

# ON Stage<sup>®</sup>

VOLUME 13 • ISSUE 2



Marat Bisengaliev



Zakir Hussain



Zane Dalal



Niladri Kumar



Rakesh Chaurasia



Steven Isserlis



Richard Farnes



Alpesh Chauhan



Pavel Kolesnikov

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**the magic of music.**  
*for the love of progress.*



Citi is proud to be a long-standing patron of The Symphony Orchestra of India, the country's first and only professional orchestra. The Symphony Orchestra of India, with its pool of talented musicians from India and around the world, aims to elevate India's future talent.



# Chairman's Note



Building an orchestra from the ground up is a painstaking endeavour. There are challenges, anticipated and unforeseen, but there are also rewards. And this season is one such reward, a validation of what we have created over the last 17 years with the concerted efforts of Marat Bisengaliev, ably supported by our consultants and the entire team at the NCPA.

Soon after two memorable concerts with Zubin Mehta, the Symphony Orchestra of India is ready to embark on its Autumn 2023 Season. A bevy of international stars and celebrated Indian artistes, and a diverse programme, including the world premiere of Zakir Hussain's triple concerto commissioned by the SOI, make this a musically rich season. Steven Isserlis, among the great cellists of our time, makes his India debut with the SOI. Zane Dalal, Associate Music Director, SOI, conducts the orchestra in the opening concert. The acclaimed conductors Richard Farnes and Alpesh Chauhan are returning to the podium after their much-appreciated concerts last year.

The season's programme will also be performed across eight cities of the U.K. during an ambitious tour planned for later this year.

Indian Music at the NCPA is regarded for its well-curated festivals and concerts, the most recent of them being *Bandish*. The dance collaboration, *ĀHUTI*, presented in August, has received much praise.

Our International Music genre continues to grow with its events that feature a mix of the best of local and international talent across streams of music. The line-up for the NCPA International Jazz Festival in November has already been announced and the response, as always, is encouraging.

The Marathi theatre initiative *Darpan* has been well received as have our other plays that address important themes, both engaging and entertaining.

The time has come to really modernise and equip our theatres with the latest technology available so that we may present shows and events which are highly dependent on these technologies. To progress with what is happening in the modern music and theatre world without equipping ourselves with adequate 'weapons', I am afraid, would mean that we may be slowly left behind. And that is not what we need at the NCPA.

To move ahead on the front of modernisation, a fervent appeal to all our patrons, individuals and corporate, to come forward with your ideas and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "K. N. Suntook".

**Khushroo N. Suntook**

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Khushroo N. Suntook

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*I started my week by becoming the first visitor to the NCPA's Preservation Vaults since the catalogue was made available online. The vaults hold a treasure trove of music, dance and film archives that one can now access by simply filling a form. I had eagerly booked several recordings but ended up watching Leela Samson's dance recital for over an hour. If you have time on your hands, I definitely recommend a visit to the vaults. It is absolutely amazing.*

– Priyanko Sarkar, writer

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# CONCERTOS FOR INDIAN INSTRUMENTS: CREATIVE, PERFORMANCE-RELATED AND INTERPRETIVE CHALLENGES

Ahead of the world premiere of Zakir Hussain's triple concerto for tabla, sitar and bansuri with the Symphony Orchestra of India, Siddhaseel Sen explores what emerges from the dialogue between two musical languages.



It is always a pleasure to find a symphony orchestra departing from tried-and-tested canonical repertoire and, instead, giving a premiere of a newly composed work. That pleasure—added to expectation—increases when India's only professional symphony orchestra, the Symphony Orchestra of India, commissions one of the iconic figures of Indian classical music, Zakir Hussain, to compose a

triple concerto for tabla, sitar, bansuri and orchestra. Having composed a concerto for tabla and orchestra, titled *Peshkar*, for the SOI in 2015, and two concertos prior to *Peshkar*, Hussain is no stranger to such crossover projects. That fact should not let us forget the challenges involved in writing such pieces, and it would be instructive for students of both Indian and Western music to hear how Hussain creatively addresses them.

For instance, at a creative level, Hindustani music is largely based on improvisations around certain fundamental rules, while Western music, especially those for large forces, depends on the concept of the realisation of a musical "work," with improvisation playing a relatively smaller role. Furthermore, Indian musicians hold on to a particular note as their tonic or "sa," and musical training on an instrument as well

as exposition within a given raga is based on a fixed tonic. Western musicians, in contrast, are trained to play scales based on a movable "sa". As a result, Western composers are able to make extensive use of modulation—the change of "sa" *within* a movement—coupled with shifts of mode (i.e., changes from major to minor and vice-versa). Performers trained in Western music routinely deal with modulation and shifts of



## WHAT CROSSOVER WORKS LIKE CONCERTOS FOR INDIAN INSTRUMENTS DO IS TO GIVE ARTISTES THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS MUSICAL CHALLENGES AND, IDEALLY, TO TAKE STEPS IN MAKING THE MUSICAL TRADITIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE “OTHER” THAT OF THE “SELF”

mode, since composers have used these devices (among others) for centuries in shaping the forms of individual movements in various genres, including concertos.

The timbre of an instrument also plays an important role in Western music: the orchestra for a concerto for a relatively soft-toned instrument like the flute is likely to be of smaller dimensions than that for a concerto for piano or violin. What kind of orchestration suits what is, by Western conventions, the rare combination of tabla, sitar and bansuri? And does the use of harmony run the risk of deflecting attention from the exquisite play of melody (*ragas*) and rhythmic cycles (*talas*) that has been the forte of Indian classical music?

There is some give-and-take in any crossover project. Musicians from one tradition must find some common ground in order to reach out to the other. If that requires the imposition of constraints of some kind or the other, the reward is that of the opportunity to enter unfamiliar territory—to learn and to teach at the same time. What crossover works like concertos for Indian instruments do is to give musicians the opportunity to address some of the challenges mentioned earlier and, ideally, to take steps in making the musical traditions and practices of the “other” that of the “self”.

At a press conference on the SOI Autumn 2023 Season where the triple concerto will have its premiere, Hussain spoke of being witness to this give-and-take:

When Ravi Shankarji wrote his first sitar concerto, I was there when he was writing it down. I was keeping the *theka*, at his place on Highland Boulevard in Los Angeles. The orchestrator who was sitting with him would suggest, “Okay, Ravi, what if I added a C minor chord here, and then E sus over there” and Ravi Shankarji would go “no, no, no.”

“Why, Ravi?” Because, he said, “it’s not in the raga.” He was so worried about stepping out of that *Lakshmanrekha* of the raga... he wanted to make sure that the integrity of the raga is maintained... [By the] second concerto, he loosened up a little bit. And allowed a little bit of harmonic elements to come into play.

Arguably the first step in such crossover dialogue—in the context of the genre of the Indian-instrument concerto—was taken by the American composer Alan Hovhaness, whose double concerto for violin, sitar and orchestra, *Shambala* (1969), was meant for Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar, but which was not performed till its recent premiere recording. Instead, Shankar himself went on to compose three concertos for sitar alone, while Amjad Ali Khan composed one, titled *Samaagam*, for sarod. Concerted works have also been composed for Carnatic violin (L. Subramaniam), Hindustani violin (Kala Ramnath), Veena (Jayanthi Kumaresh) and many others—indeed, such crossover projects are perhaps now more popular than ever before. Among such works, Hovhaness’s *Shambala*

and Param Vir’s *Raga Fields* are perhaps the only concertante works for any Indian instrument written by a composer trained primarily in Western music.

There is, in fact, considerable diversity to this repertoire of crossover music, to which Hussain’s triple concerto brings some unique features. As with only two other concertante works that this writer knows—Carl Maria von Weber’s *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra, and Richard Strauss’s *Don Quixote* for cello, viola and orchestra—Hussain’s triple concerto tells a story. This is the story that Hussain related in the press conference:

The idea is that there are two spirits or two beings or two people, kids, [who] grew up together in the village. And they become deep friends, and they’re very happy with each other. They do things



Zakir Hussain during a performance of *Peshkar*, his concerto for tabla and orchestra, for the SOI





Alpesh Chauhan will conduct the world premiere of the triple concerto in Mumbai and later, in the U.K.

## HUSSAIN'S TRIPLE CONCERTO TELLS A STORY. AND SINCE MUSIC IS BETTER ABLE TO CHART EMOTIONAL PROGRESS THAN REPRESENTING SOMETHING SPECIFIC OR CONCRETE, THE CONCERTO'S PROGRAMME PROMISES TO BE HELPFUL IN GUIDING AUDIENCES THROUGH THE COMPOSITION.

together, move around together, they've always studied together... But then they get to a certain age, and then the village people step in. And they say, now, you can't do this. You can't do that. You can't go there. You can't see him. Why?

Well, because they don't belong to our way of life. And suddenly all that creeps in. So, the two principal characters are in shock and they don't understand why suddenly their friendship is now not supposed to be a friendship. That is then, followed through in their mind, that confusion and then the pushback against the elders, and then finally the confrontation where they stand up for themselves. There is a village elder played by the tabla who intervenes and tries to make things right, and then eventually it all comes to fruition in a more equitable and happy way. So that is, in a nutshell, a story that the music tells.

This is a timely story for our increasingly fractious world. And since music is better able to chart emotional progress than representing something specific or concrete, the concerto's programme promises to be helpful in guiding audiences through what is likely to be a formally unusual piece of music.

In the same press conference, Hussain drew attention to the work of Vanraj Bhatia, who explored the possibility of composing Indian music for orchestra, and how, in turn, the experience of Rakesh Chaurasia (bansuri) and Niladri Kumar (sitar)—who, Hussain pointed out “are at their pinnacle when it comes to

being improvisers, spontaneous and creative”—in working with Bollywood composers came in handy with respect to the use of harmony and counterpoint. As a result, the triple concerto promises to provide a sensitive and thoughtful combination of Indian and Western elements. But how can audiences receive or interpret the dual inputs of Indian and Western music? As Hussain puts it:

The Indian audiences are very different. And they're different because they're very diverse. The same people who will go to a disco or a nightclub will go to a theatre, or they will go to a ghazal concert ... And, or that they will come to an Indian classical music concert or go for a Bharatanatyam recital. You'll see the same young people going to all these different things. And that is great... In America, the rock and roll audiences are rock and roll audiences. The country music audience is just that. You don't see them mixing and matching. But here, that happens. And that is good.

The distinguished soloists and the SOI will premiere Hussain's triple concerto in Mumbai, conducted by the rising British conductor of Indian origin Alpesh Chauhan. They will then take the piece on tour to the U.K. One eagerly looks forward to hearing the new offering by these luminaries of Indian music and hopes that the piece wins new audiences for both Indian and Western music. ■

*Zakir Hussain's triple concerto for tabla, sitar and bansuri will be premiered by the SOI on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre. Suddhaseel Sen is a literary scholar, musicologist and Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay.*



# SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

## AUTUMN 2023 SEASON

**ZANE DALAL**  
conductor

**MARAT BISENGALIEV**  
violin

**RICHARD FARNES**  
conductor

**PAVEL KOLESNIKOV**  
piano

**ALPESH CHAUHAN**  
conductor

**STEVEN ISSERLIS**  
cello

**ALPESH CHAUHAN**  
conductor

**ZAKIR HUSSAIN**  
tabla

**NILADRI KUMAR**  
sitar

**RAKESH CHAURASIA**  
bansuri

**ROSSINI** *Semiramide Overture*

**KHACHATURIAN** Violin Concerto

**TCHAIKOVSKY** Symphony No. 6

10 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 5:00 PM

**WILLIAMS** Imperial March from *Star Wars*

**BRAHMS** Piano Concerto No. 2

**WAGNER** *Parsifal* Suite (arr. Gourlay)

15 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM

**STRAUSS** *Rosenkavalier* Suite

**SCHUMANN** Cello Concerto

**STRAVINSKY** *Petrushka* (1947)

20 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM

**HUSSAIN** Triple Concerto

(world premiere, SOI commission)

**TCHAIKOVSKY** Symphony No. 5

23 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM

24 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 5:00 PM

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# The Best of Both Worlds

Ahead of the premiere of the highly anticipated triple concerto at the SOI Autumn 2023 Season, NCPA Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook, tabla maestro Zakir Hussain and flute exponent Rakesh Chaurasia addressed the press at the NCPA.

**T**hough the imminence of a deluge loomed large over Mumbai on 14th July, the NCPA was warm with enthusiasm as tabla maestro Zakir Hussain and flute exponent Rakesh Chaurasia graced the foyer of the Tata Theatre. The two maestros joined Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA and co-founder of the Symphony Orchestra of India, in addressing journalists from print, broadcast and digital media about the triple concerto commissioned by the SOI for its upcoming Autumn 2023 Season.

“For 17 years, we have been presenting concerts of a high international standard at home in Mumbai, across India and internationally. After the visit of Maestro Zubin Mehta in August, our season will commence on the 10th of September and will include a special performance for our music lovers. We have persuaded Ustad Zakir Hussain to compose a triple concerto for tabla, sitar and bansuri, especially for the SOI. This will be the second work he has written for us and this time, maestros Rakesh Chaurasia and Niladri Kumar will be involved in this wonderful adventure,” said Mr. Suntook. The triple concerto will be conducted by Alpesh Chauhan, who has been awarded an OBE by the late Queen. He is appearing in a second series of performances with the SOI, both in India and in England, as part of the SOI’s tour of the U.K. in November-December.

“This is a fine amalgam of Indian composers and artistes with celebrated international stars. A true collaboration to give Indian audiences both in India and the U.K.,” said Mr. Suntook as he apprised the press of the performances planned for the orchestra’s longest and most ambitious season yet. SOI co-founder and Music Director Marat Bisengaliev and Associate Music Director Zane Dalal along with the conductor Richard Farnes, pianist Pavel Kolesnikov, cellist Steven Isserlis (considered to be one of the greatest living cellists in the world) among other acclaimed musicians will perform in India and across several prominent cultural centres of the U.K. The triple concerto commission, a noteworthy presentation of this season’s repertoire, blends the NCPA’s unique artistic offerings in a special manner: three masters of their respective crafts come together with the SOI to showcase the melodic and



(From left) Tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, NCPA Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook and bansuri exponent Rakesh Chaurasia meet the press

harmonic coalescence of two musical languages that are vastly different in their origins and customs.

Hussain in his statement to the press affirmed the NCPA’s sterling efforts to bridge the gap between cultures, regional or international, and present their artistic heritage with integrity and vigour. He described the institution as an “incredible bastion of art and culture—unlike anywhere in the world. You go to any other arts centre, whether it’s in England or in Europe or in America, it is primarily focused on the arts belonging to that part of the world. But here, we have the honour of being able to display art that has a global stand—whether it’s Western classical music or chamber music or jazz or Indian classical music, or dance, contemporary dance, ballet and theatre.” He commended the leadership that enabled “all this under one roof, managing at a level that is beyond excellent, under the guidance of Mr. Khushroo Suntook. So, a special thanks to him for having helmed this incredible ship for the last 16 magnificent years and 8 take-off years.”

The triple concerto marks Hussain’s second work commissioned by the SOI. In 2015, the illustrious artiste composed *Peshkar*, a tabla concerto for the SOI’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary season that went on to garner global acclaim.

“Living in India and having the responsibility of housing

a symphony orchestra, which has its demands and needs, and to be able to follow that through is an amazing feat. I am very lucky that I had a chance to write a piece of music [for the SOI]. They took a chance on me and showed confidence in my ability that I did not know existed,” said Hussain, concluding with the hope that audiences would appreciate the uniqueness of the accomplishments of a holistic establishment like the NCPA. ■



Maestro Zakir Hussain presents his composition, triple concerto for tabla, sitar and bansuri, commissioned by the SOI, to Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook



# Celebrating Talent

Even as marquee concerts and a full season unfold, the young brigade of the SOI and other initiatives by the orchestra continue to leave a mark.



Marat Bisengaliev  
with young pianist  
Vihaan Bamugade



## Encore in Pune

In early August, 31 students from the SOI Academy Orchestra performed under the baton of SOI Music Director and violin virtuoso Marat Bisengaliev at The Poona Music Society. "The Mazda Hall was packed beyond capacity. It was a full programme of 1.5 hours with 16 pieces specially chosen and arranged for the children's orchestra," says Bisengaliev. In addition to classical repertoire, the programme included popular pieces like themes from *Harry Potter*, *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Game of Thrones*. "It is really rewarding to work with kids. Building something from scratch is special," he says.

The concert received an overwhelming response. Priya Krishnan Das, illustrator and travel blogger, who was in the audience responded with her live sketches of the performance (in pic). Karl Daruwala, a teenager from Canada visiting family in India, said, "I have nothing but praise for the youth orchestra. If we closed our eyes, we wouldn't have known that it was a youth orchestra—they were that good." Renu Jamgaonkar, Cultural Coordinator, Goethe Institut, praised the orchestra for its choice of programme that resonates with young audiences, "It was a mesmerising experience as 31 young musicians enthralled the Pune audiences ... The orchestra exhibits international standards of professionalism. Some of the youngest musicians (merely

eight or nine years old) impressed the most. Kudos to the finest homegrown and nurtured talent!"

## Mumbai's Prodigy in Vienna

All of nine years, Ayaan Deshpande, a student of the SOI Music Academy, has stunned artistes and audiences alike with his musicality. Earlier this year, he was chosen as the Winner of the Golden Key of Vienna Music Festival, an annual summer festival held in the Austrian capital, which brings together musicians from around the world. After receiving his Winner's Diploma and Medal in August, he performed at the Winners' Gala Concert held at the majestic Ehrbar Hall. The little pianist was also invited to perform in a public recital dedicated to Mozart at Bösendorfer Hall in Mozarthaus. Having also won the second prize in the composition category, he



Ayaan Deshpande with his teacher  
Aida Bisengalieva in Vienna

performed his original composition at the World Composers' Concert. "I have run out of epithets for Ayaan. He has something special that you don't see in other prodigies," says Marat Bisengaliev, SOI Music Director and founder of the academy. Speaking of his piano teacher Aida Bisengalieva, he adds, "Aida is the right person to nurture his talent. He needn't be taught, just gently guided."

## Call for Composers

At a concert of the SOI Chamber Orchestra conducted by Indo-Danish conductor Maria Badstue in July, a surprise awaited the audience that turned up in big numbers despite the incessant rains. In the programme for the evening that included works by Sibelius and Beethoven was another work by an Indian composer Johann Mathews.

"Cornerstone" was among the selected works for the Call for Composers initiative of the Symphony Orchestra of India, which, during the pandemic, invited Western classical music compositions from composers across



Maria Badstue conducted Johann Mathew's composition

India and Indians across the world. Each of the 100 entries from 82 composers were then heard by a jury that included Marat Bisengaliev.

Mathews, a Bengaluru-based composer, came with his family for the India premiere of the three-movement work composed for solo strings and piano. "Hearing my music performed live by the Symphony Orchestra of India was an indescribable experience ... The Chamber Orchestra and its propensity for artistic brilliance, under the direction of Madam Maria Badstue, simply brought alive the notes on my pages ... I am humbled by this level of artistic detail and accuracy of character, nuance and emotion throughout their performance," said Mathews. ■



# A Quest for Brilliance

The SOI Autumn 2023 Season brings the promise of musicianship at its best. From the India debut of celebrated British cellist Steven Isserlis with the Symphony Orchestra of India to the anticipated return of pianist Pavel Kolesnikov and conductors Richard Farnes and Alpesh Chauhan, the season's programme presents a tapestry of diverse repertoire, technical proficiency and talent.

By Beverly Pereira

Throughout his career, the award-winning cellist Steven Isserlis has been known for his virtuosic playing, soul-stirring tone, technical brilliance and profound musical interpretations. Regarded for his performances of classical repertoire, particularly the works of Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms and Bach, Isserlis is known for his attention to detail and maintaining the integrity of the score. Rightly so, he is recognised as one of the most distinguished and nuanced cellists of our times.

Isserlis is also an advocate for lesser-known composers and is known to include their pieces in his concert programmes. He is loved for his seemingly effortless ability to stay true to the original intent of a composer while still infusing personal artistry into every performance. Isserlis's commitment to the cello and to music at large is evident in his unique career not only as a soloist and chamber musician, but also as an educator, author and broadcaster.

## A beloved figure

Isserlis has collaborated with major orchestras and conductors across the world—from the Berlin Philharmonic to the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He performs regularly with a long list of the world's leading chamber orchestras including the Australian, Scottish, Zurich and Saint Paul chamber orchestras. And, then there is the ease with which he works with period-instrument orchestras. His work with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra is noteworthy, as is the fact that he also directs chamber orchestras from the cello.

Isserlis has curated a number of comprehensive series for some of the world's most famous festivals like the Salzburg Festival and on

prestigious stages like the Wigmore Hall, where he devised programmes that include *In the Shadow of War*, a four-part series that marked the centenary of the First World War and the 75th anniversary of the Second World War. Another one of his engaging series explores the bond between the cello and human voice, while yet another makes a deep inquiry into the life and music of Schumann.

## Early beginnings

Born in 1958 in London, Isserlis grew up surrounded by music and displayed immense promise as a musician. His grandfather was the pianist and composer Julius Isserlis. His mother was a piano teacher, and his sisters played the viola and violin. The young cellist studied at the City of London School before moving to Scotland in his teens to study under the tutelage of Jane Cowan. At the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Richard Kapuscinski, he honed his talent and developed his distinctive style.

A major breakthrough arrived in 1988 when Isserlis asked John Tavener to write a work for cello and orchestra—the outcome was *The Protecting Veil* that was premiered at the BBC Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oliver Knussen. His recording and every other recording thereafter, really, has been met with critical acclaim. Another example of contemporary music premieres include Stephen Hough's (who performed at SOI Autumn 2017 Season) Sonata for Cello and Piano. Isserlis's contribution to

**“Schumann's Cello Concerto is probably my most beloved cello concerto of all—a truly searching, lyrical, touching work that conveys the very essence of Romanticism”**

SATOSHI AOYAGI





classical and contemporary music has been immense and aside from a CBE recognition, honours bestowed on him include the Robert Schumann Prize of the City of Zwickau and the Wigmore Hall Gold Medal.

#### A conscious commitment

Beyond performing and recording, Isserlis is an educator known to nurture the talent of young cellists. His genuine passion for music has put him on the global radar for intriguing masterclasses and workshops that encourage an appreciation for classical music. Since 1997, he has been Artistic Director of the International Musicians Seminar at Prussia Cove in Cornwall. “Think inside, not outside, the music. Look for the composer’s meaning, not for the effects you can produce,” Isserlis tells us in an email interview.

On his engaging website are witty articles of interest for both the music enthusiast and professional. Blessed with a natural inclination for writing and playing for children, he has authored several children’s books including *Why Beethoven Threw the Stew* and has written the text for musical stories like ‘Goldiepegs and the Three Cellos’. Isserlis is a regular contributor to publications including *The Guardian* and *Gramophone*, and has guest edited *The Strad*.

#### A bon vivant

Isserlis’s website is also a repository of his reflections on books, films, TV series and people that inspire him. From his love for the Marx Brothers and their films, to a compilation of the lovable Fred Basset comic strip, Isserlis is a bon vivant. Another item on the list ties in with his visit to India. “I love Indian food, so I’m hoping for new, exciting tastes!” he says.

Schumann evidently ranks high among Isserlis’s enthusiasms. Later this month, audiences at the NCPA will be privy to both the art of cello playing and the compelling nature of the composer’s music when the British cellist takes to the stage to present Schumann’s Cello Concerto with the SOI under the baton of Alpesh Chauhan, Associate Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of Birmingham

Opera Company. “It is probably my most beloved cello concerto of all—a truly searching, lyrical, touching work that conveys the very essence of Romanticism,” he says in the interview ahead of his arrival in Mumbai with his trusty instrument, “the wonderful cello kindly loaned to me by the Royal Academy of Music in London.” The instrument in question is a beautiful Marquis de Coberon (Nelsova) Stradivarius (1726).

