American poets. He published his first collection at the age of 17, and quickly developed an assured and distinctive poetic voice.

This poetic evening draws from the poems that are the heart of the film *Il Postino*, a cinematic fantasy spun from an apocryphal incident in the life of the Chilean poet and Nobel laureate, Pablo Neruda. Few writers of any age have described the pleasures and torments of erotic love with such unsentimental directness and sensual precision. This poetic experience is an amalgamation of the famous early collection *Twenty Love Songs and a Song of Despair* (1924) to the key works of his maturity, *Residence on Earth* (1935), *Elemental Odes* (1954) and the autobiographical *Memorial de Isla Negra* (1964), all duly celebrated in the film *Il Postino*.

This reading is designed by **Dr. Omkar Bhatkar** using movement, music and visual aesthetics along with the text. He writes and directs plays and makes independent feature films and documentaries. He has been

teaching Film and Aesthetics and involved in theatre making, poetry and cinema for a decade now and hopes to die painting. He is the Artistic Director of Metamorphosis Theatre and Films and the co-founder and Head of St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis.

FILM

Reality Check

Documentary Film Screening

Little Theatre

Thursday, 20th – 6.30 pm

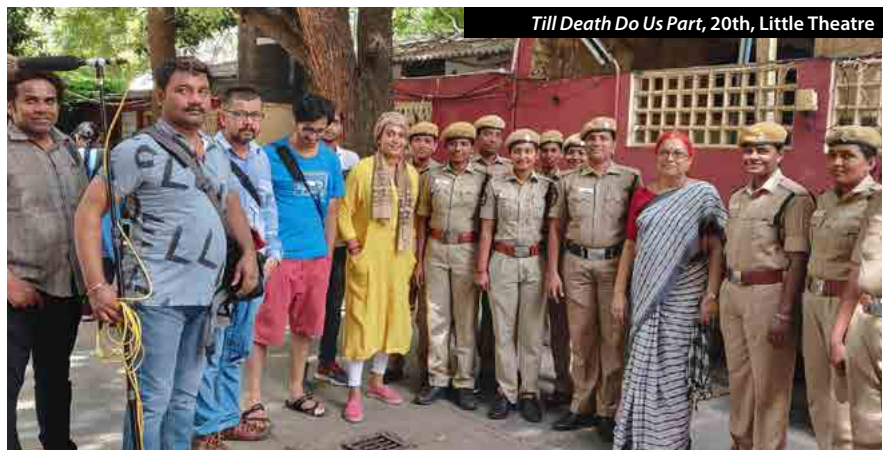
An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Cinema Collective

The Reality Check film series promotes and encourages documentary filmmakers in India, whose work reflects life and culture in the country today in a provocative blend of creativity and integrity.

Till Death Do Us Part

English/Telugu Film with English Subtitles (53 mins)

The film begins with establishing Indian women's perception of their husbands and marriage, and the deadly price they pay for treating marriage as the only reason for their existence. It also looks at the different challenges faced by three survivors who lived to tell their story. Pain is the central element which binds these women, and compels the protagonist to take it upon herself to ensure that no other woman ever goes through horrifying violence.



The film then goes on to explore several factors contributing to the mindset that perpetuates violence like patriarchy, lack of parental support, financial dependency, ostracism, loopholes in the justice system and support from the police. The film also probes the cycle of violence, which is most likely responsible for the never-ending brutal crimes against women and children, with the help of hard-hitting facts from experts and gut-wrenching stories of children and older people who have suffered in the safe confines of home.

It is through these brave survivors who have shunned the stigma of society and decided to turn the tide for themselves, that we see hope springing in the darkest corners of their lives and that of other survivors of domestic violence.

Writer/Director: **Insia Dariwala**

Producer: **Vasavya Mahila Mandali, Andhra Pradesh**

The film screening will be followed by a discussion.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 6.20 pm.

INDIAN MUSIC

NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop

Management of physical health from the perspective of a performer
By **Dr. Prakash R. Sharoff**
A free online workshop on Zoom



Dr. Prakash R. Sharoff, 22nd, Online

(Approx. 60 mins followed by Q&A session)

Saturday, 22nd – 11.00 am

A career in the performing arts could lead to physical problems arising out of long hours of practice in improper posture and lack of fitness. Such problems faced by artistes may range from repetitive stress injuries to severe health-related disorders that could have long-term implications on their performing career.

This workshop aims at helping artistes to understand the positive and negative implications of the posture, and its role in enhancing overall efficiency. The session will include discussing the three main postures (sitting cross-legged, sitting on a chair/stool and standing) adopted by artistes. Suggestions will be offered to correct the posture, which can prevent repetitive stress injuries and delay the degeneration of joints due to undue stress. The speaker will offer tips for increasing the efficiency of muscles and joints by putting them in a biomechanically advantageous position, and thus enhancing the overall capacity.

Dr. Prakash R. Sharoff is a distinguished physiotherapist who is trained in orthopaedics, sports and manual therapy. Having vast experience in dealing with pre- and post-operative rehabilitation of orthopaedic and sports injuries, he serves on the panels of various international organisations such as the Olympic Gold Quest. He is the first Asian official at the Neuro Orthopaedic Institute, Australasia, and an award-winning physiotherapist, serving as the Director of Physiohealth Pain Management & Performance Enhancement in Mumbai.

