

ON Stage[®]

VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 12

NCPA BANDISH

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS
OF INDEPENDENCE

Buster Keaton

in Movies Under The Stars

A tribute to Dr. Albert Schweitzer

by Dr. Farokh E. Udwadia

Die Fledermaus at the NCPA

by The Hungarian
State Opera



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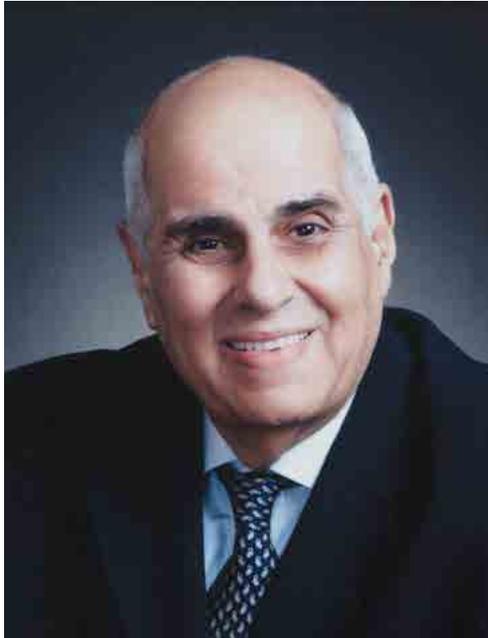


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Chairman's Note



Becoming a member of the NCPA, or any arts organisation, says something about what one deems important in life. Frequenting a centre of culture, not only for performances but to visit its libraries and soak in the atmosphere abuzz with stimulating conversations is uplifting for the mind and soul.

At the NCPA, we are trying to enhance this experience in various ways through the use of our open spaces, etc. A new offering for our members is the Movies Under the Stars initiative where classics will be screened every month, with discussions that bring together quality cinema-loving audiences.

The SOI Chamber Orchestra's tours to Bengaluru and Chennai, our first since the pandemic, are a firm step in the direction of how we envision the orchestra—the country's only national professional classical orchestra.

NCPA *Bandish*, showcasing works of composers who have seen both, pre- and post-independent India, will usher in our grand celebration of 75 years of India's independence, with events lined up all through August.

Perhaps the time is also ripe for some thought to be given to the importance we accord to culture, for it is not only a reflection of who we are as a nation, but defines who we are as a people. Culture is also important to attract the finest type of businesses and turn a place into a destination of choice for the quality of life it offers to its visitors and residents.

Yet, support for the arts is woefully inadequate. In our 76th year as a free country, the status quo ought to change.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. N. Suntook". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Khushroo N. Suntook

NCPA Chairman

Khushroo N. Suntook

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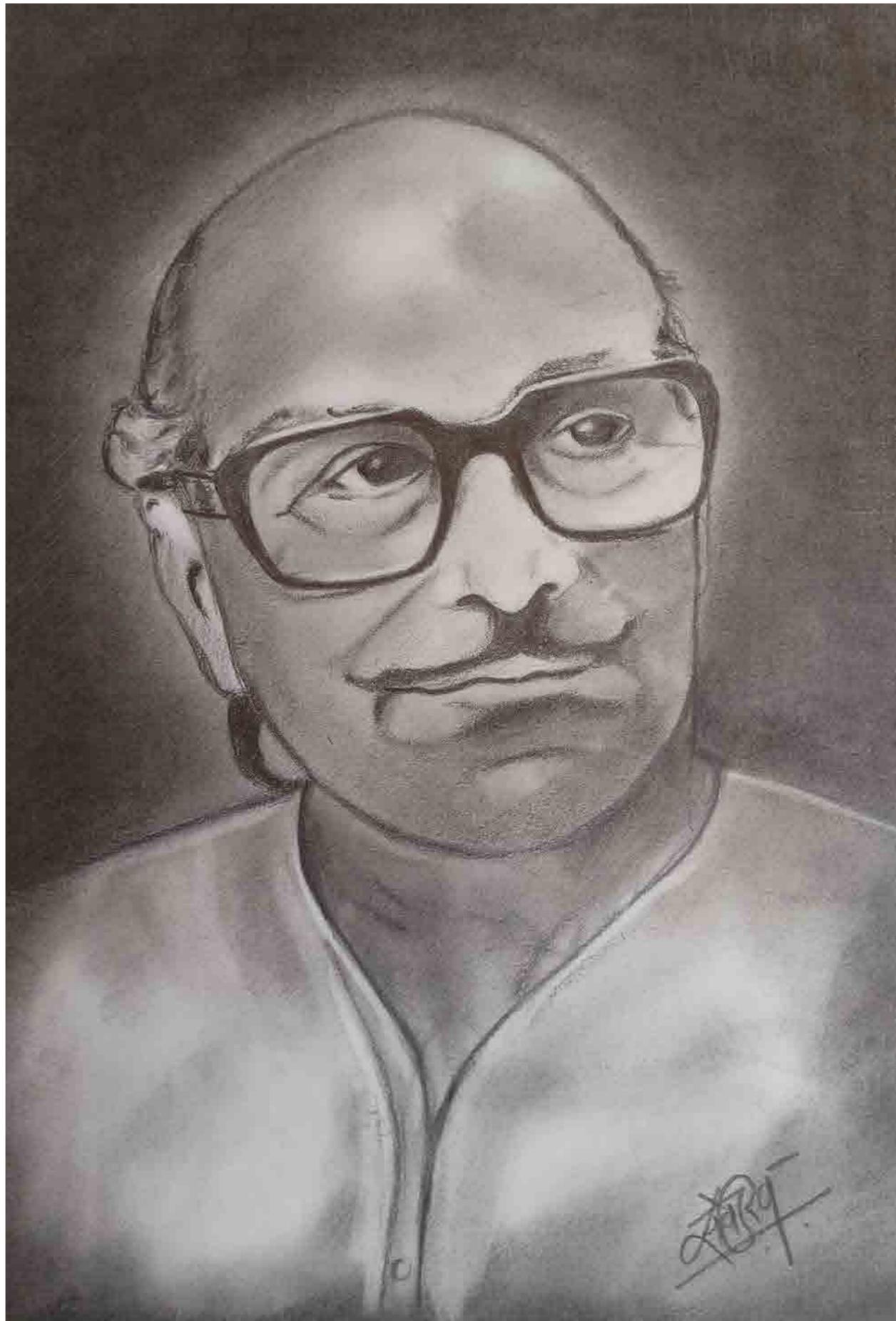


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PORTRAIT BY SARVESH VETRAWAN GURAY

The Composer's Composer

Salil Chowdhury's music was always evolving with the times, much like the man himself. Yet, the timelessness of his tunes was a reflection of his artistic integrity. **Vidhi Salla** speaks to his daughter Antara Chowdhury and contemporary composer and long-time devotee Shantanu Moitra to explore the many facets of Chowdhury's personality.

Any mention of Salil Chowdhury inevitably makes use of one word to describe his multifaceted personality: genius. While he was more popularly known as the music director for Hindi, Bengali and Malayalam films, he was also a celebrated poet, scriptwriter, director, social activist as well as a composer for some of the most notable background scores in films. His exposure to Western classical music as a child and his activism as a youth informed all of his creative work. 'Salilda', as he was affectionately known in the Indian film industry, believed that the poet or artiste does not exist detached from society, but in fact is bound to it by a social duty. Music remained his chosen form of expression but one that was influenced, nurtured and honed by his curious mind which was ever-evolving, ever-embracing new ideas.

On 17th July, as part of the three-day *Bandish* festival, the NCPA will host a tribute to Chowdhury, curated by his long-time fan, contemporary composer Shantanu Moitra. Chowdhury's unforgettable melodies will be performed by musicians from the Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI) and a 20-member choir. Prominent artistes from the Indian music industry such as Shaan, Papon and Sadhana Sargam will sing at the concert. Chowdhury's daughter, Antara Chowdhury, will sing some of her father's tunes and share anecdotes about him. In a joint interview, Antara and Moitra spoke about the tribute concert they have planned and shared facets of the master's personality in the capacity of a daughter and a *shishya* respectively.

The movement behind the man

Born in Assam in 1923, Chowdhury was greatly influenced by his father, Gyanendra Chowdhury, who was a doctor working in the tea gardens of Assam. His father organised and staged plays for workers in

the region and spoke openly against the atrocities of British colonisers. As a young man, Chowdhury witnessed the Bengal famine of 1943 and World War II, and participated in the peasant movement of 1945. These events contributed to his artistic mission. He decided that he would make art that would protest against social and political injustice.

While in college, Chowdhury joined the Communist Party of India as well as the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). To him, it was inexcusable to compose songs about love and beauty at a time when India was experiencing the oppression of a foreign rule and, among other things, famine. He composed songs for the masses and travelled all over the country with IPTA performing songs of protest and revolution. According to Moitra, "There are two kinds of revolutionaries: one who works with swords and flames and one who uses art." Elaborating on how his revolutionary way of life influenced the family, Antara recalls, "Baba always said: You have come to this planet for a reason. You have to find out what your reason is."

Music for the soul

Among the earliest influences of music in Chowdhury's life were the Western classical records owned by his father. As a young child, he was familiar with symphonies of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. Antara recalls an incident that demonstrates his gift of music: "In Calcutta, his cousin had an orchestra called Milan Parishad. That's where he saw an orchestra for the first time. They had a piano and Baba, as a six-year-old, started playing it. From then on, he started learning and reading [music] on his own." In fact, he had the ability to pick up any instrument and play it to understand its sound to be able to use it in his compositions more effectively. Chowdhury was self-

Salil Chowdhury's composition style, heavy on the use of harmonies and other international music influences, was equally informed by his background as a writer



Salil Chowdhury with his daughter Antara Chowdhury

PHOTO COURTESY: ANTARA CHOWDHURY

taught in Western and Indian classical music and could write notations of both forms effortlessly. It was a skill that he painstakingly honed by constantly educating himself. “We have books at home of harmonies, counterparts, orchestration, Indian ragas, and books on culture and the history of mankind. He studied all kinds of stuff,” says Antara.

Chowdhury’s foray into Hindi cinema happened through a story he wrote called *Rickshawalla*. His friend Hrishikesh Mukherjee recommended the work to director Bimal Roy, who, inspired by it, would eventually make the Indian neo-realistic classic *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953). Chowdhury also composed the music for the film which initiated his journey as a composer in Indian cinema. Fans of Salilda’s music will remember the evergreen songs from films like *Madhumati* (1958), *Jagte Raho* (1956), *Parakh* (1960; for which he also wrote the script), *Half Ticket* (1962), *Anand* (1971) and *Rajnigandha* (1974).

A gifted storyteller

His composition style, heavy on the use of harmonies and other international music influences, was equally informed by his background as a writer. “He always insisted on reading the script of the film before composing for it,” says Antara. Lata Mangeshkar once said about him, “Over the course of my life, I have

worked with over a hundred music directors. Of these, perhaps only ten understood both music and the cinema. And of these ten, Salil was the foremost.” On his distinct style, Moitra says, “He let his compositions flow and didn’t worry whether people will understand them or not. He was fearless. The use of chorus and choir in songs is a Western thing. When you want to convey something deep, you use gospel. For example, Salilda’s song, ‘Jaago Mohan Pyaare’ [from *Jagte Raho*] is about a man searching for his soul but he has used a choir for silence, honesty, rootedness.” Antara also affirms the use of Western elements in his compositions. Take the landmark Bengali song ‘Surero Ei Jhar Jhar Jharna’, originally sung by her mother Sabita Chowdhury in which, Antara says, a three-part harmony was used for the first time in modern Bengali music. He was called a composer’s composer by music director Naushad. Moitra, who agrees, explains, “Salilda’s level of composition was so high that it’s almost like how Harvard University grads are best equipped to understand a management module. Songs which Salilda created were best understood by other creators.”

Equally noteworthy is Chowdhury’s contribution to the background score of Indian films, especially at a time when music was used mainly to accompany

“When I first listened to the songs of *Madhumati*, I knew something extraordinary was happening in terms of chord, movement, obligato, song structure”

chase sequences or climax scenes. “You need a totally different skill set to compose a background score,” explains Moitra. “First and foremost, you have to be a damn good storyteller. Salilda was essentially a storyteller.” Often his background tunes became so memorable that filmmakers insisted on creating full-length songs from those short pieces. Antara recalls in an anecdote: “The iconic song ‘Aaja Re Pardesi’ from *Madhumati* was actually first used as the theme music in *Jagte Raho* that appears in the film each time the character of Raj Kapoor is thirsty and searching for water. Lyricist Shailendra insisted on using this tune to create a song.” In a similar instance, the background piece during the scene in *Anand* when Rajesh Khanna dies while listening to the tape, was used to create the song, ‘Koi Hota Jisko Apna’ on the insistence of Gulzar for his film *Mere Apne* (1971).

A nurtured dream

The concept of the tribute show is not a recent idea but the final germination of a dream that Moitra has nurtured for years. Ever since his first encounter with Chowdhury’s music as a sixth grader watching *Madhumati*, Moitra has been enraptured by the maestro’s music and has imbibed knowledge by listening to his songs. “I have learned from far, like Eklavya. I’ve never met him. When I first listened to [the songs of] *Madhumati*, they blew my mind. I knew something extraordinary was happening in terms of chord, movement, obligato, song structure. I could also sense that this could easily be music from any other part of the world; this was world music.”

Has organising the tribute concert been a difficult task, especially since he considers Chowdhury his guru? “In a way my job is easy because the work is already done. What’s important for me is to keep in mind that every composition has its own grammar. I just have to understand and highlight the central idea in the song and then I’m home. That evening is about coming together and trying to understand who this man was. I’m also excited because every



Shantanu Moitra



Antara Chowdhury

singer that I’ve asked [to perform at this concert] finds it very challenging that they’ll be singing a Salil Chowdhury composition... There are hardly any challenges left and if a concert like this makes them stop and say, ‘Oh, I need to rehearse this properly’, that’s a great step forward.”

Antara, who will be performing a few of her father’s songs, says her purpose in life is to take her father’s music to the next generation. In addition to teaching his songs to young kids, she has also begun archiving his writings and songs in collaboration with the University of Chicago.

Excited about performing Chowdhury’s music at the NCPA, Moitra feels that the best way to keep the composer’s legacy alive would be if a young child who follows him Googles the maestro’s works and upon hearing a song like ‘Dil Tadap Tadap Ke’ will be moved in the same way that Moitra was moved decades ago. In the words of Salil Chowdhury, “Music will always be dismantling and recreating itself, and assuming new forms in reaction to the times. To fail to do so would be to become fossilised. But in my push to go forward I must never forget that my heritage is also my inspiration.” ■

A Tribute to Salil Chowdhury will be presented on 17th July as part of NCPA Bandish at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre.

Our Supporter

“With its origins in India dating back to 1853, HSBC has been witness to both, pre and post-Independence eras in the history of the country. It has remained deeply connected with the cultural heritage of India and the association with the NCPA has only furthered its commitment to the arts. The performing arts, after all, do not exist in a vacuum and are necessarily a part of the larger cultural milieu. It is, therefore, a matter of pride for us to be associated with *Bandish*, the festival which celebrates the best of Indian music in varied genres by legendary composers, presented by eminent artistes. Through its support to various initiatives at the NCPA, including the training of disciples by masters of different *gharanas* (musical styles), masterclasses and skill development workshops to help enhance the employability of talented individuals who pursue music, HSBC aims to contribute holistically to the NCPA’s cause of promoting, preserving and propagating Indian Music. We truly value our partnership with the NCPA and greatly appreciate its contribution to the promotion of India’s rich and vibrant artistic heritage.”

Hitendra Dave, CEO, HSBC India

Celluloid Nights

Starting this month, *Movies Under the Stars*, a collaboration between the NCPA and the Film Heritage Foundation, will bring some of the greatest movies of all time to the big screen for members of the NCPA. We talk to Shivendra Singh Dungarpur, founder of the Film Heritage Foundation, about the magic and madness of the medium.

By Vipasha Aloukik Pai

Shivendra Singh Dungarpur knows great cinema. “I don’t think I ever went to sleep without watching a film,” he says in an interview about his upcoming collaboration with the NCPA. This is not a confessional but a matter-of-fact statement made by a man who has spent much of his life watching, making and restoring films. The director, archivist, winner of multiple National Film Awards and founder of the Film Heritage Foundation has just returned from Cannes, where his foundation’s restoration of Malayalam director Aravindan’s 1978 movie *Thamp* was selected for a world premiere at the prestigious Cannes Classic section of this year’s edition of the film festival.

Buster Keaton in
The Cameraman

An exclusive series for members of the NCPA, Movies Under the Stars, which entails a monthly screening, is an initiative to bring back the magic of cinema by watching classic movies the way they were meant to be watched—as part of an audience and on the big screen. At its core, it is a celebration of some of the greatest movies ever made. “It is going to be a casual evening where we watch a film together, then sit back and discuss it. We have chosen classics like *The Cameraman*, *Singin’ in the Rain* and *Some Like It Hot* because the idea is to watch something that has had a lasting impression on all of us, a cinematic experience of which all of us have some memories,” he says. For now, the screenings will be presented at the Little Theatre but after the rains, the plan is to take it forward under the stars and into the lawns of the NCPA.

The right venue

“Right through my struggling days,” says Dungarpur, “when I began my career, the NCPA used to have regular screenings. Here, we would get to watch world cinema. It was one of the most important institutions where a whole generation of people came and watched films. You experienced a film together and afterwards you talked about it as you went across to Marine Drive and then walked on to Churchgate.” The NCPA has been hoping to recreate this experience for its members by screening classics in an informal, relaxed atmosphere.

The selection of films by Dungarpur and Teesha Cherian (Director of the Film Heritage Foundation and Dungarpur’s wife) is comprehensive and attempts to cover several significant genres. “The first one—Buster Keaton’s *The Cameraman*—is really the beginning of cinema, which is comedy. Then we have *Double Indemnity*, which is one of the great works of the film noir movement of the 1940s. We have *Notorious*, a Hitchcockian classic filled with romance and suspense,” he says. Also on the roster is the eternally romantic *Casablanca*, that unforgettable musical, *Singin’ in the Rain* and the brilliant Billy Wilder comedy, *Some Like It Hot*. With folks who have a history of experiencing cinema at the NCPA, the prospect of this is evocative. Dungarpur says, “I have people calling me up and saying: I saw *Singin’ in the Rain* at the NCPA so many years ago! It is so lovely to see it back again, especially with the monsoon coming.”



Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca*

For now, the screenings will be presented at the Little Theatre but after the rains, the plan is to take it forward under the stars and into the lawns of the NCPA

Each screening will begin with a short introduction to the film. “It’s very important to set the context of when these films were made. For example, with *The Cameraman*, there will be a short talk on the history of comedy or with *Notorious*, since it was shot in various ways, we intend to discuss that. And then, of course, after the film, it’s great to just have a conversation with some tea, coffee or wine,” says Dungarpur.

A true genius

While Charles Chaplin remains one of the most important figures in the history of film, it is Buster Keaton who is now considered by many to be the true genius. “Keaton doesn’t emote as much as Chaplin, but he is a *phenomenal* filmmaker, a

MARKA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Gene Kelly in *Singin’ in the Rain*



A scene from *Some Like It Hot*

phenomenal technician and a *phenomenal* acrobat. There is nobody like him,” says Dungarpur.

Part of the appeal, and the reason why he was called The Great Stone Face, is his seemingly unchangeable deadpan expression. Dungarpur agrees. “As a kid, when I saw him on my grandfather’s projector, I was fascinated. He is nearly run over by a train or he is running behind cars or being chased by boulders and he would just have that one expression.” Hilarious, yes, but when one considers that he not only performed his own stunts but also thought of and planned all those impossible sight gags, he becomes a cutting-

edge engineer, a great mathematician, a sharp-eyed cinematographer and, above all, a server of visual epiphanies. And armed with a face that Orson Welles found beautiful and Dungarpur calls stunning, Keaton is indeed phenomenal in every sense of the word. American film critic Richard Corliss summed it up perfectly when he wrote, ‘The Keaton deadpan is stoic, heroic and as thoroughly modernist as a Beckett play or a Bauhaus facade.’

Keaton’s career trajectory, from his vaudeville days and early flash-in-the-pan success in silent films to sudden personal and professional decline is beyond the scope of these pages. Though it needs to be said that, as many might believe, the advent of the talkies was not the problem—Keaton was in possession of a deep, natural baritone. The

studio he entered into a contract with, MGM, was the problem. *The Cameraman*, his first project with the studio, was also his last great film. In addition to that, Dungarpur sees in it the value of a historical document. “It is really the essence of any of the films made in that period because it is about where he wants to place the camera and how he wants to shoot. It gives an insight into not just that film but into that whole era, of how they shot their films and what went behind it. That’s why we want to give people an overview of that time and that period,” he says.

RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SINGIN’ IN THE RAIN); JUS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SOME LIKE IT HOT)

When one considers that Buster Keaton is not only the performer but the creator of those impossible sight gags, he becomes a cutting-edge engineer, a great mathematician, a sharp-eyed cinematographer and, above all, a server of visual epiphanies

The biggest influence

To steer the conversation back to Dungarpur's grandfather's projector, I ask him about the formative years of his love for films. "I had very indulgent grandparents," he says. "My grandfather had his own projector and projectionist. Every day, the projector would be pulled out and I would run into this room which was called *thanda* room because this was in Bihar and that was the only airconditioned room. These films were all kept in a glass cupboard and I would open the cans of film, smell them (they smelled like vinegar) and take one to the projectionist."

To the young boy, to see the projectionist thread a film upside down, have it come straight up and be projected felt like magic. "I had a great mix between my grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather watched Chaplin, Keaton, Wilder, John Ford, Howard Hawks, among others. He used to have his drink in the evening and watch a film. My grandmother would go to cinema halls to watch English films, and I would go with her. They once drove from their place all the way to Lucknow in an open Lancia to watch *Gone with the Wind*. They were crazy about films," he says. What is that idiom about the apple and the tree? Years later, before the advent of DVDs, Dungarpur would often travel across the country to catch a retrospective where he would watch movies back-to-back.

There is a certain magic to watching movies on the big screen. They become larger than life, literally and metaphorically. A lifetime spent watching movies and Dungarpur still feels the same way. "When I go to the cinema hall, I become a child. I watch [the movie] in exactly the same way I watched when I was a child. The gaze, that look, the screen, the projectionist...it's almost like a *Cinema Paradiso* moment for me," he says. The Oscar-winning Italian film, about a friendship between a young boy

Shivendra Singh Dungarpur, pictured here at the Cannes Film Festival



and a projectionist in a small Sicilian town, is also part of the line-up. "I met Giuseppe Tornatore, the director, in Bologna and I had the opportunity to talk to him. The relationship between the little kid and the projectionist is the story of all of us, the story of everyone who went through that era when we had to buy tickets in black and watch the first show on the first day. This is the most important film for anyone who loves cinema."

