The Wunderkinds
Young musicians take the stage

The Dhananjayans
at the August Dance Residency

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The monsoon brings good tidings. Not only do we remember Dr. Bhabha on his birthday on 21st August, but he would have been delighted to know that Zubin has agreed to conduct two concerts with our Symphony Orchestra of India. He is conducting one of them on Dr. Bhabha’s birthday, which includes some works close to his heart. After a whirlwind tour in the last few months with his world-famous orchestras from Florence and Berlin, the great maestro will arrive in the city this month.

If this was not enough, our orchestra will, immediately after his departure, start intensive work on about 10 major works over five concerts featuring renowned artistes for the Autumn 2023 season and will then take these programmes to the U.K. in November-December. One of them is the triple concerto by Zakir Hussain, specially composed for the SOI. In a delightful gesture, he presented the completed score to the NCPA on his recent visit.

Some of us are still getting over the virtuosity and artistry of the great Akram Khan. The major festivals which have now become a part of the offerings at the NCPA will be presented in their full glory this year as well. These include Bandish, featuring renowned vocalists Rashid Khan, Ajay Pohankar, Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam and Pankaj Udhas, in their respective genres of Indian music.

Our International Jazz Festival line-up has attracted a lot of attention and celebrated international artistes have been engaged for this excellent season.

The NCPA is foraying into different areas of artistic endeavours among which there is a discussion taking place of organising conversations relating to current topics of great importance and relevance to our situation. Tata Literature Live!, which surely misses the touch of Anil Dharker, continues with celebrated authors expounding their views, conservative, radical and otherwise, to an inquisitive audience.

People ask if we are doing too much. Are we headed for digestive disorders? We think not. With your support, we will march on.
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Remembering our illustrious founder whose vision and fortitude nurtured the NCPA
THE IMPRIMATUR

Zane Dalal shares personal reflections on the repertoire and his 46-year association with Zubin Mehta, ahead of the Maestro’s eagerly awaited concerts with the Symphony Orchestra of India on 19th and 21st August.

It is my great pleasure to write once more for the readership of ON Stage, this time on a subject matter that gives the NCPA and the SOI tremendous pride, and for a plethora of reasons has remained elusive until now. “Aapre Zubin” will lead the SOI in two concerts this August, on the 19th and 21st, in Mozart’s Overture to The Marriage of Figaro, Schubert’s Symphony No. 8 in B minor “Unfinished” and Mahler’s Symphony No. 1 “Titan”. The concerts are being presented by the NCPA and Mehli Mehta Music Foundation. Our readers who are avid concertgoers will hopefully find my anecdotal approach to these pieces interesting and informative, whilst those who have yet to make concert-going a passion, will find part of their new-found delight in this genre, by viewing it through a different lens.

It is a particularly high honour for me to write on this visit to us by Maestro Mehta, because in my long association with attending his rehearsals and concerts, I have never had cause nor opportunity to write on my experience of them. They developed over time into a warm relationship where he went out of his way to provide extraordinary moments in which I was brought into close contact with the music-making.

I recall in Florence in 1989, performances of “Eroica”, Rienzi overture and Verdi’s Requiem at the Maggio Musicale. He asked how well I knew the Requiem. Before I knew it, I was not just attending rehearsal but singing in the chorus. On the same trip, during one of his days off, the theatre was given over to a great performance of Der Rosenkavalier with Jiří Kubelík at the helm and Anna Tomowa-Sintow as the Marschallin, who was making waves with her debut at the time and was Herbert von Karajan’s favoured soprano for the 9th Symphony, in his third complete Beethoven cycle. I was duly introduced to all these cast members backstage by Zubin as Maestro Dalal. It was a typical moment of generosity of which there have been so many. It was also, incidentally, the first time I met Mehroo Jeejeebhoy, who was also in Florence at the time. We had both been invited to lunch with the maestro. Come to think of it, it was also the first time I enjoyed tiramisu the way it should be, a yardstick that I have kept all these years.

However, these moments of generosity were primarily in Los Angeles, where we both make our home, even to this day and they go back to 1977, before I knew I was going to be a musician and he was in his 16th year as Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic just before his tenure at the New York Philharmonic. I remember a particularly fine Beethoven 5th at the Hollywood Bowl from that period, and I didn’t know then that attending
particular, these pieces is uniquely shaped by his Mehta’s treatment of these composers, and in the programme may seem to include the usual fare about five minutes from downbeat. There I sat four rows back, dead centre of the orchestra stalls, so close that I could see the whites of musicians’ eyes and the subtle interplay between cast members and conductor. It was a real live masterclass in stagecraft. It was a real live masterclass in stagecraft.

Zubin added briskly, “in a seat where he can see the whites of musicians’ eyes and in the breaks, dealing with all manner of extra-musical working cog details, and for that I suppose I was particularly lucky. He summoned a house manager at the LA Opera and spoke kindly but I was overjoyed, but that was not all. Just as the manager reached the door of the green room, Zubin added briskly, “in a seat where he can see me clearly.” The first ask was fairly possible. The second was absolutely impossible because we were about five minutes from downbeat. There I sat four rows back, dead centre of the orchestra stalls, so close that I could see the whites of musicians’ eyes and the subtle interplay between cast members and conductor. It was a real live masterclass in stagecraft.

I am immensely grateful for the connection we have forged on a musical level, and the generosity of spirit he has shown and continues to show when we have occasion to meet, quite apart from the affection that our two families shared, hinged by the enduring friendship between my mother DhunMal and his mother Tehmi.

We are in for a treat this month at the NCPA. The programme may seem to include the usual fare of great masterworks, as expected, but Maestro Mehta’s treatment of these composers, and in particular, these pieces is uniquely shaped by his singular experiences, not only first-rate but now, as we are privileged to witness the elder statesman at work, almost certainly legendary. There are several facets to Mehta’s brand of excellence. Some of them are well known and documented. Others are lesser known or recognised only by a handful of cognoscenti but equally as important. Whether it is his stick technique, so incredibly clear that if there were any question about cohesion, the players were just not attentive enough, or whether it is his ability to build an overarching structure no matter how lengthy or complicated a work. Whether it is his skill with a vast repertoire that comfortably spans Bach to Berio, or whether it is his ability to present the essence and style of each composer so that the ribald sounds of Gershwin or Copland are essentially Americana as much as the Mozart or Schubert are ‘eck authentisch Wiener’. There are so many more areas of expertise that make up the whole, one could devote an entire book to them. The one that perhaps dominates, to my mind, is his skill as an accompanist, not because he has single-handedly helped launch the careers of literally hundreds of mainstream virtuoso artists—from Vengerov to Midori, from Lang Lang to Buniatishvili—but that it speaks to his extraordinary ability to allow a musician to breathe and to play comfortably in their own skin and to listen and be flexible whilst at the same time creating that overall arch for the piece. These qualities are necessary and prerequisite if one wishes to conduct opera. After all, an opera is but a concerto for cast members and chorus, but with the added complication that they should seem to be involved in drama and not necessarily set up to watch the beat. By my mind, this ability to nurture a melody or bring out the hauptsstimme is of paramount importance in all the repertoire, and if one approaches orchestral repertoire as if it is written for soloists, one can discover another territory altogether.

When the composer is a master of the operatic form, what he writes in his chamber music and his symphonies will reflect operatic tendencies of timing, breathing and melody. This is completely true of Mozart, whose symphonies and quartets cannot be understood without knowing his operas. So it would stand to reason that the most convincing performances of Mozart are almost always achieved by those who are not just familiar with opera but masters of operatic conducting. Now as I mention the names you will automatically agree that Mehta along with Bruno Walter, James Levine, Carlos Kleiber, Carlo Mario Giulini and perhaps two or three more, have a special key to secrets that remain elusive to others. When listening to Mozart’s short, fiery yet refined overture to The Marriage of Figaro, think about not just what you are hearing but the whole wealth of experience and craft that is allowing that sound to occur. It will bring you closer to an understanding of not just what a conductor does, but, in particular, why working Mozart with Maestro Mehta is such a gift to our musicians. But don’t take just my word for it. Recently available on CD is a recording made in the 1970s with the Israel Philharmonic. Here’s an excerpt from an online review by David Rowe.

Is there anything that Zubin Mehta doesn’t do well? It is astonishing these Mozart symphony recordings from the late 70s are just now seeing the light of day on CD. For they are among the most enjoyable I’ve heard. It is a pity Mehta and Decca did not record a “complete” set of the later symphonies (say from the mid #20s through #41) in Israel. What we do get are #34, 39 & 40. Unbounded joy and freshness pervade every bar - aided by alert, crisp playing from all departments of the Israel Philharmonic, especially the excellent strings sections. Mehta was always a stickler for crisply articulated bowing from his strings, and this is evident here and pays enormous dividends. Why do so many conductors today allow their strings to play with inarticulate, mushy, on-the-string bowing? It’s a mystery, especially after hearing how glorious it is when played correctly, as on this set.
Franz Schubert is another such Viennese composer who, perhaps even more than Mozart, is aligned with the Vienna that Mehta knows and experienced firsthand when at the Hochschule under the tutelage of Hans Swarowsky, with his close colleagues Daniel Barenboim and the late Claudio Abbado. Mehta is aligned to this understanding of Vienna, the way the German is spoken, the way the people think and what is prioritised, and which stones are deliberately left unturned. Yes, Vienna represents a paradox, the apex of culture and art, the presence of tremendous diversity as a former imperial capital, but also a city of traditions, some of which are quaint, some of which are what Mahler referred to as “Schlamperei” (which roughly translates to “sloppy”) and yet others that are best not mentioned because they draw you to a dark and questionable current that is ever present in the reality of its presence. Whereas in Germany, though titles have no political or public standing, they are not banned, and the country keeps its traditional noble houses intact precisely because they continue off the radar without hindrance or involvement.

There are many things in the music of Schubert that are noteworthy and some staggeringly so. A consummate melodist, Schubert’s beautiful unravelling lines of spun gold show not only an understanding of the practical nature of playing and breathing, but also a deep understanding of harmony, which is perceptibly flexible through almost every note. Like Brahms, Schubert has the extraordinary ability to make the horizontal line of the melody integral to the vertical line of the harmony, so that in examining one, you are automatically examining the other as well. This sort of complication is where Mehta thrives. The Schubert, evocative and yet pragmatically centred—steeped in tradition yet at the same time other-worldly and far beyond his time—is part and parcel of the unfinished Symphony No. 8. Written in between 1822 and 1823 and presented in 1824 to thank the University at Graz for his doctorate, the piece was never delivered by Hüttenbrenner who sat on the Graz committee, and not performed until 1865 when, guilty of having sat on a treasure, he revealed the score to conductor Johan von Hurbeck. The audience went wild on hearing this extraordinary piece. Written whilst Beethoven was still alive and premiered whilst audiences were about to receive Wagner’s Das Rheingold, the “Unfinished” demonstrates the scope of language it contains and the gulf of time and tradition it spans. If one examines just the opening bars, the traditions of Schubert’s day are combined with a delirium and soundscape so far advanced that they easily could have been introduced by Wagner. Some suspect that delirium to be the ravages of syphilis from which Schubert eventually died in 1828.

Mahler’s Symphony No. 1, “Titan”, is another piece far-ranging in its language and beyond its day. Written in that extraordinary 50-year span between 1875 and 1925 where humans journeyed from candlelight to jet aircraft, one might expect far-reaching and equally remarkable achievements in art and culture. Charles Dickens is connected with Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels with Carl Jung. More amazingly for Mahler’s 1st, the 1880s delivered Brahms’s 3rd and 4th symphonies, Verdi’s Otello, Massenet’s Manon, Bruckner’s 8th symphony, Borodin’s Prince Igor, Strauss’s Don Juan and in the same year (1888) Tchaikovsky’s 5th symphony. Meanwhile, the St. Gotthard Pass was built, the Panama Canal was built, and Marconi sent his first radio messages, as Pasteur immunised for rabies. Even with that backdrop, the language of Mahler 1 seems far beyond its time.

Again, Mehta excels in all of Mahler, but most especially symphonies 1 through 5, those referencing Des Knaben Wunderhorn. There are so many marvellous inconsistencies in the telling of this grand story. Mahler the Jew, finding his way in an anti-Semitic environment, the sounds of the synagogue mixed with the sounds of the Catholic church and those in turn mixed with the military marches of the parade ground in Iglau, itself a German outpost surrounded by Czech and non-Germanic peoples, are the bucket from which he draws. This hotchpotch of inspiration proves to be a powerful source for an immensely powerful piece. Mehta’s understanding of Mahler goes way beyond, and there are subtleties in the score which need attention. Mahler, a conductor himself, constantly wrote instructions for not only the players but also the conductors. Some of it is nitpicking to improve the standards of playing, and some of it is a composer’s hieroglyph from within the piece trying to transmit his sensibilities to future generations. Deciphering this coded language is a ratified art—one in which Mehta excels.

I have had the good fortune to listen to and witness performances and rehearsals of Mehta’s Mahler at very close proximity and over at least four decades. From his fine recording of the 2nd Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic with Ileana Cotrubas and Christa Ludwig—still an adored benchmark by so many Mahler enthusiasts—to his most recent performance with the Los Angeles Philharmonic just before COVID shut us down, it has been a privilege to enjoy and the education of an era. That he brings this privilege and this education to our musicians at the SOI and our audiences at the NCPA is not just a momentous and historic occasion—it is the ultimate imprimatur for Khushroo, Marat and myself. An imprimatur and a nihil obstat for all those of us involved in the long and arduous work of orchestra-building.

The SOI will embark on its second tour of the U.K. in November/December of this year. Zane Dalal, Associate Music Director of SOI and frequent contributor to ON Stage, will conduct on 10th September at the NCPA, in repertoire that will be presented on tour, featuring Rossini’s Semiramide Overture, Khachatryan’s Violin Concerto with Marat B glebvaliev as soloist and Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 6 “Pathétique”.
A LIFETIME IN NATYA

Ahead of their much-anticipated presentation, Smriti-Patham, as part of the August Dance Residency of their premier institution Bharata Kalanjali at the NCPA, Bharatanatyam doyen V.P. Dhananjayan shares the ups and downs of life with his partner on and off the stage, Shanta Dhananjayan.

In 1953, my first train journey from the remote village of Payyanur in north Malabar along with another boy, Balagopalan, brought us to the green environs of the campus of the Theosophical Society Adyar in Chennai, back when it was called Madras. I went from a thatched house to a small cottage where the world-renowned Kalakshetra was housed between 1936 and 1962.

When we first arrived at Kalakshetra with Chandu Panicker, Shanta was the first girl introduced to me and Balagopalan. Panicker requested the then nine-year-old Shanta to take care of the ‘village brats’ conversing in the only language we knew at that time, Malayalam. Was that love at first sight? Like Rama and Sita meeting in the gardens of Mithila, the two of us first met in the gardens of the Theosophical Society. Later in life, we did go onstage as Rama and Sita in Kalakshetra’s Valmiki Ramayana series and many other major roles followed over the years. Shanta became my life partner on 24th August 1966, when we exchanged simple ‘tulsi maalas’ (garlands) straight from the altar of the famed Sri Guruvayur temple in Kerala.

Kalakshetra nurtured us with all we needed for a successful and productive life. Shanta and I served our alma mater for over one and a half decades, and, out of sheer economic compulsion, we chose to leave the institution and start Bharata Kalanjali in 1968, housed under another small, thatched roof, with just one student. With no financial backing or godfathers to support us, it was an arduous journey. However, with steadfast conviction and courage, we pulled the yoke together to plough the field with success. Discipline, devotion and dedication were the watchwords—a ‘3D’ formula for success that led to a creative life full of adventure, a life that was often pleasant and sometimes not so pleasant. We are grateful that Shanta’s parents stood by us through thick and thin.

Our creative journey commenced with the establishment of Bharata Kalanjali because that is when I found the courage to be bold enough to break away from so-called tradition. However, this meant facing criticism and brickbats from the arts fraternity, especially our alma mater, and from colleagues and contemporaries. We met them with equanimity and continued the journey, breaking the barriers of politics, nepotism, bureaucracy, jealousy. Opportunities came to us on their own and we made the most of them. We chose to project our art but did not use it for self-promotion. We chose to maintain a certain grace, to honour our sanskriti and to promote, preserve and propagate our heritage.
CRESTS AND TROUGHS

In the almost six decades of our journey with Bharata Kalanjali, we have traversed the globe and received much acclaim. Within the canvas of Bharatanatyam, we have painted multifarious subjects that were educative, enlightening and entertaining. We have collaborated with acclaimed artistes, including Ravi Shankar, Jacques d’Amboise (principal dancer and choreographer at the New York City Ballet) and Heinz Poll (Founder of the Ohio Ballet). Our collaborative ventures have included choreography for Jungle Book, commissioned by Cuyahoga Community College and the Cleveland Cultural Alliance; Ghanashyam, commissioned by the City of Birmingham Touring Opera (now called Birmingham Opera Company) and Chakra: A Celebration of India, a production of the National Dance Institute in New York.

While we have experienced great success, we have also faced failure. After building and running an arts and cultural centre, Bhaaskara, founded on the models of Tagore’s Santiniketan and Kalakshetra, in Kerala for 10 years, we had to give up because of financial constraints and local politics. Bhaaskara was built in the style of temple architecture on a hill in the village of Kaithapram in north Malabar. Though it remains a sight to behold, our hard-earned life savings were gone with it.

After the heartbreak of Bhaaskara, a historic milestone came our way. We completed 25 years of conducting the Gurukulam Summer Camp at Yogaville, Virginia, USA (under the guidance of Swami Satchidananda) from 1989 to 2013. This continued project and association gave us immense satisfaction. It was a pioneering venture contributing to the Indian diaspora and changing the attitude and misconceptions about Indian culture among the younger generations of American Indians. We could justifiably be proud of changing the scenario and paving the way for our musicians and natya practitioners to have lucrative careers both at home and abroad.

Our pioneering work started with an out-of-the-blue invitation we received from the New York State Education Department in 1976, requesting us to enlighten young American children about the culture of India through lecture-demonstrations in educational institutions. We spent two months visiting not just cities but even nooks and corners of the State of New York, giving lecture-demonstrations and stage performances with just two musicians accompanying us. It was an unforgettable experience. It strengthened our confidence to face arduous situations.

WHEN CULTURE MET COMMERCE

Towards the end of our artistic and decidedly non-commercial journey, destiny brought us a new experience in the commercial world of modelling for Vodafone commercials. The success of those commercials made us famous—we came to be known as the Vodafone Couple. This unexpected exposure brought us several more commercials that fetched good earnings and increased our popularity, possibly much more than we had experienced as a natya couple. These commercials introduced us to the feature film industry in Tamil and Malayalam where we experienced a totally different world. We took it as a challenge to tide over the stigma attached to the commercial world and make the experience a part of our learning.