“I’m looking forward to meeting a new group of musicians and working with Chauhan for the first time. Incidentally, I hear that he’s not only a very fine conductor, but also a wonderful cook,” he says. “And finally, I’m looking forward to getting a glimpse, at least, of a country in which several of my favourite books are set—especially *A Fine Balance* by Rohinton Mistry. The only downside is that my trip is ridiculously short—it just worked out that way.” ■

*The SOI Autumn 2023 Season will be presented from 10th to 24th September. Steven Isserlis will perform with the SOI, with Alpesh Chauhan at the podium, on 20th September at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre.*

#### AN ANTICIPATED RETURN

Most will remember being enraptured when Chauhan opened the SOI Autumn 2022 Season with the SOI and British piano virtuoso Benjamin Grosvenor. Now, the OBE-honoured British-born conductor returns to the NCPA for the world premiere performances of a new, exciting triple concerto composed by Zakir Hussain with himself as tabla soloist and Niladri Kumar on sitar and Rakesh Chaurasia on bansuri. Prior to this musical extravaganza, a concert with two highly acclaimed musicians beckons. The remarkable British conductor Richard Farnes and one of the most engaging young pianists of our time Pavel Kolesnikov—the duo came together for a memorable performance of Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No. 3 in the Autumn 2022 Season—return to present an intriguing programme comprising Williams’s ‘Imperial March from *Star Wars*’; Brahms; and Wagner.

# A Fortnight of Favourites

What to expect at the SOI Autumn 2023 Season.

By Jehangir Batiwala

**M**usic lovers in Mumbai should look forward to one of the most varied seasons of the Symphony Orchestra of India, this September. Essentially, a precursor to the orchestra’s eight-city tour of Britain in November-December 2023, the five concerts at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre offer a wide variety of repertoire, soloists and conductors.

One can safely argue that during the fortnight

between 10th and 24th September, there will be enough music to cater to lovers of Classical, Romantic, ballet, contemporary, world music and even Indian classical music. The world premiere performance of Zakir Hussain’s triple concerto for bansuri, sitar and tabla with orchestra will probably evince the keenest interest from a wide range of audiences. Those who fondly remember Hussain’s triple concerto for banjo, double bass and tabla, which had its India premiere



**Between 10th and 24th September, there will be enough music at the SOI Autumn 2023 Season to cater to lovers of Classical, Romantic, ballet, contemporary, world music and even Indian classical music**

in 2013 with Béla Fleck, Edgar Meyer and Hussain collaborating with the SOI and Zane Dalal, should definitely experience this new creation, specially commissioned by the SOI and the NCPA.

The opening concert on 10<sup>th</sup> September, conducted by Dalal, after a long absence, will feature a most entertaining and virtuosic *Semiramide* overture by Rossini, followed by the violin concerto by the great Armenian composer, Aram Khachaturian. This concerto, originally composed in 1940 for Ukrainian violinist David Oistrakh, will have Marat Bisengaliev as violin soloist. Bisengaliev studied with Valery Klimov who in turn studied with Oistrakh, so a more fitting musical pedigree is hard to find for this concerto. Tchaikovsky’s programmatic 6<sup>th</sup> symphony (*Pathétique*) will be played in the second half and will be the final piece of the evening as the music fades out at the end of the last movement.

The next concert on 15<sup>th</sup> September will be conducted by Richard Farnes, who has made waves across Britain, especially when he led Wagner’s complete *Ring* cycle at Opera North. Therefore, the programming of the Wagner *Parsifal* suite, which ends the concert, seems appropriate. The concert opens with the fantastic *Imperial March* from *Star Wars* by John Williams and continues with Brahms’s second piano concerto in the first half. This four-movement concerto is more delicate and introverted, almost like chamber music, as compared to Brahms’s majestic first piano concerto composed 22 years earlier. Having been praised for his sensitivity and amazing pianistic ability, Pavel Kolesnikov promises to be a worthy soloist for this music.

The following concert on 20<sup>th</sup> September will delight lovers of opera, ballet and orchestral music. Richard Strauss’s *Rosenkavalier* Suite, an orchestral suite comprising highlights of Strauss’s opera, opens the concert. Artur Rodzinski, the conductor of the New York Philharmonic, was behind the creation and success of this suite, which is now standard repertoire for orchestras. He conducted the first performance in the 1944-1945 season. The first half of this concert ends with Schumann’s lone cello concerto, performed by one of the greatest living cellists of our time, Steven Isserlis. This is the first time that Isserlis is performing in India, making his debut with the SOI. The concert ends with Stravinsky’s *Petrushka*, a ballet based on the story of the puppet Petrushka, who comes to life. Stravinsky scored the music for Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballet Russes in 1911. These performances, full of virtuosic music, will be conducted by Alpesh Chauhan who returns to conduct the SOI.

The final two concerts on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September are also conducted by Chauhan. Awarded an OBE in 2022, Chauhan is enjoying a flourishing international career, conducting eminent orchestras in Europe, America and Asia. Both these concerts will have the same programme and feature Hussain’s triple concerto in the first half. The soloists are amongst the finest living exponents of their instruments; Niladri Kumar will play the sitar, Rakesh Chaurasia, the bansuri and of course, the composer Hussain will play the tabla. The second half of the programme will have a performance of Tchaikovsky’s 5<sup>th</sup> symphony. This will prove to be a worthy finale to an absolutely gorgeous orchestral season, the likes of which will be difficult to replicate anytime soon. ■



# Transcending Gender

Three men who found their calling in Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Odissi, discuss their non-normative career choice and Indian classical dance as a spiritual surrender beyond social mores.

By Aishwarya Sahasrabudhe



From left to right:  
Deepak Mazumdar;  
Sandip Mallick;  
Rahul Acharya

Indian classical dance has undergone tremendous transformation through centuries of nationalist struggles, political upheavals and social reform movements. In the years following independence, a structural shift was apparent in the formalisation and institutionalisation of classical dance, a process that was as gendered as it was cultural and political. This was a period when male gurus passed on their inherited repository of classical compositions to aspiring students even as male pupils began to dwindle and classical dance gradually became an unconventional career for men.

Bharatanatyam stalwart Deepak Mazumdar is no stranger to the ridicule male dancers experienced in the 1970s when he was emerging as a performer training under exemplary artistes such as Kalanidhi Narayanan and Adyar K Lakshman. “[The number of] male dancers could be counted on the fingers of one hand,” recalls the sexagenarian.

Kathak artiste and choreographer Sandip Mallick echoes the stalwart’s musings. He opines that it is a challenge for male classical dancers to carve a space for themselves in a performing arts landscape enamoured by the beauty and grace of the feminine. However, he maintains, “At the end of the day, the work talks.” When he teaches his students—male, female and transgender—he insists on inspiring the belief that irrespective of gender, “When you are onstage, you will be considered a dancer.”

Mallick, who served as visiting faculty member and choreographer at Delhi’s Kathak Kendra, will be taking the stage at the NCPA in September 2023 for a performance entitled *Upalabधि*, a quest towards self-realisation. The end of the month will witness two recitals, one by Mazumdar which decodes layers of Ravana, not as an antagonist, but as an extraordinary musician, astrologer and devotee. The other recital will feature Odissi artiste Rahul Acharya in a performance exploring the *shringarik nayaka*, or the romantic hero of classical dance. Through three distinct performances across three classical dance forms, the path-breaking dancers will unravel the complexities of a *nayaka* reflecting their own meditations on their art.

## GENDER CONSTRUCTS

Acharya, who trained under the renowned Odissi stalwart Durga Charan Kabir, asserts that the remunerative obstacles facing men who contemplate a career in dance are a sharp reflection of the economic and patriarchal constructs that shape contemporary society. A trained scientist, it was only after he completed his post-graduate studies that Acharya immersed himself in the performing arts. Inevitably, his academic inclinations are highlighted not only in his in-depth study of Odissi's *bhava* but also in his keen understanding of the entanglements of classical art with existing socio-political systems.

"Art and artistes come towards the end of the requirements of society," Acharya concedes, and it is the monetary aspect that "does not work in favour of male dancers." When the man continues to be

folded in the *naman hasta*. "And for a female dancer, if she is wearing lehenga or angarakha, the treatment will be different," he says. "But this is not based on gender alone," Mallick goes on, "It aims to factor in differences in individual performance." Speaking about the *anga bhaav* or conveying emotions through body language, he illustrates how he would train a dancer with big eyes to simply use them to indicate a 'no' while for another, "I will prefer them to use the hand with the eyes."

## PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Acharya's recital at the NCPA will place the *shringarik nayaka* at the centre of his performance. The hero, in relation to the *nayika* (heroine), will be woven into stories drawing from medieval Oriya poets and verses from the *Geet Govinda*. A concept developed by Acharya through work with his mentees, this will be a dive by the soloist

**When the man continues to be considered the primary breadwinner, it becomes exceedingly difficult for male artistes to break the barriers of a conventional set-up which has already rendered survival difficult for any performing artiste**

considered the primary breadwinner of the house, it becomes exceedingly difficult for male artistes to break the barriers of a conventional set-up which has already rendered survival difficult for any performing artiste.

In sharp contrast to the decades past, today, irrespective of gender, there is a persistent fear of grooming classical artistes altogether, Mazumdar, who is also a well-known guru of Bharatanatyam, rues. That is because securing a commercially successful future in dance is no mean feat, he explains.

Historically, the performing arts flourished under the patronage of maharajas, nawabs and zamindars, but Mallick notes how as the sponsorships ebbed, the classical arts lost their financial sustainability and were transformed into a non-normative profession for the modern man. Such was the dearth of male students, he recalls, that while training under Srilekha Mukherjee, an exponent of the Lucknow *gharana*, he was the only boy in a class full of female students for nearly 15 years.

All three artistes tend to agree that gender carries a stronger economic connotation and has little role to play in the ambit of performance. For many, even today, classical dance is thought of as a gift from the divine. Mazumdar notes that it is an eternal balance of *purusha* and *prakriti*; a yogic, almost transcendental journey involving "more of devotion, more of surrendering," no matter one's gender.

The fundamentals and *adavus* in classical dance are imparted to all students, to narrate a story through the syllables of the *tatkaar* and the *bhava* of the *abhinaya*. The difference, Mallick says, lies merely in the slight alterations made to the treatment of a choreography to suit the costume, height, girth and gender of the soloist. The artiste draws on his own experience to suggest that when he is teaching his students simple footwork, he will perhaps instruct the male dancer to keep his hands

into the *purusha anga* of classical dance to explore the *nayaka* as described in the seminal text, *Natyashastra*.

Mazumdar endorses this need for male dancers to engage in alternative explorations of *nayika*-centric themes and asserts, "If there are *nayikas*, parallel to that, there are *nayakas*, so you have to understand *nayaka bheda* simultaneously." Moving away from attempts to replicate the female figure, he instead suggests that male dancers must choose characters prudently. Drawing on the *vastraharan*, or disrobing, of Draupadi in the Mahabharata, he elaborates that it is hardly necessary for a male artiste to assume the character of the Pandava queen. Instead, her predicament can be poignantly portrayed by becoming Dushasana, her pain reflected in the movements of his hands, in the burning malice in his eyes.

So too, Mallick concedes, while depicting the *abhisarika* (a type of *nayika*, described in the *Natyashastra*, who goes to meet her lover), a more effective route for the male artiste to reach his audiences is to showcase the *nayaka* eager to meet his beloved. So much so that in one composition, his depiction of the *varsha abhisarika*—the *nayika* who stealthily steps out to meet her beloved during the monsoons—involved the *nayaka* dressing up in front of the mirror. "I did the same *shringara*," he says, "but with the *bajuband*, *tilak*, *pagdi*, *dhoti* and other accessories."

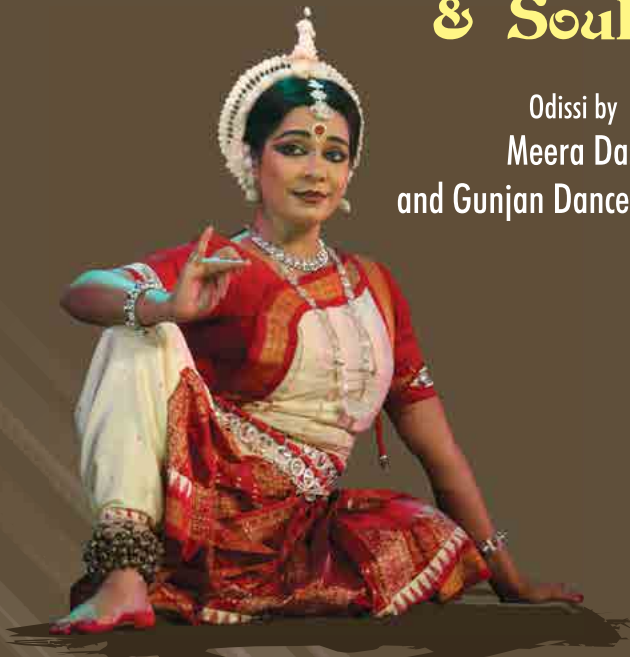
It is not, Mazumdar notes, as if men don't experience *shringara*. "If there is a *shringara* of Sita, the male dancer can choose to depict the *shringara* of Rama." ■

*Kathak by Sandip Mallick will be presented on 1st September at the Experimental Theatre. Bharatanatyam by Deepak Mazumdar and Odissi by Rahul Acharya will be presented on 29th September at the Experimental Theatre.*



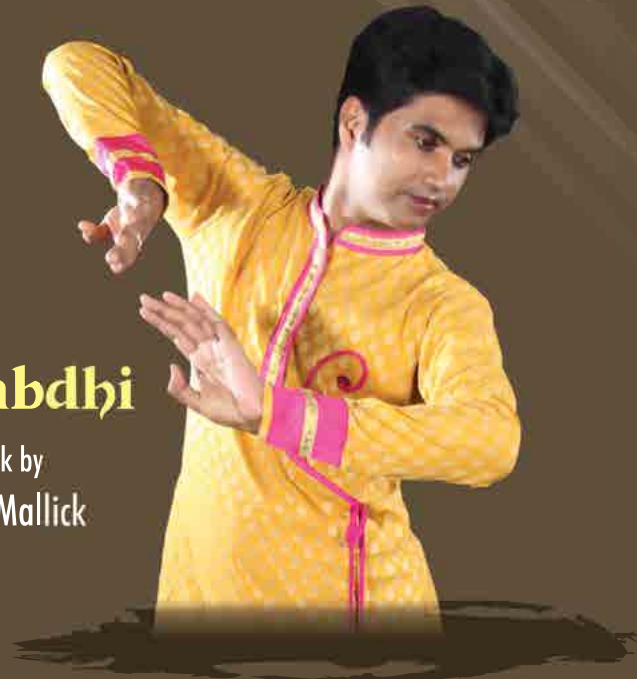
## Sublime Serene & Soulful

Odissi by  
Meera Das  
and Gunjan Dance Academy



## Upalabdhi

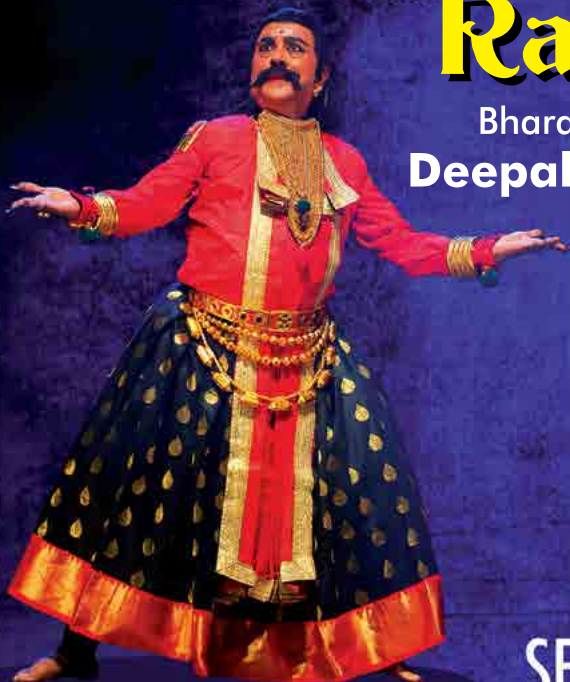
Kathak by  
Sandip Mallick



Sep 1 | 6:30 pm | Experimental Theatre, NCPA

## Ravana

Bharatanatyam by  
Deepak Mazumdar



## Shringari Nayaka

Odissi by  
Rahul Acharya



SEP 29 | 6:30 PM  
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA





## TWO JOURNEYS, ONE BEGINNING

As the Marathi play *Kalgitura* and an Indian adaptation of *A Small Family Business*, both NCPA productions, return to the stage, we speak to Datta Patil and Akarsh Khurana about writing and rewriting these works.

By Prachi Sibai

The journey of a theatrical piece does not end with its staging. Sometimes, it begins there and takes a new form and shape every time the lights appear. These productions evolve over time and present nuanced interpretations of the text. It is not often that theatres, where the play is first staged, become a part of this journey, guiding and nurturing it at every stage.

For the Marathi play *Kalgitura* and the Indian adaptation of *A Small Family Business*, however, this has been the arc indeed. Both saw the light of day at the NCPA's own theatres and while *Kalgitura*, in its second run, toured Mumbai and Nashik in August, the latter is set to return to the stage this September. At the heart of the productions is the vision of Bruce Guthrie, Head of Theatre and Film at the NCPA, to support new writing.

### AN ANCIENT TRADITION

*Kalgitura*, by playwright Datta Patil, finds its genesis in an ancient folk tradition from the village of Parsul. Intertwining stories from ancient texts like the Puranas and oral traditions, *kalgitura* exhibited complex emotions. Practitioners would sing during celebratory occasions, religious ceremonies and to alleviate the



*Kalgitura* writer Datta Patil



Director Sachin Shinde

pain of kin during the time of a family member's death. The 700-year-old tradition witnessed a revival in the 1990s through a small group of people.

"I wanted to write a play on *kalgitura*, but before that, I had to understand the tradition. For the last six years, I have been talking to people in the village of Umarane. I found the struggle of this new generation of villagers trying to revive this folk tradition extraordinary. The play is a tribute to their struggle," says Patil adding that *Darpan*, the NCPA's new initiative for voices in Marathi theatre, gave him the platform that a production as ambitious as this required. Patil admits that it was the push that he needed to start writing the piece.

*Darpan* was launched by the NCPA in early 2023. "We had more than 55 entries. We had a panel of mentors who read all the scripts. We shortlisted five and had readings at the NCPA in front of an audience. Then, the mentors made a decision about the one NCPA would produce to open the *Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav 2023*," says Guthrie detailing the process. The play, he tells us, was supported like a home production. At the time of writing this article, it was ready to embark on its debut tour in August.

The extensive research that the play required notwithstanding, Patil says that every show is like an experiment that needs to get better with time. "It's perhaps why a drama show in Marathi is called *prayog* (experiment)," he says. Patil's docu-drama style received accolades in newspapers and a full standing ovation. The genuine kind, Guthrie tells us. But that doesn't stop Patil from chiselling this already tight, music-filled drama, before its tour. He shares that the premiere was followed by a period of reflection with edits, rearranged songs and robust rehearsals. "For the actors, the connection with the text gets much deeper over time. The play will feel a bit tighter and more nuanced," says Guthrie.

### CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS

While *Kalgitura* is ready to be presented at new venues, *A Small Family Business*, an NCPA production, has found a new home within the same campus. Premiered at the Tata Theatre in May 2022, this Indian adaptation of Alan Ayckbourn's popular play by the same name is ready for a revival at the Experimental Theatre this month.

For writer Akarsh Khurana, who first encountered the play in a London bookshop, this has been an exercise in precision. Chipping away at the text, he estimates that the play will now be a tight 80 minutes from its 100-minute runtime earlier. "I think the script is much clearer, sharper and funnier. Also, a bit more succinct. We get to the point much sooner," says Guthrie adding, "Akarsh has distilled it down to the most important aspects of what he wants the play to be. The first time, the plot was in danger of sounding convoluted. Now, it's absolutely clear. We have a much more potent version of the play."

*A Small Family Business* tells the story of, well, a family business where a Goan Christian son-in-law in a Delhi Punjabi family is taking over the mantle. A series



*A Small Family Business*  
has been adapted by  
Akarsh Khurana

Director Adhaar Khurana

of events turns this otherwise happy occasion into a moral reckoning of sorts. "It's not necessarily a farce but has farcical elements, quite like *Breaking Bad*. You think it's not going to get worse, then it does. You think they won't be able to get out of it, and then they do. As an audience member, there's a certain thrill to it," says Guthrie.

As much as the comedic elements, it was the journey of the character, and the curveballs the situation throws at his integrity, that appealed to Khurana. Having read a few of Ayckbourn's other works, Khurana kept an eye out for a fitting Indian context for an adaptation up until he read *A Small Family Business*. "It's a universal story. There are a lot of business families in India. We connect to that quite strongly," he says. "It also brings in the aspect of money, and how it matters to different people. It's almost *Succession*-like," he adds.

Adaptations at large, Khurana believes, are becoming more critical for contextuality and require a complex approach. "The idea is to not alienate people. It has to be a deep dive, not a find-all and replace-all. It can't be a superficial job," he explains. He gives us an example from the adaptation. The church in the play is replaced with a godman figure who makes money selling pharmaceuticals, something that is far more relatable in the Indian context. "I could make the characters Indian, and they could still be fighting a church the way they are in the original. However, the church isn't seen as that kind of enemy here," he says.

Khurana has a word of caution about the process, too. "People approach an adaptation thinking they will make it better. I find that a bit conceited. My approach is to not fix what is broken but remember why the play appealed to me in the first place," he says.

The new version of the play comes relooked, re-rehearsed, with set and costume upgrades and new cast members. A second crack at the script, Khurana admits, isn't an opportunity that comes by often and has enabled him to keep the new venue and cast changes in mind. "When you are moving into a smaller space, you can afford to experiment a little, even thematically. You don't necessarily have to be crowd-pleasing any more and can take a few risks," he says. ■

*A Small Family Business* will be presented from 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September at the Experimental Theatre.



# The Vast World of Rhythm

As part of the **Converging Streams** series, which explores the best of world music, **The Heart of Drums** will present a variety of rhythms in the right ambience.

By **Narendra Kusnur**

**O**n a rainy day in July, drummer Ranjit Barot has driven down from south Mumbai to a Goregaon studio for a session of planning and rehearsing with flautist Ashwin Srinivasan and violinist Nastya Saraswati. The three of them are trying to get a fix on where solos should start and how many times the main melody will be repeated.

On 3rd September, they will be joined at the Experimental Theatre at the NCPA by Emmanuel Simon on world percussion and Gulraj Singh on keyboards and vocals. As part of the Converging Streams series, Barot will spearhead **The Heart of Drums**, a show that aims to provide a meeting point between the ancient and the contemporary. "The focus will be on rhythm patterns," says Barot, "which Emmanuel and I will execute. There will be different styles of drumming, spoken word pieces and [Vedic] chants, and we will add a modern flavour through melody instruments and lush soundscapes produced on the keyboard." The concert is rooted in the fact that drums and rhythmic expressions are used in every ritual, festival and social gathering. The music is being specially composed for the concert and will include multimedia. "The aim is to provide the right ambience," says Barot.

Each of the musicians was chosen with a specific aim.



**Clockwise from here:**  
Gulraj Singh; Ranjit Barot;  
Emmanuel Simon; Ashwin  
Srinivasan; Nastya Saraswati



## The music for *The Heart of Drums*, rooted in the fact that rhythmic expressions are used in every ritual, festival and social gathering, is being specially composed for the concert

“Ashwin is primarily known as a flautist, but there is a lot more he can bring to the table because of his broader knowledge of music. Nastya is originally from St. Petersburg in Russia, but she developed an early passion for Indian music and has stayed in India for a while now. I met her through sitar player Purbayan Chatterjee and his wife Gayatri, and when I heard her play, I was impressed.” French percussionist Simon, too, fits into the mix perfectly. According to Barot, “He has a wide canvas, covering jazz, Latin, Indian and popular music. We have played together before and there’s a wonderful understanding. Gulraj Singh, likewise, is open to different kinds of music. Put together, it is a good blend of personalities.”

The rhythms will have variety. There will be some styles typically used in north-eastern India, and some practised by the Sidi Goma community, comprising people with African origins settled in India who have their own approach to Afro-drumming. The musicians will follow that style on some pieces. Besides using regular Western techniques, they will also use some Carnatic styles like the *konnakol* method of spoken syllables and mridangam rhythm patterns. “The world of rhythm is so vast, and there is a lot of scope for creation and improvisation, using a melange of styles,” says Barot.

