

 NCPA

APRIL 2023

# ON Stage<sup>®</sup>

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## **Dr. Sonal Mansingh**

At this year's edition of *Mudra*

Celebrating the legacy of  
Kumar Gandharva

An eclectic line-up for  
International Jazz Day

A conversation on  
Easter in Art



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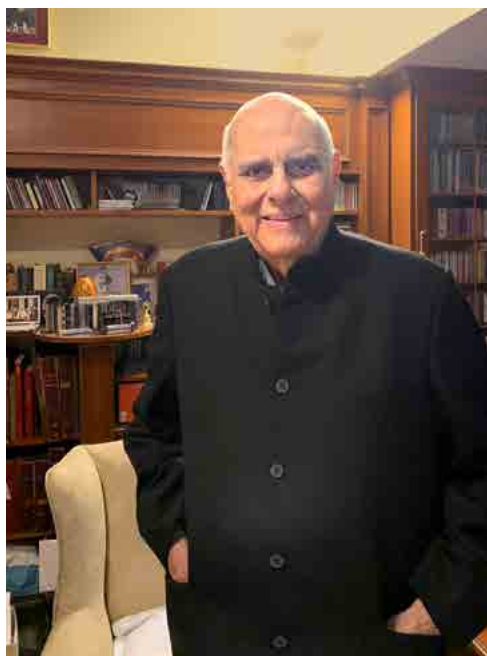
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# Chairman's Note



More than 35 years ago, Dr. Jamshed Bhabha realised the need for a gallery dedicated to photography. The Piramal Gallery was thus established and over the decades, it has served as a platform for photographers of repute from across India and the world.

It reopened recently after refurbishment, rekindling the NCPA's association with Dilip Piramal, our supporter. The Dilip Piramal Art Gallery is indeed a testament to how such support goes a long way in helping the arts flourish in ways tangible and intangible. We hope more of you come forward to support us in our endeavours.

The annual dance festival of *Mudra* is here, featuring noted artistes such as Dr. Sonal Mansingh and Dr. Sandhya Purecha, whose careers in classical dance have been path-breaking. Their choreographies will offer diverse interpretations of this year's theme of 'Aparajita – the one who didn't stop till she won'.

In the birth centenary year of Kumar Gandharva, his legacy will be celebrated through concerts, talks and discussions in a special two-day event this month.

Soloists and conductors who performed at the NCPA during the SOI Spring 2023 Season have the most encouraging words for the orchestra and also the manner in which our seasons are organised. Their reflections appear in the following pages.

Apart from the obvious after-effects of the pandemic, one gradually realises the effect it has had on not only the personal lives of people and their professions, but also on the serious performing arts business. This phenomenon will be carefully reviewed in a forthcoming issue of *ON Stage*. Do remember to look out for it.

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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**NCPA**



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# A RELENTLESS PURSUIT

This year's edition of the NCPA *Mudra* features doyens of classical dance who have overcome demons of bodily hurt and mental trauma to return undefeated to the practice of their art. We speak to Dr. Sonal Mansingh, Dr. Sandhya Purecha, Sutapa Talukdar and Rajashree Shirke on the pain of leaving and the glory of returning to the stage.

By Aishwarya Sahasrabudhe



Dr. Sandhya Purecha (right)

**M**agic works at every moment in life if one has faith and love for what one is doing,” asserts prominent Odissi and Bharatanatyam dancer, Dr. Sonal Mansingh, as she reflects on her 1974 accident in Germany which severely injured her legs and threatened the doom of her dancing career. After spending weeks in a cast, intense sessions of painful physiotherapy followed and, nine months later, Mansingh returned to the stage to deliver a classical recital at Mumbai’s Rang Bhavan. The youngest recipient of two of India’s highest civilian honours—Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan—had found within herself indomitable courage and grit that brought her back to the “fullness of dance”, a practice inseparable from her sense of being.

In April 2023, the NCPA’s thematic dance festival, *Mudra*, presented annually around International Dance Day, will feature artistes whose stories of bravery, determination and discipline have enabled them to build and sustain decades-long dance careers and to practise their art form despite insurmountable physical, emotional and mental distress.

## This edition of *Mudra* revolves around the theme *Aparajita*—meaning the one who did not stop till she won—presenting choreographies and lecture-demonstrations that celebrate this theme, and talks that explore how each of these stalwarts crossed the threshold of their personal abyss and returned to the spotlight of the stage

This edition of *Mudra* revolves around the theme *Aparajita*—meaning the one who did not stop till she won—presenting choreographies and lecture-demonstrations that celebrate this theme, and talks that explore how each of these stalwarts crossed the threshold of their personal abyss and returned to the spotlight of the stage. The festival will showcase recitals by such esteemed gurus and their troupes, across dance forms like Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Kathak and Mohiniattam, which are imbued with thought-provoking narratives derived from their own stories of strength as well as those found in our rich history and mythology.

### Defeating demons

Describing her upcoming performance at the festival, the Shringar Mani award-winning danseuse Sutapa Talukdar notes, “When I first thought about presenting *Parijat*, I did not proceed by thinking that I had indeed become victorious.” In a heart-rending recollection

of her cancer diagnosis, the exponent first ruminates over a childhood spent in “unadulterated happiness” to then becoming an established Odissi artiste to dueling head-on with a disease whose treatment left her with a body that seemed nothing but “the spectral remains of the undead.”

However, a spurt of energy, mindfulness and planning gradually took root in Talukdar so that the scars of radiation and chemotherapy manifest in her blackened nails, hair loss and constant pain were slowly overcome. Even as dancing proved difficult, she transferred innumerable creative ideas “swarming in her head” around choreography and costuming to her students. She also trained herself in the study of the *navrasas* and began to closely observe diverse emotions like “curiosity, dismissal, pure happiness and wonder”, in the visage of those she encountered. Eventually, she began dancing herself and, in the process, discovered a new, unmasked version of herself that was “ruthless, practical and hard-working”. The performances in *Parijat*, she says, “reflect the different emotions of a woman, such as innocence, love, grace, adoration towards nature...”

Talukdar, like Mansingh, received her training from Odissi’s tour de force Kelucharan Mohapatra. It was her attachment to dance, she says, that helped her overcome misgivings about her appearance, mental depression and even jealousy towards her peers. “Dance is not different from my personality,” she confesses. It is a presence so subliminal that following her diagnosis, dance heightened Talukdar’s approach towards reality, revealing her transparent and undisguised self.

For Bharatanatyam artiste and the chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, Dr. Sandhya Purecha, such bodily challenges came in the form of the debilitating diagnosis of aggravated cervical spondylitis, which would render her immobile. Purecha believes it was the unflinching faith in her Ayurvedic physician, in herself and in the affections of her sister that led to a full recovery and a return to the stage. In the process, she discovered that it is in such moments that one can discover fearlessness to embrace challenges, to be more disciplined in practice and to ultimately emerge stronger and creatively ignited. “So, whether I’m physically performing or not,” says Purecha, “I’m in constant and continuous *abhyaas* or study connected to my art and am able to rediscover infinite means of expression and movement.”

### The good fight

Where wounds of bodily hurt were healed with discipline and patience, the mental trauma and anguish of personal choices trickling into the everyday of dance exacted a sum from dancers which could potentially extinguish their spark. For Mansingh, this storm came in the form of Mohapatra’s opposition to her divorce,



Sutapa Talukdar



Dr. Sonal Mansingh



Rajashree Shirke

an impact felt acutely because the position a guru occupies in the world of a classical dancer is only next to the supreme. Yet, Mansingh persisted in her *riyaa*, hopeful of reconciliation and continued imbibing her guru's lessons.

On the other hand, eminent dancer Kanak Rele's love for propagating Mohiniattam transitioned into a sociopolitical battle of national consequence when the Padma Bhushan awardee struggled with severe social and cultural stigma to give the dance form a systematic academic structure. Banned as prostitution by the colonial regime, the hurt of taboo echoed post-independence too, but the founder-director of the Nalanda Nritya Kala Mahavidyalaya persevered and succeeded in restoring the erstwhile dignity of this beautiful art form. Taking the stage at *Mudra* will be Rele's troupe paying homage to the lasting legacy of their guru.

For Rajashree Shirke, known for her exemplary blend of Kathak, Bharatanatyam and theatre, growing up as the *majhli* or middle child was as much about navigating her own identity as it was about fulfilling, along with the trajectory of marriage and family, her enthusiastic dream to dance. Of the lasting influence of her mother on her creative processes, Shirke recalls that back then while these lessons were invaluable, as a *majhli*, this also meant a persistent feeling of being sidelined, faulted or living in the shadow of her extraordinary elder sibling. Yet, the dancer reveals that her mother's insistence on inculcating the habit of reading in her was so profound that she dove deep into the recesses of her own mind through literature to visualise every page she read. Her choreographies, exploring a host of themes from the Bhakti poets' relationship with the divine to women freedom

fighters before the revolt of 1857, are suggestive of her understanding of the range of narratives classical dance can reproduce.

At *Mudra*, Shirke will be performing a production originally written by playwright Chetan Datar, with her own variations and flourishes to tell the story of Mahabharata's Hidimba. The production's haunting narrative explores the plight of Hidimba, the Mata-Stree (mother and woman) who raised Ghatotkacha single-handedly only to suffer from the terrible pain of the death of her child during the war of Kurukshetra.

The inspiring journeys of all the dancers reflected in their zealous practice reveal perseverance and fortitude of such degree that as they pour time, study, thought and insight into their practice, their dance form evolves and reshapes itself. There is also gratitude to those who taught them the grammar of dance and that of life. Mansingh, fully aware of her gurus' gifts, says, "My Bharatanatyam gurus U.S. Krishna Rao and Chandrabhaga Devi have been a great influence on me... from Gouri Amma, I imbibed subtleties of delineating *padams*. Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra's Odissi lessons were sculptural poetry and Jiwan Pani lent the weight of his honest and deep scholarship which raised my consciousness and awareness to another level." Physical and emotional impediments, she says, are part of every artiste's journey. "India's beautiful tradition of dance with the amalgam of several other art forms is always fresh and attractive and will remain *aparajit*." ■

*The NCPA Mudra Dance Festival 2023 will be presented on 27th April at the Experimental Theatre and on 28th April at the Tata Theatre. A reading from Kanak Rele's autobiography will be held as a tribute to the eminent artiste.*





# The Season That Was

All through February, the theatres at the NCPA resounded with music as the Symphony Orchestra of India played in its 30th season. Acclaimed conductors and soloists, many of whom made their India debut, reflect on the experience of performing with the SOI.

## Marat Bisengaliev, Music Director, SOI

Karl Jenkins's music is versatile, beautiful and easy to listen to. It does not have boundaries and the composer openly uses elements of many genres—rhythm, tunes and instruments from folk music around the world, jazz, Western classical and even some elements of pop music.

The two evenings of music by Jenkins at the Jamshed Bhabha Theatre were a real celebration of over 160 Indian artistes who formed a formidable ensemble onstage. The orchestra, in fact, consisted of 12 academy students and seven SOI apprentices, which made me very proud as this meant that our educational initiatives are delivering quality results. Included in the choirs was the SOI academy choir, comprised of 20 children.

The majority of the programme for the first two concerts included Indian premieres. Jenkins's Requiem is a unique piece which represents both European and Oriental traditions. I was happy to see the work brought to life by five choirs working together. The solo part, which is crucial to the work, was performed by Shirish Malhotra on the bansuri. He is a young musician of the highest calibre whom I will follow and collaborate with in the future with great admiration. The soprano part was sung by Zarina Altynbayeva. She is a talented opera diva known around the world for her beautiful coloratura singing and great artistic qualities. The orchestra performed to perfection and the students and apprentices did themselves justice. All in all, my greetings and a big thanks to all the musicians who gave it their all on the stage and also the management that worked very hard to tackle the logistics of dealing with such a large project. Congratulations.



## Zarina Altynbayeva, soprano

It has been a great pleasure for me to perform with the Symphony Orchestra of India under the guidance of Maestro Bisengaliev. To bring together such a large number of people—the orchestra, five choirs and soloists—onstage, I would say, was quite a challenge. After several rehearsals, we achieved this magical synchronisation and felt like one music machine.

I loved the way the orchestra carried the soloists, so gently and supportive. Before bringing Karl Jenkins's Requiem to India, Marat Bisengaliev invited me to perform this masterpiece in Kazakhstan. He is such a legend, and truly an incredible musician. It was an honour for me to perform with him on the same stage. I get inspired, I learn from him, I get to know new facets of the music. This Requiem at the NCPA was something unforgettable.

Many thanks to the audience for expressing such an interest,

especially in the Kazakh classical music which we presented on a special evening for Friends of the SOI. I did not expect to receive such applause for this kind of repertoire. I enjoyed working in this friendly atmosphere and would love to come back.

I also noticed many children at the NCPA learning classical music. I think it is important for the young generation to have this experience of performing with professional musicians onstage and learning from them. It is great that these young musicians have this opportunity and I hope we inspired them to follow their path as classical music performers.



