

ON Stage[®]

VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 7



SOI Spring 2023 Season

Alim Beisembayev | John Axelrod | Plamena Mangova
Adam Walker | Marat Bisengaliev | Evgeny Bushkov

Trilok Gurtu returns
to Mumbai

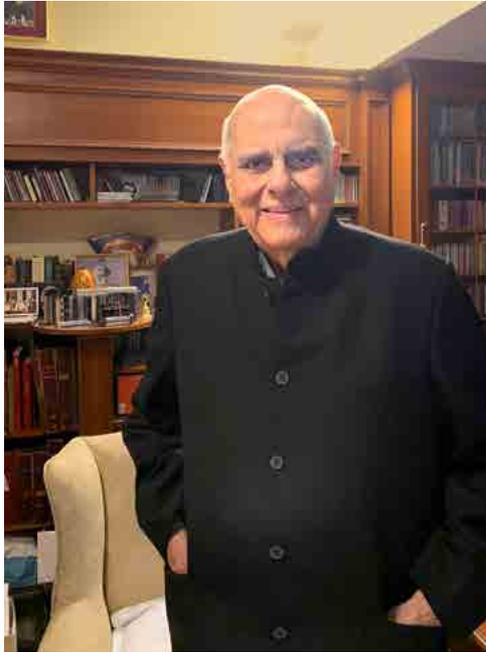
Mystical notes at
the NCPA Sama'a

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low-income communities.



Chairman's Note



I cannot believe we are in the 17th year of the establishment of the SOI. We have every reason to be fairly satisfied with the progress we have made. That is not to say we have neglected the other sectors.

Our great Indian musicians like Hariprasad Chaurasia, Zakir Hussain, Shubha Mudgal, among others, continue to grace our stages and we believe that we are moving in the right direction.

Theatre is making a resurgent comeback after many years. An area so far neglected is training in theatre craft. The brilliant shows that one sees are largely technologically driven, and the NCPA is moving into training our own people in stagecraft as well as other advanced forms of presenting their offerings in a most effective manner. To take this knowledge further is our duty and the NCPA has embarked on an ambitious plan to train and hold workshops with professionals who need to have the most modern ways in which to deal with theatre challenges.

Another joyful movement is the collaboration between our respected museum, the CSMVS, and the NCPA in presenting joint events. It is time that like-minded organisations that have a common goal gathered for not only their art and craft but a better quality of presentation to our people.

We hope that our members and supporters will be satisfied with the manner in which we are proceeding. Several innovative moves are being contemplated and this is a moment of excitement for the NCPA. So, keep watching these spaces regularly.

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

Khushroo N. Suntook

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Khushroo N. Suntook

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 **NCPA**

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In her latest book, writer, scholar and translator *Rana Safvi* explores, among other things, the introduction of Sufism in India and the interchange of influence between its philosophy and the Bhakti tradition of North India. We present an excerpt from *In Search of the Divine: Living Histories of Sufism in India*.

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A unique concept, a contemporary orchestra and a dazzling virtuoso are coming together to present a memorable

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

**THE MUSIC OF
SIR KARL JENKINS**
featuring the India premiere of
REQUIEM
and other works

MARAT BIENGALIEV
conductor

FEATURING CHOIRS FROM AROUND INDIA:
Living Voices Mumbai
The Bangalore Men
Cappella Bangalore
Delhi Chamber Choir
Zarina Altynbayeva, soprano

4 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7:00 PM

5 FEBRUARY 2023 | 5:00 PM

JAMSHED BHABHA THEATRE



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experience. We speak to Trilok Gurtu, the virtuoso in question, about his music, innovation and much-anticipated return to the city. *By Narendra Kusnur*

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This month, four plays written and performed by women will explore the impossible pressures of surviving and thriving in a patriarchal society. *By Akshaya Pillai*

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On Marathi Bhasha Diwas, the oral tradition of Maharashtra will be celebrated through a musical presentation of the state's diverse literary forms.

An initiative of the NCPA, in association with the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra, the event has been conceptualised by author-scholar *Dhanashree Lele*. While she captures the spirit of the tradition in Marathi, we bring you its essence.

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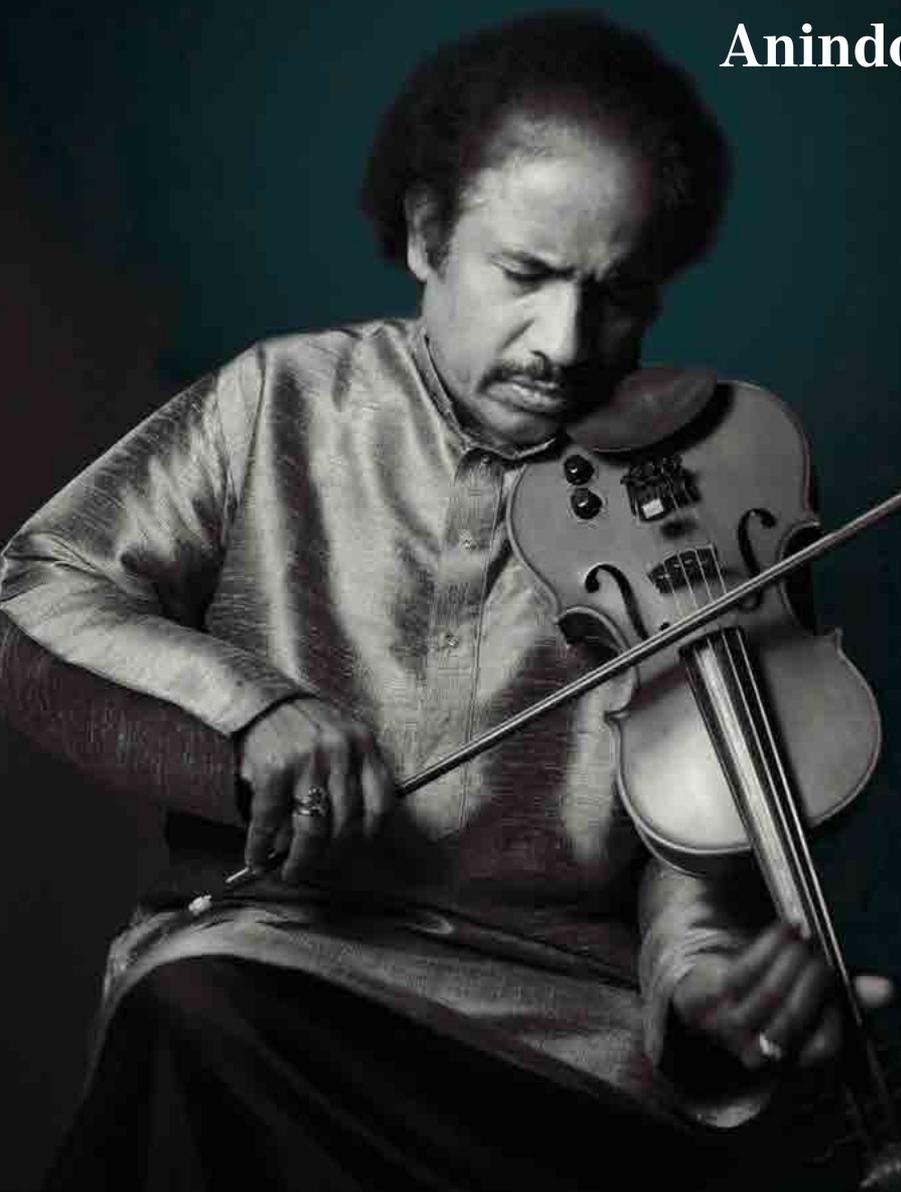
PERCUSSION SYMPHONY

by

Dr. L. Subramaniam

featuring

Anindo Chatterjee & group



1st Feb 2023

6:30 pm

**Tata Theatre,
NCPA**

**Box office: 66223724/54
www.ncpamumbai.com**

THE RACHMANINOFF CONNECTION

A cornerstone of concert repertoire, Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini continues to resonate with audiences across the world. Ahead of their concert with the Symphony Orchestra of India, renowned conductor John Axelrod and the young virtuoso pianist Alim Beisembayev take us through the intricacies of this popular work and explain why it is special to them.

By Beverly Pereira

When Niccolò Paganini wrote 24 Caprices for Solo Violin between 1802 and 1817, little did the Italian violinist and composer know that the last caprice of this collection would lend itself to scores of variations by notable Romantic-era composers, including Franz Liszt and Johannes Brahms. Among them, Sergei Rachmaninoff's interpretation of the famous 24th caprice, written in 1934, continues to captivate both performers and audiences. Titled Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43, Rachmaninoff's composition for piano and orchestra premiered later that year at the Lyric Opera House in Baltimore with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Leopold Stokowski and with the Russian composer himself at the piano. Rachmaninoff's work comprises a set of 24 variations in a single movement and follows the tempo of a typical concerto with a slower middle section flanked by a fast-paced beginning and ending.

Amid the sparkling symphonic concerts and recitals of the SOI Spring 2023 Season, this is one that is looked forward to for several reasons. On 19th February, the renowned American conductor John Axelrod will make his debut in India with the SOI for a performance of Beethoven's Leonore Overture No. 3 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 "Pathétique". Wedged between the two, Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini is expected to set the tone for a rapturous evening. Kazakh-born pianist Alim Beisembayev, winner of First Prize at The Leeds International Piano Competition in 2021, will join the SOI for this section of the programme. Aside from the level of genius associated with Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody, the work is incredibly significant to both Axelrod and Beisembayev.

AN ALPINE RESONANCE

For the American conductor, who was scheduled to conduct the SOI in the spring of 2022 only to have his trip cancelled due to the pandemic, the rhapsody

is especially momentous. Born in Houston, Texas, the conductor has held many a prestigious post—from Artistic and Musical Director of the Royal Seville Symphony Orchestra to Principal Guest Conductor of the City of Kyoto Symphony Orchestra and Principal Conductor of the Bucharest Symphony Orchestra; he continues to hold the latter two posts at present. The dynamic conductor tells us that he remains particularly connected to the work that Rachmaninoff wrote at his Swiss summer home Villa Senar near Lake Lucerne for many reasons. "Rachmaninoff lived in Lucerne where I was Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the Lucerne Theater from 2004 to 2009. I still live in Switzerland but on the French side in Lavaux. Yet, no matter where, Rachmaninoff's music is what echoes from the Alps and lakes for me," says Axelrod, whose inclination for perfectly pairing music with food and wine led him to host the Culinary Concerts of Chardonne that feature award-winning musicians and the best of Lavaux wines.

"The rhapsody holds a special place in the repertoire for all pianists. These 24 virtuosic variations, themselves based on Paganini's 24 Caprices, are fiendishly difficult, and it is not surprising that the 'Devil's Violin' and the medieval chant 'Dies Irae' are associated with this work. It is a late work for Rachmaninoff, after his enormously successful career as a soloist, composer and chamber music performer," Axelrod explains. "The main theme seems like a rather simple melody played by the soloist, even in octaves between the two hands. But then, it never stops until the final surprising staccato note to make the final 'wink'. When Rachmaninoff premiered the work, he set the standard by which all other versions are judged (and there are over 400 recordings!)," he says.

A LAUDABLE LINK

The Kazakh-born pianist Beisembayev had wished to play the rhapsody since he was a teenager. Some years



Alim Beisembayev



NABIN MAHARJAN

later, in September 2021, he would perform and win First Prize for this very work at The Leeds International Piano Competition with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrew Manze. *The Guardian* called this young, promising graduate of The Purcell School, a “worthy winner” with a “real musical personality”. Currently completing his master’s degree at London’s Royal College of Music, he has performed with the likes of the Moscow State Symphony and at venerable venues like the Royal Festival Hall and Wigmore Hall. “This work has a special place in my heart. I first played it with an orchestra in 2018, so I was delighted to bring it back to Leeds in 2021 with a more experienced point of view,” says Beisembayev who will harness his technical prowess and impressive musical interpretation skills to give life to Rachmaninoff’s expressive masterpiece with the SOI and Axelrod later this month.

“It is a highly original work of brilliant writing for piano and orchestra. The two parties work with and against each other creating the most vibrant and energised atmosphere. Although it is named Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, it is not to be mistaken to be inferior to a full concerto. The only difference is the form of the work which consists of 24 variations, where each one melds into another, either with witty and subtle differences in character, or significantly contrasting changes but always beautifully blended,” says Beisembayev, breaking down the composition.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUBLIME

If Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody is of immense importance to musicians to date, it is the well-known 18th variation in this composition that continues to strike a chord with both, the performer and listener. “It is the highlight of the whole piece for me—always emotionally moving and the coda (including variations 19 to 24) is just a great burst of energy,” says Beisembayev, now 25,

ahead of his first visit to India.

Variation No. 18, tender and ripe with emotion, also represents a memorable occasion in Axelrod’s life. For one, he met his wife, a Russian, when he was conducting this very work in Moscow in 2015. “Our eyes met and we smiled at each other and cupid shot his arrow. Of course, Variation 18 was to become our theme. But most of all, when our son was born in 2018, he was very late in his birth. We tried to induce labour, but nothing worked. I suggested music as our soon-to-be-born listened to music throughout the pregnancy. Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 didn’t work nor did Bach’s Goldberg Variations. I thought even the timpani of Brahms’s Symphony No. 1 would help. But then, remembering our meeting, and his Russian heritage, I said Variation 18. Within seconds, he was born. Therefore, it is our theme and I am very proud to share it with your orchestra and audience,” says Axelrod.

Beisembayev shares this enthusiasm. “I’m excited to play with Maestro Axelrod whose work I admire very much. It is always a pleasure for solo pianists to collaborate with new musicians as we learn so much during the process and I look forward to the partnership,” he says. Anticipating the collaboration, Axelrod is well aware of the level of musicianship that the prize-winning Beisembayev comes with. To witness Axelrod and Beisembayev perform Rachmaninoff’s spectacular work which brims with significance for them, personally and professionally, should be special—a performance that they too look forward to enjoying with both the SOI and the audience. ■

.....
Works by Beethoven, Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky will be presented by the SOI under the baton of John Axelrod on 19th February at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre. Alim Beisembayev will be the soloist in Rachmaninoff’s Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

THE SEASON LINE-UP

Meet the other musicians scheduled to perform at the NCPA this month.

ADAM WALKER, FLAUTIST

When he was eight, Adam Walker’s parents bought him a plastic flute from a car boot sale, a seemingly inadvertent act that would shape the rest of his life. According to Walker, he was hooked, after which things happened very quickly. Within a few months, he was studying full-time at the Chetham’s School of Music. Later, at the Royal Academy of Music, he was taught by Michael Cox, the current principal flute of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. At just 21, Walker was appointed principal flute of the London Symphony Orchestra, a position he would hold until 2020. He has

been a professor at the Royal College of Music since 2017 and at the Bern Academy of the Arts since 2022.

Praised for the purity of his tone, Walker regularly performs with major orchestras in the U.K. including the BBC Philharmonic, The Hallé, Sinfonia of London, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. His much-acclaimed recital album, *French Works for Flute*, was called ‘hugely enjoyable’ by *Gramophone* because its ‘finely nuanced expressiveness will win you over whether or not you naturally gravitate towards solo flute.’ At the 2014 premiere of Huw Watkins’s Flute Concerto with

the LSO, he 'brought the house down' according to a critic from *The Guardian*. Walker, the critic wrote, 'playing with staggering virtuosity and charm, kept the audience on the edge of their seats throughout.'

PLAMENA MANGOVA, PIANIST

Bulgarian pianist Plamena Mangova rose to prominence after winning the second prize at the prestigious Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2007. Since then, she has performed with leading orchestras around the world including Staatskapelle Berlin, St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra and the philharmonic orchestras of Rotterdam, Luxembourg, Tokyo, among several others.

Mangova studied at the Panayot Pipkov school in Pleven, Bulgaria, named after the great 19th-century Bulgarian composer. She trained with Marina Kapatsinskaya and while she was at the Reina Sofia School of Music in Madrid, with the renowned pianist Dmitri Bashkirov. A perceptive chamber music player, she has performed with Renaud Capuçon, Augustin Dumay and Maria João Pires, all of whom have performed at the NCPA and are loved by its audiences.

She has several acclaimed recordings to her name. Her first solo recording of Shostakovich's works was awarded a Diapason d'Or of the year 2007 while a chamber music recording that followed was awarded the Supersonic Prize by the music magazine, *Pizzicato*. Her 2021 album, *Lettres Intimes*, is a recital of works by Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms.

EVGENY BUSHKOV, CONDUCTOR

A former Resident Conductor of the SOI, Evgeny Bushkov hardly needs an introduction for audiences at the NCPA. At 18, when he was announced as the winner of the International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition in 1986, he was still a student at the Moscow Conservatory. Successive wins include the Queen Elisabeth Competition (1989, third place) and the International Tchaikovsky Competition (1990, second place). Bushkov was awarded the first Henryk Szeryng Foundation Award in 1992. For several years, he performed extensively as a soloist in renowned concert halls in Russia, Europe, the U.S. and South America.

Since 2000, Bushkov has devoted himself to conducting and teaching. He has worked with several orchestras across the globe including, but not limited to, the "Tchaikovsky" Symphony Orchestra (formerly BSO Moscow), Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Saint Petersburg Philharmonic, the orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre and Neue Philharmonie Westfalen (Germany). Since 2019, he has been Principal Guest Conductor of the Sicilian Symphony Orchestra (OSS) in Palermo. His engagements before the Covid-induced lockdown include the New Year's Concert series in Portugal with "Metropolitana" Orchestra in 2019, New Year's Concert in Palermo with Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana in 2020 and concerts with Orchestra Regionale di Toscana in Italy, to mention a few.

Known for innovative programming, Bushkov holds a special place in his heart for young musicians. In 2003, he founded an educational concert series for children which has been performed with much success in Moscow and Belarus. When he became the Resident Conductor of the SOI in 2017, he continued to conceptualise special concerts for younger audiences in addition to regular programming for the seasoned Mumbai audiences. In the Autumn 2017 Season, he conducted an orchestral concert featuring acclaimed British pianist Stephen Hough. Bushkov last conducted the SOI Chamber Orchestra in 2019 for *When Land Becomes Water*, an innovative collaboration based on a set of books by Neeta Premchand, with music composed by Airat Ichmouratov and direction and design by acclaimed puppeteer Dadi D. Pudumjee.

JAMES BAILLIEU, PIANIST

As a young person, James Baillieu was diagnosed with poor hand-eye coordination. 'I was neither left nor right-handed and didn't like to cross over my hands,' he once said in an interview. An occupational therapist figured the piano might be good for him because it would make use of both his hands. Those piano lessons turned out to be more than therapeutic because Baillieu fell in love with the sound of the instrument and spent hours practising. Possessing a musicality that is fluid and innovative, Baillieu is now known as a star pianist, sought after by some of the biggest singers and instrumentalists of our time.

Born in South Africa, Baillieu was educated at the University of Cape Town. At the Royal Academy of Music in London, he studied under Michael Dussek, Malcolm Martineau and Kathryn Stott. He has been a frequent guest at many of the world's most distinguished music venues including Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam and Vienna Musikverein, among others. He is a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, a coach for the Jette Parker Young Artist Program at the Royal Opera House and, in addition to other teaching engagements, conducts masterclasses around the world.

He has been praised for 'stunning understanding and a theatrical verve' by *The Times* and for the 'wonderfully attentive performance of the piano parts' by *The Guardian*. By some, he has been called the perfect accompanist, having performed with Benjamin Appl, Jamie Barton, Adam Walker and others. But one review of his performance of Schubert's Winterreise with Appl in early 2022 put into words what anyone who has watched him might think—that he is anything but an 'accompanist'. 'Again and again,' wrote Scott Cantrell for *The Dallas Morning News*, 'a subtle shift of colour, a chord exquisitely balanced, a telling hesitation before a pivotal downbeat shed new light on the music. I can't recall another pianist so daringly delaying that magical shift from minor to major mode in the opening "Good Night," before the words "I will not disturb you as you dream." It was the stuff of chills down the back.'

- Vipasha Aloukik Pai

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF INDIA

EVGENY BUSHKOV conductor

PLAMENA MANGOVA piano

WEBER: Overture to Der Freischütz

TCHAIKOVSKY: Piano Concerto No. 1

BRAHMS: Symphony No. 3

15 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7.00 PM



JOHN AXELROD conductor

ALIM BEISEMBAYEV piano

BEETHOVEN: Leonore Overture No. 3

RACHMANINOFF: Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini

TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6

19 FEBRUARY 2023 | 5.00 PM



JOHN AXELROD conductor

ADAM WALKER flute

DVOŘÁK: Othello, concert overture

MOZART: Flute Concerto No. 1

DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 7

23 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7.00 PM



Of Mystics and Music

Three transcendental evenings of Sufi poetry and music are in store with *Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy* at the NCPA this month. We explore how these immortal verses lend themselves to puppetry and gospel music.

By Aishwarya Bodke

*We have fallen into the place
where everything is music.
The strumming and the flute notes
rise into the atmosphere,
and even if the whole world's harp
should burn up, there will still be
hidden instruments playing.*
-Mevlana Rumi

Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy is a celebration of Sufi music at the NCPA, which embraces the expansive ocean of Sufi thought through musical traditions, poetic forms and visual presentations. Finding its genesis in the Sufi practice of gathering to listen, *Sama'a* hopes to be the place where words become music across three spectacular evenings.

Sufism, writes Rana Safvi in *In Search of the Divine*, is a way of life and worship, deeply entrenched in mystical thought, doctrines, literature, music and the living legacies of Sufi saints and poets. The beginnings of Sufism lie in the inadequacy of an intellectual relationship with God and an emphasis on an experiential one. The pain of separation from the Creator forms the core of Sufi lyrics and music too, and hence the longing to dissolve the physical realm.

Sufi music and the words of poets like Amir Khusrau, Mevlana Rumi, Bulleh Shah, Kabir and Lal Dedh have seen a resurgence in popular culture. The universality and innate secular nature of Sufism is often employed to dissociate Sufism from Islam or present it as a separate sect of the religion. What should not be lost in translation is that the Sufi literature we enjoy is firmly rooted in the tenets of Islam.

A means to an end

Rangreza: A Musical Presentation based on Sufi Poetry, the first event of the festival by Suhail Akhtar Warsi, presents a harmonious blend of traditional



A multi-layered musical presentation, *Rumiyana* has a powerful message about diversity and plurality

and contemporary Sufi musical elements. It will be followed by *An Ode to Rumi*, a reading of Rumi's poetry by actor Kabir Bedi. Poems of the Sufi poet and mystic have been translated and reproduced across different languages and they continue to transcend national and ethnic borders.

Arguably the most influential work by Rumi, *Masnavi* lends itself to *Rumiyana: A Journey Within* by the

A multimedia puppet theatre performance, *Rumiyana* borrows four stories from Rumi's *Masnavi*, weaving them together into a conversation between a master and a student

Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust. A multimedia puppet theatre performance, it borrows four stories from *Masnavi*, weaving them together into a conversation between a master and a student—Shams and Rumi. Narrated on the threshold of a door that unfolds a journey within and unravels the path outside, the tale chronicles the gem of wisdom—what you seek is seeking you.