While using a specially created narrative, the concert

will adhere to the broader concept of Converging Streams, which aims at showcasing the best of world music and fusion. It will also showcase the evolution of Barot as a drummer, from the time he played in rock bands to his discovery of jazz and later, world music.

The son of Kathak legend Sitara Devi, Barot was exposed to Indian music and musicians from an early age. His own interests were in drumming, and he played at local clubs, and was part of the group Waterfront. He has also played with renowned music directors R.D. Burman, Laxmikant-Pyarelal and Kalyanji-Anandji. In 1980, he joined Louiz Banks’s Jazz Yatra Sextet, where his music got a new direction. As part of sitar maestro Ravi Shankar’s ensemble, he had a different kind of experience.

Barot points out that his exposure to different genres helped shape his musical personality. “There was a time when I began focusing on film scores, but Zakir Hussain and Taufiq Qureshi told me I should get back into more live playing. It was through Zakir that I met guitarist John McLaughlin, and I am happy to have been a part of his band, 4th Dimension, for 12 years now. In films, I play regularly with A.R. Rahman, both in the studio and in concerts. But beyond that, I don’t do films the way I used to,” he points out.

All these experiences have come to shape his next big project, which is *The Heart of Drums*. “The show will represent different styles of drumming I have picked up over the years. The series Converging Streams is an ideal platform for it,” he says. Past performers at Converging Streams include vocalist Zila Khan, flautist Rajeev Raja, clarinettist Wacław Zimpel, ghatam maestro Giridhar Udupa and percussionist Taufiq Qureshi, who played last year with his group Surya. With *The Heart of Drums*, Barot and his ensemble promise to continue the magic. ■

*The Heart of Drums will be presented on 3rd September at the Experimental Theatre.*

## East-West Encounters

A dialogue between diverse streams of music has been a part of the ethos at the National Centre for the Performing Arts since its inception. Between 1983 and 1986, the NCPA, initiated a series of East-West dialogues involving composers, musicians, choreographers, dancers, theatre experts, philosophers and scientists who were invited to participate in an inquiry into the possibilities of creative work and thought drawing from Indian and Western sources. The project involved seminars and workshops dealing with the fields of music, philosophy, dance, visual arts and drama.

The first book published on the NCPA (1988) thus captured the essence of the East-West Music Encounter: “While purists on both sides still maintain that any blending and integrating of different music cultures may well yield ‘a salad of pseudo-ethnic music’... [s]ome composers have long ago begun breaking away from their national music language and display an impressive plurality of national and supra-national approaches to contemporary music creation. Non-European music has long fascinated composers like Claude Debussy, Olivier Messiaen and Jean-Claude Eloy in France, Ton de Leeuw in Holland, Roberto Laneri in Italy, Peggy Glanville-Hicks in Australia while Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Zakir Hussain in India have taken up the challenge of experimenting with Indian and Western music. It was, therefore, useful to examine existing cross-cultural music more closely, analyse its tools, materials and aesthetics rather than oft-heard opinions.”

# CONVERGING STREAMS

BEST OF WORLD MUSIC



THE  
HEART OF  
**DRUMS**  
BY  
**RANJIT BAROT**



ASHWIN SRINIVASAN  
FLUTE & VOCALS



GULRAJ SINGH  
KEYS & VOCALS



NASTYA SARASWATI  
VIOLIN



EMMANUEL SIMON  
WORLD PERCUSSIONS

SEP 3 | 6:30 PM

EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA

Presents



MUMBAI  
**PIANO DAY** 2023

Curated By **LOUIZ BANKS** and NCPA



LOUIZ BANKS



MAHESH  
RAGHUVAN



ANURAG  
NAIDU



MANECK  
BILLIMORIA



TUBBY



AYAAN  
DESHPANDE



GINO  
BANKS



SANJAY  
DIVECHA



AVISHEK  
DEY

... ALSO FEATURING ...



SHRAVAN  
SAMI



ANUBHA  
KAUL

Sep 23 | 6:30 pm  
Tata Theatre, NCPA



# The Man Behind the Melody

Ahead of the second part of his online workshop, Shantanu Moitra talks about the art of composing music and what it means to be a composer.

By Aishwarya Bodke

One of the most celebrated composers today, Shantanu Moitra had once said, “I became a music composer to pursue my passion without asking for leave.” Moitra is simply uncanonical. Seeking the sound of music in rivers and hills and the wind against his mountain bicycle, his music comes to life outside of the studio.

The man behind beloved Indian film albums, including *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, *Parineeta*, *3 Idiots* and *October* to name a few, Moitra, having grown up as a Bengali in Delhi, never imagined a career in music. A corporate job at a bank led to a client servicing profile in advertising that eventually opened up the vistas to compose jingles for commercials. His illustrious body of work now includes *Songs of the River*, an audacious six-episode expedition of cycling along the banks of the Ganges, capturing sounds to offer a glorious music album, and *Song of the Himalayas*, a collection of songs inspired by his 100-day journey across the Himalayas, which had its premiere at the NCPA.

It is perhaps the sound of breaking free that bleeds the most beautiful music.

Moitra speaks to *ON Stage*, as he returns with the second instalment of his much-anticipated online workshop, Understanding the Art of Composing, at the NCPA this September. Here's an excerpt from the conversation.

**ON Stage: You have had a unique path to composing that started with a job in a bank. Could you tell us about your leap of faith into music?**

**Shantanu Moitra:** I think it is evident that I don't plan my life. If I had, I would have still been a banker. When I was working at a bank, I didn't really enjoy it, but then advertising happened, and I was asked to make jingles. It gave me proximity to the world of creativity.

Life before that followed the trajectory that any Bengali boy's would. I come from a long line of sarod players, so I played an instrument and had a band in college, the usual. But the big question was that of money. I was brought up in a family that had seen poverty, so music was never a natural professional choice. But advertising made me realise that I can make music, make money and have fun.



**“There is a whole world outside of studios and stages waiting to be discovered. That is why I disappear for long stretches of time but come back inspired. You cannot keep giving without taking things in.”**

One always needs somebody who stirs your belief. For me, it was Pradeep Sarkar. It was for him that I wrote my first jingle, Uncle Chipps. The ad’s popularity went through the roof. It gave me the confidence to create. And then I did my first album, *Ab ke Savan*, with the extraordinary Shubha Mudgal. After I composed for the film *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, a particular song in the album—‘Bavra Mann’—opened many doors. And ever since, life has been full of music-making.

**OS: Like all artistic pursuits, the experience of and expectations from a composer may have undergone change. What does it mean to be a modern-day music composer?**

**SM:** I think the essence of who a composer is has not changed at all. Perhaps we keep digressing as technology and equipment evolve. There have always been tools to help create, but they could never substitute creation. Music lasts longer than any technology. Music that has been created organically stands the test of time, and that is why I say that music composition has not changed. It is the ability to string together a combination of notes that tells a story. That’s it. That is what a composition is. If it tells you a story, it touches you.

As the world transforms, more avenues in music open up to aid the execution. But the creation of music, the first realm of composition, resides in the mind of the composer. Nothing has been able to substitute that.

Moreover, there is a whole world outside of studios and stages that is waiting to be discovered. It is important, now more than ever, that a work-life balance is struck. That is why I disappear for long stretches of time but come back inspired. You cannot keep giving without taking things in.

**OS: Composing takes a different form in the Indian context, especially in our films, with colossal cultural diversity and so many moving parts—lyricists, playback singers and directors. Could you elaborate on the process?**

**SM:** To be a composer in India is definitely more complex than it would be in the West simply because of the expanse of our languages, dialects and styles. Musically, the Northeast is remarkably different from Punjab. As a composer, you need to be proficient in dealing with this range of sounds that the country offers. So, it becomes important to listen to all kinds of music and to be exposed to different cultures. It is challenging but also fascinating. Bollywood in itself is a whole cosmos.

The geography of the country, too, seeps into our music. I like to travel, and I have incorporated a lot of it into music. When I was in the Himalayas, they became a part of my music. When I was cycling down the Ganges, my music was inspired by the sound of the river. There is so much I learned during these expeditions. Every hundred kilometres, styles were changing, dialects were changing, voices were changing.

**OS: The scores and the songs you have composed for films have an atmospheric quality and people keep coming back to them. But these films have also been among my favourites. Does the script play an important role when you are choosing to compose for a project? Because sometimes terrible films can have great music.**

**SM:** The script is important. But what is more important is the filmmaker. I have seen great scripts which eventually disappoint, and average scripts that transform into brilliant films. The script is a great instrument but ultimately someone has to play it well.

Filmmaking is such a collaborative experience. My process involves spending a lot of time with the filmmaker, right from when the story is being conceived. I couldn’t have scored my last film, *Sardar Udham*, if I hadn’t known Shoojit Sircar and his sensibilities so well. I have always invested in the filmmaker. It is not the script, but the intention is what I’m scoring.

**OS: How does one boil down an art form such as composing into a workshop?**

**SM:** The workshop is merely a way to ignite the mind. Composing is more of an innate skill but a class can help identify that ability. My workshop comprises things one can do to hone that ability in order to be a more complete composer. Growth becomes much more pronounced once you start doing different formats like documentaries, films, jingles and theatre because music is everywhere, even in the sounds on the street. My job is to also let you know how to listen as a composer. Your listening style is going to be dramatically different from anybody else’s. You must be able to hear things that nobody else does.

Finally, composing is a neglected and misinterpreted art form and my idea of the workshop is to try and clear away some of those cobwebs. ■

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*The NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop: Understanding the Art of Composing will be conducted online by Shantanu Moitra on 2nd September. To register, please log on to [www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)*



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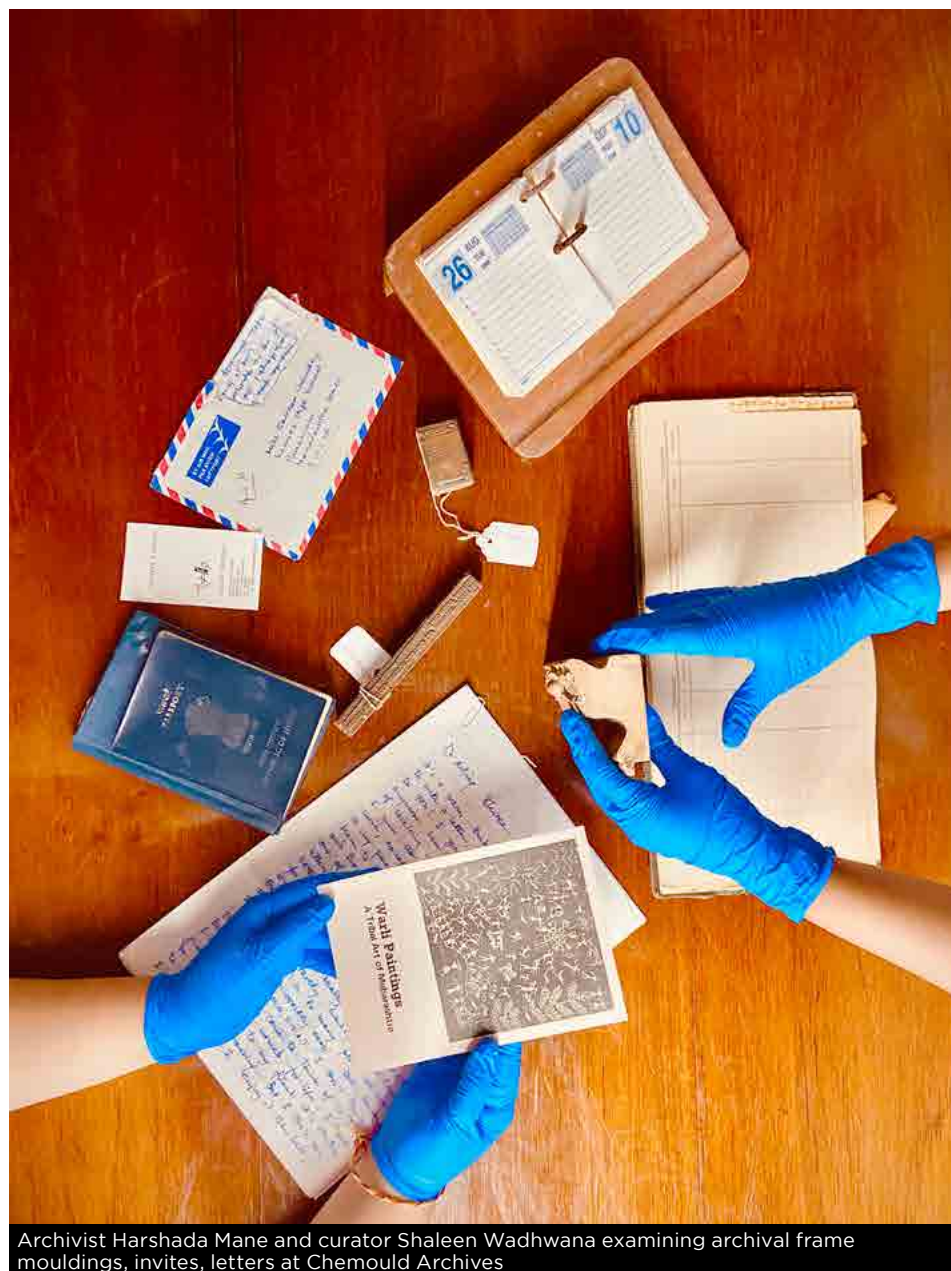
# Archival Inspirations

As Chemould, the contemporary art gallery, prepares its months-long celebration of having completed 60 years, we speak to the people behind the scenes of this important Mumbai institution to understand how its archive is serving as the lodestar for curation and creation.

By Vipasha Aloukik Pai

Gallery Chemould was always a place of possibilities and discoveries. Since the 1960s, anyone who walked in could see the latest paintings by Indian artists who are now considered to be masters. On the list of the most valuable Indian artists, almost every name has been associated in one way or another with the gallery. V. S. Gaitonde, Tyeb Mehta, F. N. Souza, Bhupen Khakhar, S. H. Raza and Laxman Pai, whose works are now considered to be blue-chip investments, were all nurtured by and exhibited at Gallery Chemould.

Chemould, which opened its doors in September 1963, would soon, thanks to its founders Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi, become an institution that would nurture some of the greatest Indian artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It took risks, it honoured commitments, it made it possible for art to flourish in the city in a way that had not been possible before. In his book *Citizen Gallery: The Gandhys of Chemould and the Birth of Modern Art in Bombay*, Jerry Pinto writes: 'For at least three generations of



Archivist Harshada Mane and curator Shaleen Wadhwana examining archival frame mouldings, invites, letters at Chemould Archives

YASHTI GHILANI



Opening of Gallery Chemould on 16th September 1963. From left to right: K.K Hebber, Laxman Pai, Gal Arya (architect), Siaxes Chandan Gaitonde, other members of the family and staff

**Over 30 contemporary artists have created new works in response to curatorial prompts from the gallery's archive which will culminate in a celebration with four exhibitions—*Framing, Futuring, Remembering* and *Continuum*—in three spaces over the next four months**

artists and art-lovers, Chemould was the first magical encounter between what you thought art might mean and what art could be. It could be here and now and it could be signed by an Indian name. It could speak to you without the language you were used to in those slick coffee-table books.'

For artist Anju Dodiya, it was where she saw all her favourite artists. "For a young student, it was an anchor that you always came back to and learnt from," she says. According to Rajendra N. Patil, President of the Bombay Art Society and Founder and Managing Director of the India Art Festival, "Gallery Chemould exhibited fantastic art. Even today, the gallery has a roster of big names like Atul Dodiya, Jitish Kallat, Sheetal Gattani and others. Anyone who gets an opportunity to exhibit at Chemould knows that it means a straight entry into mainstream art. It is a validation, which in the art world is very complicated," he says.

To celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the gallery has undertaken an in-depth exploration of its own extensive archive, which includes letters, albums, catalogues, photographs and much more. Over 30 contemporary artists associated with the gallery have

created new works in response to curatorial prompts from the archive. This will culminate in a celebration that will include four exhibitions—*Framing, Futuring, Remembering* and *Continuum*—in three spaces over the next four months.

\* \* \*

I am meeting Shireen Gandhi, Director of Chemould Prescott Road, in her ancestral home, Kekee Manzil, located at the edge of the city in Bandra. Surrounded by condominiums and fancy celebrity homes, the mansion, now over 100 years old, stands like an elegant rebel that has vanquished every high-rise-constructing demolition brigade in the area. It is also where her parents, Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi, lived. Before they became gallerists, the Gandhys ran a frame-manufacturing business called The Chemical Moulding Manufacturing Company with a studio on Princess Street. More than 40 years after Gallery Chemould was established above the Jehangir Art Gallery, it relocated to a bigger space on Prescott Road in Fort in 2007. The framing studio still exists, and the gallery has now added to its macrocosm



Chemould CoLab, a space in Colaba that facilitates summer residency programmes for artists, writers, researchers and the like.

At Kekee Manzil, we are, unsurprisingly, surrounded by a lot of good art. Above the couch hangs Atul Dodiya's 'Shanti moving house' from his Hindi-cinema-inspired series painted during the pandemic while Desmond Lazaro's 'The Baptism Certificate' hangs near the foyer. On a wall by the door are signed canvasses of artists who had solo exhibitions at the gallery between 1963 and 1972. I am looking at signatures, some accompanied by doodles, of Pai, Mehta and Ram Kumar, among others, which, Gandhi says, will be the point of reference for *Remembering*. "It is not unusual to see Gaitondes and Razas now because auction houses do that quite often. But *Remembering* will be sentimental and it will have some iconic works," she says.

When Gandhi took over the helm 35 years ago, there was a significant change in what the gallery chose to exhibit. "That happened naturally. It wasn't planned," she says. "Between 1988 and 1990, there was a shift in the politics of the country and that kind of started changing how artists began to work. In 1992, when the Babri Masjid came down, the artists we were working with felt they couldn't work on canvas anymore." Artist and activist Vivan Sundaram, for instance, stepped away from traditional painting to embrace multimedia because he saw things changing dramatically 'both in terms of the political situation as well as the opening up of technologies'. Nalini Malani, who has worked in several media including video art, has said that for her, painting 'lost its meaning and was seen as something redundant and bourgeois'. Gandhi, who at the time had access to both Sundaram and Malani, says, "They started informing [me] because I was open to those ideas, and that is how the gallery began to shift and change in how we were showing."

Chemould then became a gallery that allowed artists to explore and innovate. "Malani, for the first time, did work which actually covered the ground and

the walls. She was responding to a time that was highly charged for us. We began to have a certain kind of reputation, I think in a good way," says Gandhi. Anju Dodiya, whose first solo show was at Chemould in 1991, says, "The gallery has always allowed me to do what I want as an artist. It has always been about freedom and the need of the artist."

Forward-looking even today, Gandhi has invited 32-year-old Shaleen Wadhwa to curate *CheMoulding* which includes *Framing* and *Futuring*. Wadhwa is the youngest curator of anniversary exhibitions at Chemould—the 25<sup>th</sup> year was curated by Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi, the 40<sup>th</sup> by art historians Geeta Kapur and Chaitanya Sambrani and the 50<sup>th</sup> by Kapur, all of whom were already significantly established in their careers. When I ask Gandhi why she chose Wadhwa, her response is simple. "I knew I'd never get another Shaleen," she says.

\* \* \*

"There are 33 people living in my head at all times," says Wadhwa, when I meet her at Chemould CoLab, which currently serves as the headquarters of the archive. The 33 people she is talking about are contemporary artists associated with the gallery—Anju Dodiya, Reena Saini Kallat, Jitish Kallat, Shilpa Gupta, among others—who are currently creating new work for *CheMoulding*. Wadhwa, fully aware of the gallery's powerful legacy, says, "I added the 'ing' [in the exhibition title] because we think of Chemould as a verb. For 60 years, they have been a space for free artistic expression. And I find that those spaces have become threatened. To remember that there was and is such a space is very important for my generation and the next," she says.

The Delhi-based independent art educator and curator has been living in Mumbai since March, working on ways to honour, commemorate and inspire while also digging through 28 boxes of archival material, with the help of archive manager Harshada Mane.

Wadhwa is creating an ever-expanding curatorial mind map on one side of a wall and on the other, a detailed timeline of Chemould's history juxtaposed with socio-political happenings and developments in the Indian art movement. She brings to the table a degree of awareness, not just of the task at hand but of the bigger picture. "I have tried to study how human motivation works," she says. "The fact that I'm a curator who looks a lot at socio-political movements and how artists respond to social justice becomes imperative to how I want to communicate."

The art being created for *CheMoulding* promises to be diverse while connecting with individual artists' practices. Expect wood, metal, multimedia installations, digital artwork, oil acrylic, watercolour, natural pigment paint. Expect paper, canvas, video works, sound works, video and sound works, sculpture from wood, metal and ceramics. Expect a lot of audiovisual content and a reading room that will serve as a bibliography for the exhibitions. "Some artists are paying homage to artists of the past. Some are working with the theme of friendship between the gallery and artist. There are artists working with dates that are important to Chemould.



Shireen Gandhi, Kekoo Gandhi and Khorshed Gandhi in 2003

**"The gallery has always allowed me to do what I want as an artist. It has always been about freedom and the need of the artist"**

Others are working with physical objects that were important. Some are responding to the architecture of Chemould Prescott Road and Kekee Manzil," says Wadhwa. Jitish Kallat, for instance, has proposed a 'radical restructuring' of the gallery space. He says, "For Chemould 60, I am reintroducing the former Gallery Chemould space within the current Chemould Prescott Road. The distinctive circular Chemould wall will be reincarnated within this larger gallery space, nested like a Russian doll or a tree's growth ring." Anju Dodiya, a dedicated user of watercolour, fabric and charcoal is, after many decades, working with oil paint. "I am going to respond to personal family photographs from the archive. I have been looking for the right subject matter to start working in oil paint, and in these photographs, I found something warm and nostalgic, with interesting pictorial possibilities," she says.

\* \* \*

The history of Chemould is exceptional. "We are talking not just about a space showing art but also about intellectual and liberal human beings," says Dodiya. To fully and expansively commemorate 60 years of a cultural institution is a near impossible assignment. But the promise of what we are about to see is alluring. "It is historic because Part 1 and 2,

*Framing* and *Futuring*, are about 60 years of the entirety of Chemould history and where we're going into the future," says Wadhwa. Meanwhile, work by gallery veterans will be shown at *Remembering* at the old Gallery Chemould (above the Jehangir Art Gallery). Then there is *Continuum*, curated by Atyaan Jungalwala (Gandhi's daughter) and Sunaina Kewalramani, co-founders of Chemould CoLab, which will showcase works by emerging artists.

At the heart of it, though, this is a tribute to Khorshed Gandhi. "The hero in this show is going to be my mother," Gandhi says. In *Citizen Gallery*, Pinto writes, 'She [Khorshed] made him [Kekoo] possible and together they made Gallery Chemould into a birthing room for Indian modernism.' Wadhwa too, while working with the archive, has come to deeply admire Khorshed.

With strong credentials in art history and cultural heritage law, Wadhwa is also an educator in an age in which our history books are being callously edited. If the exhibitions make even a single viewer "a little more aware, more vigilant of our historical truths, I will have done my job," she says. "Because *that* is the embodiment of Kekoo and Khorshed." ■

*The exhibitions celebrating 60 years of Chemould will begin with Framing on 15th September at Chemould Prescott Road. For more information, please visit [www.gallerychemould.com](http://www.gallerychemould.com)*



From left to right: Shireen Gandhi, Shaleen Wadhwa, Atyaan Jungalwala at Chemould Archives

HARSHADA MANE

CHEMOULD ARCHIVES

# Capturing the City

It takes a rare degree of generosity for an artiste to share with others what has inspired, frustrated, celebrated and humbled them. *Always Being Born: A Memoir* by Mrinal Sen is a lucid account of the auteur's life exploring his early days as a teenager new to the city of Calcutta, his experiences as a renowned filmmaker on the festival circuits of Berlin and Cannes and much in between. Here, the well-read, eloquent and opinionated man, who never took himself too seriously, discusses his complex relationship with Calcutta and the failure of a prophetic film.

**Looking back to** the distant past, Mirza Ghalib, the great poet, who stayed in the city for over a year, had said, 'If I were a bachelor, I would have stayed back here for ever. Here, to be a commoner is better than being a ruler.'