In principle, we have never pursued honours and accolades. They seemed to appear one after another in search of us. In retrospect, it is satisfying to have been honoured and decorated with national and international recognitions for our service to our Bharatiya kala and sanskaar.

The journey of our life has been a contented and happy one, striding through the good and eschewing the bad with a positive approach. Indeed, our life is an open book and, with no exaggeration, we are made for each other. Leading an austere, principled and disciplined life, we feel honoured to serve as role models for our students and anyone else who might be inspired by us.

While mapping our artistic journey around the globe, I must acknowledge that the NCPA is amongst the most prestigious art centres not just in India but renowned the world over. We have performed at the NCPA many times over the years and we are looking forward to performing here once again.

Smriti-Patham, a narrative presentation with excerpts from iconic choreographies that cover five decades of the work of Shanta and V.P. Dhananjayan, will be presented on 3rd August at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre. Workshops under August Dance Residency will be held on 4th and 5th August. To know more about their extraordinary careers, please read Master of Arts: A Life in Dance by Tulsi Badrinath (Hachette India Publication, 2013).
Smriti-Patham
by
Shanta and VP Dhananjayan
of Bharata Kalanjali

AUG 3
6:30 PM

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, NCPA

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A Tale of Two Nations

The NCPA is now home to an exquisite bust of William Butler Yeats. An unveiling ceremony filled with poetry and music marked the 158th birth anniversary of the great Irish poet.

The bust has been sculpted by Rory Breslin. The bust is a gift from the Bulbulia Bequest, a philanthropic initiative run by Dr. Abdul, Senator Katherine Bulbulia and sculptor Mr. Rory Breslin, and a kind reciprocation of the gift of one of W. B. Yeats to be unveiled at the NCPA. How appropriate! This makes Ireland the first country to host a discussion on the great man at the earliest opportunity," Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA, announced at the ceremony.

The bust is a gift from the Bulbulia Bequest, a philanthropic initiative run by Dr. Abdul, Senator Katherine Bulbulia and sculptor Mr. Rory Breslin, and a kind reciprocation of the gift of one of W. B. Yeats to be unveiled at the NCPA. How appropriate! This makes Ireland the first country to have donated a bust to be permanently displayed at the NCPA," Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA, announced at the ceremony.

The bust was unveiled by Consul General Ms. Anita Kelly, Consul General of Ireland in Mumbai, unveiled the bust with Mr Suntook. Ms. Kelly thanked Mr. Suntook and his team for the introduction to the English language version of Tagore's cherished collection of poems. The enthusiasm of Yeats's promotion of Gitanjali helped to popularise it in Europe. The English version eventually led to Tagore being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. Yeats also translated Tagore's play Dakghar. The two wordsmiths continued to correspond and share ideas until Yeats's demise in 1939.

Ms. Kelly also shared some lesser-known nuggets of history. "Tagore and Yeats were close associates during a significant time in Ireland's nationalist history. A letter was recently discovered in our National Library, signed by Irish playwright and freedom fighter Patrick Pearse in 1915, a year before he was executed for his part in the Easter Rising. The letter shows that Pearse's play, The King, was staged by Tagore's pupils in his school. We know that this play was also staged in Dublin at the Abbey Theatre, the national theatre of Ireland, alongside Dakghar," she told the audience. The King was staged in Irish while Dakghar was staged in Bengali, which has immense cultural significance in a colonial context.

This cultural exchange continues to this day. It stands as a testament not only to the strengthening of relations between India and Ireland but to the role art plays in bringing nations and their peoples together. It is a reminder of the past to pave the way for the future. To put it in Yeats's compelling words, "Hope and Memory have one daughter and her name is Art."

"The Second Coming", written in the aftermath of the First World War, is a masterpiece of modernist poetry by WB Yeats:

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
>
> Things fall apart: the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.
>
> Surely some revelation is at hand;
> Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
> The Second Coming! Hardy are those words out
> When a vast image out of Spiritus Mundi
> Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
> A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
> A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
> Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
> Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
> The darkness drops again; but now I know
> That twenty centuries of stony sleep
> Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle.
> Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?"
In its fifth edition, The Wunderkinds is set to showcase the skills of young musicians, many of whom are performing on an esteemed platform for the first time.

By Deepali Singh

Making the First Move

In its fifth edition, The Wunderkinds is set to showcase the skills of young musicians, many of whom are performing on an esteemed platform for the first time.

By Deepali Singh

It only takes a spark to get a fire going, according to composer Kurt Kaiser’s popular hymn ‘Pass It On’. Going by the increasing popularity of The Wunderkinds and the opportunities the initiative has provided to young talents in the field of music, it is not far from the truth to suggest that this platform has proved to be just the spark that was needed to ignite the musical flair.

Conceptualised in 2018, The Wunderkinds is a platform that brings together musical talents from the ages of 8 to 21. The culminating performance on the prestigious Tata Theatre stage of the NCPA is a musical extravaganza, featuring a multitude of genres such as pop, rock, jazz, soul, hip-hop and R&B, among others. Farrahnaz Irani, General Manager – International Music at the NCPA, shares that the reason this platform was conceptualised five years ago was an outcome of the realisation that while there is a lot of talent in children, there is a lack of exposure to the world of live musical performances, the joy in performing in front of a live audience and a feel for the careers they can have in the performing arts.

One of the first things the participants are required to do is to submit video entries in the month of March. Those who are selected are called for a live audition in May. Prior to the big day in August when they get to perform onstage, the final group of participants undergo three months of rehearsals to polish and enhance their musical skills as well as learn the know-how of performing in front of a live audience. They are trained by professionals who are well known and established in the field of the performing arts.

This year, 300 odd entries were received and after two rounds of auditions, 73 participants were given the opportunity to participate in the 2023 edition of The Wunderkinds. “The judges evaluate the participants’ work on various parameters including voice control, tone and rhythm, command of the instrument, sense of pitch and timing, ability to...
The Wunderkinds was conceptualised because there is a lot of talent in children, but what they lack is exposure to the world of live performances and the joy of performing in front of a live audience.

improvise, stage presence and expression. Each subcategory is allotted five marks, taking it to a final tally of 30,” shares Irani.

For most of the participants, this is their first brush with performing live and an opportunity to showcase their skills on one of the biggest performance stages in the city. The auditions, and the three months of rehearsals that follow, make the journey as interesting as the destination and for the budding artistes, an experience they cherish for years to come.

Behind the scenes

For 19-year-old Rameses Fernandes, who is back for this year’s edition after participating last year for the first time, it is the rehearsal process that has been life-changing. Drummer Sanket Pahurkar, who participated in 2019 and 2022, feels the same way. “It was both exciting and impressive to meet some of the other musicians and to play some jazz and funk tunes, which was a new genre for me to explore,” he recalls.

During group rehearsals, the participants are trained by professionals in the music field in how to work as a team, sing with others, harmonise, work with a live band, improvise and work on choreography and stage presence wherever required.

Seventeen-year-old Eashan Shaikh is one of the few who has participated in every edition of The Wunderkinds and is eagerly looking forward to performing this year as well. The teenager, who learnt about the auditions through his vocal teacher Samantha Noella, shares that the creative process has become more refined over the years. “Also, I see younger musicians being given more opportunities, which I think is fantastic. In the first few editions, the core band was on the older side and with every edition, I see a lot more children under 10 as well,” he says.

Shanelle Ferreira, who participated in the initiative in 2019, recalls the final performance with a lot of warmth. “We performed in front of a live audience at the Experimental Theatre. The seating arrangement is such that the audience is close to the stage, and it makes the experience really warm and intimate,” says the 20-year-old, for whom performing on such a stage was a first.

The Wunderkinds, Irani believes, is more than just a show. “This is why so many participants who have performed here for the first time keep coming back. This is also where they learn a lot more about the stage than just singing or playing an instrument, which helps them grow in different aspects of life. We encourage repeat participants and there is a certain joy in watching young artistes go from strength to strength and build confidence with every passing year,” she adds.

Opening doors

Not only has The Wunderkinds helped its participants in polishing their musical abilities, it has also expanded their horizons on the professional front. Ferreira is now the lead vocalist of The Bombay Coalition, a band that describes itself as an English pop, rock and retro band that also dabbles in Bollywood fusion and performs at private and corporate shows. “I had finished my schooling just a few months before I took part in The Wunderkinds and performing in front of such a large audience was a confidence-booster. It paved the way for me professionally,” she says, crediting all her mentors for guiding her in the right direction and helping her channel her musical energies in the best way possible.

Pahurkar and Fernandes are part of Duneheart, a blues band they joined this year that has recently completed a performance tour in Delhi. “The Wunderkinds is where it all took off for me,” shares Fernandes, adding that he used to perform at Mass and brunch gigs, but the NCPA initiative turned out to be a stepping stone for him on a professional level. “It played a crucial part in my career,” adds the self-taught musician. Pahurkar put him on to band member Rushikesh Nene who was, at the time, looking for a keyboardist. The duo now performs regularly with the band and Pahurkar also plays drums for Bollywood singer Shaan’s gigs.

Shaikh and Fernandes are excited about the upcoming show on 12th August. The concert will last around two hours with the musicians performing 24 songs in total. The genres range from funk to pop, rock and jazz, among others. “This time, I am not only part of the vocals but will also be playing the guitar on the big stage for the first time,” Shaikh adds with a smile. The Wunderkinds is truly a place for many firsts.

The Wunderkinds will be presented on 12th August at the Tata Theatre.
THE WUNDERKINDS

talented young musicians

12 August 2023

Tata Theatre, NCPA | 6:30 pm

Book now on bookmyshow | Box Office: +91 22 66223754
In focus: Bandish

In a series that explores a particular facet of the performing arts, Dr. Suvarnrala Rao, Head - Indian Music at the NCPA, introduces the concept of the bandish, a vital element of Indian classical music.

Music, as we know, is humanly structured sound. Though musical behaviour is universal across human civilizations, its manifestions seem to be highly diverse with respect to their structures, roles and cultural interpretations. Can there be music without song? Be it the Chinese opera, music of the Pashu tribes in Afghanistan, the Pinteap ensemble in Cambodia, Sufi sîlah in Egypt, folk music of 60 different ethnic groups of Burkina Faso, Latin Caribbean music, Australian aboriginal music or modern-day genres of rock and reggae; it seems that from the far East to the distant West, from the extreme North to the deep South, music performance in any culture, whether traditional or popular, stems from a pre-composed entity – a composition that we commonly understand as “song”.

Music traditions in India too are no exception. In fact, North Indian art (classical) music, also known as Hindustani music, lays special emphasis on a well-structured composition known as bandish, which forms the basic building block of any musical making. Its counterpart in the South, Carnatic music, is also based on a similar concept. Thanks to the creative genius of composers across several centuries, today we have a treasure of compositions in diverse genres and multitudes of languages.

Bandish in art music

Raga, tala and bandish are the three pillars that form the basis for art music traditions in India. While the concepts of raga and tala are related to melodic and rhythmic aspects of music, the bandish is a comprehensive facet. It encompasses not only melody and rhythm manifesting as raga and tala, but also has a linguistic component of poetry. A bandish is the central idea or the edifice upon which a performance is sculpted and realised. It holds within its structure elements that can be improvised upon. The raison d’être of art music is to portray the personality of a raga in an aesthetic and philosophical way. A bandish, incorporating distinctive features of the raga, helps realise this aesthetic prerequisite. Thus, what could outwardly seem as a mere song, has the potential to transform into a full-fledged story of a raga in a performance.

Compositions could be set in any raga and tala. Hundreds of melodies (ragas and thumis) have been the basis for compositions set to various rhythmic cycles and performed within the aesthetic parameters of a range of genres like dhun, dhamar, thyal, thumri, kriti, padam, etc. There could be many compositions in a given raga, each exploring a different facet of the raga.

In the realm of art music, a good composition possesses grandeur that unmistakably unveils the distinctive features and beauty of a raga as visualised by the composer. A composition may be relatively short, but it plays a vital role in its recurrence throughout the performance. Generally, a composition has at least two parts known as sthayi (lit. standing or constant) and antara (lit. intermediate). While the sthayi dwells in the first part of the middle octave and part of the lower octave, the antara covers the higher part of the middle octave and beyond.

The poetic content (shloka) of a bandish can range from sacred and religious to profane and from secular to spiritual. The subject can vary from devotional and philosophical to eroticism and love, especially concerning the amorous exploits of Krishna and yearning of the milkmaids of Vrindavan. We also come across compositions describing the grandeur of nature and the immensity of the music itself.

These compositions are available in many languages as well as regional dialects prevalent across India: Rajasthani, Hardi, Bhoguri, Marwadi, Punjabi, Farsi, Urdu, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi and so on, thus encompassing pan-Indian expressions and ethos.

Creators of bandish

A composer (sargukar, nayak, rachanakar), as creator of both lyrics and/or melodic/rhythmic content, is a much-revered figure in the Indian tradition. Compositions are not relics of the past. They are handed down from one generation to the next through oral-aural tradition and therefore, they remain alive in a culture. In fact, performers strive to safeguard the treasure of compositions, and as a result, contemporary performance practices in Indian art music (both Hindustani and Carnatic) are replete with works that can be traced back to medieval poet-musicians. Often, there have been instances when bandishes are “gifted” or “traded” as if they were monetary assets. For instance, the story goes that when the legendary musician-composer of Atrauli, Mohohob Khan’s (Darus Pya) daughter was married to Faiyaz Khan, the doyen of the Agra gharana, the son-in-law received 500 compositions as dowry from the father-in-law.

No doubt, today we have a vast treasure of traditional compositions, and present-day performers seem to take pride in drawing upon the traditional compositions in order to lend credibility to their performance. Nevertheless, given the creative urge in every generation, new compositions are also written and adopted. Thus, the legacy is constantly enriched and continues to unfold as our priceless cultural heritage.

In July 2010, the NCPA launched an annual festival, Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Composers, showcasing iconic works of celebrated composers across genres in Indian music. In past editions of the festival, we have presented some memorable compositions of iconic like Tansen, Alladaya Khan, Kumar Gandharva, Boddinall Maharaj, Thyagaraja, Maththuvasi Dikshit, Khettryaya, Kabir, Surdas, Merebhai, Radharaman Thagor, Mirza Ghulab, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Jaidev, Naushad, Madan Mohan and such other luminaries, from pre-independence as well as post-independence eras.

This year, the 13th edition of the festival will feature works of several vocalist-composers: Amani Ali Khan, Amir Khan, Inayat Hussain Khan, Nissar Hussain Khan and Sudha Pohankar. In addition, there will be musical presentations of ghazals penned by illustrious wordsmiths, from ancient classic poets like Mirza Ghalib to contemporary poets like Gulzar. The grand finale will be a tribute to the legendary melody queen, Lata Mangeshkar.

Music Makers: Living Legends of Indian Classical Music

By Ashok Roy
Published by Rupa Publications India

Delve into the captivating world of Indian classical music through the pages of Ashok Roy’s book published in 2004. This publication is the result of a journey to 21 of the most revered and influential figures in this rich tradition of music. From the virtuosos Amjad Ali Khan and Zakir Hussain to the maestros Bhimsen Joshi, Bismillah Khan, Kishan Maharaj, M. Balamuralikrishna, Ram Narayan and Ravi Shankar, each musician’s remarkable journey is eloquently portrayed in this book.

An accomplished adman and artist, Roy combines evocative language and captivating visuals to encapsulate the essence of these musicians’ lives and their unparalleled contributions. The structure of the book includes a profile, followed by rare photographs and finally, an interview with each artiste. According to Roy, the individual musician, whether vocalist or instrumentalist, is the nucleus of Indian music. To explore and examine this essence of music, Roy delves into the very fabric of the country’s traditions, fables and culture. This book is indeed a love letter to Indian classical music, its magical spell and its charm and its makers.

In a country as vast and diverse as India, there are many more talented musicians who continue to enrich the tradition with their artistry, dedication and creativity. Their contributions have shaped the genre and inspired generations of musicians. Join the NCPA Library to explore books on these artistes from various genres and peruse out-of-print volumes and rare manuscripts.

The NCPA Reference Library is open to visitors from 10 am to 5.15 pm on weekdays. The reference library membership is complimentary for NCSPA Members and Friends of the SOI. The SOI (and IPI in the Stuart-Liff music library are available for reference to Friends of the SOI at no cost. The reference library membership is open to the general public at a nominal annual fee of $500/ ($40/March). Casual membership for visitors (outstation visitors only) is available at $100/ yr. For more information, please call 022-6622 3715.

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As artistes from the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble and the Chitrasena Dance Company prepare to present ĀHUTI at the NCPA, we speak to them about Kandyan, Odissi and the importance of cross-border collaborations.

By Akshaya Pillai

A Cultural Exchange

Fusion is a word that many artistes disown, even dread. It carries the weight of dilution, compromise and the fear of losing the essence of one’s art form in the process. The journey to document the successful decade-long collaboration between the Nrityagram Dance Ensemble from Bengaluru and the Chitrasena Dance Company from Sri Lanka begins with their mutual aversion to this word. This deliberate choice illustrates the grace with which they navigate the vast distance between them while respecting the centuries behind them.

“We like to call it a conversation where each dancer is always speaking in their own language and not necessarily fusing other languages with it. It is extremely important for dance forms to evolve and stay relevant. A collaboration will never endanger a form,” says Thaji Dias, principal dancer, Chitrasena Dance Company, adding that it depends on how one chooses to do it. She emphasises the importance of “the commitment of dancers to make time for exploring and understanding another dance tradition before working on a production. It also goes without saying that a dancer needs to be steeped in their tradition, so they have a firm sense of where their red lines are.”

The story of this fascinating interaction between Odissi and Kandyan began almost two decades ago, when the pioneers of the stage form of Kandyan dance, Chitrasena and his wife, Vajira, as well as their daughter and principal dancer, Upeka, visited Nrityagram in 2003. The encounter between these two dance powerhouses cultivated an enduring friendship that laid the foundation for the collaboration. It wasn’t until 2011 that it blossomed into a tangible project. Workshops were conducted to facilitate the learning of each other’s dance forms and rhythms, with artistes from both companies spending two weeks each month at Nrityagram, immersing themselves in a regimen of 12 to 14 hours of daily practice. This rigorous process involved creating dance sequences, setting rhythms and layering music to strike a profound conversation.