Dungarpur's mentor, director and self-confessed film buff Martin Scorsese, in an ode to Fellini published last year in *Harper's Magazine*, called curation "an act of generosity—you're sharing what you love and what has inspired you." With Dungarpur, we are, without a doubt, in safe hands. A passion project befitting hardcore cinephiles and true-blue neophytes, if you haven't experienced these films, then watching painstakingly restored versions on a big screen is an obvious choice. If you have known and loved these films, then this is an opportunity to revisit the magic. After all, as Dungarpur says, "Cinema, when it was created, was for sharing experiences together. To be in a community, to be with people, to share what you watch and to watch something larger than life." ■

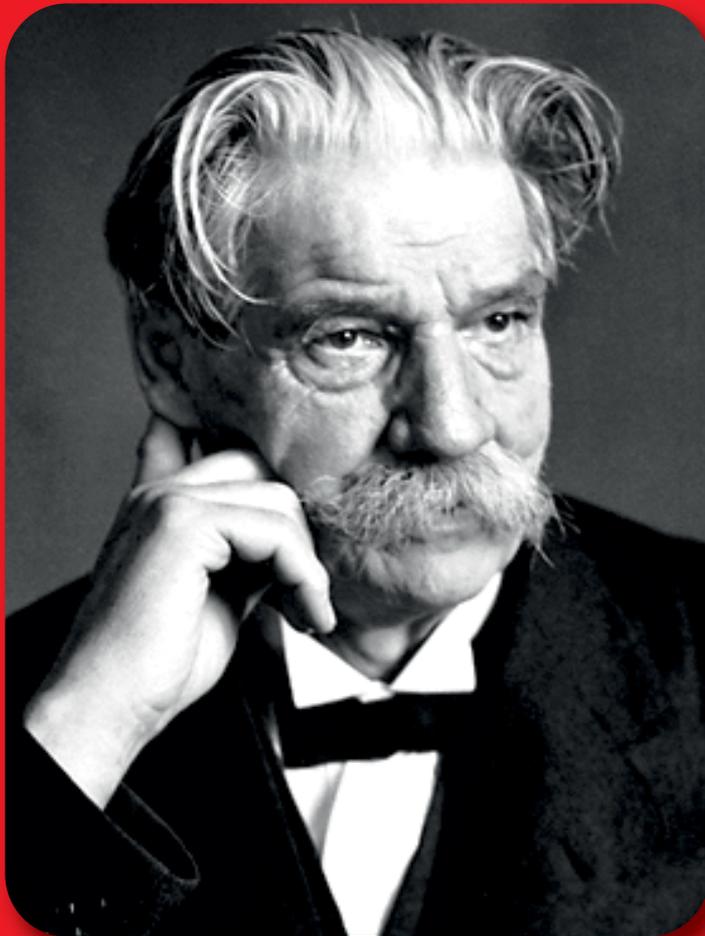
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The Cameraman will be presented as part of Movies Under the Stars on 22nd July at the Little Theatre.

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WRITTEN BY DR. FAROKH E. UDWADIA



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From Hungary, With Love

Szilveszter Ókovács, General Director, Hungarian State Opera, writes about the collaboration between Hungary's national opera company and the Symphony Orchestra of India for the SOI Autumn 2022 Season.

"We are delighted that many years of efforts have finally borne fruit and we are pleased to reproduce the direct communication received from Mr. Szilveszter Ókovács, a person with a deep musical knowledge and leadership ability."

– Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA

India is a world power of the future, but by the time this sentence ends, it might be one in the present. It is a great honour for the Hungarian State Opera to be invited to one of the most populous and rapidly developing countries by the leading cultural institute of such a great city, that has been eager to host our ensembles and productions for years even in the shadow of the pandemic. No wonder that our guest performances in Mumbai are being looked forward to with great expectations on our side as well: we are to present pieces close to our heart for the first time in your metropolis so rich in tradition and responsive to European culture, too.

The delay was inevitable for a number of reasons. Decades of tours in Japan and our guest performances in New York in 2018 made us aware of the challenges posed by the logistics, the careful planning required from both the guests and the hosts concerning the transport of the costumes and sets by sea that can take months. Not to mention the several hundred people involved—soloists, chorus, orchestra, dancers, extras and technical crew—and the weeks of preparation that involve them. Moreover, there was the heightened health risk of travelling that not only rendered our tours



but our normal operation impossible. Nevertheless, the Hungarian State Opera was not completely inoperative during the lockdown. Aria recitals and opera highlights with piano accompaniment as well as chamber performances by our musicians, chorus members and ballet dancers were streamed free every week online. When the possibility arose, full-scale performances were broadcast from our different venues. However, the lack of a live audience and regular appearances on stage took its toll on all of us.

Die Fledermaus has constantly been part of the Hungarian State Opera repertoire for 125 years. Its plot determines it to be performed around New Year's Eve in Hungary making it an audience favourite of the season. This masterpiece by Johann

Strauss II, the Viennese waltz king, evokes a sense of nostalgia for 19th-century Austro-Hungary and its music features motifs of the Hungarian czardas. It was also inspired by other nations of the former Central European empire. The well-composed operetta might seem lightsome at first sight, but closely inspected, it turns out to be a clever, many-sided piece. It emanates a zest for life on the one hand, while it exposes the falsity of the bourgeoisie and married life of the age on the other. Everyone cheats on everyone, they all pretend to be someone they are not, but the work also shows examples of defencelessness and humiliation. The music of Strauss puts an ironic touch to these all for the listeners not to be too downhearted by the moral of the story.

The performances in Mumbai also feature a true curiosity: the artistes of the Hungarian State Opera present our national opera, *Bánk Bán – The Viceroy Bánk*, in a concert version. The composer Ferenc Erkel was the first general music director of our opera house, he created Hungarian opera in the 19th century, and also composed *Hymnus*, our national anthem. Just as in the case of his other operas, he drew inspiration from Hungarian history to reflect on his own time. His piece, interwoven with patriotic emotions, is a symbol of the want of independence by the Hungarians living under the Habsburg rule. The action takes place in the early 13th century. Bánk is a Hungarian nobleman, bound by his oath to his king who is on a crusade, to bear the immoral and infestant deeds of the German queen and her family,

until his own wife falls prey to them. The music of the opera is reminiscent of Verdi and Meyerbeer and features the Hungarian “verbunk” style accompanied by such particular instruments as the cymbalo and the viola d’amore.

The Hungarian State Opera presents its productions in a very special set-up, in a cooperation featuring the Symphony Orchestra of India led by a Hungarian conductor and instrumental leaders. The Budapest OPERA Orchestra has had such collaborations previously, in Qatar, Jordan and South Korea, which

proved very successful. This way it is not only the audience but the artistes too who get first-hand experience of the style and culture of another continent, which all helps a better understanding of the other and results in more inspired, more spirited productions.

It is for the first time that the members of the Hungarian State Opera are visiting India, a famed country. We are grateful for the invitation and the interest in the art and artistes of our thousand-year-old nation. ■

Die Fledermaus and the Vienna of Johann Strauss

Ahead of the Hungarian State Opera’s production of the beloved operetta as part of the SOI Autumn 2022 Season, a look at the enduring appeal of the work and its historical context.

The operetta is a form of theatre and light opera. It has spoken dialogue, songs and dances, and is lighter than opera in terms of its music, orchestral size. It is usually of an amusing character. Flowing champagne, ceaseless waltzing, glittering ball gowns, romancing and dancing, gaiety and light-heartedness, are all part of what constitutes the idea of an operetta.

The operetta was born in France during the time of Jacques Offenbach in the 1850s. Spreading across to the golden age of Franz von Suppé and Johann Strauss II to the silver era, so to speak, of Franz Lehár and Emmerich Kálmán, further through the Broadway operettas of the 1920s up to the musicals of the 40s and 50s, operettas have kept audiences enthralled for more than a century, principally by means of their hummable melodies. By the end of the 19th century, operettas were among the most popular of theatrical attractions with companies and theatres devoted to their presentation all over Europe and America.

Suppé and Strauss were influenced by Offenbach. Suppé’s early short works imitated Offenbach’s and Strauss was personally coaxed by Offenbach to compose for the stage.

No one wrote waltzes—and waltz-operettas—like Strauss. In 1874, Strauss gave Vienna and the world the greatest of all Viennese operettas, *Die Fledermaus*, by which other Viennese operettas are measured today.

The libretto in German by Karl Haffner and Richard Genée is based on the French farce *Le Réveillon* by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy. The world premiere was at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna on 5th April, 1874.

Strauss’s inspiration was great—when he received the libretto, he cut himself off from the world and completed the operetta in 42 nights. This work, undoubtedly the most tuneful ever written, had little success when it first appeared. It ran for a mere 16 performances and was then withdrawn. The reason had nothing to do with the real merit of the work, but solely that in his operetta, Strauss had enshrined the frivolity of the 1860s. In Berlin, *Die Fledermaus* was received more cordially in June 1874 and celebrations for its 200th performance in 1876 were held when the Vienna production reached only half that number.

One thing that set *Die Fledermaus* apart from many other Viennese and French operettas of the day was that it was in modern dress, which presumably made audiences expecting costumed frivolity a bit discomfited. The party in Act II, we doubt, purposely compensated for this omission.

Music is a great humaniser and with this music, he gave life to characters, transforming them into warm, glorious creatures. If Strauss was on the whole unsuccessful with his dramatic music, he compensated for it by breathing into *Die Fledermaus* sufficient life to last an eternity. ■

- Jimmy Bilimoria

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

Friday, 16th September – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Benjamin Grosvenor, piano

Humperdinck: Overture to *Hansel & Gretel*

Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 1

Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet* (excerpts)

Wednesday, 21st September – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Ben Goldscheider, horn

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*

Mozart: Horn Concerto No. 3

Strauss: Horn Concerto No. 1

Bernstein: Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

Sunday, 25th September – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Sayaka Shoji, violin

Henri Demarquette, cello

Jean-Frédéric Neuberger, piano/conductor

Mendelssohn: *The Hebrides*

Brahms: Double Concerto

Beethoven: Triple Concerto

Friday, 30th September – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Richard Farnes, conductor

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 3

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7

RECITALS

Sunday, 18th September – 5.00 pm

Experimental Theatre

Benjamin Grosvenor, piano

Bach/Busoni: Chaconne

Liszt: Sonata in B minor

Ravel: *Le tombeau de Couperin*

Ravel: *La valse*

Friday, 23rd September – 7.00 pm

Experimental Theatre

Ben Goldscheider, horn

Richard Uttley, piano

Beethoven: Horn Sonata in F major, Op. 17

Schubert: Klavierstücke No. 1 in E-flat minor, D. 946

Schumann: Adagio and Allegro in A flat, Op. 70

And works by Widmann, Simpson, Kirchner and Bowen

Monday, 26th September – 7.00 pm

Experimental Theatre

Sayaka Shoji, violin

Henri Demarquette, cello

Jean-Frédéric Neuberger, piano

Schubert: Trio No. 1, D. 898

Brahms: Trio No. 3, Op. 101

Wednesday, 28th September – 7.00 pm

Experimental Theatre

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Programme details to be announced shortly

OPERA

Wednesday, 12th October – 7.00 pm

Friday, 14th October – 7.00 pm

Sunday, 16th October – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Die Fledermaus

Music by **Johann Strauss II**

Libretto by **Karl Haffner** and **Richard Genée**

Set: **Attila Csikós**

Costumes: **Nelly Vágó**

Choreography: **Jénő Lócsei**

Director: **Miklós Szinetár**

Sung in German with English subtitles.

An NCPA presentation in association with the Hungarian State Opera

Saturday, 15th October – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Bánk Bán

Concert performance

Music by **Ferenc Erkel**

Costumes: **Nagy Viktória**

Sung in Hungarian with English subtitles

An NCPA presentation in association with the Hungarian State Opera

AN EXTRAORDINARY SAGA

In a loving tribute that explores the life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the great humanitarian and Renaissance man, Dr. Farokh E. Udwadia, eminent physician and author, reflects on a story of selflessness and universal love for all forms of life.

By Snigdha Hasan

‘What makes a man a saint?’ ruminates Dr. Farokh E. Udwadia in the note on his tribute that explores the life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer. ‘A man who forsakes a comfortable life and feels impelled to live and work as a doctor in the jungles of equatorial Africa—a man who offers unconditionally, a lifetime of service to the poorest and most wretched of his fellow human beings, with great compassion, humility and love. If so be the man, Dr. Albert Schweitzer should undoubtedly be considered a saint.’

Despondent patients and their kin often lean on saintly terms to describe the healing touch of doctors that miraculously salvages life from the clutches of mortality. But for a doctor to use the word for a fellow doctor is another matter. Dr. Udwadia is perhaps alluding to a rather unkind comment Dr. Schweitzer was subjected to when he revealed his intentions of working in Lambaréné in what is now Gabon, a former French colony in central Africa. “Tell me, Albert, is it that you want to become a saint? Saint Francis—now Saint Albert? Well, if you do become one, you won’t know it, as saints are canonised well after their death,” remarks Dr. Schweitzer’s professor of theology at a poignant juncture towards the beginning of the tribute, written in a deeply personal voice. Or, it could well be that the magnitude of the task that the Alsatian-German polymath set out to do and its far-reaching impact are somewhat indescribable in earthly terms.



The story begins with a 30-year-old Albert Schweitzer, who, having already obtained his doctorates in music, philosophy and theology, is battling a sense of restlessness

“Look at the vastness of the man from the point of view of literature, philosophy, theology, music, medicine—where would you find a combination of these? Here was a man who sacrificed his life for the love of a people whom nobody loved,” says Dr. Udwadia, eminent physician and author, about the subject of his tribute, which will be presented at the NCPA as a staged reading by Jim Sarbh, directed by Sooni Taraporevala.

The story begins at a crossroads in the life of a 30-year-old Albert, who, having already obtained his doctorates in music, philosophy and theology, is battling a sense of restlessness—how could he be at peace with being counted among the learned elite

FARABOLA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

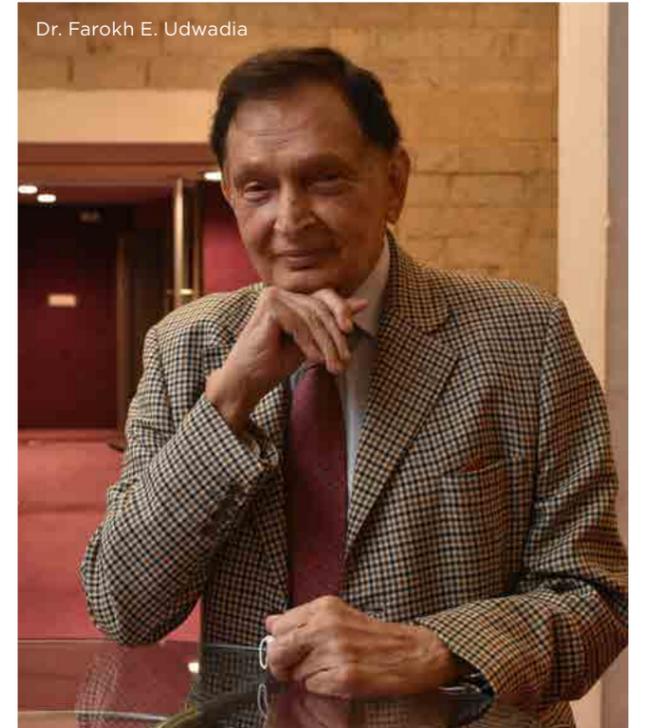
of Germany when there was so much suffering in the world? One day, he serendipitously stumbles on an announcement requesting for a doctor in French Equatorial Africa and that changes the course of his life and that of countless others. “It was almost a visitation. He opened a journal he never read and came across this advertisement and said to himself, ‘I must give back to society’. He wasn’t even a doctor then,” says Dr. Udwadia referring to how the theologian, musician, virtuoso organist and prolific writer decided to pursue medicine and dedicated seven more years of his life to academic rigour. He obtained his MD to equip himself to go to Africa with his wife and pillar of strength, Hélène, and also accompanied by his specially made piano, with pedal attachments built for the tropics, which the Bach society of Paris gave him in recognition of his many years of service as their organist.

The work progresses to the Schweitzers’ time in Africa and the numerous challenges they faced there, from tropical illnesses to superstitions. A fascinating encounter with the local practitioners of medicine, Ogangas, finds a place in the second part of his tribute. Interestingly, the good doctor too would eventually come to be addressed as Oganga by the people of Lambaréné and nearby and far-flung areas. It is here that a physician’s perspective on a fellow practitioner’s challenges in a country that “devours its own” is brought to the fore with a riveting blend of clinical precision and empathy.

Dr. Udwadia dwells on the doctor-patient bond, which, as he writes, lies at the very heart of medicine. “It’s being lost. I am one of the last of the Mohicans. Doctors today relate more to machines and the sad part is that they have conditioned patients to relate to machines too,” he laments. The art of listening to patients, empathy, is something he attributes to art, literature and music—one of the many parallels between the writer and the subject.

The staged reading will be interspersed with the music of Bach, something that stayed with Dr. Schweitzer in moments of solitude, introspection, struggle and celebration. “He wrote five volumes on the technique of playing Bach as well as his biography,” says Dr. Udwadia as he mentions the books he read during his research, including *Out of My Life and Thought*, and *African Notebook*, based on his diary. “For one thing, his philosophy is very close to my heart. The reason I wrote the last part [where Dr. Schweitzer reflects on life] first is because his thoughts are very similar to mine,” he adds.

In a country where patients would be accompanied by the entire family and an army of friends, where the ebb and flow of the Ogooué river determined the ebb and flow of life, where pelicans and monkeys would follow him around as worthy companions, it is not surprising that Dr. Schweitzer’s philosophy of Reverence for Life was born here, aboard a steamer



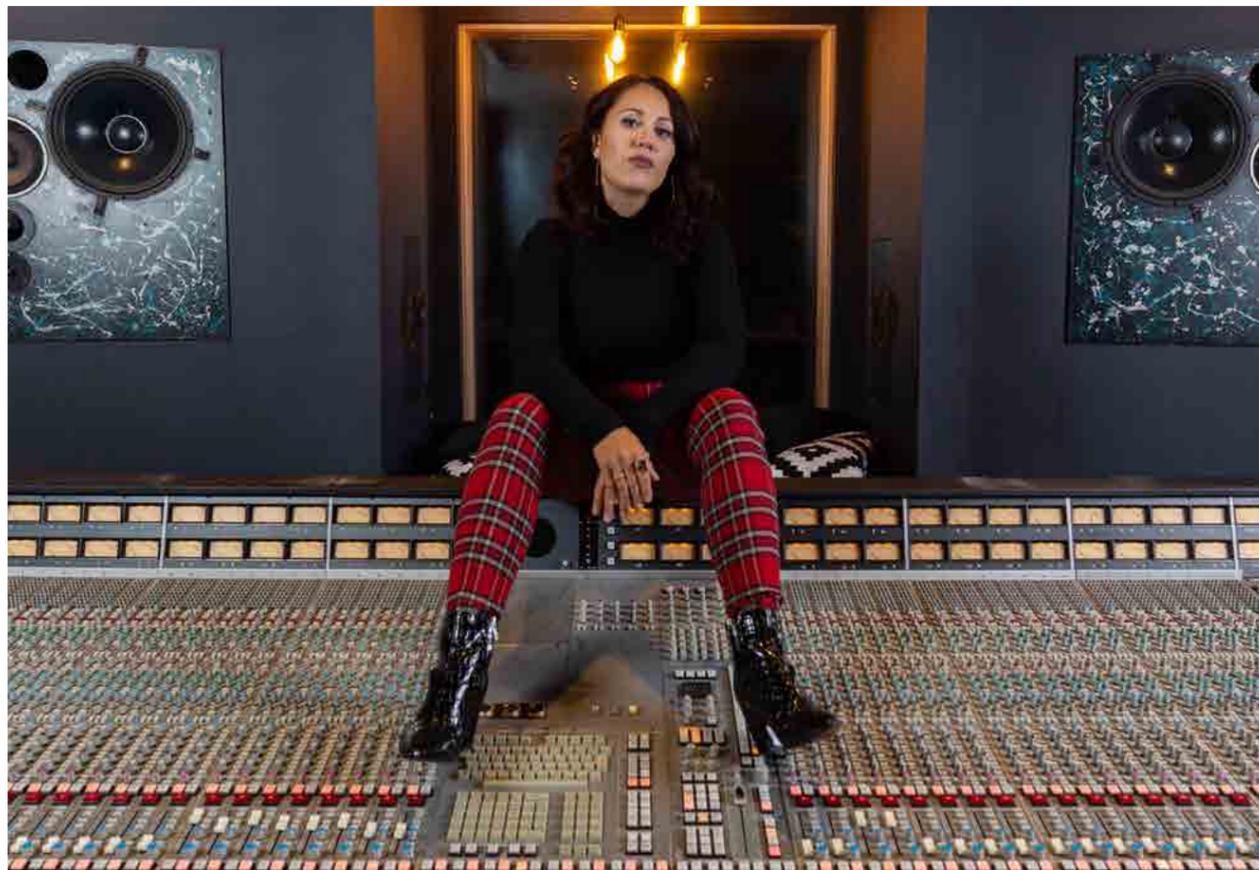
The staged reading by actor Jim Sarbh will be interspersed with the music of Bach, something that stayed with Dr. Schweitzer in moments of solitude, introspection, struggle and celebration

across the Ogooué. The lack of harmony between civilisation and ethics was his lingering concern and it had to be addressed. Reverence for life—all forms of life—was the answer.

The finale of this story is a tender reminiscence of Dr. Schweitzer’s beloved wife who could not withstand the rigour of a tropical climate. It is beautifully and poetically scripted by the author and is indeed a touching end to this wonderful work.

Dr. Schweitzer never set out to be a saint but earned phenomenal recognition and many honours along the way—the 1952 Nobel Prize for Peace being one of them. But for the medical missionary who inspired waves of doctors and nurses to carry forward his humanitarian work, everything else was a distant second to one sobriquet—to thousands of grateful lives, he was their Oganga. ■

‘OGANGA!’ - A Tribute to the Life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer will be presented on 10th July at the Tata Theatre.



For the Legends

A versatile vocalist who has shared the stage with bigwigs like Jay-Z and Ariana Grande, Holly Petrie, slated to perform at the NCPA this month, talks to **Aishwarya Bodke** about two exceptional artistes who have shaped her musicality.