Taking everything of mine into consideration, more of failure and much less of achievement, can I call myself the commonest of the commoners? I am what I am, an incorruptible and incorrigible individual, living in a city which has always excited me, provoked me, inspired me and offered me such a bounty of delicious and bitter sentiments. This is my city; it irritates me, makes me laugh and cry, makes me take flight. As much stimulant as it is irritant.

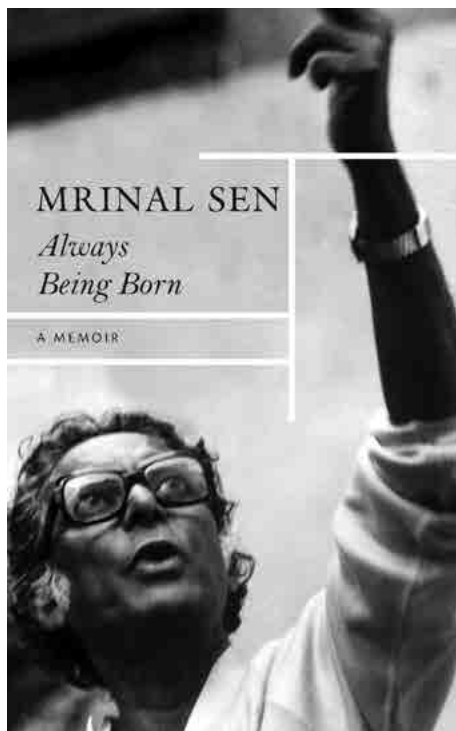
I remember a befitting anecdote, so typical of my city, from my dear friend Gulzar, filmmaker, poet and writer. He lived for a brief period in the city's southern extreme. One day he came out of his house, bag in hand. A neighbour, obviously a Bengali, sitting on the threshold and chewing a *daatun* (twig brush), asked him casually in Bangla, *Machh kinte jachchen, moshai? Oi goli diye chole jaan, ekhane gooli cholchhe*. (Going to buy fish, sir? Take the lane on that side, there's firing going on this side.) Hugely amused, Gulzar mused, 'This is Calcutta! A battlefield and yet so cool, so normal.'

Yes, indeed, a battlefield! The lull before and after the storm.

Once again, an anecdote, this one my own. From sometime in 1968, towards the end of the year.

A huge contingent of the metropolitan police. A circuitous barricade across the spacious Esplanade East. Enormous prison vans and hired buses behind the barricade. Further west—the imposing house of the governor, an opulent remnant of the Raj, as if the imperial master's parting gift. At a safe distance, a crowd of curious onlookers. A kind of uneasy calm. That was the scene one afternoon when we got there—my cameraman and I, modestly equipped. I used to do such coverage from time to time, for use in my future films. All to capture the time that my countrymen passed through. All to help characterise the period effectively.

Having patrolled the sensitive area, a police jeep suddenly braked before the barricade. An officer jumped down. Instantly, I recognised him—he was a friend of mine. I walked up to him. He smiled. I asked him if he was in charge of the operation. He gave



a broader smile and asked if I had come to do a coverage of the confrontation between the police and the students. Yes, that was the day for a students' rally, when a mob of about 200,000 students representing various unions and splinter groups would attempt to break the police cordon. Ostentatiously to build a case for their parent bodies, the left-wing parties, who had gained a government in the state only to be 'unjustly' liquidated by the Central authority.

I asked my friend if he would allow a foreign crew to do the filming along with me. I guessed he would not. I knew his hands were tied by law—foreigners are forbidden to lay their hands on politically sensitive issues.

'Where are they from?' he asked rather casually.

'From France,' I said.

His eyes beamed. 'Filmmakers?' he asked.

'Yes, a three-member team, headed by

one Louis Malle.'

'Is Louis Malle here?' he asked with childlike enthusiasm. 'I must meet him. I am a fan. Where is he?'

Malle had landed in the city the night before. He, his cameraman and his recordist. He called me in the morning and said he had come to do a film on the 'fascinating' crowd of the city. I told him that the crowd I'd have an encounter with that afternoon for reasons of my own would be beyond his 'reach'. I told him about the legal constraint. Even then, hoping against hope, he had come along with me in a hired car.

'I must meet him,' reiterated my policeman friend.

I rushed to the car parked a safe distance away and pulled out Malle. 'A fan of yours is waiting for you,' I said.

'Mine? My fan here? In this unearthly place and at this unearthly hour?' he asked, a bit distrustful.

'Yes, very much here, in this battlefield. And your fan is a policeman. Rathin Bhattacharya, a Calcuttan!'

'A p-o-l-i-c-e-m-a-n!'

'That's right,' I said, and presented him before the operation commander. The policeman said he had watched Malle's *Zazie dans le Métro* (*Zazie in the Metro*) (1960) just a week ago. And, yes, without subtitles. He'd watched the film at the Alliance Française and loved it. Oh yes, he had completed a course in

French and also translated Louis Aragon's 'Elsa au miroir' (Elsa at the mirror) (1945).

A speechless Malle gaped at my friend and then at me. Moments later, he took me aside and gushed, 'Amazing, incredible! A policeman ready to beat the students to jelly any moment now is remembering Aragon and his "Elsa at the Mirror"! Mrinal, this can happen only in your city. Nowhere else!'

... That was my city in the late 1960s. That is my city, always. And away from its downtown, or in the thick of it, go to a coffee house or to a tea shop, not to the famous one with two wings—Lords and Commons—which once made history and has now lost its lustre—go there, to a moderate backstreet shop or stand at the maddening crossroads where, a little apart from the boisterous crowd, perchance you may capture a young poet with his unkempt beard, busy replacing a line from his yet-to-be-published work with a more suitable phrase. Calcutta/Kolkata! Buoyant, creative, erratic, even hopelessly disengaged. For reasons of my own, having lived in my El Dorado for ages, I stop a while and look within and ask myself if I have, at any point of time, felt sick of my city. Have I? Ever? Do I? Now? The truth is that I am so much a part of its anatomy. As I write this, I remember a Bob Dylan song—'Love Sick' (1997)—which, not long ago, the actor-singer Anjan Dutt, my friend, made me listen to. I am sick of love / but I am in the thick of it. That was it—a kind of love-and-hate relationship with your lover, or mine. Inescapable. Maligned and loved, both in enormous proportions.

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Now, it was time to think of a new project—a new film. 'What next?' asked Gita ... In utter confusion, I toyed with ideas I had once nurtured but then laid aside. I glanced through books that came my way. But all the time, I felt dreadfully empty. I envied Charlie Chaplin who, talking to journalists at a pretty old age, said he would never be able to retire because ideas just kept popping into his head. I recalled Gabriel Garcia Márquez once telling me in an intimate conversation that 'ideas come to me through images'. And as for Istvan Szabo, the Hungarian filmmaker, there were stories scattered all over. But, silly me! I could think of nothing, see nothing. My mind and eyes grew weary.

Strangely, an idea had come to me once. Just once. That was in early 1974. One day, on my way to the Reserve Bank of India

during peak hour, I was struck by an unusual spectacle: an unending, serpentine line of men and women, young and not so young, waiting patiently, unmoved. It was a huge queue, the like of which I had never seen before. I forgot about my appointment at the bank and walked along the line of countless people, watching them, talking to them. I gathered they had come from various districts to buy job-application forms. Jobs that were far fewer in number than them.

I set aside my own work and rushed to a friend of mine, Mohit Chattopadhyay—college teacher and eminent playwright, specialising in the theatre of the absurd. I told him about the spectacle and asked him if he would collaborate with me on my next script. It would be a huge crowd of 30,000 or the double that number or even more, waiting for days to collect application forms from a particular counter within a well-guarded fortress. Buying forms from a counter or two, then depositing the same, Law and Order remaining dreadfully active all the time. Until eventually the applicants turn violent and attack the impregnable fortress. The 'Chairman' of the fortress would then declare an Emergency.

Mohit gladly accepted my offer and the two of us began work on a satirical fantasy; we called it *Chorus* (1974). For right or wrong reasons, the film received the Golden Lotus, along with quite a few awards at foreign festivals ... But it failed miserably in the domestic circuit. One evening, an angry group emerged out of a city theatre and, identifying me in the foyer, they rushed to me and asked if I could provide them with a subtitled print—because the film had been beyond their comprehension. The fantasy had gone over their heads. Such a reaction was not new to me; I was more than used to such encounters full of sarcasm about my work. I took it all as part of the game. But I wondered why I kept in check a beautiful line, which Lindsay Anderson, maker of the remarkable film *if....* (1968), a funny, bitter allegory, his all-time best, had once told me that 'today's fantasy would turn out to be tomorrow's reality!' How delightfully prophetic Lindsay had been! The Emergency was declared in India on 26th June 1975. ■

*This is an excerpt from Always Being Born: A Memoir by Mrinal Sen. No part of this excerpt may be quoted or reproduced without prior written consent from its publisher, Seagull Books.*

## Mrinal Sen's Calcutta: A Battlefield He Called Home

A rebel with a conscience, the pioneering filmmaker's camera held up a mirror to and embraced his beloved city, warts and all. **By Sayantan Ghosh**

**When I was asked** to write about Mrinal Sen, I initially struggled to locate my association with him and his work. My tryst with Sen began in my late teenage years, but when I was barely 10 or 11 years old and still trying to discover my city's voice, it was singer-songwriter Anjan Dutt's music that I found most relatable. I was acutely unaware that Sen was Dutt's mentor in some sense. Dutt had begun his film acting career with Sen's *Chaalchitra* (1981) and they shared a deep friendship until the latter's demise in 2018. The everyday rebellion in Dutt's songwriting that grabbed me by the throat in the '90s was cut

from the same cloth as Sen's mutinous filmmaking, with their edges marginally softened, since the decades in between had somewhat reoriented the city's concerns too. A few years after Dutt, the words of a scrawny man from Minnesota named Bob Dylan entered my life and ended up becoming that indelible influence that I was never able to shake off.

Like many, I have admired Sen's films while growing up in the heat and dust of our city, Calcutta. Discussed, argued and debated the relative greatness of Ray-Ghatak-Sen over several cups of tea and coffee—a favourite pastime of cine-lovers in



Bengal. Interestingly, all three made their debut features around the same time—Ray and Sen in the same year (1955) while Ghatak arrived at the scene three years later. But it is Sen's Calcutta trilogy—*Interview* (1971), *Calcutta 71* (1972) and *Padatik* (1973)—that has been elemental in both shaping and remoulding my ideas about this tumultuous, restless and forever cosmopolitan city.

Early on in Sen's memoir, *Always Being Born* (Seagull Books, 2023; originally published in 2004), he recalls how his son Kunal always asked him not to blindly trust memory because "memories are reconstructive rather than photographic". In Sen's work we see this reconstruction happen very often, especially in the three films of the Calcutta trilogy. Sen's cinematographer, K. K. Mahajan, photographs the city with the lens that Sen has reconstructed in his mind already. But while Sen's work acknowledges and appreciates this reconstruction of reality, the rebellious individual in him resisted it when the state tried to enforce changes that he found unnecessary in his beloved city. That is why he opposed the decision of renaming the city of Calcutta to Kolkata when it had been proposed. He recognised the colonial history behind the name, but his idea of protest had been through his art, his truth materialised strongest when told through cinema. When it was done any way, he remarked, "jolts notwithstanding, my city remains mine own—good, bad or indifferent!"

There are many remarkable films by Sen which feature Calcutta prominently, but it is in these three films where we get to observe a maker who is deciphering the many marvels of his city, possibly for the first time, along with the viewers. Whether it's that pioneering fourth-wall-breaking tram sequence in *Interview* that critiqued sartorial neocolonialism, or the montage shots of a visibly erupting metropolis in *Padatik*, the audience is never a step ahead or behind Sen when these are playing out, but with him throughout. One of the most profound moments of Sen's career came after a screening of *Calcutta 71* at the Metro theatre. A young man came up to Sen and asked him when he had shot the film, then began shouting at him. Sen was left distraught, but on enquiring further realised that the young man in question had spotted one of his dear friends delivering a speech at Esplanade in one of the sequences. Later that same evening, he was killed by the state police. Sen had been recording similar incidents in and around the city for a few years then, and during one such shoot the cameraman must have captured that scene. Oscar Wilde had famously written life imitates art, but in Sen's case the line between life, death and art had blurred beyond recognition.

Calcutta was his sanctuary; it was here he could unhesitatingly step out with his motley crew and walk through a crowded street to create some of the most iconic guerrilla filmmaking images ever captured on camera. Calcutta was his home, but this was also where he lived so simply and yet so fully. Sen had once



*Calcutta was Mrinal Sen's sanctuary; here he could unhesitatingly step out with his motley crew and walk through a crowded street to create some of the most iconic guerrilla filmmaking images ever captured on camera*

remarked to the great film director Adoor Gopalakrishnan while talking about another filmmaker, "You tell me about his lifestyle, and I'll tell you what kind of films he'll make." This also applies to Sen and his filmography.

Sen, a polemicist and provocateur extraordinaire, was always interested in telling stories of ordinary, oppressed citizens, never one to shy away from taunting the ultra-rich or even exposing the frailties of educated middle class Calcuttans—depicted masterfully in *Kharij* (1982) starring Dutt in a lead role. He adored this city but also stood first in line to call out its deceptions and hypocrisies. "I am not the person to treat my city as a sacred cow," he wrote, "even though I confess I am not ashamed to call it my El Dorado—of course, not without my tongue firmly in my cheek every now and then." Dutt's songwriting imbibed this trait and as a young boy I was able to find myself in his words. While I found the right words to describe my relationship with my hometown through his songs, Dutt himself might have borrowed some of these thoughts from Sen and their time together as collaborators.

Sen was an artiste who encouraged mistakes and learning from them, which is also why he was able to change with the times and stay relevant until the very end. "Don't compromise," are two words he was often heard telling younger filmmakers who visited him for advice. A sense of disquiet always prevailed in his storytelling but it is evident from a closer scrutiny of his vast body of work—over 30 feature films, documentaries and telefilms—that he never created from a sense of hopelessness or doom. Instead, the way he saw his films is also how he saw his home and the city—with love, but also with a cautionary prism of realism. ■

Sayantan Ghosh is Executive Editor at Simon & Schuster and writes a column on books for DailyO. His published work can be found at [linktr.ee/sayantanghosh](https://linktr.ee/sayantanghosh). He lives in Delhi.





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# A New Era

After two online editions, Con Brio 2023 returns to the theatres at the NCPA. Here's what to expect.

**By Florestan Furtado**

From 2010 to 2019, the Furtados Con Brio Festival gave Mumbai a unique Western classical music experience. Trademarks of the festival were unusual repertoire presented in deeply thematic programmes, several young Indian musicians performing chamber music at a high standard alongside seasoned international professionals, and the final rounds of India's premier music competition where the best of budding musicians perform in front of an audience. The festival and competition were created by Furtados and Parvesh Java, and the young exploratory spirit of the festival was a crucial ingredient in its success.

It is that same spirit that continues to influence the post-pandemic revival of Con Brio, which, after two online editions, is back at the NCPA from 15th to 17th September with some new developments. After a decade of steering the ship, Java hands over the baton to Smit Shah. The idea behind the changing of the guard is best expressed in Java's own words. "Young ideas are the essence of Con Brio and one reaches a point where the grey hair on their face makes it unbecoming to still call themselves young." Luckily for Furtados and Java, the winner of the online Con Brio Piano Competition of 2022 is actually very young, and full of interesting ideas much like his predecessor, and also enthusiastic to play the daunting role of Festival Director.

Among the other major changes in Con Brio over the last few years was the expansion of the single piano competition into a complete suite of competitions for various instruments. At this year's festival, we will also witness a violin competition



and a voice (singing) competition. These competitions have always been about keeping the discovery process of India's finest young talent alive. This year saw the highest number of entries the competition has ever seen, with 70 entries for piano, 17 for violin and 24 for voice. All classical music lovers should feel very encouraged that there is a growing enthusiasm for the practice of this art.

As is tradition with Con Brio, a strong theme ties everything at the festival. This is a unique feature of Con Brio. Most classical music festivals present programmes where the individual items do not seem to have a common linkage. The 2023 edition revolves around the synergy between visual arts and music which will manifest itself in the various pieces of music being accompanied by projections of 'matching' visual art. In fact, composers often undertook the reverse process. For instance, it is believed that Claude Debussy's masterpiece 'La mer' was inspired by Japanese artist Hokusai's 'The Great Wave off Kanagawa', a print of which hung in the composer's studio. Ottorino Respighi's 'Trittico



Botticelliano' was meant to be a symphonic tribute to three Botticelli paintings. Most well-known, of course, is Modest Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition'—a multi-movement piano piece inspired by an exhibition of works by Viktor Hartmann. It is after this work that this year's Con Brio Festival is titled: 'Pictures at a Concert'.

Some of the works at the festival include a Rachmaninoff four-hand transcription of a piece by Tchaikovsky to be performed by the new festival director sharing the piano with the outgoing one. The singers will present themed sets of songs: Farah Ghadiali on different times of the day, Rahul Bharadwaj on flora and fauna and Subin Sebastian on sculptures. Oscar Castellino will sing selections from *Earth and Air and Rain* by Gerald Finzi, while Eshvita Menezes will hold the strings of the festival together as she has done for several previous editions. Fittingly, an adaptation of Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition' will be the finale piece with all the festival performers. All of this will be accompanied by visual art, including some works of local artists. Con Brio 2023 promises to be not just a veritable feast for the ears this year, but also one for the eyes. ■



*Con Brio 2023 – Pictures at a Concert will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> September at the Little Theatre and on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September at the Experimental Theatre.*

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# Recommended Volume

Every month, **Sujata Jadhav**, Head - Libraries & Documentation Centre at the NCPA, introduces a must-read book from the NCPA Reference Library. Here, she recommends an in-depth study of the business side of running an orchestra in the United States.

**Orpheus in the New World: The symphony orchestra as an American cultural institution - its past, present, and future**

by Philip Hart

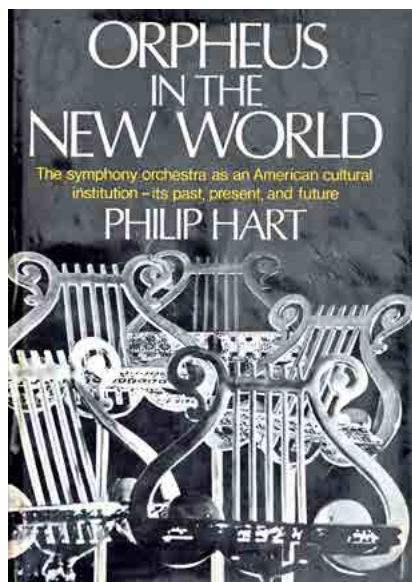
Published by W. W. Norton & Company (1973)

The history of symphony orchestras in the United States has been shaped by various factors, including immigration, cultural influences, economic conditions and artistic innovation. *Orpheus in the New World*, written by music historian Philip Hart, gives a historical account of the institution of the orchestra in America, down to the present and with an eye on the future. Here, classical music has had strong roots in major cities like Boston, New York and Philadelphia and the influence of classical music traditions, particularly from Germany and Austria, have played a significant role in shaping early American orchestras.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several prominent conductors and composers from Europe, like Gustav Mahler, Arturo Toscanini and Leopold Stokowski, made their mark on American orchestral culture. They introduced new works by European and American composers and helped establish symphony orchestras as world-class ensembles.

The book is divided into three parts; the first part is dedicated to the history of orchestras and the people behind them. Hart explores the contributions of five influential figures who left a significant impact on the arts community in the country—Theodore Thomas, Henry Lee Higginson, Arthur Judson, James Caesar Petrillo and Helen M. Thompson. These individuals left a powerful legacy in the arts community in the United States, with their contributions spanning the realms of orchestral music, arts management and musicians' rights.

The author then discusses six orchestras—namely, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Utah Symphony, the Louisville Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Albuquerque Philharmonic Orchestra and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra—in time of crises. Each of these orchestras has



contributed significantly to the cultural landscape of its respective city and offered exceptional musical experiences to its audiences. He further illustrates the variety and complexity of what were then the current problems with, and opportunities in, orchestras.

Though this book was published 40 years ago, it analyses the inner workings of an orchestra, which are relevant even today. Hart explains that while some ensembles continue to focus on traditional repertoire, others actively engage in promoting contemporary composers and diverse musical styles. Many American orchestras have embraced community engagement and educational initiatives, aiming to reach new audiences and foster a love for classical music among younger generations. They often perform in schools, offer family concerts and collaborate with other art forms like dance and visual arts to make classical music more accessible and relevant to modern audiences.

However, orchestras have also faced financial challenges, struggling with declining ticket sales and reduced public funding. To adapt, some orchestras have experimented with alternative concert formats and thematic programming to expand their reach and relevance. The future of symphony orchestras in the U.S., Hart writes, will likely continue to evolve in response to changing societal trends and technological advancements.

To keep up with the times, orchestras must diversify their programming, musicians and audience outreach, the author recommends. Embracing a wider range of cultures and musical styles can make orchestras more representative of the diverse American population and more likely to attract new audiences. He also writes presciently about the crucial role of technological integration. And we see that in addition to digital streaming, international orchestras today actively incorporate technology into their performances including virtual and augmented reality. Collaborations with artists from different disciplines, such as video game designers and filmmakers, have also led to innovative performances that appeal to a broader audience.

The need to find novel ways to secure funding and ensure financial sustainability will remain, as always, the greatest challenge for orchestras in the future. Educational outreach will remain crucial to cultivating future audiences and musicians. Orchestras may further expand their educational programmes to reach underserved communities and provide more comprehensive opportunities.

The future of symphony orchestras in the U.S. will depend on their ability to adapt, innovate and engage with the ever-changing cultural landscape, Hart concludes in this insightful work. By embracing diversity, technology and community involvement, orchestras can continue to be a vibrant and relevant cultural institution for generations to come. ■

*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 and Friends of the SOI. 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 Rs.500/- (April-March). Casual membership for visitors (outstation visitors only) is available at ₹100/- per day. For more information, please call 022-6622 3715.*

# For the Record

**Jimmy Bilimoria** discusses a work from the Stuart-Liff Collection he oversees at the NCPA. This month, he writes about the legendary *tenore di grazia*, Tito Schipa.

**When once asked** how he had managed to keep his vocal powers intact after a career lasting almost 50 years, Italian tenor Tito Schipa replied, “I always take good care of my health, and in my youth I had a sound vocal and musical training, also I have never attempted in opera to compete with the orchestra for volume.” This is how singers from the bel canto traditions sang well into old age with little or no sign of vocal decline. They were known for certain qualities—a seamless register, electrifying agility, coloratura technique, sound musicianship, tremendous powers of interpretation and vocal as opposed to physical acting. Unfortunately, very few who entered the gramophone era had these qualities.

The famous soprano Bidu Sayão, who often sang with Schipa during the later years of his long career, said that she learnt more from him than from any other tenor, although her partners included Beniamino Gigli and Aureliano Pertile. She said he “chiselled phrases like a goldsmith”. He had clarity, refinement, diction and all this featured in his singing whether onstage or on gramophone records.

Schipa began his musical studies at the early age of six. He was accomplished as a pianist and composer, and this strong foundation stood him in good stead throughout his career. He made his debut in 1910 as Alfredo in *La traviata* in Vercelli. In the duet ‘Un dì felice, eterea’, one can hear his graceful phrasing, and the tenderness and elegance that were to remain his hallmark. His voice projection was such that even his pianissimo could reach the farthest seat in any opera house.

In 1915, Schipa made his La Scala debut as Vladimir in *Prince Igor* and as Des Grieux in *Manon*. He enjoyed success as Des Grieux, reprising the role at various venues across Spain and at

An autographed photo Tito Schipa sent to the author from Rome in 1963



the Costanzi in Rome (now known as Teatro dell’Opera di Roma), a success which founded his real reputation. In 1917, Puccini chose him to create the role of Ruggero Lastouc in *La rondine* which premiered in Monte Carlo. In 1919, Schipa made his American debut with the Chicago Opera. He appeared in every season till 1932, the year of his debut with the Metropolitan Opera in New York as Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore*. The critic W. J. Henderson commented that the aria ‘Una furtiva lagrima’ was presented as it had rarely been sung in the house, an opinion confirmed by Schipa’s 1929 record of the aria. In 1932, he recorded *Don Pasquale*. Ernesto’s arias are said to be models of Donizetti’s singing. Leading British opera critic Harold Rosenthal referred to his interpretation as “still unbeatable.” He is one of those rare singers who enlivened everything they touched.