## Evgeny Bushkov, conductor

For me to come back to conduct the SOI was an extraordinary experience, especially after the Covid-19 lockdown when it seemed like musical life had stood still and it was hard to believe that it would resume.

Due to the time spent in Mumbai during my residency with the SOI, my return was not simply meeting with an orchestra, it was a reunion with close friends and colleagues. I was very happy with the level of the orchestra—even though my concert was early in the season and musicians had just got together, we had an intensive rehearsal period and the result was quite satisfying, both technically and musically.

An important role in the success of our performance was of the fantastic soloist I was happy to collaborate with—Plamena Mangova. She is a world-class musician, whom I had the privilege of working with for the prestigious December Nights of Sviatoslav Richter festival in Moscow a few years ago. We had a wonderful understanding, both in music and personally.

Her Tchaikovsky concerto for the SOI Spring 2023 Season sounded very fresh and moving. She interprets it differently from what we hear with Russian pianists and I personally loved her view. It was a great moment for all musicians to work with an excellent and refined musician.



## John Axelrod, conductor

My experience with the Symphony Orchestra of India at the NCPA was a marvelously musical one, full of friendship and fresh ideas. Tchaikovsky's Pathétique and Dvořák's Symphony 7 were the main works of the two programmes, played with passion, purpose and precision. But Beethoven and Mozart and Rachmaninoff were equally performed with total commitment. I was very impressed and inspired by the orchestra, playing at a world-class level, flexible to accommodate the needs of the music, and motivated to serve the intention of the composers. I knew many musicians who came from other orchestras to add to the already high level of local talent in the orchestra, in particular, concertmaster Adelina Hasani, who proved to be an outstanding leader and colleague for everyone. The soloists were well supported. The Rachmaninoff Paganini Rhapsody, performed by Alim Beisembayev, resonated throughout the hall. Adam Walker, the virtuoso flautist was for me the great discovery, and he played Mozart with such ebullience that the music sparkled like champagne.

I was particularly grateful to Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook, Xerxes Unvala and the staff for their hospitality and kindness, and chauffeur Sunny Gaur, who navigated the cacophony of the Mumbai traffic to ensure I would arrive in one piece. As I said for the encore after the Dvořák Symphony, in the rhythm and melody of the third movement scherzo:

*NCPA and SOI,*

*It's 30 seasons for you and I,*

*It is so fun, it is so free,*

*The way that music ought to be.*

*The SOI and NCPA proved that to be true. And for this I thank you.*



## Plamena Mangova, pianist

I was thrilled when the great Russian conductor Evgeny Bushkov, with whom I have collaborated successfully earlier, told me about the possibility to join the Symphony Orchestra of India with him for a concert in February in Mumbai. A long-time dream of mine was going to come true. India had always been a country that had attracted me with its culture and as a destination to visit in general. Even more exciting was to learn of the opportunity to add a recital to the concerto performance, which meant I could share a diverse repertoire with the audiences.

I must say that my stay in Mumbai was the most enjoyable and I was happy to collaborate with the highly professional orchestra. I was excited to see that the SOI is composed of musicians coming from so many countries—some of them in residence, others travelling specially to join the concerts during the season. The atmosphere was wonderful, I made many new friends and we enjoyed making music together. I was highly impressed by the welcome from the team at the NCPA and the SOI, where the artiste is treated with professionalism and in a sympathetic manner at the same time.

From a purely professional point of view as well, I adored the NCPA auditorium with its phenomenal acoustics, a more than fantastic piano and a team taking care of the many important elements beyond imagination, all with kindness and a high level of skill. I must mention the beauty and diversity of Mumbai, where the incredible Gateway of India or the fabulous waterfront are just a little part of this city of varied colours. I found the atmosphere of the city fascinating, and it was enjoyable to come closer to what is real Indian food and understand the Ayurveda tradition as well.

Mumbai will stay forever in my heart with this unforgettable experience and I carry with me a dream of my next visit.





### Alim Beisembayev, pianist

I had the most memorable first visit to India which, I hope, will lead to many more. It was a joy to perform at the NCPA where so many great artists have performed over the years.

It was a privilege to play the Rachmaninoff Paganini Variations with Maestro Axelrod and the SOI, which is a world-class orchestra, and I will always have fondest memories working with them. I also had a lovely time in Pune where I played for the Poona Music Society.

The audience was one of the highlights. It was so special to play to so many enthusiastic people, both at the Experimental Theatre, Jamshed Bhabha Theatre and in Pune where the response was so warm at each event.



Members of the NCPA Chorus with choir director Olga Vykhodtseva



Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA (centre), with SOI Music Director Marat Bisengaliyev (left) and guest conductor John Axelrod



A student of the SOI Music Academy tries her hand at conducting during an interaction with John Axelrod and Alim Beisembayev



Adam Walker's flute recital with pianist James Baillieu



Shirish Malhotra plays the bansuri for Karl Jenkins's Requiem

# AN INSTRUMENTAL VOICE

A century after his birth, vocalist and composer Kumar Gandharva's path-breaking legacy continues to inspire musicians and listeners alike. We speak to his daughter Kalapini Komkali to find out how she plans to celebrate the legend's birth centenary this month at the NCPA.

By Akshaya Pillai

In a little corner of the internet there is a live recording of a special *mehfil* that took place on 28th December 1983. Painstakingly restored from a two-decade-old VHS tape, you can watch Kumar Gandharva in all his glory perform 'Maai Gusaiya'. The musician and his accompanists are all seated on the floor and the backdrop is a wallpaper featuring a landscape. Even in the grainy texture of the video, the waterfall in the wallpaper remained visible, the cascading streams frozen in time. Gandharva's voice takes flight like a bird soaring through these mountains, cascades and valleys, carrying with it the weight of centuries of longing and devotion. His music was always meant to speak across generations, and his voice was a force of nature, a raw and powerful instrument that could convey both the ecstasy and the agony of the human condition.

## Enduring inspiration

His renditions have moved and inspired countless listeners over the years, including scholar and writer Linda Hess. The year was 1991. Hess was teaching at the University of California when she had a chance encounter that would change the course of her life. A fellow writer, U. R. Ananthamurthy, asked her if she

had ever listened to Gandharva, the renowned Indian classical singer. Hess had not, but Ananthamurthy was insistent. "How can you translate Kabir without listening to Kumar Gandharva? In India, text is only a pretext. Please listen to him," he told her. This exchange must have stayed with her because, almost two decades later, Hess published *Singing Emptiness*, a collection of translations of Kabir's poems that were sung by Gandharva.

Gandharva's legacy lives on not only through his music but also through his daughter, Kalapini Komkali; grandson, Bhuvanesh Komkali, and his disciples such as Satyasheel Deshpande, as well as through musicians, like Niladri Kumar, who continue to be inspired by his groundbreaking contributions to Indian classical music. "You hear the first note of an artiste and you know it's no one else but Pandit Kumar Gandharva. A true Gandharva," says composer and sitar player, Niladri Kumar. "Even after a century has passed since his birth, the fact that Kumar Gandharva's music, approach to *sur*, dedication to music and life in general still serve as inspiration for most practising musicians is a testament to his enduring legacy."

Like her father, Komkali was drawn to the folk music of the region around Dewas, where she grew up, and began exploring it in her own unique way. When I start asking her a question about Kumarji's interpretations of Kabir, she is quick to retort, "Why does everyone come back to Kabir? He also composed music on Tukaram, Tulsidas and Namdev. Kabir was undoubtedly an integral part of my father's musical repertoire and continues to be popular among the younger generation, but it's important to acknowledge his diverse range of compositions and innovation, spanning genres," she says before comparing him to an archaeologist who unearthed old traditions and honed them till they shone in a new light.

Today, Komkali plays a key role in organising music festivals that honour her father's legacy. To celebrate his genius on the occasion of his centennial birth year, his family and students come



together to present *Kalajayee*, which translates as the one who has emerged victorious against time. The two-day musical extravaganza at the NCPA will bring his music closer to fans who cannot make it to Dewas for the annual Kumar Gandharva Mahotsav and will include stalwarts like Hariprasad Chaurasia, Venkatesh Kumar, Ulhas Kashalkar, Shruti Sadolikar and Niladri Kumar, amongst others.

## A silver lining

A rebel and a maverick, Gandharva refused to be bound by the traditional boundaries of Indian classical music. He was a child prodigy who began singing at the tender age of five and went on to become one of the most renowned classical vocalists of his time. But his journey was not an easy one. It was marked by illness, adversity and a constant search for new horizons.

Born Shivaputra Siddharamayya Komkalimath in Sulebhavi, a village in Karnataka, Gandharva showed a natural aptitude for music from an early age. His father, a school teacher, recognised his talent and encouraged him to pursue music seriously. At the age of nine, Gandharva began training under

## Finally, unfettered

This was also the time that he began to explore *nirgun bhajans* through a new lens. He found in them a spiritual depth and simplicity that spoke directly to his soul. He began to incorporate them into his performances, to infuse them with his own passion and energy. This was the beginning of a new phase in his career, one that would see him break free from the constraints of the classical tradition and create a new genre of music.

In an essay in the biography *Kaljayi Kumar Gandharva*, Shubha Mudgal says, "No other singer in the pantheon of Hindustani classical music but Kumar Gandharva crafted a voice that howled like the wind, carrying shades of joy, lament, love and loss, modelling it on the sounds of the folk music that he had introspected on for years. At times there is an awe-inspiringly eerie quality to the voice, which defies description. This aspect of Kumar Gandharva's singing voice is not so much a result of endless hours of *riyaaz*, but is, in fact, a much deeper philosophical observation of, like nature, the vagaries of the human mind and heart, and a study of silence, symmetry and asymmetry."

# Kumar Gandharva's music was always meant to speak across generations, and his voice was a force of nature, a powerful instrument that could convey both the ecstasy and the agony of the human condition

Vinayakrao Patwardhan, a renowned vocalist of the Gwalior *gharana*. Under Patwardhan's tutelage, Gandharva polished his skills as a classical vocalist. He developed a powerful voice, with a range that could span three octaves. He learned to master the intricacies of the ragas and to imbue them with his unique style. He became known for his ability to improvise, experiment with different tempos and blend different genres of music.

In his early 20s, a young Gandharva was given a diagnosis that could have been a death sentence: tuberculosis. In those days, the disease was often fatal, and doctors advised him to seek the drier climate of Dewas, in western Madhya Pradesh, where he could recover. It was in Dewas that the young musician discovered a new sound that would define his life's work. The folk music of the region captured Gandharva's imagination.

It was here that he realised there was more to music than just the classical tradition he had been trained in. He began to explore the rich variety of folk music that surrounded him, to listen to the songs of the people, to understand their rhythms and melodies. He found that this music spoke to him in a way that the classical tradition never had. It was raw, emotional and deeply connected to the people and the land.

Gandharva's new approach to music was not without controversy. He was criticised by purists who saw him as diluting the classical tradition. But he remained true to his vision, and over time, his music began to win over new fans. He became known as a genre-defying musician, one who was not afraid to experiment and push boundaries. His legacy continues to inspire musicians like Niladri Kumar, who says, "I come from a generation that is half his age, and for me, his way of looking at raga sangeet, his approach to a raga, the *bhava* in his renditions and, most certainly, his unique style remains inspirational."

Kumar Gandharva created a new style of music that blended the classical and the folk, the spiritual and the secular, the traditional and the modern. His innovative approach inspired musicians to think beyond the conventional, experiment with new genres and find their own voice. But it is his desire to connect with his audience that truly distinguishes him as an artiste, and why his music continues to inspire and delight listeners across generations.

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***Kalajayee: The Birth Centenary of Kumar Gandharva will be celebrated on 8th and 9th April at the Tata and Experimental Theatres.***



# Saz-ē-Bahar

Festival of Indian Instrumental Music

**14 APRIL**


Vijay Ghate tabla  
U. Rajesh mandolin

**15 APRIL**

Joydeep Mukherjee sursingar & mohan veena  
Kushal Das sitar

Pre-event talk at 6:00 pm on instruments by Dr. Suvarnalata Rao

**Godrej Dance Theatre, NCPA | 6:30 pm**

Tickets on book  show

# Through a New Lens

The state-of-the-art Dilip Piramal Art Gallery inaugurated at the NCPA adds a new chapter to its legacy of pioneering work in the field of photography

With its bright interiors and modern amenities, the newly refurbished Dilip Piramal Art Gallery reopened at the NCPA last month, cementing its standing as a pioneer in the ever-changing world of photography. After extensive renovation work achieved in record time, the gallery was inaugurated on 2nd March by its benevolent donor Mr. Dilip Piramal and chief guest Mr. Harsh Goenka. The lamp was then lit by NCPA Chairman Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Mr. Goenka, Mr. Piramal, Managing Director, Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (MMRC), Ms. Ashwini Bhide, and the head of the gallery Mr. Mukesh Parpiani.