**Registration starts on 26th June 2023
Book now on BookMyShow**

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

NCPA Legends with Shweta Shetty

Tata Theatre
Saturday, 22nd – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Shweta Shetty brings together an



Shweta Shetty, 22nd, Tata Theatre

all-girl band and dance group to pay tribute to the legends who have left an indelible mark on the music scene; an evening of brilliance to uplift your mood and soul. Get ready for some retro, soul, jazz, funk, soul and pop. The show will feature songs from Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Amy Winehouse and many more great artistes.

Tickets:

₹1,350, 900, 720, 450 & 270/- (Members)

₹1,500, 1,000, 800, 500 & 300/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC

Monsoon Melodies

by **Shahid Parvez (sitar)**
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 22nd – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in association with Kilachand Foundation & Ashwin C. Shroff

The monsoon is richly celebrated in Hindustani music. Ragas of the Malhar family and myriad genres of semi-classical music, like the *thumri* and *dadra*, are inseparably associated with this season. Several allied folk forms like *kajri*, *sawan*, *jhoola*, *hindola*, etc. also express the pain of separation and the joy of union with the beloved.



Shahid Parvez, 22nd, Experimental Theatre

Shahid Parvez inherited the rich legacy of the Etawah Imdadkhani *gharana*, and was trained by his father, Aziz Khan, the son of surbahar and sitar virtuoso Wahid Khan. Hailed as a child prodigy, Parvez is well-known for his extraordinary command of the instrument and mastery over both, *tantrakari* (instrumental techniques) and *gayaki ang* (vocalised idiom). A recipient of numerous prestigious awards and accolades, he has performed widely in India and in major festivals across the world.

In this recital, Parvez will present compositions to celebrate the rains.

Tickets:
₹360 & 270/- (Members)
₹400 & 300/- (Public)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

SOI Chamber Orchestra

Maria Badstue, conductor
Christina Bjørkøe, piano
Tata Theatre
Friday, 28th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Beethoven’s sublime Third Piano Concerto is a masterpiece embodying a profound journey from stormy drama to tranquil resolution. This will be followed by the gentle charm of Sibelius’s music, which will transport you to Nordic landscapes painted with lush, musical brush strokes.

Maria Badstue has been praised as “one of the best young Danish conductors of today”. She is a recipient of the prestigious 2019-2021 Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship, and in the 2022-23 season, she makes her debuts in Italy, France and the United States.

Pianist **Christina Bjørkøe** is one of Denmark’s leading musicians

and performs solo recitals, as a chamber musician and as a soloist with the Danish symphony orchestras. She is an associate professor at the Danish National Academy of Music and has worked with pianists including Krystian Zimerman and Emanuel Ax.

Programme:
 Biber: Battalia
 Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 3
 Sibelius: Impromptu
 Sibelius: Romance
 and more

Tickets:
₹1,080, 720 & 450/- (Members)
₹1,200, 800 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 26th June for Members & 29th June for Public

INDIAN MUSIC

Musical Sandstorm
by Ila Arun & folk artistes (130 mins)
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 29th – 7.00 pm

Forty years ago, on 9th June 1982, Surnai Theatre and Folk Arts Foundation took Mumbai by storm with its *Musical Sandstorm*, a folk extravaganza, which announced the birth of a new theatre group in Mumbai, Surnai, “a soulful voice of the performing arts”. Forty folk artistes from Rajasthan created magic on the NCPA stage, joined by Ila Arun and her dancers.

Four decades later we celebrate our journey with a repeat performance of *Musical Sandstorm*, a grand finale of our year-long celebrations. Once again, an ensemble of folk artistes will join Arun, celebrating her journey in the folk tradition and the fortieth anniversary of Surnai.

World-renowned folk artistes from Rajasthan—the Langas, the Manganiyars and the Kalbelias—will take over the stage at the NCPA. Dancers from Mumbai will perform to the tune of Arun’s most popular numbers, choreographed by Avni Shah. It will be a musical extravaganza, a spectacle of colour, light and the sounds of the desert, a performance never seen before in Mumbai.

An Antardhwani Production



SOI Chamber Orchestra, 28th, Tata Theatre

Tickets:₹1,800, 1,350, 900, 675 & 450/-
(Members)₹2,000, 1,500, 1,000, 750 & 500/-
(Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

**Box Office: 26th June for Members &
29th June for Public****THEATRE****9 Parts of Desire****English Play (80 mins)****Godrej Dance Theatre****Saturday, 29th – 7.00 pm**

An internationally acclaimed, off-Broadway, one-woman hit that has received multiple awards around the world, *9 Parts of Desire* details the lives of nine Iraqi women: a painter, a radical communist, a doctor, an exile, wives, mothers and lovers. The play delves into the many conflicting aspects of what it means to be a woman in a country overshadowed by war.

Written by **Heather Raffo**Directed by **Lillete Dubey**Performed by **Ira Dubey**Produced by **The Primetime Theatre Co.****Age: 18+****Tickets:****Rs.675/- (Members)****Rs.750/- (Public)****(Inclusive of GST)****Box Office now open****THEATRE****Kahaaniya Showcase****English/ Hindi (100 mins)****Experimental Theatre****Saturday, 29th – 8.00 pm****An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation in
collaboration with Tape A Tale**

Stories make our otherwise mundane lives exciting and magical. Come join us for Tape A Tale's signature storytelling show, Kahaaniya Showcase, which features some of the finest storytellers who are masters of the craft. The evening will include a wide variety of storytelling forms on a single stage with a line-up you won't

**Jidnya Sujata, 29th, Experimental Theatre**

want to miss. Our storytellers will share their personal stories that will touch your heart. Since its inception, Tape A Tale has done over 200 such shows across India and the Kahaaniya Showcase is our biggest celebration of the craft of storytelling. Tape A Tale is India's largest storytelling platform with a following of 2.5 million.