The month of July will bring talented vocalist Holly Petrie to the music enthusiasts of Mumbai. NCPA Legends is an exclusive show in which Petrie will weave together some of the most vocally challenging and iconic tracks from the two multi-genre legends, Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan. Through the concert, she hopes to illustrate to the audience how widespread the influence of the two artistes has been on the evolution of R&B, funk and soul.

ON Stage: How are you gearing up for your performance in India? How do you go about putting a show together?

Holly Petrie: Putting up a show is a really exciting process for me. A lot of deliberation precedes choosing each song, its placement in the show and creating a dynamic and exciting setlist. I wouldn't say I craft it differently for different audiences, but I may deliver it differently depending on how it is being received. Cultural differences between countries mean some audiences do not applaud and cheer as much,

some want to get up and dance and some don't. I find it fascinating.

OS: How have Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan influenced your musical journey?

HP: I have been singing along to Stevie's songs since I was young. 'Overjoyed' and 'Lately' were a big part of the background score to my teens. I have always had a lower voice for a female singer. So even though I was obsessed with Celine Dion, Mariah Carey and Whitney Houston, I could never really sing those songs, not the high notes anyway. Stevie's songs always sat in the perfect sweet spot, so I loved singing them. I learned breath control, riffs, vibrato, and so much more from his music. He was such a great influence on me. But it wasn't until I got to college that I dove into his albums and discovered more of his catalogue, falling deeper in love with him as a musician and writer. I fell in love with Chaka in my 20s as well. I'm amazed by her delivery, and I love a strong female voice. I especially adore her work with Rufus. I even named my son after Rufus!

OS: Which era are you trying to capture with the two icons?

HP: Honestly, we are delving into their entire careers. We will be doing all the songs you know and love, and hopefully, some that may be new to you. We are going back to the 1960s with *Up-Tight* and *For Once in My Life*, which were released on Tamla Records [now known as Motown Records]. It will be followed by Chaka's first album as well as visiting hits from her time-honoured and glorious body of work. We have a lot to pack into this set.

OS: Despite their unique careers and music, Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan have more in common than meets the eye. How do you plan to showcase that?

HP: Yes, they do have a lot of common ground that people may not notice. On Chaka's first album, she did a cover of Stevie's 'I Was Made to Love Her' (but she changed the 'Her' to 'Him'). We will be playing her version of his lovely song from the '60s. Stevie and Chaka both did their own covers of 'We Can Work It Out' by The Beatles, which will naturally find a place in our show. Stevie wrote 'Tell Me Something Good' for Chaka in 1974; that is something we cannot miss. Stevie even played the harmonica on Chaka's version of 'I Feel for You', originally written and released by Prince. So many connections!

OS: How do you navigate through the variety of genres that you juggle?

HP: I've had a very eclectic taste in music ever since I was young. My approach has always been to honour the music and commit emotionally to every performance and every lyric. It helps me have a sense of balance when dealing with different genres, be it rock, gospel, pop, soul, or funk. If you sing with intention and confidence, you can get away with anything.

OS: You have worked with an impressive array of artistes. How should one maintain their unique and dynamic voice while collaborating?

HP: I try to sing everything with my own sound, while still staying true to the original track. When I learn a song, I will listen to it with my own voice in mind and imagine how I will approach it. This will include segregating sections where I may stick solidly to the original melody, sections where I will sing the same riffs and runs as the record, and then sections where I can do my own thing. When singing with other artistes, I think it's important to give each other space to shine, while simultaneously taking your moments to showcase what you have to say musically.

OS: How important are backing vocals in enhancing a song's value?

HP: This really depends on the song. Some iconic songs won't have any backing vocals at all. But a good BV arrangement can completely transform a song and elevate it to new heights. It can lay a bed for a singer to open up, play around and experiment. It can elevate the emotion of a section, or emphasise a lyric. The harmony you create can change the feeling of the song entirely. Unfortunately, I won't have any backing vocals for this show. However, I am making my band sing a little. I'm hoping to bring my little vocoder so I can harmonise with myself.

OS: In the hybrid model of performance for an artiste of today—albums, social media platforms, stage concerts and tours—what importance do live performances hold, especially in the post-pandemic world?

HP: I've done three tours and countless shows since the gradual retreating of the pandemic, and it truly is a beautiful thing to see the joy on people's faces again. I think live shows are more important than ever in lifting spirits and connecting people. As an artiste, it is extremely rewarding to reach people all over the world via social media, but there is no greater feeling than sharing the joy of live music.

OS: With the world opening up and art transcending borders on a scale larger than ever, how can performers and musicians adapt themselves better? What does it mean to be a global artiste?

HP: It is such a privilege to be able to reach people on the other side of the world. My purpose as a performer has always been to spread as much joy as possible. It's great to be alive in an age where we don't even need to leave the house to do so. But the

world opening back up enables us to travel and spread our art in person again, which is incredible. As artistes who are able to connect with audiences around the world, it becomes so crucial to be aware of what's happening around us and how we can use our art for good, whether it is through charitable work, spreading messages of love, acceptance and self-love, or using our platform to help encourage positive sociopolitical change. Being aware of what your art is capable of doing and how far it can travel is so important.

OS: What are some of the highlights of the show for you?

HP: The highlight for me will be my amazing musicians. They are incredible and will help bring these fabulous songs to life for the audience. We are going to have so much fun. ■

Holly Petrie will present NCPA Legends on 23rd July at the Tata Theatre.

Animated Conversations

Ahead of the special animation edition of Short Film Corner at the NCPA, we talk to the filmmakers who are using the medium innovatively to tell powerful stories.

By Arwa Mamaji

What is your brown number? 80? 25? Or are you a 12? A swatch card pops up on the screen to show the different gradations of the brown colours and just when you think it is a clever commercial for a fairness cream or a paint brand, you slowly begin to realise that this short, animated film brings to the fore a potent reality of our world in a crisp, humorous but trenchant manner. *What Is Your Brown Number?* is one of five innovative films that will be screened at this month's edition of Short Film Corner.

Short Film Corner is a collaborative effort by the NCPA and White Wall Screenings (WWS). Filmmaker Pratik R. Kothari, co-founder of WWS, says, "We started with my film [in 2017] and back then we had a scant audience because there was not too much awareness, but over a period of time, especially just before the pandemic in 2020, we

would have a dedicated audience who would turn up to see the short film screenings."

Frames of reference

Those unfamiliar with short films might wonder how 10 or 14 minutes can possibly grasp the attention of an audience. In fact, short films discernibly avoid unnecessary tropes and are almost always equipped with powerful points of view. For instance, *What Is Your Brown Number?*, Vinnie Ann Bose's graduation film from the National Institute of Design (NID), is a humorous look at our national obsession with fair skin. Suresh Eriyat—animator, director and founder of the animation atelier Studio Eeksaurus—who has produced the film, says, "I felt very strongly about this topic, because when I was at the NID, I had faced such discrimination. Being a south Indian and having a dark complexion, there was always that bias when

A scene from *What Is Your Brown Number?*, which takes a satirical look at our obsession with the colour of our skin



In addition to a National Award for best animation film, *Tokri* has also won the same title at the Borroego Springs Film Festival, Moscow Shorts and PSAF Palm Springs Animation Festival, among many others



we crossed the southern part of the country and went to the north."

Also on the roster is Eriyat's award-winning claymation film *Tokri*. It is a simple story, rich in detail. The scale of production is stellar and the film is grounded in the grit and grime of the city. Eriyat has used clay models to tell his story, an idea that was brewing within him for eight years. The essence of the story is inspired by a real-life incident. "This little girl came tapping on my [car] window and urged me to buy some baskets. I was hurrying to a meeting for which I was already running late. I shoed

her away. But I noticed that my demeanour shook her. That incident evoked in me a sense of guilt, which triggered the story," he says. The earnestness comes through. The film, a bittersweet story of the relationship between a father and his daughter, becomes a permeable membrane through which the emotion seeps and reaches out to the audience.

Filmmaker Kireet Khurana, director of the short film *Pravaasi*, touches upon the subject of migration. The colours used for the animation are black, white and red. The palette is simple yet contrasting and the starkness is apparent. The pandemic was brutal to migrant labourers. Homeless and hungry, they walked for miles towards their villages and many of them perished along the way. Khurana uses poetry to bring out the poignancy. *Safar*, another film in the same vein, was also visualised by Khurana though here, the poetry was contributed by Anshu Gupta, who runs Goonj, a non-governmental

Safar features voice-overs by Tisca Chopra, Dia Mirza and Nandita Das, among others



organisation that undertakes disaster relief and humanitarian aid projects. Khurana has grown up working with the medium of animation. His father Bhimsain Khurana is considered a pioneer of animation in India. The 1970s animated film *Ek Anek Aur Ekta*, aired on Doordarshan and very popular with children, was his creation.

Indian animation

Compared to other genres, the Indian animation industry has been relatively low-key. Eriyat believes India is nowhere close to where it should be when it comes to quality and creativity in animation. He says, "India is known for the skill of just finishing the white man's idea and not really creating our own. We are not telling our stories. Even today, 95 per cent of animation done in the country belongs to the West. That is changing, but the stuff that is happening in India is not of great quality." Khurana agrees. "Most

Released at the height of the first lockdown, *Pravaasi* gives voice to the unimaginable suffering of the migrant population from across the country



Daud, released only this year, is an interesting blend of live action and animation

“A few years ago, we thought of doing an animation special and when we started looking for Indian short films, the kind of work we came across was mind-blowing”

of the uncreative work comes to India. It is not a nice space to be in,” he says.

The dearth of original ideas in the animation industry could possibly have been a side effect of the colossal influence of Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil and other language films. A challenge Kothari faced a couple of years ago was that a lot of short films were trying to be a low-budget Bollywood film. Now that technology is easily accessible and with the advent of the digital medium, he has seen a stark change in quality. People are investing a lot more money in short format content. As short films are gaining prominence, well-known actors are willing to be involved. For instance, *Pravaasi* has a voice-over by actor Taapsee Pannu.

Favourable features

From the time he started curating, Kothari has seen a positive change. “You will be surprised to see the kind of animation films that are coming out of India today. In 2017-18, we thought of doing an animation special and we started looking for shorts. A lot of what we saw was mind-blowing,” he says.

Accessing a short film can also be quite a process. Kothari says that there is no particular channel or platform that maintains a record of all short films

being made in India, much like the unstructured nature of filmmaking. Sometimes, films show up in his mailbox—like *Daud* directed by Nihar Palwe, which is also going to be screened at the NCPA. A film about a boy who decides to climb an impossible mountain in memory of his father, *Daud* is an interesting blend of live-action storytelling and animation, something Palwe always wanted to do. “The visual dynamism and creative potential of animation has always fascinated me,” he says.

Today, the world of Indian short films is quite extensive. Kothari says there have been times when an audience member has introduced him to an interesting film. Screenings at Short Film Corner have become an adda for creative filmmakers. Discussions with other filmmakers bring to light the struggles and triumphs they face in the process of making a film, works become accessible to a wider audience and hidden talent gets noticed. The idea is to create a community through these screenings and having one’s film screened at the NCPA comes with its own prestige. ■

Short Film Corner will be presented on 13th July at the Little Theatre.



Giuseppe Verdi's

Don Carlos

Opera Screening

Sung in French with English Subtitles

An NCPA-Metropolitan Opera
(New York) Presentation

Conductor: **Patrick Furrer**

Production: **David McVicar**

Cast: **Sonya Yoncheva, Jamie Barton,
Matthew Polenzani, Etienne Dupuis,
Eric Owens & John Relyea**

3rd July 2022 | 4:00 pm
Godrej Dance Theatre, NCPA

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Gaetano Donizetti's

Lucia Di Lammermoor

Opera Screening

Sung in Italian with English Subtitles

An NCPA-Metropolitan Opera
(New York) Presentation

Conductor: **Riccardo Frizza**

Production: **Simon Stone**

Cast: **Nadine Sierra, Javier Camarena,
Artur Ruciński & Matthew Rose**

23rd July 2022 | 4:00 pm
Godrej Dance Theatre, NCPA

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Intricate Imagery

A Kuchipudi exponent and scholar provides an insightful look at the history and evolution of a dance form rich in colour and culture.

By Anuradha (Jonnalagadda) Tadakamalla

Vayonurupah prathamastu veshou
Veshanurupena gatipracharaha
Gatipracharanugatam ca pathyam
Pathyaanu rupou abhinayascha karyaha
Natyashastra, chapter 12, verse 247

The attire should be according to the age,
the gait should be according to the attire,
the speech should be according to the gait/
movement,
and, the abhinaya should be according to the speech.

Being a visual reflection of the time, space, culture and context, the dance costume is a statement in itself. Bharata opines that even the psychological state of a character is reflected through *aharya* (costume, make-up, jewellery and stage decor). Thus, in dance, *aharya* assumes a significant role in shaping the identity of the form.

Reflection of time

Kuchipudi, rooted in traditional theatre, has evolved in the past century into a solo classical dance style.

The change is not only in its technique and repertoire but also in the case of the practitioners—from the hereditary male to the non-hereditary female. Thus, the traditional *Yakshaganas*, *Kalapas*, dance-dramas and solo repertoire coexisted in the form, leading to a variegated vibrancy in all aspects, including its costuming and make-up. For the convenience of understanding, one may historically bifurcate this into pre- and post-independence times. In the former, *Kalapas* and *Yakshaganas* were predominant while in the latter, the dance-dramas and solos took over. The *aharya* used in these genres reflected the social purpose, the aesthetics of the time, the influences of parallel art forms and the target audience.

The *aharya* of the major male and female characters in *Yakshaganas* and *Kalapas* largely carried the ethos of regional Telugu culture, as did the genres themselves. Interestingly, in *Bhamakalapam* an entire section is dedicated to discourse on the kind and significance of jewellery that Satyabhama wears each day of the week. In fact, Satyabhama and especially her plait (*jada*) have become synonymous with the form. This *jada* symbolises the universe of which the *Adishesha*

(the great serpent) forms the base, holding the Sun, Moon, 27 stars, the three worlds (heaven, earth, and lower world, *patala*), and the nine planets (*navagrahas*). It is intriguing to note how Kuchipudi practitioners incorporated the symbolism of this Puranic idea of *Anantha Sesa* as the cosmic energy of creation that beholds the universe, into the plait of Satyabhama.

Along with *Kalapas*, from the late 1870s, *Yakshagana* performances, with their unique make-up and costuming for the dramatis personae, became predominant in Kuchipudi.

Garb for all

The *aharya* for male characters can be broadly divided into *nayaka* (hero), *pratinayaka* (anti-hero) and other minor characters. The heroes, who are generally supposed to be valorous and good-natured, have simple costumes like a *dhoti*, *anga vastra* (upper cloth), jewellery for ears (*Makara kundala*), around the neck, on the fore and upper arms, around the waist and feet, and, a long beaded string worn like the sacred thread around the upper body hanging down from the left shoulder across the chest to the right. Apart from these, crowns are worn by kings, Gods and princes. Other characters, like ministers for example, wear cloth turbans (*talapaaga*), which are embellished according to the status of the characters. The facial make-up is made from natural colours and mineral extracts. The base for facial make-up is coconut oil mixed with ground *aradalam/addelam*, *manisila* and *safed* (zinc). Naturally made kohl highlights the eyes and moustache, and vermilion is smeared on the lips. The dim lighting of the times necessitated pronounced make-up.

For the anti-hero characters, the costume is more or less like the *nayaka* characters, with an additional pleated gown-like coat made of *makhmal* (velvet), which covers the upper body, adding the necessary volume to it. This use of coats is ascribed to Parsi theatre, whose presence was dominant in the Andhra region during the latter part of the 19th century. In addition, large shoulder ornaments—*bhujakeertulu*—and elaborate crowns make them seem imposing. Besides the costumes and ornamentation, some male characters have character-specific make-up and embellishments. For instance, Krishna/Vishnu is painted blue, from top to toe, as he is described as the one with a dark blue complexion. Peacock feathers adorn his crown, and a flute is held in his hand. For Lord Narasimha, a lion mask, the *Karala*, is used. This mask of Narasimha is revered and due rituals are conducted before wearing it in *Bhakta Prahlada Yakshaganam*. Specific characters like Banasura, an *asura* king with strength equivalent to having a thousand arms, is depicted symbolically by using extended multiple wooden arms. Other social



Yamini Krishnamurthy in a traditional Kuchipudi costume



Solo costume standardised by Vempati



Character-specific costumes from the dance-drama *Haravilasam* featuring Vempati Ravishankar as Shiva and Anuradha as Parvati

hence ample jewellery is used to make them look feminine. Traditionally, a huge wooden box was used to store the jewellery and costumes, called *Ganiyam Petta*.

A vibrant evolution

The sociopolitical changes that occurred after the 1940s have affected the form, leading to an evolution of dance-dramas and solo streams in Kuchipudi. Simultaneously, the introduction of women into the form, the spread of the form—from hereditary custodians to others, and from rural precincts to urban areas—has prompted change in both movement and costuming. Thus, one can observe a near total transformation in the costuming, especially in the dance-dramas and solos, in accordance with the urban aesthetic of suggestion and decorum.

The traditional method of tying costumes has now been replaced with specially designed and ready-to-wear costumes. Even the colours chosen now look more sober and character-specific. Metal jewellery has been adopted in place of wood. One may observe that in the 1950s and 60s, the jewellery was minimal and by the late 70s, character-appropriate jewellery became more popular. This is especially seen in the head gear and crowns worn by major characters. It began with Vempati Chinna Satyam's *Ksheerasagara Madhanam* but consolidated in *Srinivasa Kalyanam*. These changes can be traced to the influence of cinema and to the designer that Satyam hired, Pardhan, who brought with him experience of working in the art direction department for Telugu and Tamil cinema. The *makhmal* coats that were used in *Yakshaganas* were not seen in dance-dramas and did not find place even in the revived *Yakshaganas*. For instance, in the *Yakshagana*, *Sasirekha Parinayam*, revived in the 1990s, the *aharya* of the characters is more akin to that of dance-dramas. An example of this is the character of Ghatotkacha, who is a forest dweller and a tribal chief. Reflecting this, feathers adorn the crown and a black and red woven shawl becomes the *anga vastra*. Though suggestion became the main mantra in the dance-dramas of Vempati, from the mid-1990s, in some of the dance-dramas of Kuchipudi, one can see realism cropping up in the stage decor, almost bordering on being garish, owing to the influence of Surabhi *natakams*.

Regarding the *aharya* for the solo presentation of Kuchipudi, the first-generation dancers followed the stitched costume pattern of Bharatanatyam, with a knee-length fan in the front. From the mid-1960s, practitioners largely followed in costume and hairdo, the style set by Satyam who took inspiration from Vijayanagara dance



Vedantam Raghavaiah plays Ghatotkacha in *Sasirekha Parinayam*

It is intriguing to note how Kuchipudi practitioners incorporated the symbolism of the cosmic energy of creation that beholds the universe into the plait of Satyabhama

sculptures to design a costume with a full-length fan which looks like the traditional saree. Over a period of time, the solo costuming and jewellery also underwent changes following trends set by popular dancers like Yamini Krishnamurthy, Sobha Naidu and Radha Reddy. Some dancers even set a trend by not using a *pallu* in their costume and replacing it with a long blouse with a pleated fan. In recent times, one may also observe a trend leaning towards minimal use of make-up, costume and jewellery. Change is considered a constant in any living art form. So it is in the *aharya* of Kuchipudi, which responded to the changing aesthetics and restyled itself from time to time. ■

The author is a performer, teacher and academic, passionately involved in the study of Kuchipudi for more than four decades. She is the Professor and Head of the Department of Dance, University of Hyderabad.

PHOTO COURTESY: SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI

FIRST ENCOUNTER

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CLUB GUY & RONI, NAVDHARA INDIA DANCE THEATRE,
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SUPPORTED BY
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8TH JULY
2022
6:30 PM

EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA



Catalyst

An evening celebrating
choreographies born during lockdown

Kuchipudi by
Parvathy Menon

Odissi by
Mitali Varadkar & Shreya Sabharwal



Kathak by
Sanjukta Sinha & troupe

21st July 2022
6:30 pm

Experimental Theatre,
NCPA



(From left): SOI musicians Averell DeSouza, Prabhat Kishore and Deon D'Souza (in red) with Dr. Luis Dias (centre) and the participants

With the World on a String

A weeklong music camp, conducted on the initiative of the Symphony Orchestra of India and Child's Play India Foundation, presented a golden opportunity for young violin and viola players in Goa to interact with and learn about chamber music from the SOI's string musicians.

By Beverly Pereira

On a late summer's day in May this year, a group of 11 budding musicians were immersed in plucking and bowing their violins and violas. Ranging from eight to 18 years, they were a part of a weeklong music camp organised on the initiative of the Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI) and Child's Play India Foundation (CPIF) in Panjim, Goa. Three string musicians from the SOI travelled from Mumbai to Goa for the violin- and viola-intensive camp that drew in participants from various corners of the coastal state. The camp involved individual lessons as well as coaching in duos, trios and quartets for chamber music, and interactive music appreciation sessions.

The country's first and only professional orchestra,

founded by NCPA Chairman Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook and violin virtuoso Marat Bisengaliev, who serves as the Music Director, the SOI places great emphasis on education and outreach work. Chief amongst the orchestra's educational initiatives is the SOI Music Academy, which brings a professional level of teaching, previously not available in India, to gifted young musicians, with the aim of growing the number of Indian musicians in the SOI in the future.

Many of the SOI musicians are also teachers, working to develop the musical potential amongst young people in India. The orchestra has crafted a music programme for underprivileged children that not only brings them all the positives cues that exposure to music provides but also gives the orchestra an opportunity to scout for that rare talent that might emerge from any one of these groups. It is under this programme that the collaboration with CPIF came about. Led by Dr. Luis Dias, CPIF was established in 2009 as a registered music education trust to instil positive values and provide social empowerment to India's disadvantaged children through imparting classical music lessons. Today, CPIF teaches violin, viola, cello, recorder, transverse flute and piano to around 60 children across three locations in Goa. Besides a choir project of an additional 40 children, the foundation also started the Camerata Child's Play India orchestra of senior students, teachers and local musicians, and the Junior Camerata Child's Play made up of younger students.

Dr. Dias, Founder and Project Director of CPIF, is a fourth-generation doctor who first practised in India for a decade and then in the U.K. for another. He is also a musician, having trained on the violin since the age of five. Years of practice, exploration and exposure led him to question why his own country was not producing more professional musicians trained in Western classical music. Then, the idea to make accessible an education in Western classical music to people of all socio-economic backgrounds was



born after he had attended concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 2007 that presented two exceptional orchestras comprising underprivileged children from South Africa and Venezuela. A year later, the doctor gave up his career in the U.K. and returned to Goa with his wife to work towards bringing that idea to life.