Rumiyana synergises puppetry, acting and dance, masks and shadow play to create a visual spectacle accompanied with music by Sandeep Pillai and animations and digital projections by Shaaz Ahmed. Hrishikesh Pawar, Shamsul and Narayan Sharma are the choreographers, while the costume design by Gunjan Arora and Rahul Jain, features hand-laid thread textile used for the attire of Shams among other costumes situated in that particular time in history. Pioneer of modern puppetry in India and founder of the Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust, Dadi Pudumjee spent months during the pandemic adapting Rumi's words to Ishara's unique storytelling method. He emphasises that it is the marriage of

many genres that gives birth to the unconventional stream of puppetry. "Puppets are used as a means to tell a story and are not an end [in themselves]," says Pudumjee. He explains how traditional puppetry was a family occupation passed on to future generations. Modern practices, however, become their own traditions. It is how the art form is used that is important. Traditional puppet groups are now experimenting with new media, among other things.

Talking about the binding principle of the festival, Pudumjee says, "If you read any of the great Sufi poets, whether Rumi, Kabir or Khusrau, their words circle around the same core values. They may be from different sects and speak different languages, but they speak of the oneness of humanity."

Beyond genres

Pudumjee's thoughts are mirrored by singer and composer Sonam Kalra, who will give the final performance of the festival in *Within: Songs of the Sacred* by Sonam Kalra & *The Sufi Gospel Project*.

Sonam Kalra in an earlier performance at the NCPA



The show seeks to blend the many voices of faith through poetry, prayer and music to create a universal sound.

The Sufi Gospel Project (SGP) was born about 12 years ago, when Kalra was asked to sing gospel music at the death anniversary—*urs*—of the Sufi saint Inayat Khan in Nizamuddin, New Delhi. It marked a turning point

for her. Having enjoyed a vastly diverse musical upbringing with a solid foundation in Indian classical music, she found herself drawn to gospel music. Her performance in Nizamuddin created a special atmosphere where a Sikh woman belted out gospel tunes at a *dargah*.

“I think the lines between faith and music are blurred for me,” Kalra propounds. The SGP creates a musical landscape where the words of Khusrau blend with the plaintive strains of the age-old hymn ‘Amazing Grace’, and Kabir’s sagacity shares the stage with the ever-moving verses of ‘Abide With Me’. The playful wisdom of Bulleh Shah’s philosophy is brought to life amidst Irish music whilst Guru Nanak’s words resonate with the harmonies of world folksounds. “We try to shed the garb of traditional Sufi and gospel interpretations

“The Sufi Gospel Project tries to shed the garb of traditional Sufi and gospel interpretations to create a more inclusive definition of oneness that also embraces *Bhakti* and contemporary poetry”

and find common ground to create a more inclusive definition of oneness that also embraces *Bhakti* and contemporary poetry, and more,” elaborates Kalra.

While we celebrate the great Sufi poets, it is imperative to acknowledge the lives and work of many women that remain obscured in the annals of history. Kalra

points out that Rabi’a al-Adawiyya was among the earliest Sufi poets, expressing a relationship with the divine by referring to God as the ‘beloved.’ Kalra suggests, “Interestingly, many Sufi poets often blurred lines between genders. Many of them, including Khusrau and Bulleh Shah, wrote in the feminine form because they believed only a woman’s heart was capable of loving so deeply and surrendering to [the act of loving].”

Centuries pass but the relevance of Sufi poets and their words lives on. *Sama’a* celebrates this timeless legacy, the universal love and the music of the mystics. ■

Sama’a: The Mystic Ecstasy will be presented from 10th to 12th February at the Tata Theatre and the Experimental Theatre.



Sama'a

THE MYSTIC ECSTASY

FESTIVAL OF SUFI MUSIC

FEBRUARY 2023

10TH FEB
6:30 PM

Rangreza: A musical presentation based on Sufi poetry
Concept & narration: **Suhail Akhtar Warsi**
Singers: **Girish Sadhwani and Pooja Gaitonde**

11TH FEB
6:30 PM

An Ode to Rumi: Presentation based on the Poetry of
Mevlana Rumi by **Kabir Bedi**
Concept & design: **Jai and Taru Talwar**

12TH FEB
3:30 PM
5:30 PM

Rumiyana: A journey within
Presented by **The Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust**
Direction & design: **Dadi D. Pudumjee**
Text & animation: **Shaz Ahmed**
Music: **Sandeep Pillai**

12TH FEB
7:30 PM

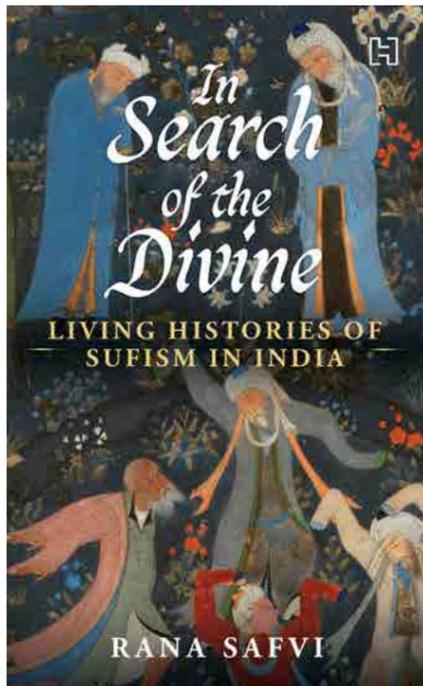
Within: Songs of the sacred
By **Sonam Kalra & The Sufi Gospel Project**

AT THE NCPA

Sufism in India

In her latest book, writer, scholar and translator **Rana Safvi** explores, among other things, the introduction of Sufism in India and the interchange of influence between its philosophy and the *Bhakti* tradition of North India. We present an excerpt from *In Search of the Divine: Living Histories of Sufism in India*.

- First half of 7th century - Arab trade with India began
- 712 CE - Mohammad bin Qasim's conquest of Sindh
- 1039 CE - Arrival in Lahore of Syed Hafiz Haji Abul Hasan Bin Usman Bin Ali al Jalabi al Hujwiri from Ghazni
- 1192 CE - Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor defeated Prithviraj Chauhan and established the Delhi Sultanate
- End of 13th century - Arrival of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti in Ajmer



From the dawn of history, India has been the meeting place of various cultures, making its landscape rich with complexity. India, being a 'civilisation society', has been the repository of various cultural, linguistic and religious influences through the ages. All of these influences combined have resulted

in its unique, rich, multi-layered culture referred to as a composite culture.

The various traders, conquerors, armies, migrants, crafts people and professionals who came to India in search of a better future, brought with them not just 'destruction but also valuable deposits that enriched the ancient soil, out of which grew fresher and more luxuriant cultures.' Navigational and commercial interests brought South Asia closer to Arabia; Muslim Arab traders travelled by sea to the shores of Gujarat and Malabar in the Indian subcontinent, and, as early as the seventh century, settled down in some of the cities in the Malabar region. They married local women and introduced Islam there. The Muslims, who were called 'mopillas'—a term meaning 'a great child' or 'bridegroom'—acquired great importance in the ensuing period and many privileges were showered on them. By the 10th century, Islam had spread to the east coast of India as well, and Muslims had acquired influence both in court and in society. Sufism was introduced in south India by such early Muslim traders and navigators from the eighth and ninth centuries onwards...

The *maraikkayar* [a 15th century Tamil- and Malayalam-speaking community spread along the coast of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Sri Lanka—descendants of the early

Muslim seafaring people who married women from the coastal Mukkuvar community] built several shrines; several of such *dargahs*, from the 20 in Mahmud Bandar (Porto Novo), are said to contain the remains of *sahabi* (actual companions or contemporaries of the Prophet). Even though, as Bayly says, 'It is impossible to say whether there really were *sahabi* who lived and died in south India,' the fact that they are believed to be *sahabi* shrines, shows how early Muslims came to the southern coast of India.

Under Khalifa al-Walid bin Abdal Malik, who was the Umayyad caliph of Damascus, Muhammad bin Qasim was appointed by the governor of Iraq—Hajjaj—to lead an expedition into the Sindh. In 712, Muhammad bin Qasim's army defeated the army of Sindh ruler

Raja Dahir, thus conquering Sindh and Multan. So, by the eighth century, Muslim influence could be felt in both these regions where they now ruled, and in the coastal towns of Gujarat, Malabar and Konkan where they had settled down as traders. Saints soon followed the traders and the armies, and Sufism entered India through Multan and Punjab in the ninth century and spread to north India, in particular to Ajmer and Delhi. It then reached Bihar, Bengal, Kashmir, Gujarat and the Deccan. In fact, the Deccan Sultans actively encouraged and invited Sufi saints of the Qadriya order to settle in their kingdoms.

The first Sufi to settle in Multan during the 11th century was Sheikh Saifuddin Kaziruni, a native of Shiraz in Iran. He famously set off on a camel, after being appointed as his uncle's successor, with orders to get off only after the animal came to a stop. The camel halted in the desert, and he founded the city of Uchh in Multan where it did. Uchh is now famous for its Sufi shrines. This story is probably mythical, but it is true that many turned to Sufism in this unpopulated area which was ideal for meditation and contemplation of God...

Soon, many other men of learning and religion too came to India. The most famous and the first known to arrive was Hazrat Syed Hafiz Haji Abul Hasan Bin Usman Bin Ali al-Jalabi al-Hujwiri, who is known in the

subcontinent simply as Data Ganj Baksh. He went to Lahore in the 11th century from Afghanistan, where his family had settled after the Battle of Karbala in seventh century. His Persian treatise *Kashf al-Mahjub*, the first work on mysticism, became a template for mystics.

Another famous Sufi to visit India in the 12th century was Fariduddin Attar (1145–1221), celebrated author of the *Mantiq al-Tair* (*The Language of Birds*).

In 1192, Muizuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor defeated Prithviraj Chauhan, the ruler of Delhi, and established the Delhi Sultanate. When the Mongol hordes were conquering and destroying much of Central Asia, the Delhi Sultanate offered an oasis of peace, prosperity and learning. Many from Central Asia thus migrated to India during that period; among them were a vast number of Sufi scholars and mystics, including the parents of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.

Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti came to India during the reign of Sultan Iltutmish (1211–36) and settled in Ajmer. He was the founder of the famous Chishti *silsilah* in India.

As numerous mystics came and settled in the subcontinent, they drew from local Hindu influences

and developed a unique form of Sufism here. There was a great and constant cross-fertilisation of ideas. With their understanding, acceptance and integration of local customs and influences, they carved their own unique space in the hearts of locals of every faith, class and caste. They could speak the local language and dialects, and as tales of their *karamat* (miracles) grew, so did their followers.

Regarding the matter of conversion, the majority of the saints believed in personal example, as is clear from conversations of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya in *Fawa'id al-Fuad*, and not the use of force; many did accept Islam, impressed by the gentle and inclusive behaviour of these saints. Islam's democratic theories of social organisation also made an impression in a caste-ridden society. ■

This is an excerpt from In Search of the Divine: Living Histories of Sufism in India (2022; Hardback, 432 pages; ₹599), written by Rana Safvi. It has been edited for length and clarity. No part of this excerpt may be quoted or reproduced without prior written consent from its publisher, Hachette India.

Recommended Volume

Every month, **Sujata Jadhav**, Head - Libraries & Documentation Centre at the NCPA, introduces a must-read book from the NCPA Reference Library. Here, she recommends an authoritative biography of Naushad, widely considered to be one of the greatest composers of the Hindi film industry.

Naushadnama: The Life and Music of Naushad

By **Raju Bharatan**

Published by **Hay House India (2013)**

When it comes to Hindi film music, many have acquired fame and fortune but few have defined, shaped and left a permanent mark on the genre the way Naushad—composer of music in classics like *Baiju Bawra*, *Mughal-e-Azam* and *Pakeezah*, among many others—has. A painstaking effort by veteran journalist Raju Bharatan, *Naushadnama: The Life and Music of Naushad* is as much a tribute to the film music that the composer created as it is a vast treasure trove of anecdotes about an otherwise reticent man.

Instead of a chronological study of the composer's life, the book, according to a newspaper review by Narendra Kusnur, analyses 'various features of Naushad's work, often going back and forth in time to provide relevant examples.' The way he modified his way of working and the singers he preferred working with is worth a read. How his music

contributed to the success of stars like Dilip Kumar and Rajendra Kumar as well as singers like Mohammed Rafi and Lata Mangeshkar is equally interesting. The book also highlights the way music directors of that era competed with each other and how music direction, heavily imbued with Indian classical music, slowly started adopting elements of Western music.

Large portions of the book focus on Naushad's relationships—with singers (including Suraiya, Rafi, Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle), songwriters (including D.N. Madhok, Shakeel Badayuni, Majrooh Sultanpuri) and 'unsung' instrumentalists, some of whom were innovators with creative inputs that were integrated into the musical score. Bharatan brings to the fore the triumphs and tribulations of the great composer by using material from more than 50 years of first-person interactions with him. The book sparkles with a string of anecdotal gems.

According to Bharatan, no individual reigns supreme without putting in a Herculean effort to reach the pinnacle and

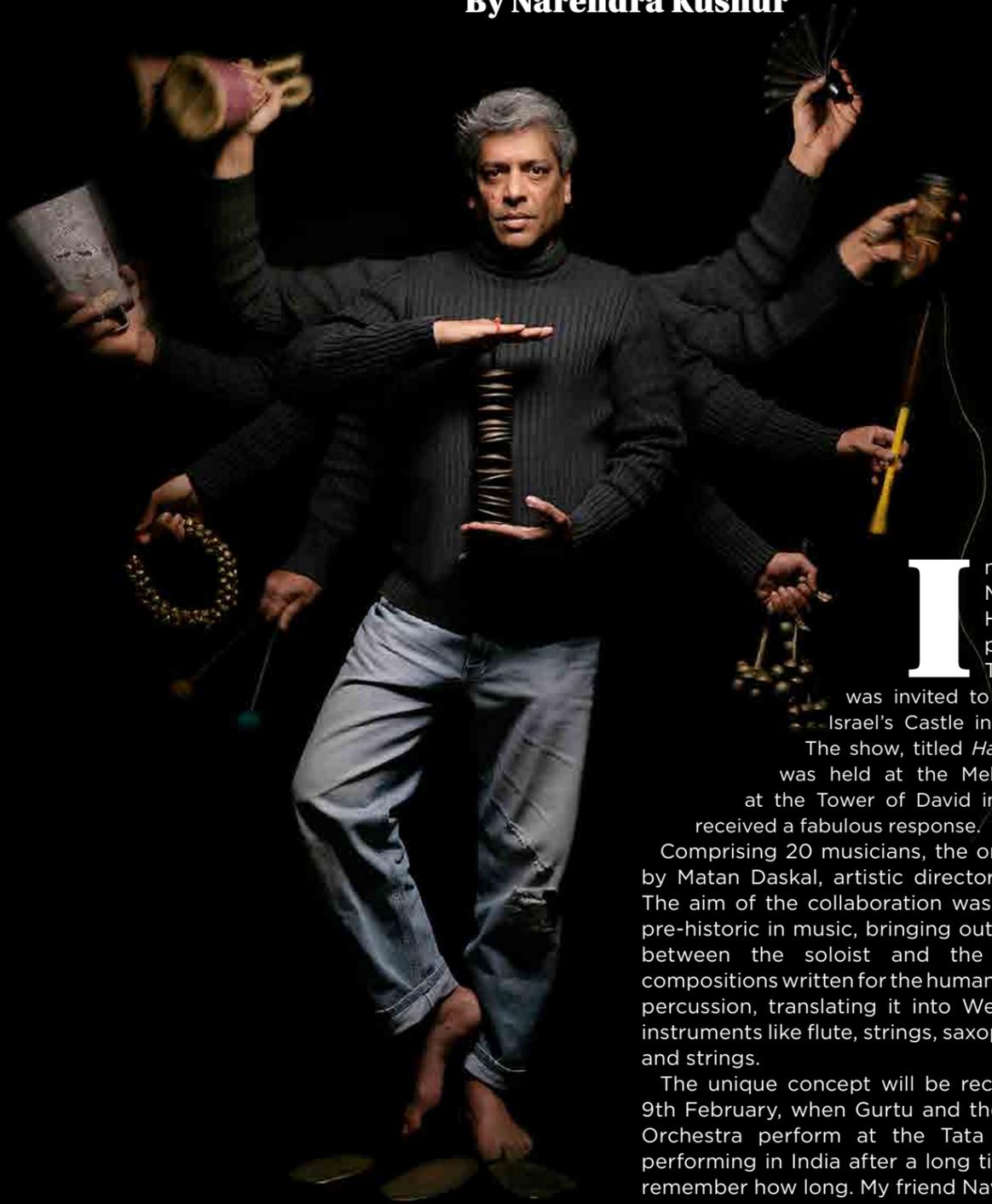
stay there unchallenged—especially for as long as our maestro did. And perhaps, no composer moved more cleverly behind the scenes than Naushad to sustain his hold on the public imagination. Even as we marvel at the incredible variety of his mellifluous creations that have stayed evergreen for over 70 years, how little do we know about Naushad, the man. *Naushadnama* is an authoritative, comprehensive and enthralling narrative studded with rare nuggets of information that provide insights into a great, musical mind. ■

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

About Time

A unique concept, a contemporary orchestra and a dazzling virtuoso are coming together to present a memorable experience. We speak to Trilok Gurtu, the virtuoso in question, about his music, innovation and much-anticipated return to the city.

By Narendra Kusnur



In 2017, Mumbai-born, Hamburg-based percussionist Trilok Gurtu was invited to collaborate with Israel's Castle in Time Orchestra. The show, titled *Harmonies in Time*, was held at the Mekudeshet festival at the Tower of David in Jerusalem, and received a fabulous response.

Comprising 20 musicians, the orchestra was led by Matan Daskal, artistic director and composer. The aim of the collaboration was to research the pre-historic in music, bringing out the relationship between the soloist and the tribe. It used compositions written for the human voice and Indian percussion, translating it into Western orchestral instruments like flute, strings, saxophone, keyboard and strings.

The unique concept will be recreated again on 9th February, when Gurtu and the Castle in Time Orchestra perform at the Tata Theatre. "I am performing in India after a long time, I don't even remember how long. My friend Naveen Deshpande suggested we do the show in India, and the NCPA was kind enough to invite me. Though the Israeli

orchestra will be smaller, maybe consisting of 10 or 11 musicians, there will be a special attraction as vocalist Chandana Bala Kalyan will join us," says Gurtu in a candid conversation over a Zoom call from Germany.

The 80-minute show will have many special features. It will use complex polyrhythms from Africa alongside a stormy fugue from European classical music. It will use a language of improvisation specially created during the rehearsals as a way to communicate without words, thereby producing music on the spot.

On influences

Over the years, Gurtu has enjoyed such experiments and innovations. The son of *thumri* doyenne Shobha Gurtu, he was born on 30th October 1951, which makes him seven months younger than tabla maestro Zakir Hussain. The young Gurtu began by learning the tabla from Abdul Karim, known for playing the dholak in Hindi films. When he was 13, he accompanied his mother when the scheduled percussionist did not turn up because of illness. He continued for a few years with the tabla, taking guidance from the legendary Ahmed Jan Thirakwa.

In his early 20s, he moved to the drum kit, beginning with the Mumbai-based band Waterfront, which played at nightclubs and pop concerts. Later, he went on to become one of the most admired names in jazz and world music percussion, winning the *DownBeat* magazine's award for best percussionist on numerous occasions.

Gurtu developed a unique style. He did not use a stool, and instead sat in a half-kneeling position. His kit has a mix of Western drums and the tabla, and he created special sounds by dipping cymbals, ghungroos, bells and shells into a bucket of water. While his basic playing is rooted in Indian music, he has incorporated elements from Africa, Latin America, China, Japan and European folk music, creating a distinctive style. And thereby hangs a tale.

He recalls, "After Waterfront, I accompanied R.D. Burman and Asha Bhosle on their U.S. tour. My dream of course was to learn at the Berklee College of Music in Boston. But people there made fun of my playing and rejected me, and so I decided to try my own style. I also heard the famous jazz pianist McCoy Tyner, and observing him and the drummer, I was exposed to a totally new world. I also began following Carnatic music more closely after listening to mridangam player Palghat Raghu."

Creative collaborations

From the U.S., Gurtu went to Europe. In 1977, he featured on the album *Apo-Calypso* with Munich-based jazz collective Embryo. He also played with

saxophonists Charlie Mariano and John Tchicai, guitarist Terje Rypdal and trumpeter Don Cherry. In 1985, he appeared on violinist L. Shankar's brilliant album *Song for Everyone*, along with Hussain and Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek. In the late 1980s, he played with the American group Oregon, while simultaneously releasing his album *Usfret*, featuring his mother. The tracks 'Shobharock' and 'Shangri La/ Usfret' are popular even today.

One of Gurtu's most memorable phases was as part of guitarist John McLaughlin's trio in the early 1990s. He recalls, "Playing with John was a great learning experience, as he was somebody who knew, understood and was passionate about Indian music. I played with him for six years."

Besides collaborating with jazz keyboardist Joe Zawinul and electronic musician Robert Miles, Gurtu recorded many unique albums like *African Fantasy*, featuring guest singer Angélique Kidjo from Benin, and *The Beat of Love*, a Sufiana album with singer Roopkumar Rathod on the title track and 'Tuhe'. He also continued research on the tabla through guidance in *taal vidya* from Suresh Talwalkar.

In the late 1990s, Gurtu presented many concerts in Mumbai and other Indian cities. But that has lessened over the past decade. He says, "I wanted to do quality concerts, but wasn't getting the right offers. I will not compromise on my style by just doing timepass and playing to please the audience. I also feel many people don't understand my music," he says. His latest album *God Is a Drummer*, released in 2020,

is dedicated to his spiritual guru Ranjit Maharaj. Guests include Assamese singer Kalpana Patowary (known for her Bhojpuri songs), Turkish singer Zara, violinist Emre Meralli and the Junge Norddeutsche Philharmonie.

He feels the forthcoming concert with Castle in Time Orchestra is just right for his style and temperament. Besides Gurtu and conductor Daskal, percussionist Shalev Ne'eman has played a big role in guiding the orchestra, which consists of many young musicians. An independent ensemble, it was formed out of the need to create a large group that plays a mix of acoustic and electronic instruments, focusing on original music. Its repertoire comprises works with traditional notations and works that have been composed live through a system called soundpainting, created by composer Walter Thompson.

The orchestra toured India in 2020, playing in Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Pune. With Gurtu joining them this time, the experience should be special. ■

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Harmonies in Time, an NCPA & Mixtape presentation, will be presented on 9th February at the Tata Theatre.

The Sisterhood of the Stage

This month, four plays written and performed by women will explore the impossible pressures of surviving and thriving in a patriarchal society.

By Akshaya Pillai

The Maratha Sardars were known for their bravery and valour. Their stories occupy spaces in museums and are handed down as bedtime stories to the young. While they are celebrated as an integral part of the cultural and historical legacy of the Maratha Empire, it is a little-known fact that many famous *lavani* performers of the time would travel with the army and perform for the soldiers. The men forgot their exhaustion and the weight of their duties. The performers, often women, were not just there to entertain the soldiers but to remind them of their cultural roots. They were a beacon of hope, a symbol of strength and a connection to a rich past. And yet, these very women were often marginalised and oppressed in a patriarchal society, their contributions to the cultural tapestry, unseen and unsung.