Performers: **Amandeep Singh,
Jidnya Sujata, Sainee Raj & others****Suggested age: 16+****Tickets:****₹450/- (Members)****₹500/- (Public)****Box Office now open****THEATRE****Chinta Chhod
Chintamani****Hindi Play (120 mins)****Godrej Dance Theatre****Sunday, 30th – 5.00 pm & 8.00 pm**

This is the story of a family in which the father thinks his progeny are standing on the threshold of total ruination. They are wallowing in self-indulgence and their destiny is leading them to an inevitable fall. On the other hand, the children think this is part of the travails of a generation gap and the old man is unable to understand the situation. Is the family not getting along because of a generation gap or a case of miscommunication? And if

it is the former, then who will bridge the gap?

Written by **Vasant Kanitkar**Directed by **Om Katare**Cast: **Om Katare, Mukesh Yadav,
Sahil Ravi, Jaya Ojha, Sailee
Gaikwad, Ashok Sharma & others**Produced by **Yatri Theatre
Association****Tickets:****₹450/- (Members)****₹500/- (Public)****Box Office now open****THEATRE****Tape by Stephen Belber****English Play (70 mins)****Experimental Theatre****Sunday, 30th – 6.00 pm & 8.30 pm**

Three friends,
A motel room
A lot of beer
And an uncomfortable truth...

Amy, John and Vince meet after 10 years and are faced with an uncomfortable truth. Vince, who used to love Amy in high school, resents the fact that Amy left him at the end of high school and started dating his best friend John. But he was always confused about why the two never continued their relationship after school. Years later, on finding that they were all in one city, Vince decides to have a reunion with John and Amy to find out what had happened in high school between them. But John's version of the story is completely opposite to what Amy reveals in the end.

As difficult conversations unfold and layers of denial are peeled, we discover the thin line between sexual consent and persuasion.

Written by **Stephen Belber**Directed by **Aakash Prabhakar**Cast: **Aakash Prabhakar & Nishank
Verma**Produced by **Here and Now****Tickets:****₹675 & 450/- (Members)****₹750 & 500/- (Public)****(Plus GST)****Box Office now open**

What's Next

August & September 2023

(Programmes are subject to change. Please check the website and refer to our emails for updated information.)

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Talks on Western Classical Music

Little Theatre

Tuesday, 1st August – 6.00 pm
and

Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Friday, 4th August – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 (Titan)

"Western classical music is heavy."
"The music of Beethoven and Mozart is difficult to understand."

There are several misconceptions about this rich tradition of music. But from the chords of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata which inspired the hit Beatles' track 'Because' to countless films where snippets of classical compositions have heightened the joy, drama or pathos, we are surrounded by classical music. In a new series of talks, **Dr. Cavas Bilimoria** will take participants through musical concepts, the lives of composers and their famous works, sprinkled with examples of recorded music.

His first set of talks in August will feature Gustav Mahler's Symphony No.1, also called the *Titan*. It is a symphonic poem inspired by Jean Paul's novel of the same name, where the protagonist strives to lead a life with nobility, passion and heroism—ideals Mahler greatly identified with. He conducted more performances of this symphony than of any of his other works.

Happy listening!

Register on www.bookmyshow.com
Entry free

SCREENING

Hopper - An American Love Story, 2nd August,
Godrej Dance Theatre



Hopper – An American Love Story

Exhibition on Screen

(Approx - 90 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 2nd August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA - Seventh Art Productions
(UK) Presentation

Hopper's work is the most recognisable art in America—popular, praised and mysterious. Countless painters, photographers, filmmakers and musicians have been influenced by his art, but who was he and how did a struggling illustrator create such a bounty of notable work?

This new film takes a deep look into Hopper's art, life and relationships. From his early career as an illustrator to his wife giving up her own promising art career to be his manager amid his critical and commercial acclaim, this film explores the enigmatic personality behind the brush.

Combined with expert interviews, diaries and a startling visual reflection of American life, *Hopper* brings to life one of America's most influential artists.

Written & directed by **Phil Grabsky**
Music by **Simon Farmer**

Tickets:

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

Box Office: 9th July for Members &
12th July for Public

DANCE

August Dance Residency 2023

3rd to 5th August

An NCPA Presentation

As part of the residency this year, the NCPA invites **Bharata Kalanjali**, a premier dance institution for the Indian classical dance form of Bharatanatyam. Established in Chennai in 1968, Bharata Kalanjali recently celebrated its golden jubilee.

Smriti-Patham

by **Shanta & VP Dhananjayan and group**

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Thursday, 3rd August – 6.30 pm

Smriti-Patham is a journey through the artistic lives and extraordinary work of the famed Bharata Kalanjali founder duo—**Shanta** and **VP Dhananjayan**.