After 10 months of artistic exploration, their first collaborative production, Saṃhāra, came to life. Their second collaboration, ĀHUTI, which loosely translates to “offering”, is a cultural dialogue delivered through movement and music, which further pushes the boundaries of both dance styles. It premiered in 2019, and after a hiatus of three years, was revived with a new group of dancers. Over the years, the performance has evolved, with the ensemble growing and embracing new creative dimensions. The addition of an expressive invocation, such as Ravana’s Shiva-Thandhava Stothram, demonstrates the willingness of the ensembles to explore and expand their artistic vision.

Surupa Sen, the Artistic Director of Nrityagram, who is dedicated to expanding the vocabulary of Odissi, believes that India and Sri Lanka have a "This may be one of the most important and transformative cultural exchanges that has happened in our histories and one that has generated a genuine appreciation and understanding of each other’s historical, ritualistic and cultural identities"
rich, yet overlooked, common cultural history that dates back centuries. “This may be one of the most important and transformative cultural exchanges that has happened in a long time in our histories and one that has generated a genuine appreciation and understanding of each other’s historical, ritualistic and cultural identities. It was the way forward in healing the wounds of the world as only shared art can.”

***

In a collaboration of such magnitude, dancers navigate a complex web of roles and responsibilities. They are not mere performers, but also students, collaborators and much more. It is a demanding landscape that requires adaptability, versatility and a steadfast commitment to continuous growth and discovery. The challenges encountered while merging these diverse dance forms in turn become integral to their learning process. “A notable challenge was when we were trying to understand each other’s rhythm cycles,” says Dias. “In Kandyan, not all phrases or adavu complete the rhythm cycle and end on samam. But our rhythm composer, Guru Prasanna Rupatillake, managed to create new rhythms and add to the existing phrases and complete the rhythm cycles. The artistes also had to conduct their own research and learn and understand each other’s dance forms, music traditions and rhythm patterns. For the Kandyan dancers, it was challenging to dance to music, as ours is a percussive dance form and we don’t have a classical music tradition that’s associated with our form. The music did add another layer, helping us emote and give meaning to the movement, which helped bring the two forms together more seamlessly. There was never a moment in the production where we danced each other’s forms. We are very clear that this is not dance fusion, yet many said the two forms came together so beautifully that it almost looked like the masculine and feminine energy of the same form,” she says.

This delicate balance is at the heart of ĀHUTI, demonstrating that collaborations can serve as catalysts for the preservation as well as revitalisation of traditional dance, ensuring its relevance for future generations. In an ever-changing world, artistic expression must adapt to stay relevant and, as Dias puts it, “The new is merely an extension of the old. Even as we continue to experiment with the form, a lot of time and energy has been devoted to make sure we retain the essence of our dance form. We continue to work with our traditional gurus who are connected with the ritual aspect of the form as we innovate within the technique.”

The resulting expansion in the Kandyan vocabulary, Sen observes, was enriching and transformative in many ways. “Combining two culturally different languages of dance to tell one seamless story was a substantial challenge for the dancers and the choreographer,” she adds, underscoring the importance of pushing the boundaries of artistic expression.

Through the cross-pollination of ideas, dance forms can transcend their individual confines and find new avenues for creativity, ensuring their longevity in a dynamic artistic landscape. Can collaborative dance productions then become platforms for dialogue and understanding, promoting empathy and breaking down cultural divides? Can they inspire us to rethink traditional notions of competition and embrace a collective mindset where artistes uplift and support one another for the greater artistic good? Dias hopes that in addition to being moved by the production, the audience will be able to take away something from the nature of the collaboration. “It is not unique to showcase different dance forms in a production but the difference here is that we are not dancing at each other, in some dance-off. It is more like we are dancing for each and to each other, holding close our own dance tradition,” she adds.

Dance, as a universal language, has the power to transcend linguistic barriers. ĀHUTI becomes a microcosm of the broader potential for cross-cultural collaborations to encourage dialogue between diverse communities. The bond forged between the artistes of Nrityagram and the Chitrasena Dance Company over the past decade is testament to the enduring nature of their collaboration. Sen can recount many moments that bring back smiles. “The dancers and musicians constantly tease each other affectionately and playfully talk in each other’s languages, imitating sounds and gestures. They laugh helplessly when they say something that means a completely different thing in the other’s language. There is constant camaraderie in the practice space and green rooms that makes you realise that they actually function as one single company rather than people from two different countries,” she says.

Meanwhile, Nrityagram has become a home away from home for the Chitrasena dancers. Dias is at times surprised at how they have been there for each other on and off stage, through personal and professional crises or triumphs. “We have followed Nrityagram around the world, following their creative growth and journey as proud family and ardent fans. The dancers and musicians have forged their own friendships along the way as we toured together. There are long conversations on dance, music, films, dogs and life, and never-ending decisions on food. We have become ardent fans of khichdi for performance days. This collaboration has opened up new horizons for us, giving a new lease of life, especially through difficult times like the economic crisis Sri Lanka is going through right now,” she says.

In a world yearning for unity, it is collaborative dance productions, like ĀHUTI, that foster healing and understanding between communities by showcasing the beauty and universality of movement as a language of connection. ĀHUTI will be presented on 10th August at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre.
Ahuti

by Nrityagram Dance Ensemble and Chitrasena Dance Company

Supported by Deepak Fertilizers and Petrochemicals Corp. Ltd

Aug 10 | 6:30 pm
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, NCPA
The Art of Giving

How does one quantify the enrichment gained out of listening to a singer who channels decades of riyaz in one recital or of witnessing fingers take on a life of their own on the tabla? The ability to appreciate the value of culture, as history shows, has always rested with connoisseurs (from the French word connoître, to know). Patronage of the arts has changed hands down the centuries, what hasn’t changed is the connoisseurship of the patrons. The benevolent patronage received by the NCPA over decades has allowed it to curate annual festivals, foster educational and outreach initiatives, carry out technological upgradation, build assets, as well as create, from the ground up, the first-of-its-kind symphony orchestra in India, way ahead of its time and possibilities.

This month, we celebrate the support extended to the NCPA by its well-wishers and corporate guardians, without which the scope of the NCPA’s mission to preserve, promote and propagate the arts would not be what it is.

M. K. TATA TRUST

The M. K. Tata Trust is a Founder Donor of the NCPA. Piloo Tata, Chairperson and Managing Trustee of the M.K. Tata Trust, along with her son Jimmy Tata and daughter Veera Tata Choksey, both Trustees, and NCPA Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook, unveil the plaque in remembrance of M. K. Tata in 2017. Their keen support and generous donations have helped the NCPA establish itself as India’s premier cultural institution. Support from the trust has also enabled the acquisition of musical instruments for the SOI, most recently in the form of high-end violins.

HT PAREKH FOUNDATION

NCPA Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook and Deepak Parekh, then Chairman, HDFC, at the unveiling ceremony of the plaque celebrating the benevolent support of the HT Parekh Foundation, the philanthropic arm of HDFC, in March this year. The donation enabled the establishment of a Digital Studio Hub at the NCPA, equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual facilities. This further cemented the NCPA’s long-standing association with HDFC through their foundation that has supported our music education and dance outreach initiatives.

Citi

Citi has been committed to the preservation of the arts in the countries it has a presence in. In India, it has supported our cultural heritage for over 25 years. Of its various partnerships, Citi’s longest-standing association in India has been with the NCPA, with both the institutions sharing a common vision of nurturing India’s performing arts as part of an overall commitment to serve the community. Over a decade ago, the NCPA and Citi came together for two wonderful initiatives—the Western Music Programme, and the Guru-Shishya Programme—aimed at holistic education in music. As has the distinction of being the first and the longest patron of the SOI. Seen here is Ashu Khullar, Chief Executive Officer, Citi India and Regional Head for South Asia, at the plaque unveiling ceremony in 2019, celebrating this partnership.

JASUBHAI FOUNDATION

The SOI has counted industrialists Jasu Shah and Maulik Jasubhai from the Jasubhai Group among its earliest patrons. After Jasu Shah passed away, the baton of patronage shifted to his son, Maulik Jasubhai, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Jasubhai Foundation and the Honorary Consul General of Austria. The foundation has been active in promoting Indian and Western music and Gujarati art forms, supporting cultural exchange and providing an opportunity for young musicians in India. Their generous endowment to the NCPA led to the creation of the Music Appreciation and Training Centre at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre in 2007. The plaque honours their support.

THE BHOGILAL LEHERCHAND FOUNDATION

Nirmal Bhogilal at the unveiling, in 2015, of the plaque recognising the bounteous donation by the Bhogilal Leherchand Foundation to support the SOI in replenishing its musical assets and encouraging its endeavours as the first and only professional orchestra in the country. A member of the NCPA Council, Nirmal Bhogilal has been among the earliest believers in the idea of the Symphony Orchestra of India. In its initial days, he contributed handsomely to bridge the gap between dream and reality.

JSW FOUNDATION

Sangita Jindal, Chairperson of the JSW Foundation, unveils the plaque acknowledging their handsome donation to the NCPA in 2022, towards the promotion of the performing arts and culture of the country. As the social development wing of the JSW Group, the foundation has contributed substantially to the encouragement, education and support of art and sporting activities in India. Mrs. Jindal began her journey as a patron of the arts under the guidance of the NCPA’s founder Dr. Jamshed Bhabha when she started the Jindal Arts Creative Interaction Centre (JACIC) at the organisation in 1994.

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

The plaque, unveiled in 2006, honours the magnanimous support by the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) towards the NCPA’s Digital Studio. In the mid-2000s when the world was making a decided digital shift, the funds were instrumental in acquiring video cameras, a video switcher, a video recorder and advanced editing and mixing software for the studio.

30 • August 2023 NCPA
Noted for his glum figures and no-frill edifices, the great American painter continues to inspire contemporary artists chronicling urban life, changing cityscapes and interconnectedness between technology and isolation.

By Ornella D’Souza

On-screen ‘Chop Suey’ (1929)

‘Chop Suey’, which sold for close to $92 million in 2018, alludes to the emergence of Chinese restaurants in New York City, and the two women shown seated at one table is heraldic of the time when women began to ditch their male chaperones.

He wrote: “We all hope to defy Hopper’s terrifying vision of alienated, atomised individuals and instead survive as a community. But, ironically, we have to do that by staying apart and it may be cruelly dishonest—the empty propaganda of the virus war—to pretend everyone is perfectly OK at home.” Three days later, on 30th March 2020, Alex Greenberger of ARTnews wrote a counter argumentative piece with the headline: ‘No, We Are Not All Edward Hopper Paintings Now’. Greenberger said Hopper’s subjects seem isolated because of their modern-day lifestyles, whereas the pandemic has held us against our will. “We choose to simply try to stay alive in the world today and a pandemic that has so far killed more than 36,000 worldwide is keeping us captive. We are not all Edward Hopper paintings now. If only we were so lucky,” he reasoned.

The irony in the above art debate is that both the writers and the artist in question, despite belonging to two different eras, felt isolated by diverse modern-day ills. Hopper created these works during the Great Depression. But one cannot deny the resonance, which directly or indirectly spurred scores of artists to create solitary profiles or even self-portraits in quarantine, including noted Indian artists, like Atul Dodiya who created 366 watercolour portraits of solitary figures between 2020 and 2021.

Contemporary significance

Born in 1882 in Nyack, New York, Hopper began painting at a young age, but till his late 30s struggled to sell his paintings and worked as a freelance commercial illustrator, a skill he had trained in at the Correspondence School of Illustrating before enrolling in the New York School of Art in 1900. During the 1920s, his etchings sold his paintings and worked as a freelance commercial illustrator, a skill he had trained in at the Correspondence School of Illustrating before enrolling in the New York School of Art in 1900. During the 1920s, his etchings

In 16th March 2020, after the onset of the pandemic, a writer from New Orleans, Michael Tisserand, resurrected public interest in one of the greatest American painters of the 20th century—Edward Hopper, noted for his unique approach to Realism, and urban life and landscapes. He tweeted, ‘We are all Edward Hopper paintings now’ along with images of four of his paintings of individuals with vacuous faces, by themselves in seemingly large public spaces. A shop attendant checking bills, a man staring out of his top-floor apartment, a woman seated in an empty theatre, and people seated separately, akin to social-distancing, in a restaurant. This grid hit a nerve.

Art critic Jonathan Jones instantly reacted with an essay for The Guardian, with Tisserand’s affirmation as part of the headline: ‘We are all Edward Hopper paintings now’: is he the artist of the coronavirus age?

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be his manager. She did his paperwork, completed a few paintings, put up with his introverted ways, travelled with him to hotels and on public transport to paint. His career skyrocketed after meeting her, travelled with him to hotels and on public transport to study his co-passengers, look and wonder about their private lives. We get to analyse their homes and offices, and the places they frequent—theatre halls, diners and, in particular, corner shops. They often seem lost, lonely and unsure of the future. Hopper demonstrated this idea of feeling stuck with his sense of geometry—intersecting angles and planes—the use of both sunlight and incandescent lights to create demarcations that separate the outside from the inside and by putting his subjects into confined spaces. For every artificially lit ‘Nighthawks’, there is a slew of works that exalt the sun such as ‘Summertime’ (1943), ‘Morning Sun’ (1952) and ‘Summer in the City’ (1948). “Maybe I am not very human—what I wanted to do was to paint sunlight on the side of a house,” Hopper has famously said.

Critics feel that Hopper painted his subjects and his buildings in a similar fashion. The interconnectedness of flesh and concrete is visible in ‘Summertime’ in which a woman appears to be cut out from the building behind her, wearing a white dress that matches the concrete exterior and curtains, while her hair and skin matches the hollowed doorway. His urban landscapes were an attempt to preserve a slice of New York City before, during and after new waves of urbanity kept changing its landscape. ‘Chop Suey’ alludes to the emergence of Chinese restaurants in the city, and the two women shown seated at one table is heraldic of the time women began to ditch their male chaperones. It became Hopper’s most expensive work that sold for close to $92 million at a Christie’s auction in 2018. A similar assertion of power is shown in ‘Automat’ (1927) in which a woman is sitting alone at a table having a cup of coffee.

“An eerie silence can turn into companionable silence when the artist draws you into a scene, and you in turn begin to decipher the scene. That is the beautiful thing about art; its ability to feed us such patterns of paradoxes.”

 ordinary, but also in the contemporary. There was an uncompromising truthfulness, personal attachment and familiarity with his painted world. This ‘familiar world’ could be beauty or banality. An eerie silence can turn into companionable silence when the artist draws you into a scene, and you in turn begin to decipher the scene. That is the beautiful thing about art; its ability to feed us such patterns of paradoxes.

Adoration from India

Goa-based photographer Bharat Sikka produced his photographs as a series under Hopper spell. As per Sikka, the series involved chronicling masculinity of the older Indian male through profiles of his father, uncles and friends in their private quarters. In an interview published in The Art Journal, he has said: “…when I go back to my early photography, my biggest influence has been Edward Hopper; the painterly quality and the solitude, the light and the environment.”

As a critic, Nair says she can “never forget” seeing Hopper’s works in the ‘90s at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. “His perspective and compositional elements were brilliant. Be it a row of houses or two people sitting in a café … the narrative and the subject were both important. His colours had their own solidity, depth of strength. He chose subjects one normally doesn’t think about. I love ‘East Wind Over Weehawken’ (1934). One look at this vignette of houses, and you know the East wind is coming.” These painterly skills, observes Nair, boil down to the ‘artistic integrity’ back even when the masters sat down and sketched the familiar—streets, places, ordinary aspects of life.

In the pandemic, the pre-Covid paintings of retired photographer and self-taught artist Sudhir Patwardhan acquired newfound resonance for their distinct Hopper signatures. The kurta-pajama clad man in Patwardhan’s 2009 canvas ‘Inside (Window)’ shares the same vibe with the lady in Hopper’s ‘Morning Sun’, both peering out of windows at their respective worlds. Patwardhan’s paintings of Mumbai and Thane that combine sparse buildings, windows and loners, are redolent of Hopper’s portrayals of New York. Patwardhan was first introduced to Hopper in the ’70s through reproductions, and from the early ’80s, he began viewing the actual works on subsequent visits to Europe and the U.S. “I have seen ‘Nighthawks’ at The Art Institute of Chicago many times, and even caught a large Hopper retrospective at Whitney Museum of American Art some years ago,” he says.

Patwardhan admits to having tried Hopper’s process of artmaking in the late 80s. He would use public transport to study his co-passengers, look outside from the inside and even live and paint on the spot in hotels, cafés and other locations. “I like the slightly glum mood of his figures, I like his cityscapes and suburban landscapes. But his buildings have greater character. They have their own personality and speak to you,” says Patwardhan. “When artists moved to avant-garde art forms, Hopper boldly stuck to his basic preoccupations despite being perceived as unfashionable.”

Hopper – An American Love Story will be screened on 2nd August at the Godrej Dance Theatre.
A destiny came at a price. That liberty came at the platforms freighted with dead bodies. It was a for the promised freedom was accompanied by displaced and million others were dead. The outcry known in modern human history, millions were too small to meet the demand, the prevailing film from Lahore. Since the Pakistani film industry was 107 were produced in Bombay, 24 were from the a huge part of the film capital was severed by the blazed grounds. Bengal was impacted badly too, as haze, the Pakistani film industry had to rebuild from countries was colossally different. While Bombay in Pakistan. The effect of the Partition on the two countries, of families, of heritage and of art. The shared culture of stars in the vast skies,

The stained daylight, the daybreak battered by night,

Chale the yaar ki mil jaayegi kahin na kahin

Yeh woh seher to nahin, jis ki aarzoo lekar

The division of the subcontinent meant the division of families, of heritage and of art. The shared culture of the subcontinent was up for trade and artists were plagued by the dilemma of staying or leaving. The film industry of undivided India centred around Bombay, Lahore and Calcutta. After the Partition, Lahore was the only primary hub of film production in Pakistan. The effect of the Partition on the two countries was colossally different. While Bombay lost some of its finest artists and suffered a fleeting haze, the Pakistani film industry had to rebuild from blurred grounds. Bengali was impacted badly too, as a huge part of the film capital was severed by the formation of East Pakistan.

In 1946, a total of 144 films were released in the region that later became Pakistan. Of those, 107 were produced in Bombay, 24 were from the U.K. and U.S.A., four from Calcutta and only nine from Lahore. Since the Pakistani film industry was too small to meet the demand, the prevailing film exhibition system continued for some years after independence, until they were banned in 1965. When the time came, among the earliest migrants to Pakistan included filmmakers Nazir Ahmed Khan, Shaukat Hussain Rizvi and W.Z. Ahmed, music composers Gulam Haider, Feroz Nizami, Rashid Attre and silver screen stars including Noor Jehan, Swaroop Kapoor and Shamim Banday. Prominent figures who came to India from Lahore included actors Pran and Om Prakash, and filmmakers Dalsukh Pancholi and Roop Shorey, who owned the two main studios in Pakistan—Shorey Studios and Pancholi Pictures. Nasir Khan, Dilip Kumar’s younger brother, first chose to move to Lahore and went on to star in the first Pakistani film, Ten Yaad, opposite Asha Pawley. It was released in 1948 on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr. Unfortunately, it didn’t fare well. After a few more unfavourable stabs, he moved back to Bombay.