Savitri Medhatul is here to remind us of the beauty and strength of these women with her play *Lavanyavati*, scheduled for its premiere in Mumbai at the NCPA this month. Over a phone conversation, Medhatul takes us back to the day when as a child, she accompanied her parents to the Ram Ganesh Gadkari Rangayatan in Thane to watch the *tamasha*, *Vichha Maaji Puri Kara*. "I was mesmerised by their playfulness, the way they carried themselves onstage." Starting from its roots as a traditional form of *tamasha* and *sangeet bari*, performed mainly in rural areas and smaller towns, *lavani* has now reached the hearts of many. For Medhatul, it has been a lifelong dream to perform a *lavani* and this will be her first time donning the costume. "I always loved dancing but like most kids my age, I opted for Bharatanatyam and Kathak. *Lavani*



A scene from *Lavanyavati*

does not have a pedagogy and it was only later in life, when I started researching and working with talented *lavani* dancers, that I asked them to teach me the art form. I was aware of the politics of sharing this space that was not mine so even on the rare occasion that I did perform, I'd never dare put on the costume. But this time, I will be wearing a costume because I want to show that *lavani* is accessible to everyone," says the playwright and documentary filmmaker.

Lavanyavati examines the rich history of the traditional folk art form from Maharashtra. The performance, devised in collaboration with *lavani* and *tamasha* artistes, traces the evolution of the dance form through the years and its impact on contemporary cultural identity. Medhatul's play was initially named *Lavanya Katta*, a place under the tree where people gathered to tell stories, and it combines live performances of *lavani* songs with oral histories, archival material and contemporary works like collaborations with filmmaker-writer Paromita Vohra's initiative, Agents of Ishq.

Lavanyavati is one of the four plays, written and performed by women, to be staged at the NCPA this month. Diverse in their themes, and time and spatial contexts, what unites them is their unique portrayal of the lived experiences of women in the Indian subcontinent.

Storied struggles

It was in the 1970s that India saw the rise of socially relevant and feminist theatre. Women's theatre, known as 'Theatre of Protest', emerged as a platform for women to express their resentment against gender discrimination and exploitation. Jana Natya Manch and Indian People's Theatre Movement were some of the groups that performed plays tackling issues such as bride burning, wife battering and dowry. Playwrights like Mahasweta Devi, Usha Ganguli and many others wrote plays that dealt with important social issues and brought about a profound concern for the human predicament.

Feminist theatre was born out of an interaction between the experimental theatre movement of the 1960s and the feminist movement that was going on at the same time in the political arena. It was as much a political attempt as a theatrical one. Revisionist in spirit, it questioned orthodoxy. *Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan* is a thought-provoking play that embodies the spirit of feminist theatre by delving into the complexities of gender and the challenges faced by women in urban spaces. Using physical objects and cartography, it delves into the everyday lives of the actors in Delhi's Nizamuddin Basti, as they share their personal stories and reflections on family, trust, consent, personal space and gender dynamics. Through these



A scene from *Aurat Aurat Aurat*

Lavanyavati, devised in collaboration with *lavani* and *tamasha* artistes, traces the evolution of the dance form through the years and its impact on contemporary cultural identity

A scene from *Dekh Behen*



first-hand retellings, the audience is invited to enter the performers' world and witness their struggles and questions about their identity and how they are perceived within their community. Director Dhvani Vij remembers a powerful moment that spoke to the impact and resonance of the work. After one show, an old lady, "someone's grandmother" who had come to watch the play, told her, "Arey yehi toh mai kehna chah rahi thi kitne time se." ("This is what I have wanted to say for a long time now.") "Her use of the phrase 'kitne time se' just made me feel a lot of things," says Vij.

Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan takes the audience on a journey of discovery and introspection. The play began as a concept, an idea that was born out of the Gender Bender movement in Bengaluru. Vij was approached by the Aagaaz Theatre Trust to collaborate on a project that would give voice to the realities faced by women and children living in the urban space of Nizamuddin. "It was a devised piece, and as we went about it, in addition to gender, religion and class also became important pillars of the play." The 15-minute performance, which was originally called *Urban Turban*, then evolved into *Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan*, delving deeper into the complexities of identity. "The basic idea remained the same, where young girls shared incidents in their life, their relationship

with school, like they wondered why the school was closed for Holi but how they never got holidays for the festivals they celebrated in their house. Then, more women from the Aagaaz repository joined. The number of performers fluctuated and faces kept changing."

The play holds a mirror to the everyday lives of its actors. It has been performed multiple times over the years, with different actors bringing their own unique perspectives to the stories being told. The lines keep changing because the stories keep changing. And yet, there is one line in the play which finds a way of coming back. And it is everyone's favourite: "Main chaahti hu, main jaisi hu log mujhe waisa hi dekhe." ("I hope that people see me for who I am.")

Wedding woes

Plays by women have the power to challenge and subvert societal norms and expectations surrounding gender roles and representation in the performing arts. These productions can showcase the dynamic experiences of women, rather than reducing them to stereotypes or marginalising them in male-dominated narratives. Furthermore, they encourage young women to pursue careers in the arts, to assert their own voices and to be true to themselves. Perna Chawla, the director of the play

In *Aurat Aurat Aurat*, directed by Naseeruddin Shah, an all-female cast enacts selections from Ismat Chughtai's writings that reflect the writer's abiding concern for the state of womanhood

A scene from *Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan*



Dekh Behen, paints a powerful picture when she speaks of how her team is often moved by messages from young women who have found solace and strength in the character of Dilshad, a lesbian, and have been encouraged to come out to their families with pride.

Against the boisterous backdrop of a grand Delhi wedding, five bridesmaids gather in secret. Hours before they are set to take the stage for their rehearsed performance, they bond over food and drink, exchanging gossip and complaints about their matching outfits. But their shared disdain for the bride is not the only thing they have in common. The play by Akvarious Productions features an all-female cast and crew in a comedic exploration of the complex relationships between daughters, girlfriends, mothers, sisters and wives, who are trying to navigate the chaos and joy of one unforgettable wedding celebration.

Chawla speaks candidly about her experience of working with women. "I'm currently working on four different productions, two of which feature an all-women cast," she says. "But, to be honest, my personal experience has been that friendship transcends gender." Chawla, also an actor in *Aurat Aurat Aurat*, tells me that her favourite Chughtai story is 'Lihaaf'. "It was the first work of hers that I encountered during my Indian literature in translation class, which is also where I first discovered the many authors that I have since been obsessed with."

Championing Chughtai

In *Aurat Aurat Aurat*, directed by Naseeruddin Shah, an all-female cast enacts selections from Chughtai's

autobiography and three other writings—'Ek Shauhar ki Khaatir', 'Aadhi Aurat Aadha Khwaab' and 'Soney ka Anda'. The works reflect Chughtai's abiding concern for the state of womanhood, her impatience with empty rituals and her anger at the condescension women are subjected to.

For Seema Pahwa, known for her powerful performances in films like *Bareilly Ki Barfi* and *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, 'Soney ka Anda' holds a special place. The short story centres around a woman who is struggling to come to terms with her own identity and desires as a mother and wife, while also navigating the expectations and judgments of those around her. Through the character's inner turmoil and eventual rebellion, the story explores themes of autonomy, societal pressure and the complexities of motherhood. As Pahwa delves into the character's emotional journey, she also reflects on her own experience of being part of the play. "It was such fun working with an all-women cast. We had the best time exploring new places and cuisines when we performed in different cities," she says. The bond and camaraderie among the cast not only adds depth to their performances but also provides a supportive environment for exploring such heavy themes. As women are coming together to tell their stories and give voice to their struggles and triumphs, they are creating a new narrative, one where women are not just half of the equation, but the whole. ■

Lavanyavati will be presented on 4th February, Dekh Behen on 5th February, Aurat Aurat Aurat on 18th February and Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan on 19th February at the Experimental Theatre.

PHOTOS COURTESY: AKVARIOUS PRODUCTIONS (DEKH BEHEN); AAGAAZ THEATRE TRUST (BHAGI HUI LADKIYAN)

Rhythm, Emotion and Aesthetic

The 33rd Pt. Durgalal Festival will celebrate the brilliance of the classical repertoire through two spectacular Kathak and Bharatanatyam recitals.

By Aishwarya Sahasrabudhe

Springtime connotes new beginnings and to usher in the vivacity of the *vasanta ritu*, award-winning Kathak danseuse and artiste Gauri Diwakar will take the stage at the NCPA's Tata Theatre this February with a performance themed *Sarve Nava* or "everything new". At the 33rd edition of the annual Pt. Durgalal Festival, Diwakar's recital will invoke the blossoming of age-old compositions in newer renditions that simultaneously retain the evergreen form and technique of the classical repertoire.

Organised by the Sam Ved Society for Performing Arts, the festival has been running for over three decades as a tribute by the renowned Kathak artiste and tour de force, Uma Dogra. It pays homage to the enduring legacy of her mentor and guru, Durgalal, maestro of the Jaipur *gharana*, and is one of multiple efforts undertaken by the Sam Ved Society to preserve



Gauri Diwakar

and promote the classical arts. Another such initiative is the Raindrops Festival which provides a platform to young, up-and-coming dancers by connecting emerging talent to audiences and collaborators. The Pt. Durgalal Festival brings to connoisseurs celebrated masters of classical dance in spellbinding presentations.

PURE AND TRADITIONAL

In the upcoming edition, the festival will feature, along with Diwakar, the Bharatanatyam danseuse Meenakshi Srinivasan. Even as the artistes practise two distinct dance styles, both emanate an identical eagerness and gratitude for having been invited to perform at Sam Ved's festival by the doyenne of the Jaipur *gharana*. Srinivasan, who is based in Chennai, recalls fondly how Dogra spotted her in a virtual performance during the pandemic leading to the generous invitation to dance in Mumbai. She now looks forward to presenting an *abhinaya*-centred piece at the festival because it was her expression that the stalwart had admired.

On her performance for the festival, Diwakar says, "Umaji wanted a pure, traditional Kathak recital." Reconciling this vision with the onset of spring, the performer's choreographies will weave Kathak's traditional repertoire into the season's rejuvenating spirit. She will unpack Taal Basant (nine beats) accompanied by a *shloka* describing the season. Exploring Kathak's *abhinaya*, the dancer is set to showcase at least two compositions, a *bandish* by Bulleh Shah celebrating the festival of colours through the poignant lyrics, 'Holi khelungi kehekar Bismillah!' and the poem 'Naino ke dore laal gulaal bhare' by Suryakant Tripathi "Nirala" that marks the blossoming of romance and hues of spring in a *nayika*'s narration of the night she spent with her beloved.

Srinivasan's recital too will immerse audiences in traditional Bharatanatyam repertoire and accompanied by a "fantastic set of musicians," she hopes to draw spectators into their collective space in a shared experience of the movement that unfolds onstage. The *varnam* will be integral to her performance, she notes. A coming together of *laya* (tempo) and poetry depicting vignettes from mythology, the *varnam* is the centrepiece of a Bharatanatyam recital and will highlight the festival's focus on the classical because as Srinivasan asserts, it "conveys so much about what Bharatanatyam is."



Meenakshi Srinivasan

THINKING DANCERS

Recipients of the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, both Diwakar and Srinivasan have enjoyed an artistic career spanning decades, earning them several accolades and laurels.

For Diwakar—who trained at the Kathak Kendra in New Delhi under Birju Maharaj, followed by years of tutelage from his son, Jaikishen Maharaj—knowledge of dance transcends the mastery of *toda*, *tukda*, *paran* to become more about cultivating a knowing approach towards choreography and performance. One must be recognised as a 'thinking dancer', she affirms, attributing the development of her creative process to the training she received from Kathak exponent, Aditi Mangaldas, known for a creative genius that infuses traditional repertoire with a contemporary aesthetic.

It was Mangaldas who encouraged Diwakar to expand her worldview, to draw inspiration not only from Kathak but also from other dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Odissi, and art forms like painting and sculpture, bringing about exceptional shifts in her choreographic process. Now a senior member of The Drishtikon Dance Foundation run by Mangaldas, Diwakar explains that in turning to the stalwart for training, it was not so much the technique but Mangaldas's approach, her "aesthetic, passion, thinking", that she wanted to imbibe.

These learnings are reflected in Diwakar's own productions like *Earth Diaries*. Referring to herself as a *munshi* (account keeper), she translated her habit of

recording every life detail into a performance that leapt beyond pirouettes and footwork to tell a story from birth to adolescence to adulthood and the ensuing love and sensuality, entirely revealed through diary entries blended into Kathak's movement vocabulary.

OF PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICE

This multi-layered aspect of dance, recognises Srinivasan, is such that "it draws from music, poetry, sculpture, architecture, philosophy, human psyche, emotion," becoming a unifying and holistic experience for the performer and audience alike.

Describing the synergy so created, especially in a performance with live musical accompaniments, she opines that dance is as much about the *bhava*—the emotion generated from elements other than the dancer, like the lyric, rhythm and the emotionality of the music and musician. From the mridangam player to the flautist to the vocalist, each artiste pours their own *bhava* into the performance so that the essence of every note and tune seeps into the dance to produce an organic spectacle, unique to every recital.

The multi-layered aspect of dance is such that it draws from music, poetry, sculpture, architecture, philosophy, human psyche and emotion

Moreover, the movement vocabulary of Bharatanatyam is itself structured to perfection, Srinivasan states. A dancer can draw such energy from its physicality that it activates sensation, right up to the fingertips. Each movement of the body, even the transition of the *mudras*, she says, creates an experience that, coupled with discipline and technique, can lead the dancer towards freedom. Bharatanatyam, Srinivasan asserts, "allows you to be liberated because of the way it is structured, and that is the physicality of the dance."

Inevitably, for Srinivasan, practising Bharatanatyam is more than a career, it is a way of life that allows her to grow, "both as a person and as an artiste". Yet, even as she enjoys dancing in her own space, she emphasises the need for festivals celebrating classical arts as a way for the repertoire to reach a larger audience. Diwakar, who has showcased Kathak at notable spaces like the Darbar Festival, the Sydney Dance Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, agrees that such platforms are necessary to encourage artistes. Motivated artistes, rooted in tradition and unafraid to stoke their creative fire—the Pt. Durgalal Festival promises to be a connoisseur's delight. ■

The 33rd Pt. Durgalal Festival will be presented on 5th February at the Tata Theatre.

The Music of Life

On Marathi Bhasha Diwas, the oral tradition of Maharashtra will be celebrated through a musical presentation of the state's diverse literary forms. An initiative of the NCPA, in association with the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra, the event has been conceptualised by author-scholar Dhanashree Lele. While she captures the spirit of the tradition in Marathi, we bring you its essence here.

In the journey of sound to music, life, through the mundane and the extraordinary, is a constant companion. There is the music of the millstone, the kind that emanates from the monotonous but rhythmic grinding of grain and breaks this very monotony. There is the music of celebration that dips into the beauty and peculiarities of rites of passage and strings together songs around them. And all these forms of expression make up our oral heritage, which thrives as long as there are voices that sing its songs and hands that play its music.

The culturally rich land of Maharashtra boasts its own treasure of oral traditions, of which the 'ovi'—perhaps best explained as the song of life—forms an inseparable part. Back in the day, when labour was manual and chores and celebrations were communal activities, these *ovis* were a refreshing aid to ease fatigue, keep pace with the task at hand and add colour to festivities. Sung by women whose circumstances robbed them of access to formal education, the *ovi* accomplished something more. A fascinating mode of communication, it is a couplet that follows a definite metrical structure and is never devoid of a message—simple at times, subversive at others.

The fragrance of colloquialisms infuses the *ovi*. 'Lakshman' is sung as 'Lakshuman'; 'Sarsoti' refers to 'Saraswati'; 'Pani' is without the purist, retroflexed 'na' sound. The choice of words is reflective of the worlds

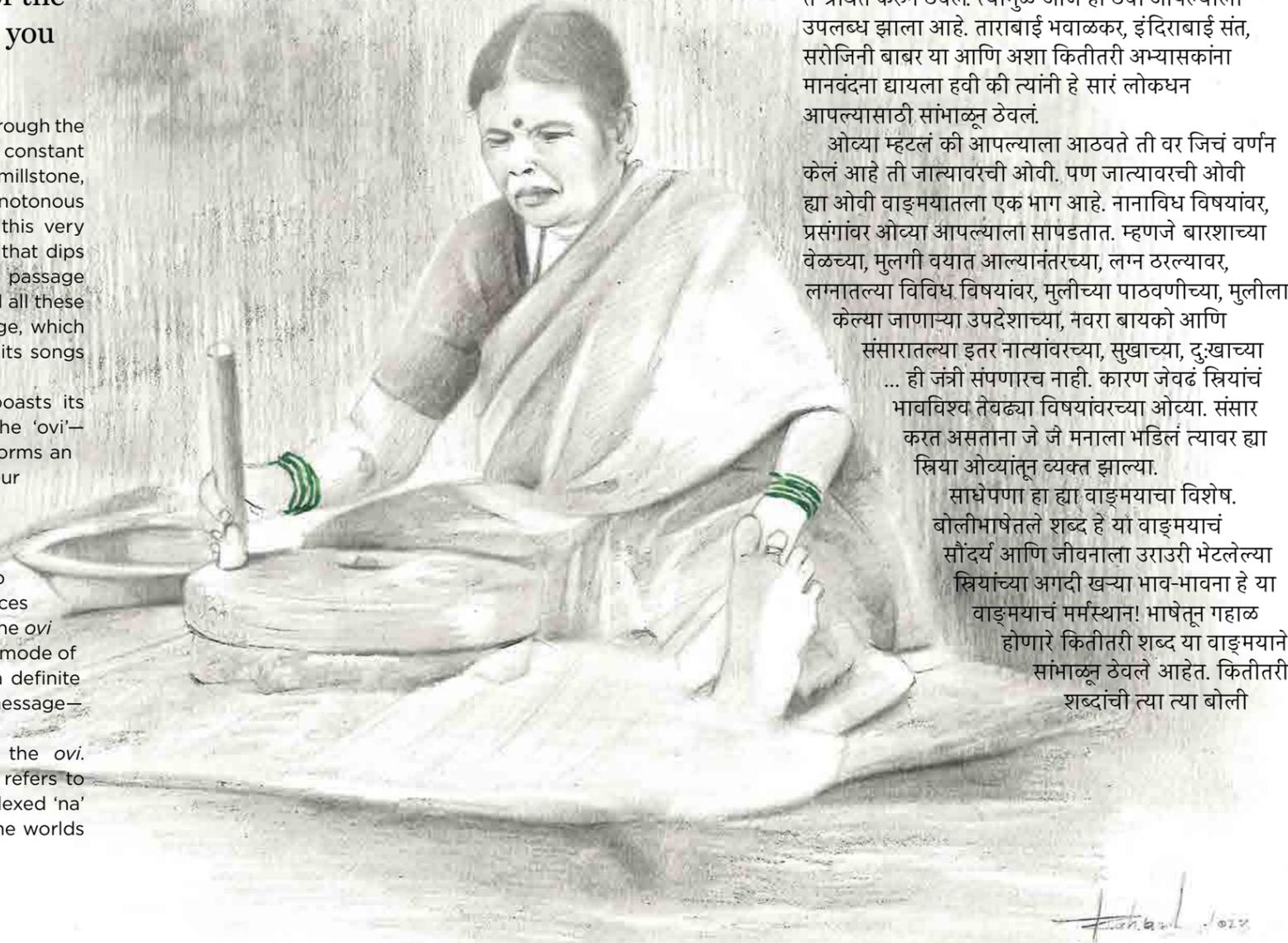
the women inhabit too. Ram and Lakshuman are referred to as 'ranjan', which means both, treasure (in terms of wealth) and a big pot of mud to store grain (a form of treasure, too).

Distinct from the performative side, this music is deeply personal. The women who sing these songs seek no listeners. Unlike the 'kahat Kabir/Rahiman' expression one comes across in the *dohas* of the poet saints, the creators of the *ovi* leave no trace of themselves in their couplets, leaving these portraits of life unsigned.

As labour-intensive chores get consigned to oblivion, the associated vocabulary is falling into disuse—as is the *ovi*. Had they not been documented by enlightened academicians like Tarabai Bhavalkar, Indirabai Sant and Sarojini Babar, many of these *ovis* would have faded away. Today, these creations of 'unlettered' women are studied in universities. Their meaning is deep and philosophical, belying the label of illiteracy that never got in the way of their wisdom. For, these women have been to the school of life.

The *ovi* was never meant for academic confines, though. It comes alive when it is sung. The evening of 'Ovi Ovi Gumphali' attempts to do just that.

- Translated and edited by Snigdha Hasan



ओवी ओवी गुंफली

धनश्री लेले

पहाटेची वेळ... डोंगर दरीत विसावलेलं एक टुमदार गांव, खेडं. सारी घरदारं साखर-झोपेत. पण घरात ओसरीवर मात्र एक समई उजळलेली. या प्रकाशात दसितं काय? तर दोन स्त्रिया जात्याच्या समोरासमोर बसून, एक पाय दुमडून एक पाय मोकळा सोडून, आपल्या हिरवीगार काकणं भरलेल्या हाताने जात्याला घास भरवतायत, मुठी मुठीने जेवू घालतायत आणि एका हाताने जात्याचा खुंटा घट्ट पकडून जातं फिरवायला सुरवात करतात.... हळू हळू त्यांच्या शरीराला एक सुंदर वळणदार लय प्राप्त होते. जातं फिरू लागतं आणि हळू हळू त्या जात्यातून बाहेर पडू लागतं ते जात्यात घातलेल्या धान्याचं मऊ, सुगंधित पीठ. जात्यातून पीठ झरायला लागतं तसं या सुवासिनींच्या मुखातून प्रकाटायला लागते ती ओवी !

या ओव्यांनी, निरक्षर स्त्रीच्या ओवी वाड्मयाने मराठी भाषेच्या साहित्याला समृद्ध केलं आहे. खरंतर वाचेवरून वाचेवर फरिणारं हे वाड्मय काळाच्या प्रवाहात कधीच लुप्त झालं असतं पण या महाराष्ट्रभूमीतल्या लोकसाहित्याच्या जागरूक अभ्यासकांनी मात्र ह्या प्रकाराचं मोल जाणलं आणि ते प्रथित करून ठेवलं. त्यामुळे आज हा ठेवा आपल्याला उपलब्ध झाला आहे. ताराबाई भवाळकर, इंदिराबाई संत, सरोजिनी बाबर या आणि अशा कितीतरी अभ्यासकांना मानवंदना घायला हवी की त्यांनी हे सारं लोकधन आपल्यासाठी सांभाळून ठेवलं.

ओव्या म्हटलं की आपल्याला आठवते ती वर जिचं वर्णन केलं आहे ती जात्यावरची ओवी. पण जात्यावरची ओवी ह्या ओवी वाड्मयातला एक भाग आहे. नानाविध विषयांवर, प्रसंगांवर ओव्या आपल्याला सापडतात. म्हणजे बारशाच्या वेळच्या, मुलगी वयात आल्यानंतरच्या, लग्न ठरल्यावर, लग्नातल्या विविध विषयांवर, मुलीच्या पाठवणीच्या, मुलीला केल्या जाणाऱ्या उपदेशांच्या, नवरा बायको आणि संसारातल्या इतर नात्यांवरच्या, सुखाच्या, दुःखाच्या ... ही जंत्री संपणारच नाही. कारण जेवढं स्त्रियांचं भावविश्व तेवढ्या विषयांवरच्या ओव्या. संसार करत असताना जे जे मनाला भडिलं त्यावर ह्या स्त्रिया ओव्यांतून व्यक्त झाल्या.

साधेपणा हा ह्या वाड्मयाचा विशेष. बोलीभाषेतले शब्द हे या वाड्मयाचं सौंदर्य आणि जीवनाला उराउरी भेटलेल्या स्त्रियांच्या अगदी खऱ्या भाव-भावना हे या वाड्मयाचं मर्मस्थान! भाषेतून गहाळ होणारे कितीतरी शब्द या वाड्मयाने सांभाळून ठेवले आहेत. कितीतरी शब्दांची त्या त्या बोली

भाषेत गेल्यानंतरची आगळी वेगळी रूपं सांभाळून ठेवली आहेत. ते सगळं पाहताना आपण या ओव्यांमध्ये गुंतून जातो.