The Padma Bhushan awardees, better known as the Dhananjayans, are international celebrities with almost six decades in the field of Bharatanatyam. Their academy is a standing testimony to the art and culture of Bharatanatyam.

Having also trained in Kathakali, the couple has been instrumental in the propagation and preservation of India's art and culture with their exemplary performances all over the world.

Smriti-Patham traces their contribution to the world of art through a narrative presentation that will enthral audiences with excerpts from their iconic choreographies that cover five decades of their work. Their conceptual imagination of 'Bhaaratadesam' is brought to life through the brilliance of choreographic works through their own school of thought and creation and through collaborations with numerous national and international ballet companies that brought them adulation and recognition.

The presentation is a 90-minute experience in *ekahaarya lasyam* (a single costume) that ignites the challenge of the Aangika and Vaachika *abhinaya*. Narrated by Dhananjayan, the presentation will be a singular experience for dance and theatre enthusiasts, connoisseurs, students.

Tickets:

₹900, 684 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,000, 760 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

Workshop – 'Abhyaasaala'

by Shanta & VP Dhananjayan of Bharata Kalanjali
Sea View Room



VP and Shanta Dhananjayan, 3rd to 5th August

Friday, 4th & Saturday, 5th August – 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

This workshop will help students understand the various nuances of Bharatanatyam, including the confluence of music, science, art and discipline of the human body along with social values, culture and personal well-being. These aspects help shape the personalities of the students not just for the performance but for life, thus keeping it relevant in the ever-changing world of today.

Fees: Rs. 1,500/-

For registration, please call: 8879114939 / 8879313834

Email: sdasgupta@ncpamumbai.com / mdsouza@ncpamumbai.com

INDIAN MUSIC

NCPA Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Composers

Tata Theatre

Friday, 4th to Sunday, 6th August – 6.30 pm

Supported by HSBC India

Indian music centres around the well-structured melodic and rhythmic composition known as *bandish*. A *bandish* represents a central idea or base upon which the edifice of a performance is sculpted and realised.

The three-day festival will showcase some of the most treasured works of great composers of pre-independence as well as post-independence era in the history of India. Some eminent artistes will present select compositions spanning varied genres of Indian music.

4th August

Ajay Pohankar

Rashid Khan

Ajay Pohankar has had an illustrious



Ajay Pohankar, 4th August, Tata Theatre

career as a vocalist of the Kirana *gharana* for the past six decades. He will present select compositions of his mother and guru, Sushila Pohankar, and Aman Ali Khan, the legendary vocalist-composer of the Bhendi Bazaar *gharana*.

Rashid Khan, a virtuoso of the Rampur-Sahaswan lineage, will pay



Rashid Khan, 4th August, Tata Theatre

tribute to Amir Khan of the Indore *gharana* with a presentation of repertoire composed by the iconic vocalist-composer. The recital will also include compositions of stalwarts like Inayat Hussain Khan and Nissar Hussain Khan of the Rampur-Sahaswan *gharana*.

Tickets:

₹900, 720 & 540/- (Members)

₹1,000, 800 & 600/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

5th August

Ghalib se Gulzar tak

Concept, curation & presentation: Pankaj Udhas

Ghazal is a special form of poetry that lends itself to be set in a musical frame, further enhancing its emotional appeal.



Pankaj Udhas, 5th August, Tata Theatre

With a distinguished performing career spanning over four decades and more, **Pankaj Udhas** continues to be one of the most influential *ghazal* singers today. Conceptualised and curated by Udhas, the presentation will include a bouquet of *ghazals*, from classic poets like Mirza Ghalib, Meer Taqi Meer and Daagh Dehlvi to contemporary poets such as Zafar Gorakhpuri, Mumtaz Rashid, Nida Fazli, Bashir Badr, Wasim Barelvi, Zameer Kazmi, Qaisar Ul Jafri, Gulzar and such other noted *shayars*.

Tickets:

₹1,800, 1,440, 1,080, 720 & 540/- (Members)
 ₹2,000, 1,600, 1,200, 800 & 600/- (Public)
 (Inclusive of GST)

6th August

A Tribute to Lata Mangeshkar
By Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam

This is a tribute to one of the greatest Bollywood singers by another inspired singer.

The award-winning playback singer, **Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam**, will present a bouquet of unforgettable melodies immortalised by the legendary melody queen, Lata Mangeshkar. The presentation will include works of stalwarts from Anil Biswas, C. Ramchandra and Naushad to more modern film music composers like A. R. Rahman and Jatin-Lalit. The evening also features some Meera *bhajans*, Marathi *abhangas* and other regional songs popularised by Mangeshkar.



Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam, 6th August, Tata Theatre

Tickets:

₹1,800, 1,440, 1,080, 720 & 540/- (Members)
 ₹2,000, 1,600, 1,200, 800 & 600/- (Public)
 (Inclusive of GST)
Box Office for the Festival: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

SCREENING



Don Giovanni, 5th August, Godrej Dance Theatre

Don Giovanni

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Opera Screening (175 mins)
Sung in Italian with English Subtitles
Godrej Dance Theatre
Saturday, 5th August – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was the son of a Salzburg court musician who exhibited him as a musical prodigy throughout Europe. His achievements in opera, in terms of beauty, vocal challenge and dramatic insight, remain unsurpassed. Aided by his ingenious librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte, Mozart approached his operatic retelling of the myth of Don Juan from a point of view that is neither tragic nor entirely comic, but rather light-hearted, urbane and ironic. Mozart's score teems with the elegance and grace that marks his entire output, which is evident from the first measures of the ravishing overture. This combination of musical refinement and extraordinary dramatic expression makes *Don Giovanni* one of the longest enduring and universally beloved works in the standard repertoire.