"Like so many Goan Catholic children of my generation, I had violin lessons very early in life, and like many of my generation, music education was linked to the church. I also came from a background where Western classical music was loved. If I had had the access to the training that the SOI Music Academy imparts today and that SOI musicians get as part of their on-the-job training, I have no doubt I would have pursued music instead of medicine. This is what I want to help future generations of India's children receive, across the socio-economic spectrum, regardless of their parents' income," he says.

Three string musicians from the SOI travelled from Mumbai to Goa for the violin- and viola-intensive camp that drew in participants from various corners of the coastal state



The first of its kind

Ever since the trust was founded, Dr. Dias had stayed in touch with the NCPA and the SOI, looking for ways in which the two could collaborate. "The musicians of the SOI embody many things. They stand for professionalism and the pursuit of excellence in music, particularly in ensemble music-making. This makes them powerful role models for our children to aspire to," he says, adding that discussions about the possible ways of working together started during the pandemic.

The music camp that ran from 8th to 18th May at the CPIF premises in Goa's capital city was open to young participants from disadvantaged as well as privileged backgrounds. They were selected via an audition process to assess their ability to sight-read music and to be able to play to a basic to intermediate level. There were, of course, many more youth from Goa and even Bengaluru who were keen to be a part of the camp. But space constraints and keenness on the part of the SOI faculty and CPIF to offer each participant focused attention did not permit a group larger than eleven.



Building confidence

On the very first day, the mood was abuzz from the get-go as the SOI string players listened to the young musicians play their instrument to gauge the level of playing. From there on, SOI violinists Averell DeSouza and Prabhat Kishore worked with young players in groups of three, while Deon D'Souza worked with two viola players. "Our aim was to get the participants to play in ensembles, rather than play solo. That's what they do on a regular basis anyway," Averell explains.

Days at the music camp spanned 10 am to 4 pm, beginning with instrument tuning and practising of scales, arpeggios, left-hand exercises and several types of bow strokes. This was followed by one-on-one lessons with students practising a solo piece. Post lunch, the three string musicians practised duets and orchestral works with their students every day. "I had a great time teaching the violin. Some students were at a great level and were good at reading music. They would go home and practise their musical difficulties and play it again the next day," says Kishore. Averell echoes him, saying, "I was quite surprised with their level of playing because in Goa there aren't many opportunities to learn the instrument at a good standard. I was impressed with the students and most played with the right technique."

Two viola players tutored by Deon worked on a classical piece arranged for the instrument. "The level of playing was fairly good," he says, even as he noted that their understanding of and playing as an ensemble needed work. "Instilling discipline during group rehearsals was a bit of a task. We encouraged each child to play their part. The style of playing bow strokes was new to them. They did manage to correct some technical habits in this short period of seven days," he says. Dr. Dias was always around and ready to lend a hand to those who needed assistance with music camp homework at the end of the day.

"The SOI is potentially an enormous resource for music education, and we experienced this first-hand during the week of the intensive, quite exhilarating, music camp"

Interactivity at its best

Widening the range of the camp were audiovisual music appreciation sessions. Led by Deon, these interactive sessions were lively and unlike formal lectures. The first session included an introduction to instruments and sections of the orchestra, which in turn encouraged the young participants to think beyond their instrument and observe the presence of other orchestral instruments. "They were encouraged to listen to the music as a whole instead of listening to their part only. Videos of all orchestral instruments were shown to help them grasp the unique sound they produced. They were further asked to guess the sounds without watching the videos," he explains. At the second session, they were introduced to important eras of Western classical music with masterpieces of prominent composers from those eras played for the group. Besides, faculty members shared their stories about their journey to become full-time musicians.

"Children need this exposure to widen their horizons and to be aware of various career opportunities in music for those who are thinking of deepening their study of music," says Dr. Dias. "The SOI is potentially an enormous resource for music education, and we experienced this first-hand during the week of the intensive, quite exhilarating, music camp." The week culminated with the youth putting on an enjoyable concert for their families, featuring Felix Mendelssohn's Adagio from String Sinfonia no. 8 and Pieces for 4 violins, Op. 178, by Charles Dancla.

The string players then enthralled the audience with performances featuring Dvořák's Terzetto in C major, op. 74 and Baryton Trio Hob. XI:14 by Haydn.

Dr. Dias says, "We look almost instinctively to the SOI for its assistance. It is the country's only professional orchestra, and it is of exceptional calibre. This collaboration with Child's Play is a form of outreach

into Goa, arguably the country's most fertile ground for the blossoming of music, particularly Western classical music. It makes perfect sense for the SOI to make inroads here, given also that Goa is quite close to Mumbai. We look forward to having even more robust and sustained pedagogic collaborations with them again." ■

Recommended Volume

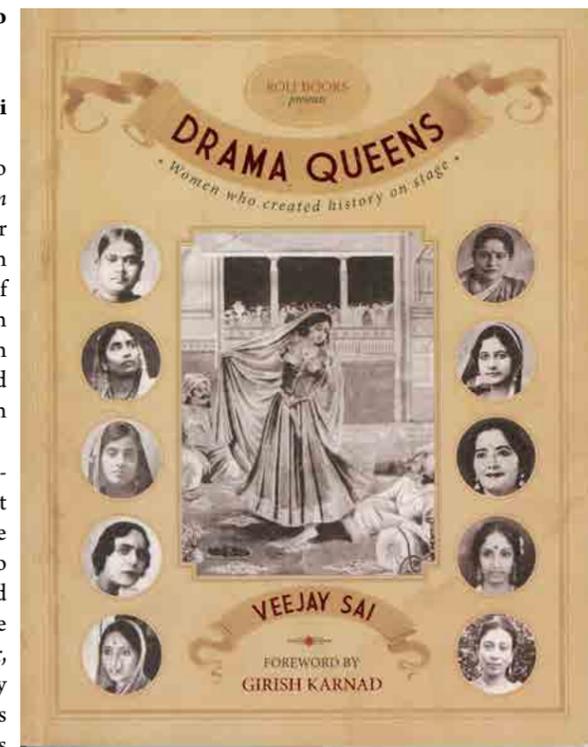
Every month, **Sujata Jadhav**, Head - Libraries & Documentation Centre at the NCPA, introduces a must-read book from the NCPA Reference Library. This month, she discusses a crucial history of forgotten women of the Indian stage.

Drama Queens: Women Who Created History on Stage
By Veejay Sai
Publisher: Roli Books, New Delhi

This month, I would like to recommend *Drama Queens: Women who Created History on Stage* to our members and readers. This is an exceptional historical document of women in theatre during the 19th and 20th centuries, a time when performing artistes who happened to be women were treated with much indignity.

The book, authored by award-winning writer, editor, columnist and culture critic Veejay Sai, is the outcome of extensive research into the lives of ten of the most acclaimed women of the Indian stage. In the foreword, actor, writer and director, Girish Karnad has written, "Veejay Sai not only deals with the lives of artistes who weathered this century of transition and laid the foundations of a whole new aesthetics, he covers the entire panorama of theatre across the country, in different languages and cultures, detailing the stresses as well as the richness of their work, the financial and social challenges they faced, and the glorious legacy they left behind."

The book is formatted chronologically with the text divided into 10 chapters, one allotted to each personality. It shines the spotlight on the cultural history of the country and includes rare pictures that make it even more intriguing. The book is also filled with interesting anecdotes that would have otherwise been forgotten. For example, productions by celebrated Marathi thespians, like Bal Gandharva, had special, subsidised tickets



for women who came from courtesan cultures. The photographs enhance the sequential curve that the author covers, while the variety of language theatres Sai has referenced, provides a comprehensive, national perspective.

Featured in it are:

- Kumbakonam Balamani (Tamil)
 - Tarasundari Devi (Bengali)
 - Munni Bai (Parsi)
 - Mukhtar Begum (Urdu)
 - Hirabai Barodekar (Marathi)
 - Malavalli Sundaramma (Kannada)
 - Jahanara Kajjan (Hindi)
 - Moti Bai (Gujarati)
 - Rushyendramani (Telugu) and
 - Thambalangoubi Debi (Manipuri)
- These women were courageous,

adventurous, ambitious and did not reflect the traditional expectations of society. The struggles they faced were all-encompassing—they faced resistance on stage and in life. Sai describes how and why theatre producers began hiring women, and how the next 50 years saw the rise of female singers and actresses, who soared to the top of the charts in theatre and recording industries. The artistes in this book were integral to the success of the theatre economy of their times yet their contribution was largely ignored. In fact, they were instrumental in introducing the song and dance element in our films that remains integral even today.

The book is one of a kind, in that it resuscitates the lives of women performing artistes who broke through impossible

barriers that prohibited women from acting on the public stage. Join us at NCPA Library to explore this rigorously researched piece of work. ■

The NCPA Reference Library is open to visitors from 10 am to 5.15 pm on weekdays. The reference library membership is complimentary for NCPA Members. The books and LPs in the Stuart-Liff music library are available for reference to Friends of the SOI at no cost. The reference library membership is open to the general public at a nominal annual fee of ₹500/- (April-March). Casual Membership for Visitors (for outstation visitors only) is available at ₹100/- per day. For more information, please call 022-6622 3715.

INSIGHT AND EXPERIENCE

The recently concluded Pratimb Marathi Natya Utsav at the NCPA saw students from the Lalit Kala Kendra, Pune, in attendance to gain hands-on training in presenting a theatre festival. We bring you snippets of their experience.



Audience at the festival finale, *Sangeet Devbabhali*

SANTOSH NAIK

As students of theatre, it was an amazing learning experience for us. Having volunteered for the management team, we could see the process intimately. From venue preparation, guest management, audience management and technical aspects like light and sound arrangements, and the set, organising a festival and executing it is a tedious job, but in this case, it was done seamlessly. All the plays presented at the festival were one of their kind. *Adhyaat Me Sadhyaat Tu Madhyaat Ma Kuni Nahi* and *Mumbaiche Kawale* with their different forms—one being abstract and another showcasing traditional folk theatre called *wagh natya*—were brilliantly performed. The concluding play, *Sangeet Devbabhali*, was a musical masterpiece. *Aparichit PuLa*, in which Satish Alekar, Chandrakant



A guided tour of the NCPA through its theatres and libraries was part of the festival

(From left) Actor Subodh Bhave, Deputy Municipal Commissioner, MCGM, Ramakant Biradar, Festival sponsor, Shilpa Kumar, actor Swapnil Joshi, Head of Theatre & Films, NCPA, Bruce Guthrie



गोष्टी घडतात आणि त्या सर्वाला स्वतःचा असा एक ऑडियन्स सुध्दा असतो, तो मनापासून ह्या सगळ्या कार्यक्रमात हजर असतो, हे नव्याने कळलं, आनंद आला. प्रतिबिंब मध्ये होणारी बरीचशी नाटकं प्रायोगिक अशी होती. तरीसुद्धा त्या नाटकांना भरपूर गर्दी होती, प्रतिसाद फार कमाल होता. NCPA चा ऑडियन्स वेगळा ओळखून येत होता. एनसीपीएचं वातावरण मला फार आवडलं, पॉसिटीव्ह वाटलं. पुन्हा शिक्षणासाठीच्या वेगवेगळ्या सुविधा, वर्कशॉपचा उत्तम उपयोग होतच असावा. संस्थेचं काम फार मोठं आहे, आदर अधिक दुणावला. इतका मोठा व्याप असलेली संस्था आणि तरी देखील सारं काम शिस्तशीरपणे होतं आणि अगदी वेळेत त्यामुळे सगळ्या कर्मचाऱ्यांचा त्याबाबतीतलं पॅशन जाणवतं. NCPA चा उद्देश पूर्ण होवो आणि मी तिथे एकदा परफॉर्मन्स करण्याचं भाग्य लाभो!

ISHA VETAL

For an actor, it is important to be able to act but also watch plays that deal

with a range of subjects like sociopolitical issues, psychological aspects, etc. Also, one should know what goes on backstage—lights, set, costume, make-up, music. At NCPA Pratibimb, I got to learn and I watched everything that I wanted to. The plays were a treat and I am already excited to attend next year's edition.

VISHAL WANGEKAR

इतक्या मोठ्या स्तरावरचा आणि इतक्या मोठ्या दर्जाच्या महोत्सवाचा एक छोटासा भाग होण्याची संधी मला मिळाली या गोष्टीचा मला खूप आनंद होतोय. एक टीम म्हणून सगळ्यांनी एकत्र येऊन कसे काम केले पाहिजे ही एक महत्वाची गोष्ट मला शिकायला मिळाली. तसेच ब्रूस सरांसोबत झालेल्या गप्पांमधून सुद्धा खूप काही गोष्टी समजल्या - बाहेरच्या देशातील नाटक, नाटकातील शिक्षण, तसेच आता कलाकारांनी काय काय केलं पाहिजे, हे त्यांच्याकडून शिकायला मिळाले. तांत्रिक गोष्टींबद्दल झालेल्या काळे सरांसोबतच्या चर्चा, व लाईट बद्दलच्या विजय दादाने शिकवलेल्या गोष्टी, लाईट आणि म्यूझिकसाठी वापरल्या जाणाऱ्या वेगवेगळ्या मशीनच्या बाबतीत सांगितल्या गेलेल्या

Kale and Girish Kulkarni presented lesser-known writings of P.L. Deshpande, was a hilarious ride. Theatre Katta, in which renowned theatre director Vijay Kenkre interviewed the legends of Marathi stage Alekar and Kale, and brought to the fore their life experiences and their work in theatre, was inspiring.

MAYUR SARKALE

आल्या आल्या वेगवेगळ्या नाटकांचे पोस्टरस दिसायला लागले, काही नाटके, काही स्टॅंडअप, काही नृत्य-गायन कार्यक्रम. एकाच वेळी इथे बऱ्याच

गोष्ठी, लायब्ररी मध्ये पहायला मिळालेल्या गोष्ठी या सगळ्यांतून खूप शिकायला मिळाले. आम्हाला सगळ्यांना राजश्री ममनी सुद्धा छान co-ordinate केले. त्यांनी NCPA च्या कॅम्पस मधील वेगवेगळे थिएटर दाखवले, त्यांची हिस्ट्री सांगितली. पहिल्या दिवशी मिळालेला मानपान आणि श्वेटच्या दिवशी मिळालेली महोत्सवाची आठवण म्हणून दिलेली भेटवस्तु, सर्टिफिकेट, तसेच NCPA च्या कॅम्पसची फेमस कोल्ड कॉफी, महोत्सवाचा टी-शर्ट, या सगळ्या गोष्ठी माझ्यासाठी खूप महत्वाच्या आहेत. एक कलाकार म्हणून अजून काय-काय गोष्ठी करणे गरजेचे आहे, आपण कुठे आहोत आणि जग कुठे पोचले आहे हे यातून समजले. एक नवीन आणि छान अनुभव मिळाला. थँक यू सो मच NCPA.

CHINMAY DEO

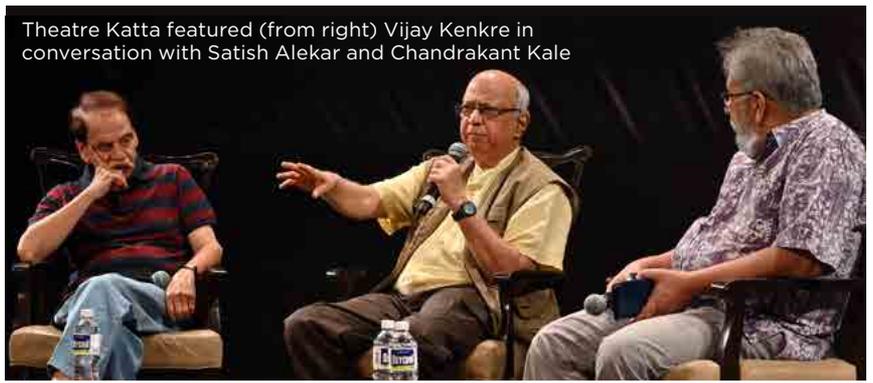
Pratibimb was a delight to work for. The NCPA always seemed unreachable. To walk on its stage and help Marathi plays put together their show was a matter of great prestige for me. What I would have liked more is to have been involved earlier on in the process so I could have contributed more creatively. I also think that we could have arranged opening acts before the main shows to involve theatre groups that may have short but good theatre pieces to present. They need not have any theatre space assigned; any open space in the campus could be used. All in all, thank you for an enriching experience.

NIKHIL PRABHAKAR PATIL

NCPA चे टाटा थिएटर मला खूप आवडले, त्याची रचना इतकी सुंदर आहे की त्याचे वर्णन करणे कठीण आहे, त्याचबरोबर जमशेद भाभा थिएटर हे एवढे मोठे थिएटर होते, तेथे शिरल्यावर तर अस वाटलं की आपण वेगळ्याच कुठल्या जागी प्रवेश केला आहे. मला नाही वाटत की भारतात एवढे सुंदर थिएटर फार ठिकाणी असतील. तेथील सगळा स्टाफ फार गोड आणि कर्तव्यदक्ष आहे. भविष्यात तेथे काम करायची संधी मिळाली की मी ती कधीच सोडणार नाही. प्रतिबिंब उत्सव फार उत्तम होता. सध्या दोन-तीन वर्षांपासून नाटक फार कमी ठिकाणी होत होते. नाटक जास्त लोकांपर्यंत पोहोचू शकत नव्हते, अश्या परिस्थितीत प्रतिबिंब उत्सवाला लोकांनी भरभरून प्रतिसाद देऊन सिद्ध केले की नाटकाला लोक विसरले नाहीयेत याउलट नाटक बघण्यासाठी लोक अजून जास्त तरसले आहेत असे दिसले त्याने आम्हा नवीन पिढीचा रंगकर्मींना अजून उस्ताह मिळाला.

PRIYANKA HAJARE

As artistes, we strive to connect with places, institutes and experiences that enhance our creativity and broaden our skill set. NCPA's Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav helped me experience a new world and ways of the theatre world. The infrastructure that they provide ensures comfort for an artiste performing there. Learning about professional lighting systems, various kinds of theatres, the history of the NCPA, and connecting with experts in the world of theatre was enriching. Backstage work, connecting with artistes and the Head of Theatre & Films, Bruce Guthrie, gave an insight into the world I already knew but with a very different perspective. Thank you, NCPA and the Theatre Department for a unique, thrilling and enriching experience.



Satish Alekar, Girish Kulkarni and Chandrakant Kale's presentation of *Aparichit PuLa* was well received

RUSHIKESH KALASKAR

छोटाश्या वास्तूमध्ये नाटक शिकणारे आम्ही आज नॅशनल सेंटर फोर द परफॉर्मिंग आर्टस् पाहायला चाललो होतो. मुंबई मध्ये पहिल्यांदा पाउल टाकलं होतं NCPA च्या निमित्ताने. तोपर्यंत मनात सारं कल्पनेचं विश्व निर्माण कस ठेवलेलं पण समोर त्याही पेक्षा कितीतरी पटीने कल्पनाशक्तीच्या पलीकडील वस्तू पाहायला मिळाली. थोडक्यात सांगायचं झालं तर NCPA ला स्वर्ग म्हणणं योग्य ठरेल. टाटा थिएटर मधील अकोस्टिक पाहून तर पायाखालची जमीनच सरकली. आणि श्वेटच्या दिवशी जमशेद भाभा थिएटर पाहून डोळे अगदीच गरगरले. प्रतिबिंब फेस्टिवलच्या निमित्ताने आलेलो आम्ही सर्व नाटकांचे साक्षीदार झालो हे आमचं भाग्याचं म्हणावं लागेल. आता मनात अजून मोठी भूक वाढलीये कि एकदातरी या रंगमंचावर परफॉर्म करण्यास भाग्य आमच्या पदरी पढावं.

AMEYA NARKAR

It was a pleasure to be working for Pratibimb amidst the experienced people at the NCPA. Even though we joined the team just a day prior to the festival, we were welcomed with open arms. For me, the three days of the festival were a complete learning process, not only as a student of theatre but also as an individual. They helped me realise that managing a theatrical event is teamwork just as performing a play is. The coordination I witnessed amongst the different teams working for the event was mesmerising. Bruce Guthrie had a very candid chat, that I would call a mini workshop, with us where he spoke about his experiences, his understanding of the craft and provided us with guidance as to how we can improve and go forward in the field. Similarly, Nayan Kale, spoke to us about the technical aspects of theatre and helped us understand the technology used at the NCPA, after which Vijaykumar Asokan gave us a demonstration which is definitely going to be helpful for us in the coming future. This all was smoothly facilitated by Rajeshri Shinde from the Theatre department. I left for Pune taking with me these memories and experiences but also an ambition to be performing at the NCPA at least once in my life. ■



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A TRIBUTE TO LEGENDARY COMPOSERS

15TH JULY, 6:30 PM TATA THEATRE

Vasantryo Deshpande & Kumar Gandharva by **Rahul Deshpande**

Gajananbua Joshi, Dinkar Kaikini &

Ramashreya Jha by **Ulhas Kashalkar**

16TH JULY, 6:30 PM TATA THEATRE

Bhakti sangeet ki indradhanushi yatra

Concept & Curation: **Shekhar Sen**

Singers: **Shekhar Sen, Manjusha Patil Kulkarni,**

Abhijeet Ghoshal & others

17TH JULY, 6:30 PM JAMSHED BHABHA THEATRE

A Tribute to Salil Chowdhury

Concept, Curation & Presentation: **Shantanu Moitra**

Singers: **Shaan, Vijay Prakash, Sadhana Sargam,**

Antara Chowdhury, Adriz Ghosh,

**a 20-member choir with musicians of the
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THE PRESERVATION PRINCIPLE

We talk to Italian architect Chiara Rostagno about working on the restoration of Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper', her recent visit to India and the importance of conserving works of art.

By Aishwarya Bodke

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya and the Asiatic Society of Mumbai, in collaboration with the Italian Cultural Institute of Mumbai, recently presented a conference, *Sweetness and Beauty. Antonio Canova and Natural Beauty*, to mark the bicentenary of the neoclassical sculptor's death anniversary. Chiara Rostagno, former Director of the Leonardo's Last Supper Museum and the Scientific Director of Palazzo Litta in Milan, was the speaker at the conference. She spearheaded the last preservation project of Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper'.

Excerpts from the interview:

ON Stage: How do you look back at the whole experience of heading the task of preservation of Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper'?