Schipa’s voice had a unique quality—its penetrative power. This was due to the technique derived from the classic

method of voice production where the singer concentrates on breathing. He was by nature very musical and showed great respect for the text.

“A singer able to express darkest melancholy by means of modulation calculated to a milligram; an interpreter who, with the somewhat wan, opaque notes of his chest register, produced a truly exhausted and grief-laden voice for the desperate Werther [in Jules Massenet’s opera] of the last two acts—Schipa was adept at choosing the right moment to emphasise now the classical, now the romantic side of his temperament. What is more, he always gave the impression of a great simplicity of means. His performances of *arie antiche* [as also the simple Neapolitan and Spanish songs]... have the merit of an exceptional purity of

line and vocalisation and of an interpretative approach which shuns all individual quirks and seeks only to evoke the colours, fragrance and atmosphere of an era lost for ever,” wrote Rodolpho Celletti in his note for a Gramophone recording of Schipa’s opera and song recital.

The Stuart-Liff Collection at the NCPA boasts several records of operatic arias and songs by the great Italian tenor. ■

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



# The Performing Arts Dispatch

A series on houses of culture from around the world. In focus this month: Shakespeare's Globe.

By Aishwarya Bodke



The year 2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the First Folio, the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623, seven years after his demise. The comedies, histories and tragedies of Shakespeare form this collection that includes 36 of his plays, including *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *The Tempest* and *Julius Caesar*.

Most of these monumental plays were performed at the Globe, a picturesque open-air theatre, built in 1599 on the south bank of the Thames in London. They were produced by Lord Chamberlain's Men, the company that Shakespeare wrote for and partly owned. The historic cultural site—one that rose from burned grounds and overcame natural and systemic closure—is the ancestral precursor to what is now the iconic Shakespeare's Globe.

It began with founder Sam Wanamaker's visit to London in 1949 and his resolve to locate the site of the original Globe. A misfired prop cannon during a

1613 performance of *Henry VIII* caused the thatched roof to catch fire, burning down the entire place. Miraculously, no one died. Rebuilt in only one year, it had to eventually close down by parliamentary decree in 1642. But all Wanamaker could find was a small plaque—an inaccurate one—commemorating the site. After establishing the Shakespeare Globe Trust in 1971, he persevered for two decades to rebuild the amphitheatre. Tragically, he did not live to see the theatre in bricks and mortar. The Globe Theatre was finally inaugurated in 1997 by Queen Elizabeth II.

For over 25 phenomenal years, Shakespeare's Globe has been the foremost custodian of the Bard's legacy. Its objective is to harness the power of performance, cultivate intellectual curiosity and make Shakespeare accessible to all.

Shakespeare's Globe is home to two performance spaces. The Globe Theatre is an open-air 360° auditorium. Here, tales of the Bard unfold come rain, shine or snow.

Shakespeare called his theatre a 'wooden O'. Shaped like an icosagon, or a 20-sided polygon, the Globe Theatre can hold 1,570 people, 700 standing and the rest seated. The seats are arranged in galleries around the wide, open stage, so spectators and performers can see each other at all times. Audience involvement was a huge part of the theatre's history and it continues to be so. The emotional investment from the spectators is palpable just as much in the silence as in the animated cheer. An experience as collective and visceral as live theatre finds its haven here.

The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, on the other hand, is an indoor candlelit theatre, modelled after the intimate candlelit playhouses of Shakespeare's London. Illuminated by over 100 beeswax candles, it is an archetype of the Jacobean indoor theatre, where plays like *Othello* and *The Duchess of Malfi* were written and performed. The venue is celebrating its 10th anniversary, with an extensive season,



A scene from *Henry V* in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse



A scene from *The Comedy of Errors* at Shakespeare's Globe



The atmospheric Sam Wanamaker Playhouse



A scene from *Midsummer Mechanicals* at Shakespeare's Globe

opening with Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* this winter. The season will also feature a new version of *Hansel and Gretel*, Tim Crouch's acclaimed solo show *I, Malvolio* and a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, created especially for young people.

The warm embrace of gleaming candles has, over the last decade, transported artistes and audiences to worlds elsewhere. "As the nights draw in, and the days get darker, we hope these beguiling and bewitching dramas will charm, inspire and nourish as you step into the candlelight to celebrate 10 years of our wonderful Sam Wanamaker Playhouse," Artistic Director Michelle Terry has said.

The sense of wonder at the atmospheric Shakespeare's Globe only deepens as they proudly claim to be the playwright's workplace. At 200 yards from the original site and with diligent research and traditional craftsmanship, they have architecturally recreated conditions under which Shakespeare and his contemporaries worked. It goes beyond the expectations for a performing arts organisation in becoming a cultural symbol not only for London but for a global literature and theatre community. There are several replicas and pop-up venues across the world that seek to recreate the Bard's original performance space, but Shakespeare's Globe holds a distinct position.

*For over 25 phenomenal years, Shakespeare's Globe has been the foremost custodian of the Bard's legacy and its objective is to harness the power of performance and make him accessible to all*

The financial and artistic ruptures caused by the pandemic seeped into the functioning for a long time as the Globe Theatre remained shut for 429 days. With tremendous efficiency in adapting to the digital medium, the theatre's pandemic run included eight productions released worldwide for free; the Globe Player received nearly 30,000 film streams and over 160 online events were organised for schools. In May 2021, the theatre opened to reduced capacity but great gusto.

Shakespeare remains one of the most studied authors in the world. The holy grail is to lovingly nurture the universal legacy of the

playwright but also make it accessible. The venue remains committed to showcasing bold and innovative productions, and education programmes. The theatre programme here is one of the few that continues to produce and tour repertory theatre. The 2021-22 season delivered 510 performances across 21 venues, providing employment for 572 artistes.

The various educational initiatives are designed around finding ways to introduce Shakespeare to and engage young audiences. Abridged versions of Shakespearean plays are directed with a special focus on design to make the story, characters and themes feel relevant to young people, who may often have preconceived notions about the Bard of Avon.

Lucy Cuthbertson, Director of Education, elaborates, "We know this has a significant accessibility impact as many of these students are coming to a theatre for the first time, a larger number are seeing their first live Shakespeare play. We have had professional actors come back to perform in productions who first experienced theatre via their school trip to Shakespeare's Globe."

Additionally, as part of an ongoing commitment to inclusion and diversity, endeavours, both onstage and off, include integrated sign language for some critically acclaimed performances, residencies for writers, affordable ticket prices, 'Open Meeting Days' to provide actors the opportunity to meet with their casting team and an Environmental Sustainability Taskforce.

Attempts to reinvent art are never not accompanied by questions of fidelity to tradition. Questions of moral bankruptcy even. Charlie Josephine's *I, Joan*, a Shakespeare's Globe production invited a barrage of criticisms and fury even before it opened. Josephine's reimagining portrays France's patron saint Joan of Arc as non-binary. Several reviews hailed it as a joyous protest, as personal as it is derivative. Purists lamented and condemned it as manipulation of history, offending factual sensibilities.

But what is art if not a medium to reimagine, to step over boundaries and peek, to inquire and incite? Traditionalists guard and creators create. And who better than the Bard to know this? Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's contemporary and a literary critic, found his writing too glib and one that ignored Classical rules. Jonson also had to concede, though, that Shakespeare had no rival in his comedies and tragedies. ■



# Performing Arts: Photography

A monthly column that explores any and every aspect of the performing arts. This month, writer and photographer **K.K. Gopalakrishnan** writes about the duality of enjoying a live performance as a connoisseur-cum-photographer.

**I know for sure** that my first experience witnessing the performing arts must have been watching a *Theyyam*, the theatrical folk ritual in northern Kerala. Most likely witnessed from my mother's ancestral home as an infant in the arms of an elder, *Theyyam* is a tradition that both my parents' families patronised. I have been a photographer for decades and I can confirm that I have not clicked better images than the ones I have in my mind from these memories. They are unshaken, focused, captivating compositions that are also aesthetically perfect.

I was particular about being self-made and never asked my parents to buy me a camera. I ventured into professional photography only after getting a job, availing the staff festival advance after confirmation to buy a camera. Owning a professional camera as a hobby was a luxury in those days. The costs of films (negative or transparency), developing, processing and printing were high. Except for a few, people for whom I took photos did not even pay for the cost of films or prints. Was I mad or was this an inner calling? That era was unlike today, when everyone is a photo-videographer with a phone.

My first camera was the Pentax ME Super with a standard 50mm lens bought in the 1980s. The very next day, I left for Kullu-Manali, studied the literature on camera operation on the train and the first click from that trip was on the cover of a prominent Malayalam weekly. Some of the photographs were published in the weekend editions of *The Indian Express* and *Mathrubhumi* (Malayalam) in support of my story, and that helped build my confidence. The camera is still intact, and my vicenarian daughter's passion for film photography has made her its inheritor.

My equally significant passion, right from my academic days, has been writing. From sports to literature to the performing arts, the rivulet gently progressed. Writing about the performing arts became my comfort zone. Though I preferred to watch performances with my heart, I realised they require photographic support.



Simultaneously, I had terrible experiences with my photographer friend whom I hired to take photos, but never got any on time or of my choice. The press never paid extra for the images. For beginners like me, the remuneration was very little, and often came after months. The late K. Raghavan (former chief photographer of the Sikkim Government) encouraged me to take my own pictures to overcome this, which resulted in me buying a zoom lens.

The challenge was this—how to click while fully engrossed in a performance? I started missing good clicks while my

heart captured those moments. The opposite, too, was not uncommon. The challenges were more pronounced when artistes like Kalamandalam Gopi were onstage. Gradually, during these aesthetic encounters, I reached a level where I missed nothing significant. Exposure, shutter speed and what not, all executed perfectly through the hands like a well-oiled machine, while the mind focused on the performance. Who said familiarity breeds contempt? I always liked the frozen seconds in a chain of motion, moving sculptures, and I never wanted to click posed ones. Emphasis on gymnastics and mechanical movements onstage in the name of Indian dance often drove me away from the theatre.

In September 2010, the Chennai edition of *The Hindu* assigned me to review *Bhava Bhavanam*, the five-day Kathakali festival held at Kalakshetra. I was an associate editor for the Hyderabad-based dance journal *Nartanam* at that time. The Chief Editor, Madhavi Puranam, also joined me in Chennai. The arrangement was that I would provide the required photographs to go with her detailed story.

PHOTOS COURTESY: K.K. GOPALAKRISHNAN

During performances, I was involved in multiple tasks: watching, clicking photos with two cameras (one with a tele-zoom and the other with a wide-angle zoom), making notes for my review for *The Hindu* and, at times, explaining the *ilakiyattam* (the artistic interpolation without the vocal music—here the actor, who is both the character and interpreter, narrates contextually relevant incidents or stories) to Puranam sitting on my right. I still remember the ace Bharatanatyam exponent, a Kathakali practitioner and the then Director of Kalakshetra, Leela Samson, sitting on my left, amusingly observing me.

During several of our artistic travels, critics such as the late Sunil Kothari, Leela Venkataraman, Manjari Sinha and ace dance photographer Avinash Pasricha expressed wonder at how I was getting absorbed in the performance while constantly taking pictures. Yes, for a photographer, the possibility of constant clicking is the primary benefit of the digital era. While on assignment, Avinash said he could only see through the viewfinder and hardly enjoyed the poetry onstage beyond his clicks. This seasoned elder brother is like the Arjuna, who could see only the caged bird's eye, in Paanchali's *swayamvara*. But to make the epic complete, Arjuna's siblings and other relatives also had roles. Thus, my existence. ■



In the ancient ritual of *Theyyam*, the artiste wears elaborate make-up and costume to represent a local deity

K.K. Gopalakrishnan is a cultural historian, performing arts photographer and the author of *Kathakali Dance Theatre: A Visual Narrative of Sacred Indian Mime* (2016) and *Theyyam: Indian Folk Ritual Theatre Through the Eyes of an Insider* to be released soon. Currently the Director of the

South Zone Cultural Centre (SZCC) of Govt of India, Ministry of Culture, he hails from the Kamballoore Kottayil family in Kasaragod district that has been patronising *Theyyam*, including *Mappila Theyyams* (worshipping a Muslim soul in the ancient Hindu ritual) and a mosque, for over three centuries.

## First Reactions

Audience members tell us what they thought of events they experienced at the NCPA.



### XENOS

What an unusual thing I have seen! I loved the production. The stage, the sound, and of course, Akram Khan's movement reminded me a lot of Astad Deboo, who we lost a few years ago. It was absolutely stunning and I'm so glad that the NCPA has given us this opportunity to see things that are different and new.

— Dolly Thakore







## Kalgitura

I was completely overwhelmed after watching *Kalgitura* and its concept of supporting, accompanying and alleviating the suffering of the family of the deceased.

– Amruta Subhash

I originally come from the same region where *Kalgitura* takes place but I never got to see it in person. But through the play, I got to experience the tradition.

– Anita Date-Kelkar

I loved *Kalgitura*. The play's words and tunes will remain in my memory forever.

– Aahana Kumra

## Jesús Molina

One of the most incredible gigs I have seen. Molina is blessed.

– Ehsaan Noorani

Glad to be here, checking out one of my favourites.

– Loy Mendonsa



## Mumbai Monsoon

Wonderful show. Great to see the city's unsung heroes—the photojournalists.

– Chirodeep Chaudhuri

A wonderful curation of stories captured through the lens of photojournalists.

– Sandra Vaz

An aesthetic and balanced view of the city's most highlighted season.

– Esha Puro

## NCPA Bandish

We especially stayed back after our performance, *Smriti-Patham*, at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, so that we could catch a few glimpses of Hindustani music at the Bandish Festival. It was supremely beautiful and so inspiring.

– V.P. Dhananjayan and Shanta Dhananjayan



## ĀHUTI

What a splendorous merging of sound and light, of movement and the poetry of human forms. Arresting visuals in smoke and light highlighted the choreographic brilliance of Surupa Sen and lighting by Lynne Fernandez that had shafts of light

open out to athletic and aesthetic forms in a relentless dialogue with each other. *ĀHUTI* was indeed an offering that gathered the entire audience into a visual symphony.

– Lata Surendra

## Smriti-Patham

An evening which was a complete blissful and divine experience ... we are speechless and exhilarated. The



trendsetters of the '70s, '80s and '90s, the great Dhananjayans ... who set the stage on fire and brought in lots of new ideas, innovations to the scene of *natyam*. Watching their journey of 50 years, *Smriti-Patham*, was truly an honour ... Grateful to be able to witness that in our city of Mumbai. Thank you, NCPA and Swapnokalpa Dasgupta, for bringing such wonderful artistes. Be it the stagecraft, lighting, costumes, dancers, the accompanying artistes, the entire narration by the master himself—everything was a learning experience.

– Gayatri Subramanian

# THE NCPA INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL 2023

**24TH NOV**



**THILO WOLF  
BIG BAND FEAT.  
JOHANNA ISER,  
TORSTEN GOODS  
AND FLORIAN  
BÜHRICH**

**6:30 pm**

**25TH NOV**



**EMMET  
COHEN FEAT.  
BENNY  
BENACK III**

**6:30 pm**

**26TH NOV**



**ALFREDO  
RODRIGUEZ  
TRIO**

**6:00 pm**

**26TH NOV**



**JANE  
MONHEIT**

**8:00 pm**

**HOST - BRIAN TELLIS**  
**TATA THEATRE, NCPA**





# Kaleidoscope

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



## In solidarity

For renowned Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi dancer Mallika Sarabhai, art can never be divorced from activism. The artiste dedicated her latest performance, *In Search of the Goddess*, at Bangamela 2023—a festival of dance, music, theatre and folklore held in California—to the women of Manipur who have survived and suffered from the ongoing violence in the state. Created by Yadavan Chandran and choreographed by Vikram Iyengar, the dance theatre presentation features Sarabhai rendering a modern interpretation of the legend of goddess Shakti. A quest for women empowerment has been a recurring motif in Sarabhai's works that have tackled issues like female infanticide, child marriage and sexual abuse. Both Sarabhai and Iyengar have graced the stage at the NCPA on several occasions. To read more about Sarabhai's artistry and activism, please refer to the October 2020 issue. For more information, please visit [www.bangamela2023.org](http://www.bangamela2023.org)

## About time

Since April this year, The Cosmic House in London has been home to *1980 in Parallax*, a multimedia exhibition exploring the intersection of time, space, philosophy and research. Positioned as an intriguing response to the theory of the time continuum, the exhibition is the brainchild of New Delhi-based Raqs Media

Collective. The various installations explore the concept of parallax, which denotes the constant displacement of objects seen from differential perspectives, based on the works of American architect and cultural theorist, Charles Jencks. At the centre of this exhibition is a film commissioned by the Jencks Foundation, titled *The Bicyclist Who Fell into a Time Cone*, an exploration of the relentless transience of time shot in Delhi's hinterland. A monologue sprinkled over contemporary footage of the urban sprawl juxtaposed with archival images from Jencks's travels in India in the 1980s folds the subjectivities of history and memory together to depict a spectral plurality of time. The exhibition accompanies the launch of the Jencks Foundation's first research theme, *'isms and 'wasms: 1980 in Parallax*. It is described as an exercise in remapping the year 1980, the summit of postmodernist thought and a target of unbridled nostalgia, to examine



its existence from parallax views. The exhibition will be on till 22nd December 2023. For more information, please visit [www.jencksfoundation.org](http://www.jencksfoundation.org)

## Birthday treat

Residents of Germany turning 18 years of age in and after June 2023 are to receive a special birthday present courtesy of the cultural ministry. Meant to increase interaction between the youth and live arts and culture in the country, a digital application called the *KulturPass* or Culture Pass will offer €200 to teenagers to spend on a myriad of cultural activities and products, including concert tickets, museum and art gallery visits, theatre shows, books, musical instruments and more, within a two-year period. This decision comes as part of a strategic plan implemented by the government to boost revenue for the

cultural industry within Germany, as well as to rejuvenate physical cultural engagement after a lockdown-induced slump. The country's finance minister, Christian Lindner, has described the voucher's model as "cultural start-up capital" with an aim to empower the younger generation through personal development and diversified educational horizons. Interestingly, conglomerates like Amazon, Netflix and Spotify are not included in the cultural services offered in the pass. The German government has put strong emphasis on literature, regional performing arts and other non-digital forms of arts. The most populous country in the European Union has followed examples of cultural initiatives by other European countries like France, Italy and Spain. It's perhaps time for India to take a leaf out of this book too. For more information, please visit [www.kulturpass.de/jugendliche](http://www.kulturpass.de/jugendliche)

## Resurfaced

Obscured amongst the thick book spines in the science section of the Fisher Library at the University of Sydney was a literary treasure waiting to be discovered for the last 25 years. Virginia Woolf's personal copy of her debut novel *The Voyage Out*, which was first published in 1915, was retrieved from the library in 2021 and has been recently digitised for public



use. Following a 24-year-old woman on her maritime journey from London to South America, *The Voyage Out* is a cleverly designed satire of Edwardian English society and contains the foremost applications of 'stream of consciousness' in storytelling, a narrative innovation pioneered by Woolf. The copy contains her personal annotations and handwritten revisions alongside typed excerpts of the text. Several literary scholars have hailed the resurfaced copy as a significant revelation, as it provides an entirely new perspective on Woolf's writing process. For more information, please visit [digital.library.sydney.edu.au](http://digital.library.sydney.edu.au) ■

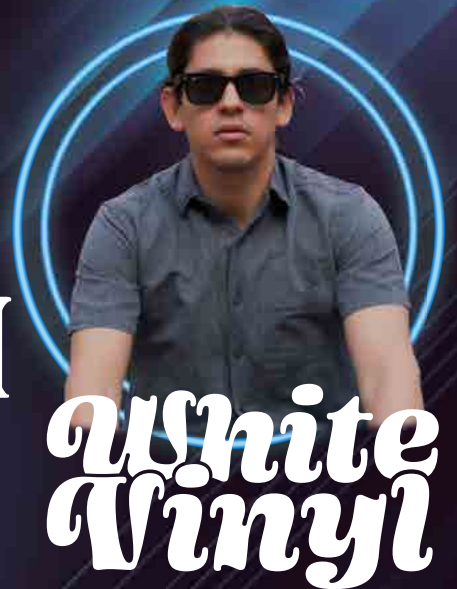
- Neelakshi Singh

ALAMY (WOOLF)



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# Striking Voices

*ON Stage* brings you edited excerpts from the *NCPA Quarterly Journal*, an unsurpassed literary archive that ran from 1972 to 1988 and featured authoritative and wide-ranging articles. In the concluding instalment of a two-part series, classical vocalist and musicologist **V. R. Athavale** discusses the unique voices that shaped the evolution of Marathi stage music in the early 20th century.

The early decades of the 20th century sowed the seeds of a transformation in Marathi stage music. This was primarily due to the contribution of two great actor-singers, Bal Gandharva and Keshavrao Bhosale, and the advent of Bhaskarbuwa Bakhale on the musical scene. As a youth, Bakhale had worked in Annasaheb Kirloskar's company but had left it in order to train in serious classical music. At first, he studied with Faiz Mohammed Khan, imbibing from him the Gwalior *gayaki*, with its emphasis on a vigorous presentation of the *sthai* and *antara* to create the atmosphere of a raga. From Natthan Khan, he learnt the secret of *badhata* of a *khayal* (in a medium tempo) through the use of *bol-anga*. The artistic deployment of *tans* was what Alladiya Khan taught him. Govindrao Tembe has written about these influences and their impact on the aesthetic quality of Bakhale's music.

Bakhale was quick to grasp the distinctive features of the Agra style: the *gharana's* emphasis was on the *madhya laya* and on the embellishment of words through *bols*. Aline could thus be presented in a variety of ways. The *alaaps* were few, but in accord with the *laya*; the *tans* limited in number and scope. A *bandish* could be sung in the style of a *thumri* or a *khayal* in *madhya laya*. Usually, *bandish thumris* accompanied dance and the element of rhythm was predominant in them. On the whole, the Agra *gharana's* style managed to achieve the correct balance between *swara* and *shabda*.

An actor-singer as talented as Gandharva turned to Bakhale for guidance and the latter trained him to assimilate this style of music. The emotive quality of the style harmonised with Gandharva's interpretation of female characters and was particularly suited to the delicate timbre of his voice. On the other hand, Bhosale, another notable actor, had been groomed earlier on by Jambhekarbuwa. Then he tried to seek the guidance of Alladiya



Bal Gandharva



Jyotsnabai Bhole

stage music as Marathi *khayals* based on Hindi *cheeja-s*. Words began to count for less than notes and spectators came to the theatre to satisfy their thirst for music. Naturally, stage music deviated more and more towards the classical. At the same time, since it was not rigorously classical, it

did not have to adhere to too meticulous a manner to raga structures. A time came when most of the ragas had been employed in some form or the other in stage songs. Krishnarao Phulambrikar tried, to some extent, to compose new music to suit the mood of a play and bring out the beauty of the words in a song. Later, Tembe would do the same, and the two plays, *Nandakumar* and *Patwardhan* bear witness to this effort.

## After 1925

Around 1925, the lyric made its appearance in Marathi literature. Earlier on, poets like Tambe and Tekade had composed poems meant to be sung. The poems of the Ravikiran Mandai group widened the scope of this effort. The more educated among theatre-goers welcomed the attempt to infuse literary sophistication in stage songs. A classical musician like Manji Khan set Govindagraj's *Murli* to music. Thus, a new musical form, the *bhavageet*, was born. *Swaras* became an attractive medium designed to enhance the beauty of the *shabda* of a lyric. G. N. Joshi set Tambe's poems to music and the experiment won a wide response. When Keshavrao Bhole had Jyotsnabai Bhole sing a *bhavageet* in *Andhalyanchi Shala*, a new and fresh element entered the sphere of stage music. In the late '30s and '40s, though the influence of Gandharva and Mangeshkar persisted, a parallel strain also gained acceptance. Theatre-goers began to be captivated by Jyotsnabai Bhole's renderings of Anant Kanekar's lyrics. In these *bhavageets* the lines were

sung in diverse note-patterns to express the latent emotion in the lyric. In the earlier phase of stage music Bhausaheb Kolhatkar or Balkoba Natekar (drawing on the Haridasi style) used to set the usual *jativrittis* to attractive tunes. The *bhavageets* employed the same principle in changed conditions.