Conductor: **Nathalie Stutzmann**
 Cast: **Federica Lombardi, Ana María Martínez, Ying Fang, Ben Bliss, Peter**

Mattei, Adam Plachetka, Alfred Walker & Alexander Tsymbalyuk

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)
 ₹500/- (Public)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

SCREENING



Fleabag, 9th August, Godrej Dance Theatre

Fleabag

Theatre Screening
(Approx.100 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Wednesday, 9th August – 6.00 pm

An NCPA-National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

Fleabag is a rip-roaring look at a woman living her sort of life. *Fleabag* may seem oversexed, emotionally unfiltered and self-obsessed, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. With family and friendships under strain and a guinea pig café struggling to keep afloat, *Fleabag* suddenly finds that she has nothing to lose.

Written & performed by **Phoebe Waller-Bridge**
 Directed by **Vicky Jones**

Age: 15+

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)
 ₹500/- (Public)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

MATT HUMPHREY (FLEABAG)

DANCE

AHUTI, 10th August, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre



AHUTI

by Nrityagram and Chitrasena
Dance Company
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Thursday, 10th August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in
collaboration with Sahachari
Foundation Events

A collaboration between Nrityagram Dance Ensemble (from Bengaluru) and the Chitrasena Dance Company (from Sri Lanka), *AHUTI* seamlessly melds the traditional beauty of Odissi and Sri Lanka's native styles with contemporary dance, set to exquisite rhythms from both countries, and accompanied by a live orchestra.

Supported by Deepak Fertilizers &
Petrochemicals Corp. Ltd.

Tickets:
₹675, 450 & 270/- (Members)
₹750, 500 & 300/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 9th July for Members &
12th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

The Wunderkinds

Tata Theatre
Saturday, 12th August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

After an enthralling and successful show in 2022, The Wunderkinds are back once again to entertain you with the most melodic, rhythmic and toe-tapping music. As part of the NCPA Performance Series, The Wunderkinds will showcase talented young musicians (aged 8 to 21), who will take the audience through a

journey of different musical styles and vocalese, encompassing funk, R&B, Latin, pop, rock and jazz with an innovative twist.

Tickets:
₹900, 720, 450 & 270/- (Members)
₹1,000, 800, 500 & 300/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office now open

THEATRE



The Parsi Prime Minister,
16th August, Tata Theatre

The Parsi Prime Minister

Inspired by and Adapted from the
works of Adi Marzban
Parsi Gujarati Comedy Play
(100 mins)
Tata Theatre
Wednesday, 16th August – 5.00 pm
& 7.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation for the Adi Marzban Endowment Fund (5.00 pm Show)

The Prime Minister is a Parsi and he is loud, pompous, pious and a total Baug *bawaji* out to teach everybody the Parsi way.

Directed by Meherzad Patel

Cast: Danesh Irani, Pheroza Modi,
Danesh Khambata, Azmin Mistry,
Darius Shroff, Siddharth Merchant
& others

A Silly Point Production

Tickets:
₹1,800, 1,350, 1,080, 900, 720, 630,
450 & 315/- (Members)
₹2,000, 1,500, 1,200, 1,000, 800,
700, 500 & 350/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Symphony Orchestra of India

Zubin Mehta, conductor
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Saturday, 19th & Monday, 21st
August – 7.00 pm

An NCPA & Mehli Mehta Music
Foundation Presentation

Internationally renowned, Bombay-
born conductor Zubin Mehta leads

Zubin Mehta, 19th & 21st August, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre



the Symphony Orchestra of India in two special concerts including the works of classical giants Schubert and Mozart. The programme also features Mahler's monumental First Symphony, performed here with 'Blumine', the rarely heard original second movement that Mahler later discarded.

Programme:

Mozart: Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 "Unfinished"

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 "Titan"

Tickets:

₹15,000, 12,000, 9,000, 6,000, & 3,000/-

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 25th July for Friends of the SOI, NCPA Members and MMMF Members & 28th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Inside the Music

Drum Workshop conducted by Gino Banks

Little Theatre

Sunday, 27th August – 4.00 pm to 6.30 pm

An NCPA and Algorhythm Presentation

In this workshop, **Gino Banks** talks about all the factors that go into learning and receiving a strong sense of drum rhythm.

The session will be highly interactive: Participants may ask questions about the challenges they may have encountered in their musical journey, as well as receive tips and techniques to help them develop and enhance their musical path.



Gino Banks, 27th August, Little Theatre

Workshop Fees: ₹1,500/- (Plus GST) Registration starts on www.bookmyshow.com on 15th June 2023. For details please email: Idesouza@ncpamumbai.com

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Talks on Western Classical Music

Little Theatre

Monday, 28th August – 6.00 pm and

Stuart-Liff Collection Library

Thursday, 31st August – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings

"Western classical music is heavy."

"The music of Beethoven and Mozart is difficult to understand."