W.Z. Ahmed owned Shalimar Studios in Pune, famed for producing Ek Raat starring Prithviraj Kapoor, but he chose to leave. He was allotted the Regal Cinema in Lahore and made only two films, Roohi and Waadah. The former became the first film to be banned by the Film Censor Board of Pakistan. Ahmed’s Man ki Jeet, an adaptation of Thomas Hardy’s Tess of the d’Urbervilles, has the distinction of having lyrics penned by the renowned revolutionary poet Josh Malihabadi.

Remembered as Shayar-e-Inquilab, Malihabadi’s decision to come to Pakistan as late as 1956, was troubled by the shrinking scope for and growing aversion to Urdu in India. Jawaharlal Nehru, an admirer of the poet, tried to persuade him to stay but to no avail.

It was the 1942 hit, Khandaan, which brought Noor Jehan as well as director Shaukat Hussain Rizvi to Bombay. The two got married shortly after. But after the Partition, Noor Jehan refused to leave her place of birth, Lahore. Along with Rizvi, an avid supporter of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, she packed up her life in Bombay to move back to Pakistan in the wake of communal riots. They were crucial for the rejuvenation of Pakistani cinema as they created the Shahnaz Studios; rechristened and born out of the dilapidated Shalimar Studios. A disciple of Bade Gulam Ali Khan, ‘the melody queen’ went on to become the most celebrated singer in Pakistan as well as the first female director of the country with Chandni. Due to the state of film production in Lahore, it took Noor Jehan until 1951 to appear on the screens. Some of her most beloved songs have been in her native language of Punjabi, evident in films like Dupatta and Patey Khan, which were clashed in India.

An interesting account of oral history from the Partition Museum in Delhi unearths the tale of a meeting between Noor Jehan and Lata Mangeshkar, the greatest musical icons of two lands, near the border. Noor Jehan’s departure after the Partition has caused some scholars to wonder if it was her absence that aided in the seminal success of Mangeshkar. Across the border, Mangeshkar became the voice of the country with songs cutting across countless genres and languages. Noor Jehan, on the other hand, remained liyed down failed, moved from Urdu ghazals and Punjabi ballads. It is worth deliberating that while the Partition caused India to lose a stalwart, she too, endured its impediments.

The division was an obstructive nightmare for the Partition of the subcontinent meant the partition of its artistes. A look back at what we lost. By Aishwarya Bodke

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**Archiving Memories**

A conversation with Kishwar Desai, author, columnist and the moving force behind the recently inaugurated Partition Museum in Delhi, a custodian of memories of the Partition. By Aishwarya Bodke

The recently inaugurated Partition Museum in Delhi is the second memorial set up by The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust (TAACHT), after their undertaking in Amritsar in 2017. Housed in a restored library building on the Ambedkar University campus at Kashmiri Gate, it is home to countless memorabilia in the oral, visual and aural media to tell the stories of millions who crossed the border 76 years ago.

The museum has six galleries dedicated to the Partition and what preceded and followed it—Towards Independence and Partition, Migration, Refuge, Rebuilding Home, Rebuilding Relationships, and Hope and Courage.

History is the evidence we must preserve so that the horrors of the past are not repeated. That it took 70 years for the first Partition Museum to come up is telling of the wounds it left behind and perhaps also of the importance we accord to documentation and preservation of the past as a nation. To remember the Partition is to inherit it, for the only memory of history is archival.

We spoke to Kishwar Desai, author, columnist and Chairperson of TAACHT, about the museum’s resolve and the long journey of building the people’s archive.

**ON Stage (OS): Could you please elaborate on the vision for the Partition Museum?**

**Kishwar Desai:** When I set up a trust in 2015 to create a Partition museum, it was because there was no memorial or even a publicly displayed piece of art anywhere in the world that commemorated the Partition of India. It was shocking. Over 20 million people had been impacted by what was the world’s largest migration. And yet no one wanted to remember it as if the country had developed amnesia. People were uprooted overnight and suffered tremendous loss. Many were traumatised and had nowhere to express their collective anguish or narrate their experience. Other parts of the world have Holocaust museums, the Apartheid Museum and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, but we had nothing. I felt there was an imperative need to set up a museum dedicated to the Partition of India, where we could collect both tangible and intangible memories: oral histories, objects, art, documents, music and poetry. It was a race against time because many of those impacted by the Partition were already in the evening of their lives. The museum in Amritsar was set up in August 2017, 70 years after the Partition. It was our quest to build the world’s largest archive on the Partition. Both the museums were set up entirely through people’s contributions and through blood, sweat, tears, and no government funds.

There are scores of pages written about the politically charged time, but there is limited material on the experience of the people. Our vision was to change that. We have documents and photographs related to the Partition in every gallery from various archives, libraries, universities and private collections. The idea was to contextualise the raw suffering.

**OS: The experience of the Partition was collective, and at the same time, complex and diverse for different regions—Punjab, Bengal, Delhi, etc. How does the museum encapsulate the intricacies of the experience?**

**KD:** In addition to the regional disparity, the Partition was equally diverse and complex at the individual level. We have collected thousands of oral history accounts in the last seven years but no two narratives are the same. One could have made a whole museum based on one story. But we wanted to give a larger experience of the forced exodus, the loss of home, of becoming a refugee, of separation from loved ones, of rehabilitation. Within each of the 14 galleries in Amritsar, we have narratives from different regions, including Punjab, Bengal, Sindh and Assam, among others. The ‘Gallery of Migration’ also has a railway station, with luggage and objects scattered, as trains played an important role in the migration. But the gallery also has art, photographs and documents to provide a layered experience of what happened in different parts of the country.

We have created a slightly different narrative with a stronger focus on the capital in the Delhi Museum, with seven galleries linked through a compelling narration.

**OS: What significance does the library building hold as the home to the museum?**

**KD:** The Dara Shukoh Library Building is a rather unique aspect in that it is a historical building—like the Town Hall in Amritsar—and was thus a witness to the Partition. Old Delhi saw migration both inwards and outwards. Many of the surrounding monuments, such as the Purana Qila, Red Fort and Jama Masjid became refugee camps overnight, as did the schools and colleges. However, when we were asked to set up the Partition Museum in Delhi in 2019, I had second thoughts. Though we were being given the building under ‘Adopt A Heritage’, the building was in bad shape. It was leaking and full of mould. The gardens were littered and rooms strewn with dust, dirt and old books. There were snakes and termites. It took a very long time due to the pandemic, but the building was ultimately restored and we were able to begin work on the Museum.

**OS: Could you share some examples of art and artistes that suffered due to the Partition?**

**KD:** At the Amritsar museum, we have the ‘Gallery of Divisions’, which captures the destruction of culture through unnatural divisions. Not only was the army and the police divided but so was art, culture and music as artistes were forced to choose one country. Many gharanas were lost. The Dilli gharana and the Patiala gharana were divided. The Lahore Museum, which was the largest repository of culture, was divided. Indian cinema was divided. Many artists suffered the trauma of the Partition when the circumstances forced them to relocate. It was as though the soul of the nation had been ripped apart, and culture was completely vandalised. It is a loss that we are still trying to cope with.

**OS: Was there any ray of hope you came across in this grim story of the subcontinent?**

**KD:** I think the significance of the museum lies in telling the Partition story from the people’s perspective. The ‘Gallery of Hope and Courage’ in the Delhi museum, for instance, ends on a hopeful note. We have collected inspirational stories of people who helped each other and those who despite losing everything went on to become nation builders.
Even though Guru Dutt made only eight films, he is a revered figure in the world of cinema. Impulsive but thorough, short-tempered but empathetic, the man was a strange combination of the self-doubting artiste and the unparalleled genius.

By Vidhi Salla

When Raj Kapoor watched Kaagaz Ke Phool, he remarked the film had been made way ahead of its time; that the audience would not be able to understand it, but future generations will study it and take pride in this filmmaker. Kaagaz Ke Phool (1959), widely considered director, producer, actor Guru Dutt’s autobiographical film, was declared a flop when it released and ran for barely a week in some theatres. Much like a scene in the film in which the audience shouts angrily at director Suresh Sinha for making a terrible movie, Dutt was dissed by audiences and critics alike. A review that appeared in Filmindia magazine read, “Kaagaz Ke Phool is an utterly undistinguished picture except that it is made in Cinemascope. It is a depressing, incoherent tale boringly told.” The film’s colossal failure compelled Dutt to never add a director’s credit to any of his future films. It wasn’t the criticism but the failure of his audiences to understand him that dejected Dutt. Today, Kaagaz Ke Phool is considered a masterclass in filmmaking. The film was commercially released in France in the 1980s, has been screened at numerous international festivals since and is on the syllabus of several filmmaking courses around the world.

One of the many reasons why Dutt’s films are celebrated several decades after he made them was that in a world of make-believe, he never shied away from showing the bitter truths of human existence; the emotions and reactions of his characters mirrored the agony of the real world. Just like his films, he was born ahead of his times, battled depression and, according to some, alcoholism, and left the world too soon. His early training in dance, the formative years spent in Calcutta, the family’s financial hardships, his father’s discontentment with his writing career, the trauma of losing a brother in his childhood, marital problems— all of it influenced and shaped Dutt’s personality and reflected in his most personal works.

EARLY YEARS

The first of five children, Dutt was born on 9th July 1925 and given the name Vasanth Kumar Padukone. When Dutt was two, he had a severe fall resulting in a head injury and a fever that lasted two weeks. The family summoned a priest who suggested that his name be changed. The family decided to name him Gurudutt Padukone because he was born on a Thursday, a guruvaar. When he joined the film industry, he dropped his last name and called himself Guru Dutt.

The Padukone family endured severe financial struggles when Dutt was young and even lived separately in different places including Mangalore, Madras, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, finally settling in Calcutta where his father, Shivshankar Padukone, got a steady job. The artistic atmosphere of Calcutta and support from his mother Vasanthi Padukone’s cousin, painter B.B. Benegal, proved to be just the nurturing environment for the artiste in Dutt to flourish. He exhibited an early interest in the performing arts and obsessively attended jatras, musical theatre performed by wandering artistes who staged regular shows at an open space near the Padukone residence. It was in Calcutta that Dutt learned to speak Bengali and imbibed several mannerisms and Bengali influences that were evident in films like Pyasa (1957). His uncle’s painting, ‘Struggle for Existence’, of a half-clad man holding a snake coiled around his body so inspired Dutt that he choreographed a dance without any prior training or experience in the form. At the time, Uday Shankar was a celebrated name and his dance academy in Almora was known to have an unconventional all-round approach to artiste development. With help from his uncle, Dutt received a scholarship to go to the institute where he studied and toured with Shankar’s dance troupe for years. After Shankar’s company shut down, Dutt moved to Bombay where his family now lived. With the Second World War at its peak and no suitable work in sight, Benegal recommended Dutt to take up a job at Pune’s
Prabhat Studios as a choreographer. In addition to choreography, Dutt also worked as a directorial assistant and actor in some of Prabhat Studios’ films. It was here that he met his future pal, then struggling actor Dev Anand, and the two vowed to give each other work when either of them became famous. The end of Dutt’s contract with Prabhat Studios coincided with the partition of India. He was jobless, aimless and hopeless like many young people of the time. That year of desolation resulted in the birth of a story called ‘Kashmakash’ which years later became his masterpiece, Pyasa. Anand’s promise to Dutt materialised in 1951 when the latter made his directorial debut with Baazi under Navketan Films, marking the beginning of a promising career as a filmmaker.

**A JEWELLER’S EYE**

Among the many characteristics of Dutt’s films that earned him the title of auteur-director, perhaps the most important one was the lighting and camera angles. Together with his long-time collaborator and cameraman V. K. Murthy, Dutt has created frames that look like paintings; the most iconic of them being the wide shot in Kaagaz Ke Phool where a streak of light slices the otherwise dark studio room into two. Sinha and his muse, the actress Shanti (played by Waheeda Rehman), stand on either side of the light, interacting silently about the blows of circumstances on their relationship and the song ‘Waqt Ne Kiya Kya Haseen Sitam’, written by Kaifi Azmi, effectively expresses their emotions. Another memorable shot is in the film Pyaasa, when the protagonist, poet Vijay (also played by Dutt) assumed to be dead is shocked to witness the launch of his book and the posthumous honours being showered upon him. He sings in disbelief, ‘Yeh Duniya Agar Mil Bhi Jaaye Toh Kya Hai’ while standing in the frame of the auditorium door, his outstretched arms and the backlit frame creating a Christ-like silhouette while his face is dark; depicting the world’s adulation of the shadow of a person they created rather than the man himself. Close-up shots taken with a 100-mm lens in his films came to be known as ‘the Guru Dutt shot’. When Dutt passed away unexpectedly at the age of 39, cameraman Murthy lamented not only the loss of his mentor but also his own technique. He believed that Dutt had the “eye of a jeweller” and brought out the best in everyone that he worked with.

Another significant aspect of Dutt’s filmmaking was his skill for song picturisation. As much as he found them a distraction in the flow of the narrative, he believed that a song should not only express the emotions of the characters but also take the story forward. His songs were stories and scenes unto themselves, designed to retain the attention of audiences. A fine example is ‘Jaane Woh Kaise Log The’ from Pyaasa when aspiring poet Vijay, after being treated like a servant at his boss’s party, suddenly breaks into this poetic expression of people’s fickleness, stunning all the guests as well as the audience. A more playful number from Aar-Paar (1954), ‘Sun Sun Sun Sun Zaalima’, is picturised in a garage, the workspace of the protagonist, Kalu Birju. Despite the restrictions of space, the lovers’ playful banter is creatively framed by placing the camera inside the window of a car under repair as the actors move to the rhythm of the song. Dutt’s skill shows maturity in the song ‘Na Jao Saiyan Chhuda Ke Baiyan’ from Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam (1962). An inebriated Chhote Sarkar (played by Rehman), from visiting the courtesan by drawing his attention to her beauty by singing, ‘Yeh bikhri zulfain, ye khilita kajra, yeh mehki chunari, yeh mann ki madira’, only to resort to the devotion of a wife that so repels her husband, ‘Tumhare raste ki dhul lekar main maang apni sadaa bharoonga’, it elicits a literal yawn from him. Even though Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam was directed by Abrar Alvi, Dutt was called in to shoot and choreograph the song sequences.

**A BROKEN SOUL**

Dutt’s marriage to Geeta Dutt was a happy one until ego clashes and insecurities crept up between them, according to an interview with his sister and artist, Lalita Lajmi, that appeared in the August 2014 issue of Filmfare. His turbulent marriage combined with the failure of Kaagaz Ke Phool exacerbated his melancholic tendencies. Even though he made several successful films after that such as Chaudhvin Ka Chand (1960), Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam (1962) and Baharen Phir Bhi Aayengi (1966), he remained producer and never added a director’s credit to the films fearing that he was bad luck. Dutt was a sensitive soul prone to depression and had attempted suicide twice. He died alone in his Peddar Road flat on 10th October 1964 allegedly from a deliberate overdose of sleeping pills. Those who were close to him recalled in various interviews how he seemed off during that phase and was definitely feeling a sense of alienation despite having friends and family to check on him. He was known to never share his feelings or emotions with anyone.

An excerpt from his article called ‘Classics and Cash’ in Celluloid magazine is perhaps a window into how he felt as an artiste in the world: “In the formula-ridden film world of ours, one who ventures to go off the beaten track is condemned to the definition which Matthew Arnold used for Shelley: ‘an angel beating wings in a void’. I believe that one who goes out against the winds has to be prepared for bouquets and brickbats, for triumphs as well as heartbreaks, whether or not one only makes a classic or collects the cash. It is this baffling unpredictability that gives edge to the thrill of movie-making.”

Vidhi Salla is a journalist and film curator based in the U.S. where she regularly introduces Bollywood classics to foreign audiences. In July 2022, as part of the film programming for a non-profit called Halcyon Arts in Amherst, Massachusetts, she hosted a screening of Guru Dutt’s Pyasa for discerning audiences.
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As riyaz becomes a more solitary activity, the compact size and hardiness of the electronic version of the drone instrument is becoming more valued as a practice tool and on travel, sometimes even coexisting onstage with the acoustic tanpura.

By Lakshmi Anand

The Evolution of the Electronic Tanpura

shruti mata, laya pita’—the saying goes in the Carnatic tradition of music. So crucial is the baseline pitch for Indian classical music, whether Carnatic or Hindustani, bhajans or ghazals, dance and more. Consequently, the tanpura (or tambura in Carnatic parlance) has been integral to the arts. Many prominent Indian classical musicians were eased into the performing world strumming the tanpura for their gurus, a privilege usually reserved for only the most talented of disciples. From a vantage point on stage, but with the limelight trained just a few inches away, they obtain deep insight into the finer dynamics of live performances—the perfect training ground for their own concerts.

Handed down through generations, bestowers of a tanpura vet suitability of recipients painstakingly—his or her commitment to music and the quality of that music. No wonder then, that artistes are emotional about their tanpuras and the hallowed provenances they come with, ministering to them like flesh-and-blood children. When new tanpuras are commissioned, they are zealously fretted over and huge sums are invested because the buyer has a vision of its ideal tone—rich and seasoned—often only achievable, paradoxically, over time and use.

Traditional tanpuras, Miraj or Mysore, Thanjavur or Trivandrum, are as revered as ever now, but the electronic tanpura has nevertheless become ubiquitous. Several concerts today use both traditional and electronic tanpuras.

It was the very practical problem of not having a person to play the tanpura for his flute practice that made G. Raj Narayan, in 1971, make a gadget that produced sound akin to a reed-based shruti box. It was the beginning of Radel Electronics, the first mover in this area.

Flooded with requests for a tanpura version, Raj Narayan, an electronics engineer who trained at IIT Madras, demonstrated one in 1979 at The Music Academy, Madras, along with an electronic
talamer and shruti box. So fascinated was M. Balamuralikrishna with the electronic tanpura that he requested one immediately for his personal use. The celebrated Carnatic musician used it at many concerts sans traditional tanpuras—a revolutionary act then, bordering on sacrilege. This was the hand-made Saarang, for long the only electronic tanpura in the market.