“This is a tribute to our founder Dr. J.J. Bhabha. Decades ago, he allocated an important area in our city for the promotion of the performing arts and other forms of culture, on an unimaginably large scale, of which we are reaping the harvest today,” said Mr. Suntook in his inaugural address.

Born out of a dearth of venues dedicated to the art of photography, the gallery started as part of the Centre for Photography as an Art Form in 1987. A state-of-the-art darkroom and a colour processing unit were set up, facilities that were unmatched in the city at the time. The Piramal Art Gallery was established soon after with a grant from Mr. Piramal, who shares a longstanding and cherished association with the NCPA. “It was the visionary Dr. Bhabha who saw a need for a photo gallery in Bombay. When he proposed to me a space above the Experimental Theatre, I considered it a privilege to be a part of this novel initiative. Technology is ever evolving and for a gallery that has been a pioneer, it was time for it to undergo refurbishment and upgrade. When I was apprised of this plan at the NCPA—this time under the able leadership of Mr. Suntook—I knew I had to be a part of this exciting new innings,” he said.

Speaking fondly of his association with the NCPA, Mr. Goenka said, “The NCPA means so much to all of us. In addition to great performances, it has exacting standards as far as acoustics and audio visuals are concerned...That’s what the NCPA stands for—an aspiration for every artiste to be a part of it.”



The gallery has reopened with a three-part series of exhibitions on the ongoing mega infrastructural projects in Mumbai—the Mumbai Metro 3, the Coastal Road Project, the Mumbai Trans-Harbour Link



The state-of-the-art Dilip Piramal Art Gallery

The noted industrialist and connoisseur of art also recalled witnessing the gallery’s opening three and a half decades ago and shared his joy in being present for the unveiling of its renewed form.

“As the gallery reopens today, we are delighted that it has found support in Mr. Piramal. He values the importance of music, dance, theatre, photography and paintings to civilised citizens, and we are grateful to him for his magnanimity,” said Mr. Suntook, as he also thanked Ms. Brinda Khatau, Council Member, NCPA, and the organisation’s senior management for pursuing the modernisation of the gallery, to bring it



Mr. Dilip Piramal (left) and Mr. Harsh Goenka inaugurate the gallery



Mr. Dilip Piramal and Mrs. Shalini Piramal at the gallery

to fruition. “All this, however, would not have been possible without our one-man army, Mr. Mukesh Parpiani. He ensures that the gallery is always in step with the times, and a history of his achievement can indeed form the reason for a well-documented journey of the NCPA.”

(From left) Mr. S.K. Gupta, Director, Projects, MMRC; Mr. Mukesh Parpiani, Head of the gallery; Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook, Chairman, NCPA; Ms. Mala Goenka; Ms. Shalini Piramal; Ms. Ashwini Bhide Managing Director, MMRC; Mr. Harsh Goenka; Mr. Dilip Piramal; Ms. Aparna Raje Piramal and Ms. Brinda Khatau, Council Member, NCPA, at the lamp-lighting ceremony

Veteran photographers Mr. Praful C. Patel, who ran the gallery for 18 years, and Mr. Mukesh Parpiani, who has been heading it since 2009, have greatly contributed to the success of the gallery. Mr. Parpiani also took the lead in organising virtual photo exhibitions amid the lockdowns imposed during the pandemic, which had a significant impact.

The Dilip Piramal Art Gallery opened with a three-part series of exhibitions on the ongoing mega infrastructural projects in Mumbai. The first show, *Connecting the Unconnected*, on the Mumbai Metro Line 3, chronicles its journey as it comes to life. It has been curated in collaboration with the MMRC and is supported by Tata Projects. Exhibitions on the Mumbai Coastal Road Project, curated in collaboration with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and supported by Larsen & Toubro (L&T), and on the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link, curated in collaboration with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) and supported by Tata Projects, will follow soon. The exhibitions will showcase the behind-the-scenes journeys of these infrastructural undertakings that will change the transportation dynamics of the city and the quality of life of the citizens of Mumbai.

“I would like to congratulate the NCPA for the revamping of the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery. It is an honour for the MMRC as ours is the first exhibition after the makeover of this art gallery. Choosing infrastructure projects as a theme or subject matter of an art exhibition in a prestigious gallery of our country is unusual and unheard of. Planning,



(From left) Mr. Dilip Piramal, Ms. Ashwini Bhide and Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook observe a model of the Aqualine of the Metro

execution and completion, and the problems faced during execution are generally presented in academic workshops and seminars. But when the execution of such projects becomes the subject of an art exhibition, it is recognition from art lovers and an indication that infrastructure is really an art of engineering. We are thankful to the organisers of this exhibition and the NCPA,” said Ms. Bhide.

Elaborating on the project, she added that the Metro Line 3 is Mumbai’s first completely underground metro line which is a challenging and complex project. “As all the stations of the Aqualine are underground, people don’t get a chance to see the progress or process of how it is being built beneath the busy roads of this dense city. It is an opportunity for every Mumbaikar to witness the intricacies of this engineering marvel through breathtaking visuals of the ongoing construction work. Once operational, the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ route will transform the way Mumbai will travel and will cater to 17 lakh passengers daily, connecting six major business and employment centres including Nariman Point, Cuffe Parade, Fort, Lower Parel, BKC and SEEPZ/MIDC,” said Ms. Bhide, who has been a supporter of the promotion of arts in the city of Mumbai. The metro project will facilitate the citizens of Mumbai to attend the offerings of the NCPA in a more convenient manner.

Tata Projects has been a key player in bringing these mega infrastructural projects to fruition by enabling the deployment of cutting-edge technology among other undertakings. “Mumbai is the commercial capital of India and one of its most vibrant cities. Its transportation system is Mumbai’s lifeline. Tata Projects is proud to be a part of building this lifeline and to be associated with executing one of the most challenging stretches of the Metro Line 3, which passes through some extremely dense areas. Another transformational project that Mumbaikars can look forward to and we are proud of is the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), a six-lane road bridge across the Mumbai bay, between Sewri, the Eastern Freeway in Mumbai and Ulwe in Navi Mumbai. The MTHL will be faster, efficient, cheaper and lower the



Interactive gallery visits for schoolchildren have been organised

commute time from the island city to Navi Mumbai to 26 minutes. While these projects have been in the making for some time now, many Mumbaikars are unaware of the actual nature of work being carried out and the innovation and technological challenges of the projects. A big congratulations to the NCPA for the renovation of the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery. This exhibition couldn’t have been at a better place than in Mumbai, a metropolis that is a melting pot of cultures with a rich history, a metropolis which is also looking forward to modern transportation infrastructure,” said Mr. Vinayak Pai, Managing Director - Tata Projects Ltd.

As part of the inaugural month, interactive visits to the gallery have been organised for students of schools run by the BMC. Guided walk-throughs, quizzes, informative videos and miniature models of the metro and tunnel-boring machines have greatly helped pique the interest of the young minds.

In addition to exhibitions on unique, curated themes, the gallery has served as a platform for emerging and established photographers over the last 36 years. Well-known war photographer Robert Capa’s work, to be showcased this month, is another exhibition to look forward to.

New and improved amenities in a setting that retains the original charm is the hallmark of the gallery. Remote-controlled lighting and non-reflective walls will offer the best display for photographs. Movable partitions will make the gallery modular and help facilitate group shows. A state-of-the-art audiovisual system will aid in a variety of events, including more online workshops and film screenings. The adjoining fully covered terrace fitted with improved lighting will allow for year-round workshops and exhibitions in a more intimate setting—all the makings of a riveting new chapter in the world of pictures. ■

*The Dilip Piramal Art Gallery is open on all days of the week (except public holidays) from 12 pm to 8 pm.*



# MAMOGI

Featuring

**Mark Hartsuch, Mohini Dey & Gino Banks**



**20 MAY 2023**

**6:30 PM**

**TATA THEATRE**

**NCPA**

# A FINE BALANCE

Louiz Banks discusses what is in store for the audience at the upcoming International Jazz Day celebration at the NCPA.

By Narendra Kusnur



**T**hough International Jazz Day is celebrated on 30th April every year across the world, preparations begin much in advance. In the last week of February, India's jazz ambassador Louiz Banks was busy finalising the line-up for this year's celebration at the NCPA. The broad plan was that it had to offer something different from what was played in the past few years, and also have some variety.

### Encouraging prospects

"The groups we've chosen reflect the future of jazz in India," announces Banks, proudly. "There are many talented youngsters on the scene, and they have to be seen to be believed. Many of them are regulars at various clubs in different cities, and the auditorium setting will be a great platform. So, our focus this time is on younger musicians, including a band comprising teenagers. Of course, the veterans are there too, so we have a balance," he adds.

The event, curated by Banks, is being presented by the NCPA in association with UNESCO and the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz, which spearhead the international celebrations. Now in its 12th edition in Mumbai, it has been held at the Tata Theatre since 2017.

The teenage band Banks refers to comprises 15-year-old guitarist Shivin Shirodkar, saxophonist Harsh Bhavsar (18) and drummer Anurag Saha (19). They will be mentored by bassist Avishek Dey.

The other 'young' group is The Act, consisting of vocalist Shreya Bhattacharya, pianist Arka Chakraborty, guitarist Pragya Barooah, bassist Avishek Dey and drummer Arjun Chakraborty. The group delivers a good mix of standards and new music. The evening will also feature the Zian Bhamgara group, fronted by Bhamgara on vocals. She will be accompanied by Niranjana Joshi on piano, Ralph Menezes on bass and Adrian D'souza on drums.

**“There are many talented youngsters on the scene who have to be seen to be believed... our focus this time is on younger musicians, including a band comprising teenagers along with veteran ensembles”**

### Fusion of flavours

While these bands will focus more on jazz styles, the Louiz Banks Fusion Ensemble will blend jazz sounds with Indian elements. Joining pianist-keyboardist Banks, bassist Sheldon D'Silva and drummer Gino Banks are vocalist Sharmistha Chatterjee and sitar exponent Ravi Chary. Says Banks, "This will be a completely different sound, and I am working on some new tunes. Sharmistha has been with me on the fusion group Ganga Shakti, and there will be some fabulous vocals coming from her."

The show will last about three hours, and to add an international flavour, there is a French group featuring 60-year-old pianist Jean-Christophe Cholet, saxophonist Vincent Mascot and drummer Quentin Cholet. Well known in European jazz circles, Cholet believes in cross-cultural artistry, blending harmonies with traditional tunes, his work drawing from the great composers.

"Though the main idea is to showcase younger talent, there is a good mix of youth and experience," says Banks. "What impresses me about most musicians is that they like to create their own music. Even if they play standards, they add their own flavour. Standards should never be a copy-paste endeavour, and the way they adapt them is admirable," he says.

### On curating artistes

How does he shortlist artistes each year? Banks says, "My son Neil, who manages this and other events, is always on the look out for talent. It is a continuous process. In Mumbai, there are many clubs where young musicians play. The fees at these venues may not be high, and they need to simultaneously do film music or ads to earn a living. But the exposure and experience are very good. Neil and Gino keep sounding me off, and so does bassist Sheldon. That's the starting point."

The next step is to select the theme and flow, and choose artistes that fit the overall plan. According to

## A French group featuring pianist Jean-Christophe Cholet, saxophonist Vincent Mascot and drummer Quentin Cholet will add an international flavour to the festivities

Banks, these may consist of musicians who regularly play together as a group, like The Act this year, or flautist Rajeev Raja's group last year. Or they may be groups that have been put together specially for the show. At earlier Jazz Day shows, singers like Gary Lawyer, Sonia Saigal, Samantha Noella, Isheeta Chakraborty and Vasundhara Vee have played with different backing bands.

Banks says that most musicians are keen to perform at the International Jazz Day concert. "The date is fixed, so they plan their schedule accordingly. Availability is rarely an issue. Once the line-up is finalised, the musicians make their own preparations. We don't have any large combined rehearsals, but if anyone is looking for space, they come and rehearse on our premises," he says.

### Intercultural unity

Globally, International Jazz Day has been celebrated since 2012, after UNESCO announced the date the previous year. The idea came from renowned pianist and composer Hancock, who is also a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. The organisational partner for Jazz Day was the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, which was later renamed the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz. The mission was "to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role in uniting people in all corners of the globe." Nearly 200 countries participate every year. Besides concerts and jam sessions, events include workshops, conferences and community outreach. To be part of it, one has to register with the institute. In India, while the big show is held in Mumbai, other events are organised by different promoters in Delhi, Bengaluru and Goa.

Banks is gung-ho about the future of jazz in the country. While he is optimistic about the younger generation, he also feels it is important to follow both traditional and newer jazz. "Many of them only like the modern, funky stuff, and have thus missed out on many treasures. I would also suggest that they learn to read and write music, as that's a big asset," he says. Banks also feels that though young musicians are writing good original tunes, they need to understand the system in a broader way. "It's important to know the nuances of different instruments besides the one you play. This is especially true for fusion, where one also needs to know about Indian instruments like the sitar or bansuri. Even as musicians, I notice there are many talented players but they need to finetune their art so they can play with the rhythm section, and not just shine in solos."