Thus from 1880 to 1945, Marathi stage music passed through various phases: first the Haridasi mode, then *khayal* singing in *bol-anga*, followed by its *swara*-based form with the accent on dazzling musical effects and finally the *bhavageet* style.

## From 1943 to 1957

An important event took place in 1943. The festival organised by Dr. Bhalerao to celebrate the centenary of Marathi drama was so successful that all fears about the musical drama being extinct were dispelled. Actor-singers began to perform in musical plays. Spectators crowded into the theatre to watch Gandharva (who was, by then, more than 60) appear in his former roles. The music of these plays still bore the stamp of the earlier tradition and managed to cast the same spell. From 1944 to 1957 there were several attempts to revive the more successful of the musical plays in Gandharva's repertoire, including *Sangeet Sharada*, *Swayamwar* and *Ekach Pyala*.

These 13 years, in fact, saw the parallel existence of two streams: traditional musical drama and relatively recent plays, of the kind popularised by Jyotsnabai Bhole and based on the *bhavageet* tradition. The modern stream embraced the works of playwrights like P. K. Atre (*Jag Kay Mhanel*, *Panigrahana*), M. G. Rangnekar (*Vahini*, *Maze Ghar*, *Maher*, *Rambha*, *Bhatala Dili Osari*, *Dhakti Aai*), A. V. Warty (*Ranicha Bag*), C. Y. Marathe (*Honaji Bala*), G. N. Dandekar (*Radhamai*), P. L. Deshpande (*Ammaldar*) and others. It continued to foster the *bhavageet* tradition that had become so popular in the previous decade.

## After 1957

But from 1957 onwards the music in plays ceased to conform rigidly to either the traditional or the *bhavageet*-based styles. The tendency at synthesis which had followed in the wake of the festival celebrating the centenary of Marathi drama led, after 1957, to the incorporation in musicals of various earlier forms. Among others, the musical ingredients in the *kirtana* (namely the *saki*, *dindi* and *ovi*), the *lavani*, *khayal*, *thumri*, *tappa*, *tarana*, *ghazal*, *kajri*, *abhangas*, *bhajan*, *abhinaya*

*geet*, the duet, the dance, *sher-shayari* were all appropriated by stage music. Productions like *Panditrao Jagannatha* (1960), *Suvarnatula* (1960), *Matsyagandha* (1964), *Madanachi Manjari* (1965), *Jai Jai Gaurishankar* (1966), *Priti Sangam* (1968), *Meera Madhura* (1971), *Deva Deenaghari Dhavala* (1971) represent these efforts to integrate various musical forms in plays. This phase saw the attempt to build a play itself round the central concept of music. Plays were written on the lives of musicians. *Mandarmala* (1963), *Baiju* (1966), *Meghmahara* (1967), *Katyar Kaljat Ghushi* (1967), *Dhanya te Gayanikala* (1968), *Rangat Rangla Shrirang* (1970), *Swarasamradni* (1972) illustrate this trend.

But the music itself of these plays (that were built round the germ idea of 'music') or of other plays for that matter was not basically different from that of earlier days. The style of presentation also remained the same. The themes of the plays had undergone a transformation, but the mode

*The year 1918 marked the entry of Deenanath Mangeshkar (popularly known as Master Deenanath) whose presentation was striking—he was endowed with a resonant voice and a fertile musical imagination*

of presenting music still harked back to the tradition of Gandharva, Bhosale and Mangeshkar.

Perhaps the one exception to the rule is *Lekure Udanda Jhali*, in which musical elements were borrowed from the style of *My Fair Lady* or possibly from the folk drama of music director Jitendra Abhisheki's home state, Goa. Its verse forms often managed to achieve a rapport with spectators. True enough, the musical elements had notes but there was no 'musicality' to speak of. The lines could be sung but they did not add up to a musical composition. There were echoes of the *katav* principle present in Deval's play *Sharada*. (The principle could be described as a mode of enunciating words in a specific rhythm on the basis of notes.) But the style does deserve praise because it was a new musical experiment. Another important innovation worth mentioning was Bhaskar

Chandavarkar's novel use of folk music in *Ghashiram Kotwal* (1972) and *Ajab Nyaya Vartulacha* (1973).

A new definition of stage music has been suggested in recent times by musicians Ashok Ranade and Chandavarkar. According to them, a poem set to music ought not to be regarded as the sole ingredient of stage music. They feel that if the *dhvani*, *nada*, *swara* in vocal and instrumental music and the total 'noise' created by them in unison help to highlight a dramatic moment and make it more effective, then these musical elements should be regarded as stage music. It is this approach which represents current thinking on stage music.

## Conclusion

On the whole, it appears that Bakhale's choice of the *khayal* with *bol-anga* and Tembe's introduction of the *purab anga* were ideally suited for the needs of our stage music. After all, the very soul of *thumri* singing lies in the expression of emotion. Unfortunately, in the course of time, artistes began to neglect the element of voice projection which made the style so effective. Instead, they opted for the 'classical' mode; they modified it, believing that strict adherence to raga norms was not required in stage performance. They even tended to forget the important fact that the Haridasi style was effective precisely because the *kirtankara* tradition laid such great store by voice projection.

This is not to suggest that the Haridasi style should be revived. But one needs to emphasise the fact that, in stage music, it is the *natya* which is predominant; the musical element provides an added aesthetic value. By its very nature the *thumri* has closer affinities with the stage, because of the relatively secondary position occupied (in the form) by *alaps* and *tans* and the possibilities of expressing emotion through *bol banao*. Tembe grasped this significant fact and had his conception been developed further, stage music in Maharashtra would have absorbed the qualities of restraint and balance and become an appropriate vehicle for illuminating the emotional core of a play through song. But this did not happen and the period following 1957 marked no radical break with the past and there was no major contribution to stage music as such. ■

*This article first appeared in its entirety in the NCPA Quarterly Journal in June 1978 (Vol 7, Issue 2).*

# Programme Guide

September 2023

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

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

## SOI symphony orchestra of india

### Autumn 2023 Season

Patron: Citi India

### Orchestral Concerts

Sunday, 10th September – 5.00 pm  
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Zane Dalal, conductor  
Marat Bisengaliev, violin

Rossini: *Semiramide* Overture  
Khachaturian: Violini Concerto  
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 "Pathétique"

SOI Associate Music Director **Zane Dalal** returns to Mumbai to conduct a concert featuring Tchaikovsky's final composition, popularly known as the "Pathétique" Symphony, from the French meaning "evoking emotion", recognised for its profound emotional depth and dramatic narrative.

Music Director **Marat Bisengaliev** performs Khachaturian's Violin Concerto, an incredibly attractive work showcasing Armenian folk melodies and enthralling rhythms.

The concert opens with Rossini's overture to *Semiramide*, the grandeur of which matches that of the opera making it one of Rossini's finest contributions to the genre.

Friday, 15th September – 7.00 pm  
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Richard Farnes, conductor  
Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Williams: Imperial March from *Star Wars*  
Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2  
Wagner: *Parsifal* Suite (arr. Gourlay)

**Richard Farnes** returns to conduct a programme opening with Williams's iconic Imperial March from *Star Wars*, which has become one of the most performed and celebrated pieces of music in orchestral repertoire. Pianist **Pavel Kolesnikov** performs Brahms's Second Piano Concerto. Composed 22 years after the first, Brahms wrote to Clara Schumann: "I want to tell you that I have written a very small piano concerto with a very small and pretty scherzo." This was the self-critical composer describing a giant work.

The concert concludes with a suite from Wagner's *Parsifal* constructed by Andrew Gourlay. "*Parsifal* surely contains some of Wagner's greatest orchestral writing ... I, therefore, set about constructing an orchestral suite that would give us more time to settle into the music of *Parsifal*. The result is forty-five minutes of continuous music from the opera," says Gourlay.

Wednesday, 20th September – 7.00 pm  
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor  
Steven Isserlis, cello

Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite  
Schumann: Cello Concerto  
Stravinsky: *Petrushka* (1947)

Rising star British conductor of Indian descent, **Alpesh Chauhan**, leads this programme that opens with Richard Strauss's Suite from his opera *Der Rosenkavalier*. After the premiere in 1911, it became hugely popular and has remained the most often performed of Strauss's operas. One of the most respected cellists of his generation, **Steven Isserlis** joins Chauhan in Schumann's cello concerto.

The concert concludes with music from Stravinsky's ballet *Petrushka*. The

primitive nature of Stravinsky's music captures the essence of the characters in the story—which dates from the 16th-century *commedia dell'arte*—who represent human emotions in their most raw form: *Petrushka*, who yearns for love; the Ballerina, the unattainable symbol of beauty; and the Moor, ill-mannered and symbolising the base aspects of humanity.

#### Tickets:

₹3,600, 2,880, 2,520, 2,160, 1,800,  
1,440, 900 & 450/- (Members)  
₹4,000, 3,200, 2,800, 2,400, 2,000,  
1,600, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)  
(Inclusive of GST)

Saturday, 23rd September –  
7.00 pm

Sunday, 24th September – 5.00 pm  
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor  
Zakir Hussain, tabla  
Niladri Kumar, sitar  
Rakesh Chaurasia, bansuri

Hussain: Triple Concerto (world premiere, SOI commission)  
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5

A highlight of the season, these concerts feature the world premiere of a new triple concerto for sitar, bansuri and tabla, composed by the renowned **Zakir Hussain** for the SOI. Hussain is also featured as the tabla soloist, alongside **Niladri Kumar** on sitar and **Rakesh Chaurasia** on bansuri.

Tchaikovsky is arguably the most popular Russian composer of all time. His music holds great appeal through its tuneful, open-hearted melodies, impressive harmonies and colourful, picturesque orchestration, all of which evoke a profound emotional response from the listener. All this holds true in his Fifth Symphony, which forms the other half of the programme.



**Alpesh Chauhan** conducts what is sure to be a memorable concert.

**Tickets:**

₹4,500, 3,600, 2,880, 2,520, 2,160,  
1,890, 1,440, 900 & 450/- (Members)  
₹5,000, 4,000, 3,200, 2,800, 2,400,  
2,100, 1,600, 1,000 & 500/- (Public)  
(Inclusive of GST)

**Recital**

**Wednesday, 13th September –  
7.00 pm**

**Experimental Theatre**

**Celestial Navigation**

**A piano recital by Pavel Kolesnikov**

**Pavel Kolesnikov** has made a name for himself as one of the acclaimed pianists of our time, and also as a creative thinker, programmer and curious mind.

*Celestial Navigation* is Kolesnikov's homage to the American artist Joseph Cornell, known for his open-to-interpretation assemblage boxes, full of everyday objects arranged in whimsical ways. According to Kolesnikov, "What Cornell puts together is the art of a free spirit who makes links between disparate elements. It is a weaving together of paradoxical links which rests on intuitive energies." The pianist draws a parallel between Cornell's work and musical recitals: "What is a recital if it's not a Cornell box?", he says. "If each work is a world in itself, the relationship of these worlds engenders a variety of third worlds, whose significance is always superior to their sum."

The programme includes Schubert's Four Impromptus Op. 142, and works by Chopin, Couperin, Messiaen, Ravel, and Thomas Adès.

**Tickets:**

₹1,080, 720 & 450/- (Members)  
₹1,200, 800 & 500/- (Public)  
(Inclusive of GST)

**Box Office now open**

**DANCE**

**Sublime, Serene &  
Soulful**

**Odissi by Meera Das & troupe  
and**



Meera Das, 1st, Experimental Theatre

**Upalabdhi**

**Kathak by Sandip Mallick with live  
music**

**Experimental Theatre**

**Friday, 1st – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

The work of **Meera Das**, one of the most distinguished Odissi dancers, is characterised by her unique recitals that are poetry in motion and laced with innovative improvisations while retaining the purity of the classical dance form. She received her initial training from Gangadhar Nayak and mastered the acrobatic form of Odissi dance, *Bandha Nritya*. A disciple of the illustrious Kelucharan Mohapatra, Das learnt the art of expression, graceful movements and intricacies of dance from him. To popularise the dance form and educate students in the purest form of Odissi, she started the Gunjan Dance Academy in Cuttack. For almost two decades, her academy has been performing the world over and has attracted overseas students who have become torchbearers of Odissi in their respective countries. A student of philosophy, Das is also a successful music composer and vocalist.

The Odissi presentation comprises three items—Puspanjali, invoking the blessing of Lord Jagannath for an auspicious beginning to the performance; Moods of Rhythm, exploring the styles and patterns of the mardala; Sei Ramani, celebrating the spirit of womanhood. The presentations are based on poems by Vyasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati and poets Ramakant Rath and Kedar Mishra.

Born in a family devoted to music, **Sandip Mallick** has trained in Kathak under the tutelage of Srilekha Mukherjee. He also received extensive training from Birju Maharaj, Ram Mohan Mishra, Chitresh Das, Bela Arnab, Bandana Sen, Saswati Sen and Vijai Shankar, all luminaries in the world



Sandip Mallick, 1st, Experimental Theatre

of Indian classical dance. With the *taalim* obtained from these stalwarts and the rhythm training he received from Kumar Bose coupled with his own imagination, Mallick has given Kathak a new dimension. He is a first-class Postgraduate in Dance from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. He has also completed his Nritya Prabhakar, Visharad and Upadhaya (with gold medal). In 1993, Mallick established Nadam, his institution in Kolkata, and has conducted Kathak workshops in different parts of India, the U.K., Canada, Singapore, Czech Republic, Italy and Germany. He is an auditioned artiste of Doordarshan and an empanelled artiste of I.C.C.R.

*Upalabdhi* is a solo presentation following the storytelling format of Kathak dance. The presentation showcases the reflections of life, connection between body, mind and soul and eventual surrender to the guru who shows the path to salvation.

**Tickets:**

₹360 & 270/- (Members)  
₹400 & 300/- (Public)  
**Box Office now open**

**INDIAN MUSIC**



Shantanu Moitra, 2nd, Online

**NCPA-HSBC Music  
Workshop**

**Understanding the art of composing  
(Part 2)**

**A free online workshop on Zoom by  
Shantanu Moitra**

Saturday, 2nd – 11.00 am

Supported by HSBC

Composition is the mainstay of music performance in any tradition. There is no music without composition. It is significant, therefore, to understand what constitutes a composition, and how it really takes shape in the hands of a composer. Today, being a composer is regarded as a viable career option for talented musicians, and thus, it becomes equally important to understand the attributes of a composer.

In the first session of this two-part series, **Shantanu Moitra** had presented his viewpoint on what makes a successful composer and how one could identify the composer within. His deliberation also delved into the basics of composing, the tools used, and approaches that could be adopted while composing for various media.

The second session continues with in-depth details of the building blocks of composing as well as the actual approach leading to a composition.

Starting with advertisement jingles, Moitra went on to compose music for landmark films including some award-winning works like *Parineeta*, *3 Idiots*, *Pink*, *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* and others. He has also to his credit independent albums like *Ab Ke Sawan* and *Gulzar in Conversation with Tagore*. Furthermore, Moitra has uniquely married his adventures and music to create *100 Days in Himalayas* and *Songs of the River*, based on climbing the great mountains and cycling along the mighty Ganga.

Register now on  
[www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)

#### SCREENING

### Die Zauberflöte

by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Opera Screening (190 mins)

Sung in German with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 2nd – 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera  
(New York) Presentation

*Die Zauberflöte*—a sublime fairy tale that moves freely between earthy



Die Zauberflöte, 2nd, Godrej Dance Theatre

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

Conductor: **Nathalie Stutzmann**

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

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

Box Office now open

#### INDIAN MUSIC

### Shyam Rang

Exploring the divine trinity:

Krishna, Radha and Meera

by Deepika Bhide Bhagwat & group

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 2nd – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Supported by Rukmani & Kishan  
Daiya Foundation

Indian music has a substantial



Deepika Bhide Bhagwat, 2nd, Experimental Theatre

repertoire that has poetic content based on the amorous exploits of Krishna, the cowherd of Brindavan. Several compositions are also dedicated to devotional and philosophical thoughts associated with his divine love.

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

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

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

Tickets:

₹180 & 135/- (Members)

₹200 & 150/- (Public)

Box Office now open



## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Ranjit Barot, 3rd, Experimental Theatre

### Converging Streams

Best of World Music  
"The Heart of Drums"  
Experimental Theatre  
Sunday, 3rd – 6.30 pm

#### An NCPA Presentation

Ranjit Barot – drums & vocals  
Ashwin Srinivasan – flute  
Gulraj Singh – keys & vocals  
Nastya Saraswati – violin  
Emmanuel Simon – world percussion

The Heart of Drums, a meeting of the ancient with the now. The beat of the drum is a primal language, as old as the heartbeat. Every ritual, every festival and major social gathering featured drums and rhythmic expressions. Featuring Vedic chants to draw in the hearts as well as minds of the audience, this performance will pay tribute to the humble drum which will be accompanied by melodic instruments and lush soundscapes on the keyboard.

#### Tickets:

₹900/- (Members)

₹1,000/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

## WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

### Talks on Western Classical Music

Little Theatre  
Tuesday, 5th – 6.00 pm  
and  
Stuart-Liff Collection Library  
Thursday, 7th – 4.00 pm

#### An NCPA Presentation

Stravinsky: *Petrushka*

"Western classical music is heavy."

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

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

In the first set of talks this month, he will discuss Igor Stravinsky's masterpiece, *Petrushka*. It displays the repercussions of power when wielded by the wrong hands. The ballet is also accessible to kids as it captures the story of three puppets that come to life.

Register on [www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)  
Entry Free

## MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION

### Poetry Reading

Godrej Dance Theatre  
Wednesday, 6th – 4.30 pm

An NCPA Library Book Club  
Presentation in collaboration with  
Literary Warrior Group.

The Literary Warrior Group is an all-India collective that actively organises online contests every month, challenging writers to think outside the box and venture beyond their comfort zones. These contests provide opportunities for participants to explore new styles, genres and themes in their writing. Both budding and established poets are encouraged to join the group and participate in these contests, which are held in English and Hindi. Participants from the group have achieved numerous national and international accolades, showcasing their talent and creativity.

A few talented members of the

group such as Dr. Aparna Pradhan, Anoop Pande, Juhi Gupte, Anup Jalan, Meera Bhansali, Purna Parikh, Sunil Joshi, Mani Saxena, Sheo Nath, Pooja Dadhwal and Neelam Saxena Chandra will render their poems at the NCPA in a reading session that will be moderated by Sujata Jadhav at the Godrej Dance Theatre.

The reading will be followed by the release of the poetry book titled *Moh se Bandhi Main* by Neelam Saxena Chandra. Another interesting event will be a Kathak performance by Arpana Rao, a renowned actor and Kathak exponent, on select poems.

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

## FILM

### Reality Check

Documentary Film Screening  
Little Theatre  
Thursday, 7th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in  
collaboration with Cinema  
Collective

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

### Leap of Faith

English Film (72 mins)



Leap of Faith, 7th, Little Theatre

*Leap of Faith* is the story of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar's life. He is a yogi whose name is synonymous with precision and perfection in yoga. *Leap of Faith* is a saga of courage and faith, of chance meetings and chosen paths, of perseverance in the

face of insurmountable hurdles, of the triumph of the human spirit and of his union (yoga) with the divine consciousness.

This 72-minute film spans nine decades of Iyengar's life and over 70 years of his practice and teachings. It shows him as a guru, teacher, husband, father and *shishya*—a multifaceted personality. This film helps reveal the simple man behind a complex and towering personality, an endeavour to capture the man behind the phenomenon.

Directors:

**Aditi Makim & Valentina Trivedi**

Producers:

**Devdatt Kapadia & Mrinal Kapadia**

Editor: **Vinay Pednekar**

Narrator: **Naseeruddin Shah**

**The film screening will be followed by a discussion.**

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

#### INDIAN MUSIC



Asaramji Sable, 8th, Experimental Theatre

### NCPA-Citi Promising Artistes Series

Asaramji Sable (pakhawaj)

Mukund Dev Sahoo (dhrupad)

(Approx. 90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Friday, 8th – 6.30 pm

Supported by Citi

**Asaramji Sable**, Citi-NCPA Scholarship Winner (2017-18), has completed his Master's in music from the Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, Pune, where he won the gold medal in Hindustani Instrumental Music for his proficiency in pakhawaj playing. He has trained with Keshav Jagdale and



Mukund Dev Sahoo, 8th, Experimental Theatre

Prakash Shejwal, and has accompanied many stalwarts onstage including Ronu Majumdar, Devaki Pandit and the Gundecha brothers, among others. He has won several awards and has performed in concerts around the country.

Born in a family with strong musical ties, **Mukund Dev Sahoo** received his initial education in the *kirtana* style of music from his father, Hem Chandra Sahoo. He is a senior disciple of the Gundecha brothers and has evolved into a dynamic exponent of the *dhrupad* style of singing. He studied Hindustani music from Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, Bhubaneswar. He has received personal guidance from Vijayananda Naik (Gwalior *gharana*), Bhushen Nagdev and Arun Kashalkar. Mukund Dev has performed in many prestigious music festivals within India and abroad and has collaborated with international artistes including Belgian flamenco dancer, Marisol Valderrama Guerrero. He was awarded the Citi-NCPA Scholarship for 2020-21.

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

Register now on

[www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Stagecoach, 8th, Little Theatre

### Movies Under the Stars

Stagecoach (1939)

Film Screening

(B&W - 96 mins)

Little Theatre

Friday, 8th – 6.30 pm

### An NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation Presentation

Orson Welles saw *Stagecoach* 40 times before he made *Citizen Kane* (1941). *Stagecoach* was John Ford's first Western of the sound era that had John Wayne in his first starring role for Ford, as the daredevil outlaw, the Ringo Kid. The film tells the tale of Ringo Kid, who joins a motley bunch of passengers that include a bumbling driver, a prostitute with a heart of gold, an elegant gambler, an alcoholic, a travelling whisky salesman, the wife of an army officer, and a scheming banker, thrown together by chance, as they travel on a stagecoach through treacherous Apache territory. As with any story of people confined in a space, *Stagecoach* depicts changing group dynamics, shifting allegiances and the formation of a chain of command among the passengers. Their eventual cooperation demonstrates that it takes all kinds to make a world. The extended stagecoach chase sequence is a masterclass in editing. Superbly shot against the backdrop of Utah and Ford's beloved Monument Valley in Arizona, this sweeping and powerful drama of the American frontier is an enduring masterpiece that elevated the Western from the B-grade to serious cinema.

Director: **John Ford**

Writers: **Ernest Haycox** (original story) & **Dudley Nichols** (screenplay)

Cinematography: **Bert Glennon**

Cast: **John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Andy Devine, John Carradine & Thomas Mitchell**

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

#### THEATRE

### The Graduate

English Play (120 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 9th – 4.00 pm & 7.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Tpot Production

Benjamin Braddock, a 21-year-old graduate, struggles to find himself. What happens when an unsatisfied





**The Graduate, 9th, Experimental Theatre**

housewife enters Ben's near-perfect life? In a world of dysfunctional marriages and great expectations, Ben grapples with love, lust and confusion. A play adapted by Terry Johnson, based on the novel by Charles Webb and the Motion Picture Screenplay by Calder Willingham and Buck Henry. By special arrangement with StudioCanal.

Writer: **Charles Webb**

Adapted by **Terry Johnson**

Motion Picture Screenplay:

**Calder Willingham & Buck Henry**

By special arrangement with **StudioCanal**

Director: **Trishla Patel**

Cast: **Shashank Vishnu Dutt, Kenneth Desai, Digvijay Savant, Kiyomi Mehta, Tejaswini Kolhapure, Fatema Arif, Garima Yajnik, Akshay Kulkarni & Yash Onil Mavani**

**Tickets:**

**₹540 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹600 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Plus GST)**

**Box Office now open**

## THEATRE

### Sainik

**Monologue in Hindi (60 mins)**

**Godrej Dance Theatre**

**Saturday, 9th – 6.00 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Ansh Theatre Group**

A soldier is someone who has dedicated their life to protecting their country and its people. On the



**Sainik, 9th, Godrej Dance Theatre**

battlefield, they find themselves faced with a life-or-death situation. They make a split-second decision, pulling the trigger and taking another person's life. A haunting thought, isn't it?