More progress was made through automated processes with compact, mouldable plastic cases and multiple variations. In 1999, the first sampled sound-based tanpura—which synthesised sound from a recorded real tanpura—was produced. Never patented, Radel's ‘tanpura-in-a-box’ has many clones now, with Raagini Digital from Sound Labs being a popular competing product.

Parallelly, the gurukul system had begun to erode away and music became a more solitary activity. By removing the necessity for a second human and with a price that was a fraction of the real instrument, electronic tanpura manufacturers made practice-on-demand possible for everyone and eliminated major entry barriers for aspirants. As the music and musicians travelled globally, the compact size and hardness of the electronic versions became increasingly more valued even as airline luggage limits tightened. It was a seminal chapter indeed.

The next big leap occurred when Android and iOS opened their platforms to developers in 2008. To have a tanpura on the smartphone one already carried was incredibly convenient. Created by a Hindustani musician and computer scientist, Prasad Upasani of California, iTanpura, released in 2009, was possibly the first ever paid tanpura app. Using sampled sound from his own Miraj tanpuras, it took off at once in the U.S.

Among free apps, the Tanpura Droid is popular. Easy to use, it suffices for casual users and occasional singers. Bheema Pro is a paid app created by Mukunda Haveri of Bengaluru, a Digital Signal Processing engineer, who converted a Windows-based application to this app in 2013. Combining his detailed study of tanpuras with samples of one string recorded from his Miraj tanpuras, he developed detailed analysis models to extrapolate the other strings.

While all these versions of e-tanpuras use synthesised sound or sound extrapolated from samples of real tanpuras, the eSWAR app is different. All shrutis on it are real recordings of seasoned tanpuras belonging to veteran musicians, recorded from air-suspended mics, played by a professional and tuned to 440hz at a controlled 18-degree temperature. eSWAR offers Thanjavur and Miraj styles as separate paid apps.

The ideal tanpura strummer is expected to play the instrument with remarkable, non-trivial, monotonous, consistent spacing between strings and even pressure on them. Purely a drone instrument, there is no improvisation either, making it ideal for automation. The corollary explains why the electronic tabla is still, for the most part, used only in practice. Traditional tanpuras are affected by changes in temperature, humidity and the very act of strumming itself, necessitating intermittent re-tuning mid-concert. Additionally, the tanpura is usually strummed behind, or immediately adjacent to, the headliner artiste—making them inaudible to others onstage in today’s larger venues with more localised mics. The electronic tanpura is, thus, increasingly being used as a baseline to tune oneself and the instruments, including the traditional tanpura.

However, the creators of these electronic avatars have themselves only sought to mimic the instrument. The traditional tanpura cannot be perfectly replicated, they attest, with its multiple points of resonance, sheer size, the passive resonance of one string on others and the individuality in plucking that can change the tenor of the instrument. There is no substitute for the aura and ‘presence’ a traditional tanpura lends either. In a survey administered by this author to several performing Carnatic musicians, almost everyone indicated they preferred traditional tanpuras—though they appreciated the quick, readily tuned convenience of electronic tanpuras as a quick practice tool, for supplementary shruti and on travel. It appears that the traditional and the electronic will be co-existing for the foreseeable future.

The writer is a Kalpalata Fellow for Classical Music Writings for 2023. Her interests lie in music, food, travel and life-at-large. She blogs at lakshmianand.com
INSIDE THE MUSIC

DRUM WORKSHOP

BY
GINO BANKS

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moonshine
The August Revolution

In Insurgency and the Artist: The Art of the Freedom Struggle in India, historian Vinay Lal outlines the aim of the book: “to bring together in a single volume some of the most insightful artwork … which points to how artists in India responded to the freedom struggle and indeed helped in shaping it and imagining the nation.” We present an excerpt in which Lal analyses the ‘frenetic energy’ of the art created in and after 1942, when India was seeking immediate independence from the British and M.K. Gandhi had famously told Britain to leave India to God or to anarchy.

On 8th August, Gandhi delivered a speech before a gathering where he urged his countrymen and women to consider themselves free as of that very moment, and be prepared to follow their own conscience if the leaders were taken into custody, before enjoining them to follow this injunction: ‘Do or Die’. The Bombay-based artist Babuji Shilpi (1927–2016) was there to capture the frenetic energy of the moment. The crowd was very large, and some men positioned themselves atop trees to get a better view of Gandhi and the leaders seated behind him, male and female volunteers stood by to ensure some semblance of order. It is a sea of white khadi; but another mass of people can also be seen with umbrellas and banners sticking out with the usual slogans: Vande Mataram; Azadi; Inquilab; Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai; and so on.

The following day, on 9th August, in one fell swoop the government picked up Gandhi and nearly every senior Congress leader. Their arrests fuelled people’s rage. In December 1942, Babuji Shilpi took to the style found in palm-leaf manuscripts to depict the quick sequence of events in several frames (see image below). Viewed from the left, people are shown arriving into which thousands of Indians were recruited, engaged in carefully planned acts of sabotage, targeting communications and transportation networks. The mural executed in 1954 by Beohar Rammanohar Sinha (1929–2007), a Jabalpur-born artist who trained with Nandalal Bose and whose illustrations adorn the original manuscript of the Constitution of India, shows a broken railway line and downed electricity poles. The greater tension is produced by the resolute-constituents Congress followers as they advance upon policemen and armed soldiers with drawn rifles who have already felled one man to the ground. Though the communists opposed the Quit India movement, one of many such blunders on their part, Chittaprosad characteristically displayed an independence of judgement and realised the importance of the moment for the nation. His linocut on paper—a variation of the woodblock print—exaggerates the asymmetry that is at the heart of nearly every street rebellion, here positing state power against children and an armoured vehicle against an act of defiance by ‘little rebels’ inscribing in large letters the words ‘Quit India’ on a wall (see image above). The supine body of a child on the street separates the firepower of the military from the paintbrush of a boy, an iteration of the old opposition of the pen and the sword, but there is nothing in the print to suggest that the children can be deterred from the pursuit of their defiance. But Chittaprosad felt moved, even disturbed, by Gandhi’s arrest as well, and for the cover of the July 1943 issue of the journal of the All-India Students’ Federation, he sketched a procession of men and women carrying a massive banner bearing the words, ‘Release Gandhi’, behind which is visible a smaller banner on which are written the words, ‘Freedom Peace Progress’. Gandhi had been detained at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune and it is there that his personal secretary Mahadev Desai, as close to him as any of his sons, passed away just days after they were interned there—on 15th August, to be precise, five years short of Independence Day. Two years later, in 1944, Kasturba, to whom he had been married for over sixty years, died in his arms: the light had gone out of his life, to steal Nehru’s words. Gandhi’s sorrow was indescribable: a photograph shows him sitting in the corner of a room, consumed by grief.
If ten years ago someone wanted my definition of a true artiste or musician, my immediate response would have been: Someone who is loyal to music, and music alone, before anyone and anything. Someone who isn’t scared of starving or not living up to society’s expectations and whose patience for learning and serving their art can never be manipulated by the circumstances of life. This would have been my stern, unwavering answer. That is the kind of artiste I wished to be.

I must have miscalculated the privilege that allows one to forfeit all responsibilities to be a true artiste. I was told life would water me down and it did. The realisation dawned upon me that my innermost self had now mutated into two—one that aspired to be a ‘true artiste’ who serves only music, who creates with good intentions, who polishes the soul so the music doesn’t suffer and the other, who believes in achievements and accolades. It is rightly remarked that only the rich and the extremely poor can afford to be ‘true artistes. The rich can afford to lose while the poor have nothing to lose. I swing in between these worlds—I have something to lose and I can’t afford to lose it.

I think a major part of being an artiste involves moving between worlds, the hide-and-seek of ideologies, the fits of honesty, and all this, while decoding who you really are. Recently, during an interview someone asked me, “Do you think people like you because you are real?” I pondered for a while and then responded that I am able to show my real self with great effort. And that’s a part of my ‘act’ to bring forth my authentic self. There have been artistes who have been lost in the worship of their art to the point of erasing their existence but, at the same time, if we have heard their names that means they weren’t that lost after all.

An artiste needs her audience to thrive the same way people need good art to stop them from becoming dull and, more than anything, an artiste needs her own art to survive. Art can come to be in isolation, but it cannot thrive in isolation. Leonard Cohen was once asked if he thought of himself as a poet and he said, “I always thought that poetry is the verdict that others give to a certain kind of writing. So to call yourself a poet is a kind of dangerous description.”

It would be understandable if your work did not resonate with everyone, but it would be quite something else if it resonated with no one. You may create in isolation, but the moment your pen hits paper, your mouth announces the first sur, it becomes an act of sharing, for if not that, it would be content living within the mind or body. It is almost as if the artiste is saying that this ‘thing’, which sometimes is a gift and sometimes a burden, is given to me and brings me joy when recognised as the same by you.

But I often ask myself whether being a true artiste is a sign of the utmost strength or blissful ignorance. A true artiste in the age of medical bills? Of transportation and living costs? Of living in a world that has a uniform standard of what is success and what isn’t? I sometimes wonder if I overcame everything and just made art, how different it would be and how much for “myself” it would be. I think sometimes the only way would be to choose what you are ready to compromise on and what you are ready to uphold against all odds.

Artistes often say: concentrate on the music, the money will come eventually and maybe you or your children or theirs will be there to collect it. How does one reconcile with that? With the dualities within one’s artistic self and one’s practical self? How does art help navigate the practicalities of life? Today, and this might change tomorrow, my answer is this: you stretch yourself, you start belonging to different places and different spaces in your memory, you become the eccentric hobo with creative quirks. This can be risky. Or you become this person with a placid surface who has too much going on underneath and who can reconcile with their true self only through their art.

It has been said that art is beyond vanity, self-glorification or the need for approval. It is a way of communicating with the divine through the medium of true music. But I want to believe that even in the divinity surrounding true art, there is room for nuance. Sometimes it can be about something as trivial as gelling your hair to impress a woman or making sure the rent is paid on time.
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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

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In a new series, Jimmy Bilimoria discusses a work from the Stuart-Liff Collection he oversees at the NCPA. This month, he writes about Gaetano Donizetti’s Don Pasquale, the final comic opera by a man who loved to delight his audience.

Don Pasquale is a comic opera in three acts by Gaetano Donizetti which premiered in Paris in 1843 and had its Italian premiere later that year in Milan. It is a ‘romantic comedy’ with 19th-century values. The plot, set in Rome, revolves around Don Pasquale, who wants his nephew Ernesto to marry for convenience instead of love. Ernesto, however, is in love with Norina, a young widow. Dr. Malatesta, who is Pasquale’s friend, wants to help the lovers unite and hatches an elaborate plot with Norina to achieve this. He presents her as his sister to Pasquale, suggesting that they should marry each other. Once the contract of marriage is finalised, Norina is to harass Pasquale to such an extent, that he will eventually be relieved to be rid of her, even if it is to marry Ernesto. A veritable success when it premiered, the humour of Don Pasquale lies in the chicanery that Pasquale must endure and the metamorphosis of Norina from a shy, demure bride to a ‘virago’.

Don Pasquale is the quintessential old bachelor, old-fashioned, stingy, gullible but a good person. Dr. Malatesta is a man who lives by his wits. Ernesto and Norina are young, impulsive and willing to do anything to marry each other and even more to make sure Ernesto is not disinherited by Pasquale. Four characters and a story as old as time, yet Don Pasquale stands apart from the rest. Pasquale, defeated and tricked, is depicted as ridiculous and pathetic and is eventually deprived of his last illusion about life.

The music is exquisite—at times brilliant and at others playful, but also sentimental when it needs to be so. All is perfect in Don Pasquale from the famous overture with its serenade theme to the final admonishment against marrying at an old age. In between are gems like the Norina-Malatesta duet in the first act, the squabble between Pasquale and Norina in the second and in the famous third act, the secret meeting of Pasquale and Malatesta, and Ernesto’s serenade, ‘Com’è gentil’.

In Norina’s entrance aria, set to an irresistible dance tune, she laughs at sentimental tales and asserts her own ability to stimulate love. The humour is captivatingly revealed in the aforementioned duet, as is sympathy when Norina feels sorry for the slap she gave Pasquale. It is Norina’s capacity for tenderness that keeps her sense of humour within the bounds of good taste; and that good taste is found everywhere in the music. It is said that Donizetti composed the opera in a very short time—in about two weeks. The whole action is carried by the four principals. The chorus has one moment of prominence in the last act and then appears as background for Ernesto’s serenade. The overture is mainly concerned with Ernesto’s serenade from the last act and Norina’s aria from the first.

The time at which Donizetti wrote this was a very difficult period in his life. Almost 50 years old, he was at the height of his fame but suffering from a series of deaths in the family and exhausted from his journeys between Vienna, Paris and Italy. This, in addition to working long hours every day, eventually took a toll on him. The composer said farewell to comic opera with this work.

Together with The Barber of Seville and Falstaff, Don Pasquale forms the great Italian comic opera triad of the 19th century. It is a triad of great vitality which still dominates the world’s opera houses.

To bring out the flavour of this opera, we have in our collection a true interpretation of the characters involved headed by a master singer, Tito Schipa, accompanied by Ernesto Badini, Afro Poli and Adelaide Saraceni. The opera has been conducted by Carlo Sabajno, who was among the prominent conductors of the time.

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.
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

AUTUMN 2023 SEASON

ZANE DALAL
conductor
MARAT BISENGALIEV
violin

- ROSSINI Semiramide Overture
- KHACHATURIAN Violin Concerto
- TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No. 6
  - 10 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 5:00 PM

RICHARD FARNES
conductor
PAVEL KOLESNIKOV
piano

- WILLIAMS Imperial March from Star Wars
- BRAHMS Piano Concerto No. 2
- WAGNER Parsifal Suite (arr. Gourlay)
  - 15 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM

ALPESH CHAUHAN
conductor
STEVEN ISSERLIS
cello

- STRAUSS Rosenkavalier Suite
- SCHUMANN Cello Concerto
- STRAVINSKY Petrushka (1947)
  - 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7:00 PM

ALPESH CHAUHAN
conductor
ZAKIR HUSSAIN
tabla

- 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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An overview of ongoing and upcoming arts festivals from around the world.

By Neelakshi Singh

**Venice International Film Festival**

The impressive roster of films to be screened at this year's Venice International Film Festival serves as testament to the influence and repute of the biennale in the Western film industry. For its monumental 80th anniversary edition, the festival will open with the world premiere of the highly anticipated film, *Challengers*, directed by Luca Guadagnino and starring Zendaya, Josh O'Connor and Mike Faist in the Sala Grande at the Palazzo del Cinema. The festival has long served as a platform for auteurs including Pedro Almodóvar, Darren Aronofsky, Valeria Golino, Joanna Hogg and many others. Directors Damien Chazelle and Alice Diop, who have both competed in previous editions of the festival, will serve on this year's jury. The festival will be held from 30th August to 9th September in its designated destination of the Venice Lido.

For more information, please visit www.labiennale.org/en/cinema/2023

**Festival d’Automne à Paris**

When the city of Paris begins to don the crisp colours of autumn, it is also gearing up to celebrate the Festival d’Automne. Since its inception in 1972, the multidisciplinary festival's annual offerings that transcend regional borders garner around 250,000 spectators. The 2023 edition, from September to January next year, promises to go bigger and broader in its approach than before. An itinerary of 82 performances playing across 60 venues in the region includes an eclectic presentation of dance, music, theatre, visual arts and cinema. In the Portraits series this year, which extends over a full season and follows the careers of select artistes and/or ensembles by presenting a range of their works, the featured artistes include dancer and choreographer Trajal Harrell and the composer Pierre-Yves Macé. Keynote conversations with filmmaker Alice Diop and activist Angela Davis are among the other highlights. Building on the festival's philosophy of promoting inclusivity through art, this season also sees careful curation of made-to-measure meetings, circuits and artistic workshops for the Paris public health system’s caregivers and patients, as well as non-profit associations. For more information, please visit www.festival-automne.com

**George Enescu International Festival**

Every year since 1958, Romania has been celebrating the life and legacy of one of the greatest composers to exist in its history through the George Enescu International Festival. Over the decades, the festival has moved past the conception of a mere memorial concert to become a celebratory tribute to Romanian culture and a prominent phenomenon in the realm of classical music. From 27th August to 24th September this year, the festival will witness the attendance of 3,500 guest artistes, 150 soloists, 40 conductors and over 40 orchestras from 16 countries and 11 from Romania. Numerous operas in concert, orchestral performances and educational concerts will honour the music and spirit of George Enescu. Exploring the theme of “Generosity through Music”, a value said to be of great importance to Enescu, luminaries like conductors Simon Rattle, Zubin Mehta, pianist Yuja Wang and violinists Renaud Capuçon and Janine Jansen will return to the festival as dedicated veterans.