Having mentored many musicians, Banks knows this well. At 82, he is actively involved in making sure the youngsters carry forward the tradition. He also keeps himself occupied writing new music, besides re-releasing some of his older albums on streaming platforms. The best thing is that he continues to thoroughly enjoy himself with jazz. ■

*International Jazz Day will be celebrated on 30th April at the Tata Theatre.*



Louiz Banks

# THE EASTER STORY

Besides being a masterclass in Western art history, filmmaker Phil Grabsky's *Easter in Art* is, at its heart, a remarkable story of human endeavour. As the NCPA revives exhibition screenings this month, the film is the first of many to come.

By Prachi Sibal

“Let me ask you a question, are you Christian?” begins filmmaker Phil Grabsky in a video interview much before I have asked him any of mine. He’s not really Christian either, he says. Born to a Jewish father and a Christian mother, Grabsky, like many of us, chose to walk past religious art at the National Gallery in London, where he is now based. “Of the 2,700 paintings there, a quarter are based on religious themes. I would go to the sections on Dutch art and the Impressionists,” he confesses.

But later, when the award-winning British documentary filmmaker turned his eye to religious art, he found it ‘utterly transfixing.’ He went on to produce perhaps the most exhaustive visual art history piece on the subject, in the form of his film, *Easter in Art*. Released in 2021, the film is a part of his Exhibition on Screen series, where he has documented the work of great masters through exquisite visual storytelling. Several films from this series have been screened at the NCPA since 2014, as part of its collaboration with Grabsky’s Seventh Art Productions.

True to the name of the series, *Easter in Art* is akin to walking in a gallery, at a calm pace, as you observe, awestruck, the story of Easter depicted through the works of Giotto, Rembrandt, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Titian, Rubens, Dalí and many more.

## THE ESSENTIAL STORY

“Whether you are a Christian or not, the story as told in the gospels is completely intertwined with the history of Christianity. Whether you believe in the Resurrection or not, you cannot understand history without understanding Christianity,” Grabsky says. “If you are a Christian, Easter is much more important than Christmas.”

Having spent over 30 years making documentary films on art and artists with his production house, Grabsky observed that nearly every Western artist in the last 100 years has covered the death of Christ in some form. “I wanted to explore why these artists have been drawn to this particular story. And, to lay out the specifics of the Easter story. Not everybody really knows it,” he says, adding that this also led to mapping the history of Western art over the years.

Attempting to decode what drew artists to these themes, especially those of Easter, Grabsky says, “Many of them had unshakeable faith. We know those like Caravaggio, Michelangelo and Leonardo were passionate individuals. Their artwork was often a direct conversation with the god they believed in intrinsically.”

“At a more pragmatic level, what could be better than to paint an altarpiece of Jesus on the cross? It was wonderfully challenging and in contrast with portraits of lords and ladies of the time, or making a landscape,

“PEOPLE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT THESE ARTISTS ARE MASTER STORYTELLERS...REMBRANDT IS REMBRANDT, LEONARDO IS LEONARDO, BECAUSE THEY ARE EXTRAORDINARY IN THEIR ABILITY TO CONTROL YOUR VISION AND TELL YOU THE STORY”



‘Raising of the Cross’ by Peter Paul Rubens

or still life,” he adds. Besides, there is the economic context, he tells us. The church had a lot of money and could commission these works.

## THE MAKING OF A CLASSIC

The process began with a reading of the four gospels to extract what he needed to tell the story of the seven to eight days until Easter. “Everybody would know about ‘The Last Supper’ but may not know that it was the Passover meal. Or that the timespan between Christ being captured and crucified was less than a day,” he says.

The next step was to decide which artworks he would use to illustrate this incredible story. There were thousands to choose from in locations all over the world. Grabsky knew much of the work and chose to shoot the film on location across Europe, the U.S. and Asia. “In cinema, you don’t want to just have digital images. Sometimes filming the painting in situ is better because you get a higher resolution of images or you get a sense of its monumentality. Some of Caravaggio’s pieces are still in the same places in the same churches in Rome. So, we had to film them there,” he says.

*Easter in Art* begins and ends with a Christian ceremony that, Grabsky tells us, was also shot on location. In the film, the artworks appear on the screen with all the detailing and yet can feel almost like moving images, taking you through the chronology of the story, from the Last Supper to

Crucifixion and the Resurrection.

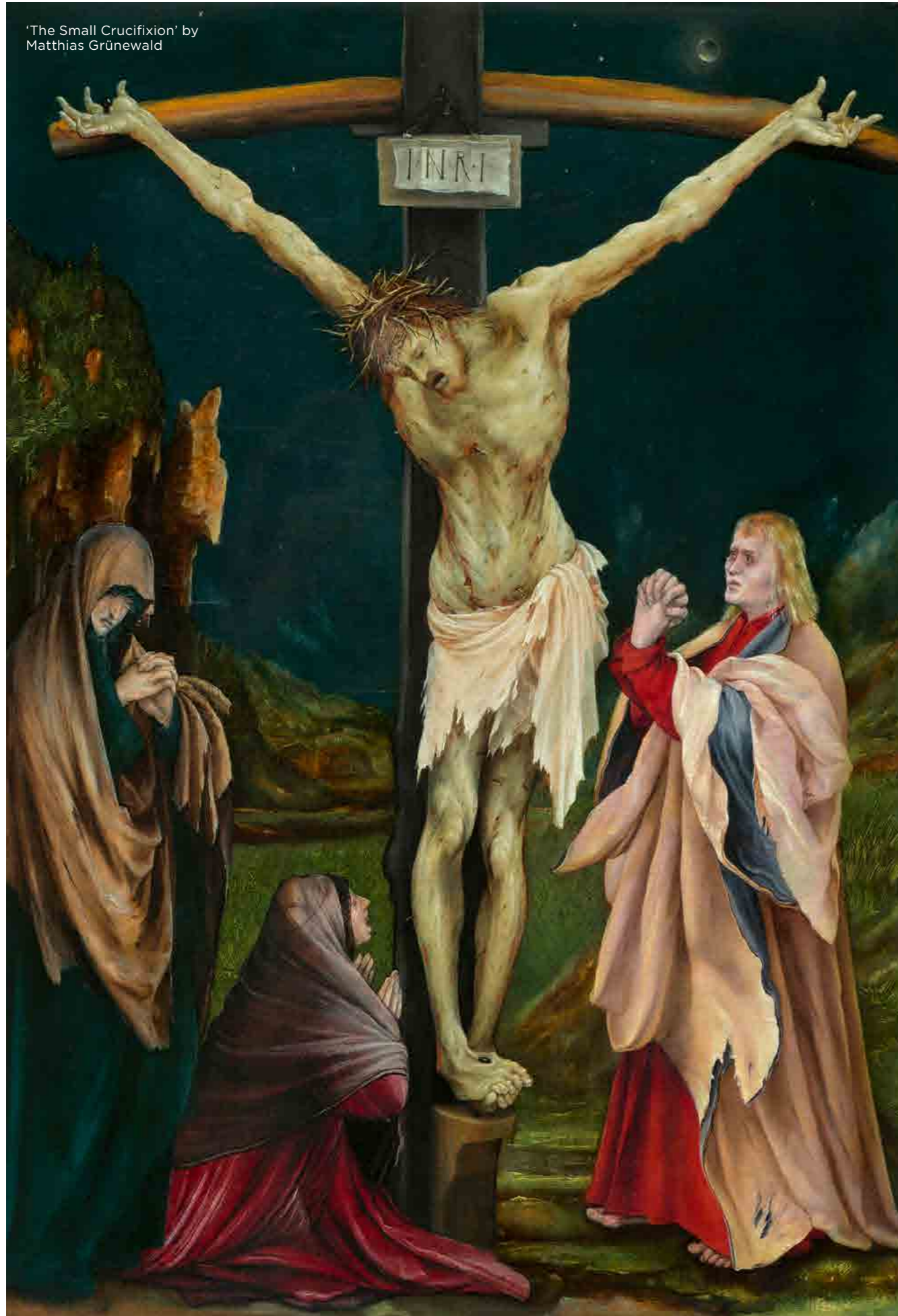
As the story unfolds, you will notice that several of these paintings are enormous in size. “This is deliberate because they were often commissioned by churches to sit behind the altar. They are also painted knowing that the people are looking up, so the perspective is slightly different. So, when the person officiating says that this wafer represents the body of Christ and that this wine represents the blood of Christ, they are doing that in front of a very large painting of a human being on the cross, where it is visually made real what the body and blood are,” Grabsky explains.

## A FILM FOR EVERYONE

While those interested in religious art or art history, or art of any kind for that matter, will instantly see the value of capturing the Easter story in a documentary, Grabsky insists that this is a film for everyone, even the non-believers. “It is about a mother and child. What they are trying to reflect in her face, is the joy of having a new baby and the realisation that he is going to die on the cross. Because she knew,” he says. “It is about a human being who wanted to change things, at enormous personal risk, and ultimately paid with his life. In our own societies, we sometimes respect someone like this and at other times, fear him,” he says.

The filmmaker’s creative choices also make the film easy to watch, one where the focus rarely shifts from the art itself and by extension, the story that lies at the heart

'The Small Crucifixion' by Matthias Grünewald



SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION



'Christ Cleansing the Temple' by El Greco

SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION

of it. "People must never forget that these artists are master storytellers. There is so much to look at in their paintings and part of my job is just to give you the opportunity. Rembrandt is Rembrandt, Leonardo is Leonardo, because they are extraordinary and not just in their craft but in their ability to control your vision and tell you the story. This was the television of the time, the Bollywood of the time," he explains.

"When people saw a character in the middle of a painting in blue, many would know it was Mary because she was always depicted in blue. Lapiz lazuli, discovered around that time, was a prized pigment and saved for the most important character. One of the reasons we tend to walk past these paintings is that we don't know these stories; unlike the Impressionist paintings where everything was clear and easy to understand," he adds.

A light touch, a carefully scored mellow soundtrack, gentle editing and a watertight script ensure this is a

**"EVERYBODY WOULD KNOW ABOUT 'THE LAST SUPPER' BUT MAY NOT KNOW THAT IT WAS THE PASSOVER MEAL... OR THAT THE TIMESPAN BETWEEN CHRIST BEING CAPTURED AND CRUCIFIED WAS LESS THAN A DAY"**

journey of words as much as visuals. After all, for Grabsky, despite the visual nature of his work, the script reigns supreme. He tells us that the team spends an enormous amount of time on it. There are no long interviews, and the inputs from researchers and historians do no more than set the context for the story and its significance in modern times. "There are also no people dressed up as Romans. I don't do what television sometimes does," he quips.

The human story behind religious events is as important and appealing, according to Grabsky, as the artworks that depict them. He says, "It is about human endeavour, challenge and emotion. You could swap out the religious title and this is about a human being's desire to improve, against authority, the world we live in." ■

*Easter in Art will be screened on 5th April at the Godrej Dance Theatre.*

# Marathi Matters

A new initiative by the NCPA, *Darpan*, has given young playwrights creative and financial support to write, polish and present their work to a group of mentors and fellow artistes. One play will be selected from the final shortlist and will premiere at this year's edition of *Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav*. We speak to the five finalists of *Darpan*.

By Reshma O. Pathare

Russian playwright Anton Chekhov had once said, "There's nothing new in art except talent." Indeed, new talent is what infuses fresh ideas, concepts, vision and techniques in any field—even more so in the performing arts which hold a mirror to the world around us. As society transforms, fresh voices are required to express the effects of this evolution. Recognising this, the NCPA has launched a new initiative called *Darpan* in an attempt to shine the spotlight on new voices in Marathi theatre.

A writing initiative that gives a platform to up-and-coming Marathi playwrights, *Darpan* was launched in October 2022, when the NCPA invited individual playwrights and groups to submit script options, proposals and pitches. The initiative received a huge response from writers from Mumbai, Pune, Aurangabad, Nashik and Kolhapur; understandably so, because the proposals were to be scrutinised by theatre veterans like



**SAYALEE MESHRAM**

Play submitted: *Narangi*

"I belong to Nagpur where my father is a farmer and an agricultural officer. I have grown up listening to heart-wrenching stories about the challenges that farmers face in growing and selling their produce. The fact that we never think of bargaining at a posh mall with

writers and directors Pratima Kulkarni and Shafaat Khan; writer and academic Rekha Inamdar Sane and actor, singer and producer of children's plays, Leela Hadap.

The mentors went through each pitch and shortlisted writers who were then invited for in-depth interviews where they proposed, among other things, the people they wanted to work with for their projects. Eventually, five proposals made it to the final round. The NCPA allocated funds to the finalists for a week-long workshop to help them construct a play with actors.