But what about the soldier themselves? What happens when they become the one who is killed? It's a harsh reality that we often overlook. We mourn the loss of a brave individual, someone who made the ultimate sacrifice. We honour their memory and acknowledge their bravery, but it is important to question the circumstances that led to their death. Was it a sacrifice or an act of murder? This is a question that sparks intense debate and raises important ethical considerations. They made a conscious choice to fight for what they believed in, and their death is seen as a sacrifice for a greater cause.

On the other hand, there are those who believe that the soldier's death is a tragic result of a larger system of violence and aggression. They argue that the soldier was a victim of circumstances beyond their control, manipulated by those in power for their own gain. The soldier's death is seen as a murder, a senseless loss of life that could have been avoided.

So, what is achieved through all of this? Is there a greater purpose to war and the sacrifice it demands?

Written, Directed & Performed by **Makarand Deshpande**

Lights: **Amogh Phadake**

Set: **Sumit Patil**

Music: **Aashish Gade**

**Tickets:**

**₹450/- (Members)**

**₹500/- (Public)**

**Box Office now open**

## INDIAN MUSIC

### RAGA – RANG

**Singers: Priyanka Barve, Vishwajeet Borwankar**

**Compère: Sunil Deodhar**

**Music arrangement: Kamlesh Bhadkamkar**

**Tata Theatre**

**Saturday, 9th – 6.30 pm**

**Presented by Sahachari Foundation Events**

**Supported by Vijaykumar Taparai**

A specially designed thematic concert, showcasing **raga-based** compositions on romance and pathos, selected from old Hindi films. These golden melodies have timeless appeal and have continued to enthrall listeners over the years. A compère will give a short commentary in between the songs, and a simultaneous projection of video clips will be included in some songs to enhance the appeal.

About the singers: An actress and playback singer, **Priyanka Barve** is best known for her role as Anarkali in the musical play *Mughal-e-Azam*, directed by Feroz Abbas Khan.

A vocalist trained in classical music under Ram Deshpande, **Vishwajeet Borwankar** is a winner of Zee (Marathi) *SaReGaMaPa*, a playback singer and composer.

**Tickets:**

**₹630, 450, 360, 270 & 180/- (Members)**

**₹700, 500, 400, 300 & 200/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

**Box Office now open**

## THEATRE

### The Land of Mea Lilo

**Children's Play in English**

**(50 mins + 20 mins interaction with the audience)**

**Godrej Dance Theatre**

**Sunday, 10th – 12.00 noon**



*The Land of Mea Lilo*, 10th, Godrej Dance Theatre

### An NCPA Presentation

Join Mea and Lilo, two quirky, endearing characters in their discovery of *The Land of Mea Lilo*—a place of hidden objects. The play is about what happens to them there and how they overcome the challenges they face with wit, teamwork and determination. Witness their adventures of creative explorations and watch your imagination come to life.

Devised & performed by  
**Dipna Daryanani & Priyanka Babbar**

**Age: 4+**

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

### THEATRE

## Phirse Honeymoon

Hindi Play (110 mins)  
Experimental Theatre  
Sunday, 10th – 4.00 pm & 7.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with ScriptTease Creations

A couple revisits their honeymoon destination to get a breakthrough in their stagnant relationship. As they reach 'Hotel Dreamland', the past starts merging with the present. Space and time melt and dreamlike events start unfolding in a humorous, edgy and breath-taking manner. They must complete the past before they can dream of the future.



*Phirse Honeymoon*, 10th, Experimental Theatre

Written & directed by  
**Sandesh Kulkarni**  
Hindi translation: **Amruta Subhash**  
Cast: **Amruta Subhash, Sandesh Kulkarni, Amit Phalke & Kaushal Jobanputra**  
Music: **Narendra Bhide**  
Sound Operation: **Prithvi Khandagale**  
Lights: **Ashutosh Parandkar**

**Tickets:**  
₹540 & 450/- (Members)  
₹600 & 500 /- (Public)  
(Plus GST)  
**Box Office now open**

### THEATRE



*Gurleen Pannu*, 10th, Godrej Dance Theatre

## Women Slay Sunday

Stand-up Comedy  
English/ Hindi (90 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Sunday, 10th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation  
In collaboration with Comedy Ladder

Comedy Ladder presents Women Slay Sunday, an all-women's line-up that will give you a live stand-up comedy experience like no other. This is a show where the men pay more because women love discounts. This edition of Women Slay will be hosted by the energetic **Jeeya Sethi**, with a line-up consisting of **Daahab Chishti, Shreya Priyam, Shreeja Chaturvedi, Pavitra**

**Shetty & Gurleen Pannu.**

**Suggested age: 16+**

**Tickets:**  
**Women:**  
₹450/- (Members)  
₹500/- (Public)

**Men:**  
₹675/- (Members)  
₹750/- (Public)  
(Plus GST)

**Box Office now open**

### WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

## Talks on Western Classical Music

Little Theatre  
Tuesday, 12th – 6.00 pm  
and  
Stuart-Liff Collection Library  
Thursday, 14th – 4.00 pm

### An NCPA Presentation

Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2

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

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

The upcoming talk in the ongoing series is about one of the greatest piano concertos of the Romantic period, Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2. The composition took nearly three years to complete as Brahms was constantly trying to escape Beethoven's legacy. His first and second piano concertos have a gap of over two decades between them.

**Register on [www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)  
Entry Free**



## FILM



*Afwaah, 12th, Godrej Dance Theatre*

### Afwaah

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(126 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre  
Tuesday, 12th – 6.30 pm

The Indian Express Film Club screening in association with NCPA & Banaras Media

*Afwaah* is a captivating and thought-provoking movie that delves into the power of rumours and its impact on individuals and society. It is a gripping drama that highlights the consequences of spreading false information and the damage it can cause. The movie skilfully addresses relevant social issues, such as the dangers of misinformation in the age of social media. It sheds light on the importance of critical thinking, responsible communication, and the need to verify information before accepting it as truth.

Director: **Sudhir Mishra**

Producer: **Anubhav Sinha**

Cast: **Bhumi Pednekar, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Sumeet Vyas, Sharib Hashmi, Sumeet Kaul, T.J Bhanu, Taapsee Pannu, Sumit Kaul, Jahnvi Soni, Carl Zohan, Appurv Gupta & Rockey Raina**

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

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

## 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 a dialogue with filmmakers, who in turn, get a chance to connect with their audiences.

### Chhoti Si Baat

Hindi & Marathi Film (13 mins)



*Chhoti Si Baat, 13th, Little Theatre*

*Chhoti Si Baat* is the story of 12-year-old Shiv who has been guarding a secret. But his life comes to a halt in the midst of Ganpati celebrations when things take an unexpected turn.

Directed by **Hitarth Khyati Desai**

### Keep Punching

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(25 mins)



*Keep Punching, 13th, Little Theatre*

Kirnay, a closeted queer boxer from a quaint Himalayan town, inches closer to her dream of representing the country. But celebrations are cut short as her mother is adamant about getting her married. Torn between family and love, Kirnay must fight for her freedom outside the ring before conquering her dreams inside it.

Directed by **Kirnay Bhatt**

## Rat in the Kitchen

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(22 mins)



*Rat in the Kitchen, 13th, Little Theatre*

Vikram lives alone after separation from his wife. Their divorce proceedings are ongoing. He leads a solitary life, doing only the bare minimum—work, eat, sleep and drink copious amounts of alcohol. He has reached a point where he is bitter at the world, and negligent about everything around him, including his own well-being. On top of this, he begins to notice that his food is going missing and his kitchen is ransacked every time he comes home. He instals CCTVs around his house, thinking he has a rat problem. But what he uncovers is far more bizarre.

Directed by **Arkish Aftab**

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

## THEATRE

### Three Women

English Play (105 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Thursday, 14th – 7.00 pm

What happens when a time-travelling ghost of Kadambari Devi (Rabindranath Tagore's sister-in-law) whizzes across centuries to guide two of Tagore's fictional characters, Charu and Bimala, to better outcomes in love and life? Inspired by three of Tagore's heroines, this musical, set to folk-pop beats with live singing and Manipuri dancing, has reached international heights soon to become a crossover film. Back at the NCPA on popular demand, this production has been celebrated around the world as one that regales, humours and astounds audiences as a spectator's delight.

Production: **Isheeta Ganguly**

Written & directed by

**Isheeta Ganguly**

Cast: **Perna Talwar, Richa Shukla & Archana Patel**

Produced by **Neerupama**

**Tickets:**

**₹900, 720 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

**Box Office now open**

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

### Con Brio 2023 – Pictures at a Concert

**15th to 17th September**

#### An NCPA & Furtados Presentation

Con Brio is back with its 13th edition, featuring three competition categories: Piano, Violin, and Voice. This year's competition-festival delves into the intriguing intersection between the aural and visual arts. Every piece will be accompanied by a visual artwork chosen exclusively by its performer. The artwork will reflect the performer's interpretation of the imagery, narrative and character of the piece.



Con Brio, 15th, Little Theatre

### Competition Semifinals

**Little Theatre**

**Friday, 15th – 6.00 pm**

Six pianists, six singers and six violinists will come together to perform an eclectic repertoire for the semifinals. **Priya Fernandes, Nakul Jogdeo and Sonam Lodhi** will perform a piano triet (for six hands) composed by Sergei Rachmaninoff, celebrating his 150th anniversary.

**Registration Fee: ₹200/-**

**Register now on**

**[www.bookmyshow.com](http://www.bookmyshow.com)**

**For details contact: 99306 54907**



Con Brio, 16th, Experimental Theatre

### Festival Day 1, and Competition Finals - Violin and Voice

**Experimental Theatre**

**Saturday, 16th – 6.30 pm**

The Saturday programme will commence with Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty Waltz" arranged for piano four hands by Rachmaninoff and performed by **Smit Shah** and **Parvesh Java**. This will be followed by the finals of the violin competition. **Eshvita Menezes, Judyline Fernandes** and **Jasiel Peter** will present a violin trio by Friedrich Hermann, accompanied live by an artist creating a work of visual art. The finals of the voice competition will then follow. A chamber vocal ensemble conducted by **Parvesh Java** will perform works by 20th-century composers with pianists **Nadine Crasto** and **Priya Fernandes**. Saturday will conclude with the announcement of the winners and the prize distribution for the violin and voice competitions.

**Tickets:**

**₹810/- (Members)**

**₹900/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

### Festival Day 2, and Competition Finals – Piano

**Experimental Theatre**

**Sunday, 17th – 6.30 pm**

The Sunday programme will open with **Jeremiah Christopher** performing Bach's 'Sheep May Safely Graze' on solo piano, followed



Con Brio, 17th, Experimental Theatre

by **Oscar Castellino** performing selections from Finzi's 'Earth and Air and Rain' with **Parvesh Java**. **Subin Mathai** and **Nadine Crasto** will present a selection from Jake Heggie's 'Into the Fire'. The finals of the piano competition will then follow. **Rahul Bharadwaj** and **Nadine Crasto** will perform a set of pieces inspired by flora and fauna, while **Farah Ghadiali** and **Peter Gorobets** will present a programme representing different times of the day. **Eshvita Menezes, Farah Ghadiali, Nadine Crasto** will then perform a trio by Charles Dancla. This will be followed by the announcement of the winners and the prize distribution for the piano competition. The Con Brio Festival will wrap up with a thrilling performance of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition conducted by **Parvesh Java**, for two pianos eight hands, featuring pianists **Sonam Lodhi, Priya Fernandes, Nakul Jogdeo** and **Jeremiah Christopher**, along with the Festival String Ensemble, comprising **Eshvita Menezes, Judyline Fernandes, Jasiel Peter** and **Sherna Doongaji**.

**Tickets:**

**₹810/- (Members)**

**₹900/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

**Box Office for the Festival now open**

## INDIAN MUSIC



Lata Mangeskar, 15th, Experimental Theatre

### Aaj Phir Jeene Ki Tamanna Hein

**A tribute to Lata Mangeskar**  
**An audio-visual presentation**  
**by Yatindra Mishra**  
**Experimental Theatre**  
**Friday, 15th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

**Lata Mangeskar** was regarded as a living legend during her lifetime, and her name is forever etched in golden



letters in the annals of music as one of the greatest and most influential Indian singers. Born Hema Hardikar (1929-2022), her delicate voice—soaked in astounding tunefulness, coupled with immaculate intonation and total mastery over breath—transformed her rendition into a flawless work of art, leaving her listeners speechless.

Having recorded thousands of songs under the baton of several music directors spanning over 75 years, she sang in 36 Indian regional and foreign languages. The list of her non-film songs is also equally impressive.

**Yatindra Mishra** is a celebrated poet, author and scholar of music and cinema. He has to his credit, four collections of Hindi poetry. His other contributions include writings on the life and work of great artistes like Girija Devi, Sonal Mansingh, Bismillah Khan, Begum Akhtar, Lata Mangeshkar and books such as *100 Years of Hindi Cinema* and a detailed documentation of Ayodhya. An impressive list of many awards received by Mishra includes the Uttar Pradesh Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar, Bharatiya Jnanapitha Fellowship, Raza Foundation Award and such others. His book *Lata: Sur-Gatha* won six awards in 2016, including the National Film Award and MAMI Mumbai Film Festival Award for Best Book on Cinema.

Celebrating the legend of Lata Mangeshkar, this presentation will include some of her audio excerpts of film and non-film renditions. A host of memorable photographs and experiences shared by Mishra will make the evening come alive.

#### Tickets:

₹270 & 180/- (Members)

₹300 & 200/- (Public)

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

### THEATRE

## Welcome Zindagi

Hindi Play (120 mins)

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 16th – 6.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Sparsh Productions

The play has been running in Gujarati



Welcome Zindagi, 16th, Tata Theatre

since May 2010 and has garnered several accolades.

In the heart of Mumbai city, a two-room flat houses the play *Welcome Zindagi*. Three people live in the flat: the father, Arun Ganatra, the mother, Bhanu Ganatra, and the son, Vivek Ganatra. The main conflict in the play results from the father and son's lack of communication. The son is young and is all set for a promising future while the father, Gandhi Associate's head clerk, is close to retiring.

Arun is a hard-working clerk, trapped in his less than privileged past. Vivek, an MBA, yearns to escape his father's drab, predictable life to create a brighter future for himself in business. Father and son communicate through Bhanu. "I am the bridge between them," says the wife and mother. But later, when Vivek needs to discuss his business plans with a sceptical Arun, the bridge folds up, refusing to take the excess load of the impending conflict. Father and son now face each other. They fumble and falter and finally talk. And the conflict begins.

The conflict is not simply between generations; it is also between middle-class reality and upper-class aspiration, between the service class and the business class and between a seasoned head clerk and a fresh MBA. The play maintains considerable humour throughout, despite dealing with this delicate subject.

Writer & Director: **Saumya Joshi**

Cast: **Jigna Vyas, Abhinay Banker & Saumya Joshi**

Set Design:

**Saumya Joshi & Kabir Thakore**

Light & Music Design: **Saumya Joshi**

#### Tickets:

₹1,350, 1080, 900, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,500, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

### THEATRE

## Pink is the New Black

English Play (100 mins)

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 17th – 7.00 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: **Avantika Akerkar, Dilnaz Irani, Tarana Raja, Meghana AT, Alysha Khodaiji, Divya Vinekar & Aarti Aaney.**

Produced by **Silly Point Productions**

#### Tickets:

₹1,800, 1,350, 1,080, 900, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹2,000, 1,500, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office now open

### THEATRE



A Small Family Business, 21st to 24th, Experimental Theatre

## A Small Family Business

By Alan Ayckbourn

English/Hindi Comedy (90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Thursday, 21st & Friday, 22nd – 7.30 pm

Saturday, 23rd & Sunday, 24th – 4.00 pm & 7.30 pm

An NCPA Production in association with Akvarious Productions

First presented at the National Theatre, London, on 5th June 1987.

Samson Sequeira is a misfit—a man of principle in a corrupt world. A mild-mannered Goan Christian married into a boisterous Punjabi business family in Delhi. After two daughters and many years of loyalty to his wife, Samson's father-in-law decides to entrust the family business to him. Moments after he takes on the mantle, Samson is approached by a private investigator armed with some compromising information. And this is only the beginning of his troubles. What was meant to be the happiest phase of his life descends into a hilarious nightmare of dishonesty and double-crossing, and a trial by fire of Samson's integrity. Whoever said blood is thicker than water hasn't met this family yet.

Adapted by **Akarsh Khurana**

Directed by **Adhaar Khurana**

Cast: **Vivek Madan, Shikha Talsania, Tahira Nath, Vikash Khurana, Garima Yajnik, Vrinda Kacker, Kalliroi Tziafeta, Lisha Bajaj, Kashin Shetty, Kanchan Khilare, Dhiraj Wadhvani, Mohit Nehra & others**

**Age: 14+**

**Tickets:**

**₹900, 720 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Plus GST)**

**Box Office now open**

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



**Louiz Banks, 23rd, Tata Theatre**

## Mumbai Piano Day

**Tata Theatre**

**Saturday, 23rd – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

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

**Tickets:**

**₹900, 720, 450 & 270/- (Members)**

**₹1,000, 800, 500 & 300/- (Public)**

**(Plus GST)**

**Box Office now open**

## SCREENING



**The Curious World of Hieronymus Bosch, 27th, Godrej Dance Theatre**

## The Curious World of Hieronymus Bosch

**Exhibition on Screen**

**(Approx. 90 mins)**

**Godrej Dance Theatre**

**Wednesday, 27th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA-Seventh Art Productions (UK) Presentation**

After 500 years, Bosch's paintings still shock and fascinate us. Delve into the vivid imagination of this true visionary.

Who was Hieronymus Bosch? Why do his strange and fantastical paintings resonate with people now more than ever? How does he bridge the medieval and Renaissance worlds? Where did his unconventional and timeless creations come from? Discover the answers to these questions and more with this remarkable new film from Exhibition on Screen.

*The Curious World of Hieronymus Bosch* features the exhibition 'Jheronimus Bosch - Visions of Genius' at Het Noordbrabants Museum in the southern Netherlands, which brought the majority of Bosch's paintings and drawings together for the first time to his hometown of Den Bosch and attracted almost half a million art lovers from all over the world. With his fascinating life revealed plus the details and stories within his works seen like never before, don't miss this cinematic exploration of a great creative genius.

Directed by **David Bickerstaff**

Written by **David Bickerstaff &**

**Phil Grabsky**

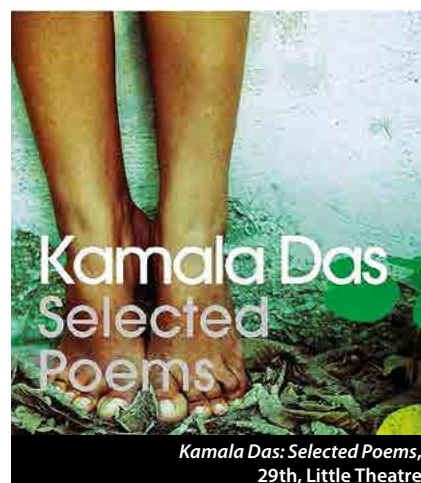
**Tickets:**

**₹360/- (Members)**

**₹400/- (Public)**

**Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public**

## MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION



**Kamala Das: Selected Poems, 29th, Little Theatre**

## Book Reading

**Only the Soul Knows How to Sing:**

**Poetry of Kamala Das**

**Written by Kamala Das**

**Reading designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar**

**Little Theatre**

**Friday, 29th – 4.30 pm**

**NCPA Library in collaboration with Metamorphosis Theatre and Films**

**Kamala Das** was born in 1934 in India into an artistic family. Her father was the managing editor of *Mathrubhumi* and mother, a much-respected poetess. Das is noted for her honest poems and other writings that cover a wide range of issues. Her taboo-breaking work explores themes of love and betrayal, the corporeal and the spiritual while celebrating female sexuality and remaining deeply rooted in the poet's ancestral tradition and landscape. In English, she published six collections of poetry in her lifetime including *Summer in Calcutta* (1965), *The Descendants* (1967), *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* (1973), *Encountering Kamala* (2007) and her autobiography, *My Story* (1976). She was recognised with many literary prizes, including the Sahitya Akademi and the Vayalar awards.

A rigorous selection from her oeuvre—six published volumes and other uncollected and previously unpublished poems, published by Penguin Classics in 2014, *Kamala*



*Das: Selected Poems* offers a unified perspective on her poetic achievement. 'Only the Soul Knows How to Sing: Poetry of Kamala Das' is a poetic experience designed by **Dr. Omkar Bhatkar** using movement, music and visual aesthetics along with the text.

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

## INDIAN MUSIC



**Surojit Guha and Sangeeta Melekar,**  
29th, Tata Theatre

### Tumhe Yaad Hoga

**Evergreen songs of Hemant Kumar & Talat Mahmood**

**By Surojit Guha and Sangeeta Melekar**

**Music arranger: Pradipto Sengupta**

**Tata Theatre**

**Friday, 29th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Sahachari Foundation Events**

A retro evening in which **Surojit Guha** presents evergreen songs of Hemant Kumar and Talat Mahmood, iconic playback singers and composers of yesteryears. Having started his singing career at a very young age, Guha has to his credit a large number of performances of Hindi film music, *Adhunik Bangla* and *Rabindra Sangeet*. He has also performed songs in numerous other languages.

Known for his haunting voice remarkably similar to that of Kumar's, Guha will present songs immortalised by Kumar and Mahmood, accompanied by **Sangeeta Melekar**, a talented singer. The songs will be strung together by a compère.

#### Tickets:

**₹630, 450, 360 & 270/- (Members)**

**₹700, 500, 400 & 300/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

**Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public**

## DANCE



**Deepak Mazumdar, 29th,**  
Experimental Theatre

### Ravana

**Bharatanatyam by Deepak Mazumdar and**

**Shringari Nayaka**

**Odissi by Rahul Acharya**

**Experimental Theatre**

**Friday, 29th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

**Deepak Mazumdar** is a performer, teacher and choreographer and one of the most respected names in the classical dance world for more than three decades. A 'Top' grade artiste of Doordarshan, Mazumdar has, over the years, carved a niche in the world of Indian classical dance and created an everlasting impression with his prowess in *abhinaya*. He has trained with Dr. Kanak Rele and studied rhythm under T. S. Kadirvelu of Tirugokarna. He has honed his skills as a performer under Adyar K. Lakshamanan and Kalanidhi Narayanan. Mazumdar is the first male dancer to receive an MFA from Mumbai University in the field of Bharatanatyam. In 1978, he was a recipient of the National Scholarship for Dance. He has been awarded the Prabhu Pada Sampurna Kala Paksha by Bharti Kalakshetra, Sevabharti, and the Lifetime Achievement Award Nritya Bharati, among others. For the last 25 years, Mazumdar has been training students in the traditional teaching methodology and repertoire of Bharatanatyam at his institution, Shiladhishi.

The performance focuses on the portrayal of Asura King Ravana's life before his battle with Lord Rama. The unfolding demeanour of Ravana's character from being an incomparable devotee of Lord Shiva, an uncompromising loving brother to Surpanakha, an unequalled scholar on innumerable subjects, an intuitive



**Rahul Acharya, 29th, Experimental Theatre**

person to look through divine beings, to becoming a tyrant that ends with defeat in the hands of Lord Rama, is remarkably portrayed. The audience will be compelled to see Ravana's side of the story with compassion that enables them to see epics and their seemingly negative characters from a new perspective.

**Rahul Acharya** is one of the most popular Odissi soloists in the international arena, renowned for his mastery of the technical aspects of the form and his display of sublime emotions. His rendition of Odissi has been inspired by his guru Durga Charan Ranbir and by Deba Prasad Das. He has been an active participant in the most celebrated dance festivals including the Khajuraho and Konark Dance Festivals. Acharya is a graded artiste of Doordarshan, an empanelled artiste of the ICCR, an honorary member of the Sacred Dance Guild (U.S.A.) and a member of the International Dance Council CID (UNESCO), among others. He is a member of *Narthaki*, the largest international website on Indian classical dance. Being well-versed in Sanskrit, Acharya enjoys reading and researching shastras (scriptures) and bringing them to the forefront through his dance.

*Shringari Nayaka* are male protagonists and existentially connected with the *nayikas*, through *shringara* or love. They play an integral part in the *natya parampara*. In this presentation, Acharya has chosen the various aspects of the *nayaka* and his dalliances with his lover, exploring the *rasa* of love, *shringara*, considered as *rasa raja*.