केवळ शब्दच नाही तर काव्य म्हणून या प्रकाराचा विचार करताना भाषेतले कितीतरी अलंकार ह्या ओव्यांनी ल्यायले आहेत. **पानी व न पडतं | टपकलं थेंब थेंब | झाडं झाली चिंब चिंब | ...** बाहेर पडणाऱ्या पावसाचं हे वर्णन. पण किती काव्यमय! स्वभावोक्ती अलंकाराचं उत्तम उदाहरण ! किंवा- **राम लुमण | दोघे धनाचे रांजण |** ह्या एवढ्याश्या चरणातून रामलक्ष्मण याचं वर्णन किती अचूक करतात ह्या स्त्रीया. त्या दोघांचं वर्णन करताना 'दोघे धनाचे रांजण' असं म्हणून त्याचं अमोलिकत्व ती किती बहारीने सांगते. उपमा अलंकाराचं हे उत्तम उदाहरण. या स्त्रिया स्वतः शिकलेल्या नव्हत्या पण त्यांना जे काव्य स्फुरत होतं त्याचा अभ्यास मात्र आज विद्यापीठातून केला जातो हेच त्यांच्या काव्याचं खरं मोल. खरंच कोणी शिकवलं या स्त्रियांना हे सगळं? याचं उत्तर एकच ! जे बहिणाबाईंनी दिलंय **'माझी माय सरसोती | माले शिकविते बोयी | लेक बहिणाच्या मनी | किती गुपितं पेरली |'**

या कवयित्रींचं सगळ्यात मोठं गुणवैशिष्ट्य म्हणजे यांचा श्रद्धाळू स्वभाव, भावनेनं ओथंबलेलं मन ! या गुणविशेषामुळे अवतीभवतीच्या साध्या साध्या गोष्टींकडे या चैतन्ययुक्त नजरेने पाहतात आणि निर्जीव वस्तूला ही सजीव, सचेतन करून टाकतात. **तुळशीबाई तुझा | हिरवागार शेला | सावळ्या गोविंदाने | येता जाता हलविला ||** तुळशीची हिरवीगार पानं म्हणजे पानं नाहीत तर तिने नेसलेला तो शेला आहे. हे वाचता वाचता तुळस फक्त झाड उरत नाही तर आपल्या डोळ्याला उंची हिरव्या रंगाचा शालू नेसलेली एखादी सुवासिन दिसू लागते. आणि तो सावळा गोविंद फक्त देवळात उभा नाही तर वाऱ्याचं रूप घेऊन तोच माझ्या अंगणात धावत असतो आणि येता जाता तुळशीचा शेला हलवत असतो. असं तो गोविंद आणि तुळस यांना अगदी आपल्या डोळ्यासमोर दोन पात्र म्हणून उभी करते.

इतकं सुंदर काव्य करणाऱ्या ह्या स्त्रिया किती साध्या, भोळ्या. कुठेही आपलं नाव त्या गुंफत नाहीत. त्यामुळे हे सुंदर सुंदर ऐवज घडवले कोणी? अशा प्रश्नाचं उत्तर एकच कुण्या प्रतीभावती अनामिक स्त्रीने ! ह्या स्त्रिया आपलं नाव का गुंफत नाहीत? कारण त्यांना आपण काही वेगळं, काही मोठं केलंय असं वाटत नाही. त्यांना त्यातून पैसा, प्रसिद्धी, पुरस्कार काही मिळवायचं नसतं. ज्याप्रमाणे आकाशात मेघ दाटून आले की मोर उत्स्फूर्तपणे नृत्य करतात त्याप्रमाणे हृदयात भाव दाटून आले की ह्या स्त्रिया त्यांना शब्दातून वाट देतात.

ह्या स्त्रिया साध्या असतील, खेडवळ असतील, निरक्षर असतील पण त्याचं काव्य साधं नाही. ह्या ओव्यातून ती आपलं निरीक्षण मांडत असते. निसर्ग, माणूस, माणसाचा स्वभाव सारं सारं ती पाहत असते. आणि ह्या सगळ्यातून तिला जे जीवनाच्या अनुभवाचं संचित हाती येतं ते ती काव्यातून मांडते. कधी कधी तर एखाद्या तत्वज्ञाने काही सांगावं असं ती बोलून जाते. तिचं निरक्षर असणं तिच्या विवेकाच्या आड कधीच येत नाही. कारण ती जीवनाच्या शाळेत शिकून मोठी झालेली असते. ■

Ovi Ovi Gumphali: Celebrating Marathi Language Day will be presented on 24th February at the Experimental Theatre.

THE POLITICS OF ART

Ronald Harwood's *Taking Sides* is set in another time and place but raises questions about art and politics that we still grapple with.

By Prachi Sibal

Recently, on social media, a meme was doing the rounds. The picture displayed a hospital set-up and a doctor who had visibly collapsed due to exhaustion. It claimed that he had died 'separating the art from the artist'. Its virality had a lot to do with the fact that the question has remained a part of our collective conscience for decades, whether it was in times of political upheaval or the MeToo movement.

Is it possible to experience and appreciate the art without the artiste? Is it possible to separate them? Is art only spiritual? Can art and politics exist in silos? Is all art political? Some of these questions are central to *Taking Sides*, a play by South African-British playwright Ronald Harwood.

Set in post-World War II Germany, *Taking Sides* is about the denazification investigation of a renowned

composer and conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, who once led the Berlin Philharmonic. At the peak of Hitler's regime, Furtwängler was among the few artistes who hadn't fled the country. He claimed that he never joined the party or pandered to the Nazi salute. Famously 'Hitler's favourite conductor', Furtwängler's life and work have always been shrouded in controversy.

Written in 1995, Harwood's play delves deep into the dichotomy of Furtwängler's life through a singular investigation by an American army officer, Major Steve Arnold, who represents the Allied Forces after the fall of Nazi Germany. Harwood held a deep interest in the Nazi period in Germany, and *Taking Sides* is one of his many attempts at investigating the fall of the empire through its people. The best-known of his works, the Academy Award-winning film *The*

Sukant Goel and Kashin Shetty
in a scene from *Taking Sides*

surroundings at the time and how things were playing out in the socio-economic sphere. I was also younger and my concerns were different," he says further, of his views.

TAKING ON A CLASSIC

When Kumar revisited *Taking Sides* during the pandemic, this time as a script, he realised that his views had changed, almost diametrically. It also made him deeply aware of the relevance of the play and its central debate in the current political climate. "It moved me equally. I think it's even more important right now to our country and to me as an artiste. It has questions I ask myself every day. It became extremely urgent and important to me to attempt it as a performance piece," he says.

Ironic as it may be, Kumar chose to play Furtwängler at a time when his views had aligned with the 'side' of the investigating Major Arnold. "I invoke what I held previously to bring some justice to the character as an actor. Because I am now on the side of the major, it also makes me portray the artiste with a lot more humility. As a director, it leaves me with some ambivalence," he explains.

Kumar has also directed the play and opted for a light directorial touch in view of the intense, well-crafted material he was working with. "We didn't have to do too much with the dramaturgy. All it required was some clever editing so we retain the backbone of the play without it becoming too long. We worked a bit on the scenography and design," he says, about the process.

The result is a haunting piece with powerful performances, especially by Kumar as Furtwängler and actor Sukant Goel as Arnold. Also part of the investigation is a German secretary, a German-American lieutenant and a pianist who played at the Berlin Philharmonic. Briefly, the wife of a Jew pianist appears to testify for Furtwängler, claiming that he helped her husband escape Germany during the regime. Actors Mallika Singh, Kashish Saluja, Kashin Shetty/Kenneth Desai and Richa Jain form the rest of the cast.

Pianist, directed by Roman Polanski, was the story of a Holocaust survivor, a Polish-Jew pianist. *Taking Sides* was adapted into a film in 2001 by Hungarian director István Szabó and received critical acclaim. Harwood wrote the screenplay himself.

It is this adaptation that The Company Theatre's Atul Kumar first encountered 15 years ago, at a film festival in Mumbai, that led him to produce the work for the stage. It opened in February 2022, right after theatres came to life following the pandemic.

Kumar remembers being deeply influenced and moved by the subject and the questions it poses. He knew that at some point in his life, he was going to attempt it as a play. "Little did I know that it was already a play!" he recounts. "What affected me then was quite simply the position and the condition of the artiste. I was not as politically aware of my

Set in post-World War II Germany, *Taking Sides* is about the denazification investigation of a renowned composer and conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, who once led the Berlin Philharmonic

Though titled *Taking Sides*, that is the one thing the play chooses not to do...it presents both sides, that of the artiste who believes in the spiritual aspect of art devoid of politics and of the Major who believes all art is political

SETTING THE STAGE

Coming to the more practical aspects of mounting a production in the pandemic, Kumar tells us, he chose not to audition for this one. "It was born of that period of turmoil. It was easier and safer to cast people I knew and could identify with the roles. For a long time, we did not rehearse together. We would do it in bunches of twos and threes, or over Zoom," he says.

Besides rehearsals and engaging with Harwood's text, Kumar and the cast also dipped their toes in research about the period and the compositions of Furtwängler. "We also heard a lot of pieces played by another conductor who was actually a Nazi party member and found him to be better. We read a lot about interrogations of artistes from the period and about the Gestapo (the official secret police of Nazi Germany). It allowed us to understand and play the truth of the time and the moment."

MANY QUESTIONS

While the play is titled *Taking Sides*, it is the one thing that it chooses not to do. It presents both sides, that of the artiste who believes in the spiritual aspect of art devoid of politics and of the Major who believes all art is political. "We would like the audience to go back with questions and the heaviness of not being able to take a side. Troubled, disturbed and moved," Kumar says, adding, "I've had people text me weeks later about how they couldn't pick a side. They don't have to as long as it creates an internal dialogue."

Kumar, who has in the past been known for his adaptations including those of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* titled *Piya Behrupiya* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* titled *Khwaab Sa*, chose not to adapt or translate *Taking Sides*. "It's a question that came early to us, about 10 to 15 days into rehearsals. Why am I doing a play about Nazi Germany? The answer is, it is relevant to me. Why is it relevant? Because of

Director Atul Kumar, who also directed *Piya Behrupiya*, the much-acclaimed adaptation of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, plays Wilhelm Furtwängler in *Taking Sides*



what is happening to us in our country. Then, why am I not doing something more direct?" he says, admitting that translation or adaptation would have been a better way but would make for a whole other project.

It also brings Kumar to a deeper, more urgent question in the arts sector in the country. "Should I be doing anything at this point that is not directly about us? Why should I pick Shakespeare? Or anything from another time, another culture, another situation. It's always once removed," he says.

Quite like the play he has chosen, there are many sides to these questions and Kumar doesn't have all the answers, only more questions. They are bound to make you ponder about the urgency of the artistic choices we make in the times we are living in. "To be making plays that are soulful would be an opaque way of looking at art, or life, or both. What will you do if your neighbour is being killed? Would you still continue to compose music believing it serves a higher purpose? That murderers and tyrants will be moved by music?" ■

Taking Sides will be presented on 25th February at the Experimental Theatre.

PLAMENA MANGOVA

piano

- BRAHMS** Sonata No. 3 in F minor
- CHOPIN** Etude Op. 25 No. 7 in G minor
- CHOPIN** Ballade No. 1 in G minor
- LISZT** Petrarch Sonnet 104
- SCHUBERT/LISZT** Der Atlas
- GINASTERA** Argentinian Dances, Op. 2

13 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7.00 PM



ALIM BEISEMBAYEV

piano

- SCHUBERT** Sonata in C minor, D.958
- LISZT** Transcendental Etudes, Nos. 9-12, S. 139
- RACHMANINOFF** Prelude in D major, Op. 23 No. 4
- RACHMANINOFF** Moments Musicaux No. 2
- RACHMANINOFF** Etude-tableau Op. 33 No.3 in C minor
- RACHMANINOFF** Etude-tableau Op. 39 No. 5 in E-flat minor

17 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7.00 PM



ADAM WALKER

flute

JAMES BAILLIEU

piano

- POULENC** Sonata for flute & piano, FP. 164
- MOZART** Andante in C major, K. 315
- MOZART** Rondo in D major, K. Anh. 184
- BIZET/BORNE** Carmen Fantasy
- FRANCK** Sonata for flute & piano in A major

21 FEBRUARY 2023 | 7.00 PM



We Do ‘The Waste Land’

We take a look at the shape of the world on and off the page a hundred years ago as T. S. Eliot was writing his epic poem.

By Dr. Shefali Balsari-Shah



An illustration depicting German soldiers carrying white flags, which marked the beginning of the end of the First World War

The Waste Land’ by T.S. Eliot, published in 1922, has become one of the most important documents of modernism despite its fearsome reputation of being incomprehensible to all but “the superior guys” (Ezra Pound). It is a shambolic behemoth, often buckling under the weight of its quotations from literary and popular works in different languages and styles, obscure allusions and references, and a gallery of seemingly random figures. Are all these little more than fragments, the ramblings during Eliot’s nervous breakdown that were later knocked into shape by Pound, his friend and mentor, whom he duly credited as “the better craftsman”? Or do these fragments constitute an extraordinarily rich collage with a central vision, theme and purpose? Eliot, years later, described the poem as “the relief of a personal and wholly insignificant grouse against life...just a piece of rhythmical grumbling.” His contemporaries,

however, saw it as capturing the cultural and spiritual ruptures in a sterile post-war world and the cry of an entire civilisation in crisis. ‘The Waste Land’ was quickly projected as the essential statement of that crisis and the epitome of high modernism.

The first two decades of the 20th century witnessed the emergence of modernism, a movement marked by a breaking away from tradition, a heady pursuit of experimentation in form and technique, and a celebration of the avant-garde. Expressionist and Cubist paintings like Picasso’s ‘Les Femmes d’Alger’ (1907) and Marcel Duchamp’s ‘Nude Descending a Staircase’ (1911) blatantly defied established rules of representation; the Imagist poets (from 1911 onwards) advocated direct treatment of a subject using precise words for visual clarity in the style of a musical phrase, not dependent on a specific rhythm or rhyme; James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922) experimented with non-linear narrative,

SHUTTERSTOCK

followed by Virginia Woolf and the stream-of-consciousness novel; Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring* (1913) broke established conventions of music by introducing dissonance, deliberately harsh sounds and impossibly high notes while, starting with Scott Joplin (1904 onwards), the growing popularity of ragtime and jazz relocated music out of concert halls and into music halls, bars and speakeasies. On the other hand, in the aftermath of World War I, there was an increasing sense of disillusionment, alienation and fragmentation, intensified by the grim depictions by war poets like Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg of rat- and lice-infested trenches and battlefields strewn with dismembered bodies. The old world seemed irrevocably destroyed; what remained was, as Pound bleakly put it, “a botched civilisation” amounting to a mere “two gross of broken statues ... a few thousand battered books.” All these facets of modernism form the context for ‘The Waste Land’.

life-giving rain. The “Unreal city” where “a crowd flowed over London Bridge” opens up, by the end, to a vast spatio-temporal panorama, “What is the city over the mountains/ Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air/ Falling towers/ Jerusalem Athens Alexandria/ Vienna London/ Unreal.” These syncopated yet lyrical confluences of history and geography infuse the poem with a floating timelessness.

Section II, ‘A Game of Chess’, is a brilliant example of Eliot’s bricolage that also, incidentally, blurs the conventional boundaries between high and low culture. The opening lines echo Shakespeare’s *Antony and Cleopatra*, then shift to Ovid’s story of the rape of Philomela and her transformation into a nightingale, followed by an abrupt “Jug jug”, conventionally representing both birdsong in Renaissance poetry and coarse sexual activity. Suddenly we hear a querulous woman: “Speak to me. Why do you never speak? Speak,” her male

T.S. Eliot, years later, described ‘The Waste Land’ as “just a piece of rhythmical grumbling” but his contemporaries saw it as capturing the cultural and spiritual ruptures in a sterile post-war world and the cry of an entire civilisation in crisis

Eliot originally titled his work ‘He do the Police in Different Voices’, a phrase from Dickens’s *Our Mutual Friend* (1864) describing young Sloppy, “a beautiful reader of the newspaper”, who invents different police voices for the crime reports. Eliot’s poem abounds in contrapuntal sounds similar to the sound of a radio being tuned between different stations, static and all; indeed, these tonal shifts constitute the underlying structure. For, it is when we listen attentively to its polyphonic music that the poem begins to make a kind of sense and seep into us, and we appreciate what Eliot himself said, that “genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.”

The voices come in various, often disconcerting, forms, sometimes switches between an array of shape-shifting characters, elsewhere a constant intercutting of indirect references and twists on familiar lines. Other kinds of voices come from cinematic settings in vastly different times and places: the “Sweet Thames” of Elizabethan England becomes the muddy swirl that “sweats/ Oil and tar” in modern times and, in turn, transmutes into the “sunken” Ganga strewn with “limp leaves” awaiting

companion’s response, likely unspoken, “I think we are in rats’ alley / Where the dead men lost their bones,” and then a riff on a ragtime song “O O O O that Shakespearian rag”. The section ends with an overheard conversation in a pub, interrupted with increasing frequency by “HURRY UP PLEASE IT’S TIME,” the standard warning that closing time is approaching, but with a sinister suggestion of imminent death or apocalypse. The final “Good night, sweet ladies” recalls Ophelia’s last words before her death in *Hamlet*.

War is the background to the poem, with the implication that all wars are, in reality, the same one. In section I, two men hail each other near London bridge: “Stetson! / You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!” But are these the voices of veterans of the ancient Punic Wars, or of WWI, or an uncanny anticipation of the My Lai of Vietnam notoriety? In section II, Eliot gives war a relatable human face: two women are discussing Lil, wife of a soon-to-be demobilised soldier: “think of poor Albert, / He’s been in the army four years, he wants a good time, / And if you don’t give it him there’s others will, I said.” Thus, through his characters and the stories we can imagine



T. S. Eliot originally wrote 800 lines for 'The Waste Land' which were edited to 433 at the suggestion of his friend Ezra Pound

for them, Eliot personifies swathes of social history.

The use of so many interwoven voices allows Eliot to distance himself from any single statement or position. This technique also underscores the futility of the question, which of them is true. They are all true and not true, co-existing multiple, if conflicting, realities. In Eliot's first significant poem 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' the protagonist, like the nude in Duchamp's painting, is frozen simultaneously on different levels and planes, repeatedly agonising, "Do I dare?" By the end of 'The Waste Land', Eliot

'The Waste Land' abounds in contrapuntal sounds similar to the sound of a radio being tuned between different stations, static and all; indeed, these tonal shifts constitute the underlying structure

seems to accept that "the heap of broken images" need not mean abandonment of hope, that even if "London Bridge [and civilisation] is falling down," one can muse, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?", and that even "these fragments I have shored against my ruins" can lead to "the Peace which passeth understanding."

Postscript: Daily Covid report from Dr. Craig R. Smith, Surgeon-in-Chief, Columbia University Medical Center: "Writing on April 1 [2020], late in the day, I can't possibly be the first person to shout out the first four lines of 'The Waste Land' (T.S. Eliot). But first or not, I can't resist: 'April is the cruelest month, breeding / Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing / Memory and desire, stirring / Dull roots with spring rain.' ... In an April that may be apocalyptically cruel, that is how we are poised, desiring spring."

We are still desperately shoring up fragments and yearning for meaning in a post-post-modern world. It looks as though 'The Waste Land' will be around for at least another hundred years. ■

Dr. Shefali Balsari-Shah is former Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Mumbai.

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Shortfilm corner

An NCPA Presentation
In collaboration with White Wall Screenings



The film screenings will be followed by a discussion
24th February 2023 | 6:30 pm
Little Theatre, NCPA

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis | NCPA members will get preferential seating till 6:20 pm



A Letter to Jean-Luc Godard

From Shivendra Singh Dungarpur

I am a painter with letters.

I want to restore everything, mix everything up and say everything.

- Jean-Luc Godard

Dear Jean-Luc.

This is another letter to you, of the many I have sent over the years that you have never answered, except for the postcard I once received that said simply, in your hand, Jean-Luc Godard.

But while your acknowledgement of my existence gave me momentary pause, it still did not satisfy my deep desire to meet you. In my quest to reach you, I reached the town of Bayonne, in the southwest of France, near the Spanish border, to meet Raoul Coutard, probably the person whose camera told your vision in the language of images. And then suddenly, years later, we were in the same room in Lausanne. I remember the anticipation of a room full of film archivists, each one wondering whether you would really come to receive the FIAF Lifetime Achievement Award, given your past history with awards. You had deemed even an Oscar or an award at Cannes not worth your time. The door opened and there you were, in a hat, coat and muffler, talking to us about the future of cinema. I wanted to speak to you then and came out after you, but as I watched you get into the taxi that would take you home to Rolle, courage somehow failed me and I thought that I would write you another letter.

Martin Scorsese recently wrote—Jean-Luc Godard is perhaps dead. But as you once said, “I make my films not only when I’m shooting but as I dream, eat, read, talk to you” . . . when you are perhaps dead too. For many of us, the language of cinema began with you. When I watched *Breathless* for the first time, it shook me up and it rattled the foundations of the canon that Griffith had laid for the craft of filmmaking. I watched the film again and again trying to bend it to the rules of filmmaking that we thought were written in stone and still failing. You broke every rule, pushed the boundaries, played with the physicality of the medium to create a new form in cinema whose impact will be felt forever. The world changed for me as a filmmaker after *Breathless*.

I wanted to discover every one of your films. And the opportunity presented itself when the Alliance Française

For many of us, the language of cinema began with you...you broke every rule, pushed the boundaries, played with the physicality of the medium to create a new form in cinema, whose impact will be felt for ever

in Mumbai announced a retrospective of your films that were to be screened on 16 mm. I remember standing in long queues, sitting on the floor, leaning against walls, doing everything not to miss this chance. Very much like you, as we aspired to be filmmakers, the cinephile in us lived on and all that mattered to us was the screen.

I watched film after film. I remember walking in to *Une Femme Est Une Femme*, your first foray into colour and a tribute to the Hollywood musical comedy, and falling in love with Anna Karina. In *Vivre Sa Vie*, which Susan Sontag described as “one of the most extraordinary, beautiful, original works of art”, you surprised me with the use of intertitles which appeared like film chapters, each chapter reflecting the influence of Dreyer, Mizoguchi, Baudelaire and Zola. When I think about the ongoing war in Ukraine, I think of your film *Le Petit Soldat*, a daring indictment of France’s involvement and cruelty in the Algerian War and of the bourgeoisie who turned a blind eye to the atrocities, much as we are doing today. It makes me want to muster up the courage to speak up through my work. *Contempt* was your subversive foray into commercial filmmaking that arose from your inner conflict, as an artiste, with the bourgeois world, but it was also a love letter to film and it was a thrill to see Fritz Lang playing himself. *Bande à part* was your take on the gangster film, but how can I forget the iconic dance sequence where you made use of disjointed intercutting of the soundtrack? *Une Femme Mariée*, with its unforgettable black-and-white images, where you interrupted the narrative with shots advertising women’s clothes and a monologue about body image—a film that speaks about memory, history and identity. *Pierrot le Fou* in which one of my favourite directors, Samuel Fuller, appears and exclaims “Emotion!” much like he would fire a gun in the air on his set to signal “Action!” and in which Belmondo and Karina’s journey across France is rife with references to literature, art and the Vietnam War. *Alphaville*, your “science fiction” film that was a cry of protest against worshippers of science and logic.