Chiara Rostagno: When I look back at my work with the Last Supper Museum, I have to acknowledge how pivotal the project was to understand, in time, the effects of pollution and climate change on works of art. 'The Last Supper' is a very fragile painting. People had recognised the need to protect it a century ago, but they had no means to fully understand the

problem. The painting is such an important piece of history, identifiable across the world; a century of different approaches culminated into an ideal method of preservation. We started in 2015, and it took years of research to achieve what we set out to do. When you are taking care of a masterpiece, you have a lot of responsibility too. However, this is a job that can't be done alone. I was lucky to have worked with a very supportive team. Experiences like these help change the course of the field around the globe and establish uniform techniques.

OS: When an artwork undergoes restoration, there are certain parts or aspects of it that one needs to, unfortunately, let go of. Many argue that it compromises the originality. What is your take on this?

CR: The painting has been in a damaged condition since 1527. The world changes over five centuries—generations change, topographies change, governments change, climate changes, and along with all this, changes the painting. But that does not mean what we have today is any less of an artwork than what da Vinci first brought to life. When you are reading poetry, the absence of a word or two

“‘The Last Supper’ has been in a damaged condition since 1527... over five centuries, generations change, topographies change, governments change, climate changes, and along with all this, changes the painting”



does not take away its essence or the credit of the poet. You can still understand its beauty through its composition. The suffering of the material also reflects its history. Many layers of value exist underneath it. We try our best to take care of the artwork without losing anything because what is lost is lost forever. The artwork is irreplaceable and the intention is not to alter it. It is not to compromise on authenticity but to retain it and its legacy as much and for as long as we can. 'The Last Supper' went

through restorations through the years because it was otherwise impossible to preserve da Vinci's layer. Restoration is important but should be the last answer. We have to take care of our heritage and artworks every day, and that has been our preventive approach. It takes a lot of patience and passion.

OS: What is the difference in approach when it comes to the preservation of art pieces and heritage sites, temples or monuments?

“It is quite interesting how preservation in India has woven a beautiful relationship between science and the history of the place”

CR: Just like India, the colossal cultural value of Italy resides in its monuments and architecture. The approach remains the same, the scale may change. It becomes crucial to have a restorer along at all times when it comes to preservation of architecture. A team of architects and engineers is equally essential in maintaining the integrity of the structure and its material. Some practices are better than others and you need a whole team to identify what works best. As a conservator, you have a massive responsibility for something that could be very important to the local community or the country, world heritage sites, etc.

OS: Visitors are often unaware of the colossal efforts put into preservation. How can we change that?

CR: It has become increasingly important for people to know that they too can contribute to taking care of cultural heritage. Making the process of preservation public and transparent reiterates the very significance of the art in question. Most heritage monuments and paintings deteriorate as a result of prolonged effects of climate change, pollution and human contact. So, making the population a part of preservation would only help in all aspects. In Italy, we started the practice of explaining our work to visitors in the foyers and we have only found them to be interested and curious, even about the more scientific aspect of it.

OS: Italy has worked beautifully around the intersection of heritage preservation and tourism. How can developing countries take a leaf out of its book?

CR: In densely populated countries with economic priorities, we have to find a way to reach the true tourism potential and communicate its value to the world. However, we have to start at home. We need to prepare our heritage to face adversities. It is just as important to take care of indoor conditions of the monuments as much as the external. In Italy, we follow some practices where we try to have roundtable meetings with the museum staff with detailed explanations. We have to understand the chemistry of the atmosphere around the place, and the maximum number of people that should be allowed inside the premises that would cause no damage. Preservation should always be a scientific process but without forgetting that it is centred

around people. The planning cannot work if we do not take into account the factor of climate change and daily human contact. Ultimately, if our heritage monuments are maintained in perfect condition, there will naturally be a rise in global visitors.

OS: Did you come across some glaring examples in your travels to India that need immediate transformation and care?

CR: I actually loved how India has approached conservation. It is quite interesting how preservation has woven a beautiful relationship between science and the history of the place. Preservation practices here are able to retain the spirit of the site and that is wonderful. The only thing to work on would be improving the indoor conditions of the monuments and museums. That is a common problem everywhere and can be something to work on together. The stark difference in changing seasons here, coupled with pollution, is something that the preservation practices should be able to adapt themselves around, especially the monsoons.

OS: How can art organisations play a proactive role in this regard?

CR: Art organisations are a substantial cultural currency to begin with and can help people perceive and access the cultural capital of a country. They have the kind of human resource required that can not only contribute but also get their viewership more involved in our work. As times change, the roles of our institutions change. I believe art organisations play an important role in the cultural and intellectual nourishment of a people, bridging the gaps in social mores and time. They are vital—especially in the post-pandemic world—to foster a sense of community, which goes far in the preservation practice.

OS: How has your experience in Mumbai been?

CR: My journey to Mumbai has been very rewarding so far. The city was a powerful experience to say the least, that helped me merge knowledge with experience. I got the opportunity to meet masters in the field who are trying to expand the horizons of heritage preservation in India, while simultaneously encouraging it as a sustainable choice of profession. These kinds of collaborations are immensely essential to work towards our common goal of greater cultural appreciation. ■

 NCPA

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RAAG SETHI **BASS**
CHIRAG TODI **GUITAR**
SHANKAR IYER **GUITAR**
MEERA DESAI **VOCALS**
HARMONY SIGANPORIA **VOCALS**
SHIVANG KAPADIA **DRUMS**
HARMISH JOSHI **WOODWINDS**
NAYAN KAPADIYA **KEYS**

9TH JULY 2022 | 6:30 PM
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA

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TATA THEATRE, NCPA | 6:30 PM

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Performing Arts: Photography

A monthly column that explores any and every aspect of the performing and visual arts. This month, photographer **Ashok Dilwali**—armed with more than five decades of experience, over 35 books on photography to his name and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Government of India—talks about, among other things, the one piece of advice that transformed not only his life but also his work.

I was eight years old when I received my first lesson in photography. My father—renowned photographer B.K. Dilwali, who managed two premier photo studios, The Kinsey Brothers and Shimla Studios—instructed me to load a film in a Baby Brownie camera. Since then, photography has been my passion and though I qualified as a Chartered Accountant, I eventually became a full-time photographer. Initially, I specialised in portraiture but in 1979, I fell in love with the Himalayas and then chose to combine trekking in the mountains with photography.

Around this time, I came across a lovely coffee-table book on Afghanistan by photographer Roland Michaud, published by Thames & Hudson. I was curious to know the equipment used by this great photographer and sent a letter to the publishers to direct my query to him as his address was not mentioned. Two years later, I got a phone call that he was in town and I could meet him if I so desired. I went running to see him and he was extremely kind to me. He said that I should select one part of the Himalayas and keep going there till I become a specialist.

I followed his advice and for the next five years, I went only to Garhwal. This was virgin territory as far as photography was concerned. It was, along with Kumaon, part of Uttar Pradesh (now Uttarakhand) and had been neglected all along. There was not a single book on the area nor was there much development. It was known only for Char Dham Yatras and as a stopgap for hardcore mountaineers. Back then, the first response Garhwal elicited was: where is it?

The region was full of surprises. Many areas there were unknown to the common man. On many of my trips, I had difficulty in finding porters and guides who were familiar with the places I was going to. They were hidden from the glare of publicity but sure enough, they were breathtaking places—numerous lakes,



hours, something unheard of at the time. I also became fascinated with panoramic photography and used specialised film panoramic cameras like Linhof Technoramas and Fuji 6x17 cm. I have also published a book on infrared photography, a first on the subject by an Indian photographer.

My experience as a photographer spans over half a century. I was

unseen temples, etc. There was no STD facility and no other way to communicate with family back home. Dhabas had the most basic food. Finding accommodation was rare and an attached bathroom was even rarer. There were times when I had to carry my own petrol and diesel because there were no petrol pumps. No tourism in certain areas meant no hotels which meant I had to pitch my own tent most of the time. I have slept in caves and was once chased by a bear.

The time spent getting to know Garhwal was also before the advent of digital photography. One had to guess the right exposure and films were expensive. There was no possibility of knowing how my pictures would turn out till I came back home and processed the films at my studio. But this was also a time of experimentation for me. I pioneered moonlight photography in the country. I used medium and large format cameras with exposures between one and four

there when each picture was taken with a flash bulb, white for black and white images and blue for coloured images. I still remember photographing my eldest sister's marriage in 1957 with flash bulbs as there were no electronic flash guns. To send pictures to friends and family out of India, we made prints, put them in envelopes, paid a lot for stamps, with the hope that they would receive them in a week or ten days. Now, everything happens instantly. To me, that is an earth-shattering advancement.

I have always believed we ought to give back to society what we learn from our experiences. The National Book Trust asked me to write a book for novices explaining the basics of photography. I have now written another book for them titled *All About Photography* based on 50 years of my travel experiences. Sharing what I have learned and encouraging budding photographers is my way of giving back to society. ■

CRAVE SHOWCASE

by KOMMUNE

An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation



ARTISTS

PRIYA MALIK | YAHYA BOOTWALA
RAKESH TIWARI | SALMAN ELAHI
HARPREET | AKANKSHA SETHI
RAHUL SHAH

Many more...

HOST

ROSHAN ABBAS

24TH JULY 2022 | 6:30 PM
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE,
NCPA



Prima Facie

THEATRE SCREENING

AN NCPA-NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE (LONDON) PRESENTATION

WRITTEN BY SUZIE MILLER
DIRECTED BY JUSTIN MARTIN

STARRING JODIE COMER, THE EMMY AND
BAFTA AWARD-WINNING STAR OF KILLING EVE AND THE LAST DUEL

27TH JULY 2022 | 6:00 PM
GODREJ DANCE THEATRE, NCPA

Kaleidoscope

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



150 years of legacy

The year 2022 marks important milestones for Mumbai's museums. While the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya completed its centenary in January, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, the oldest museum in the city, celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. The milestone was marked on 17th May with the launch of the book, *Mumbai – A City Through Objects: 101 Stories from the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum*, and the opening of a special exhibition, *A Hall of Wonder*. The book has been edited by the Managing Trustee and Honorary Director of the museum, Tasneem Zakaria Mehta, and tells the intertwined stories of the city and the evolution of the museum through 101 artefacts from its collection. These include 17th-century maps made with watercolour and ink and coloured postcards of Bombay from the 18th and 19th centuries. The book encourages a reading of the objects from a post-colonial perspective. For more information, please visit www.bdlmuseum.org

250 years of Beethoven



Norway's Rosendal Chamber Music Festival will be taking place between 7th and 10th July. Against the backdrop of breathtaking mountains, waterfalls and fjords, the 2022 season will celebrate the music of Beethoven. The programme, initially scheduled in 2020 but delayed because of

the pandemic, will honour Beethoven's 250th birth anniversary. Founder and Artistic Director Leif Ove Andnes will be joined by over 20 artistes and speakers, including Víkingur Ólafsson, Kristian Bezuidenhout, Enrico Pace, Sveinung Bjelland, Sebastian Stevesson Ragnhild Lothe and Jan Swafford, among others. The exhibition at the festival will showcase works by Norwegian artist Olav Christopher Jenssen. The highlights of the chamber music festival include iconic works such as the Kreutzer, Pathétique Sonata and various string quartets. Beethoven's lesser-known compositions like the Fantasy for Piano, Op. 77, the four-hand piano arrangement of the Grosse Fuge, Op. 133, will be performed as well. For more information, please visit www.baroniet.no/en/rosendal-festival

Architecture of transformation



The Museum of Modern Art in New York has been exhibiting *The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985* since February this year. The exhibition seeks to address how architecture synthesised the processes of decolonisation and modernisation for the emerging nation-states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka through an assemblage of original sketches, photographs, films, audiovisual and architectural models put together by notable names. Pritzker-winning Indian architect Balkrishna V. Doshi, Sri Lanka's first licensed female architect Minnette de Silva and Pakistan's first-ever female architect Yasmeen Lari are some names whose works have been highlighted. The presentation is designed around various thematic branches such as organisation

of labour, craft traditions, agriculture, industry and infrastructure, and their role in the transformation of South Asian societies. For more information, please visit www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5439

All about Rachmaninoff



Since it returned in June 2022, the Bard SummerScape has been showcasing music, opera, theatre, dance and cabaret and will continue to do so till 14th August. The season is dedicated to one of the last great exponents of Russian Romanticism, Sergei Rachmaninoff. The specially curated, Rachmaninoff and His World, will offer a series of concerts, talks and panel discussions that aim to examine the troubled life and times of the composer. Richard Strauss's *Die Schweigsame Frau (The Silent Woman)* is to be staged in a new production by Christian R ath. Two new world premieres will grace the festival this year: Ashley Tata's original adaptation of Moli re's subversive tragicomedy, *Dom Juan*, will mark the playwright's 400th anniversary while *Song of Songs*, a new dance-theatre production, will feature original music and choreography by David Lang and Pam Tanowitz. Returning to the stage after a two-year hiatus, Bard's beloved mirrored tent, the Spiegeltent, has been hosting live music and dance events over weekends. The festival is taking place at the Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center and other venues at Bard College in New York's idyllic Hudson Valley. For more information, please visit fishercenter.fishercenter.bard.edu/whats-on/programs/summerscape/ ■

- Aishwarya Bodke

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ADIL MANUEL GUITARS
SAMANTHA NOELLA VOCALS
YOHAN PISSURLENKER BASS
PRANOY PRAVEEN DRUMS
ANAND BHAGAT PERCUSSIONS
SIDDHARTH SHANKAR GUITARS

GUEST ARTISTS
SHUBHANGI CHAKRAVARTY VOCALS
PALOMI GHOSH VOCALS

16TH JULY 2022 | 6:30 PM
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA



PRESENTS

VERONICA FUSARO
live

28TH AUGUST 2022 | 6:30 PM
TATA THEATRE, NCPA

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OPENED FOR THE LEGENDARY MARK KNOPFLER



The Performing Arts Dispatch

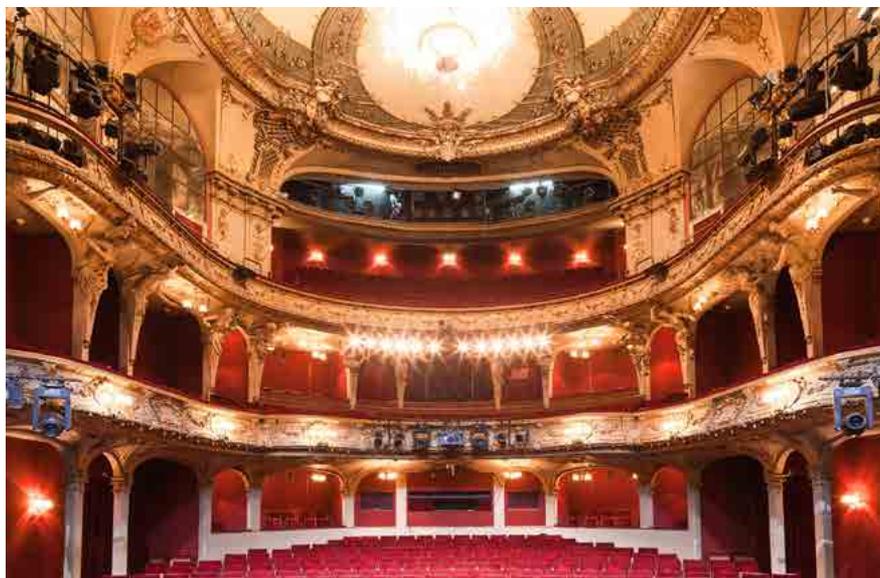
A series on houses of culture from around the world. In focus this month: Berliner Ensemble.

One could not have imagined that the site of a colossal neo-baroque structure, devoid of what fills and nurtures it—people, cheer and laughter—would turn into something poetically beautiful. Two years ago, Berliner Ensemble, the theatre company founded by Bertolt Brecht in 1949, decided to adapt to the woes of the pandemic by completely altering its seating design. The theatre uninstalled 500 of its 700 seats to adhere to the 1.5-metre distance rule. The large empty spaces became a statement in itself that the venue chose to make. The stripped-down interior was not as haunting as it was evocative, metaphorical even. It is fair to question why they would not simply block the seats or allocate them according to a predetermined plan. “We want to create an experience that is special, that will anchor itself in people’s emotional memory,” artistic director Oliver Reese told *The Guardian*.

The philosophy reflects their long pedigree stemming from the founder. Brecht was arguably one of the most influential playwrights in history. His work rose to eminence at a time of acute anarchy within the German lands, riddled with hyperinflation and political extremism after the war. It is during this time that Brecht managed to capture truth with hard-hitting criticism. In its history spanning more than a century, Berliner Ensemble too, has striven to offer a critical look at socially relevant issues, especially with Brecht’s plays.

The Theatre am Schiffbauerdamm, at the Schiffbauerdamm riverside in Berlin, has been home to the Berliner Ensemble since 1954. The building is the largest auditorium, holding nearly 700 seats. The theatre celebrates its 130th anniversary this year. The more intimate venue, Kleines Haus, in Berliner Ensemble’s annexe houses 200 audience members. Since the 2019-20 season, two new fully-equipped venues, the Neues Haus and the Werkraum, have been in operation too. The latter is emerging as a space for new and innovative formats of performing arts.

Since Reese took over the mantle as Artistic Director in 2017, Berliner Ensemble has increasingly gravitated



towards contemporary texts and subjects. A keen interest in developing artistic formats that blend new, state-of-the-art technologies with the classical components, capabilities and resources of theatre and opera has been of key focus. Efforts in the analogue and digital sphere, along with creating hybrid models of experiencing art, have also been actively pursued. A helpful feature is the German tradition of having an ensemble of actors affiliated with the theatre. It provides both flexibility and stability to expand and experiment with new ideas. This practice also turned out to be an economic advantage during the pandemic.

The resurgence of the Berliner Ensemble through the pandemic has been nothing short of impressive. The August season last year saw a new production of *The Threepenny Opera*, along with 20 premieres for the season. An endeavour to invite and embrace young, innovative and progressive storytellers has been

made to establish a “new Brecht tradition at the house.” Christina Tscharyiski’s rendition of Brecht’s *The Mother* retains his intention of appealing to the population’s consciousness about workers’ exploitation, but also ropes in ideas of consumerism, feminism and existence in a digital world. Intrepid productions like Elfriede Jelinek’s *Schwarzwasser* were widely appreciated, while Ersan Mondtag provided a neo-expressionist lens to the works of Wagner and Brecht.

Surprising new additions include an adaptation of Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible*, with 21 performers taking the audience on a ghostly atmospheric outing. The most unanticipated entry would have to be the one-woman-show, *It’s Britney, Bitch!* It plays out as a homage to America’s princess of pop, as well as a chronicle of the 14-year-long conservatorship that dissolved last year, taking away her father Jamie Spears’s control over her personal and professional life. It doubles up as a commentary on female suffering and toxic masculinity.

The experimentation is a testament to the Berliner Ensemble’s unhindered courage, and conviction for the future. The company has emerged from the whirlwind of uncertainty and stood tall, if not stronger. It shows that it knows how to hold on to tradition while embracing change. ■

- Aishwarya Bodke

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Devotional Notes

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 first of a two-part series, **Ajit Singh Paintal** deliberates on the evolution, role and use of music in religion, with a special focus on Sikhism.

For spiritual elevation and as an aid to communion with God, music plays a special role in almost all the religions of the world. It is intimately related to the heart of man and has little to do with his reasoning mind. The devotee of the music, that is evocative of emotions, thus enjoys intimate communion with God. He becomes one with God as he realises Brahma in *nada*. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Sikhs attach great importance to music and regard it as one of the means of communion with God. The Sikh Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, gave music an honoured place in their religion.

Path to enlightenment

The Hindu devotees (of *saguna* worship) composed lyrics and sang them. These are included in the kirtan. But nowhere do we find an entire religious congregation singing this kirtan as one body. Sikhism established this new tradition. All those present in a congregation are entitled to participate in the kirtan. The absence of congregational kirtan in Hinduism was probably due to its rigid caste system. (The *shudras* were not allowed to enter the temple precincts, to study Sanskrit and to participate in rituals along with the higher castes).

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, believed that this kind of discrimination was a blot on religion. He also observed that when Muslims offer namaz in a mosque, there is no distinction between a prince and a pauper. Both worship God as equals. In the spiritual sphere, this absence of discrimination inspires self-respect among the humble and the lowly. Guru Nanak's keen insight enabled him to discern this vital phenomenon and so he placed a ban on such discrimination in religion. Perhaps that was also the reason why he made kirtan congregational in character.

Hindustani music is the common heritage of Indians. Sikhism, inheriting this tradition, evolved a new system of kirtan. The kirtan performed at Kashi,

Mathura, Ayodhya and other Hindu places of worship, used to be related to the worship of gods, idols, and the *leelas* of the incarnations of Vishnu. Tulsi and Surdas (in Uttar Pradesh), Meera (in Rajasthan), Chaitanya (in Bengal), Sankardev (in Assam), Namdev and Tukaram (in Maharashtra), Narsinh Mehta (in Gujarat) and the musician-saint Purandara Dasa of the South are among the great singers of this tradition. The devadasis, too, sang in the temples in praise of the *saguna* form of God. The Sikh Gurus, combining the Gurbani (poetry) and *raga*, laid the basis for prayer and worship of the *nirguna* form of God. The kirtan rouses a deep desire for communion with God, and creates the appropriate spiritual atmosphere for realisation of the Supreme.

According to the Gurus of Sikhism, kirtan, or singing the glory of the Lord in ragas, is a light that penetrates the hardest heart and renders it fit for love of God.

The significance of the kirtan, for Sikhism, lies in the belief that it alone helps a human to attain Brahma. Kirtan thus occupies an important place in all the rites (*samskaras*) of Sikhism. After the death of a person, kirtan by the survivors is the only way in which peace is attained by his soul. As Guru Arjan has said: *Oh my tongue, do thou sing the glory of the Lord and the Saint! This alone shall lead thee to the Lord's feet.*

Kirtan is music which overflows with devotion for God, and sings his glory. In his *Vani*, Guru Arjan has called kirtan an invaluable gem that brings peace to the soul in this life and the Supreme State in the next. According to him, in *kalyug*, kirtan reigns supreme and it is only through it that one is able to attain

salvation. Since music mirrors the deep feelings of a man's heart and ministers to the thoughts of Divine Love, almost all the Sikh Gurus composed religious hymns and instructed Sikhs not to worship any man or the image of any prophet born on earth. They said, "Read these poems, recite them, and sing them and you will attain enlightenment."

Hence Sikh worship consists chiefly of recitation and singing hymns in praise of God to the accompaniment of various musical instruments. During his travels, Guru Nanak sang these hymns to the accompaniment of the rabab played by Bhai Mardana, his Muslim companion.