#### Tickets:

**₹360 & 270/- (Members)**

**₹400 & 300/- (Public)**

**Box Office now open**

# What's Next

## October & November 2023

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

### DANCE

#### NCPA Nakshatra Dance Festival 2023

6th to 8th October

The NCPA *Nakshatra* Dance Festival is back with some of the iconic productions presented over the last decade as well as some new works by masters of the genre. The festival aims to feature innovative group choreographies. This year brings stellar performances by eminent choreographers and performers with their respective dance institutions.

Day 1:

#### Storm before the Calm

Bharatanatyam by

Rama Vaidyanathan & troupe

and

#### Chitrangada

Rabindra Nritya by

Sruti Performing Troupe & artistes from Santiniketan

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Friday, 6th October – 6.30 pm

**Rama Vaidyanathan**, a leading exponent of Bharatanatyam, is one of the most sought-after artistes of her generation. She has trained extensively under Yamini Krishnamurthy and Saroja Vaidyanathan. While deeply rooted in tradition, Vaidyanathan



Rama Vaidyanathan, 6th October, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

has evolved her own individual style without forsaking the core principles of Bharatanatyam. She is one of the directors of Ganesa Natyalaya, one of India's premier Bharatanatyam institutes and has received numerous awards including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Kalaimamani award from the Tamil Nadu State Government, among others.

When the status quo of placidity is interrupted and the inner self is stirred, what emerges is change, movement and regeneration—the dance of the cosmos, the dance of the body and the dance of the mind. The process of churning within a dancer is inevitable and it happens on multiple levels. *Storm before the Calm* takes us inside a dancer's mind and traces the crucial journey from the studio to the stage where the elixir of joy is experienced.

**The Sruti Performing Troupe** has been presenting experimental theatrical performances for more than two decades. This platform organises workshops, seminars and performances to promote the rich cultural heritage of our country. It also provides a platform for young talents by arranging recitals and exhibitions. The troupe explores and conducts extensive research and scholarly work in the field of arts and culture with members of the troupe presenting papers at national and international conferences. The organisation undertakes interdisciplinary work focused on allied subjects like human rights, performers' rights and the legal dimensions of the performing arts field.

Tagore's **Chitrangada** was written in 1892 as a verse play and converted to a dance-drama in 1936. The Sruti Performing Troupe and artistes from Santiniketan will present *Chitrangada* in the authentic Rabindra Nritya

form, complete with costumes and jewellery reminiscent of the times when it was staged at Santiniketan.

**Tickets:**

₹675, 450 & 270/- (Members)

₹750, 500 & 300/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Day 2:

#### Workshop on Rabindra Nritya

by Dr. Sruti Bandopadhyay

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre (foyer)

Saturday, 7th October – 10.00 am to 12.00 noon

**Dr. Sruti Bandopadhyay** is one of the leading exponents of Manipuri dedicated to propagating the form outside the boundaries of the state. She is a 'Top' grade artiste of Doordarshan. Having trained under Bipin Singh, Kalavati Devi and Darshana Jhaveri, among others, she has performed in major festivals in India and abroad. She is a recognised artiste of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the ICCR, the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre and other cultural institutions in India. In addition to having choreographed a number of acclaimed productions, Bandopadhyay has completed her PhD from Rabindra Bharati University and D.Litt. from Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. Currently, she teaches Manipuri Dance at Sangit Bhavana of Visva-Bharati University and regularly performs, lectures and writes on dance. She has been a recipient of the Devadasi Rashtriya Samman at Bhubaneswar and the Sri Lalit Kala Academy Award from Mysore.

A poet, playwright, painter, lyricist, novelist and a man of



letters, Rabindranath Tagore also revolutionised the dance scenario of Bengal. In this workshop, participants will learn to create and recreate to express, in their own ways, the vision and philosophy of Tagore.

**For registration, call: 8879114939 / 8879313834**

**Email: [mdsouza@ncpamumbai.com](mailto:mdsouza@ncpamumbai.com), [ashetty@ncpamumbai.com](mailto:ashetty@ncpamumbai.com)**

## Shrimanta Yogi

**Bharatanatyam by Vaibhav Arekar and**

**Group Odissi by Srjan**

**Jamshed Bhabha Theatre**

**Saturday, 7th October – 5.00 pm**



Vaibhav Arekar, 7th October, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

**Vaibhav Arekar**, one of India's leading male Bharatanatyam soloists, has trained under virtuoso teachers Saroja Srinath, Thangamani Nagarajan and Dr. Kanak Rele. Arekar has a B.F.A. and M.F.A. from Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya. His collaborative work in the genre of theatre-dance has created milestone productions. *Haravalele Pratibimba*, *Mata Hidimba*, *Dwandwa* and *Shrimanta Yogi* are regarded as model thematic works in Bharatanatyam. His solo work includes *Debotar Grash* (based on Tagore's poem) and *Narmade Har Hara* (in praise of river Narmada), among others. As a soloist, he has performed at prestigious dance festivals around the country. He is the founder of Sankhya Dance Company, which has performed in Japan, Brazil, Canada, the U.S., Poland, Russia, Germany, France and Australia.

**Shrimanta Yogi** attempts to capture a few impressions of the phenomenon that was Shivaji Maharaj. The premise of the performance is the cultural, social and emotional state of society and of Shivaji himself. The entire performance,



Srjan, 7th October, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

far from the chronological life and history of the warrior king, is more of an impressionistic dance expression.

**Srjan** was founded in 1993 by the eminent Kelucharan Mohapatra and has since evolved into a premier Odissi dance institute of India. Srjan symbolises Mohapatra's humble offering of the classicism of Odissi dance, music and percussion to the rich national ethos of India. Today, a vital aspect of Srjan's function is teaching dance, which is patterned after the ancient *gurukul* system. Mohapatra's rigorous teaching method has been faithfully adopted by his son, Ratikant Mohapatra, who has, ably and imaginatively, assisted this great teacher in imparting the knowledge and technique of Odissi. Srjan had previously performed *Chitra Vitanam* at the NCPA to mark the completion of 100 years of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya.

### Tickets:

**₹675, 450 & 270/- (Members)**

**₹750, 500 & 300/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

### Day 3:

## Kathak by Anart Foundation

**(Ishira Parikh & Maulik Shah)**

**and**

## Kalyanasougandhikam

**Kathakali by Margi from Kerala**

**Experimental Theatre**

**Sunday, 8th October – 5.00 pm**

The **Anart Foundation** was established by **Ishira Parikh and Maulik Shah** with a view to generate and extend awareness of classical dance and related arts. It presents dance productions, imparts performance-oriented training



Anart Foundation, 8th October, Experimental Theatre

and works on research-oriented projects. Parikh and Shah are renowned Kathak dancers whose choreographic endeavours reflect the synthesis of sensitivity and intelligence. Both are 'Top' grade artistes of Doordarshan. Considering their outstanding contribution to Kathak, the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, has awarded them the prestigious Akademi Puraskar. They have been designated by the ICCR, have performed in more than 40 countries and are recipients of many prestigious awards such as the Gaurav Puraskar, among others.

**Margi** is an organisation dedicated to the revival of Kathakali and *Kutiyattam*, two classical art forms of Kerala. Training to students is imparted through the *gurukul* system. Over the last three decades, the organisation has worked to preserve and revive the unique art forms of Kerala. The Margi troupe has performed extensively in several countries including Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Germany, Japan, the UK, Italy, the US, France and Spain.

**Kalyanasougandhikam**, an 18th-century story by Kottayathu Thampuran, is known for its unique blend of elements that highlight the classicism of Kathakali. It is a citation of dance from Kathakali which depicts Bhima's search for the rare flower 'Kalyanasougandhikam' for his consort Panchali. The performance is centred on the meeting between the two sons of Vayu—Hanuman and Bhima—when the latter goes in search of the divine flower.

#### Tickets:

₹360 & 270/- (Members)

₹400 & 300/- (Public)

**Box Office for the Festival: 9th September for Members & 12th September for Public**

#### INDIAN MUSIC



Avinash Vyas, 6th October, Tata Theatre

### Avinashi Avinash

Ashit Desai, Hema Desai, Alaap Desai & others

Compère: Mukesh Joshi

Tata Theatre

Friday, 6th October – 6.30 pm

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

Music composer, lyricist and singer, **Avinash Vyas** (1912-1984), left an indelible mark on the world of Gujarati *sugam sangeet* (light music) through nearly 10,000 songs that he composed during the course of his career. Having had the privilege of being groomed under the legendary sarod maestro Allauddin Khan of Maihar, he went on to compose around 1,200 songs covering a wide range of subjects and moods for over 190 Gujarati films. Some well-known films for which he scored music were: *Mahasati Ansuya* (1943, with Allarakha), *Gunsundari* (1948, in Gujarati and Hindi), *Bhagyan* (1953), *Andher Nagari Chaupat Raja* (1955), *Grihalakshmi* (1959), *Mehendi Rang Lagyo* (1960), *Hawa Mahal* (1962), *Taqat aur Talwar* (1972), *Santu Rangili* (1976), *Maa Baap* (1977), *Garvi Nar Gunaratan* (1981) and *Kanku ni Kimat* (1983), amongst others. Besides using mainstream male and female singers, he was equally comfortable working

with new talent. In fact, he was instrumental in introducing Geeta Dutt to Gujarati films.

This presentation will showcase a wide range of his songs in Gujarati along with a *garba* sequence, providing a glimpse of the versatility of the award-winning music composer.

#### Tickets:

₹450, 315 & 225/- (Members)

₹500, 350 & 250/- (Public)

**Box Office: 9th September for Members & 12th September for Public**

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Livewire, 6th October, Experimental Theatre

### Livewire - Let there be Rock and Roll

Experimental Theatre

Friday, 6th October – 7.00 pm

#### An NCPA Homegrown Presentation

**Vibhas Shukla** – vocals & rhythm guitar

**Troy Damerum** – vocals & lead guitar

**Darel Joseph** – vocals & keyboards

**Albert Dennis** – vocals & bass

**Deon Rebeiro** – vocals & drums

Celebrating a night of homage to more than 60 years of rock. Rock, in all its varied genres, has one common denomination—freedom. Here is your chance to join in on an exclusive night featuring Pune-based band, Livewire, bringing the house down, with the best of rock and retro from the '60s till the turn of the century. With hits from CCR, Elvis Presley, ABBA, Cliff Richard & The Shadows, Boney M, The Beatles, Queen, Toto, Pink Floyd, Guns N' Roses, Eagles, Bon Jovi, Ozzy Osbourne, Van Halen, Bryan Adams, AC/DC, The Doobie Brothers,

Deep Purple, Dire Straits and many more, Livewire has something special, for everyone.

#### Tickets:

₹675 & 450/- (Members)

₹750 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

**Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public**

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Dhananjay Chhettri, 7th October, Experimental Theatre

### White Vinyl – Live at the NCPA

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 7th October – 6.30 pm

#### An NCPA Homegrown Presentation

**Dhananjay Chhettri** – lead guitars

**Vyom Joshi** – lead vocals & rhythm guitars

**Anveya Chole** – bass guitar

**Shreyansh Kejriwal** – drums

White Vinyl is a pop-rock band from the northeast, comprising musicians coming from varied walks of life. Like a prism combining seven colours into one, the band amalgamates a wide diversity of music genres into their songs. White Vinyl fuses music genres such as blues, rock and soul into their music style, and are sure to make you sway and groove while keeping you on your toes in sweet anticipation. The sound of the band draws inspiration from legends like Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, Bon Jovi, Pearl Jam and John Mayer, to name a few.

#### Tickets:

₹675 & 450/- (Members)

₹750 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)



**Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public**

## INDIAN MUSIC

### One World Many Musics: Celebrating Artistic Plurality

13th & 22nd October

An NCPA Presentation

The world that we live in is buzzing with myriad traditions and musical forms across various indigenous cultures. It is natural that various musical styles from around the world tend to influence each other, leading to newer forms that keep evolving.

This festival, showcasing varied musical forms, reaffirms the peaceful co-existence of cultural and artistic plurality in the world. With this event, we celebrate the power of music as a healing force that promotes cross-cultural understanding and reminds people of all cultures and religions that we share a common humanity.

### Dipesh Varma Collective

Experimental Theatre

Friday, 13th October – 7.00 pm

Led by **Dipesh Varma** (percussion & djembe), the ensemble includes **Sridhar Parthasarthy**, a senior percussionist (mridangam, kanjira, morsing), along with a younger team comprising **Sandeep Mishra** (sarangi), **Harmeet Singh** (tabla), **Abhay Nayampally** (guitar) and **Amit Padhye** (harmonium & keyboard). Besides having a mix of artistes trained in North and South Indian music traditions, the ethnic diversity of instruments adds to the appeal of the band.



Dipesh Varma, 13th October, Experimental Theatre

The collaborative endeavour of the band strives to blend purposefully some conventional Hindustani and Carnatic melodies and rhythms with contemporary elements, resulting in an exciting sonic experience.

**Tickets:**

₹360 & 270/- (Members)

₹400 & 300/- (Public)

### When Chai Met Toast

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 22nd October – 7.00 pm



When Chai Met Toast, 22nd October, Tata Theatre

After having met at music circles in Kerala, the quartet—comprising **Ashwin Gopakumar**, **Achyuth Jaigopal**, **Palee Francis** and **Pai Sailesh**—went on to form the pop band, When Chai Met Toast. Debuting with 'Joy of Little Things' in 2017, followed by hits like 'Believe' and 'When We Feel Young' and such others, the band has established its identity which can be described as a mix of indie folk and alternative rock. Having performed at numerous concerts worldwide, today, the band enjoys a wide following among global audiences.

**Tickets:**

₹1,800, 1,440, 1,080, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹2,000, 1,600, 1,200, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

**Box Office for the Festival: 9th September for Members & 12th September for Public**

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

### Celine Learns to Rock with Dr. J and Kelly

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 14th October – 6.30 pm



Dr. J and Kelly, 14th October, Experimental Theatre

An NCPA Presentation

Prepare to be teleported back to the '90s, as **Dr. J and Kelly**, with their brilliant band, revive those timeless melodies and nostalgic hits from your favourite artistes who make your heart go on and teach you the power of love. Get ready to be captivated by infectious melodies, catchy hook lines, engaging lyrics and soulful balladry as The Dr. J Collective performs chart-topping, award-winning hits. Warning: You might just have your heart stolen and soul stirred. You do not want to miss this euphoric, immersive and nostalgic experience. Book your tickets now.

**Tickets:**

₹900/- (Members)

₹1,000/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

**Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public**

## INDIAN MUSIC



Chandra Chakraborty, 19th October, Experimental Theatre

### The Saga of Songstress:

The lost world of Gauhar Jan, Janki Bai, Zohra Bai & Begum Akhtar  
By Chandra Chakraborty

**Experimental Theatre**  
**Thursday, 19th October – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

The contribution made to Indian music by talented women of the courtesan community is indeed laudable. Although society at large preferred to ignore their contribution and even sought to abolish them from the performing space, research points to the ways in which these songstresses overcame social taboos and logistical challenges of recording and contributed immensely to the documentation and propagation of traditional classical and semi-classical repertoire.

Naturally endowed with tuneful and delicate voices, coupled with systematic training and arduous practice, they became custodians of an unusually large repertoire ranging from *khayal*, *thumri*, *dadra*, *tappa* and *hori* to *ghazal*. With a unique combination of beauty, brains and musical talent, they ruled the world of classical and semi-classical Indian music in the early 20th century.

**Chandra Chakraborty** has trained at the prestigious ITC Sangeet Research Academy, Kolkata, with stalwarts like A. Kanan, Malabika Kanan and Girija Devi. She is an AIR gold medalist and a National Scholar in Music. Besides performing at many prestigious venues across the world and producing cross-cultural events, she has been closely associated with several organisations promoting Indian music in the U.K.

This presentation seeks to revisit the mystery and magic of the untold, unheard stories of some of the evergreen melody queens of Indian music. Researched, scripted, directed and performed by Chakraborty, the production portrays the tales of four songstresses in particular: Gauhar Jan (1873-1930) of Kolkata, Janki Bai (1880-1934) of Allahabad, Zohra Bai (1868-1930) of Agra and Begum Akhtar (1914-1974) of Lucknow.

**Tickets:**

**₹225 & 180/- (Members)**

**₹250 & 200/- (Public)**

**Box Office: 9th September for Members & 12th September for Public**



**WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC**

**SOI Chamber Orchestra**

**Marat Bisengaliev, conductor**

**Tata Theatre**

**Tuesday, 31st October – 7.00 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

The SOI Chamber Orchestra performs a programme that includes Mozart's beloved Symphony No. 40, arguably the most popular of Mozart's 41 symphonies, with its instantly recognisable opening melody. Music Director **Marat Bisengaliev** conducts. The rest of the programme will be announced shortly.

**Tickets:**

**₹1,080, 720 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹1,200, 800 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Inclusive of GST)**

**Box Office: 9th September for Members & 12th September for Public**

**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC**

**NCPA International Jazz Festival 2023**

**Tata Theatre**

**Friday, 24th & Saturday, 25th**

**November – 6.30 pm**

**Sunday, 26th November – 6.00 pm**

The NCPA International Jazz Festival is back and this time it's even bigger

with four international artistes performing over three nights. Thilo Wolf, who performed at the festival last year, is coming back with his big band. This edition of the NCPA International Jazz Festival features a spectacular line-up of Grammy and Emmy-nominated musicians from across the world coming together to create some fine jazz.

The line-up features:

- 24th November – Thilo Wolf Big Band featuring Johanna Lser, Torsten Goods and Florian Bührich
- 25th November – Emmet Cohen featuring Benny Benack III
- 26th November – Alfredo Rodriguez Trio
- 26th November – Jane Monheit

Expect some stellar musicians and the highest standard of jazz heard in the city that craves for more, Mumbai.

**Tickets:**

**For 24th & 25th November**

**₹1,800, 1,350, 1,080, 900, 720 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹2,000, 1,500, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Plus GST)**

**For 26th November**

**₹2,250, 1,620, 1,350, 1,080, 720 & 450/- (Members)**

**₹2,500, 1,800, 1,500, 1,200, 800 & 500/- (Public)**

**(Plus GST)**

**Box Office now open**



## Become a Member

### Dear Supporter of the Arts,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please turn over for the Membership form.



# Membership Application Form

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

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

☐ Silver member of the NCPA

☐ Friend of the SOI

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Joint Member Name (in case of couple membership): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Pin Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Drawn On: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## NCPA Silver Membership (inclusive of GST):

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

## Special Membership Packages

	Rates ₹:
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership	On Request
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Membership	On Request

## Membership Benefits:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Email:** [membership@ncpamumbai.com](mailto:membership@ncpamumbai.com)  
**Tel.:** 66223719



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









\*For more information on these and other membership packages, please refer to the upcoming issues of **ON Stage** and log on to [www.ncpamumbai.com](http://www.ncpamumbai.com)



# Events at a glance

September 2023

Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Fri	1st	6.30 pm	Sublime, Serene & Soulful Odissi by Meera Das & troupe and <i>Upalabdh</i> Kathak by Sandip Mallick with live music	
Sat	2nd	11.00 am	NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop Understanding the art of composing (Part 2) A free online workshop on Zoom by Shantanu Moitra	Online
Sat	2nd	4.00 pm	<i>Die Zauberflöte</i> by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Opera Screening Sung in German with English Subtitles	Godrej dancel theatre
Sat	2nd	6.30 pm	<i>Shyam Rang</i> Exploring the divine trinity: Krishna, Radha and Meera By Deepika Bhide Bhagwat & group	
Sun	3rd	6.30 pm	Converging Streams Best of World Music "The Heart of Drums"	
Tue	5th	6.00 pm	Talks on Western Classical Music	 Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Thu	7th	4.00 pm		
Wed	6th	4.30 pm	Poetry Reading	Godrej dancel theatre
Thu	7th	6.30 pm	Reality Check Documentary Film Screening	
Fri	8th	6.30 pm	NCPA-Citi Promising Artistes Series Asaramji Sable (pakhawaj) Mukund Dev Sahoo ( <i>dhrupad</i> )	
Fri	8th	6.30 pm	Movies Under the Stars <i>Stagecoach</i> (1939) Film Screening	
Sat	9th	4.00 pm & 7.30 pm	<i>The Graduate</i> English Play	
Sat	9th	6.00 pm	<i>Sainik</i> Monologue in Hindi	Godrej dancel theatre
Sat	9th	6.30 pm	RAGA-RANG Singers: Priyanka Barve & Vishwajeet Borwankar Compère: Sunil Deodhar Music arrangement: Kamlesh Bhadkamkar	TATA THEATRE
Sun	10th	12.00 noon	<i>The Land of Mea Lilo</i> Children's Play in English	Godrej dancel theatre
Sun	10th	4.00 pm & 7.30 pm	<i>Phirse Honeymoon</i> Hindi Play	
Sun	10th	5.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Rossini, Khachaturian & Tchaikovsky Zane Dalal, conductor Marat Bisengaliev, violin	
Sun	10th	7.00 pm	Women Slay Sunday Stand-up Comedy English/ Hindi	Godrej dancel theatre
Tue	12th	6.00 pm	Talks on Western Classical Music	 Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Thu	14th	4.00 pm		

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



Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Tue	12th	6.30 pm	<i>Afwaah</i> Hindi Film with English Subtitles	Godrej theatre
Wed	13th	6.30 pm	Short Film Corner Short Film Screenings	LITTLE THEATRE
Wed	13th	7.00 pm	Celestial Navigation A piano recital by Pavel Kolesnikov	F THEATRE
Thu	14th	7.00 pm	<i>Three Women</i> English Play	F THEATRE
Fri	15th	6.00 pm	Con Brio 2023 (15th to 17th September) Competition Semifinals	LITTLE THEATRE
Sat	16th	6.30 pm	Festival Day 1, and Competition Finals - Violin and Voice	F THEATRE
Sun	17th	6.30 pm	Festival Day 2, and Competition Finals - Piano	F THEATRE
Fri	15th	6.30 pm	<i>Aaj Phir Jeene ki Tamanna Hein</i> A tribute to Lata Mangeshkar An audio-visual presentation by Yatindra Mishra	F THEATRE
Fri	15th	7.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Williams, Brahms & Wagner Richard Farnes, conductor Pavel Kolesnikov, piano	jb JANAKI THEATRE
Sat	16th	6.00 pm	<i>Welcome Zindagi</i> Hindi Play	TATA THEATRE
Sun	17th	7.00 pm	<i>Pink is the New Black</i> English Play	TATA THEATRE
Wed	20th	7.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Strauss, Schumann & Stravinsky Alpesh Chauhan, conductor Steven Isserlis, cello	jb JANAKI THEATRE
Thu & Fri Sat & Sun	21st & 22nd 23rd & 24th	7.30 pm 4.00 pm & 7.30 pm	<i>A Small Family Business</i> by Alan Ayckbourn English/Hindi Comedy	F THEATRE
Sat	23rd	6.30 pm	Mumbai Piano Day	TATA THEATRE
Sat	23rd	7.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Hussain & Tchaikovsky Alpesh Chauhan, conductor Zakir Hussain, tabla Niladri Kumar, sitar Rakesh Chaurasia, bansuri	jb JANAKI THEATRE
Sun	24th	5.00 pm		
Wed	27th	6.30 pm	<i>The Curious World of Hieronymus Bosch</i> Exhibition on Screen	Godrej theatre
Fri	29th	4.30 pm	Book Reading Only the Soul Knows How to Sing: Poetry of Kamala Das Written by Kamala Das Reading designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar	LITTLE THEATRE
Fri	29th	6.30 pm	<i>Tumhe Yaad Hoga</i> by Surojit Guha and Sangeeta Melekar Evergreen songs of Hemant Kumar & Talat Mahmood Music arranger: Pradipto Sengupta	TATA THEATRE
Fri	29th	6.30 pm	<i>Ravana</i> : Bharatanatyam by Deepak Mazumdar and <i>Shringari Nayaka</i> : Odissi by Rahul Acharya	F THEATRE





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possibilities. With its original patented design consisting of a bezel, a case back and a winding crown screwed down against the middle case, it profoundly changed the course of watchmaking history and set new standards of waterproofness for all wristwatches. To this day, the Oyster case continues to protect our watches and our movements within them. It stands as undeniable proof of our constant quest for reliability.

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