The finalists recently performed for an audience consisting of the mentors and other participants. Depending on the production quality, scale and sustainability, the NCPA will choose one play to be produced at its Marathi theatre festival, *Pratibimb*. As they wait with bated breath to know which of their works has made the cut, the five finalists tell us about their personal and professional motivations.

overpriced goods, but will haggle for a small amount with a hardworking farmer has always disturbed me no end. So, in 2018, when I decided to write a play, this topic came naturally to me and I didn't have to look elsewhere. *Narangi* is the story of farmers who cultivate oranges, and the challenges they go through when they try to sell their produce at a local vegetable fair.

When I received a call from the NCPA that my play was selected for *Darpan*, it changed the course of my life. I had been struggling to get good work in Mumbai theatre for five years. In spite of having worked with renowned productions, I was not getting sustained work. I had almost decided to return to my life as an architect in Nagpur. When the NCPA stepped in with monetary help and guidance of mentors, it marked a turning point. Till then, I could barely afford to pay travelling costs or a basic food allowance to my actors which was very disappointing. But the NCPA's funding removed those obstacles and we used the money to create not just a reading but an entire production for the mentors. If we win, it will be spectacular, but even if we don't, I'm sure we are now equipped to take a much-polished version of *Narangi* to theatre festivals and commercial stages."



**SUSHIL SWAMI**

Play submitted: *Bannerwadi Pvt. Ltd.*

"*Bannerwadi* is a play that throws light on the politics involved in advertising banners. It shows how human behaviour changes when one receives undue popularity in one's community. The play is not aimed at any election, past or upcoming. The premise is that politics in our country revolves around an array of factors in rural and urban areas, but one thing remains common in marketing the party's work and that is, the banner. This also holds true in global politics. After observing

many banners of various parties, I found some to be good and some to be downright funny. This led to the idea of creating a political satire and so, *Bannerwadi* was born.

Coming this far in the contest has been simply fantastic. It has boosted my confidence; I feel I'm making good art for my audience and they're liking it. The experts' suggestions have helped me gain more insight into how to improve the play. It will definitely be great to win, but it's also okay if I don't, because the process and satisfaction of creating good art is more important to me."



**DATTA PATIL**

Play submitted: *Kalgitura*

"*Kalgitura* is a folk art comprising *lavanis* written in local dialects, and is made up of two words 'kalgi' (shakti) and 'tura' (Shiva). As with several folk art forms, *kalgitura* brings pertinent issues to the fore and addresses complex emotions via the medium of entertainment. For instance, if there's a death in a family, *kalgitura* practitioners perform till daybreak to partake in the family's sorrow. Our play takes place in a village that has been swept away in the winds of modernisation, taking away with it the 700-year-old tradition of *kalgitura* that it was known for. Somehow, a bunch of youngsters decide to revive the tradition, but with the demise of the last person who knew this art, it becomes an uphill task for them to find the poems, learn the instruments and so on. How they conquer these problems and start partaking in the

villagers' sorrow in their traditional way again, is the story of *Kalgitura*. Topics with a social message have always appealed to me more than others. My plays like *Handabhar Chandanya* and *Toh Rajhans Ek* have made a commentary on the paucity of water in villages and the challenging lives of our farmers respectively. The eternal question of death forms the backdrop of *Kalgitura*, a topic that only a master like Satish Alekar could handle in his play *Mahanirvan*. But I took on the challenge because of the layers of emotions involved.

The production scale of *Kalgitura* is big, so the NCPA's funding has been very helpful. It also has been a great learning experience to get suggestions and encouragement from all the mentors whose work we have grown up seeing. I do hope we get selected for *Pratibimb* because the name of the NCPA attached to *Kalgitura* will change the outlook of audiences towards it."



## AVISHKAR RAVINDRA

Play submitted: **Mahamanavachya Navane...**

"*Mahamanavachya Navane...* is a tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, not to preach to or change anyone but to create awareness by presenting Dr. Ambedkar's enlightening thoughts. Our play attempts to showcase the horrible reality of a community living with a new identity after the mass conversion of 1956. Instead of promoting the ideas of great men, today's society manipulates their ideas for its own convenience. Thus, the play becomes a commentary on the corrupt practices flourishing around us. I wanted to make this

play because being a part of the same community, I always felt that Dr. Ambedkar fought for us but we haven't given back our share in the same proportion. It was a thrilling moment to receive a call from Shafaat Khan sir, telling us that we had been selected as finalists. I am a huge fan of his work and it has been wonderful to receive guidance from the mentors and imbibe their suggestions in my writing. Finance has not always come easy for our productions (we have a theatre company called Fankaar). The NCPA's initiative has boosted my confidence as a writer to create more personal stories and write plays close to my heart."



## SWAPNIL GAIKWAD

Play submitted: **Rakhandar**

"Our play sheds light on caste-based societal challenges, while underlining, without being preachy, the roles of the writer and teacher in society. Nowadays, the distinction between rural and urban centres is blurring rapidly, but some practices and ideas remain rooted in tradition. *Rakhandar* is a story that unfolds in one such 'developed village' which has a highway and access to the internet, but caste and economic fault lines run deep. The sarpanch has a wedding in the family, and since such a home is not supposed to be locked, a poor man named Hari is assigned the task of a watchman (*rakhandar*). In a parallel track, Hari has been requesting the sarpanch for many months to repair the village temple and school which fell into a state of dilapidation during the Covid-19 pandemic. His granddaughter has been suffering due to lack of offline school. But the sarpanch couldn't be bothered.

The kind of problems this skirmish throws up and whether Hari comes out with his honour intact is what *Rakhandar* is about.

I feel elated to have been able to showcase my play in front of the mentors and other contestants. The experience of learning about how to polish the presentation, weave the characters, change the dialect in songs for better expression, has been invaluable. From fellow playwrights and contestants like Datta Patil, I learnt how to turn angst into something constructive. Getting funding from the NCPA has been a shot in the arm; this platform has given us the confidence to go commercial. Marathi theatre requires more variety. We need thrillers, musicals and more. *Pratibimb* might just be the game changer to spread our wings in that direction." ■

*Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav will be presented from 5th to 7th May at the Tata, Experimental and Godrej Dance Theatres.*

PRESENTS



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



2023

## International Jazz Day - Mumbai -

Curated By **LOUIZ BANKS**



LOUIZ BANKS



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TALWALKAR



MOHINI  
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SHARMISTHA  
CHATTERJEE



AVISHEK  
DEY



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VINCENT  
MASCART



QUENTIN  
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ZIAN  
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SHREYA  
BHATTACHARYA



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ARKA  
CHAKRABORTY



PRAYAAG  
BAROOAH

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MENEZES



ANURAG  
SAHA



ARJUN  
CHAKRABORTY

**30 April 2023 | 6:30 pm**  
**Tata Theatre, NCPA**



# In focus: The Romantic Era

In the first instalment of a new series that explores a particular facet of the performing arts, Resident Conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of India, **Mikel Toms** discusses the Romantic era in Western classical music.

**Music cannot be measured** with a calendar. I agree it's tempting, if you're digging about, exploring a particular period of music, to listen out for a starter's pistol and then to train your field glasses on an imagined finishing line a few decades later but fortunately Music has a habit of not cooperating quite as amenable with Time as you might suppose.

Instead, I've always thought the Romantic era in Western classical music (if you twist my arm, roughly the 19th century) is bookended and coloured by a series of great *journeys*.

At one end, in Franz Schubert's

song cycle *Winterreise* (A Winter Journey), a young man steps out into a bleak, snowy, nocturnal landscape and starts walking. We don't know where he's heading. All we know is that he has just separated from his beloved and is leaving her behind forever. *Winterreise* comprises 24 short songs of unremitting misery. Perhaps the most beautiful misery ever depicted in Western classical music—but misery nonetheless.

Written in 1827, the same year Beethoven (generally considered the apotheosis of the preceding

Classical era) died and only one year before Schubert's own untimely death at the age of 31, *Winterreise* is a journey to nowhere. In the final, bleak song of the cycle, 'Der Leiermann' (The Hurdy-Gurdy Man), the young man stumbles across a derelict street musician.

*No one wants to hear him.  
No one looks at him...*

*Strange old man,  
Shall I go with you?  
Will you turn your hurdy-gurdy  
to my songs?*



SHUTTERSTOCK

*For me, Franz Schubert's song cycle Winterreise is the point at which the Romantic era truly arrives [through] this exploration of the psyche and, in particular, the placing of the composer's own tortured soul centre stage*

In reality, the journey is a journey entirely through the young man's mind and, given Schubert's awareness of his own approaching demise and these final, devastating lines, we have to assume through the composer's mind also.

For me, this is the point at which the Romantic era truly arrives. It is this exploration of the psyche and, in particular, the placing of the composer's own tortured soul centre stage which brings Music directly into line with the great English Romantic poets like Shelley and Byron, so many of whose works sprang from similar geographical and psychological exploration.

Three short years later, in 1830, the French composer Hector Berlioz, wrote his *Symphonie Fantastique*. Now, there is no longer any attempt to tie a psychological journey to a geographical one. The journey is purely mental—and quite bonkers. Berlioz describes what each movement represents and, once again, the protagonist is clearly the composer himself: an artist takes a dose of hallucinatory drugs and imagines himself in a variety of scenes featuring his beloved. He murders her, is guillotined and a diabolical orgy accompanies his funeral. The conductor Leonard Bernstein put it succinctly: "Berlioz tells it like it is. You take a trip, you wind up screaming at your own funeral."

You don't need to know what the music depicts, however. The work stands on its own two hallucinogenic feet as a wonderful piece of abstract music. The storyline Berlioz provides is crucial, though. Suddenly abstract concert music could tell stories, it could depict actual people and places and this so-called "programme music" became a huge and central part of the Romantic era. Felix Mendelssohn portrays a journey around the Scottish Islands in his *Hebrides Overture*, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky retells Shakespeare in his overture *Romeo and Juliet*. Franz Liszt invents a whole new orchestral form, the "tone poem", solely to tell

these musical stories while Richard Strauss chronicles Byronic journeying in *Don Juan*.

This new-found ability of music to paint pictures and tell stories was seized upon by nationalist movements. Carl Maria von Weber and Richard Wagner created uniquely Germanic and folkloric soundworlds in their operas and Giuseppe Verdi created a body of work that still seems to encapsulate Italian cultural identity. Eternally tortured exile, Frédéric Chopin repeatedly returned to Poland but only in his mind through his series of Polish dances (mazurkas and polonaises). In 1874, the Czech composer Bedřich Smetana composed *Vltava*, one of the most enduring tone poems depicting the journey of the River Vltava as it flows through Czech countryside and towns before passing by Vyšehrad, the final resting place of Czech royalty.

The Romantic era also gave rise to that other great breed of destinationless wanderer, the touring virtuoso. The Hungarian pianist Liszt and the Italian violinist Niccolò Paganini spent decades touring Europe and beyond to crowds of adoring fans. Since the start of the Romantic era, composers could make a living outside the great institutions of the church and the royal courts. The marketplace was the new royal court and these sensational performers who played music seemingly diabolical in its complexity were the rock stars of the age.

As the century progressed, musical language became increasingly complex until it appeared to reach breaking point. It seemed it couldn't get any more complex without breaking down completely which, ultimately, is what happened. The old harmonic certainties of the Classical period gradually faded. Composers created soundworlds that seemed hazy, otherworldly, unresolved. In many ways, the musical language of composers such as Wagner, Liszt and Alexander Scriabin seem to mirror

the uncertain wanderings of Schubert's antihero, which brings us to the second of our two great "bookend" journeys.

Arnold Schoenberg's string sextet *Verklärte Nacht* (Transfigured Night), written in 1899 on the eve of the 20th century, depicts the journey of a young couple. Like *Winterreise*, it takes place at night in a nameless winter landscape and, like *Winterreise*, the destination of the journey is uncertain and unimportant. The woman confesses to the man that she has been unfaithful to him and is now pregnant with another man's child. The man tells her that their love is so great that the child has been transfigured and is now his:

*That warmth will transfigure the  
stranger's child,  
and you bear it me, begot by me.*

The story seems finally to offer a psychological and emotional destination, a hearth for Schubert's great Wanderer. The musical uncertainties, contradictions and opposing pathways of the Romantic era seem, symbolically at least, to resolve themselves in Schoenberg's beautiful, warm sextet.

At its premiere, the Vienna Music Society rejected *Verklärte Nacht* on the grounds that one of its chords couldn't be categorised according to a standard textbook. Schoenberg responded: "thus [*Verklärte Nacht*] cannot be performed, as one cannot perform that which does not exist." And so, just like that, like Schubert's will-o'-the-wisp, the flickering ghostly light that momentarily distracts the wandering soul in Schubert's *Winterreise*, the Romantic era is snuffed out.

The following era, the 20th century, was so fragmented, so contradictory, so uncompromisingly kaleidoscopic that it could be named using only that bluntest of yardsticks—a calendar. ■

# REBEL WITH A CAMERA

Hungarian-born war photographer Robert Capa is reputed for chronicling five historic wars and co-founding Magnum Photos. A total of 108 images by Capa will be showcased at the NCPA this month.