There are several misconceptions about this rich tradition of music. But from the chords of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata which inspired the hit Beatles' track 'Because' to countless films where snippets of classical compositions have heightened the joy, drama or pathos, we are surrounded by classical music. In a new series of talks, **Dr. Cavas Bilimoria** will take participants through musical concepts, the lives of composers and their famous works, sprinkled with examples of recorded music.

In this talk, Dr. Bilimoria will take the listeners through Tchaikovsky's ode to his musical god, Mozart, in his composition *Serenade for Strings*. The symphony lends a unique interpretation to Mozart's 18th-century classicism in the form of Tchaikovsky's signature romantic style.

Happy listening!

Register on www.bookmyshow.com

Entry free

SCREENING

Die Zauberflöte

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Opera Screening (190 mins)

Sung in German with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 2nd September - 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Die Zauberflöte—a sublime fairy tale that moves freely between earthy comedy and noble mysticism—was written for a theatre located just outside Vienna with the clear intention of appealing to audiences from all walks of life. The story is told in a *singspiel* (song-play) format characterised by separate musical numbers connected by dialogue and stage activity, an excellent structure for navigating the diverse moods, ranging from solemn to light-hearted, of the story and score. The composer and the librettist were both Freemasons—the fraternal order whose membership is held together by shared moral and metaphysical ideals—and Masonic imagery is used throughout the work. The story, however, is as universal as any fairy tale.

Conductor: Nathalie Stutzmann

Cast: Erin Morley, Kathryn Lewek, Lawrence Brownlee, Thomas Oliemans, Alan Held, Stephen Milling & Brenton Ryan

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office: 9th August for Members & 12th August for Public

INDIAN MUSIC

Shyam Rang

Exploring the divine trinity:

Krishna, Radha and Meera

by Deepika Bhide Bhagwat & group

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 2nd September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Supported by Rukmani & Kishan Daiya Foundation

Indian music has a substantial repertoire that has poetic content based on the amorous exploits of Krishna, the cowherd of Brindavan. Several compositions are also dedicated to devotional and

philosophical thoughts associated with his divine love.

With *Janmashtami* just a few days away, we present a musical event celebrating the legend of Krishna, “the dark one”, through the voices of Radha and Meera, his two ardent devotees belonging to two different eras. Radha was his contemporary and her devotional outpourings therefore seem real, earnest and heartfelt. Whereas, for Meera, he dwelt in her imagination and forever remained a distant dream.

Deepika Bhide Bhagwat has had the privilege of training with several accomplished vocalists including Madhukar Joshi and Dhondutai Kulkarni. At present, she is under the tutelage of Dr. Ashwini Bhide Deshpande and Shubha Joshi for *khayal* and semi-classical music respectively. Endowed with a mellifluous voice ranging three octaves, her musical expressions seem aptly suited for several genres from *khayal* and *thumri* to *hori* and *bhajan*.

Interspersed with pertinent comments, this presentation will feature various musical forms like *thumri*, *dadra*, *kajri* and *bhajan*, exploring some common threads as well as distinguishing traits in the artistic/poetic creations that voice the outpourings of Radha and Meera.

Tickets:

₹180 & 135/- (Members)

₹200 & 150/- (Public)

Box Office: 26th July for Members & 29th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Converging Streams

Best of World Music

“The Heart of Drums”

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 3rd September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Ranjit Barot – drums & vocals

Ashwin Srinivasan – flute

Gulraj Singh – keys & vocals

Nastya Saraswati – violin

Emmanuel Simon – world percussion

The Heart of Drums, a meeting of the ancient with the now. Drums were the

first form of communication we had. It is a primal language, as old as the heartbeat. Every ritual, every festival and major social gathering featured drums and rhythmic expressions. Featuring Vedic chants to draw in the hearts as well as minds of the audience, this performance will pay tribute to the humble drum which will be accompanied by melodic instruments and lush soundscapes on the keyboard.

Tickets:

₹900/- (Members)

₹1,000/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Mumbai Piano Day

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 23rd September –

6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Mumbai Piano Day is back for its eighth edition, featuring some of the finest pianists and keyboard players in the country and from around the world. Curated by the NCPA and Louiz Banks, and covering all genres from jazz, funk to classical, this is an evening not to be missed.

Tickets:

₹900, 720, 450 & 270/- (Members)

₹1,000, 800, 500 & 300/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office: 26th July for Members & 29th July for Public

SOI symphony orchestra of india

Autumn 2023 Season

Patron: Citi India

Sunday, 10th September – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Zane Dalal, conductor

Marat Bisengaliev, violin

Rossini: *Semiramide* Overture

Khachaturian: Violin Concerto

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6

Friday, 15th September – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Richard Farnes, conductor

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Williams: Imperial March from

Star Wars

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2

Wagner: *Parsifal* Suite (arr. Gourlay)

Wednesday, 20th September –

7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Steven Isserlis, cello

Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 1

Stravinsky: *Petrushka* (1947)

Tickets:

₹3,600, 2,880, 2,520, 2,160, 1,800,

1,440, 900 & 450/- (Members)

₹4,000, 3,200, 2,800, 2,400, 2,000,

1,600, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Saturday, 23rd September – 7.00 pm

Sunday, 24th September – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Zakir Hussain, tabla

Niladri Kumar, sitar

Rakesh Chaurasia, bansuri

Strauss: *Rosenkavalier* Suite

Hussain: Triple Concerto

(world premiere)

Stravinsky: *Petrushka* (1947)

Tickets:

₹4,500, 3,600, 2,880, 2,520, 2,160,

1,890, 1,440, 900 & 450/- (Members)

₹5,000, 4,000, 3,200, 2,800, 2,400,

2,100, 1,600, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 11th July for Benefactors/

Friends of the SOI, 14th July

for NCPA Members & 17th July for

the Public

Become a Member

Dear Supporter of the Arts,

As part of our commitment to preserving and promoting India's rich and vibrant artistic heritage, as well as presenting new and innovative work by Indian and international artistes from a range of genres including Indian, International and Western Classical Music, Theatre & Films, Dance and Photography, we continue to give our audiences experiences that keep bringing them back to our theatres.