Mehta, the festival’s Honorary Chairman, will be conducting the Symphony Orchestra of India at the NCPA on 19th and 21st August 2023. For more information, please visit www.festivalenescu.ro

**Frieze Seoul**

From the company behind eminent art fairs like the Frieze Art Fair (London) and Frieze New York, Frieze Seoul arrives as the latest artistic venture to explore the creative spirit and leading voices from one of the fastest emerging cultural capitals of the world. The second edition of the festival, from 6th to 9th September, will take place in the Gangnam district in the heart of Seoul. Over 120 influential art galleries from across Asia and beyond will offer their perspectives on modern art. Frieze Masters, a section that offers a contemporary spin on art history, will return this year under the leadership of director Nathan Clements-Gillespie. Focus Asia, the section of the fair dedicated to galleries aged 12 years or younger, will feature themes like colonialism, death, truth and friendship from emerging artists Soojung Jung, Rondi Park, Woo Hannah, Priyageetha Dia and many more. For more information, please visit www.frieze.com
Vail Dance Festival
The Vail Dance Festival gets its name from the Vail Valley in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, USA, and its worldwide repute, thanks to the efforts of artistes like ballet dancer Sophia Golovkina and patrons including Betty Ford. The festival is known not only for its leisure activities in nature, but also its work in fostering new talent from across the world. Since becoming the festival’s artistic director in 2006, Damian Woetzel has commissioned over 100 new pieces. The 35th anniversary of this dance festival is being celebrated from 28th July to 7th August through elaborate line-ups and new commissions. The 12 listed performances include works by the Martha Graham Dance Company, L.A. Dance Project, Music From The Sole, BalletX, American Ballet Theatre, the Royal Danish Ballet and more. Adji Cissoko of Alonzo King LINES Ballet, who has also performed at the festival’s 2018 and 2019 seasons, is the 2023 Artist-In-Residence. For more information, please visit vaildance.org

Graham100
The year 2026 will mark a century since dancer and choreographer Martha Graham started her dance company and school out of a small Carnegie Hall studio in Manhattan, New York. The eponymous company went on to become one of the most illustrious and eminent performing arts institutions in the world, and the oldest school of dance surviving in America. From September 2023 to 2026, the Martha Graham Dance Company will present Graham100—The First and The Future, a three-season-long centennial anniversary celebration of its founder and her legacy. The company will present three New York City seasons and tour internationally, showcasing Graham’s impact on modern American dance through her seminal works along with performances by renowned contemporary choreographers. A growing list of developments on the celebration’s calendar includes a PBS documentary, a photography book, an exhibition at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, new recordings of the great scores written for Graham, an annual opera collaboration, a training programme and creative partnerships with professional companies and universities worldwide. For more information, please visit marthagraham.org

Squaring the Circle
Serving as a prelude to the upcoming second edition of the Indian Ceramics Triennale 2024 - Common Ground, Squaring the Circle is a ceramic exhibition running from 24th June to 27th August at Arthshila Santiniketan in Delhi. It showcases answers to the curatorial prompt posed to the participants of the first Indian Ceramics Triennale - Breaking Ground, in 2018. Squaring the Circle resonates with clay artists who are known to embrace the impossible and unpredictable in their practice. The exhibition, which will feature compositions by 35 Indian and international ceramic artists, has been organised by artists Reyaz Badaruddin and Madhvi Subrahmanian. For more information, please visit www.arthshila.org/santiniketan
Kaleidoscope

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

Reaching new heights
Comedian, writer and actor Vir Das will take the stage at the Isaac Stern Auditorium, one of three iconic venues housed by the Carnegie Hall, New York, as part of his Mind Fool Tour on 19th January 2024. This makes Das a part of the league of Indian artistes who have performed at the historic venue that introduced Tchaikovsky’s talents to America. These include musical legends like Zakir Hussain, M. Balamuralikrishna and Ravi Shankar. Being among the highest-selling English stand-up comics in India, Das has also performed several shows under multiple banners at the NCPA—On the Pot in 2017, Vir Das Christmas Marathon in 2018 and Vir Das: Wanted in 2022 and remains the first and only personality to host ten consecutive gigs at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre. He has also expressed his attachment towards performing live at the JBT and Tata Theatre and refers to the NCPA as India’s principal performing arts venue. For more information, please visit www.virdas.in

Throwback with a twist
Last year, news about NEON Studios acquiring the U.S. distribution rights to South Korean filmmaker Park Chan-wook’s 2003 cult classic Oldboy had incited murmurs of excitement amongst film enthusiasts and industry professionals alike. The deal has transpired into a theatrical re-release of the film, restored and remastered in 4K HDR as supervised by Chan-wook himself. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of what is widely regarded as one of Korean cinema’s transgressive masterpieces, the theatrical run will offer audiences a new perspective on the vengeful action thriller about a man who is held prisoner by an unknown captor for 15 years. In the past, Chan-wook has commented on the numerous rounds of censorship the film had to go through to receive a television release and the role Oldboy played in his eventual blacklisting by the South Korean government. The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2003, winning that year’s Grand Prix, the second-highest honour at Cannes. For more information, please visit www.neonrated.com

Due recognition
Nalini Malani, the trailblazing video artist at the forefront of the digital revolution in India, has been awarded Japan’s Kyoto Prize, which comes with a diploma, a Kyoto Prize medal and prize money of 100 million yen (approximately $700,000). Established in 1984, the Kyoto Prize in Arts and Philosophy is awarded annually by the Inamori Foundation for lifetime achievement in the field. The foundation in a statement announcing this year’s laureates recognised Malani’s contribution to the decentralisation of art from the Western world, and her efforts to represent the “voices of the voiceless” through approachable art forms. Her own experience with the partition of India and Pakistan, and the millions of stories attached to the tragedy, have been a recurring motif in her work. One of Malani’s early experiments with video have also found a home at the NCPA. The Job, a multimedia theatrical interpretation of Bertolt Brecht’s short story of the same name, was a collaborative production with Anuradha Kapur performed at the Experimental Theatre in 1996. For more information, please visit www.kyotoprize.org

Fortune strikes
A quest for the ‘wonder of life’ found choreographers Roni Haver and Guy Weizman in the mad city of Mumbai in 2022. Fortune, a collaboration between Netherlands-based dance company Club Guy & Roni and Mumbai-based Navdhara India Dance Theatre by Ashley Lobo, was performed at Julidans last month, an international dance festival in Amsterdam that we covered in the Festive Bulletin in our June issue. A confluence of cultures and the celebration of diverse fates come together in this energetic blend of Kathak, contemporary dance and Bollywood Beats, which also features musical contributions from percussion group Slagwerk Den Haag and composers from the slums of Dharavi. Since October 2022, Fortune has seen immense appreciation from critics and audiences in Europe and is getting ready for a German tour after Julidans. The success of this particular production proves to be special, with its proximity to home and the authenticity of its depiction of the theme. The NCPA was one of the key entities involved in the prologue of this story, serving as backdrop for First Encounter, the first-ever exchange between the dance companies which was presented at the Experimental Theatre in July 2022. Audiences were privy to the excerpts of what would later become Fortune.

- Neelakshi Singh
The Music of Marathi Theatre

ON Stage brings you edited excerpts from the NCPA Quarterly Journal, an unsurpassed literary archive that ran from 1972 to 1988 and featured authoritative and wide-ranging articles. In the first instalment of a two-part series, V. R. Athavale provides a historical account of Marathi stage music.

The inception of Marathi stage music coincides with the birth of Marathi drama. The origins of Marathi drama are usually traced to Vishnudas Shave's SitaSwayamvara (1843), which was in the style of a Pauranic akhyana. Recent investigations trace the origins to 1818 and consider Goa as the birthplace of Marathi drama. Without entering into this controversy of dates, one can safely state that Marathi drama has been accompanied by stage music, which included songs that captured the imagination of spectators, for more than a century. The creative efforts of actor-singers and directors have contributed to various changes in the development and style of presentation of stage music. A study of such transformations and of the response they evoked from audiences will help us to understand how stage music gained acceptance and also suggest the line of development that is likely to evolve in the future.

Stage music is essentially music used in relation to a dramatic performance. It is not rigorously classical in style, nor is it in the nature of mere recitation. An akhyana was introduced in the later half of the kirtana to illustrate the first and expository part. The akhyana was replete with dramatic and musical elements. The kirtana was, in fact, like a one-man stage musical. Perhaps the convention influenced Shave to place the entire responsibility of music on the sustrada. The sustrada's style thus came to be patterned on notes instead of the theatrical strains of the kirtana. It is interesting to note in Balkrishnabawa lalkhandarkar's biography that he, too, was a part of the kirtana tradition, and that he had played the role of the sustrada in the Pauranic akhyanas of the Amarchand Wadikar troupe before he left for Gwalior to embark on a serious study of classical music.

That the part of the sustrada was played by those who had imbibed the kirtanka tradition is evident from the background of those who took part in the Pauranic plays of the time. The kirtanka's range extended from the classical dhrupad style to folk music. Since his audience embraced a wide stratum, the strictly classical elements of the dhrupad and the recitative aspect of folk forms (such as the savi, dandi, etc.) receded into the background. They were replaced by a more attractive style in a 'light' (lalit) vein. The musical charm of the lavani and the thumri, the pace of the vigorous tappas with its whirling tanz-patterns were appropriated by the kirtankaras. For example, a prominent kirtanka, Narrayanwada Gogte, studied the tappa style from his father Devajibawa (who in turn had imbibed it from Devajibawa of Dhar and made it popular in Maharashtra even before the advent of the khyal here). Narrayanwada's style had such a strong impact that until 1880, this lavani-thumri singing style, based on the tappa, was adopted by the kirtankaras and sustradas of Pauranic plays.

Sangeeta Shaktuntala (1880) and after

The next phase in stage music begins with Kirlloskar's Sangeeta Shaktuntala, and the style remained in vogue for nearly 25 years. The satriadhruva's singing style (which had its origins in the kirtanka tradition) was adopted for a certain degree of monotonony. Besides, the satriadhruva's music had been blended with the acting styles of the other forms, so perhaps directors liked these actors to resort to music and thus add some verve to a performance. But there was a dearth of actor-singers who could take part in Sangeeta Purjatata and other plays. In Maharashtra, efforts in this direction had to be abandoned in the previous decades mainly because good actor-singers were not available in sufficient numbers. But Kirlloskar, who could count on the support of two good actor-singers, Balboka Natekar and Moroba Waghlokhar, initiated a change in the conventional pattern. A little later he was fortunate enough to enlist in his troupe an exceptionally talented actor-singer, Bhaurao Kolhatkar. As a result, the Kirlloskar Sangeeta Mandali's dominance in the sphere of stage music continued for 25 years.

Natekar was a proficient singer. Waghlokhar (owing to his kirtanka background) had a powerful voice; he had also spent some years with a lavani troupe, imbuing that style of music. Kirlloskar's own connections with Karnataka prompted him to include some attractive melodies based on the Carnatic style in the music of Sangeeta Shaktuntala. But these were transformed onto stage music in the general Haridas kirtana style of singing and almost nothing was left of the Carnatic mode of presentation.

A characteristic feature of the music of this play was the prominence it gave to words. The tans, khutkas, murkis were not patterned on notes but intended to stress poetic essence and word arrangement. This was insisted upon at the time of rehearsals on the suggestion of connoisseurs like Kerunana Chhatre. Natekar, being primarily a musician, tended to emphasise the note-structure, which provoked criticism from the press. Later when Bhaurao Kolhatkar joined the group, the music for Sangeeta Soubhadra was conceived with his talent in mind. Kolhatkar, too, came from a kirtanka background, and he also had a strong interest in the lavani form. He had the additional advantage of being acquainted with prominent musicians from Baroda. Besides, he was gifted with a powerful voice and a keen musical imagination. Sangeeta Soubhadra incorporated padas based on classical ragas; it had Haridas 1880, when Kirlloskar arrived on the theatre scene. In Kirlloskar's biography there is a reference to the inspiration he derived from Wajid Ali Shah's production of Indira Subha in which accomplished musicians and dancers of the Lucknow court participated to make the performance a success. Kirlloskar was also acquainted with the musical tradition of Karnataka where several actor-singers used to take part in Sangeeta Purjatata and other plays. In Maharashtra, efforts in this direction had to be abandoned in the previous decades mainly because good actor-singers were not available in sufficient numbers. But Kirlloskar, who could count on the support of two good actor-singers, Balboka Natekar and Moroba Waghlokhar, initiated a change in the conventional pattern. A little later he was fortunate enough to enlist in his troupe an exceptionally talented actor-singer, Bhaurao Kolhatkar. As a result, the Kirlloskar Sangeeta Mandali's dominance in the sphere of stage music continued for 25 years.

Natekar was a proficient singer. Waghlokhar (owing to his kirtanka background) had a powerful voice; he had also spent some years with a lavani troupe, imbuing that style of music. Kirlloskar's own connections with Karnataka prompted him to include some attractive melodies based on the Carnatic style in the music of Sangeeta Shaktuntala. But these were transformed onto stage music in the general Haridas kirtana style of singing and almost nothing was left of the Carnatic mode of presentation.

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His presentation left such a strong impact that it came to be equated with the style of stage music.

A new factor appeared when Shiripad Krishna Kolhatkar tried to introduce tunes on the lines of the music in Urdu plays. But these tunes did not strike root here. There was some novelty in this undertaking, but the style of presentation remained essentially that of Bhaurao.

In Annasheb Kirloskar’s biography there is a reference to the inspiration he derived from Wajid Ali Shah’s production of Inder Sabha in which accomplished musicians and dancers of the Lucknow court participated to make the performance a success.

At this time, a new element was noticeable. Actors turned more and more to swara-based music, relinquishing the claims of the word: Bhaurao’s earlier style of presentation was restrained and balanced but later he too was tempted to opt for swara-based music. The accompanists now sat in front, facing the stage and the actor-singers tried to seek audience approval through dazzling tans. The base was undoubtedly Haridasi music. But whether it was a folk form like the dindi or saki, or a pada in the Carnatic vein, or a melody on the lines of the songs of the Urdu stage or a song based on a classical raga, the style of presentation increasingly relied on swift tans derived from the tappa mode and sung at a high pitch. Audiences, too, soon came under the spell of the swara-oriented style adopted by the actor-singers.

Kolhatkar died in 1901 but the influence of the style survived for yet another decade. Krishnarao Gore, Nanasaheb Joglekar, Dattopant Halyalkar were wholly under the sway of the style adopted by Bhaurao in the later phase of his career.

One of the negative features of this period was that actor-singers, eager to display their virtuosity, began to have a say in the choice of tunes. As a result, that balancing factor which determined the use of appropriate music for a play and its particular needs was forgotten. Instead, tunes were devised to suit the requirements of talented actor-singers. As Govindrao Tembe puts it in his Jeevana Vyasanga, “a marsh of tans grew around rock-like words.”

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

Vijaya Mehta’s Shakuntala

The Marathi version of Kalidasa’s Shakuntala, produced by the Goa Hindu Association and directed by Vijaya Mehta, was presented at the Tata Theatre on 12th October 1980, the second day of its inaugural festival. The scenic design was based on the concepts of Bharata’s Natyashastra. The scenery remained unchanged through the two hours of the play but, as the play progressed, it became elastic and fluid, denoting at times a shady tree or a pillar or a chariot. The illusion of a chariot chase through the forest, or the king’s journey across the sky came alive with varied rhythms and simple lyrical melodies, played and sung by the musicians, to which the actors lent their bodies with grace of movement. The play, with action in all parts of the semi-circular stage and variation in the pitch, strength and colour of sound, proved to be a very good test for the acoustics of the auditorium. Those who believed that sound perspective could only be achieved by placement and control of microphones were surprised to find that none were used, and there were many who felt that the Tata Theatre was the best venue for such a play. The standing ovation at the end of the performance overwhelmed the cast.

This is an extract from a piece originally published in the October 2019 issue of ON Stage.
**WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC**

**Talks on Western Classical Music**
Little Theatre  
Tuesday, 1st – 6.00 pm  
and  
Stuart-Liff Collection Library  
Friday, 4th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 (Titan)

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

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

Ahead of the Symphony Orchestra of India’s performance of Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No.1, under the baton of Maestro Zubin Mehta later this month, Dr Bilimoria’s first set of talks in August will feature this noted work of Mahler also called the Titan. It is a symphonic poem inspired by Jean Paul’s novel of the same name, where the protagonist strives to lead a life with nobility, passion and heroism—ideals Mahler greatly identified with. He conducted more performances of this symphony than of any of his other works.

Happy listening!

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

**SCREENING**

**Hopper – An American Love Story**

Exhibition on Screen  
(Approx - 90 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre  
Wednesday, 2nd – 6.30 pm

An NCPA-Seventh Art Productions (UK) Presentation

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

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

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

Written & directed by Phil Grabsky  
Music by Simon Farmer

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

**FILM**

**Short Film Corner**

Short Film Screenings  
Little Theatre  
Wednesday, 2nd – 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.

**The Complaint**

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(10 mins)

In fond memory of Major Uday Singh, Sena Medal, Shaurya Chakra. Harish Singh, a retired bank manager from Allahabad, is carrying an emotional scar that makes him sceptical of the Muslim community. But when a Muslim engineer comes to fix the old man’s laptop, something happens that proves to him that humanity is
beyond hatred. The army officer part of the plot of this film is a real-life martyr who sacrificed his life for the nation.

Directed by Mrinal Bahukhandi

**Miniaturist of Junagadh**
Hindi and Urdu Film with English Subtitles (30 mins)

1947. Junagadh. Kishorilal plans to buy the ancestral home of Husyn Naqqash, a blind miniaturist, who is forced to migrate with his family to Pakistan, for a pittance. When Kishorilal learns Husyn is in possession of a rare miniature collection, he schemes to get hold of it along with the house. But there is a secret that Husyn’s family is holding back, not only from Kishorilal but also from Husyn.

Screenplay & direction by Kaushal Oza

**Vaishnav Jan Toh...**
Hindi Film with English Subtitles (11 mins)

Set in 1944, against the backdrop of Mahatma Gandhi’s visit to a village, *Vaishnav Jan Toh...* is the story of a mother who faces a crisis as her faith in Gandhi’s message is put to the test. Winner of the National Award for the Best Debut Director of a Short Film, *Vaishnav Jan Toh...* won three other international best film awards, apart from multiple film festival screenings.

Screenplay & direction by Kaushal Oza

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

**DANCE**

**August Dance Residency 2023**
3rd to 5th August

An NCPA Presentation

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

Smriti-Patham
by Shanta & VP Dhananjayan and group
Jamsheed Bhabha Theatre
Thursday, 3rd – 6.30 pm

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

The Padma Bhushan awardees, better known as the Dhananjayans, are international celebrities with almost six decades in the field of Bharatanatyam. Their academy is a testimony to the art and culture of Bharatanatyam. Having also trained in Kathakali, the couple has been instrumental in the propagation and preservation of India’s art and culture with their exemplary performances all over the world.

Smriti-Patham traces their contribution to the world of art through a narrative presentation that will enthral audiences with excerpts from their iconic choreographies that cover five decades of their work.

The presentation is a 90-minute experience in ekahaarya lasyam (a single costume) that ignites the challenge of the Aangika and Vaachika abhinaya.

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

Box Office now open

**Workshop – ‘Abhyaasa Saala’**
by Shanta & VP Dhananjayan of Bharata Kalanjali
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 4th & Saturday, 5th – 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

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

Fees: ₹1,500/-
For registration, please call: 8879114939 / 8879313834
Email: mdsouza@ncpamumbai.com / ashetty@ncpamumbai.com

**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC**

**Movies Under the Stars**

**Brief Encounter (1945)**
Film Screening
(B&W – 86 mins)
Little Theatre
Friday, 4th – 6.30 pm
An NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation Presentation

The 1945 British drama pivots on the subject of forbidden love against the strictures of suburban British life. The film, based on Noël Coward’s play Still Life, was one of director David Lean’s first great successes. The protagonist is Laura (Celia Johnson), a married woman with children, whose conventional life becomes increasingly complicated after a chance meeting at a railway station with a married stranger (Trevor Howard) with whom she subsequently falls in love. With its evocatively fog-shrouded settings, swooning Rachmaninoff score and remarkable performances (Johnson was nominated for an Oscar), Lean’s emotionally fraught film explores with great sensitivity the thrill, pain and tenderness of an illicit romance and carefully handles the rising tension over whether the relationship would turn physical.