As the deepening strife and upheaval in the world clamoured for the attention of your cinema, your gaze turned increasingly political. With *Weekend*, you forayed deeper into the realm of politics. I can never forget the iconic single travelling shot as the married couple travels through the endless line of cars in a traffic jam as you show the collapse of bourgeois society and civilisation itself with a title at the end announcing the end of cinema. Was it the end of cinema or the end of cinema and civilisation as we knew it? Was it a prophecy of the times to come? I had so many questions that I wanted to ask you.

You moved further to the Left with *La Chinoise*, a blatantly political film about five young revolutionaries who try to abide by the teachings of Mao and his radical ideas about capitalism and political violence. I was confused. I wanted to believe that you were not idolising them, but mocking them. You then moved on to collaborate with Gorin as part of the Dziga Vertov Group where you rejected bourgeois notions of filmmaking, turning your back on story and characters, retaining an affinity for the abstract and yet drawing from the present to use your cinema as an instrument of provocation.

In 1968, you took to the streets along with Truffaut, Chabrol and other New Wave filmmakers to protest the removal of the great Henri Langlois from the Cinémathèque Française. Years later, I found myself in a similar situation when P.K. Nair, the founder of the National Film Archive of India, our church of cinema, was not allowed back on the premises and my film *Celluloid Man* became my outcry against this injustice.

In *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, I found you again in this exploration of a decade of art, music and movies to piece together a beautiful meditation on the meaning of art and how it defines our lives. Always experimenting, always pushing boundaries, your film *Adieu au Langage*, that I queued up to watch, not once but twice, at the Mumbai Film Festival, captured the inherent poetry of the moving image using 3D cinematography and double exposure. It especially struck a chord with me when you say in the film, “What they call images are becoming the murder of the present.”

To me, your films blurred the boundaries of time, moving seamlessly between the past, present and future, constantly evolving, unexpected, often appearing stylistically random. You gave us art, you showed us a unique language of images and a mastery of its grammar, but today I realise, above all, you gave us a conscience and inspired us to speak the truth through the voice of cinema. Perhaps we didn’t need to meet as we already had our conversation through your films. Goodbye, Jean-Luc. Till we meet again.

Yours ever,
Shivendra Singh Dungarpur ■

Shivendra Singh Dungarpur is a filmmaker, archivist and Founder Director of Film Heritage Foundation. *Movies Under the Stars*, a collaboration between the Film Heritage Foundation and the NCPA, brings curated classics from around the world to film lovers every month.

A Festive Bulletin

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

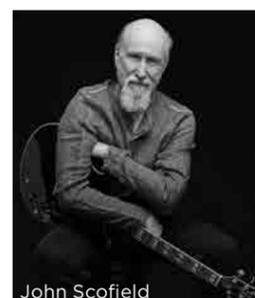
By Aishwarya Bodke

National Symphony Orchestra's 2022-2023 Season

The ongoing season of the National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has seen world premieres, masterworks and an illustrious line-up of guest artistes. A series of concerts running until June has been announced with a diverse programme. Highlights



include Lang Lang's piano recital of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, Sir Mark Elder conducting Mahler's Ninth Symphony, and *The Rite of Spring* by Stravinsky under the baton of Krzysztof Urbanski. In a not-to-be-missed concert, NSO Music Director Gianandrea Noseda will conduct the orchestra in a programme featuring the final sinfonia by George Walker, the first Black composer to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music. The final concert will mark the debut of Joseph Young, Music Director of the Berkeley Symphony, who will conduct Shakespeare's tale of star-crossed lovers in Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. Debuting soloist Michelle Cann will perform Florence Price's Piano Concerto in One Movement. For more information, please visit www.kennedy-center.org



John Scofield

Leuven Jazz Festival

The old university town of Leuven in the heart of Belgium has been a hub of rich and varied cultural offerings. The Leuven Jazz Festival, a salient part of the historic town's annual cultural calendar, completes 10 years in 2023. A 10-day celebration, filled with jazz stars from all over the world, will unfold from 9th to 19th March. In addition to stellar performances, the festival will present movies, living room concerts and family productions across multiple venues, including concert halls, cafés and the streets. Noted American guitarist and composer John Scofield and leading saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin are some of the artistes who will perform at the 2023 edition. Elliott Knuets, the young artiste in residence of Leuven Jazz 2023, will perform in a brand-new quartet with Basile Rahola on double bass, Antoine Pierre on drums and a special surprise guest. Pianist Tigran Hamasyan, who is known to blend powerful jazz improvisations with the rich folkloric music of Armenia, will be featured as well. For more information, please visit www.leuvenjazz.be/en



Kochi-Muziris Biennale

The city of Kochi gleamed a little brighter this Christmas as the fifth edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale kicked off after a long wait. Curated by Singapore-based Indian-origin artist Shubigi Rao, the biennale features works of over 90 artists from across the globe under the central exhibition titled *In Our Veins Flow Ink and Fire*. Running until 10th April, the festival dots the city with art installations, exhibitions, performances, tours, talks, workshops, films and more. Students' Biennale, an integral part of the festival, reaches out to art schools across South Asia and encourages students to exhibit on an international stage. The festival is the country's first-ever biennale of contemporary Indian and international art. Its seeds were sown when the Department of Cultural Affairs under the Government of Kerala approached artists Riyas Komu and Bose Krishnamachari to help organise an international art platform in India. Today, it is not only a colossal centre for artistic engagement but a tender embrace to the city and its people. For more information, please visit www.kochimuzirisbiennale.org

GETTY IMAGES (NSO); WWW.JOHNSCOFIELD.COM (SCOFIELD)

Hong Kong Arts Festival

Running from 17th February to 18th March, the Hong Kong Arts Festival is celebrating its 51st year in 2023. The festival presents leading local and international artistes in various genres of the performing arts, including classical music, theatre, jazz, ballet, opera and more. Ballet of Slovene National Theatre Maribor will open the festival with *Radio and Juliet* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Insula orchestra, Bamberg Symphony, Handspring Puppet Company, and artistes like Natalia Osipova and Philippe Jaroussky are part of the line-up this year. Traditional and new Cantonese opera works await the audience, featuring Cantonese Opera Classics Circa 2023, *Love in the Bamboo Grove* and *The Painted Skin* (Refined Edition). A production of *Table for Six* and the musical *Yat-sen* are highly anticipated. With the addition of Festival PLUS, the HKAF strives to enhance engagement between artistes and audiences through films, lecture



demonstrations, masterclasses, workshops, backstage visits, exhibitions and guided cultural tours. For more information, please visit www.hk.artsfestival.org/en



Sadler's Wells Spring 2023 Season

With performances running until June, Sadler's Wells Spring Season is in full swing. A home for the performing arts for more than three centuries, the festival aspires to create new and inspiring ways to experience dance. The Sadler's Wells theatres in Angel, north London, and the West End will feature acclaimed artistes and international productions. Highlights include Scottish Ballet's exhilarating contemporary rework of *Coppélia*, which promises to push the boundaries of dance, theatre and film. Dada Masilo's *The Sacrifice* and Seeta Patel's interpretative Bharatanatyam piece are inspired by Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Akram Khan's *Creature* presented by the English National Ballet is not to be missed. The National Youth Dance Company, Russell Maliphant Dance Company and Nederlands Dans Theater will be bringing riveting productions this year as well. Two highly anticipated shows of the season will feature Northern Ballet's extravagant offering of *The Great Gatsby* and Akram Khan Company's new dance-theatre production *Jungle Book Reimagined*. For more information, please visit www.sadlerswells.com

KA LAM (HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL)



New Zealand Fringe Festival

Staying true to the Fringe spirit, the 2023 edition of the New Zealand Fringe Festival brings an audaciously diverse programme spread across myriad venues in Wellington. Running between 17th February and 11th March, the open-access festival welcomes local and international artistes, first-time attendees as well as seasoned Fringe goers. What started in 1990 when a group of artistes came home inspired from a trip to the Edinburgh Fringe in Scotland, is now one of the largest multidisciplinary arts festivals in New Zealand. Among other performances, the opening night will showcase Jojo and D'Bear's *Finest of the Fringe - A Late Cabaret*, which promises a decadent evening of comedy, burlesque and cabaret. Award-winning shows such as *The Pandemical Diaries*, *Concept for a Film* and *Invisible Mending* find a fitting place in the festival, in addition to spectacular performances like *Thank You to All My Voyeurs* by Tempest Theatre Co and *The Flying Femmes* by Nicole Maisey and Regina Hegemann. A refreshing line-up of events, including comedy, music, traditional circus, dance, quizzes and theatre make this an exciting edition. For more information, please visit www.fringe.co.nz

InClassica Dubai International Music Festival

The InClassica International Music Festival is one of the most prestigious classical music events in the Middle East, which brings together internationally renowned artistes and music enthusiasts from all over the world. Taking place between 12th February and 10th March in Dubai this year, the festival aims to encourage appreciation and celebration of classical music. The Cukurova State Symphony Orchestra will open the festival with conductor Massimiliano Caldi and Japanese violinist Fumiaki Miura. In addition to a series of concerts by the National Symphony Orchestra of Uzbekistan, the Savaria Symphony Orchestra will present a repertoire of classical and Romantic compositions. A star-studded line-up of artistes, including South Korean pianist Yeol Eum Son, Dutch conductor



Daniel Raiskin and Armenian cellist Alexander Chaushian, promise an unforgettable experience. The closing concert, *Childhood Memories*, will feature the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra and Ukrainian-Austrian pianist Anna Ulaieva. Dedicated evenings celebrating the diverse cultures invited to be a part of the festival will culminate in Hungarian Night, Turkish Evening and the Uzbek Celebration of Music as special additions this year. For more information, please visit inclassica.com



Berlin International Film Festival

The 73rd Berlin International Film Festival is taking place from 16th to 26th February. After two editions with reduced capacity, Berlinale 2023 extends across the city with exciting venues like the Verti Music Hall and Cineplex Titania in Steglitz. The Honorary Golden Bear for lifetime achievement in cinema will be dedicated to filmmaker Steven Spielberg this year. In conjunction with the award ceremony at the Berlinale Palast, *The Fabelmans*, Spielberg's latest feature will be screened along with a selection of his most loved films. Among other highlights are the world premieres of *Seneca - On the Creation of Earthquakes* from German director Robert Schwentke and Alex Gibney's untitled documentary on former tennis champion Boris Becker. Brandon Cronenberg's horror feature *Infinity Pool* will have its European premiere. The environmental thriller *The Swarm* will have its world premiere in the Berlinale Series section, and Priya Sen's *No Stranger at All* will be screened at the Forum Expanded section. The Panorama section will feature feminist cinema from the U.S., Ukraine and Yemen and compelling independent filmmaking from across the globe. For more information, please visit www.berlinale.de/en/home.html



Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club

As MOBO-nominated Natalie Williams's Soul Family gears up for their India debut at the NCPA Soulful Blues in March, we bring you the latest from Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in London, where the band has held a successful monthly residency for more than a decade. When not touring, the Soul Family presents original and choice soul music to packed audiences at what is one of the oldest jazz clubs in the world. Upcoming performances at Ronnie Scott's include the Buddy Rich Big Band featuring Cathy Rich and Emmy Award-winning Gregg Potter, and imaginative, genre-fluid, instrumental jazz by Beats & Pieces Big Band. Julian Siegel Jazz Orchestra's *Tales from the Jacquard*, performances by the Philippe Lemm Trio and Ronnie Scott's Jazz Orchestra are some of the other highlights. For more information, please visit www.ronniescotts.co.uk



The NCPA
Soulful
Blues



MARCH 18, 2023

Béatrice Kahl b.groovy
feat. Joan Faulkner
and David Tobin



MARCH 19, 2023

Natalie Williams
& the Soul Family

HOST BRIAN TELLIS

Tata Theatre, NCPA | 6:30 pm

Box Office: 66223724/54 | www.ncpamumbai.com

Kaleidoscope

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



Notes of resistance

Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast, Founding Director of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM), has been nominated by the International Music Council (IMC) to serve as a Five Music Rights Champion. The Taliban's occupation of Afghanistan was followed by grave concerns about the human rights of its people, especially ones which allow Afghan women to fully and freely participate in society. The Taliban has also repeatedly banned music deeming it sinful under their interpretation of Islamic law. The IMC is dedicated to the advancement of essential music rights for all and creating a world where artistes are recognised and fairly remunerated. The Five Music Rights, focusing on expression, learning, access, development and recognition, reflect the council's core values. Hailed by *NPR* as "a great success story in the effort to renew cultural life and the arts in Afghanistan", Dr. Sarmast joins luminaries that include Cambodia's Arn Chorn-Pond, Egypt's Ramy Essam, the U.K.'s Dame Evelyn Glennie and Kenya's Tabu Osusa. Commenting on his nomination, Dr. Sarmast says, "In such a tragic moment in the history of contemporary Afghanistan when an entire nation is forced into silence...this nomination is extremely important." For the full statement, please visit www.imc-cim.org

Art by prescription

As part of a six-month pilot project, doctors at the Brugmann Hospital in Brussels, Belgium, have been formally prescribing free visits to participating museums in the city to aid patients in navigating through the isolation of depression, stress or anxiety. Launched by Deputy Mayor Delphine Houba, the initiative is modelled

after a similar effort in Canada and aims to help a growing number of people suffering from mental health issues. One of the 20 practitioners involved in the project is Dr. Vincent Lustygier, who has been using art classes and group cultural outings to complement other treatments for decades. However, he believes that a written prescription instead of a suggestion carries more weight with a patient struggling with motivation to step out. Although the pilot project ends in March, it has already piqued interest among other cultural institutions and doctors.

This is also reminiscent of what eminent physician Dr. Farokh Udwardia said in the Dr. Jamshed Bhabha Memorial Lecture in August 2021. "Music helps as a medicine for anxious people. The pulse rate slows, the blood pressure comes down, the stress hormones come down." He recalled 'prescribing' Mozart's Clarinet Concerto to a patient who hadn't slept a wink in a long time. She returned in two weeks calling it a miracle. "It doesn't have to be the clarinet concerto. It could be the andante of Mahler's Fifth Symphony or the second movement of Beethoven's Violin Concerto, Ravi Shankar's sitar or the flute of Hariprasad Chaurasia. It could be any music which suits and pleases them," he said.

Music of migration

The Royal College of Music Museum's exhibition, *Music, Migration & Mobility – The Story of Émigré Musicians from Nazi-*



Europe in Britain, opened in January this year and will be running until April. It observes the experiences of musicians who fled Nazi Germany. A series of interactive maps and personal testimonies delve into the harrowing challenges they faced. Annotated scores, costumes, recordings and concert programmes, alongside photography and personal items, introduce visitors to the musicians' journeys, motivations, experiences and their impact on British culture. Among the musicians are noted composer Joseph Horowitz; the surviving member of the Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz, Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, who founded the English Chamber Orchestra; broadcaster and writer Hans Keller and many others who would go on to play a major role in the development of major British institutions, including the Glyndebourne Festival and Royal Opera. For more information, please visit www.rcm.ac.uk

Artistes assemble



An initiative by Tamaasha Studio Foundation and Kalpalata Trust, 'Us Paar' is a performing arts residency in Kashid, a beach village near Murud in Maharashtra. It was formally launched on 23rd December last year with a large number of theatre practitioners and enthusiasts in attendance. As part of the initiative, the Goshtarang team opened their new show at Us Paar for an audience of 65 primary schoolchildren from the villages of Chikni and Sarve. With workshops, classes, readings and performances, the residency provides a thriving space for various genres, including theatre, music and dance to develop new ideas and projects. It will also function as a performing space for the local community. For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/tamaashatheatre

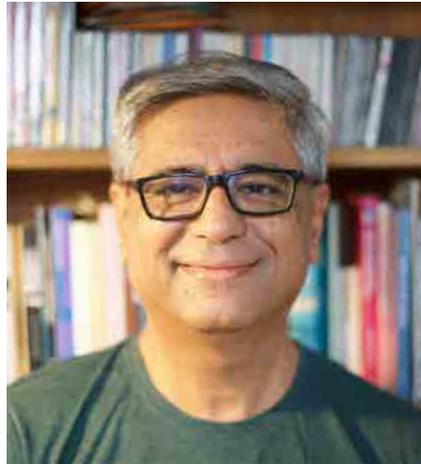
Performing Arts: Theatre

A monthly column that explores any and every aspect of the performing and visual arts. This month, playwright **Mahesh Dattani** makes a case for performing artistes to remember that being in the audience is as important as being onstage.

You will soon associate venues with specific audiences if you are a regular theatre patron in a city or a village maidan. You get to know them through their laughter, applause, silence and boredom. To the performer, it is a well-deserved loyalty. This loyalty is earned by the theatre space and the theatre companies, building bridges between performance and spectators. The regularity with which people experience theatre contributes to its growth artistically and culturally. There is a sophistication involved when a theatregoer decides, “I think I will go see the Motley play”; or “Let me see what’s new at the Experimental”. This kind of a discerning audience leads to sophisticated theatre. It poses such questions to the artiste as “What’s the story, where are we telling it and who are we telling it to?” But there is a set of people conspicuous by their absence among sophisticated audiences—other theatre artistes.

According to the *Natyashastra*, dramaturgy’s aesthetic laws are divided into *natyadharmā*, *lokadharmā* and *manodharmā*. If I were to interpret them loosely, very loosely, to a modern idiom, I would say the principles of theatre are formed by the structure of dramatic storytelling, the play’s relationship to its prospective audience, and finally, the presence of plasticity or the ability to adapt.

A theatre director once said he gets bored seeing other people’s work onstage. And hence he is unfamiliar with what other groups are doing. I hear a similar lament from actors and writers too. We are too busy with rehearsals and performances. When I watch some of the plays put on by groups and individuals with this insular belief, I am amazed at their craftsmanship and talent. But how much richer would their theatre be if there were an interest in the world outside their rehearsal space and show venues? This may be one of the reasons why in this century, despite its volatile atmosphere and uncertainty—fertile ground for art—we do not have a palpable theatre movement in India. What is missing is a real connection—to ideas, human conditions, lifestyles, sexual



mores, movements, isms or anything that emerges from our time and place. We begin by connecting with other artistes and their work, by interacting, talking, listening, reading, writing—any way to connect truly.

When the Moscow Art Theatre performed in the United States, they changed American theatre with Stanislavsky’s systematic approach to performance that was psychologically truthful. This artistic exchange eventually transformed theatre aesthetics worldwide because prominent American theatre practitioners like Harold Clurman, Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg were present in the audience and were open to the new form. Their plasticity as artistes allowed them to rethink and reimagine. Six years later, they formed the Group Theater. The rest is history.

Veenapani Chawla was enamoured by the *navarasas* portrayed by *Koodiyattam* actors. Her desire to build a modern theatre based on the *navarasas* compelled her to form Adishakti in Pondicherry, developing her training system to suit the contemporary actor and audience. The Indian People’s Theatre Association, celebrating its 80th anniversary this year, was an offshoot of the Progressive Writers’ Association. IPTA’s first president was N.M. Joshi, a trade union leader. The group brought a wave of middle-class political consciousness to modern Indian theatre.

A modest school hall in Dadar, Mumbai,

gave rise to experimental Marathi theatre in the 1970s. The theatre movement was called the Chhabildas movement, named after the school. Almost all great Marathi theatre groups of that time benefitted from the affordable venue, lovingly developed by the school and theatre pioneers such as Sulabha Deshpande, Arvind Deshpande and Arun Kokade.

I could cite many more examples from the recent past where artistes connected with their peers or the society around them and birthed a new 20th-century theatre. However, my thoughts and concerns are very much in response to the present. I see flashes of brilliance but no plasticity. It’s like seeing the footwork but not the dance. We cannot make the machinery of theatre our worldview. The machine works when we feed it with a taste of the world or a bite of Time.

At the 2015 Sewanee Writers’ Conference, Paula Vogel quoted from American art theorist Susanne K. Langer’s book *Feeling and Form*. According to Langer, every art movement goes through three stages—naivety, sophistication and decadence. The first phase is when nobody knows the rules. This is the most creative and exciting period in which language is created along with the work of art. The language that grows along with the art form lends it a new stage of sophistication where audiences understand the language and come with expectations. The last phase—that of decadence—is also an exciting one. The form decays to give birth to something else. Art and Art Theory work under one assumption. That awareness, appreciation and derision among peers is a priori. We need a more spirited communion or we are doomed to create in an artistic limbo, planting the seed of decadence even before the creation has truly lived. ■

Mahesh Dattani is a playwright, stage director and drama teacher. He has written several plays including Dance Like a Man, Gauhar and Tara. He was honoured with a Sahitya Akademi Award in 1998 for his book Final Solutions and Other Plays. He lives in Mumbai.

On Translations and Adaptations

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 part of a two-part essay, **P. L. Deshpande** discusses the pleasures and pitfalls of translating and adapting literary works.

A lot of important problems arise when we discuss translations or adaptations. People generally believe that it is exceedingly difficult to render the humour of the original into another language. But this kind of difficulty is not confined to comedy alone. There are certain elements in a culture which simply rule out attempts at adaptation. For example? I translated *Oedipus Rex* into Marathi. I could never have dreamt of adapting it. The whole structure of a Greek myth and the elements of the irrational (which form so intrinsic a part of any culture) do not lend themselves to transposition to another culture. Can the Ramayana be adapted for European readers? Where would they find parallels in their culture for a king with three queens, a son fulfilling a promise made by his father, a wife following her husband into exile? When no parallels are to be found in the culture of a people for whom a work is intended, the wisest course is to concentrate on a faithful rendering, on the near impossible task of conveying the poetic quality of the original. This is what I sought to do with *Oedipus Rex*: to capture the poetry of the play, to bring alive the cruel play of Fate. I don't know if I succeeded. My translation is based on English versions, Sombhu Mitra's Bengali rendering. In fact, it was the tremendous impact of Sombhu's performance and of his version of the play which triggered the idea of translating it into Marathi. It could be that some of the spirit of the original disappeared during this journey.

I recall an interesting episode after I finished translating it. I read it out to my friend Vasantrao Deshpande, the well-known singer and actor. He mentioned it to his mother. She came up with one of our own Satvai stories which included several ingredients similar to the Oedipus myth. Just imagine what would have happened had I heard the Satvai legend first and based a play on the story. People would have said I had borrowed elements from *Oedipus Rex* and placed them in an Indian setting!



A painting by Jean Antoine Théodore Giroust depicting a scene from Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*

In the sphere of comedy, what can be adapted with a fair amount of success are situations. It is possible to conceive of parallel situations in our milieu and make them credible. But what is difficult to convey is the nuance, the unexpected use in the original work of a word in a particular context and situation. To find such a word evoking the same kind of response in our own language is well-nigh impossible.

A good adaptation communicates the essence of the original through an experience that can be shared with spectators who, as a result, find the new work wholly credible

The three plays I adapted had a strong core of social criticism, and while reading the originals, I could at once see parallel situations in our culture. The first one was Gogol's *The Inspector General*. Even as I read it, I could imagine the same events happening here. In a tiny princely state (which I called Surungwad), a little after the merger, I could visualise such characters and their operations in that small place. I made the pair (Bobchinsky and Dobchinsky) into those stock characters of our earlier plays—two Brahmins. And I did so for a very good reason. I had to think of a kind of profession which allowed free and unhindered entry into any home. Brahmins had this advantage (and also the barber to some extent since he used his razor on the king and the commoner). The pair of Brahmins came in handy. They made a comic twosome; they became purveyors of news and gossip. In a sense, the Brahmin was unproductive and, as a social entity,

dispensable. Even so, he had his place in the scheme of things and that was enough for my purpose. Besides, I had our own tradition sanctioning the use of this team as a source of comedy and the two served as a vehicle for conveying exactly what Gogol's two landowners did. So, in this sense, it was easy to transpose the comic element to our setting.