Be it taking the NCPA to parks across the city as part of our community outreach initiative, hosting our first youth-theatre festival, helping artistes grow with specialised training programmes, or investing in the country's cultural future by providing underprivileged children with access to the arts; it has been a fulfilling year. The return of audiences in record numbers—as is evident in our sold-out shows—further strengthens our commitment to Mumbai's cultural life. With a promise of excellence, the NCPA continues to produce, collaborate with and curate the best in the performing arts.

The latest addition to these achievements is the reopening of the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery after an extensive refurbishment. The state-of-the-art venue provides a holistic space for diverse exhibitions, workshops and other events.

In the Symphony Orchestra of India, the country has its first and only professional orchestra. The orchestra not only performs in India but has also undertaken several international tours in the UK, Switzerland, Oman, UAE and Russia. The NCPA and SOI have also presented large-scale productions including fully-staged operas. Apart from this, the SOI brings a professional level of teaching to gifted young musicians at the SOI Music Academy, with the aim of growing the number of Indian musicians in the SOI in the future.

There is much to look forward to with the upcoming re-launch of the food and beverage spaces. Members will have access to a variety of dining options, exclusive spaces and much more!

Join us on this exciting journey by becoming a Friend of the SOI or a Silver member of the NCPA today! Be a part of a thriving community of art aficionados and avail of a range of special discounts and perks detailed in the panels on the back. You'll also be first in line for tickets and be invited to exclusive Members-only events throughout the year. Don't miss out on the joy of live performing arts at the NCPA!

Please turn over for the Membership form.



Membership Application Form

Please fill in the form below and submit it along with recent passport-sized photograph/s to the Membership Department. You can also apply for membership/become a Friend of the SOI online. Please log on to www.ncpamumbai.com for details.

I wish to become a: (Please tick one of the boxes below)

Silver member of the NCPA

Friend of the SOI

Name: _____

Joint Member Name (in case of couple membership): _____

Address: _____

Pin Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Occupation: _____ Company: _____

Cheque No.: _____ Date: _____

Drawn On: _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

NCPA Silver Membership (inclusive of GST):

Annual Membership Rates ₹:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | 14,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple | 24,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (A couple & two children aged 6-21) | 35,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen (Individual) | 8,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen (Couple) | 12,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artiste (Across all genres. Belonging to the artistic community with an affiliation to an artistic group. Discretion for recognition as an artiste rests with the NCPA) | 8,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defence Personnel | 8,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (6-21 years) | 8,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Differently Abled | 1,500 |

Special Membership Packages

- | | |
|---|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership | On Request |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Membership | On Request |

Membership Benefits:

- ▶ Avail generous discounts on tickets for events and workshops
- ▶ Enjoy three-day priority booking facility
- ▶ Access privileged seating to more than 36 free events in a year across various genres.
- ▶ Receive a personal free copy of the NCPA's monthly arts magazine and programme guide, **ON Stage**, couriered to your doorstep
- ▶ Receive advance e-mail notification of events
- ▶ Get a personalised membership card and gain free access to the NCPA Books and Music library
- ▶ Enjoy exclusive discounts offered by our brand partners
- ▶ Exclusive invite to two members-only shows
- ▶ Exclusive invite to an annual members' night
- ▶ Avail 25% discount on two tickets during your birthday month
- ▶ Avail 5% discount on food and beverages served at the NCPA café & restaurant when launched

Friend of the SOI (Membership Rates inclusive of GST):

Annual Membership Rates ₹:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | 25,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Couple | 45,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family (A couple & two children aged 6-21) | 60,000 |

Friends of the SOI will also be deemed Silver members of the NCPA. In addition to the benefits mentioned on the left, they will enjoy:

- ▶ Acknowledgement in the SOI programme books and on the SOI website
- ▶ Two tickets to any two concerts of the SOI Chamber Orchestra in the year*
- ▶ Priority booking advantage (6 days before public & 3 days before NCPA Silver Members)
- ▶ Invitation to one private reception every season
- ▶ Access to the NCPA Library and the Stuart Liff library
- ▶ Access to the Members' Bar at SOI season concerts
- ▶ Exclusive offers with our brand partners

Cheques for both NCPA and SOI should be drawn in favour of 'National Centre for the Performing Arts' and submitted along with a stamp sized photograph to:

The Membership Department, Tata Theatre, NCPA, NCPA Marg, Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021.

Email: membership@ncpamumbai.com
Tel.: 66223719









GST of 18% (9% CGST & 9% SGST) is applicable on fees for all membership categories (for NCPA & SOI) from July 1, 2017.