Ragas lead the way

The kirtan is thus an integral part of Sikhism. According to the Gurus, singing the glory of the Lord in *ragas* is kirtan. It is a light that penetrates the hardest heart and renders it fit for love of God. The Guru exhorts the Sikh community thus: As long as there is life, remember the (Lord's) name through kirtan.

From kirtan is derived the word *kirtania*, which means the singer of kirtans. The *kirtania* has received much praise in the Guru Granth. He who performs the kirtan of Gurbani is called a *ragi*. The *ragi* has been assigned an important place in the Sikh kirtan, because his duty is to sing kirtans in the *ragas*. In congregations, it is through *raga*-singing that the attention of the audience is directed towards God.

According to the Gurus, kirtan and *raga* are so closely related that they are inseparable. One of the lyrics of the Guru Granth says: The glory of Govinda is to be sung in *raga-alap*. Here, the *raga* has been personified as the priceless melody of God. In Sikhism, singing kirtans set to *ragas* has a special significance. The kirtan must always be in a *raga*. In actual fact, even a plain chant or a silent study of Gurbani is a path to heaven. But, in congregations, the kirtan must be sung in *ragas*.

In ancient India, the saints and sages

recited the mantras or the Vedas musically, in addition to singing other varieties of devotional songs which existed at the time. In time, as the concept of *raga* evolved, devotional songs came to be sung in different *ragas*. Our modern *ragas* are sung differently from the ancient *ragas*, but the fact remains that in Hinduism the relation between kirtan and *raga* is very old.

The support lent to classical music, its subsequent adoption by the Sikhs and the acceptance of the kirtan in *ragas* signified an important development. It provided an impetus to classical music. The Sikh

Gurus made classical music an integral part of the hymns they composed for singing. Had the Sikhs not made classical music a vital part of the kirtan, classical music would possibly have not enjoyed the status it does today, particularly in the Punjab. Guru Nanak used classical music in Gurbani and enhanced its significance. Classical music and poetry were thus revived and also preserved by being introduced in the Gurbani. In a way, they regained the esteem they had lost due to various historical reasons.

The spiritual renaissance, which commenced in the 14th century and lasted till the 16th century, encouraged the bhajan form of worship. Different parts of India produced eminent bhaktas, who enriched Indian sacred music with compositions of outstanding merit. During this period, Guru Nanak did the same for Punjab. With the help of Bhai Mardana, he propagated his *Vani* set to music, and the tradition was followed by the other Sikh Gurus. In time, this particular form of Sikh devotional music came to be known as Shabad Kirtan.

During his travels throughout India, Guru Nanak observed the different ways in which kirtan was performed by the followers of various sects. Perhaps he was impressed by the form and absorbed some of its positive features. Kirtan used to be performed at the time in the temples of Kashi, Ayodhya, Mathura and Vrindavan by traditional musicians (*kirtankars*). They used to set the devotional compositions of Vaishnava bhaktas to the prevalent *dhrupad* and *dhamar* styles of Hindustani music.



Guru Nanak visited almost all these holy places and closely studied different forms of music. With the help of his rababi minstrel, he may have set his own compositions in the *dhrupad* and *dhamar* styles as well as in the simple kirtan style. After Guru Nanak, the same tradition was followed by the various Sikh Gurus. Even today, one can listen to those old kirtan compositions rendered by the Sikh *ragis* who learnt them from the traditional *rababis* and Sikh *kirtanias*.

While in Hinduism the relation between kirtan and raga is very old, the subsequent adoption of Hindustani classical music by the Sikhs and the acceptance of the kirtan in ragas signified an important development

Sacred compositions

The Sikh religion was founded in the 15th century and the Sikh system of kirtan was strongly influenced by the various kirtan traditions prevalent at that time. The Sikh Gurus adopted only the more vital elements of music in their kirtan, but they completely eschewed the dance performed by Vaishnava and Shaiva devotees and by the Sufis in their *Sama* gatherings. The Sikh Gurus also rejected the rhythmical clapping of hands with which the Sufis accompanied their singing.

Thus, Sikh sacred music has a tradition dating from the times of Guru Nanak when he composed his *Shabads* in the various *ragas*. Composing *Shabads* in *ragas* was the need of the time. All the Sikh Gurus were well versed in music, understood its importance and a new kirtan tradition was born in the form of Sikh devotional music. This music was based entirely on the traditions of classical music as is proved by both the *Guru Granth Sahib* and the *Dasham Granth*, the two main scriptures of the Sikh religion.

In all, 31 *ragas* have been mentioned in the *Guru Granth*. They are: Shri, Majh, Gauri, Asa, Gujri, Devgandhari, Bihagra, Vadhans, Sorath, Dhanashri, Jaitshri, Todi, Bairari, Tilang, Suhi, Bilawal, Gaund, Ramkali, Nat-Narain, Maligaura, Maru, Tukhari, Kedara, Bhairo, Basant, Sarang, Malhar, Kanara, Kalyan, Parbhathi and Jajiwanti. The 19 *ragas* mentioned in the *Dasham Granth* are: Ramkali, Sorath, Kalian, Bilawal, Devgandhari, Khial, Tilang-kafi, Paraj, Kafi, Suhi, Sarang, Gauri, Dhanashri, Tilang, Kedara, Maru, Bhairo, Adan and Basant.

Various forms of kirtan were incorporated into Sikh devotional music. During the time of the various Sikh Gurus, the form of Sikh devotional music was based purely on the *dhrupad* style of Hindustani classical music which was then popular in the country. Sikh *rababis* and *ragis* also adopted this style of singing and composed innumerable *Shabads* from the *Guru Granth* based on the *dhrupad* style. This was a period when, in most of the Hindu temples of

The Instrumental Case

In the light of recent calls to phase out the harmonium from kirtan music, a look at the chequered history of the instrument that eventually came to be embraced by diverse genres of music.

Not too long after Alexandre-François Debain patented the harmonium in 1842 in Paris, the free-reed keyboard instrument made its way to India, where a void created by the sociopolitical circumstances of the day was waiting to be filled. Victorian morals and the anti-naught movement had attached a stigma to the profession of courtesans, many of whom were accomplished vocalists often accompanied by sarangi players. As women singers dwindled, so did the sarangi players. In time, not only was there a dearth of instrumentalists but also teachers, and as the exigencies of economics work, sarangi makers dwindled too, making the stringed instrument difficult to procure.

The harmonium made its appearance in these changing times. When it was introduced in India by the British, it was a foot-pumped instrument but was soon adapted for the seated style of Indian recitals. This remodelled version became popular and widespread.

The harmonium has had its limitations, which have been critiqued and discussed since the time of its advent. Indian music is *shruti*—or microtone-based and the physical structure of the instrument cannot produce gliding notes (*meend*), something that has been worked on to a degree. However, “strong criticism of the harmonium could not prevent musicians from liking it. Being a novel, foreign instrument, no social label could be attached to it. More importantly, it was a handy instrument, easy for the singers themselves to play and master,” writes Joep Bor, in *The Voice of the Sarangi*, a special edition of the *NCPA Quarterly Journal* (September, December 1986 & March 1987).

It would not be wrong to deduce that these characteristics of the harmonium, facilitated by conducive circumstances, led to its acceptance in folk, bhakti and film music. It was further popularised by its use in *natyasangeet*, where eventually it became a permanent fixture with musical ensembles. Practitioners of classical music embraced the harmonium in due course, and today, it is hard to come by a recital, where it does not feature in the accompanying instruments.

The recent calls to phase out the harmonium from kirtan music are rooted in a mindset opposed to its “British-ness” in addition to the belief that removing it from the Golden Temple (and gradually, all gurudwaras) would help revive other accompanying instruments, the rabab in particular.

It is important to note that the reservation about the harmonium in the past has been from a structural and stylistic point of view, whereas the debate today renders the issue cultural. Adopting an instrument—a thoroughly Indianised one at that, considering India is its biggest exporter—does not mean adopting a culture. The revival of the rabab, sarinda, taus, dilruba is a welcome idea that needs to be backed by comprehensive support—easy availability of raw material and facilitation of the financial viability to craft these instruments, quality training to play them, a promise of livelihood to those who invest years (it takes more than a few months) in learning them. But does this have to be at the cost of the harmonium and consequently, harmonium players? In the many-splendoured world of music, diverse instruments can thrive together without having to resort to an either-or conundrum. Erasing history has never done any good.

The harmonium, however, is not new to these calls of abandonment. In a bid to preserve the sarangi in the early 1940s, All India Radio (AIR) decided to ban the harmonium from all its broadcasts and for three decades, it adhered to its decision, even as the instrument continued to gain in popularity—it was even given to brides as a gift that they could play, or teach themselves to play, in their new home for some cultural nourishment, without having to step out or learn from a male teacher.

In October 1970, AIR took cognisance of the omnipresence of the harmonium and in a seminar about it, several musicians and scholars agreed that despite its severe limitations, the harmonium had established itself as a popular instrument. Some even preferred it “because its notes are flawless, unsagging and constant.”

The ban was lifted in 1972.

• Snigdha Hasan

Dwarka, Ayodhya, Mathura, Vrindavan, Pashupatinath (Kashi) and Nathdwara (Udaipur), the temple musicians employed the same style and sang Vishnu Padas based on *dhrupad*. From the 15th to the end of the 17th century, the *dhrupad* style of kirtan became popular in the Sikh gurudwaras and the *ragis* and the *rababis* used to perform kirtan to

the accompaniment of the mridanga or pakhawaj, as was the case with musicians when they sang in the *dhrupad* style of the classical style. Later, when the tabla became popular in the Punjab, it took the place of the mridanga, but the pakhawaj style was adapted (*khule-hath-ka-baj*) for playing it. That is why the Punjab style of playing the tabla is quite different from

the styles in other parts of India. When, in the course of time, *khayal* became popular, the Sikh *rababis* imbibed this style and composed many Shabads of the *Guru Granth* in the *khayal* style. ■

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This article first appeared in its entirety in the *NCPA Quarterly Journal* in June 1982 (Vol 11, Issue 2).

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*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



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Programme Guide

July 2022

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



INDIAN MUSIC



Padma Talwalkar, 2nd, Online

NCPA Music Workshop

Understanding the aesthetics of bandish presentation

A free online workshop by Padma Talwalkar

(Duration 60 mins followed by a Q&A session)

Saturday, 2nd – 11.30 am

In the context of Indian art (classical) music performance, the main objective is to portray the personality of a *raga* in an unambiguous manner, with maximum aesthetic effect. A good composition, often referred to as *bandish*, helps achieve this. Basically, *bandish* holds within its structure, elements that can be improvised upon, and hence, serves as an edifice upon which the architecture of a *raga* can be sculpted.

It becomes imperative, therefore, for a performer to understand the various modalities that could be adopted in the exploration of *bandish*. Some exploratory techniques are no doubt *gharana*-specific (school/style-specific). Nevertheless, there are facets that lie beyond the *gharana* framework, which

are crucial for enhancing the overall effect of a *raga* presentation.

Groomed by stalwarts like Gangadhar Pimpalkhare, Mogubai Kurdikar and Gajananrao Joshi, **Padma Talwalkar's** music is an eclectic mix of Jaipur and Gwalior traditions. Today, she is regarded as one of the outstanding female vocalists and a senior guru.

With a focus on *khayal bandishes* of Gwalior and Jaipur *gharanas*, this lecture-demonstration will attempt to highlight some essential aesthetic concepts that are beyond the confines of *gharana* ideology; and need to be adopted to enhance the overall aesthetic effect of a *raga* performance.

Entry Free

Registration starts on 15th June 2022

For registration: Please visit the NCPA website

(www.ncpamumbai.com) or

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DANCE

Thrayam

(120 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 2nd – 6.00 pm

Thrayam brings to life the mystical nature of the number three. All of us experience the three states of time—the past, present and future. In Hinduism, we have heard of the Trinity of Divinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva) with their female counterparts (Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati). In Sanskrit, *triguna* is the word used to describe the three fundamental aspects of nature. Kundalini Yoga specifies the importance of the human body (*deha*), breath (*prana*) and mind (*manas*).

Produced, conceptualised and curated by **Kalashri Lata Surendra**,

the poetry of Three unfolds through the exploring of *Thrayam* by renowned artistes in the field of Indian classical dance.

Kuchipudi by **Vyjayanthi Kashi**

Odissi by **Jhelum Paranjape**

Bharatanatyam by **Lata Surendra**

Kathak by **Sanjukta Wagh**

Kathak by **Manisha Jeet & Team**

Tickets:

₹100/- (Members)

₹300 & 200/- (Public)

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SCREENING



Don Carlos, 3rd, Godrej Dance Theatre

Don Carlos

by Giuseppe Verdi

Opera Screening (295 mins)

Sung in French with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Sunday, 3rd – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Don Carlo and French princess Elisabeth de Valois are betrothed; however, for reasons of state, the princess is obliged to marry Carlo's father, King Philip II of Spain. Carlo confides his love to Rodrigo, Marquis of Posa, who advises him to forget Elisabeth and ask for the governorship of Flanders, where he may ameliorate the hardships of Spain's reign. Princess Eboli, Elisabeth's lady-in-waiting, whose passionate love for

Carlo is unreturned, informs the King of Carlo's love for Elisabeth. Philip orders his rebellious son thrown into prison and questions the Grand Inquisitor on the propriety of asking for a death sentence. Thoroughly embittered, the King rails at Elisabeth for her supposed unfaithfulness. Eboli repents her rash confession and determines to rescue Carlo from prison. She accomplishes this mission in the confusion that ensues after the treacherous shooting of Rodrigo, who has been marked for death as he visits his friend. Carlo and Elisabeth meet in the monastery cloister, where a monk at the tomb of Charles V steps forward to rescue Carlo from the pursuing King and Inquisitor.

Conductor: **Patrick Furrer**

Production: **David McVicar**

Cast: **Sonya Yoncheva, Jamie Barton, Matthew Polenzani, Etienne Dupuis, Eric Owens & John Relyea**

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office now open

THEATRE

Miracle on Matunga Street

Hindi Play (130 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 3rd – 7.00 pm

Miracle on Matunga Street is the story of a family matriarch Tulsa Harry Peter who happily runs her soup kitchen and tends to the family heirloom, a 20-foot shrine of the blessed mother Velankanni Amma, which adjoins the house. This beacon of faith was commemorated on the day in 1947 when the blessed mother materialised in her father's barbershop. When the play opens, a family meeting is in progress. Daughter Nisha divulges her plan to finally "go public" with the family miracle by creating a one-woman play about the secret of the Velankanni Amma statue. But during the course of the meeting, the entire family's faith is shaken to the very core when a deathbed confession causes the family legend to unravel. The results are heartfelt and hilarious. The play delivers a solid message on faith, the lack of it, why we believe what we believe and how we can, or must, adjust to life's surprises.

Written & Hindi adaptation by **Ila Arun**

Directed by **K.K. Raina**

Cast: **Ila Arun, Rajshri Ponnappa, Prackriti Bhaargava & Raturaj Shinde**

An Antardhwani Production

Age: 14+

Tickets:

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₹500, 450 & 400/- (Public)

Box Office now open

DANCE



First Encounter, 8th, Experimental Theatre

First Encounter

(Approx. 90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Friday, 8th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in association with Club Guy & Roni, Navdhara India Dance Theatre, Slagwerk Den Haag Supported by Aaron Fernandes Entertainment

After the first three weeks of rehearsals and research in Mumbai, **Navdhara India Dance Theatre** and **Club Guy & Roni** are presenting an amalgamation of past repertoire and work-in-progress excerpts from **Fortune**. This first encounter with an audience adds a layer to an already exciting exchange: the discussion and exploration of each other's cultures and points of view on Fortune and embracing an artistic exchange that is exciting and beneficial on many levels.

The award-winning Club Guy & Roni is a national dance company in the Netherlands. They innovate and explore the boundaries between contemporary dance and other art disciplines. Together with one of the largest theatre companies in the Netherlands, Noord Nederlands Toneel, they

form NITE: National Interdisciplinary Theatre Ensemble.

Navdhara India Dance Theatre (NIDT) is a contemporary dance company based in Mumbai, combining the physical methodologies of Western dance and the spiritual philosophies of India and Indian dance, including thoughts from the ancient Indian *gurukul* system. NIDT seeks to allow newer methodologies and works of theatre and dance to come through.

Tickets:

₹360 & 270/- (Members)

₹400 & 300/- (Public)

Box Office now open

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Time Wise, 9th, Experimental Theatre

Time Wise

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 9th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Time Wise is a labour of love: we love what we do and can't wait to share it with the world. Time Wise brings together musicians who speak several different 'languages'—from the idioms of jazz and blues to Hindustani classical music. Everything we have heard, and everything we play, feeds into the new lexicon we are devising together.

Ranging from swing in the form of canonical pieces like 'Take Five' and 'Cocktails for Two' to the more rhythmically quirky originals such as 'In a Thread' and 'Fits', the set will leave the audience with more questions than answers about the shape of things to come.

Tickets:

₹675 & 450/- (Members)

₹750 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photo Workshops

Piramal Art Gallery
Sunday, 10th – 11.00 am to 6.00 pm

Cameraless Photography By Mayuresh Moghe

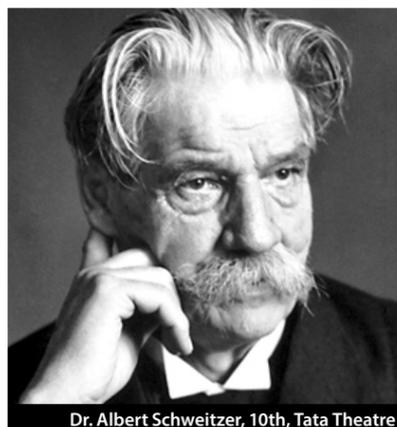
Photography means making an image with the help of light. Although the first thing that comes to our mind when we think of photography is a camera, there are several alternative methods and processes which can be used to make a photographic image without the use of a camera. This talk is about some of these processes which have been practised by image makers since the invention of photography. The speaker will also give a demo of how to make 'cyanotypes' without a camera.

Analogue B/W Photography By Madhusudan Tawde

Analogue photography has seen a revival in recent times and is becoming popular again. This talk will cover shooting with black and white films, different types of analogue film cameras and film formats. The speaker will also give a demonstration of B&W film processing while talking about the current status of analogue photography and the resources available for those interested in pursuing this form of photography.

Entry free.

THEATRE



Dr. Albert Schweitzer, 10th, Tata 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, 10th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

This tribute explores the extraordinary saga of an extraordinary man, Dr. Albert Schweitzer. 'Oganga!' brings 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. Udawadia, 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 works, 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:
₹750, 563 & 375/- (Members)
₹1,000, 750 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

FILM

Short Film Corner

Short Film Screenings
Little Theatre
Wednesday, 13th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with White Wall Screenings

There are so many wonderful short films being made in India, with auteurs at work in their own regions, and bold, new voices who are experimenting with form and technique. Short Film Corner hopes to connect movie lovers with these films and open up dialogue with filmmakers, who in turn, get a

chance to connect with their audiences. White Wall Screenings (WWS) was founded in 2017 as a community to facilitate a conversation between short filmmakers and film connoisseurs. WWS has successfully showcased more than 300 short films and also continues to conduct workshops, masterclasses and conversations around filmmaking and films.

Pravaasi – the migrant Hindi Animation Film with English Subtitles



Pravaasi, 13th, Little Theatre

Pravaasi – the migrant is an ode to the migrants that the state has forgotten. The severe pandemic lockdown brought with it immense police brutality and caused havoc in the lives of 120 million daily-wage workers across the country. Without any government assistance, the dismayed migrants, including pregnant women and young children, began walking thousands of miles towards their villages and towns. Walking for days with no money and food, some made it, others died along the way.

This film is a chronicle of those tragic events, a collective failure of the nation, the administration and its citizens to help their own people. This series of indelible images of the nation's largest man-made crisis is something that we shouldn't ever forget.

Special thanks: **Taapsee Pannu** for lending her voice and support
Written & directed by **Kireet Khurana**
Animation Direction: **Vivekananda Roy Ghatak**
Sound Design: **Farhad K. Dadyburjor**

Safar Hindi Animation Film with Subtitles

The cries of migrant workers who were left to fend for themselves during the severe pandemic lockdown with no money or support from their employers and the government are a painful

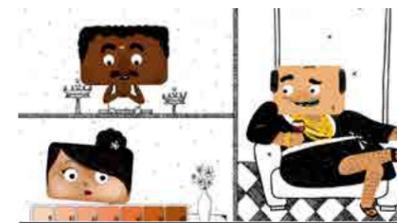


Safar, 13th, Little Theatre

reminder of a collective apathy that led to more than 120 million migrants walking endless miles, in the hope of reaching their villages on foot. Many lost their lives in the journey. *Safar* is their plea and questions that haunt them till today.

Voice: **Taapsee Pannu**
Directed by **Kireet Khurana**
Words: **Anshu Gupta**
Animation Direction: **Srijoni Bardhan, Paperboat Design Studios**
Produced by **Climb Media**
Sound Design: **Manu Rajeev**
Executive Producer: **Gurmeet Gulati**
Associate Director: **Shivangi Mittal**

What is your Brown Number? English, Tamil, Hindi Animation Film



What is your Brown number, 13th, Little Theatre

In India, everyone wants to be light-skinned. There is a sense of idealism and beauty associated with fair skin, while dark skin is treated as a problem. This film addresses this pertinent issue.

Film by **Vinnie Ann Bose**
Creative Director: **Suresh Eriyat**
Executive Producer: **Nilima Eriyat**
Guide: **Dhiman Sengupta**
Music Director: **Rajat Dholakia**
Music Arrangement: **Jolly Jose**
Sound: **John Chittilapilly, Pulz Studio**
Voice Over: **Sonia Nair, Soman Nair, Saattvic, Ram Menon, Adithya Antony Mathew & Alpesh Singh Jadeja**

Tokri (The Basket) Animation Film

A clumsy accident leads a young girl



Tokri, 13th, Little Theatre

onto the streets of Mumbai in the hope of making things right. *Tokri* is a gentle and touching father-daughter story depicted in exquisite stop-motion from Indian animation mainstay, Studio Eeksaursus.