But a real problem does arise when the humour is wholly rooted in the particular culture of a social segment of a country. The humour of P. G. Wodehouse, for example, is wholly untranslatable. If one has at one's command the resources of language he had, one can at best be inspired to write in his vein. But to adapt him is out of the question.

Certain transpositions come naturally. There is, in Gogol, that reference to the History teacher who forgets himself and speaks with such fervour when describing Alexander the Great that one might think the whole place was on fire. In our Marathi context, a History teacher getting carried away by the episode of Shivaji killing Afzal Khan seemed entirely apt.

On the whole, I tried to be faithful to Gogol's spirit. Here's a group of stupid people not even aware (in a strong moral sense) that they are corrupt and greedy. Their actions seem in character, stemming from the mores of the small world they inhabit. I had to think of such a small world. Once I hit on the idea of Surungwad, a small princely state, everything else followed naturally. The officials, so used to kowtowing to the ruling family, have now transferred that 'loyalty' to the new rulers in Delhi. The habit of misusing their positions for private gain continues unabated.

Think of those princely states just after Independence. Land was fetching good prices. The landowners were sending their sons to college. I had met types like Sarjerao (Gogol's Hlestakov) in Kolhapur. Each of them had an attendant and a cook. These young men found life at home boring. College was an excuse for merriment and expensive living. I even recall a chap who wrote to his father asking him for 'gabardine' fee, sure of the fact that the old man would never know that gabardine was a fabric used to make trousers. In college, these young men listened to writers speak on literary problems and when they

went home, they quoted what they had heard, thus impressing the family and neighbours. In creating Sarjerao, I had this whole class of landowners' sons to fall back on and their style of living fitted the bill. (There was an interesting bit of criticism of this character. D. K. Bedekar said that Gogol had intended him to be a hobo. Actually, that was how he was conceived by Danny Kaye in the film. Bedekar went by the film, without reference to Gogol.)

Surungwad and its atmosphere seemed parallel to the situation described by Gogol. I sought to 'domesticate' Gogol's world. The doctor clearing a government hospital and the maternity ward to house the bridegroom's party during his daughter's marriage is an act so typical of our petty bureaucrats. Whatever took place, it had to have, in Shakespeare's words, 'a local habitation and a name'. Otherwise, I would never have been

The humour of P. G. Wodehouse is wholly untranslatable...one can at best be inspired to write in his vein, but to adapt him is out of the question

able to communicate what Gogol wanted to convey to the audience and I would have ceased to have a meaningful dialogue with the spectators.

Our earlier adaptations of Shakespeare, *Zunzarrao (Othello)* for instance, capture the spirit of the original and the characters come alive. Granted that the poetic essence is sometimes lost. But in a literal translation, both may be missed out. Even in the utterance of a name, our own inflexion harmonises with our own names. Vinda Karandikar's translation of *King Lear* is accurate, excellent. It is a unique achievement. But if we tried to stage it, the words would communicate little. Even for the poetic essence to be transmitted, one has to have recourse to one's own poetic tradition, the associations that words and sounds bring and their rhythm. (In Ram Ganesh Gadkari's *Rajsanyas*, for

example, the lyricism of *Raya, manata asel te bol, manata nase te bol.*) Even a concept like a storm has different associations for us and the West.

I am fully in favour of straight translations for certain kinds of literature. I translated Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and George Papashvily's *Anything May Happen*. There, I took no liberties with the text. I concentrated on a faithful rendering into Marathi of the original, without changing a single name. But when it comes to a play, I feel differently. Then adaptation comes more naturally to me. It might be argued that an adaptation loses somewhat in literary value. But for me it is the only way of making a play stage-worthy. Certain departures from the original become inevitable. For instance, the mayor's wife is vain and pampered. I made her his second wife, someone much younger and, therefore, able to wheedle anything out of him. It was the only way she could have been acceptable to our audiences.

That is why an adaptation becomes a 'parallel' creation. When an author reads the original, he tells himself, 'How very like what happens here! What Gogol is depicting is so universal!' But when he begins to adapt, it is not just the original that grips him. Along with the original, there is his own experience of living, his own observation of human beings, institutions, situations. When the original has such experiences as its ally, the adaptation finds root. It communicates the essence of the original through an experience that can be shared with spectators who, as a result, find the new work wholly credible. Here is a pack of exceedingly foolish people. The kind one might meet anywhere. They are corrupt and petty. But it's their folly that makes for the humour and the corruption is not of a kind that arouses anger or indignation. One might here recall the fact that *The Inspector General* was rejected by censors who regarded it as an indictment of the regime, but Tsar Nicholas I found it so funny that he overruled them. I tried to be faithful to the comic spirit of Gogol's original and that is perhaps why audiences found the adaptation so exceedingly enjoyable. ■

This article first appeared in its entirety in the NCPA Quarterly Journal in September 1979 (Vol 8, Issue 3)

Programme Guide

February 2023

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

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

SOI symphony orchestra of india

Spring 2023 Season

Patron: Citi India

Orchestral Concerts

Saturday, 4th February – 7.00 pm

Sunday, 5th February – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Marat Bisengaliev conductor

The Music of Sir Karl Jenkins featuring the India premiere of Requiem and other works

Featuring choirs from around India:

Living Voices Mumbai

The Bangalore Men

Capella Bangalore

Delhi Chamber Choir

Zarina Altynbayeva, soprano

SOI Music Director **Marat Bisengaliev** leads this concert featuring the works of Sir Karl Jenkins, one of the world's most performed living composers. The centrepiece of the programme is the India premiere of Requiem. In keeping with his trait of drawing from various cultures in his music, Jenkins's Requiem includes not only the traditional Latin text of the Requiem mass, but also five Japanese haikus as well as instruments and elements from various musical traditions.

Bisengaliev and Jenkins share a long-standing relationship, and Requiem, like many of the composer's works, was premiered by Bisengaliev in 2005 in London. "I love the pure beauty and spirituality of Karl's music; music without

boundaries, loved by everyone and totally democratic," says Bisengaliev.

Wednesday, 15th February – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Evgeny Bushkov, conductor

Plamena Mangova, piano

Weber: Overture to *Der Freischütz*

Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1

Brahms: Symphony No. 3

Former SOI Resident Conductor **Evgeny Bushkov** returns to Mumbai to conduct a concert featuring Brahms' Third Symphony. 2023 marks 190 years since the birth of Johannes Brahms, and also 140 years since the premiere of this monumental work, of which Brahms's friend and confidante Clara Schumann said: "All the movements seem to be of one piece, one beat of the heart, each one a jewel! From start to finish one is wrapped about with the mysterious charm of the woods and forests. I could not tell you which movement I loved most." Pianist **Plamena Mangova** has enjoyed a wide international career since winning second prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2007. She joins the SOI to perform Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, arguably the most famous work in the genre.

Sunday, 19th February – 5.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

John Axelrod, conductor

Alim Beisembayev, piano

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3

Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6

"Pathétique"

The "highly imaginative and dynamic"

John Axelrod makes his debut with the SOI in a programme featuring Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony—the "Pathétique", or "passionate"—which he described as "the best thing I ever composed or shall compose." Pianist **Alim Beisembayev**, winner of the first prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition, joins the SOI to perform the same work which won him the coveted award—Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini. The programme opens with Beethoven's Leonore Overture No. 3—one of Beethoven's many attempts at the overture for his only opera, *Fidelio*, which though did not find place in the opera, has become a staple of concert repertoire.

Thursday, 23rd February – 7.00 pm

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

John Axelrod, conductor

Adam Walker, flute

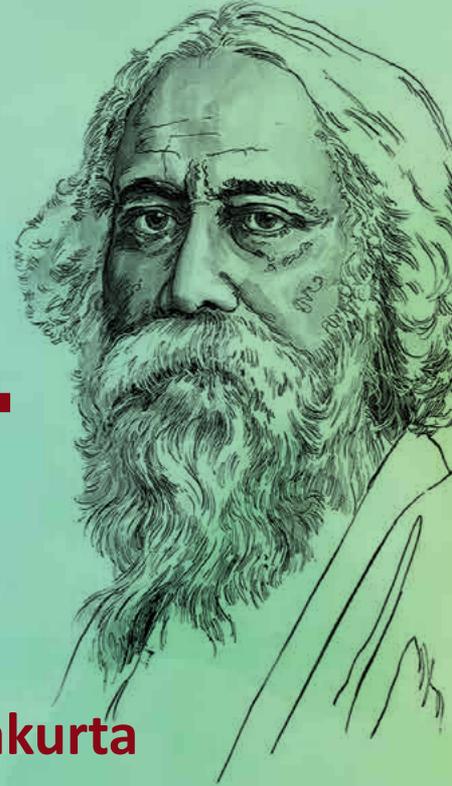
Dvořák: *Othello*, concert overture

Mozart: Flute Concerto No. 1

Dvořák: Symphony No. 7

John Axelrod leads the SOI in a programme featuring the music of beloved Czech composer Antonín Dvořák, opening with his concert overture *Othello* and closing with his Seventh Symphony, often regarded by critics as his greatest. While composing this work, Dvořák wrote to a friend, "my new symphony must be such as to make a stir in the world", and the Seventh certainly delivered. Flautist **Adam Walker** was appointed principal flute of the London Symphony Orchestra at the age of 21 and is at the forefront of a new generation of wind soloists. He makes his debut with the SOI to perform Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 1.

Finale of



युवराज

The Inner Quest through Tagore

Co-curated by

Debi Basu & Kamalika Guha Thakurta

An evening of dance based on the works of Rabindranath Tagore

Creative Indian Dance by **Anusree Bonnerjee & Team Drutam**

Bharatanatyam by **Revathi Srinivasraghavan**

Rabindra Nritya by **Sukanya Sengupta & Nilesh Singha**

Odissi by **Kaishiki Nrityabhasha**

Kathak Dance-Theatre by **Sanjukta Wagh**

Mayurbhanj Chhau by **Ankit Pahadiya**

Mohiniattam by **Madhuri Deshmukh & Megha Mohad, Nalanda Nrityakala Mahavidyalaya**

Manipuri by **Latasana Devi, Purbita Mukherjee, Shrestha Bandopadhyay, Arundhati Datta**

10TH FEBRUARY 2023 | 6:30 PM | TATA THEATRE, NCPA

Tickets:

₹3,600, 2,880, 2,520, 2,070, 1,575,
900 & 450/- (Members)
₹4,000, 3,200, 2,800, 2,300, 1,750,
1,000 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Recitals

Monday, 13th February – 7.00 pm
Experimental Theatre

Plamena Mangova, piano

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor
Chopin: Etude Op. 25 No. 7 in G minor
Chopin: Ballade No. 1 in G minor
Liszt: Petrarch Sonnet 104
Schubert/Liszt: *Der Atlas*
Ginastera: Argentinian Dances, Op. 2

Pianist **Plamena Mangova** has enjoyed a wide international career since winning second prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2007. Her recital programme includes Brahms's monumental third piano sonata. A review of her performance of the same work at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Paris, stated: "It is rare to feel a true emotional shock when listening to an artist... Admirable technique, marvellous balance and perfect reading of the polyphony even in the denser passages...The public were aware of being present at a recital of a great musician."

Friday, 17th February – 7.00 pm
Experimental Theatre

Alim Beisembayev, piano

Schubert: Sonata in C minor, D.958
Liszt: Transcendental Etudes,
Nos. 9-12, S. 139
Rachmaninoff: Prelude in D major,
Op. 23 No. 4
Rachmaninoff: Moments Musicaux
No. 2
Rachmaninoff: Etude-tableau Op. 33
No.3 in C minor
Rachmaninoff: Etude-tableau Op. 39
No. 5 in E-flat minor

The 24-year-old winner of the 2021 Leeds International Piano Competition, **Alim Beisembayev** has

been praised by *The Guardian* for his "mature and intelligent playing", and hailed as "a future piano star". His programme at the SOI Spring 2023 Season includes four of the Liszt Transcendental Etudes, the entire set of which forms Beisembayev's recently-released debut album. In his own words: "The Transcendental Etudes of Liszt are amongst the most challenging piano works ever written by any composer. Frequently described as tone poems, these inspirational works take the etude to a new level... Since early childhood, I had been inspired by performances of these works by legendary pianists such as Cziffra, Richter and Kissin, never dreaming that I would one day be performing them myself."

Tuesday, 21st February – 7.00 pm
Experimental Theatre

Adam Walker, flute
James Baillieu, piano

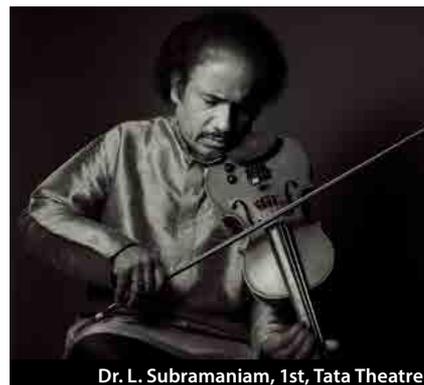
Poulenc: Sonata for flute & piano,
FP. 164
Mozart: Andante in C major, K. 315
Mozart: Rondo in D major,
K. Anh. 184
Bizet/Borne: Carmen Fantasy
Franck: Sonata for flute & piano
in A major

Flautist **Adam Walker** was appointed principal flute of the London Symphony Orchestra at the age of 21 and is at the forefront of a new generation of wind soloists. **James Baillieu** is one of the leading song and chamber music pianists of his generation, described by *The Daily Telegraph* as someone "in a class of his own". The two musicians make their recital debut in India performing, among other works, François Borne's Carmen Fantasy, featuring themes from Bizet's beloved opera.

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

Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC



Dr. L. Subramaniam, 1st, Tata Theatre

Percussion Symphony

by **Dr. L. Subramaniam**
featuring **Anindo Chatterjee & group**
Tata Theatre
Wednesday, 1st – 6.30 pm

**An NCPA Presentation in association
with Saroj Jhaveri Foundation**

The percussion symphony is a unique composition by the internationally renowned violinist and composer **Dr. L. Subramaniam**. Besides featuring different percussion sounds as practised in different parts of India, the composition also includes rich melodic and harmonic content with violin solos and interludes with other melodic instruments.

While remaining rooted in Carnatic or South Indian music, Subramaniam has collaborated with legendary musicians across the world and made pioneering efforts in the field of Indo-jazz. With over 200 recordings to his credit, some of his fusion works are considered milestones.

Besides the violin maestro, the concert will feature percussionists like **Anindo Chatterjee** (tabla), **Ramanamurthy V.V.** (mridangam), **Ganesh Kumar** (kanjira), **Satya Sai G** (morsing), **N. Radhakrishnan** (ghatam) and **Prasad Kulkarni** (octapad & dholak). Enriching the melodic canvas led by the violin are **Frijo Francis** (piano), **Atul Raninga** (keyboard), **Alwyn Fernandes** (guitar) and **Ninad Mulaokar** (bansuri).

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

FILM

Special Screening Reality Check

Documentary Film Screening
Godrej Dance Theatre
Friday, 3rd – 5.00 pm and 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.

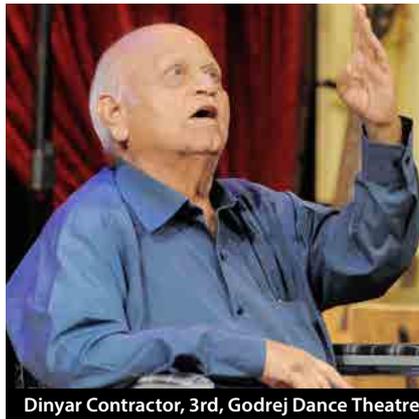
The Show Must Go On

English, Hindi & Gujarati Film with
English Subtitles (60 mins)

After decades of dormancy, the ageing icons of Parsi theatre return to the stage, putting aside their walking sticks and wheelchairs. Plunging into rehearsals, this documentary chronicles the resilience of a singular cast of characters that want nothing more than to go out with a bang. For most of them it will be the last time on stage after careers spanning over half a century. As the film tumbles headfirst into the creative chaos of rehearsals, we get an intimate portrait of the bonds shared between veteran stars and youngsters, along with a distinct flavour of their sensibilities, marked by a particular brand of not-so-subtle humour that is uniquely their own. The actors want to put up the best show they can. In a way, this film is also very much about celebrating old age. About how people considered well past their prime, still have so much to give, while being their flawed and joyous selves. A great tragedy befalls the cast on the eve of the final show. Will it change everything? Or will the show go on, despite all odds?

The film premiered at Film Southasia in Kathmandu in April 2022. Since then, it has played in several festivals around the world, won Best Documentary at the 8th Logcinema Theatre on Films, Buenos Aires, and was most recently selected as the opening film at IFFI Goa, 2022.

Directed by **Divya Cowasji**
Co-Directed & Edited by **Jall Cowasji**



Dinyar Contractor, 3rd, Godrej Dance Theatre

Cinematographed by **Divya Cowasji**

Sound by **Anindo Bose**

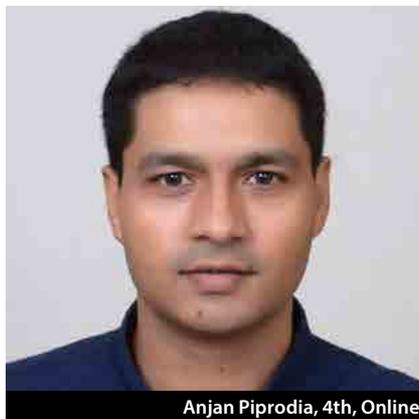
Cast: **Ruby Patel, Burjor Patel, Bomi Dotiwala, Dolly Dotiwala, Dinyar Contractor, Moti Antia & Meher Marfatia**

The film screening will be followed
by a discussion.

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

Also, online registration available
on BookMyShow for limited seats.

INDIAN MUSIC



Anjan Piprodia, 4th, Online

NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop

Financial Planning for the
Performing Artistes

A free online workshop on Zoom by
Anjan Piprodia

Saturday, 4th - 11.30 am

This workshop is aimed at
empowering performing artistes to
take charge of their financial future. It
will help participants to plan financial
goals and means to achieve near-
term and long-term objectives. The

speaker will focus on the defined
path to achieve the goals, as
attainment becomes a major
challenge. The presentation will
also demonstrate the power of
compounding and how a disciplined
approach can support investments
and wealth creation along with
diversification and asset allocation.

Anjan Piprodia has vast experience
in Wealth Management and Retail
Banking space. Currently, he is the Vice
President, Funds and Investments, at
the HSBC.

Free registration starts on 9th
January 2023

To register:

Write to [indianmusicworkshops@
ncpamumbai.com](mailto:indianmusicworkshops@ncpamumbai.com)

Or visit the NCPA website ([www.
ncpamumbai.com](http://www.ncpamumbai.com)) or the NCPA
Facebook page

THEATRE



Lavanyavati, 4th, Experimental

Mumbai Premiere Lavanyavati

English/ Marathi (90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 4th – 5.00 pm & 7.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in
collaboration with Kali Billi
Productions

Lavanyavati is a performance devised
in collaboration with *Lavani* and
Tamasha artistes. In this performance,

we follow the journey of *Lavani* through the years. The dance form, which is part of Maharashtra's folk tradition, has evolved over time with changes in social, political and cultural developments as well as changing audience preferences. It has not just survived but thrived through these changing times and has become a part of contemporary cultural identity. Starting from the traditional form of *Tamasha* and *Sangeet Bari* performed mainly in rural areas and smaller towns of Maharashtra, it has also reached audiences in metro cities like Mumbai.

Exploring the meaning of *lavanyavati* (one who performs *lavani*), we start our journey from the early 1800s till today. In this performance, we look at *Lavani* and *lavanyavati* through the lens of legacy, gender and modern feminism.

The performance is devised in the form of documentary theatre. Along with live performances of *Lavani* songs, we share stories, archival material like family photographs, video interviews and contemporary works like our collaboration with Agents of Ishq and Paromita Vohra.

Concept and Design: **Savitri Medhatul**
Performers: **Akansha Kadam, Akshay Malvankar, Seema Pote, Sudhakar Pote & Savitri Medhatul**

Vocals: **Sangeeta Panchal**
Tabla: **Prakash Sanap**
Dholki: **Ajit Phondke**
Keyboard: **Bhalchandra Pote**
Production: **Vilas Kundkar**
Light Design: **Vilas Humane**
Sound Design: **Ruchir Chavhan**
Video Design: **Eman**

Tickets:
₹630 & 450/- (Members)
₹700 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office now open

THEATRE

Dekh Behen

English/Hindi Play (80 mins)
Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 5th – 4.30 pm & 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Akvarious Productions



Dekh Behen, 5th, Experimental Theatre

This is the 99th & 100th show

A big fat Delhi wedding is underway. Merely hours before they need to put up their rehearsed item number, five bridesmaids catch up, gossip, eat, drink and bitch about their identical outfits. But that is not the only thing they have in common. They all dislike the bride. Akvarious Productions presents an all-female cast and crew in a bittersweet comedy about daughters, girlfriends, mothers, sisters, wives and getting through one wretched *shaadi ka* function.

Written by
Dilshad Edibam & Tahira Nath

Directed by
Perna Chawla & Shikha Talsania
Cast: **Dilshad Edibam, Lisha Bajaj, Preetika Chawla, Perna Chawla, Shikha Talsania, Tahira Nath** & others

Age: 18+

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

DANCE

The 33rd Pt. Durgalal Festival

Tata Theatre
Sunday, 5th – 5.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Samved Society for Performing Arts

The Pt. Durgalal Festival pays homage to Uma Dogra's guru and mentor Durgalal, doyen of the Jaipur gharana. The evening will host grand performances of Bharatanatyam by Meenakshi Srinivasan, Kathak



Meenakshi Srinivasan, 5th, Tata Theatre

by Gauri Diwakar and Shiv Anand Shloka in Taal Ashtamangal (Kathak) by Samved Society for Performing Arts. Dogra is the Founder and Managing Trustee of the Samved Society for Performing Arts to promote Indian classical dance and music.

Meenakshi Srinivasan is a Bharatanatyam dancer based in Chennai. Her individual approach, technique and creativity is characterised by a distinctively sensuous geometry. As featured in the press, she "embodies both sensitive and playful qualities through a dynamic presence on stage." A versatile dancer and choreographer, Srinivasan maintains the purity and sanctity of traditional repertoire but adds her own interpretation of contemporary themes using the language of Bharatanatyam.



Gauri Diwakar, 5th, Tata Theatre

Her strength relies on her ability to correlate different disciplines of the arts. She has worked with various artistes—composers, musicians, scholars and writers—on new choreographic works.

Gauri Diwakar's elegant and graceful moves, striking facial expressions and powerful presence on the stage leave her audiences spellbound. Diwakar has been the recipient of many prestigious awards. An 'A' grade artiste with Doordarshan, she is credited with a number of noted solo performances. She is also an empanelled artiste with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Tickets:

₹360, 270 & 180/- (Members)

₹400, 300 & 200/- (Public)

Box Office now open

FILM



One Week and a Day, 7th, Godrej Dance Theatre

One Week and a Day

Hebrew Language with English Subtitles (98 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Tuesday, 7th – 6.30 pm

The Indian Express Film Club screening in association with the NCPA & Embassy of Israel.