Brief Encounter has influenced many a cinematic brief encounter since its release.

Director: David Lean
Screenplay: Noël Coward
Cinematography: Robert Krasker
Cast: Celia Johnson, Trevor Howard, Stanley Holloway & Joyce Carey

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

INDIAN MUSIC

NCPA-HSBC Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Composers
Tata Theatre
Friday, 4th to Sunday, 6th – 6.30 pm

Supported by HSBC India

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

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

4th August
Ajay Pohankar
Rashid Khan

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

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

Tickets:
₹900, 720 & 540/- (Members)
₹1,080, 864 & 648/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

5th August
Ghalib se Gulzar tak
Concept, curation & presentation: Pankaj Udhas

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

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

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

6th August
A Tribute to Lata Mangeshkar
By Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam

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

The award-winning playback singer, Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam,

Tickets:
₹900, 720 & 540/- (Members)
₹1,080, 864 & 648/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
will present a bouquet of unforgettable melodies immortalised by the legendary melody queen, Lata Mangeshkar. The presentation will include works of stalwarts from Anil Biswas, C. Ramchandra and Naushad to more modern film music composers like A. R. Rahman and Jatin-Lalit. The evening also features some Meera bhajans, Marathi abhangas and other regional songs popularised by Mangeshkar.

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

Box Office now open

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### THEATRE

#### Kalgitura
**Marathi/Musical Play with English subtitles (120 mins)**
**Experimental Theatre**
**Sunday, 6th – 6.00 pm**
**An NCPA Production**

In a village called Parsul in Maharashtra, a unique folk tradition called *kalgitura* was nurtured for hundreds of years. Intertwining stories from the Puranas and oral traditions, *kalgitura* artistes would sing to the beats of the tambourine during festivals, fairs, religious ceremonies and on the death of a villager to ease the pain and grief of the family of the departed soul. Around 1990, this almost 700-year-old tradition started to fade away. One day, a group of men in the village find threads of the *kalgitura* tradition and realise that they must reinstate this unique art form. The play depicts the story of the revival of *kalgitura*. In the April 2023 issue of *ON Stage*, its writer Datta Patil said, "Kalgitura is a folk art comprising *lavanis* written in local dialects and is made up of two words ‘kalgi’ (Shakti) and ‘tura’ (Shiva). As with several folk-art forms, *kalgitura* brings pertinent issues to the fore and addresses complex emotions via the medium of entertainment.” Kalgitura is the winner of Darpan, a new initiative by the NCPA that shines the spotlight on fresh voices in Marathi drama.

**Writer: Datta Patil**
**Director: Sachin Shinde**
**Cast:** Hemant Mahajan, Vikram Nannaware, Nilesh Suryavanshi, Ram Wani, Arun Ingle, Rushikesh Shelar, Rajendra Ugale, Krushna Shirsath, Praveen Jadhav, Shubham Landge, Kiran Raobacche, Vaibhavi Chavan, Samrudi Gangurde, Kvata Desai & Rushikesh Patil
**Music:** Rushikesh Shelar
**Background Music:** Rohit Sarode
**Lights:** Pranav Sapkale
**Sets:** Chetan Barve
**Producer for the NCPA:** Rajeshri Shinde

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

Box Office now open

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#### Comedy for Comedy’s Sake
**Stand-up Comedy**
**English/ Hindi**
**(90 mins)**
**Godrej Dance Theatre**
**Sunday, 6th – 7.00 pm**
**An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation**

After six shows that were performed to a full house, Comedy for Comedy’s Sake is back with another stellar line-up. The show is produced by Comedy Ladder in association with the NCPA.

**Performers:** Gautam Govindham, Shashi Dhiman, Rupali Tyagi, Prakhar Pramod, Anirban Dasgupta & Abijit Ganguly
**Host:** Jeeya Sethi
Suggested age: 16+

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

Box Office now open

FILM

Fire in the Mountains
Hindi Film with English Subtitles
(84 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Tuesday, 8th – 6.30 pm

The Indian Express Film Club screening in association with the National Centre for the Performing Arts & Sony Liv

Fire in the Mountains is an Indian drama about a mother who toils to save money to build a road in a mountainous Himalayan village to take her son for physiotherapy. Yet her husband, who believes that a shamanic ritual is the remedy, stands in her way.

Director: Ajitpal Singh
Producers: Ajay Rai & Alan McAlex
Cast: Chandan Bisht, Harshita Tiwari, Mayank Singh Jaira & Sonal Jha

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 will get preferential seating till 5.20 pm.

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

An NCPA-National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

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

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

Age: 15+

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

Box Office now open

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

The Jazz Masters
Listening Sessions
conducted by Sunil Sampat
The Amazing Male Jazz Vocalists
Little Theatre
Wednesday, 9th – 5.30 pm

FILM

Reality Check
Documentary Film Screening
Little Theatre
Thursday, 10th – 5.00 pm & 7.30 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.

All That Breathes
Hindi Film with English Subtitles
(97 mins)

In one of the world’s most populated cities, two brothers—Nadeem and Saud—devote their lives to the quixotic effort of protecting the black kite, a majestic bird of prey essential to the ecosystem of New Delhi, where black kites have been falling from the sky at alarming rates. Amid environmental toxicity and social unrest, the ‘kite brothers’ spend days and nights caring for the creatures in their makeshift avian basement hospital. Director Shaunak Sen (Cities of Sleep) explores the connection between the kites and the brothers who help them return to the skies, offering a mesmerising chronicle of inter-species coexistence.

A Sideshow & Submarine Deluxe
Release in association with HBO Documentary Films
A Rise Films & Kiterabbit Films Production in collaboration with HHMI Tangled Bank Studios

Director: Shaunak Sen
Producers: Aman Mann, Shaunak Sen
& Teddy Leifer
Director of Photography: Ben Bernhard
Cinematography: Saumyananda Sahi
Editor: Charlotte Munch Bengstsen
Music: Roger Goula
Sound: Niladri Shekhar Roy

Oscar Nomination for Best Documentary Feature
Winner World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Documentary Sundance Film Festival
The Golden Eye Award for Best Documentary at 2022 Cannes Film Festival

The film screening will be followed by a discussion.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating 10 minutes prior to the show.

DANCE

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

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Sahachari Foundation Events

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

Supported by Deepak Fertilizers & Petrochemicals Corp. Ltd. and KERF

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

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Young Talent
Western Music Concert
Godrej Dance Theatre
Thursday, 10th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA & The Stop-Gaps Cultural Academy Presentation

The Budding Brigade concert, now in its 11th year, gives musically talented children between the ages of seven and fifteen the opportunity to perform on stage before a discerning audience. The brigade this year features pianists Siddharth Banerjee, Nondinee Chattopadhyay, Srinjoy Goswami, Joshua Hamilton, T. Karthik, Maira Mahadevia, Aadit Maheshwari, Kiara Mascarenhas, Neil Sajnani, Jehaan Shah, Anoushka Tandon and singer Shruthi Jairam. These children will enthral the audience with a vibrant selection of music including the works of Bach, Bartók, Beethoven, Bizet, Chaminade, Chopin, Debussy, Gardel, Grieg, Haydn, Hammond, Harvey, Kuhlau, Lyador, Mendelssohn, Mier, Monk, Mozart, Pegler, Rachmaninoff, Say, Schubert, Sinding and more.

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

MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION

Book Reading
Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse
Written by Anne Carson
Reading Designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar
Little Theatre
Friday, 11th – 4.30 pm

The NCPA Library in collaboration with Metamorphosis Theatre and Films

The award-winning poet Anne Carson reinvents a genre in the stunning work, Autobiography of Red. The book is both a novel and a poem, an unconventional re-creation of an ancient Greek myth and an original coming-of-age story set in the present.

Geryon, a young boy who is also a winged red monster, reveals the volcanic terrain of his fragile, tormented soul in an autobiography he begins at the age of five. As he grows older, Geryon escapes his abusive brother and affectionate but ineffectual mother, finding solace behind the lens of his camera and in the arms of a young man named Herakles, a cavalier drifter who leaves him at the peak of infatuation. When Herakles reappears years later, Geryon confronts again the pain of his desire and embarks on a journey that will unleash his creative imagination to its fullest extent. By turns whimsical and haunting, erudite and accessible, richly layered and deceptively simple, Autobiography of Red is a moving portrait of an artist coming to terms with the fantastic accident of who he is.

This reading is designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar and uses movement, music and visual aesthetics along with the text. He writes and directs plays and makes independent feature films and documentaries. He has been teaching Film and Aesthetics and involved in theatre making, poetry and cinema for a decade now and hopes to die painting. He is the Artistic Director of Metamorphosis Theatre and Films and the co-founder and Head of St. Andrew’s Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts.
NCPA-CITI Music Workshop
Exploration of bandish with special reference to Gwalior gharana
A free workshop on Zoom by Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas
(Approx. 60 mins followed by Q&A session)
Saturday, 12th – 11.30 am

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

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

The Gwalior gharana is regarded as the fountainhead of all gharanas that emerged later. Its aesthetic ideology hinges on presenting commonly known ragas in a style that is well-balanced with equal significance to svara, raga, tala, bandish as well as improvisatory modalities such as alap, bolalap, tan, boltan, sargam, etc.

Groomed in the tradition of the Gwalior gharana by his illustrious father, Narayanrao Vyas, Vidyadhar Vyas has been active in three major spheres of music: performance, education and administration. Having had an illustrious career with involvement in numerous national and international pedagogic pursuits and music performances, Vyas has been honoured with several awards and accolades.

With a focus on khayal bandishes of the Gwalior gharana, this lecture-demonstration will attempt to highlight some essential concepts and modalities that need to be adopted in order to achieve a meaningful exploration of a bandish.

Register now on www.bookmyshow.com

The Wunderkinds
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 12th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

After an enthralling and successful show in 2022, The Wunderkinds are back once again to entertain you with the most melodic, rhythmic and toe-tapping music. As part of the NCPA Performance Series, The Wunderkinds will showcase talented young musicians (aged 8 to 21), who will take the audience through a journey of different musical styles and vocalese, encompassing funk, R&B, Latin, pop, rock and jazz with an innovative twist.

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

Vodka and no Tonic
and other stories from Shobhna De’s book
‘Lockdown Liaisons’

English Play with some Hindi
(100 mins)

Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 13th – 5.00 pm & 7.30 pm

‘Vodka and no Tonic’ and other powerful stories of love lost and found from Lockdown Liaisons by bestselling writer Shobhna De explore the fragility of human relationships in a collection of short stories that trace the subtle world of emotions as they shift and are redefined within the four walls of the home. Told from the varying perspectives of both men and women, each story is a unique look at how relationships can break and change under trying circumstances. Ultimately, these are universal stories of forgotten and rediscovered love, of relationships made and broken, of truths exposed and lies challenged and the transformations that we all underwent during the extraordinary time of the pandemic.

The play comprises five stories:
- ‘Vodka and no Tonic’ (English) performed by Ira Dubey
- ‘Quest’ (English) performed by Joy Sengupta
- ‘A Whiff of Eternity’ (English) performed by Ira Dubey
- ‘Leaving’ (Hindi) performed by Joy Sengupta
- ‘Lockdown Funeral’ (English) performed by Lillete Dubey

Produced & directed by Lillete Dubey
Cast: Lillete Dubey, Ira Dubey & Joy Sengupta

A Primetime Theatre Co. Production

Age: 15+

Tickets:
- ₹675, 585 & 450/- (Members)
- ₹750, 650 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

Hum Dono
Hindi Play (120 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Sunday, 13th – 6.30 pm

Sarita Champaklal Desai is loath to admit that she is now a senior citizen. But age is catching up with her and she is at a sanatorium recovering from an illness. According to Dr. Harpreet Singh, the experienced medical chief of the sanatorium, there is hardly anything wrong with her physically, but her unpredictable ways, funny ideas and impulsive actions have...
completely upturned his familiar orderly worldview. Sarita’s instincts refuse to conform to the rules of the sanatorium leading to explosive confrontations with the ever-responsible Dr. Singh.

But Sarita’s enthusiasm for life, though a little skewed, is also infectious and the lonely doctor finds himself being drawn to her. Eventually, their irritation with each other evolves into concern and understanding and perhaps the beginning of a delicate new relationship.

Written by Dinesh Thakur
Inspired by Arbuzov’s original Russian comedy, Old World
Directed by Priita Mathur Thakur
Cast: Priita Mathur Thakur & Aman Gupta
Produced by Ank Theatre Group

Tickets:
₹540/- (Members)
₹600/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

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

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

The Prime Minister is a Parsi and he is loud, pompous, pious and a total Baug bawaji out to teach everybody the Parsi way. Abki Baar Parsi Sarkar! Rayomand is fed up with people and the way they work, hence he has decided to become the Prime Minister himself. His entourage is his family and they only make things harder for him, which leads to comical situations in the life of the PMO.

Written & directed by Mehrzad Patel
Cast: Danesh Irani, Pheroza Modi, Danesh Khabhata, Azmin Mistry, Darius Shroff, Siddharth Merchant & Farokh Kateli
A Silly Point Production

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

Hemant Krishna, 18th, Experimental Theatre

Hemant Krishna was neither born in a family of musicians nor did he have any meaningful exposure to Indian classical music till the age of 25. It was only after he moved to Mumbai that he began to attend Hindustani classical concerts. An opportunity to listen to a live concert of Nityanand Haldipur drew him to the music of the Maihar gharana and a desire to learn how to play the bansuri. In 2012, he began the study of the bansuri under Milind Sheorey, a noted flautist and a disciple of Annapurna Devi. In December 2013, he began his tutelage with Haldipur, also a student of Annapurna Devi, whose music had originally inspired him to take up the bansuri. To encourage Krishna’s sincerity and dedication towards the art of playing the bansuri, Nityanand Haldipur took him under the ‘NCPA-Citi Support to Gurus’ programme in 2022.

Kashmira Joshi Sarnobat was initiated into music at the age of seven, having received extensive vocal training from her mother, Shyamala Joshi and initial lessons in tabla from her father, Abhay Joshi. She has completed her M.A. in Hindustani Classical Music from the University of Pune (Lalit Kala Kendra) under the guidance of Padma Talwalkar, from whom she continues to receive training today under ‘NCPA-Citi Support to Gurus’ programme. She has also received extensive training on voice technique in light music a few years ago from Kishore Kulkarni, disciple of renowned singer and music director Hridaynath Mangeshkar. In addition to teaching Indian classical and light music for the last 15 years, Sarnobat has accompanied Talwalkar in concerts around the country and continues to give solo music performances in and around Pune.

Entry free on a first-come-first-served basis.
Register now on www.bookmyshow.com
An NCPA & Mehli Mehta Music Foundation Presentation

Internationally renowned, Bombay-born conductor Zubin Mehta leads the Symphony Orchestra of India in two special concerts including the works of classical giants Schubert and Mozart. The programme also features Mahler’s monumental First Symphony, performed here with ‘Blumine’, the rarely heard original second movement that Mahler later discarded.

Programme:
Mozart: Overture to The Marriage of Figaro
Schubert: Symphony No. 8 “Unfinished”
Mahler: Symphony No. 1 “Titan”

Tickets:
`15,000, 12,000, 9,000, 6,000, & 3,000/- (Inclusive of GST)
Box Office: 25th July for Friends of the SOI, NCPA Members and MMMF Members & 28th July for Public

SCREENING

GOOD
by C.P. Taylor
Theatre Screening (Approx. 160 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Tuesday, 22nd – 6.00 pm

An NCPA-National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

David Tennant (Doctor Who) makes a much-anticipated return to the West End in a blistering reimagining of one of Britain’s most powerful, political plays.

As the world faces the Second World War, John Halder, a good, intelligent German professor, finds himself pulled into a movement with unthinkable consequences.

Olivier Award-winner Dominic Cooke (Follies) directs C.P. Taylor’s timely tale, with a cast that also features Elliot Levey (Canionanus) and Sharon Small (The Bay). Filmed live at the Harold Pinter Theatre in London.

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

DANCE

Umang
Bharatanatyam by Sonam & Sachhidanand Narayankar
and
Odissi by Kalyani & Vaidehi Phagre
Little Theatre
Thursday, 24th – 6.30 pm

Currently under the mentorship of Vaibhav Arekar, Sonam and Sachhidanand Narayankar have completed their post-graduation in Bharatanatyam from Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya (affiliated with Mumbai University) established by Dr. Kanak Rele. They are graded artistes of Doordarshan, qualified by UGC NET and run the Nrityarangam Kala Mandir in Solapur, which has students from around the world learning Bharatanatyam online. The duo has performed in numerous national and international dance festivals, including the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival and the Doha Tribeca Film Festival.

The presentation will begin with a shloka in praise of Lord Shiva followed by ardhanaarishra kriti. The next piece is a varnam in Raagam Kharaharapriya Thalam Adi composed by Dhandayuthapani Pillai. It is a piece of conflict between jeeva and aathma where the former is bound by karma, and the latter pines to become one with parmatma. The presentation concludes with a lovely Marathi pada, ‘Rusali Radha Rusal Madhava’ in Raga Mishra Yaman, depicting the love quarel between Radha and Krishna, and its effect on the entire Gokula. All the dances have been choreographed by Arekar.

Odissi by Kalyani & Vaidehi Phagre

Kalyani and Vaidehi Phagre have been training extensively under
their aunt, Bindu Juneja. They have also trained in Kathakali under Margi Vijayakumar and performed along with him at the Margi Institute of Kathakali, Thiruvananthapuram. The duo has been performing duets across major cities in India for over a decade including Odissi Dance Festival, Shravan Mahotsav, and Khajuraho Dance Festival, to name a few. They also teach at Urdhvam – Centre for Classical Arts in Bhopal, founded by Juneja. Accompanying their guru, the duo has performed at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, on the occasion of the maiden visit of former U.S. President Barack Obama as well as at the royal wedding of the King of Bhutan.

Indian classical dance is steeped in philosophy and mirrors its profound aspects. Darpana is a presentation that unfolds in four parts: the first composition ‘Mangalam’ brings forth the spirit of oneness, auspiciousness, peace and harmony—the vision of great seers manifesting in Vedic verses. The second composition is a traditional Oriya abhinaya, ‘Sangini Re Chaha’ signifying human aspiration for unity with the eternal. The third is a pallavi in Raga Bihag, a celebration of movement, growth and expansion followed by Namadashatam by Adi Shankaracharya, an ode to river goddess Narmada.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis.
Register now on www.bookmyshow.com

**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC**

**The Singing Tree**
Children’s Choral Music Concert

Tata Theatre
Saturday, 26th – 7.00 pm

The Mehli Mehta Music Foundation presents its annual Singing Tree choral concert with 125 students from the foundation’s The Singing Tree choirs, the Udayachal Charitable School and The Pali Chimbai Municipal School run by the Aseema Charitable Trust. The foundation’s Choral Director Salome Rebello and choral conductors Rohini Basu and Khursheed Printer will lead our young choristers between the ages of 6 and 18 in a programme titled ‘Songs of Joy’ with repertoire from across cultures.