Story & Direction: **Suresh Eriyat**
Producer: **Nilima Eriyat**
Director of Photography: **Srinivas Reddy**
Music Director: **Rajat Dholakia**
Sound Design: **Jayesh Dhakan**
Storyboard: **Suresh Eriyat, Ritvik Roy, Mukund Bhalegare & Arun Rane**
Character Design: **Nikhil Joshi, Mukund Bhalegare, Arun Rane, Amey Dhamnaskar & Pravin Kadam**
Animation: **Mukund Bhalegare, Adam Wyrwas, Sanjay Patkar & Swati Agarwal**
Art Direction: **Sandeep Meher, Krishna Kedar, Sandeep Shelar, Ashok Lokare & Bhaskar Shindey**

Daud Live-Action/Animation Film



Daud, 13th, Little Theatre

Daud is the story of a young boy who has grown up alone. His earliest memory is of his father rising early every day in preparation to climb an impossible mountain. Every day his father would run, and he would run with him. The first day that he decided not to go, was the last day he ever saw his father. With the memory of his hero still vivid in his mind, the son sets out to finish what his father started.

Written & directed by **Nihar Palwe**
Creative Producers: **Karan Nagwekar & Shubham Sanap**
Starring: **Anud Singh Dhaka**

Narration: **Prit Kamani**
Original Music: **Adith Anande**
Animation: **Arindam K Duttaa**
Sound Design: **Pranav Shukla**
VFX: **Amit Housilal Malviya**
VFX Studio: **Visual Birds Studio**
Animation Team: **Addayta Biswas & Kratika Sunkar**

The film screenings 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 Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Indian Composers

Friday, 15th to Sunday, 17th July

Supported by HSBC India

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

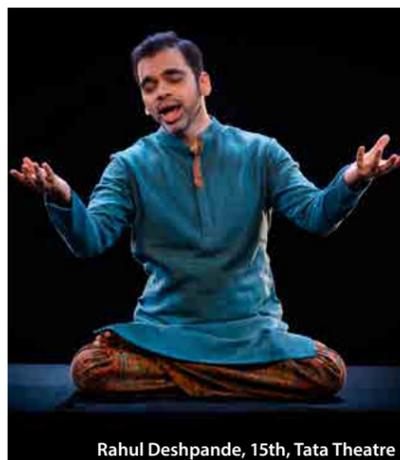
The three-day festival will showcase some of the most treasured works of the great composers of Indian music in varied genres, presented by eminent artistes.

Celebrating 75 years of Indian independence, this edition will showcase some iconic compositions of legendary composers who are witness to, both, pre-independence and post-independence eras in the history of India.

Vasanttrao Deshpande and Kumar Gandharva by Rahul Deshpande Gajananrao Joshi, Dinkar Kaikini and Ramashreya Jha by Ulhas Kashalkar

Tata Theatre
Friday, 15th – 6.30 pm

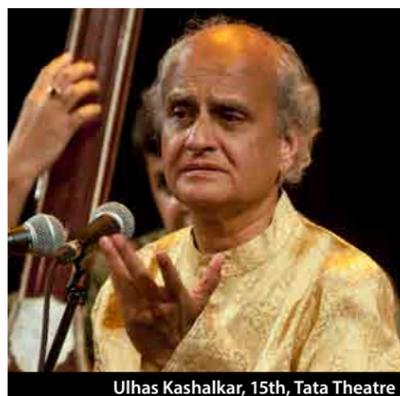
Rahul Deshpande has been mentored by several reputed teachers including Mukul Shivputra and Gangadharbua Pimpalkhare. Deeply inspired by Kumar Gandharva's music, Deshpande is a versatile vocalist with a wide-ranging repertoire. Besides live concerts, he acts in musical plays (*sangeet-natak*) and has sung for the popular film *Katyar Kaljat*



Rahul Deshpande, 15th, Tata Theatre

Ghusali. Deshpande has also depicted the character of his grandfather and renowned classical vocalist, Vasant Rao Deshpande, in the latest film *Mee Vasant Rao*. Deshpande will present select compositions of Vasant Rao Deshpande and Kumar Gandharva. The repertoire will include *bada* and *chhota khayal*, *natyageet* and *nirguni bhajan*.

Ulhas Kashalkar has had the privilege of training with many reputed vocalists including his father N. D. Kashalkar, Ram Marathe and Gajananrao Joshi. Endowed with a mellifluous voice



Ulhas Kashalkar, 15th, Tata Theatre

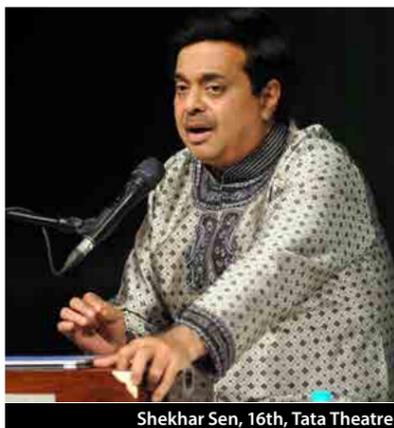
and command over a wide repertoire of well-known and rare *ragas*, his music reflects a harmonious blend of Gwalior, Agra and Jaipur traditions. Today, he is also regarded as a senior guru, mentoring several promising students.

Kashalkar will present select compositions of Gajananrao Joshi, Dinkar Kaikini and Ramashreya Jha. The presentation will include *bada* and *chhota khayal* and *tarana*.

Tickets:
₹600, 480 & 375/- (Members)
₹800, 640 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Bhakti Sangeet ki Indradhanushi Yatra: a bouquet of devotional forms

Concept & curation: Shekhar Sen
Singers: Shekhar Sen, Manjusha Patil Kulkarni, Abhijeet Ghoshal & others
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 16th – 6.30 pm



Shekhar Sen, 16th, Tata Theatre

For thousands of years, the Indian subcontinent has been home to several faiths and religious beliefs. In fact, some of them have originated in this land, which is distinguished for its multiethnic and multilingual ethos. No wonder, therefore, that multiple movements of *bhakti* (devotion) were born here and continue to flourish despite constraints and challenges of the modern times.

Consequently, the devotional and spiritual positions held by society at various points in history, have had ample reflections in the domain of the performing arts.

This event is conceptualised, curated and led by Shekhar Sen, a celebrated music composer, lyricist and actor who is internationally known for his superhit mono-act musical plays: *Tulsidas*, *Kabir*, *Vivekanand* and *Soordas*. The presentation will provide glimpses of artistic works conveying devotional leanings, especially those created during the last century by various artistes.

Starting with the reformist movement led by the great visionary V. D. Paluskar in 1922, artistes such as **Shekhar Sen, Manjusha Patil Kulkarni, Abhijeet Ghoshal** and others, will take the audience on a musical journey through the century with an array of forms from various regions: ranging

from *pad*, *bhajan*, *abhang*, *shabad kirtan*, *baul*, to patriotic song, film song, etc. in various languages. The event will also include some interesting and unknown treasures presented by artistes from the folk and tribal communities from the remotest places of our multicultural country.

Tickets:
₹750, 600 & 450/- (Members)
₹1,000, 800 & 600/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

A Tribute to Salil Chowdhury

Concept, curation & presentation: Shantanu Moitra
Singers: Shaan, Vijay Prakash, Sadhana Sargam, Antara Chowdhury, Adriz Ghosh and a 20-member choir with musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Sunday, 17th – 6.30 pm

This is a tribute to one of the greatest composers by another inspired



Shantanu Moitra, 17th, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

composer.

Under the baton of **Shantanu Moitra**, a renowned music composer known for his landmark Bollywood films, a group of prominent singers and instrumentalists will showcase some evergreen works of another celebrated composer, Salil Chowdhury.

The presentation will be interspersed with reminiscences about the maestro as shared by his daughter, Antara Chowdhury, who is also a well-known singer.

The ensemble will be supported by a group of instrumentalists including the musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India.

Tickets:
₹1,500, 1,200, 900 & 600/- (Members)
₹2,000, 1,600, 1,200 & 800/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office for the Festival now open

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Adil Manuel, 16th, Experimental Theatre

An Evening of Brazilian Jazz

Featuring
The Adil Manuel Collective
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 16th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The Adil Manuel Collective brings to you a very special Brazilian jazz set. It will present music by Brazilian jazz musicians and composers like Hermeto Pascoal, Tom Jobim, and more. The Collective will feature **Samantha Noella** (vocals), **Yohaán Pissurlenker** (bass), **Pranoy Praveen** (drums), **Anand Bhagat** (percussions), **Siddharth Shankar** and **Adil Manuel** (guitar), and also a few guest musicians. Don't forget to book your tickets as you wouldn't want to miss this very special set.

Tickets:
₹675 & 450/- (Members)
₹750 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office now open

THEATRE

The Primetime Theatre Co. celebrates 31 years with two of their much-loved productions:

Salaam Noni Appa
English Play
(90 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 17th – 4.30 pm

Based on Twinkle Khanna's charming short story 'Salaam Noni Appa' from her bestseller *The Legend of Lakshmi Prasad*, this is a delightful and heart-warming tale of an autumn romance. Noni Appa, a mature widow and her sister Binnie, are polar opposites, whose world after marriage, children and widowhood is once again a shared one in which they laugh, bicker, fight, love and spend their days in a familiar, comfortable, if staid, manner. And then one day, Noni Appa suddenly finds herself falling in love with a married man a few years younger than her and is torn between choosing companionship over respectability. *Salaam Noni Appa* is a play about breaking stereotypes, being open to new adventures, being true to oneself and rediscovering what makes life really worth living.

Written by **Twinkle Khanna**
Adapted by **Adhir Bhat**
Directed by **Lillete Dubey**
Cast: **Lillete Dubey, Yateen Karyekar, Jayati Bhatia, Rishi Khurana & Gillian Pinto**

Age: 12+

Dance Like a Man
English Play
(90 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 17th – 7.30 pm

Dance Like a Man, 650 shows on and performed across five continents, tells the fascinating story of Jairaj and Ratna, two Bharatanatyam dancers past their prime, which is contrasted with that of their daughter Lata, who is on the brink of establishing herself as a brilliant dancer. Her imminent success creates tension and jealousy, and the audience is drawn into the dark secrets of family relationships and conflicts between generations. The play probes the surface of the characters to question their deeper motivations, but the mode is comic rather than tragic, even though the concerns are serious, and you are never sure whether to laugh or cry.

Written by **Mahesh Dattani**
Directed by **Lillete Dubey**
Cast: **Lillete Dubey, Ananth Mahadevan, Suchitra Pillai & Joy Sengupta**

Age: 12+

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

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Young Talent
Western Music Concert
Experimental Theatre
Wednesday, 20th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA & The Stop-Gaps Cultural Academy Presentation

The Budding Brigade concert gives musically talented children between the ages of seven and fifteen the opportunity to perform on stage before a discerning audience. The brigade this year comprises pianists **Mihika Agarwal, Zara Andhyarujina, Althea Francesca De Souza, Ayesha Carmen Desouza, Joseph Anand Ahilan, Yuvraj Kokkili, Ryan Dorjee Lama, Cassandra Jessica Paiva** and **Arin Swadi**; singers **Aanya Pillai** and **Ananya Mohan Tawakley**. These children will enthral you with a vibrant selection of music from classical to modern, including the works of Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Gershwin, Granados, Handel, Haydn, Kuhlau, Lady Gaga, Liszt, Mozart, Pescetti, Schubert and many more.

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

DANCE

Catalyst
An evening celebrating choreographies born during lockdown
Kuchipudi by Parvathy Menon, Odissi by Mitali Varadkar & Shreya Sabharwal and Kathak by Sanjukta Sinha & troupe (approx. 90 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Thursday, 21st – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The national lockdown may have taken away a lot of privileges from us,



Parvathy Menon, 21st, Experimental Theatre



Shreya Sabharwal and Mitali Varadkar, 21st, Experimental Theatre

but it has also been a good teacher, a catalyst that has sown seeds of new knowledge and forced artistes to start thinking out of the box to create work never thought of before.

This evening will feature choreographies that have been born during the lockdown, some of which have been presented online in a limited space to suit the mobile camera screen and will now be remodelled to be featured on a live performance stage. There will be presentations by group members who have redesigned a choreography that was originally created by merging videos shot in their individual spaces. The NCPA brings them all together, not online but physically, after a long time.

Tickets:
₹360 & 270/- (Members)
₹400 & 300/- (Public)



Sanjukta Sinha, 21st, Experimental Theatre

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

FILM

Reality Check
Documentary Film Screening
Little Theatre
Thursday, 21st – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Cinema Collective

The NCPA has revived the Reality Check film series, which was started in 2014, to promote and encourage documentary filmmakers in India, whose work reflects life and culture in the country today in a provocative blend of creativity and integrity.

Happiness Class
English Film (51 mins)

Happiness Class is a journey through the unique and fascinating world of children: their preoccupations, their worries, and most importantly, their idea of happiness. Set in the context of an experimental happiness curriculum, inspired by the ideas of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and included as part of formal pedagogy in schools run by



Happiness Class, 21st, Little Theatre

the Delhi government, *Happiness Class* explores this landscape in schools and diverse neighbourhoods, with resident and refugee families, across the metropolis of New Delhi.

Children speak of their fears, stresses and joys, parents talk of their aspirations for their children, and teachers share their pedagogic experiences in the context of the larger world. Using a range of simple and universal art exercises, the film engages in intimate conversations with children; and together with playful animation, sketches the possibilities and challenges of 'happiness' being a subject in a school curriculum. In an increasingly competitive world, struggling with the challenges of conflict, segregation and polarisation, the film asks what the pursuit of happiness really means, and what role education can play.

Directed by **Samina Mishra**

The film screenings 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 Promising Artistes Series

Tanay Rege (tabla)
Somdatta Chatterjee (khayal)
(Approx. 75 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 22nd – 6.30 pm

Tanay Rege has studied the tabla for seven years under Praveen Karkare at Sharda Sangeet Vidyalaya. Currently, he is continuing the *taleem* of Punjab



Tanay Rege, 22nd, Experimental Theatre



Somdatta Chatterjee, 22nd, Experimental Theatre

gharana under Yogesh Samsi as part of 'Support to Guru' initiative. A holder of scholarships from several institutions, including the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT), Rege has also been conferred with numerous awards. He stood first at the All India Shri Baba Harivallabh Sangeet Sammelan held in Jalandhar in 2016. He won a gold medal more than once at the University Youth festival. He has performed at various festivals and on prestigious platforms including the Yuvawani programme of AIR, IIT Bombay, Swarankit Yuva Mohatsav, among many others. He has accompanied reputed artistes like Tulsidas Borkar, Babanrao Haldankar, Rahul Deshpande, Mahesh Kale and many more.

Born in a musical family in 1994, **Somdatta Chatterjee** has been primarily trained under the guidance of her father Subhashish Chatterjee, uncle Snehashish Chatterjee (one of the

senior disciples of Jayanta Bose) and grandmother Arati Chatterjee (disciple of the exponent of Bishnupur *gharana* Gopeshwar Bandopadhyay). She has also studied with renowned artiste and veteran guru of Agra *gharana*, Subhra Guha. Chatterjee stood first in the *Thumri-Dadra* and *Bhajan* section of the Talent Search Contest at the Dover Lane Music Conference in 2014. She has been awarded the National Scholarship in *Khayal* from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Chatterjee has also successfully participated at various competitions across the country, like Murari Smriti Sangeet Sammilani, Sangeet Milon Classical Voice of India, among others. In 2017, she was the Citi-NCPA Scholarship Winner for Young Musician. Chatterjee, who is a B-High artiste of All India Radio, Kolkata, has performed at various organisations in France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands with her husband, sarod player Abhisek Lahiri.

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

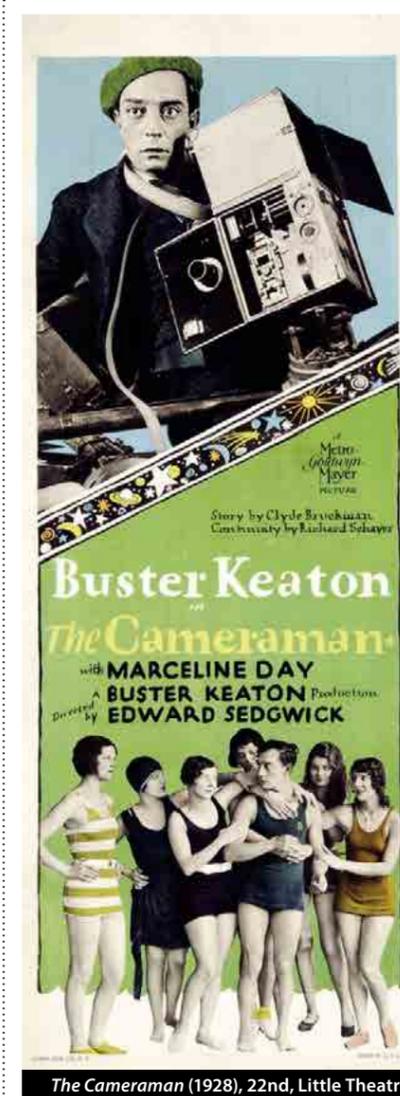
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Movies Under the Stars
The Cameraman (1928)
Film Screening
(B&W – 69 mins)
Little Theatre
Friday, 22nd – 6.30 pm

An NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation Presentation

The Cameraman is a 1928 American silent comedy widely considered to be Buster Keaton's last great masterpiece. Coming into prominence at the same time as Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd, Keaton was a giant of American comedy. His daring comic stunts, which he performed himself, without camera trickery, quickly became the stuff of legend in film history.

In *The Cameraman*, Keaton plays a bumbling photographer turned newsreel cameraman doing his best to beat his rival and impress his lady love as well as his new boss despite his obvious inexperience. His first attempt at using the movie camera yields almost experimental results with the footage moving backwards and forwards with



The Cameraman (1928), 22nd, Little Theatre

eerily superimposed images. Intricate set pieces and manic gags, shot on the streets of New York City and in the studio, make for a masterclass in comedy with unforgettable scenes in a cramped changing room, a gangland shootout in Chinatown and even the introduction of a monkey sidekick. *Slant Magazine's* review described the film as "one of Keaton's most self-reflective films and an ode to the unexpected and elusive lightning-in-a-bottle nature of filmmaking."

Directed by **Edward Sedgwick**
Produced by **Buster Keaton**
Story by **Clyde Bruckman & Lew Lipton**

Cast: **Buster Keaton, Marceline Day, Harold Goodwin, Sidney Bracy & Harry Gribbon.**

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis for NCPA members.

SCREENING



Lucia Di Lammermoor, 23rd, Godrej Dance Theatre

Lucia Di Lammermoor

by Gaetano Donizetti
Opera Screening (205 mins)
Sung in Italian with English Subtitles
Godrej Dance Theatre
Saturday, 23rd – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) composed about 75 operas plus orchestral and chamber music in a career abbreviated by mental illness and premature death. Most of his works disappeared from the public eye after his death but critical and popular opinion of the rest of his huge opus has grown considerably over the past 50 years. Donizetti's compelling romantic drama *Lucia di Lammermoor* is an example of the bel canto school of 19th-century Italian opera. Based on Scottish novelist Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the opera traces rival families, thwarted love and unhealthy obsessions in a powerful tale of an innocent woman manipulated by the men in her life.

Conductor: **Riccardo Frizza**
Production: **Simon Stone**
Cast: **Nadine Sierra, Javier Camarena, Artur Ruciński & Matthew Rose**

Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)
Box Office: 26th June for Members & 29th June for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

NCPA Legends

A Tribute to Chaka Khan & Stevie Wonder by Holly Petrie
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 23rd – 6.30 pm



Holly Petrie, 23rd, Tata Theatre

Weaving together the tracks of Stevie Wonder and Chaka Khan, **Holly Petrie** takes us on a journey through popular music history telling a story of the evolution of R&B, funk and soul.

Always seeking to challenge herself and bring a new dimension to some of the industry greats, Petrie has put together some of the most vocally challenging and well-known tracks from these two multi-genre legends. Through them, she hopes to illustrate to the audience how widespread these two artistes' influence has been in the music industry.

Despite seemingly disparate careers, Wonder and Khan have a surprising number of links, performing, writing on or paying tribute to many of each other's tracks over the years. This performance includes two great examples of this collaboration, with Petrie and her band taking on Khan's ultimate funk song 'Tell Me Something Good' which was written by Wonder, and her 1984 cover of Prince's 'I Feel for You', during which Wonder joined in to play the harmonica. We will also see Wonder's homage to his influences in his 1971 cover of 'We Can Work It Out' by The Beatles, which earned him his 5th Grammy nomination. Again, Khan then chose to cover and release this track a decade later, creating yet another thread between her and Wonder.

Tickets:
₹900, 750, 600 & 375/- (Members)
₹1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public) (Plus GST)
Box Office now open

SCREENING



Prima Facie, 27th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Prima Facie

Theatre Screening
(Approx. 120 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Wednesday, 27th – 6.00 pm

An NCPA-National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

Jodie Comer, the Emmy (for *Killing Eve*) and BAFTA (for *Help*) winner, makes her West End debut in the U.K. premiere of **Suzie Miller's** award-winning play *Prima Facie*. Tessa is a young, brilliant barrister. She has worked her way up from working-class origins to be at the top of her game; defending, cross-examining and winning. An unexpected event forces her to confront the lines where the patriarchal power of the law, burden of proof and morals diverge. *Prima Facie* takes us to the heart of where emotion and experience collide with the rules of the game. **Justin Martin** directs this solo tour de force, captured live from the intimate Harold Pinter Theatre in London's West End.

Content Advisory: Contains sensitive subject matter including references to sex, violence and rape.

Age: 18+
Tickets:
₹360/- (Members)
₹400/- (Public)
Box Office: 26th June for Members & 29th June for Public

INDIAN MUSIC

Parvaaz ka Agaaz: Wings of Fire

A musical drama on the life of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam
Script & soundtrack: Gulzar

HELEN MURRAY (PRIMA FACIE)



Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, 29th, Tata Theatre

(Approx. 70 mins)
Tata Theatre
Friday, 29th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in association with Sanskaar Valley School, Bhopal

A brilliant scientist, an exemplary President, an academician, a writer, a philosopher and a visionary who believed that we are all born with a divine fire within us, Dr. Abdul Kalam was a role model and an inspiration to millions of Indians, especially for the younger generation.

His extraordinary journey through various stages: from the young carefree man in Rameswaram to an engineering student following his passion, to the aerospace scientist who took India's space programme to another level, to a President like none other, is brought to life through an enactment from his autobiography *Wings of Fire* narrated in the voice of the eminent poet and writer Gulzar. Over 60 students of the Sanskaar Valley School, Bhopal, through lyrical dance movements and theatrical representation, enact the various events that influenced Kalam and led him to achieve all that he did in life.

His inspirational triad: aspiration (*khwahish*), hope (*umeed*) and confidence (*yakeen*) is sure to stay with the young actors in the play as well as the audience, young and old, long after the curtain call.

Entry free on a first-come-first-served basis.