One Week and a Day is a bittersweet drama about families, neighbours and the glue that keeps people together. A grieving father steals medicinal marijuana from a hospice, skips work and hangs out with his estranged neighbour's son while his wife tries to get back to her daily routine as she deals with school teachers, stray kittens and dental clinic workers.

Directed by **Asaph Polonsky**

Produced by **Naomi**

Cast: **Tomer Capone, Evgenia Dodina, Shai Avivi, Uri Gavriel, Sharon Alexander, Nora Jokhosha, Katalyn Huhnerfeld & Nili Tserruya**

The film screening will be followed by a discussion with **Shubhra Gupta**,

Film Critic, *The Indian Express*.

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

SCREENING



The Book of Dust, 8th, Godrej Dance Theatre

The Book of Dust - La Belle Sauvage

Theatre Screening

(Approx. 180 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 8th – 6.00 pm

An NCPA-National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

Elevator pitch: Set 12 years before the epic *His Dark Materials* trilogy, this gripping adaptation revisits **Phillip Pullman's** fantastical world in which waters are rising and storms are brewing. Two young people and their dæmons, with everything at stake, find themselves at the centre of a terrifying manhunt. In their care is a tiny child called Lyra Belacqua, and in that child lies the fate of the future.

Directed by **Nicholas Hytner**

Adapted by **Bryony Lavery**

Tickets:

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

Box Office now open

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Harmonies in Time

Featuring **Trilok Gurtu & Castle in Time Orchestra**

Tata Theatre

Thursday, 9th - 7.30 pm

An NCPA & Mixtape Presentation



Trilok Gurtu, 9th, Tata Theatre

Harmonies in Time is a collaboration between the percussion master **Trilok Gurtu** and the **Castle in Time Orchestra**. The piece researches the prehistoric in music. It brings out the relationship between a solo player as an individual and the tribe. It uses Indian composition (*kaida*) that was written for the human voice and the tabla and translates it to Western orchestral instruments. It uses complex polyrhythms from Africa in addition to a stormy fugue from classical Europe. It uses a language of improvisation that was devised in rehearsal as a way to communicate without words while performing, therefore, creating music on the spot. The result is 80 minutes of an unusual collaboration between cultures and generations. *Harmonies in Time* premiered at the Mekudeshet Festival in Israel in 2017.

Tickets:

₹2,500, 1,500, 1,200, 1,000 & 800/-

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

DANCE

Finale Evening of the NCPA Mumbai Dance Season 2023

Tata Theatre

Friday, 10th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation curated by **Debi Basu and Kamalika Guha Thakurta**

The season finale will feature performances by eminent artistes and institutions from Mumbai as well as established young performers.

Debi Basu is an eminent Odissi dancer and co-founder of *Samyuktam*, an organisation dedicated to the



Debi Basu, 10th, Tata Theatre



Kamalika Guha Thakurta, 10th, Tata Theatre

enrichment and promotion of Odissi. She imbibed the art form under the guidance of the great Odissi master, Kelucharan Mohapatra. Basu has been a critically acclaimed performer for more than three decades.

Kamalika Guha Thakurta is an artiste who has been exploring varied performance spaces with different creative art-based tools. In dance, she has trained in Odissi and *Rabindrik Nritya* (an amalgamation of different forms popularised by Rabindranath Tagore, primarily to give expression to his songs through movement). Through Srijon, the institute she founded in Mumbai in the year 2010, Thakurta actively works to propagate the teachings and philosophy of Tagore through both music and dance. As an actor, she began her career in Kolkata, with films by renowned directors like Goutam Ghose and Rituparno Ghosh. Later, she moved to Mumbai and

subsequently carved a place for herself in the Hindi television industry and has been a part of several popular series.

Tickets:
₹360, 270 & 180/- (Members)
₹400, 300 & 200/- (Public)
Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC

Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy

Festival of Sufi Music
10th to 12th February

An NCPA Presentation

We rarely hear the inward music, but are dancing to it nevertheless!
 - Mevlana Rumi

Based on the mystical branch of Islam, Sufism preaches peace, tolerance and pluralism. Music is regarded as a way of deepening one's relationship with the Creator, and hence longing to dissolve the physical realm and transcend into the spiritual Universe with Sama'a, the practice of listening to music, chanting and whirling, finally culminating in spiritual ecstasy. Sufi music is practised in different regions of the world through an array of forms.

Rangreza: A Musical Presentation based on Sufi Poetry

Concept & narration:
Suhail Akhtar Warsi
Singers:

Girish Sadhwani & Pooja Gaitonde
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 10th – 6.30 pm

The pain of separation from the Creator is at the core of Sufi lyrics and music. Themes and styles established in Arabic, Persian and Punjabi-Sindhi poetry have had an enormous influence on poetry and music throughout the Sufi world.

While saint-philosophers like Rumi, Lal Dedh, Kabir and such others, have fervently expressed their love and longing for the Divine through their poetry, we find similar thoughts also being echoed in works of others like Mir, Ghalib, Tukaram, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and many *Bhakti* poets across ages in numerous languages.



Suhail Akhtar Warsi, 10th, Experimental Theatre

Rangreza portrays hues of the ultimate truth as revealed by numerous philosophers from Amir Khusrau, Baba Bulleh Shah and Meera Bai, to Guru Nanak, Shahbaz Qalandar and such others who wrote in various dialects such as Awadhi, Saraiki, Behawalpuri, Multani, Hindustani, Hindavi and Punjabi.

In a style that has a harmonious blend of traditional and contemporary musical elements, the presentation will showcase similarity of thoughts underlying the diverse poetic works, highlighting the universality of the truth.

Tickets:
₹450 & 360/- (Members)
₹500 & 400/- (Public)

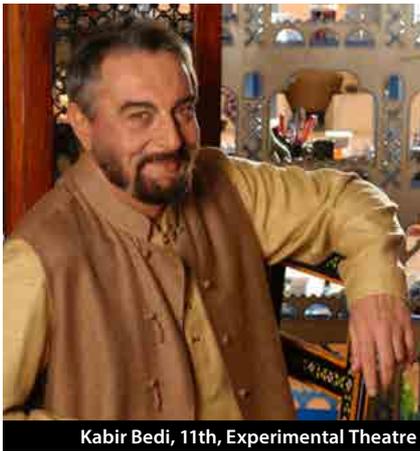
An Ode to Rumi: Presentation based on the Poetry of Mevlana Rumi

By Kabir Bedi
Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 11th – 6.30 pm

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi (1207-1273), popularly known as Mevlana Rumi, was a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, theologian and Sufi mystic who composed one of the crowning glories of Persian literature, which profoundly affected the Persian cultural sphere of Khorasan.

Although originally written in Persian, Rumi's poems have been widely translated into many languages including Urdu and Punjabi. His works transcend national and ethnic borders and seem to be relevant even today across varied cultures.

Blessed with a sonorous voice,



Kabir Bedi, 11th, Experimental Theatre

Kabir Bedi, one of India's best-known international actors, will read a selection of poetry penned by Rumi. The presentation will be divided into five parts: The Seeker, Finding Love, Tasting the Divine, The Awakening and Union with the Divine.

Concept & design: **Jai** and **Taru Talwar**

Tickets:

₹450 & 360/- (Members)
₹500 & 400/- (Public)

Rumiyana: A Journey Within

Presented by

The Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust

Direction & design:

Dadi D. Pudumjee

Text & animation: Shaaz Ahmed

Music: Sandeep Pillai

(English - 60 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 12th – 3.30 pm & 5.30 pm

Rumiyana is a multimedia musical puppet theatre performance based on Mevlana Rumi's work, *Masnavi*, whose influence transcends national borders and unites people of all races, nationality, gender across the globe, owing to the universality of his thoughts.

Enacted by two performers, the master and the student, the performance is synergised with dancers, puppeteers and visual theatre with specially composed music.

The dialogue of the story which is narrated on the threshold of a door unfolds a journey within, to unravel the path outside. Four stories emerge out of a single narrative to tell a tale of seeking and receiving, from being the light to spreading light to shining



Rumiyana, 12th, Experimental Theatre

bright—the unity of vision.

The presentation, which includes animations and projections, explores the concept of pluralism and the unity of all existence as one. It uses metaphors of soul, body and shadow to realise the idea of the true self. It promotes unity, love and peace by the celebration of diversity, for there are, as many ways as there are seekers.

Tickets:

₹450 & 360/- (Members)
₹500 & 400/- (Public)

Within: Songs of the Sacred

By Sonam Kalra & The Sufi Gospel Project

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 12th – 7.30 pm



Sonam Kalra, 12th, Tata Theatre

Delve into a deeper understanding of the true meaning of Sufism as **Sonam Kalra**, a multifaceted singer and composer, seeks to blend the many voices of faith, through poetry, prayer and music to create one universal voice of faith.

In this presentation, prayer and poetry from different languages and religions come together to create a sound that touches every soul. The mystic poetry of Sufi poets like Kabir, Bulleh Shah, Amir Khusrau and Zaheer Shah Taji are presented to highlight the one absolute truth; that God is within. Where the call to Allah finds resonance in the ever-soothing Sikh morning prayer and Vedic chants, where the poetry and ideologies of

Sufi mystics from across the world find common ground across time and region, and where Indian classical sounds seamlessly flow into Western accompaniment.

Thus, the lines between religions are blurred through the beauty of note and music, revealing that no matter what the language of the lyrics or the ethnicity of the sounds, there is but one language, the language of faith. And that, is the universal truth.

Tickets:

₹540, 450 & 360/- (Members)
₹600, 500 & 400/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office now open

THEATRE

The Devil Wears Bataa

English Play (120 mins)

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 11th – 7.00 pm

There is nothing political about this play, because, let's face it, nobody understands politics, not even the politicians themselves. The play is a hilarious fictitious take on how an orange-faced, blonde-haired, pompous, loud-mouthed businessman in the Oval Office and a sharp-witted Sardarji who is the Indian PM, go about their devious plans of finding the successors to their seats of power. The Indian and American governments share something comedic in common without realising it. That is, until they meet of course.

Written & directed by **Meherzad Patel**

Cast: **Danesh Irani, Dilnaz Irani, Jigar Mehta, Darius Shroff, Sajeel Parakh, Danesh Khambata** & others

A Silly Point Production

Tickets:

₹1,800, 1,350, 1,080, 900, 720 & 450/- (Members)
₹2,000, 1,500, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)
(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office now open

THEATRE

Breakup Special!

Comedy for Comedy's Sake



Sejal Bhatt, 14th, Godrej Dance Theatre



Chirag Panjwani, 14th, Godrej Dance Theatre



Jeeya Sethi, 14th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Stand-up Comedy
English/Hindi (90 mins)
Godrej Dance Theatre
Tuesday, 14th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA-Off Stage Presentation in collaboration with Comedy Ladder

Valentine’s Day is for Love but also for broken hearts. A break-up is part of life, and if you haven’t had your heart broken this is a great place to learn how it may happen and how to deal with a broken heart. Come and watch some very funny comics talk about their past relationships and share their experience.

Host: **Jeeya Sethi**
Comics: **Devanshi Shah, Chirag Panjwani, Sejal Bhatt, Joel D'souza & Siddharth Chandel**

Suggested age: 16+

Single Tickets:
₹450/- (Members)
₹500/- (Public)
Couple Tickets:
₹ 720/- (Members)
₹ 800/- (Public)
Box Office now open

THEATRE

Readings in the Shed - Letters of Love

Tata Garden
Tuesday, 14th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Off-Stage Presentation

When was the last time you wrote a love letter? Or penned a quick note to your beloved? In these times of beeps and pings, ink and pen messages seem to be losing their relevance. Until you come across an old trunk or a shoebox, scoot the dust bunnies off, that is. And lo and behold, they emerge...on yellowed paper and in faded ink, words that are, or deserve to be, immortal.

Join us as we dig through the archives of some famous folk to uncover love stories that have lived on. Readings in the Shed presents the fifth edition of Letters of Love

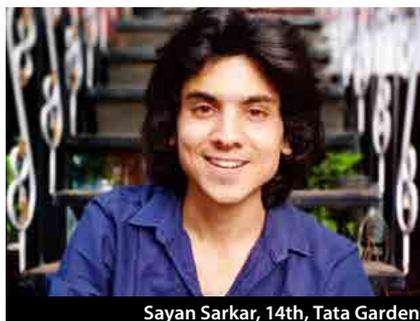
Written by
Nikhil Katara & Himali Kothari
Directed by **Nikhil Katara**



Reshma Shetty, 14th, Tata Garden



Amey Mehta, 14th, Tata Garden



Sayan Sarkar, 14th, Tata Garden

Cast: **Amey Mehta, Reshma Shetty & Sayan Sarkar**

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

THEATRE



Aurat Aurat Aurat, 18th, Experimental Theatre

Aurat Aurat Aurat
Hindustani Play (120 mins)

Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 18th – 4.30 pm & 7.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Motley Productions

An all-female cast enacts selections from Ismat Chughtai’s autobiography, and three other writings (*Ek Shauhar ki Khaatir, Aadhi Aurat Aadha Khwab* and *Soney ka Anda*) which are essays rather than stories, reflecting Chughtai’s abiding concern for the state of womanhood, her impatience with empty rituals and her anger at the condescension women are subjected to.

Directed by **Naseeruddin Shah**
Written by **Ismat Chughtai**
Cast: **Seema Phawa, Jaya Viriley, Trishla Patel, Shruti Vyas, Perna Chawla & Bhavna Pani**

Age: 12+

Tickets:
₹630 & 450/- (Members)
₹700 & 500/- (Public)
(Plus GST)
Box Office now open

THEATRE

Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan
Hindustani Play (65 mins)

Experimental Theatre
Sunday, 19th – 7.00 pm



Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan, 19th, Experimental Theatre

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Aagaaz Theatre Trust

The play explores the actors' gendered bodies and their relationship with the self, others and public spaces—the piece uses objects, physical theatre and cartography to devise a thought-provoking experience.

These stories begin on a random day. These are first-hand retellings of day-to-day in Nizamuddin *basti*. The spectator is invited to enter the performer's world through the everyday-ness of the narrative. The stories begin to twist into tales of how gender and sexuality play out in the lives of the four actors. Conversations about family, trust, consent, personal space and gender dynamics begin to surface. Their questions and confusions about their identity and how they are perceived within the boundaries of their home and their community, comes forth through their words and actions.

The play attempts to highlight the contrast between the confining yet comfortable quality of the home space and the liberating aspects of the outside world. The differences between 'who I am' and 'how people see me' guide the explorations that the performers embark on. The audience is invited to experience the happenings through a gender-sensitive lens.

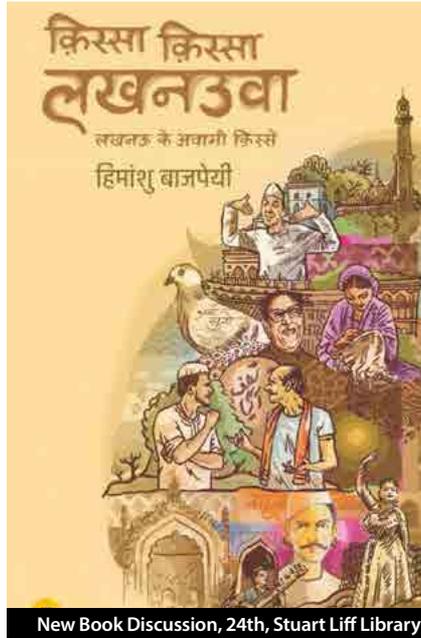
Directed by **Dhwani Vij**
Cast: **Nagina, Jasmine, Nagma & Zainab**

Age: 13+

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

MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION

Book Discussion
New Stories with Masala Chai



New Book Discussion, 24th, Stuart Liff Library

Performed reading of select stories from 'Kissa Kissa Lucknowwaaa' written by Himanshu Bajpai
Stuart-Liff Collection Library, NCPA
Friday, 24th – 4.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The focus of this work has been on Lucknowi people in particular. These aren't tales of nawabs; rather, they are those of a man, a hard-working man, a wage earner, whom author Himanshu Bhai Bajpayee has portrayed as a significant social figure. This is also an effort to create a bridge between Hindi and Urdu and maintain their unity.

These are the accounts of persons whose lives are rarely mentioned in connection with the "Lucknowi" brand. These are "Lucknowwa" tales rather than "Lucknowi" ones. These stories don't contain any *nawabi jalwas*. The people of Lucknow are *jalwanuma* in this. Even in the stories that reference nawabs, the protagonists are not nawabs but rather the regular common man.

Narration by **Vishal Singh**

Vishal Singh is an Indian film and stage actor and voice artiste, a former advertising and banking professional who recently featured in *Antim*, a Hindi feature film, and other web shows. He has given voice in more than a hundred films including recent hits like *83*, *K.G.F.*

Chapter 1 & 2 and Kantara, to name a few, and to commercials.

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

INDIAN MUSIC

Ovi Ovi Gumphali: Celebrating Marathi Language Day

Concept & Presentation: Dhanashree Lele
Supported by Preeti Nimkar Joshi, Aditi Prabhudesai & Avanti Lele
Music Arrangement: Vikram Muzumdar
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 24th – 6.30 pm

(Event to be presented in Marathi)

An NCPA Presentation in association with the Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra

Marathi, like many other languages, is endowed with a rich vocabulary. The oral tradition associated with it also shows a wealth of literary forms. *Ovi* is one such form used as a medium of expression, mainly by the so-called "illiterate" women folk while they engage in the drudgery of household chores. Couched in the most appropriate words capable of expressing finer shades of emotions, the verses of *ovi* are meant to unequivocally state universal truths in the simplest manner. Moreover, plain yet sonorous tunes to which they are set make a mesmerising impact on listeners. Today, while many Marathi words are going out of vogue from colloquial usage, *ovi* literature seems to still retain some priceless age-old expressions.



Dhanashree Lele, 24th, Experimental Theatre

Dhanashree Lele is an orator, award-winning author, scriptwriter and multilingual compère renowned for her scholarship in Sanskrit literature and spiritual subjects.

Organised on the occasion of Marathi Bhasha Divas, this event aims to showcase a range of literary forms from the oral tradition of Maharashtra. Besides presenting some *ovis* with their original tunes, the event will also feature allied forms like *bhavgeet*, *bhaktigeet*, etc., including a few that have been used in Marathi films.

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

THEATRE



Taking Sides, 25th, Experimental Theatre

NCPA Presents the Company Theatre production **Taking Sides**

English Play (125 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 25th – 5.00 pm & 8.00 pm

The play is set in post-World War II Germany, during the period of 'denazification'. While on the surface the play is about the investigation of a world-famous music conductor of that time—Wilhelm Furtwängler—it takes on larger discussions and motifs spanning music, art, culture, life, politics, morality, ethics and more.

Written by **Ronald Harwood**

Directed by **Atul Kumar**

Assistant Director: **Vara Raturi**

Light Design and operation by

Rahul Joglekar

Cast: **Atul Kumar, Sukant Goel, Mallika Singh, Kashish Saluja, Kashin Shetty/Kenneth Desai & Richa Jain**

Costume, Production & Backstage:

Kanchan Khilare

Production Manager: **Rahul Kumar**

Tickets:

₹720, 540 & 450/- (Members)

₹800, 600 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC



Parthiv Gohil, 25th, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Raga Rang: Raga-based songs from Hindi films of yesteryears

by Parthiv Gohil & group

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

Saturday, 25th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in association with Sahachari Foundation Events

Main sponsor: **Kotak**

Supported by **Ketan Brothers**

In memory of **Mrs. Krishna Khatau**

Supported by **Rukmani & Kishan Daiya Foundation**

This thematic presentation showcases gems of poetry and musical works featured in old Hindi films that are based on classical *ragas* and *raginis*. These timeless melodies continue to enthral listeners even today.

Having trained with several reputed masters like Laxmipati Shukla and Zia Fariduddin Dagar, **Parthiv Gohil** went on to become a playback singer performing for a host of films like *Devdas*, *Saawariya*, *Vada Raha* and others. His other projects include participation in the iconic song 'Phir Mile Sur Mera Tumhara' and MTV

performance with reputed artistes. Notable among the numerous awards received by Gohil include best playback singer for Gujarati films in 2007 and 2009.

Gohil and his group will present a special selection of *geets* and *ghazals* written by iconic lyricists and composed by legendary film music composers of the yesteryears.

Tickets:

₹1,080, 900, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,200, 1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

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

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Euphony

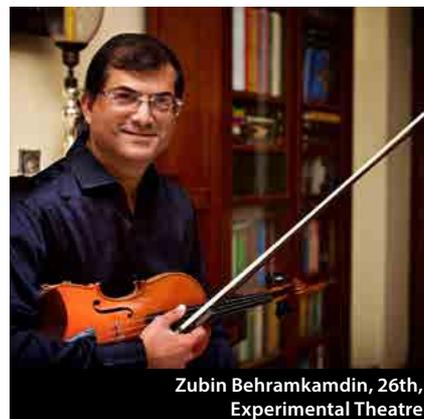
Duo Recital (75 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Sunday, 26th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA & Furtados Presentation

Zubin Behramkamdin started learning the violin at the age of seven with Silloo Panthaki and passed the Licentiate Examination of the Trinity College of Music, London, with distinction, standing first in India that year.



Zubin Behramkamdin, 26th, Experimental Theatre



Emma Tillu, 26th, Experimental Theatre

He has participated in various workshops and masterclasses conducted by eminent musicians including the world-renowned cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich and Ralph de Souza of the Endellion String Quartet. He performs regularly in India as a soloist and in chamber music recitals, and has collaborated with many musicians, local and visiting, over the years. He has often played chamber music at the Sangat Chamber Music Festival and the Con Brio Festival.

Behramkamdin was selected to play in the European Community Youth Orchestra (now the European Union Youth Orchestra) conducted by Zubin Mehta for its tour covering performances in London, Madrid, Rome and cities in India. He has also played with the World Orchestra for Peace which consists of musicians from all over the world and which plays under the baton of Valerie Gergiev in concerts in London, Berlin, Moscow, Krakow, Budapest, Tel Aviv, St. Petersburg and Beijing. In 2018, he was selected to play in an international orchestra under the baton of Simon Rattle at the Berlin Philharmonic.

Emma Gilljam Tillu is a classical pianist from Sweden. She has a Bachelor of Music in performance from the Royal College of Music in Stockholm followed by a Master of Music in Chamber Music from the Royal College of Music at Edsberg Manor, Scandinavia's top institution. She has also participated in several masterclasses by internationally renowned pianists and musicians such as Paul Roberts, Yonty Solomon, Hans Leygraf, the Altenberg Trio and Michel Béroff. She was awarded the Gottfried Boon scholarship by the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in 2004 and was a finalist in the national competition "Ung och Lovande" (Young and Promising) in 2003. Since her graduation in 2007, she has performed in many of the concert houses around Sweden, at several chamber music festivals, and as a soloist with several orchestras. In 2008, she toured extensively in China with the Stockholm Chamber Trio commissioned by Rikskonserter (Concerts Sweden).

Gilljam Tillu likes to collaborate

with other art forms. She is the co-founder of the theatre company Theatre act and regularly performs in theatrical and dance performances in Europe, India and the United States.

For the last few years, she has been based in Mumbai where she is working as a freelance pianist and piano teacher. In 2015, she made her Mumbai debut as a soloist with the Symphony Orchestra of India under the baton of Piotr Borkowski at Prithvi Theatre and a year before that with the Bombay Chamber Orchestra performing two different Mozart concertos. She has performed solo and chamber music concerts around India including Delhi, Bengaluru, Trivandrum, Pondicherry, Hyderabad and Dehradun.