Tickets:
`630 & 495/- (Members)
`700 & 550/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office: 9th August for Members & 12th August for Public

**Siachen**
Hindi Play (100 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 27th – 4.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with 72° East Productions

A survival drama about three Indian soldiers stuck on the Siachen Glacier, the highest, coldest battlefield on earth. After a catastrophic blizzard that washed away everything in sight, they are left with no news from the base. The days that follow test their beliefs and their bonds as they wait in hope for evacuation. Will they survive, and remain sane, before salvation comes or will ‘General Glacier’ have the final say?

Director: Makarand Deshpande
Writer: Aditya Rawal
Hindi Translation by Raagha Dutt
Cast: Zahan Kapoor, Chittransh, Niketan Sharma, Rohit Mehra, Jatin Sarin & Seerat Masrof
Set Design: Shaira Kapoor
Music: Ajay Janyani
Sound: Vaibhav Jadhav

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

**THEATRE**

**Siachen**, 27th, Experimental Theatre

**Gino Banks**, 27th, Little Theatre

In this workshop, Gino Banks talks about all the factors that go into learning and receiving a strong sense of drum rhythm. The session will be highly interactive: Participants may ask questions about the challenges they may have encountered in their musical journey, as well as receive tips and techniques to help them develop and enhance their musical path.

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Experimental Theatre
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Set Design: Shaira Kapoor
Music: Ajay Janyani
Sound: Vaibhav Jadhav

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

**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC**

**Inside the Music**
Drum Workshop conducted by Gino Banks
Little Theatre
Sunday, 27th – 4.00 pm to 6.30 pm

An NCPA and Algorhythm Presentation

In this workshop, Gino Banks talks about all the factors that go into learning and receiving a strong sense of drum rhythm. The session will be highly interactive: Participants may ask questions about the challenges they may have encountered in their musical journey, as well as receive tips and techniques to help them develop and enhance their musical path.
The Chatterjee House is surrounded by fear of death, when Indu, their neighbour with mental illness of wanting to see the blood of the person she murders, who is undergoing treatment, comes into their house. She swears on leaving the house only after killing someone. The house is filled with unusual characters with the most unfortunate fate of being in the house at the time when Indu enters with a desire to see blood. Each one tries to escape the bullet. The drama exhibits hilarious moments and confusion. Will they be able to save themselves from the bullet?

Written & directed by Nadira Zaheer Babbar
Cast: Rajiv Singh, Maneeta Malik, Manav Pande, Debasree Ghosh, Sushmita Rana & Hanif Patni

An Ekjute Theatre Group Production

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

Thakishi Samvad
Play reading in Marathi
(75 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 27th – 7.00 pm
An NCPA Presentation

At the centre of Thakishi Samvad is the year 2014—not just the change in government, but also the events of the past three decades that have radically changed our culture. The religious polarisation in India around 1992, the pandemic that began in 2020, the Shaheen Bagh protests in Delhi, the farmers’ movement—these, along with developments in technology, can be subsumed under the concept of ‘2014’ and form the background of Satish Alekar’s play, Thakishi Samvad.

The play is set during the lockdown. An old man in his 80s is talking to Takki, a woman in her 40s. They play games and interact virtually to relieve the isolation they are experiencing. The subject they choose to discuss in the game is like an extension of imagination. But it is not possible to say whether that imagination is real or composed fiction. It is confusing to determine what is fiction and what is real in the narrative the old man chooses, but the references to history and the present are not imaginary. The old man creates another fantasy and brings forth a fictional reference to a hyper-ancient culture, underpinned by contemporary political and religious realities.

Written and presented by Satish Alekar

Tickets:
₹225/- (Members)
₹250/- (Public)
Box Office now open

Talks on Western Classical Music
Little Theatre
Monday, 28th – 6.00 pm
and
Stuart-Liff Collection Library
Thursday, 31st – 4.00 pm
An NCPA Presentation

Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings

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

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

In this talk, Dr. Bilimoria will take the listeners through Tchaikovsky’s ode to his musical god, Mozart, in his composition Serenade for Strings.

Happy listening!

Register on www.bookmyshow.com
Entry free

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What’s Next
September, October & November 2023
(Programmes are subject to change. Please check the website and refer to our emails for updated information.)

DANCE

Odissi by Meera Das & troupe

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

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

Kathak by Sandip Mallick & troupe

Experimental Theatre
Friday, 1st September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Odissi by Meera Das & troupe

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.

Kathak by Sandip Mallick & troupe

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

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: Violin Concerto
Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6

Friday, 15th September – 7.00 pm
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Richard Farnes, conductor
Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

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

Wednesday, 20th September – 7.00 pm
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Alpesh Chauhan, conductor
Steven Isserlis, cello

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

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

Recital

Wednesday, 13th September – 7.00 pm
Experimental Theatre

Pavel Kolesnikov, piano

Pavel Kolesnikov offers a fresh, often unexpected, perspective on familiar pieces. Following his Wigmore Hall debut in 2014, The Telegraph gave his recital a rare five-star review and called it “one of the most memorable of such occasions London has witnessed for a while”.

Programme to be announced shortly.

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

Box Office now open
An NCPA Presentation
Supported by Rukmani & Kishan Daiya Foundation

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

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

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

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

SCREENING

Die Zauberflöte
by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Opera Screening (190 mins)
Sung in German with English Subtitles
Godrej Dance Theatre
Saturday, 2nd September - 4.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Shyam Rang
Exploring the divine trinity: Krishna, Radha and Meera
by Deepika Bhide Bhagwat & group
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 2nd September – 6.30 pm

INDIAN MUSIC

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

Tickets:
₹180 & 135/- (Members)
₹200 & 150/- (Public)
Box Office: 26th July for Members & 29th July for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Converging Streams
Best of World Music
“The Heart of Drums”
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 3rd September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

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

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

INDIAN MUSIC

Aaj Phir Jeene Ki Tamanna Hein
A tribute to Lata Mangeshkar
An audio-visual presentation by Yatindra Mishra
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 15th September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Lata Mangeshkar 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 artists 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:
₹180 & 135/- (Members)
₹200 & 150/- (Public)
Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public

THEATRE

A Small Family Business
By Alan Ayckbourn
English/Hindi Comedy (130 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Thursday, 21st & Friday, 22nd September – 7.30 pm
Saturday, 23rd & Sunday, 24th September – 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: Abhishek Saha, Garima Yajnik, Kalliroi Tziafeta, Kashin Shetty, Lisha Bajaj, Tahira Nath, Vikash Khurana, Vivek Madan, Vrinda Kacker & others

Age: 16+

Tickets: ₹500/- onwards
Box Office: 9th August for Members & 12th August for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Mumbai Piano Day
Tata Theatre
Saturday, 23rd September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

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

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

Bharatanatyam by Deepak Mazumdar and Odissi by Rahul Acharya
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 29th September – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Bharatanatyam by Deepak Mazumdar

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. Kadhirvelu of Tirugokarna. He has honed his skills as a performer under Adyar K. Lakshamanan and Kalanidhi Narayan. 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, Shiladhish.

Odissi by Rahul Acharya

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...
premier Bharatanatyam institutes in India. She 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. For a practising dancer, the years of introspection and dialogue with the art form result in the release of creative energy that incites the body to move in the actual space and stimulates the mind to fly in a virtual world of imagination. The process of churning within a dancer is inevitable and it happens on multiple levels. It evokes originality, it reaches out to unchartered spaces, it placates a disturbed mind and provokes a placid body.

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.

‘Chitrangada’ – Rabindra Nritya by Sruti Performing Troupe & artistes from Shantiniketan

Sruti Performing Troupe has been presenting experimental theatrical performances for more than two decades. This platform organises workshops, seminars and performances regularly to promote the rich cultural heritage of our country. It also gives exposure to young talents by arranging recitals and exhibitions. The troupe has not limited itself to performances onstage but explores and conducts 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.

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

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

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 each and every one.

Tickets:
₹675 & 450/- (Members)
₹750 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office: 26th August for Members & 29th August for Public

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 Shantiniketan

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Friday, 6th October – 6.30 pm

‘Storm before the Calm’ - Bharatanatyam by Rama Vaidyanathan & troupe

Rama Vaidyanathan is a leading exponent of Bharatanatyam, a popular classical dance form of India. She is undoubtedly one of the most sought-after artistes of her generation, having carved a name for herself in the world of Bharatnatyam. She has trained extensively under the legendary dancer Yamini Krishnamurthy and the renowned Saroja Vaidyanathan. While deeply rooted in tradition, she has evolved her own individual style without forsaking the core principles of Bharatanatyam. Vaidyanathan is one of the directors of Ganesa Natyalaya, one of the premier Bharatanatyam institutes in India. She has received numerous awards including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Kalaimamani award from the Tamil Nadu State Government among others.

Rama Vaidyanathan, 6th October, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

‘Chitrangada’ – Rabindra Nritya by Sruti Performing Troupe & artistes from Shantiniketan

Sruti Performing Troupe has been presenting experimental theatrical performances for more than two decades. This platform organises workshops, seminars and performances regularly to promote the rich cultural heritage of our country. It also gives exposure to young talents by arranging recitals and exhibitions. The troupe has not limited itself to performances onstage but 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. With young people, 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 be presenting this dance-drama 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 Bandopadhay
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre (foyer)
Saturday, 7th October – 10.00 am to 12.00 noon

Dr. Sruti Bandopadhay is one of the leading exponents of Manipuri dedicated to propagating Manipuri dances 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, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Eastern Zonal Cultural Center and other cultural institutions in India. In addition to having choreographed a number of acclaimed productions, Bandopadhay 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, ashetty@ncpamumbai.com

‘Shrimanta Yogi’ - Bharatanatyam by Vaibhav Arekar and Group Odissi by Srjan
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Saturday, 7th October – 5.00 pm

‘Shrimanta Yogi’ - Bharatanatyam by Vaibhav Arekar & Sankhya Dance Company

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 like Haravalele Pratibimba, Mata Hidimba, Dwandwa, Shreemant Yogi, Naama Mhane – An Awakening and Trayanta, which have received critical acclaim and are regarded as model thematic works in Bharatanatyam. His solo work includes Debotor 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.

Shrimant Yogi attempts to capture a few impressions of a 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, far from the chronological life and history of the warrior king, is more an impressionistic dance expression.

Group Odissi by Srjan

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
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 is engaged in wide-ranging activities from creating and staging dance productions and imparting performance-oriented training to working on research-oriented projects. Renowned Kathak dancers, Ishira Parikh and Maulik Shah stand apart amongst the foremost classical dancers of India for their exceptional command and authority over their medium and their innovative approach to presentation. Their choreographic endeavours reflect the synthesis of the highest level 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. Ishira and Maulik have also been designated by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). They have performed in more than 40 countries and are recipients of many prestigious awards such as the Gaurav Puraskar, among others.

**Traditional Kathakali by Margi from Kerala**

Kathakali is one of the eight forms of Indian classical dance with origins in Kerala. It involves ‘story play’, but one distinguished by the elaborately colourful make-up and costumes of the actor-dancers. A Kathakali performance synthesises music, vocal performers, choreography and hand and facial gestures together to express ideas. Additionally, it also incorporates movements from ancient Indian martial arts and athletic traditions of South India. The term Kathakali is derived from ‘katha’ which means story, and ‘kali’ meaning ‘performance’. The dance symbolises the eternal fight between good and evil.

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

**Day 3:**

**Kathak by Anart Foundation**
(Ishira Parikh & Maulik Shah) and **Traditional Kathakali**
by Margi from Kerala
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 8th October – 5.00 pm

Kathak by Anart Foundation (Ishira Parikh & Maulik Shah)

The Anart Foundation was marked the completion of 100 years of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalay.

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

**NCPA International Jazz Festival 2023**

Tata Theatre
Friday, 24th to Sunday, 26th November – 6.30 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.

This year’s line-up at the NCPA International Jazz Festival features:

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

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

**Tickets:** ₹500/- onwards
Box Office: 9th August for Members & 12th August for Public

**INTERNATIONAL MUSIC**

White Vinyl - live at the NCPA
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 7th October – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Homegrown Presentation

Dhananjay Chhetttri – 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
Become a Member

Dear Supporter of the Arts,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please turn over for the Membership form.
Membership Application Form

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

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

- [ ] Silver member of the NCPA
- [ ] Friend of the SOI

Name: ______________________________________________________________________________________________________________

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

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Tel.: ____________________________ Mobile: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Occupation: ____________________ Company: __________________________

Cheque No.: ____________________ Date: _____________________________

Drawn On: ____________________ Date of Birth: _____________________

Date: __________________________ Signature: _______________________

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### NCPA Silver Membership (inclusive of GST):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Membership</th>
<th>Rates ₹:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>14,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couple</td>
<td>24,000</td>
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<td>Family (A couple &amp; two children aged 6-21)</td>
<td>35,000</td>
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<td>Senior Citizen (Couple)</td>
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<td>Artiste (Across all genres)</td>
<td>8,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Belonging to the artistic community with an affiliation to an artistic group. Discretion for recognition as an artist rests with the NCPA.

### Special Membership

- [ ] Corporate Membership Rates ₹: On Request
- [ ] Group Membership Rates ₹: 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):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Membership</th>
<th>Rates ₹:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>25,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couple</td>
<td>45,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family (A couple &amp; two children aged 6-21)</td>
<td>60,000</td>
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</tbody>
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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 400021.

Email: membership@ncpamumbai.com
Tel.: 66223719

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

*For more information on these and other membership packages, please refer to the upcoming issues of *ON Stage* and log on to www.ncpamumbai.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Talks on Western Classical Music</td>
<td>Stuart-Liff Collection Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Hopper - An American Love Story Exhibition on Screen</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Short Film Corner Short Film Screenings</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>August Dance Residency 2023 (3rd to 5th August)</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Smrni-Patham by Shanta &amp; VP Dhananjayan and group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri &amp;</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>10.00 am to 1.00 pm</td>
<td>Workshop - ‘Abhyaasa Saala’ by Shanta and VP Dhananjayan of Bharata Kalanjali</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Movies Under the Stars Brief Encounter (1945) Film Screening</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<td>Sat</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
<td>NCPA-HSBC Bandish: A Tribute to Legendary Composers (4th to 6th August)</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<td>Ajay Pohankar Rashid Khan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Ghalib se Gulzar tak Concept, curation &amp; presentation: Pankaj Udhas</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>A Tribute to Lata Mangeshkar by Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
<td>Don Giovanni by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Opera Screening Sung in Italian with English Subtitles</td>
<td>Godrej Cinema</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Kalgitura Marathi/Musical Play with English subtitles</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td>Comedy for Comedy’s Sake Stand-up Comedy English/Hindi</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Fire in the Mountains Hindi Film with English Subtitles</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>5.30 pm</td>
<td>The Jazz Masters Listening Sessions conducted by Sunil Sampat The Amazing Male Jazz Vocalists</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Fleabag Theatre Screening</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>5.00 pm &amp; 7.30 pm</td>
<td>Reality Check Documentary Film Screening</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>AHUTI by Nrityagram and Chitrasena Dance Company</td>
<td>Tata Theatre</td>
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</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date &amp; Mon</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Young Talent Western Music Concert</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>4.30 pm</td>
<td>Book Reading <em>Autobiography of Red: A Novel in Verse</em> Written by Anne Carson Reading Designed by Dr. Omkar Bhatkar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>11.30 am</td>
<td>NCPA-CITI Music Workshop Exploration of <em>bandish</em> with special reference to Gwalior <em>gharana</em> A free workshop on Zoom by Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>The Wunderkinds</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>13th</td>
<td>5.00 pm &amp; 7.30 pm</td>
<td><em>Vodka and no Tonic</em> and other stories from Shobhaa De's book <em>Lockdown Liaisons</em> English Play with some Hindi</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>13th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td><em>Hum Dono</em> Hindi Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>5.00 pm &amp; 7.30 pm</td>
<td><em>The Parsi Prime Minister</em> Inspired by and Adapted from the works of Adi Marzban Parsi Gujarati Comedy Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>NCPA-CITI Promising Artistes Series Hemant Krishna (bansuri) Kashmira Joshi Sarnobat (khayal)</td>
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<td>Sat  &amp; Mon</td>
<td>19th &amp; 21st</td>
<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td>Symphony Orchestra of India Zubin Mehta, conductor</td>
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<td>Tue</td>
<td>22nd</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td><em>GOOD</em> by C.P. Taylor Theatre Screening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>24th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Bharatanatyam by Sonam &amp; Sachhidanand Narayankar and Odissi by Kalyani &amp; Vaidehi Phagre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>26th</td>
<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td>The Singing Tree Children's Choral Music Concert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
<td><em>Siachen</em> Hindi Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>4.00 pm to 6.30 pm</td>
<td>Inside the Music Drum Workshop by Gino Banks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>5.00 pm &amp; 7.30 pm</td>
<td><em>Le Golì Khà</em> Hindi Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>6.30 pm</td>
<td>Collector's Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td><em>Thakishi Samvad</em> Play Reading in Marathi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>28th</td>
<td>6.00 pm</td>
<td>Talks on Western Classical Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu</td>
<td>31st</td>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
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</table>
A Tribute to Legendary Composers

Aug 4
Compositions of Sushila Pohankar & Aman Ali Khan by Ajay Pohankar
Compositions of Amir Khan, Inayat Hussain & Nissar Hussain Khan by Rashid Khan

Aug 5
Ghalib se Gulzar tak
A bouquet of classic & contemporary ghazals by Pankaj Udhas

Aug 6
A Tribute to Lata Mangeshkar by Kavita Krishnamurti Subramaniam

Tata Theatre, NCPA
6:30 pm
This is our green seal. Since 2015, it is the new mark of our watchmaking excellence. There is nothing to distinguish it from any official seal, yet its inscriptions and colour make it unique. Its green hue attests to the superlative standards of both quality and performance to which we hold every single element of any and all of our watches: precision, water-resistance, autonomy, reliability and durability. For this simple seal bore witness to the epic journey each has undergone in our workshops, from initial sketch to final tests before shipping. Of all the components which compose our watches, this seal is not the hardest to manufacture but it is wholly our own and its value is immense. Because it carries the promise of our unwavering commitment.

#Perpetual