*For more information on these and other membership packages, please refer to the upcoming issues of **ON Stage** and log on to www.ncpamumbai.com

Events at a glance

July 2023

Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sat	1st	5.00 pm & 8.00 pm	Priya Malik Live <i>Ishq hai, Ishq hai, Ishq hai</i> Hindi	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	1st	6.30 pm	<i>Vivekanand</i> A mono-act musical play by Shekhar Sen	TATA THEATRE
Sun	2nd	11.00 am	<i>Cinderella</i> by Jules Massenet Opera Screening Sung in English with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Wed	5th	4.00 pm		
Sun	2nd	5.00 pm	<i>Go with the Flow</i> English Play	E. THEATRE
Mon to Sun	3rd to 16th	12.00 noon to 8.00 pm	Mumbai Monsoon: Beyond 24X7 A Group Photo Exhibition Curated by Mukesh Parpiani	DRAMMA art gallery
Tue	4th	6.00 pm	Talks on Western Classical Music	Godrej dance theatre
Fri	7th	4.00 pm		Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Wed	5th	11.00 am	<i>Life of Pi</i> by Yann Martel Theatre Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Sun	9th	4.00 pm		
Wed	5th	6.30 pm	Short Film Corner Short Film Screenings	LITTLE THEATRE
Fri	7th	6.30 pm	<i>Ram Ratan Dhan -</i> Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar A classical dance homage to the immortal singer	TATA THEATRE
Fri	7th	6.30 pm	Music Mirror: Screening of NCPA's archival recording of Girija Devi Direction: Sumantra Ghoshal	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	8th	4.00 pm	<i>Champion</i> by Terence Blanchard Opera Screening Sung in English with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	8th	7.00 pm	<i>To Rajhans Ek</i> Marathi Play	E. THEATRE
Sun	9th	12.00 noon	<i>Peggy Pane - Oh What a Pain!</i> Children's Musical Comedy in English	Godrej dance theatre
Sun	9th	6.00 pm	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> English Play	E. THEATRE
Tue	11th	6.30 pm	<i>Rajnigandha</i> Hindi Film with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Wed	12th	6.30 pm	<i>Sunflowers</i> Exhibition on Screen	Godrej dance theatre

 THEATRE	 DANCE
 INDIAN MUSIC	 MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATIONS
 INTERNATIONAL MUSIC	 FILMS / SCREENINGS
 WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC	 PHOTOGRAPHY & EXHIBITION



Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Thu	13th	5.30 pm	The Jazz Masters Listening Sessions conducted by Sunil Sampat The Best Jazz Standards	
Fri	14th	6.30 pm	Movies Under the Stars <i>Red River</i> (1948) Film Screening	
Sun	16th	5.00 pm	'OGANGAI' - A Tribute to the Life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer A medical missionary who revered life Written by Dr. Farokh E. Udwadia A Staged Reading	TATA THEATRE
Tue	18th	6.00 pm	Talks on Western Classical Music	Godrej dance theatre
Fri	21st	4.00 pm		Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Wed	19th	6.30 pm	<i>Khud Mein Kabir - Kabir Mein Hum</i> A dance drama by Ranjana Gauhar and <i>Samanvay</i> Kathak by Pooja Pant Dance Company	
Thu	20th	4.30 pm	Book Reading Love: Poems from the Film <i>Il Postino</i> Poems by Pablo Neruda Reading Designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar	Godrej dance theatre
Thu	20th	6.30 pm	Reality Check Documentary Film Screening	
Sat	22nd	11.00 am	NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop Management of physical health from the perspective of a performer by Dr. Prakkash R. Sharoff A free online workshop on Zoom	Online
Sat	22nd	6.30 pm	NCPA Legends with Shweta Shetty	TATA THEATRE
Sat	22nd	6.30 pm	Monsoon Melodies by Shahid Parvez (sitar)	
Fri	28th	7.00 pm	SOI Chamber Orchestra Maria Badstue, conductor Christina Bjørkøe, piano	TATA THEATRE
Sat	29th	7.00 pm	<i>Musical Sandstorm</i> by Ila Arun & folk artistes	TATA THEATRE
Sat	29th	7.00 pm	<i>9 Parts of Desire</i> English Play	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	29th	8.00 pm	<i>Kahaaniya Showcase</i> English/Hindi	
Sun	30th	5.00 pm & 8.00 pm	<i>Chinta Chhod Chintamani</i> Hindi Play	Godrej dance theatre
Sun	30th	6.00 pm & 8.30 pm	<i>Tape by Stephen Belber</i> English Play	

 NCPA

in association with

**Kilachand Foundation &
Ashwin C. Shroff**



Monsoon Melodies by

SHAHID PARVEZ *sitar*

Saturday, 22 July 2023 | 6:30 pm

Experimental Theatre, NCPA

Tickets available on [bookmyshow](https://bookmyshow.com)

BOX OFFICE: 66223724/54



WHAT MAKES A ROLEX A ROLEX?

It's not the wheels and cogs. It's not the steel we shape nor the gold we forge. It's not the sum of every single part that we design, craft, polish and assemble with countless skills and constant care. It's the time it takes. The numerous days and months that are

necessary until we can print this single word on each individual dial leaving our workshops: *"Superlative."* It's the mark of our autonomy, responsibility and integrity. This is all we make, but we make it all. So that, in time, you can make it your own.

#Perpetual

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