Programme:

- L. Beethoven: Violin Piano Sonata No. 5 in F major "Spring"
- N. Paganini: Andante Cantabile
- F. Drdla: Fantasy on Carmen by Bizet
- P. Sarasate: Ziguenerweisen
- Cesar Franck: Violin Piano Sonata in A major

Tickets:

- ₹675 & 450/- (Members)
- ₹750 & 500/- (Public)
- (Plus GST)

Box Office now open

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Young Musician of the Year 2020: Udit Gupta

**Classical Guitar Recital
Little Theatre**

Monday, 27th – 7.00 pm

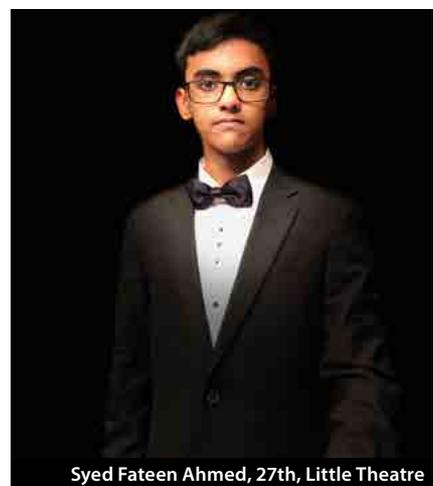
An NCPA & The Olga & Jules Craen Foundation Presentation

Udit Gupta's outgoing performance as YMOY 2020 has been delayed due to the Foundation being unable to conduct its annual event the past two Covid-restricted years.

Udit Gupta is a guitarist/composer who hails from a Western classical music background with a keen ear for Indian classical music as well. Having passed his LTCL examination with distinction, he went on to win the All India Radio (AIR) Music Competition in the Western Instrumental category and was proclaimed an AIR-graded



Udit Gupta, 27th, Little Theatre



Syed Fateen Ahmed, 27th, Little Theatre

artiste. While at college he co-founded a tabla-guitar duo, *The Crotchets*, that was invited to perform at several TEDx venues and most notably at the Taj Mahotsav in 2019, on the grounds of the Taj Mahal in Agra. He refined his musical interpretation and performing skills under the tutelage of Madhavan Somanathan and has had masterclasses with world-renowned classical guitarists like David Russell, Pavel Steidl and Raphaella Smits. Gupta will be playing compositions by Mauro Giuliani, Luigi Legnani, Francisco Tárrega, Girolamo Frescobaldi, Jean Absil, Franz Schubert, Napoleon Coste and Antonio Lauro.

Syed Fateen Ahmed, a 14-year-old pianist, will also give a brief performance as the Incoming Young Musician of the Year YMOY 2023, the Olga & Jules Craen Foundation's youngest yet.

Admission on a first-come-first-served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 6.50 pm.

What's Next

March & April 2023

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

INDIAN MUSIC

Aye Muhobbat

Curated & presented by Tushar Bhatia with Rajashree Kelkar Pathak, Shivani Vaswani, Aditi Banerjee and group
Experimental Theatre
Friday, 3rd March – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Main sponsor: Oilmax Energy Pvt. Ltd.

Aye Muhobbat is a concert dedicated to the legendary singer **Begum Akhtar** (1914-1974).

The presenter, music composer and sitarist, **Tushar Bhatia**, has researched extensively and produced a number of albums of Begum Akhtar for HMV, Music India and Sony Music. The singers, **Rajashree Kelkar Pathak**, **Shivani Vaswani** and **Aditi Banerjee** are well-trained established singers.

The evening will showcase some popular *ghazals*, *dadras* and *thumris* from Akhtar's repertoire covering multiple languages, from Urdu, Bhojpuri and Awadhi to Bangla.. The song selection will include masterpieces like '*Aye Muhobbat*', '*Diwana Banana Hai To*', '*Koyaliji Mat Kar Pukar*', '*Mere Humnafas*' and such others. Highlighting the uniqueness of her works, Bhatia will also share stories of personal interactions with people close to her, along with some interesting anecdotes about this celebrated master-musician.

Tickets:

₹315 & 225/- (Members)

₹350 & 250/- (Public)

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

INDIAN MUSIC

Hindustani Vocal Music

by Harish Tiwari



Harish Tiwari, 4th March, Experimental Theatre

Experimental Theatre
Saturday, 4th March – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in association with Kilachand Foundation

Initially trained by Thakur Chaubey, Ajay and Nandlal Baranashi, **Harish Tiwari** was privileged to be groomed in the Kirana *gharana* style by its great doyen Bhimsen Joshi. Endowed with a strong voice that is heavily reminiscent of his legendary guru's, his singing has remarkable impressions of his mentor's inimitable style. Tiwari is a lecturer of music at Delhi University and has been a regular performer on AIR, Doordarshan and prestigious music festivals across India.

Tickets:

₹315 & 225/- (Members)

₹350 & 250/- (Public)

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

THEATRE

Every Good Boy Deserves Favour

An English Play for Actors and Orchestra (60 mins)
Jamshed Bhabha Theatre
Thursday, 9th March – 7.00 pm
Friday, 10th March – 5.00 pm & 7.00 pm
Saturday, 11th & Sunday, 12th March – 3.00 pm, 5.00 pm & 7.00 pm

An NCPA Production in collaboration with the Symphony Orchestra of India

A dissident is locked up in an asylum. If he accepts that he was ill and has been cured, he will be released. He refuses. Sharing his cell is a real lunatic who believes himself to be surrounded by an orchestra. As the dissident's son begs his father to free himself with a lie, Tom Stoppard's darkly funny and provocative play asks if denying the truth is a price worth paying for liberty. The play premiered in 1977 as a part of Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee celebrations. This rarely performed masterpiece features a 40-piece orchestra playing live onstage.

Written by **Tom Stoppard**

Every Good Boy Deserves Favour, 9th to 12th March, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre



NCPA Silver Membership (inclusive of GST):

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

Special Membership Packages

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

Membership Benefits:

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

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

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

Friends of the SOI will also be deemed Silver members of the NCPA. In addition to the above-mentioned benefits, 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 year
- ▶ Access to the NCPA Library and the Stuart Liff library
- ▶ Access to the Members' Bar at SOI season concerts
- ▶ Exclusive offers with our brand partners

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

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

Email:
membership@ncpamumbai.com
Tel.: 66223719

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

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



Membership Application form

**Dear Supporter of the Arts,**

As we emerge from the pandemic, it is a pleasure to see you in our theatres and join us in celebrating the return of live performances after what has been a long and trying pause.

The arts and the artistic community need you now more than ever. After what they have been through, the very fact that theatres and performing spaces have reopened, supporters are returning and cheering them on means so much to them. The community that makes a live experience what it is, is many times more than what you see on stage and interact with at venues. There is an unseen army that supports the magic of every live performance that brings you to our theatres.

As an organisation committed to preserving and promoting India's rich and vibrant artistic heritage in the fields of music, dance, theatre, film and photography, we are pleased to let you know that during the two years that have been the toughest for a performing arts centre, like ours, we stood by each of those precious people that give you the experience that keeps bringing you back to the NCPA.

Today, we turn to you, dear friend and supporter of the arts, and request you to do your bit in supporting the larger cause of keeping the performing arts—live and alive!

By becoming a member of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, you will make a commitment to this cause and your support will go a long way, not only in the area of live performance, but will also help in our various educational and outreach initiatives which ensure that the gift of the arts enriches all sections of society.

As India's role on the international stage expands, the NCPA has been investing in the country's cultural future. In developing the Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI), the NCPA has given the country its first and only professional orchestra. In addition to this, the NCPA produces, collaborates and curates with the best to bring you a wide range of world-class experiences across theatre, music, dance and film.

We invite you to join us on this exciting journey by being a Friend of the SOI or a Silver member of the NCPA. Kindly refer to the details in the panel on the left. We request you to fill in the form below and submit it along with recent passport-sized photograph/s to the Membership Department. You can now apply for membership/become a Friend of the SOI online. Please log on to www.ncpamumbai.com for details. For any queries, please contact the Membership Department.

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

Silver member of the NCPA

Friend of the SOI

Name:

Joint Member Name (in case of couple membership):

Address:

.....

Pin Code:

Telephone: Mobile:

Email: Date of Birth:

Occupation: Company:

Cheque No.: Date:

Drawn On:

Date: Signature:

Music by **André Previn**
Directed by **Bruce Guthrie**
Cast includes: **Deepika Deshpande Amin, Sohrab Ardeshir, Neil Bhoopalam, Mihaail Karachiwala, Denzil Smith & the Symphony Orchestra of India** conducted by **Mikel Toms**

Tickets:
₹2,205, 1,755, 1,350, 900 & 450/-
(Members)
₹2,450, 1,950, 1,500, 1,000 & 500/-
(Public)
(Inclusive of GST)
Box Office now open

INDIAN MUSIC

Living Traditions: Festival of Madhya Pradesh

Experimental Theatre
Friday, 10th & Saturday, 11th March – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

India is perhaps the most musical and musically diverse region in the world. This diversity is evident in the folk traditions associated with different regions. Through this festival, we try to showcase these traditions.

This year the focus is on Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh, meaning central province, is the second largest Indian state by area. With around 30% of its land under forest cover, the region is home to as many as 10 national parks replete with diverse flora and fauna. The state is also rich in mineral resources and has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. Having three sites that are declared as world heritage sites by the UNESCO, the region is known for its Hindu and Jain temples, like the ones at Khajuraho, embellished with stone carvings and sculptures. It is also the land of several languages, including spoken ones by different tribes of *adivasis*. Having been associated with legendary musicians like Tansen and Baiju Bawra, Madhya Pradesh is noted for its classical and folk art forms.

Over the two days, 95 artistes comprising six well-known troupes from various parts of Madhya Pradesh, will present music, dance and folk

theatre forms. Each presentation will be introduced with an appropriate sociocultural and aesthetic context.

Friday, 10th March – 6.30 pm
Kabir songs by Jagdish Boriala group



The works of Kabir (c. 1425-1505) and other saint poets have had pride of place in the cultural heritage of the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh. These are preserved and propagated through oral tradition of the region. Couched in Malwi language, the musical renditions are based on diverse melodies, reflecting a folk flavour characteristic of the region.

Raee nritya by
Devki Ram Kushwaha group

Raee is a popular dance form prevalent in the region of Bundelkhand and parts of Uttar Pradesh. Performed by veiled female dancers, it is meant to celebrate victory in war. The movement of the body and feet are accompanied by vocal music and instruments like algoza, mridang and daphani.

Bundelkhandi folk drama by
Sandeep Srivastava group

Translated from the works *Kafan* and *Poos Ki Raat*, originally written in Hindi by the great novelist, Munshi Premchand, *Sadhau Ghisu Mare Na Madhau* is a theatrical adaptation presented in the folk style of Bundelkhand.

Saturday, 11th March – 6.30 pm
Bagheli folk song by
Roshni Prasad Mishra group

The Baghelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh has had a long tradition of performing songs that are associated with different rites of passage from birth to death. The group will present songs such as *sohar*, *anjuri*, *mundan*, *barua*, *madba*, *banna-banni*, *karma* and such others associated with various stages in human life.



Gangaur folk dance by
Vishal Sakalle group

Performed during the first month of the Hindu calendar (*Chaitra*), the festival of *Gangaur* celebrates the union of lord Shiva (*Gan*) and his consort, goddess Gauri or Parvati. Bedecked in colourful costumes, both married and unmarried women dance merrily to the accompaniment of rituals and folk songs, seeking the blessings of the holy couple.

Bagheli folk drama by
Neeraj Punder group

Based on a traditional belief that a child born with its feet coming out first, has magic in its feet, *Latmarba* is a folk story of one such person, Jiyaman. At first, unaware of his miraculous power, he struggles through life. However, upon realising the gift that he is endowed with, his life changes forever. Presented through the medium of Bagheli songs and dance, this folk drama conveys a socially significant message.

Daily Tickets:
₹180 & 135/- (Members)
₹200 & 150/- (Public)
Box Office: 9th February for Members & 12th February for Public

SCREENING



The Hours
by **Kevin Puts**
Opera Screening (175 mins)
Sung in English with English Subtitles
Godrej Dance Theatre
Saturday, 11th March – 1.00 pm

An NCPA – The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

A compelling new opera about three women in different times and places, *The Hours* is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Michael Cunningham and the Academy Award-winning film adaptation that followed it. Both the book and the film make heavy reference to an earlier novel, Virginia Woolf's 1925 *Mrs. Dalloway*, which forms a sort of parallel background narrative. The opera uses Woolf's and Cunningham's magisterial prose as a departure point from which to explore ambiguities and fluidities that cry out for musical expression.

Conductor: **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

Cast: **Renée Fleming, Kelli O'Hara, Joyce DiDonato, Kathleen Kim, Sylvia D'Eramo, Denyce Graves, John Holiday, William Burden, Sean Panikkar, Kyle Ketelsen & Brandon Cedel**

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

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

SCREENING

The Crucible

by **Arthur Miller**

Theatre Screening

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 15th March – 6.00 pm

An NCPA – National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

A witch hunt is beginning in **Arthur Miller's** captivating parable of power with **Erin Doherty** (*The Crown*) and **Brendan Cowell** (*Yerma*).

Raised to be seen but not heard, a group of young women in Salem



The Crucible, 15th March, Godrej Dance Theatre

suddenly find their words have an almighty power. As a climate of fear, vendetta and accusation spreads through the community, no one is safe from the trial.

Lyndsey Turner (*Hamlet*) directs this contemporary new staging, designed by Tony Award-winner **Es Devlin** (*The Lehman Trilogy*), from the Olivier stage of the National Theatre.

Tickets:

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

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

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

The NCPA Soulful Blues

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 18th March & Sunday, 19th March – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The much-awaited festival, NCPA Soulful Blues, debuts in March 2023. The festival will feature acclaimed international artistes that have made their mark in the MOBO house of fame, promising to make it a memorable two days of blues and soul, with host Brian Tellis.

The line-up includes MOBO-

nominated artiste **Natalie Williams** and the **Soul Family Band**, **Beatrice Kahl b.groovy** with **Joan Faulkner** and **David Tobin**.

18th March: **Beatrice Kahl b.groovy** feat. **Joan Faulkner** and **David Tobin**

19th March: **Natalie Williams** and the **Soul Family Band**

Get ready for a soulful evening with the best of blues in the city.

Tickets:

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

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

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open



Natalie Williams and the Soul Family Band, 19th March, Tata Theatre



Beatrice Kahl b.groovy feat. **Joan Faulkner & David Tobin**, 18th March, Tata Theatre

WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC



Ralph de Souza, 28th & 29th March, Experimental Theatre

Chamber Music by Musicians of the SOI

with Ralph de Souza

Experimental Theatre

Tuesday, 28th & Wednesday, 29th March – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of India will perform chamber music with **Ralph de Souza**, former violinist of the Endellion Quartet.

Programme details to be announced shortly.

Tickets:

₹720 & 450/- (Members)

₹800 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 25th February for Members & 28th February for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

Beatles Tribute

English Musical (90 mins)

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 2nd April – 7.00 pm

An NCPA & Silly Point Presentation

Come together as it is time to Twist and Shout on a Yellow Submarine while we Hold Your Hand on a journey where you Imagine the greatest for Eight Days a Week. The songs of The Beatles are being brought to life on stage in a way you have never seen before.

Cast: **Sarosh Nanavaty, Naquita Dsouza, Danesh Irani, Danesh Khambata, Hormuz Ragina, Arish Bhiwandiwala, Brent Tauro, Karan Parikh & Adil Kurva**

Tickets:

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

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

(Inclusive of GST)

Box Office: 9th February for Members and 12th February for Public

SCREENING

Fedora

by Umberto Giordano

Opera Screening (145 mins)

Sung in Italian with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 8th April – 1.00 pm

An NCPA – The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

Umberto Giordano's exhilarating drama returns to the Met repertory for the first time in 25 years. Packed with memorable melodies, show-stopping arias and explosive confrontations, *Fedora* requires a cast of thrilling voices to take flight, and the Met's new production promises to deliver. Soprano **Sonya Yoncheva**, one of today's most riveting artistes, sings the title role of the 19th-century Russian princess who falls in love with her fiancé's murderer, Count Loris, sung by tenor **Piotr Beczala**. Soprano **Rosa Feola** is the Countess Olga, *Fedora*'s confidante, and baritone **Lucas Meachem** is the diplomat De Siriex, with Met maestro **Marco Armiliato** conducting. Director **David McVicar** delivers a detailed and dramatic staging based around an ingenious fixed set that, like a Russian nesting doll, unfolds to reveal the opera's three distinctive settings—a palace in St. Petersburg, a fashionable Parisian salon and a picturesque villa in the Swiss Alps.

Conductor: **Marco Armiliato**

Cast: **Sonya Yoncheva, Rosa Feola, Piotr Beczala & Artur Ruciński**

Tickets:

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

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

SCREENING

Othello

by William Shakespeare

Theatre Screening

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 26th April – 6.00 pm

An NCPA – National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

An extraordinary new production of Shakespeare's most enduring tragedy, directed by **Clint Dyer** with a cast that includes **Giles Terera** (*Hamilton*), **Rosy McEwen** (*The Alienist*) and **Paul Hilton** (*The Inheritance*).

She is the bright, headstrong daughter of a senator; elevated by her status but stifled by its expectations. He is a refugee of slavery; having risen to the top of a white world, he finds that love across racial lines has a cost. Wed in secret, Desdemona and Othello crave a new life together. But as unseen forces conspire against them, they find their future is not theirs to decide.

Othello was filmed live on the Lyttleton stage of the National Theatre.

Tickets:

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

Box Office: 26th March for Members and 29th March for Public

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

International Jazz Day

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 30th April – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

In Mumbai, International Jazz Day has been celebrated for the last eleven years. The 12th edition, curated by **Louiz Banks**, will feature a huge array of artistes spread over a span of three hours. From jazz standards to jazz fusion, the concert will feature some of the finest musicians and singers in the country. The NCPA along with Banks celebrates this iconic day live at the Tata Theatre, Mumbai.

Tickets:

₹900, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

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

Events at a glance

February 2023

Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Wed	1st	6.30 pm	Percussion Symphony by Dr. L. Subramaniam Featuring Anindo Chatterjee & group	TATA THEATRE
Fri	3rd	5.00 pm & 7.30 pm	Special Screening Reality Check Documentary Film Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	4th	11.30 am	NCPA-HSBC Music Workshop Financial Planning for the Performing Artistes A free online workshop on Zoom by Anjan Piprodia	Online
Sat	4th	5.00 pm & 7.30 pm	Mumbai Premiere <i>Lavanyavati</i> English/ Marathi	E THEATRE
Sat & Sun	4th & 5th	7.00 pm & 5.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India The Music of Sir Karl Jenkins featuring the India premiere of Requiem and other works Marat Bisengaliev, conductor	jb JANAKI THEATRE
Sun	5th	4.30 pm & 7.00 pm	<i>Dekh Behen</i> English/Hindi Play	E THEATRE
Sun	5th	5.00 pm	The 33rd Pt. Durgalal Festival	TATA THEATRE
Tue	7th	6.30 pm	<i>One Week and a Day</i> Hebrew Language with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Wed	8th	6.00 pm	<i>The Book of Dust - La Belle Sauvage</i> Theatre Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Thu	9th	7.30 pm	Harmonies in Time Featuring Trilok Gurtu & Castle in Time Orchestra	TATA THEATRE
Fri	10th	6.30 pm	Finale Evening of the NCPA Mumbai Dance Season 2023	TATA THEATRE
Fri	10th	6.30 pm	<i>Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy</i> Festival of Sufi Music (10th to 12th February) <i>Rangreza: A Musical Presentation based on Sufi Poetry</i> Concept & narration: Suhail Akhtar Warsi Singers: Girish Sadhwani & Pooja Gaitonde	E THEATRE
Sat	11th	6.30 pm	An Ode to Rumi: Presentation based on the Poetry of Mevlana Rumi by Kabir Bedi	E THEATRE
Sun	12th	3.30 pm & 5.30 pm	<i>Rumiyana: A Journey Within</i> Presented by The Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust Direction & design: Dadi D. Pudumjee Text & animation: Shaaz Ahmed Music: Sandeep Pillai	E THEATRE
Sun	12th	7.30 pm	Within: Songs of the Sacred By Sonam Kalra & The Sufi Gospel Project	TATA THEATRE

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



Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sat	11th	7.00 pm	<i>The Devil Wears Bataa</i> English Play	TATA THEATRE
Mon	13th	7.00 pm	Plamena Mangova, piano	
Tue	14th	7.00 pm	Breakup Special! Comedy for Comedy's Sake Stand-up Comedy English/Hindi	Godrej dance theatre
Tue	14th	7.00 pm	Readings in the Shed Letters of Love	Tata Garden
Wed	15th	7.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Weber, Tchaikovsky & Brahms Evgeny Bushkov, conductor Plamena Mangova, piano	
Fri	17th	7.00 pm	Alim Beisembayev, piano	
Sat	18th	4.30 pm & 7.30 pm	<i>Aurat Aurat Aurat</i> Hindustani Play	
Sun	19th	5.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Beethoven, Rachmaninoff & Tchaikovsky John Axelrod, conductor Alim Beisembayev, piano	
Sun	19th	7.00 pm	<i>Bhagi Hui Ladkiyan</i> Hindustani Play	
Tue	21st	7.00 pm	Adam Walker, flute James Baillieu, piano	
Thu	23rd	7.00 pm	Symphony Orchestra of India Dvořák & Mozart John Axelrod, conductor Adam Walker, flute	
Fri	24th	4.30 pm	Book Discussion New Stories with Masala Chai Performed reading of select stories from 'Kissa Kissa Lucknowwaaa' written by Himanshu Bajpai	Stuart-Liff Collection Library, NCPA
Fri	24th	6.30 pm	<i>Ovi Ovi Gumphali</i> : Celebrating Marathi Language Day Concept & Presentation: Dhanashree Lele Supported by Preeti Nimkar Joshi, Aditi Prabhudesai & Avanti Lele Music Arrangement: Vikram Muzumdar	
Sat	25th	5.00 pm & 8.00 pm	NCPA Presents the Company Theatre Production <i>Taking Sides</i> English Play	
Sat	25th	6.30 pm	<i>Raga Rang</i> : Raga-based Songs from Hindi Films of Yesteryears by Parthiv Gohil & group	
Sun	26th	6.30 pm	Euphony Duo Recital	
Mon	27th	7.00 pm	Young Musician of the Year 2020: Udit Gupta Classical Guitar Recital	

"The Theatre Spectacle Returns"

EVERY GOOD BOY DESERVES FAVOUR

A Play for Actors and Orchestra

Written by Sir Tom Stoppard | Music by André Previn

Directed by Bruce Guthrie

"A brilliant orchestra at its helm."
- Broadway world

"You find yourselves chuckling at the darkly funny situations but also paying heed to the subtle ways in which Stoppard is trying to warn you."
- The Times of India

"The scale of the production is spectacular, it is something that might never have been experienced before in India."
- Mumbai Theatre Guide

"Can't get EVERY GOOD BOY DESERVES FAVOUR out of my head."
- Dolly Thakore

★★★★★
The Times of India

Cast: Neil Bhoopalam | Denzil Smith | Sohrab Ardeshir | Deepika Deshpande Amin | Mihaail Karachiwala & the Symphony Orchestra of India conducted by Mikel Toms

March 9th - 12th at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre | Tickets on book **my** show





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LINDSEY VONN



GARBINE MUGURUZA



SONYA YONCHEVA



GRACE KELLY



SYLVIA EARLE



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YUJA WANG

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