BY ORNELLA D'SOUZA

**A** swashbuckling attitude, an eye for composition, strong Leftist ideals and a penchant for turning up at the right place at the right time—it was a combination of these traits that drove Robert Capa to photograph five wars and produce almost 70,000 images in his lifetime, mainly via the pint-sized Leica 35mm with 36 exposures. His images were published in the French magazine *Vu*, the American magazine *Life* and the U.K.-based magazine *Picture Post*.

Capa's images offer front-row seats to battlefields, ravages of war and even covert operations—such as the grooming of teenage boys in China as soldiers in guerilla warfare or the 1938 Japanese bombing raids on Hankou that targeted civilian zones but averted European quarters. Capa gained fame for his coverage of the Allied invasion of Normandy against Nazi troops on 6th June 1944, also known as D-Day.

While emphasising the perilous nature of war assignments, Capa gives a first-person account of D-Day in his book *Slightly Out of Focus*: “The slant of the beach gave us some protection, so long as we lay flat, from the machine-gun and rifle bullets, but the tide pushed us against the barbed wire, where the guns were enjoying open season...I took out my second Contax camera and began to shoot without raising my head.” Even inches away from death, Capa produced four rolls of prints but must have felt



ROBERT CAPA



↑ Republican soldiers of the International Brigade with a Lewis Machine Gun during the offensive of fascist troops, University City, Madrid, Spain

← Facing page: Woman standing amid rubble of buildings destroyed by Nationalist air raids, Vallesca district, Madrid, Spain [November-December 1936]

↓ Below: Preparing food in a *ma'abara*, a transit camp where immigrants are placed until housing is found for them, Galilee region, Israel [1949-1950]

heavy disappointment when a novice lab assistant accidentally destroyed all the images, barring 11. Now known as the Magnificent Eleven, these prints, despite being grainy and as if captured by a quivering hand, are the world's only photographic evidence of an event so monumental.

Capa's non-photographic contribution is the term 'Generation X', which he slipped into a photo-essay on noticing precocity in children from war zones. After the Second World War, Capa co-founded the global photographic cooperative, Magnum Photos, with Henri Cartier-Bresson, William Vandivert, David

Seymour and George Rodger, to create a platform for visual storytelling.

## CHANGING IDENTITIES

Capa, christened Endre Friedmann, was born on 22nd October, 1913, to Jewish parents Julia and Dezső who ran a tailoring salon in Budapest. As recorded in Richard Whelan's book *Robert Capa: The Definitive Collection*, he was born with an extra finger and the fetal membrane around his head which when removed revealed fully grown hair—peculiarities that his mother felt would make him famous one day.

As a young man, Capa took part in street protests over the anti-Semitic dictatorship in Hungary. His dissenting ways led to his exile to Berlin in July 1931, after he was found interacting with a Communist party member. While studying journalism at Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, he got his first break at photo agency Dephot, to photograph exiled Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, whom he looked up to.

When Hitler assumed power in January 1933, Capa fled to Paris and took on the French-sounding name, André Friedmann. Separated from his own family, he looked for 'parental figures'. He met poet and painter Lajos Kassák who became his mentor. Paris-based





Hungarian couple André Kertész and Elizabeth treated Capa as their own. Kertész mentored not only Capa, but also his new Parisian friends, Cartier-Bresson and Seymour to master the compact 35mm Leica, ideal to manoeuvre in protests or battlefields. Novelist Ernest Hemingway became his friend and used Capa's stories to describe episodes in his book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

## LOVE AND GRIEF

In Paris, Capa, who still called himself André Friedmann, found love in Gerta Pohorylle, a German refugee, to whom he taught photography. Together, they reinvented themselves as Robert Capa and Gerda Taro.

In fact, Taro's iconic image of Capa—clean-shaven with a tousled mop of hair, peering intensely through a bulky Eyemo 35mm motion picture film camera—was possibly reflective of his regular disposition. Widely used in publicity material, this portrait was published in a 1938 edition of *Picture Post* that published Capa's images of the Spanish Civil War, introducing him as 'The Greatest War Photographer in the World: Robert Capa'. The introduction says, "We present these pictures as simply the finest pictures of front-line action ever taken. They are the work of Robert Capa. Capa is a Hungarian by birth; but, being small and dark, he is often taken for a Spaniard...He is a passionate democrat, and lives to take photographs. Over a year ago, Capa's wife, on her way back to join her husband in Paris, was killed in Spain. She was standing on the running-board of a car when it collided with a tank..."

Capa's portrayals of naked grief weigh heavy on the conscience. In October 1943, a day after entering Naples with the Allied forces, he chanced upon a mass funeral for 20 school boys who died fighting the Germans. "Those were my truest pictures of victory..."

said Capa. More famous are his photographs titled 'The Last Man to Die', when American infantryman Raymond J. Bowman was shot before his eyes by a sniper on an open balcony in the skirmish to secure Zeppelin Bridge at Leipzig. Capa kept clicking, and with each photo, the pool of blood oozing from the martyred soldier grew larger.

His illustrious peers, however, undeterred by the harsh reality of warzones, made him privy to their personal moments—Pablo Picasso's then muse Françoise Gilot playing with their son, Claude; Henri Matisse painting in a hotel room surrounded by his cats or Hemingway holidaying in Idaho with girlfriend Martha Gellhorn.

## A CONTROVERSY

Capa's path-breaking photo-making legacy is, however, threatened by 'The Falling Soldier', taken on 5th September 1936, in the Battle of Cerro Muriano during the Spanish Civil War. Critics claim that Capa staged this photo, that the soldier is not Federico Borrell García as previously identified, and that the real location with a skyline matching the fabricated picture is the town of Espejo, about 50 km away. No negative of this image was ever found. Moreover, *Vu* published eerily similar photographs of two soldiers crumpling to the ground in the exact fashion as García.

Even a small misstep can taint reputations. With 'The Falling Soldier', however, no concrete evidence of tampering has been found. "Besides, this is the only Capa image that ran into controversy," points out Aditya Arya, Founder & Director of Gurugram-based Museo Camera that exhibited 108 images of Capa's in January 2023; the same display will proceed to the NCPA this month. The controversial image, says Arya, is abysmal compared to manipulations carried out by photographers such as Steve McCurry and his litany of doctored images. "Capa's usage of the Leica 35mm brought about versatility and movement in analog captures. There were no 62GB cards with the liberty to click over 5,000 images and then delete or manipulate the chosen few. Only one image of an iconic moment could be captured, and everything depended on when and how you clicked it," he observes. 'The Falling Soldier', however, will not be displayed at the NCPA.



**Clockwise from top left:** Farewell ceremony for the International Brigades, Les Masies, Spain [25 October, 1938]; American troops landing on Omaha Beach, D-Day, Normandy, France [6 June, 1944]; Chiang Kai-shek, the military and political leader of the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) at a meeting of his Supreme War Council, Hankou, Hubei province, China [28 June - 4 July, 1938]; American soldier, El Guettar, Tunisia [March 1943]

← **Facing page, top:** Ernest Hemingway and the pheasant he shot, Sun Valley, Idaho, USA [October 1941]

← **Facing page, bottom:** Republican soldier writing a letter, Madrid, Spain [November-December 1936]

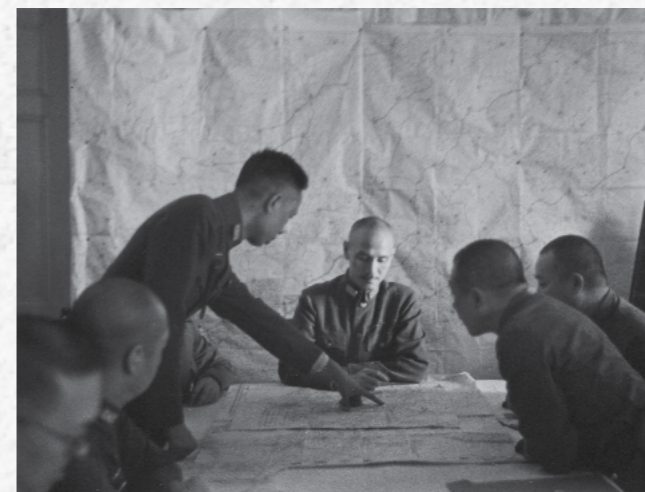


It was 25th May 1954. Capa was in Hanoi, assigned by *Life* magazine to cover the First Indochina War. He was accompanying a French convoy to tackle two outposts. Enroute, the convoy stopped for a break. Capa noticed a group of soldiers in a field and started walking towards them when he stepped on a landmine. His untimely death was hard to fathom, and aptly condoled by Hemingway: "...It is bad luck for everybody that the percentages caught up with him. It is especially bad for Capa. He was so alive that it is a hard long day to think of him as dead."

Dr. Mariann Erdő, Director and Cultural Counsellor of the Liszt Institute - Hungarian Cultural Centre Delhi, feels destiny cut his life short at 40. "I cannot imagine him growing old, sitting in an armchair sipping whisky. He needed that adrenaline." The institute, which has organised the Robert Capa exhibition, is currently celebrating the 110th birth anniversary of Amrita Sher-Gil. Interestingly, Erdő has found many similarities between the life stories of the Hungarian-Indian artist and Capa. "Both were Hungarians, born in 1913, in Budapest. Both had Jewish origins, created works in Asia and lived short lives. I wonder if their paths ever crossed in Budapest..."

Meanwhile, Capa has all her sympathy. "His 'rockstar' image, the stories he made up about himself, his high-profile love affairs, especially with Hollywood beauty Ingrid Bergman, overshadowed his professional insight. While some may only associate him with 'The Falling Soldier', a sizable number of photographers in the world continue to appreciate his pioneering journalism." ■

*Photo Exhibition of Works by Robert Capa will be on display from 3rd to 19th April at the Dilip Piramal Art Gallery.*



# Performing Arts: Theatre

A monthly column that explores any and every aspect of the performing and visual arts. This month, actor **Vivaan Shah**, while retracing his theatre-watching experience in Mumbai, reveals how his love for the form and its faces runs deep.

In **Carl Jung's memoirs**, he writes of memories that date back practically to the cradle. If it is indeed possible for the memory, like a sieve, to bore through the steel-plated strata of years to arrive at those hazy outlines of infancy, that magical dawn—then the maroon carpeting (or was it green then?) of the NCPA does fitfully emerge: The colosseum-like grandeur of its architectural sprawl, those immemorial hallways and pillars of permanence, a pyramidal stairway with gilded handrails leading up to an abandoned foyer; ghosts of Parsi theatre past hovering about the proceedings—the very compound itself a marble colossus of the arts. It seemed, to the fancy of a child, to house subterranean passageways to secret settlements and underground auditoriums; one recalls, as if in a dream, the silhouetted figures of men practising sword-fighting in the shadows of the deepest recesses of the backstage area, the dark passageways winding above and around the greenrooms, the mysterious trapdoors, attics and storage rooms, the silent single-bulb sanctity of the lighting booth with its serpentine network of cables and wires branching to menacing switchboards and panels forbidden to the child's touch, the skeletons of sets, once structural emblems of logistical ingenuity.

This was the autumn of the great Roman epic, the early '90s, the sword-and-sandal stomping ground of my early childhood. Where such names as *Julius Caesar*, *Androcles and the Lion*, *Arms and the Man*, *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, *Don Juan in Hell* reverberated with a metallic rumble, and acquired to the uncomprehending ears of a toddler, an air of mystical significance. It was there also that I saw my uncle and my father in a production of *Faust*, which stands out incongruously to the alchemical notice of a child, primarily for its use of a prop hidden beneath one of the detachable wooden tiles of the stage. I glimpsed also the wonders of a Germanic production of *The Resistible*



*Rise of Arturo Wi* (with a startling lead performance), a Runyon-esque spectacle that encapsulated perfectly my entire generation's fascination with Prohibition-era Chicago. The more down-to-earth dimensions of *Waiting for Godot* were further down the corridor of childhood at Prithvi, where waited with outstretched arms the magic carpet of children's theatre, best exemplified by *The Boy Who Stopped Smiling*, an early incarnation of *Medha and Zoombish* (both by Ramu Ramanathan, whose works for adults—including *Mahadevbhai* and *3, Sakeena Manzil*, both starring Jaimini Pathak—I also thoroughly enjoyed) and countless other delightful tales which also provided, wrapped within the sugary coating of 'fun', a fundamentally humane principle. I remember being haunted by a performance of 'Stories from the Chiller Room'; one's first brush with a theatre of very real tragedies; the Jean Cocteau of the Hindi and Marathi theatre, Makarand Deshpande's various excursions into the uncanny and the satirical, sometimes

with my mother (*Kasturi*), and at other times with my sister (*Sir Sir Sarla, Sa Hi Besura*)—I remember the knowing laughs an audience familiar with Mac's eccentricities would emit; I recollect vividly also my father's one sojourn into the surrealist, in (*W*)*Hole in the Head*, with the grand dame of the English theatre Mahabanoo Mody-Kotwal. There were striking dance and musical performances, a variety of enchanting puppet shows, mostly at Prithvi and the NCPA, but also at Horniman Circle and other venues that elude the memory—my mother would take me often to the Gujarati and Marathi theatres in Dadar and town (Tejpal being of especial significance in her life) where a carnivalesque performance of *Charandas Chor* forever branded the memory with its vivid splendour.