INDIAN MUSIC

Moner Manush

(100 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 29th – 7.00 pm

A Swaraanuraagee Presentation

Moner Manush is a show where we meet our soul through Baul music. Baul is a serene, spiritual and liberal form of Bengali folk culture. In this form of music, the entire body, mind and soul is utilised to connect with the divine. The Bauls use their voice to the accompaniment of *ektara* (a one-stringed instrument), *duggi* (a small percussion instrument) and *nupur* (anklets). They sing and dance to tell their story through their music. This show is about introspection and self-discovery. It's the journey of a soul, from its conception to its evaporation. The proceeds of the show will be donated to the Sanatan Siddhashram in Bengal which works to preserve Baul tradition and propagate Baul philosophy. The performer and scriptwriter, Dr. Uttara Chousalkar, a vocalist well versed in classical and folk music forms, is a disciple of Dr. Susheelatai Pohannkar. Since 2014, she has been under the tutelage of world-renowned Baul practitioner Parvathy Baul.

The host and narrator for this show is **Annie Arakkal Marwaha** who is a radio host, actor, dancer, content creator and collaborator.

Performed by **Uttara Chousalkar & Annie Arakkal Marwaha**
Produced by **Sudhanshu Chousalkar**

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

THEATRE

Jis Lahore Nahi Dekhya

Hindi Play (130 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 30th – 6.30 pm

Jis Lahore Nahi Dekhya, Asghar Wajahat's powerful human saga, is a story of two communities who have suffered the horrors of Partition first-hand and still have the strength and humanity to rise above petty hatred. This important message of brotherhood goes beyond the evil politician and the fanatic to make a difference to the common man.

In the light of the spate of the recent terror attacks around the world, it has become imperative to drive home the message of 'tolerance and mutual

respect' to prevent the birth of future terrorists. We need to continually remind ourselves that lines may divide countries, but they cannot divide human beings.

Written by **Asghar Wajahat**
Designed & directed by **Dinesh Thakur**

Cast: **Preeta Mathur Thakur, Aman Gupta, Atul Mathur, Brij Bhushan Sawhney, Ajay Chaurey, Meena Vaibhav, Sonal Mathur, Shankar Iyer, Rohit Choudhary, Rajat Yadav, Mani Pillai, Jay Prakash & Jawed Rehman**

An Ank Production

Tickets:
₹540, 450 & 360/- (Members)
₹600, 500 & 400/- (Public) (Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

THEATRE

Pink is the New Black

English Play (100 mins)
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 30th – 7.30 pm

Seven Indian women download a digital video diary app in which they share their intimate and personal secrets. They may be complete strangers to each other, but they have something in common. From a colonial princess to a snobbish teenager, from a domestic worker to a multinational corporate honcho, everybody uses this app, and funnily enough, they find a way to communicate with each other.

Written by **Meherzad Patel**
Directed by **Danesh A. R. Khambata**
Cast: **Dilnaz Irani, Avantika Ganguly, Karla Singh, Meghana Telang, Salone Mehta, Alysha Khodaiji & others**

Produced by **Silly Point Productions**

Tickets:
₹1,500, 1,125, 750, 600 & 375/- (Members)
₹2,000, 1,500, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public) (Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

What's Next

August & September 2022

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

INDIAN MUSIC

Mukta: The voices of women today

Friday, 5th to Sunday, 7th August

An NCPA Presentation

Supported by Dabur India

Celebrating the grand occasion of 75 years of Indian independence, this three-day festival features musical presentations conceived, composed as well as led by prominent women artistes.

Women, Sexuality, and Song

Concept, composition and vocal rendition: Shubha Mudgal

Supported by Aneesh Pradhan (tabla) and Sudhir Nayak (harmonium)

Tata Theatre

Friday, 5th August – 6.30 pm



Shubha Mudgal, 5th August, Tata Theatre

For centuries, women have featured as protagonists in Indian poetry and song. From the female divine to the *nayikas* and *ganikas*, the presence of women has been conspicuous in Indian classical literature and songs. Often, these verses and songs were penned by male poets writing in the female voice, thus

transcending certain gender barriers that were otherwise insurmountable. And yet, their writing was coloured by the social context in which they were situated.

A renowned vocalist and composer, **Shubha Mudgal** presents a selection of verses penned by great masters of Indian poetry that reflect perspectives on sexuality, beauty, societal norms and stigmas related to women of a previous era. Set to music by Mudgal, the verses convey stories of women, some full of sensuality and unabashed eroticism, others of the terrible, tragic challenges and stigmas that women continue to face and fight to this day and age.

Tickets:
₹600, 480 & 375/- (Members)
₹800, 640 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Shiva-Shakti

Concept: Jayanthi Kumaresh

Presentation: Jayanthi Kumaresh (Saraswati veena) Charulatha Ramanujam (violin)

Supported by Patri Satishkumar (mridangam), Giridhar Udupa (ghatam)

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 6th August – 6.30 pm



Jayanthi Kumaresh, 6th August, Tata Theatre

The event is based on how the supreme forces of the feminine and masculine—the *lasya* and *tandava*—intertwine aesthetically in the form of blissful music.

These elements are represented by melodies and rhythms blending through the *ragas* and *talas* of the South Indian tradition. As the divine feminine manifests Herself in the form of the veena; being the musical instrument in the hands of Saraswati, the Hindu Goddess of learning and music, the musical dialogue is aptly led by **Jayanthi Kumaresh**, a well-known veena player. While the silence between the notes of the veena is masterfully filled by the violin, leading to a seamless melody, the robust masculine aspect of *tandava* manifests through the pulsating rhythms of two percussion instruments: mridangam and ghatam.

The *lasya* and *tandava* thus join hands to create a colourful spectrum of sound textures, and the music thus formed, with its myriad forms of expression, reminds us of how even the opposite forces coexist seamlessly to make life beautiful and meaningful.

Tickets:
₹600, 480 & 375/- (Members)
₹800, 640 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Tiranga

Concept: Kaushiki Chakraborty

Presentation: Kaushiki Chakraborty & ensemble with vocalists and instrumentalists from the North and South Indian classical and folk music traditions, and the students of the SOI Music Academy

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Sunday, 7th August – 6.30 pm



Kaushiki Chakraborty, 7th August, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

The event is conceived keeping in mind the three colours of our national flag.

Saffron (perceived as the colour of dawn and dusk, courage and also of renunciation or *vairagya*) will be depicted with a *ragamala* composition presented by child artistes. Furthermore, there will be an instrumental presentation of Rabindranath Tagore's 'Ekla Chalo Re' and vocal chants.

Green (regarded as the colour of harvest/fertility as well as the colour of youth/exuberance) will be depicted through a Bengali folk song followed by a duet between the two young artistes in the North and South Indian music traditions.

Finally, white (seen as the colour of faith, innocence and hope) will be depicted by prayers of different faiths and a *tarana* composition, culminating in 'Vande Mataram'.

Tickets:
₹900, 750, 600 & 450/- (Members)
₹1,200, 1,000, 800 & 600/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office for the Festival: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

The Wunderkinds

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 6th August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

After an enthralling and successful show, which saw three standing ovations in 2019, The Wunderkinds are back to entertain audiences with melodic, rhythmic and toe-tapping music. As part of the NCPA Performance Series, The Wunderkinds will showcase talented young musicians (aged 1 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:
₹675 & 450/- (Members)
₹750 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

DANCE

Celebrating 75 years of India's Independence with Classical & Folk Dances of India

Journey of Footprints

Co-curated by Keka Sinha & Harikrishna Kalyanasundaram

(Approx. 90 mins)



Keka Sinha, 14th August, Experimental Theatre



Harikrishna Kalyanasundaram, 14th August, Experimental Theatre

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 14th August – 3.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

A presentation by senior and up-and-coming artistes of Mumbai showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Indian classical and folk traditions through dance.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 2.50 pm.

Sanskriti Gatha

The Story of a Culture's Journey from the Formless to the Form

Co-curated by Mandakini Trivedi & Shila Mehta

(Approx. 90 mins)

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 14th August – 6.00 pm



Mandakini Trivedi, 14th August, Tata Theatre



Shila Mehta, 14th August, Tata Theatre

An NCPA Presentation

A series of phenomenal performances lined up by artistes of Mumbai, celebrating the joy of Independence.

Tickets:
₹225, 150 & 75/- (Members)
₹300, 200 & 100/- (Public)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

INDIAN MUSIC

An NCPA Presentation

Artistes: Gulzar, Shantanu Moitra, Papon, Ambi Subramaniam, Prateek Srivastava, Mehtab Ali Niazi, Sridhar Parthasarathy, Abhay Sopori, Lakhan and musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Sunday, 14th August – 10.00 pm

We have the honour and privilege of ushering in the 76th year of Indian independence with **Gulzar**, the celebrated poet, writer, lyricist and film director. This living legend was born in pre-independent India, at a place that is in today's Pakistan.

On the other hand, **Shantanu**



Gulzar, 14th August, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre



Shantanu Moitra, 14th August, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Moitra, the renowned music composer known for his many landmark Bollywood films, represents the generation nurtured in the environment of post-independent India.

With his works in Hindi, specially written for this grand occasion, Gulzar will take us through the journey of 75 years of free India. Around these verses, Moitra will weave original compositions specially created for this landmark event. An ensemble of vocalists and instrumentalists from the world of Indian art and folk music will perform the compositions. In some parts, musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India will also join in.

During the celebration of 50 years of India's independence at the NCPA, legendary artistes, including the greats like Ravi Shankar, Bismillah Khan, Girija Devi and Zakir Hussain, had performed here.

Gulzar's poetry and Moitra's music will take the story forward on the same stage.

Tickets:
₹1,800, 1,500, 1,200, 900 & 600/- (Members)
₹2,400, 2,000, 1,600, 1,200 & 800/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Songs of Freedom

Celebrating 75 Glorious Years of India's Independence
Tata Theatre
Monday, 15th August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Merlin Dsouza – Music Director

Featuring: Orchestra of the Armed Forces, Vivinne Pocha, Shazneen Arethna, Ronit Chaterji, Dwayne Gamree, Saurabh Suman, Jehangir Jehangir, Rhys Sebastian, Yoko Rai, Shanaya Menezes & Jaedah

Songs of Freedom, musically directed by pianist Merlin Dsouza, brings you melodies that inspire, entertain, and celebrate the glorious 75 years of freedom. On stage with the Orchestra of the Armed Forces, vocalists, rappers, leading musicians of the country and a ventriloquist for an evening that celebrates India's journey through music.

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

THEATRE

I'm Bawa and I Know It!

Parsi Gujarati Comedy
(100 mins)
Tata Theatre
Tuesday, 16th August – 5.00 pm & 7.30 pm
Saturday, 20th August – 6.30 pm

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

Keki's parents are selling their flat in Cusrow Baug and migrating to Canada, but their rebel son Keki doesn't want to come along. The Parsi Panchayat Trustee informs him that he can only keep the flat if he gets married to a Parsi girl before they leave for Canada within 30 days. What follows is a laugh riot.

Written & directed by **Meherzad Patel**
Cast: **Azmin Mistry, Danesh Irani, Danesh Khambata** & others

A Silly Point Production

Tickets:
₹900, 750, 600 & 375/- (Members)
₹1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

DANCE

August Dance Residency 2022

Tata Theatre & Experimental Theatre
Thursday, 18th & Friday, 19th August

An NCPA Presentation

As part of the residency this year, the NCPA invites Kathak Kendra, a premier dance institution for the Indian classical dance form of Kathak, and a unit of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India's National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama, situated in New Delhi and established in 1964. The workshop and performance will include teaching and presenting some of the finest choreographies of the legendary Birju Maharaj as well as some new choreographies by the faculty members at Kathak Kendra.

Tickets:
₹450, 300 & 225/- (Members)
₹600, 400 & 300/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

SCREENING

Hamlet

by **Brett Dean**
Opera Screening (195 mins)
Sung in English with English Subtitles
Godrej Dance Theatre
Thursday, 25th August – 6.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

An opera in five acts, *Hamlet* captures all kinds of settings beginning with a funeral leading on to a wedding, the visitation of ghosts asking for Hamlet's revenge, conspiracy theories with Polonius about Hamlet's love for Ophelia, a play within the opera to reveal guilt, cruelty, murder and truth, confessions of Hamlet's brother, madness and mad plans to avenge Hamlet's father Polonius, a second funeral and much more. When Australian composer Brett Dean's *Hamlet* had its world premiere at the Glyndebourne Festival in 2017, *The Guardian* declared, "New opera doesn't often get to sound this good..."



Hamlet, 25th August, Godrej Dance Theatre

Shakespeare offers a gauntlet to composers that shouldn't always be picked up, but Dean's *Hamlet* rises to the challenge."

Conductor: Nicholas Carter
Production: Neil Armfield
Cast: **Brenda Rae, Sarah Connolly, Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen, Christopher Lowrey, Allan Clayton, David Butt Philip, William Burden, Jacques Imbrailo, Rod Gilfry & John Relyea**

Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)
Box Office: 26th July for Members & 29th July for Public

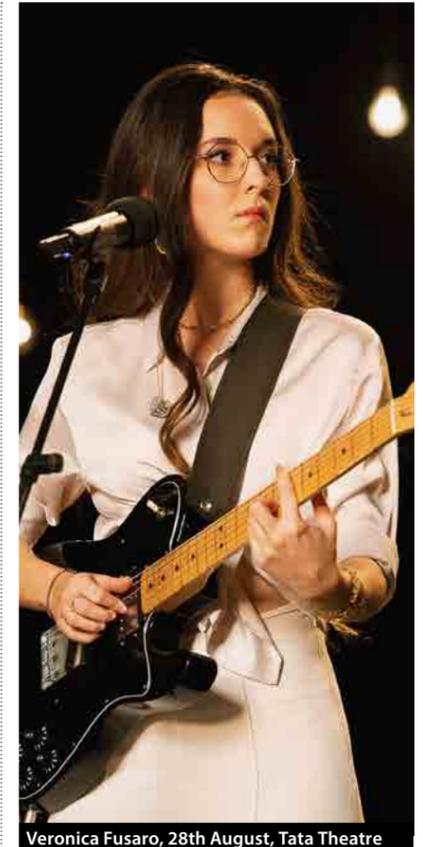
INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Veronica Fusaro Live in Concert

Tata Theatre
Sunday, 28th August – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The NCPA presents the stunning Swiss singer, songwriter, performer **Veronica Fusaro**. At just 24, Fusaro has already performed over 350 concerts worldwide including Glastonbury, Eurosonic, the Winter Olympics and more. The songstress also impressed Dire Straits legend Mark Knopfler when she opened for him at the Arena of Nîmes in France in 2019. Fusaro's influences



Veronica Fusaro, 28th August, Tata Theatre

include Frank Ocean, Amy Winehouse and Lana Del Rey. Her work is marked by something fresh from a young musician pushing boundaries, skilfully balancing between the depth and playfulness of her music which is pure, powerful and intimate.

Tickets:
₹900, 750, 600 & 375/- (Members)
₹1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office: 9th July for Members & 12th July for Public

DANCE

Catalyst

An evening celebrating choreographies born during lockdown
Mohiniattam by Saji Menon, Kathak by Diksha Rawat & Vinita Venugopal and Bharatanatyam by Nirupama Rajendra & Troupe
(Approx. 90 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 11th September – 5.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The national lockdown may have taken away a lot of privileges from us but it has also been a good teacher, a catalyst

that has sown seeds of new knowledge and forced artistes to start thinking out of the box to create work never thought of before. This evening will feature choreographies that have been born during the lockdown, some of which have been presented online in a limited space to suit the mobile camera screen and will now be remodelled to be featured on a live performance stage. There will be presentations by group members who have redesigned a choreography that was originally created by merging videos shot in their individual spaces. The NCPA brings them all together, not online but physically, after a long time.

Tickets:

₹360 & 270/- (Members)

₹400 & 300/- (Public)

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

SOI symphony orchestra of india

Autumn 2022 Season

Patron: Citi India

Orchestral Concerts

• **Friday, 16th September – 7.00 pm**
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Benjamin Grosvenor, piano

Humperdinck: Overture to *Hansel & Gretel*

Mendelssohn: Piano Concerto No. 1

Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet* (excerpts)

• **Wednesday, 21st September – 7.00 pm**
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor

Ben Goldscheider, horn

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*

Mozart: Horn Concerto No. 3

Strauss: Horn Concerto No. 1

Bernstein: Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

• **Sunday, 25th September – 5.00 pm**
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Sayaka Shoji, violin
Henri Demarquette, cello
Jean-Frédéric Neuburger, piano/
conductor

Mendelssohn: *The Hebrides*

Brahms: Double Concerto

Beethoven: Triple Concerto

• **Friday, 30th September – 7.00 pm**
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Richard Farnes, conductor

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Programme including:

Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 3

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7

Tickets:

₹3,600, 2,880, 2,250, 1,575, 900 & 450/- (Members)

₹4,000, 3,200, 2,500, 1,750, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Recitals

• **Sunday, 18th September – 5.00 pm**
Experimental Theatre

Benjamin Grosvenor, piano

Bach/Busoni: Chaconne

Liszt: Sonata in B minor

Ravel: *Le tombeau de Couperin*

Ravel: *La valse*

• **Friday, 23rd September – 7.00 pm**
Experimental Theatre

Ben Goldscheider, horn

Richard Uttley, piano

Beethoven: Horn Sonata in F major, Op. 17

Schubert: Klavierstücke No.1 in E-flat minor, D.946

Schumann: Adagio and Allegro in A flat, Op.70

And works by Widmann, Simpson, Kirchner and Bowen

• **Monday, 26th September – 7.00 pm**
Experimental Theatre

Sayaka Shoji, violin

Henri Demarquette, cello

Jean-Frédéric Neuburger, piano

Schubert: Trio No. 1, D. 898

Brahms: Trio No. 3, Op. 101

• **Wednesday, 28th September – 7.00 pm**

Experimental Theatre

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Programme details to be announced shortly

Tickets:

₹1,350, 900 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,500, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Opera

• **Wednesday, 12th October – 7.00 pm**

Friday, 14th October – 7.00 pm

Sunday, 16th October – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Die Fledermaus

Music by **Johann Strauss II**

Libretto by Karl Haffner and Richard Genée

Set: Attila Csikós

Costumes: Nelly Vágó

Choreography: Jenő Lócsei

Director: Miklós Szinetár

Sung in German with English surtitles.

An NCPA Presentation in association with the Hungarian State Opera

Tickets:

₹6,750, 5,400, 4,320, 2,970, 2,250 & 1,350/- (Members)

₹7,500, 6,000, 4,800, 3,300, 2,500 & 1,500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

• **Saturday, 15th October – 7.00 pm**

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Bánk Bán

Concert performance

Music by **Ferenc Erkel**

Costumes: Nagy Viktória

Sung in Hungarian with English surtitles.

An NCPA Presentation in association with the Hungarian State Opera

Free Concert for Members

Box Office: 6th July for Benefactors/Friends of the SOI, 9th July for NCPA Members & 12th July for the Public

Events at a glance

July 2022

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



Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sat	2nd	11.30 am	NCPA Music Workshop Understanding the aesthetics of <i>bandish</i> presentation A free online workshop by Padma Talwalkar	Online
Sat	2nd	6.00 pm	<i>Thrayam</i>	
Sun	3rd	4.00 pm	<i>Don Carlos</i> by Giuseppe Verdi Opera Screening Sung in French with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Sun	3rd	7.00 pm	<i>Miracle on Matunga Street</i> Hindi Play	
Fri	8th	6.30 pm	First Encounter	
Sat	9th	6.30 pm	Time Wise	
Sun	10th	11.00 am to 6.00 pm	Photo Workshops	Primal of Gallery
Sun	10th	7.00 pm	'OGANGAI!' - A Tribute to the Life of Dr. Albert Schweitzer A medical missionary who revered life Written by Dr. Farokh E. Udawadia A Staged Reading	TATA THEATRE
Wed	13th	6.30 pm	Short Film Corner – Short Film Screenings	
Fri	15th	6.30 pm	NCPA <i>Bandish</i> : A Tribute to Legendary Indian Composers (15th to 17th July) Vasant Rao Deshpande and Kumar Gandharva by Rahul Deshpande Gajananrao Joshi, Dinkar Kaikini and Ramashreya Jha by Ulhas Kashalkar	TATA THEATRE
Sat	16th	6.30 pm	<i>Bhakti Sangeet ki Indradhanushi Yatra</i> : a bouquet of devotional forms Concept & curation: Shekhar Sen Singers: Shekhar Sen, Manjusha Patil Kulkarni, Abhijeet Ghoshal & others	TATA THEATRE
Sun	17th	6.30 pm	A Tribute to Salil Chowdhury Concept, curation & presentation: Shantanu Moitra Singers: Shaan, Vijay Prakash, Sadhana Sargam, Antara Chowdhury, Adriz Ghosh and a 20-member choir with musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India	

Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sat	16th	6.30 pm	An Evening of Brazilian Jazz Featuring The Adil Manuel Collective	
Sun	17th	4.30 pm	<i>Salaam Noni Appa</i> English Play	
Sun	17th	7.30 pm	<i>Dance Like a Man</i> English Play	
Wed	20th	6.30 pm	Young Talent: Western Music Concert	
Thu	21st	6.30 pm	Catalyst An evening celebrating choreographies born during lockdown Kuchipudi by Parvathy Menon, Odissi by Mitali Varadkar & Shreya Sabharwal and Kathak by Sanjukta Sinha & troupe	
Thu	21st	6.30 pm	Reality Check Documentary Film Screening	
Fri	22nd	6.30 pm	NCPA Promising Artistes Series Tanay Rege (tabla) Somdatta Chatterjee (<i>khayal</i>)	
Fri	22nd	6.30 pm	Movies Under The Stars: <i>The Cameraman</i> (1928) Film Screening	
Sat	23rd	4.00 pm	<i>Lucia Di Lammermoor</i> by Gaetano Donizetti Opera Screening Sung in Italian with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	23rd	6.30 pm	NCPA Legends: A Tribute to Chaka Khan & Stevie Wonder by Holly Petrie	TATA THEATRE
Wed	27th	6.00 pm	<i>Prima Facie</i> Theatre Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Fri	29th	6.30 pm	<i>Parvaaz ka Agaaz: Wings of Fire</i> A musical drama on the life of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Script & soundtrack: Gulzar	TATA THEATRE
Fri	29th	7.00 pm	<i>Moner Manush</i>	
Sat	30th	6.30 pm	<i>Jis Lahore Nahi Dekhya</i> Hindi Play	
Sat	30th	7.30 pm	<i>Pink is the New Black</i> English Play	TATA THEATRE



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