We dwelt then within the silver age of the great Satyadev Dubey, and were fortunate to see his later works—a revival of *The Magic Pill*, *An Actor Dies...* and finally, the magnificent *Antigone* (harking back to the old epic tradition). Rajat Kapoor's *C for Clown* had also then taken the town by storm, Tim Supple's acrobatic *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (both plays had Joy Fernandes); the faces and voices of those Shakespearean figures breathe constantly in the memory—Benjamin Gilani, Akash Khurana, Khalid Sami, Shiv Subrahmanyam, Kenneth Desai, Hidayat Sami, Denzil Smith, Raj Zutshi, Jameel Khan, Vishwajeet Pradhan—titans of my childhood.

As a matter of fact, when Akash Khurana made his entrance as Julius Caesar during one of the shows, my one-year-old self was said to have proclaimed from the audience: 'Ganpati Bappa Morya!'

A lesson my parents taught me, in different ways, about the theatre is that the difference between the Western style of theatre and the Indian tradition is that the Greek (later Western) was all about the creation of an illusion with props, sets and effects, whereas Indian theatre demanded the audience's

imagination to fill in those blanks, and proceeded more from a place of the action at hand paying due reverence to the written word.

Is it not curious then to note that at the onset of the aughts, the theatre took a turn towards the realistic, the naturalistic even? The theatre retreated from the classical and fantastical, it contracted, grew closer to the earth, went inward even...became more concerned with real-life matters, and explored our own country and its essence in a new and illuminating way.

A fascinating evolution indeed then to witness the birth of the monologue, and the *Dastangoi*. Travelling from the stateliness of Shaw and Shakespeare, we arrived at the blossoming land of Premchand, the mohallas of Ismat Chughtai, the back alleys of Manto. I saw even my siblings and friends get involved, those from the peer group—and witnessed gradually what they brought from their own life experiences and interests into the hallowed arena of the stage.

Laurence Olivier once referred to the theatre as the 'first glamouriser of

thought'. If indeed thought and action go hand in hand, then the confluence of all our disparate lives did meet and mesh at this one throbbing, breathing ground. Where, for an instant, we were as the silence that swells before the majesty of some dramatic outcome. ■

*Vivaan Shah recently worked in the Netflix adaptation of Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy. His third novel The Forsaken Wilderness was published in February 2023, and is available at bookstores and on [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in).*

## 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 engrossing study of the temples of Himachal Pradesh.

**Himadri Temples (A.D. 700-1300)**  
By **Subhashini Aryan**  
Published by the **Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1994**

The NCPA library has consistently strived to develop a strong collection of treasured learning material. Its main objective is to provide its patrons access to comprehensive knowledge by compiling a robust collection of books on a wide range of subjects pertaining not just to the performing arts, but also visual arts like painting, sculpture, architecture and photography.

The NCPA Reference Library houses more than 30,000 books and over 2,000 of them are about mythology, religion and anthropology. Temple architecture is one of the sections in which books on temple traditions, art and architecture are available for research purposes. This month, I would like to recommend a title that focuses on a specific style of architecture from the vast array of styles and histories of Indian temples.

The architecture of Indian temples is famously varied, and amongst them the Himadri temples—situated in Himachal Pradesh—are lesser known as there is very limited literature available on them. *Himadri Temples*, published by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, is a meticulous study of the art and architecture of the stone temples of the state.

The author Subhashini Aryan writes,

'Till now, no coherent attempt has been made to explore the stone temples of Himachal Pradesh as a unified entity.' Between the 5th and the 16th centuries, several significant temple forms emerged which later developed into the ornate style we now see in Dashed and Naggar in Kullu district and in Baijnath near Kangra and Mandi. According to Aryan, there has been no recognition for the Himadri style temples as an important group amongst the regional developments of Nagara temple architecture. And yet, they display striking similarities with Nagara temple architecture.

Himadri temples are sculpted in a breathtaking way, and they are as majestic as the Himalayan region that holds them. These temples have an organic design that incorporates large, well-cut stones, dressed to level beds and placed one upon another without any mortar or cementing substance—an architectural feat and a fascinating example of how science lends itself to upholding faith. Although situated in the northern Indian plains alongside a long chain of mountain ranges, they are not isolated. Aryan's book contains in-depth detailing of temple design, engravings and minute details such as base moldings, roofs, pillars, doorways, floral motifs, scrolls, *mandapas* and *shikharas*. Representation in Himadri temple architecture is unique. In the middle of the 10th century A.D., Himachali sculptors added some elements from the

Pratihara tradition of Central India to their stylistic repertoire.

The sculptures that embellish these temples provide sufficient testimony to the fact that highly accomplished and talented sculptors and equally discerning and enlightened patrons existed in the western Himalayan region. Despite enormous damage to these shrines by invasions, internecine wars and frequent earthquakes, they still hold great treasures of theology and architecture. The book is the outcome of exclusive research that provides extensive information about Himachal region's stone temples, from dedicated chapters to their formative, transitional and culmination phases. In researching and writing this book, Aryan has made a substantial contribution to present the evolution, in a chronological sequence from A.D. 700 to 1300, of Himadri temple architecture. ■

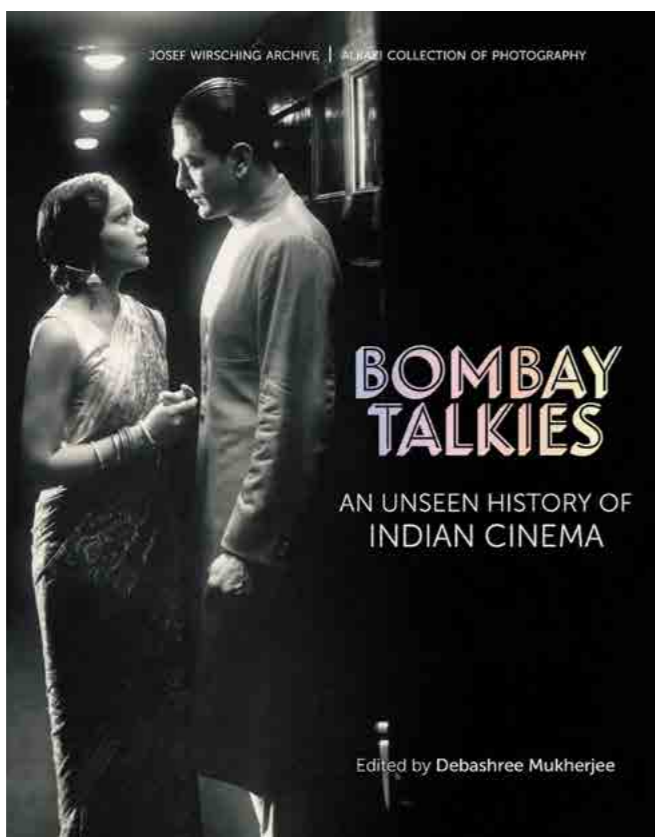
*The NCPA Reference Library is open to visitors from 10 am to 5.15 pm on weekdays. The reference library membership is complimentary for NCPA Members and Friends of the SOI. The books and LPs in the Stuart-Liff music library are available for reference to Friends of the SOI at no cost. The reference 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.*

# The Sharp Shooter

German cinematographer Josef Wirsching came to India in 1925 to work on Franz Osten's movie *The Light of Asia* and stayed on to leave his mark on some of the most well-known Hindi films, including *Pakeezah*, until his death in 1964. He also left behind a perfectly preserved collection of photographs taken mainly during his time at the studio, Bombay Talkies. The recently published *Bombay Talkies: An Unseen History of Indian Cinema*—a stunning collection of photographs and film stills from the Josef Wirsching Archive and the Alkazi Collection of Photography along with insightful essays—presents a glimpse into the art of filmmaking in the early days of Indian cinema.

The story of Josef Wirsching is intimately tied in with the story of Bombay Talkies, a film studio that has an undisputed place in the history of Indian cinema. While films like *Achhut Kanya* (1936) and *Kismet* (1943) are considered important milestones in the career of sound cinema from Bombay (now Mumbai), many of the studio's stars and technicians actively shaped commercial filmmaking in twentieth-century India. From Ashok Kumar, who started as a rookie laboratory assistant at the studio, to Dev Anand, who made his acting debut with *Ziddi* (1948), several of India's best-loved stars began their film careers at Bombay Talkies. Interestingly, a review of *Ziddi* in *The Times of India*

noted that the film was “distinguished by some of the finest photography we have seen in years on the Indian screen—the camera in fact steals the picture,” and therefore, according to the reviewer, the real star of the film was not the debutant Dev Anand but Josef Wirsching's cinematography. The work of reinstituting Josef Wirsching within the known history of Indian cinema offers us an expansive perspective on the contours of so-called national cinemas. How can a German cinematographer be considered a pioneer of Indian cinema? And what was he doing in the Bombay film industry in the first place? Tracking these questions leads us to a fascinating network of people, places, and practices that converged on Bombay city in the 1930s. From London to Lahore, Calcutta (now Kolkata) to Berlin, the Bombay film industry was built by people and resources from across the world. When one enquires after the ethnicities, linguistic identities and nationalities of the pioneers of Bombay Talkies, it becomes clear that the category “Indian cinema” is a tenuous construct



and includes a wide array of trans-regional and transnational influences, borrowing from Hollywood and Parsi theatre even as its practitioners crossed the borders of old and new nation states.

Born in Munich, Germany, in 1903, Josef Wirsching experienced all the cultural ferment of the interwar years. Cinema was still a fledgling art form at the time and was radically influenced by Munich's robust theatre and photography scene. For instance, the Ostermayr brothers (Franz, Peter and Ottmarr) ran a photography studio, studied acting and worked at Max Reinhardt's Kammertheater before they turned wholeheartedly to filmmaking.

Josef Wirsching himself was slated to take over his father's costume and set design studios but had a career epiphany when he was gifted a still camera on his sixteenth birthday. Against initial family resistance, Josef enrolled in an industrial arts school to study photography and subsequently joined Weiss-Blau-Film as an apprentice photographer. By the early 1920s, Peter Ostermayr's Emelka film company had become a greatly desired destination for young people wanting to make a name in cinema. Josef Wirsching joined Emelka at this time, as did another young man named Alfred Hitchcock.

Back in India, at the turn of the century, Indian artists were actively trying to forge an aesthetic language that could be simultaneously nationalist as well as modern. Frustrated with European academic canons and colonialist stereotypes, they turned to local artistic genealogies and avant-garde movements outside the British Empire. Germany, with its long history of Indological enquiry, became an ally in this endeavour. Thus it is that Rabindranath Tagore



Josef Wirsching with his Askania camera outside the City Palace, Jaipur, while making *The Light of Asia* in 1925. Image credit: Josef Wirsching Archive

Facing page: Kamala (Devika Rani) and Ratanlal (Najmul Hussain) share an anxious moment in Bombay Talkies' debut feature film *Jawani ki Hawa* (1935). Image credit: Josef Wirsching Archive

visited Germany in the 1920s, and, in turn, the Austrian art historian Stella Kramrisch joined Santiniketan and organised a landmark Bauhaus exhibition in Calcutta (1922). This two-way cultural exchange was keenly felt in the world of cinema; the success of “Oriental” films such as *Sumurun* (1920), *The Tiger of Eschnapur* (1921) and *The Indian Tomb* (1921) was met with the ambition of Indian filmmakers who approached German studios for technical training. Raja Ravi Varma had already popularised German chromolithographic techniques and European approaches to the body through his mass-produced calendar art. In the 1920s, intrepid filmmakers such as V. Shantaram, Mohan Bhavnani and Himansu Rai travelled to film studios in Germany to study cutting-edge cinematic techniques. In the surviving films of the 1930s, one can discern multiple

When one enquires after the ethnicities, linguistic identities and nationalities of the pioneers of Bombay Talkies, it becomes clear that the category “Indian cinema” is a tenuous construct and includes a wide array of trans-regional and transnational influences

aesthetic influences, from Bengal school portraiture and Art Deco industrial design to newly formalising Hindustani classical music conventions.

In 1924, Himansu Rai approached Emelka with a proposal to collaborate on an epic on the life of Gautama Buddha. Rai was a lawyer-turned-actor who ran a theatre company with writer Niranjana Pal called the Indian Players, in London. He was a dynamic media entrepreneur and was actively looking for producers to support silent film projects on Indian themes. *The Light of Asia* was Rai's dream project and it tapped into the neo-Buddhist revival in 1920s Germany, evidenced in the works of Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht and Herman Hesse. Thus, in 1925, a dream team comprising Franz Osten (director), Josef Wirsching (principal camera), Willi Kiermeier (assistant) and Bertl Schultes (as interpreter) sailed for India. Jointly produced by Emelka and the Great Eastern Film Corporation (Delhi), *The Light of Asia* was notable for being shot wholly on location, in Calcutta, Benares, Agra and Jaipur, with Indian actors, and with minimal use of artificial lights or make-up.

For the Emelka Bavarians, India proved to be a land of great contradictions and extreme emotions. They were impressed with their Indian colleagues and awed by the generosity of the Maharaja of Jaipur who loaned elephants, jewels and costumes for the shoot; but they also suffered greatly from the unfamiliar climate and had to negotiate cultural stereotypes with lived experiences. Nevertheless, Franz Osten collaborated with Rai on two more silent films, *Shiraz* and *A Throw of Dice*, which achieved varying degrees of success. In 1934, both Wirsching and Osten returned to India to help set up Bombay Talkies Ltd. They had known Himansu Rai and Devika Rani for a decade by then and deep friendships had been forged. ■

This is an excerpt from “Introduction” by Debashree Mukherjee in *Bombay Talkies: An Unseen History of Indian Cinema*, edited by Debashree Mukherjee, published by Mapin Publishing ([www.mapinpub.com](http://www.mapinpub.com)) in association with the Alkazi Collection of Photography, 2023.

# A Festive Bulletin

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

By Aishwarya Bodke



## Blackwater Valley Opera Festival

Ireland's annual summer opera festival will be taking place between 29th May and 5th June. Lismore Castle has been the festival's home for over two decades providing the backdrop for a memorable experience of opera and classical music. The opera headlining the 2023 edition of the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival (BVOF) is Verdi's *Macbeth*, running across four evenings. The BVOF Concert Series will see the debut of mezzo-soprano Paula Murrihy with the Irish Baroque Orchestra and Peter Whelan for *Where Shall I Fly? A Handel Celebration*. Acclaimed English tenor Ian Bostridge will present the much-awaited concert, *Shakespeare Songs*. The BVOF is famous for gourmet dining experiences and table picnics accompanied by recitals and performances. A formal dinner—The Macbeth Menu—at the Lismore Castle is not to be missed. It aims to not only showcase emerging Irish artistes but also enrich the cultural life of the region. For more information, please visit [blackwatervalleyopera.ie](http://blackwatervalleyopera.ie)

## Spoletto Festival USA

Audiences from around the world will flock to the Spoleto Festival USA in the port city of Charleston, South Carolina, from 26th May to 11th June. The multi-genre festival was founded in 1977 by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti, who wanted to create an American counterpart to the annual Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy. This year, the Bank of America Chamber Music series will open the festival, highlighting a repertoire spanning centuries at the historic Dock Street Theatre. British singer Ebony Bones will make her Spoleto debut with an eclectic mix of punk, disco, Afrobeat and pop, accompanied by a 14-piece orchestra. The featured opera this year is the Pulitzer prize-winning *Vanessa*. Theatre highlights include a radical retelling of Homer's epic *An Iliad*, and the U.S. premiere of *The Book of Life*. The Scottish Ballet will bring alive Arthur Miller's seminal work, *The Crucible*. Performances by the Immanuel Wilkins Quartet, Nickel Creek and the Quentin Baxter Quintet are not to be missed. The Grammy-nominated band, Tank and the Bangas, will close the festival. For more information, please visit [spoletousa.org](http://spoletousa.org)

SEAN O'ROSDAN

## Jeonju International Film Festival

Dedicated to independent and experimental films, the Jeonju International Film Festival in South Korea is a one-of-a-kind cinema event. Running from 27th April to 6th May, the festival adopts a partial competition format and is committed to endorsing alternative movements of contemporary film art. This year, selections from 57 countries include 123 international and 94 Korean films with 61 world premieres in diverse genres like fiction, animation, documentary and experimental films. Screenings, talks and discussions with directors will be held in association with the Korean Academy of Film Arts. The academy has a long roster of brilliant alumni, including Academy Award winner, Bong Joon-ho. Great importance is placed on discovering promising filmmakers and the submission criteria further this objective. The submissions must have a minimum prerequisite of an Asian premiere, and the film must



be the first or the second feature of the director. To encourage greater participation, the event spaces have been expanded with outdoor screenings as well. A major part of the festival is the JEONJU Cinema Project, a feature film financing and production programme that encompasses fields such as investment, production and distribution. The project will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. For more information, please visit [eng.jeonjufest.kr](http://eng.jeonjufest.kr)



## April Jazz

The 37th April Jazz Festival is scheduled to take place between the 21st and 29th April in Espoo, Finland. Packed with nine days of Finnish jazz music, the line-up features a selection of premieres and album release concerts. With venues spread across the city, music will take over the Espoo Cultural Centre, Espoo Museum of Modern Art (EMMA), Sello Hall in Leppävaara, and G Livelab and Korjaamo Culture Factory in Helsinki. The festival opens with Jukka Linkola's ensemble, The Tentet. Their music alternates between rhythmic swing and balladic elements. The Billy Cobham Band, Yumi Ito, Lizz Wright, Sara Correia, Espoo Big Band, and The Baylor Project are among the artistes and ensembles performing at the festival. PoiL Ueda—a collaboration between Japanese vocalist and satsuma-biwa player Junko Ueda and PoiL, a French electro-rock band—will give the final performance. April Jazz also brings its exciting after-party jam sessions at the April Jazz Club and Original Sokos Hotel Tapiola Garden for the audiences, with a promise of an unforgettable experience. For more information, please visit [apriljazz.fi/en/home](http://apriljazz.fi/en/home)



## PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai

PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai is a fair dedicated to photo-based and digital artworks, with a focus on the Asia Pacific region. The unique annual event will be held between 20th and 23rd April this year. It not only brings together museums and galleries from Shanghai and across China but also acts as a site for the discovery of budding talent by embracing conceptual and experimental work alongside that of modern masters. The festival confers the Exposure Award to support galleries and their innovators. Among the various sections is Insights, an exhibition focusing on a particular theme or an important moment in the development of photography. The Spotlight section presents cutting-edge exhibitions, giving the viewers a chance to see a body of work as a visual essay. Conversations is a series of in-depth talks between artists, curators, gallerists and arts professionals. The festival also includes a section for Online Exhibitions. In the earlier editions, notable galleries such as ArtCN Gallery (Shanghai), V&E ART (Paris & Taipei), Anna Nova Gallery (St. Petersburg) and Klemm's (Berlin) have been a part of the festival. For more information, please visit [www.photofairs.org/shanghai](http://www.photofairs.org/shanghai)

## Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra 2023 Season

The Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (TMSO) recently announced its 2023 season, which will commence this month. A diverse season has been planned with a line-up of acclaimed guest conductors and soloists. The season's first concert will present Mahler's Symphony No. 7, conducted by the TMSO Music Director Kazushi Ono. The Japan premiere of *Time Flies* by Mark-Anthony Turnage will follow, which includes 'Tokyo Time' written especially for TMSO. Between the Turnage and Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, soloist Michiaki Ueno will perform Lutosławski's Cello Concerto. July will see Sascha Goetzl conduct the orchestra to Korngold's *Sinfonietta*. Music Director of the Royal Swedish Opera and Principal Guest Conductor of the TMSO, Alan Gilbert, will be conducting Mozart pieces with Stefan Dohr, principal horn of the Berliner Philharmoniker. Conductors Marc Minkowski, Antoni Wit and John Adams, violinist Nemanja Radulovi and pianist Kyohei Sorita are among the many artistes featuring this season. For more information, please visit [www.tmso.or.jp](http://www.tmso.or.jp)

## The Golden Mask Festival

The Golden Mask is the Russian National Theater festival established in 1993 by the Union of Theater Workers of the Russian Federation. While the festival has been on in Moscow since February, the much-anticipated Golden Mask award ceremony will be held in April and will feature and honour artistes and productions from various genres including drama, opera, operetta, ballet, musicals and puppet theatre. The 2023 edition has nominees from 50 theatres selected by councils of experts. Some of these include *Atilla* by the Chekhov Centre, *War and Peace* by the Vakhtangov Theatre, *Kostik* by the Pushkin Theatre in the large-scale productions category and *Capital* by Chamber Theatre and *The Gospel of Bards* by the New Drama Theatre for small-scale productions. Nominated operas include *Curiosity* by Stanislavsky Electrotheatre, *Pagliacci* by the Musical Theatre of the Republic of Karelia and *Aida* by Helikon-opera, among others. *Dancemania* by the Bolshoi Theatre and *Romeo and Juliet* by the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theatre make it to the best ballet production selections. The Golden Mask celebrates various crafts with multiple categories such as acting, directing, conducting, composing and costume design. The festival, through the years, has been a chronicle of the growth of contemporary Russian theatre. For more information, please visit [www.goldenmask.ru/en](http://www.goldenmask.ru/en)

## Belgrade Dance Festival

For over two decades, the Belgrade Dance Festival has been celebrating the spirit of dance, skilled artistes, choreographers and spectacular productions. This year's edition, having started in March, will be running until 13th April across various theatres in Belgrade. Since its inception, the festival has had nearly 500 new choreographies showcased with thousands of visitors from all over the world. Some of the performances lined up in April include flamenco dancer Israel Galván, the world premiere of *Faun* by Balletto Teatro di Torino and *La Ruta* by the Nederlands Dans Theater. *Promise* by TanzMainz, the contemporary dance company of the State Theater in Mainz, will feature Sharon Eyal's choreography, which blends the physicality of ballet with electronic music. The festival has always encouraged pieces that speak about important topics through a diverse vocabulary of movement and music. It seeks to create art that pushes boundaries while igniting strong emotions. For more information, please visit [belgradedancefestival.com](http://belgradedancefestival.com)





An NCPA Presentation  
in collaboration with Akvarious Productions

# The Verdict

An English and Hindi Play

Written by  
Margaret May Hobbs (from the novel by Barry Reed)

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY  
Akarsh Khurana



Cast: Adhaar Khurana, Akash Khurana, Aseem Hattangady, Digvijay Savant,  
Dilshad Edibam Khurana, Faisal Rashid, Garima Yajnik, Lisha Bajaj, Muzammil Qureshi,  
Siddharth Kumar, Tahira Nath, Zayn Marie Khan and other.

22 April 2023 | 7:00 PM  
Experimental Theatre, NCPA

Tickets on [bookmyshow](#)



# Kaleidoscope

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



## Art on board

Air India's exquisite collection of artworks—fondly called the Maharaja Collection—will be handed over to the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) in New Delhi for public display and preservation, following an agreement between the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of Culture. With more than 4,000 art pieces, the collection boasts works by M.F. Hussain, Jatin Das, Anjali Ela Menon, Sayed Haider Raza and Laxman Pai, as well as an array of sculptures, textiles, antiques and more. A white porcelain ashtray designed by Spanish surrealist Salvador Dalí for a select group of first-class passengers is also a part of the prized collection. The amusing tale of how Dalí asked for an elephant to be delivered to him in Spain as a fee is widely known.

The former national carrier offered free international tickets to budding artists as a goodwill gesture to support them. The artists reciprocated by gifting their artworks to the airline, which now form a major part of the collection. Not only will the NGMA act as a repository for the collection but also take it to different parts of the world. It will also be made accessible to the public through innovative digital interfaces, in addition to a soon-to-be-announced schedule.

## To the city of stars



Broadway will be shining for *La La Land* as it makes its way to the stage. With director Bartlett Sher at its helm, a stage

adaptation of the beloved movie musical is in the works, which will be based on a book by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Ayad Akhtar and veteran theatre director Matthew Decker. Like the feature film, the stage score will be composed by Justin Hurwitz, with lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul. The cast is yet to be announced. The multiple Academy Award-winning feature starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone told the story of an aspiring actor and a jazz musician trying to make it big in Los Angeles. Paying a charming homage to Hollywood, the music, with original compositions like 'City of Stars', 'Another Day of Sun' and 'Someone in the Crowd' became instantly timeless. This will not be *La La Land*'s first time on the stage. 'La La Land in Concert' is on its sixth year of touring worldwide.

## Breaking the glass ceiling



Latvian violinist Vineta Sareika-Völkner was recently announced as the new concertmaster of the prestigious Berlin Philharmonic. This makes her the first woman to ever hold this position in the orchestra's 141-year-old history. Sareika-Völkner joined the first violin section of the orchestra only in May 2022. Previously, she served as the first concertmaster of the Royal Flemish Philharmonic from 2011 to 2013 and was a frequent guest concertmaster of the Royal Opera Orchestra and the Brussels Philharmonic. She has also performed as a soloist with the Philharmonia Orchestra (London), Belgian National Orchestra, Gulbenkian Orchestra and others. Even though the appointment has been remarkably slow in coming, it is a reason to celebrate. The presence of women in German orchestras has

been notoriously rare. The first female musician of the Berlin Philharmonic—violinist Madeleine Carruzzo—was hired in 1982, 100 years after its founding. Sareika-Völkner's appointment is surely a step in the right direction. For more information, please visit [www.berliner-philharmoniker.de](http://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de)

## Faiz ke naam



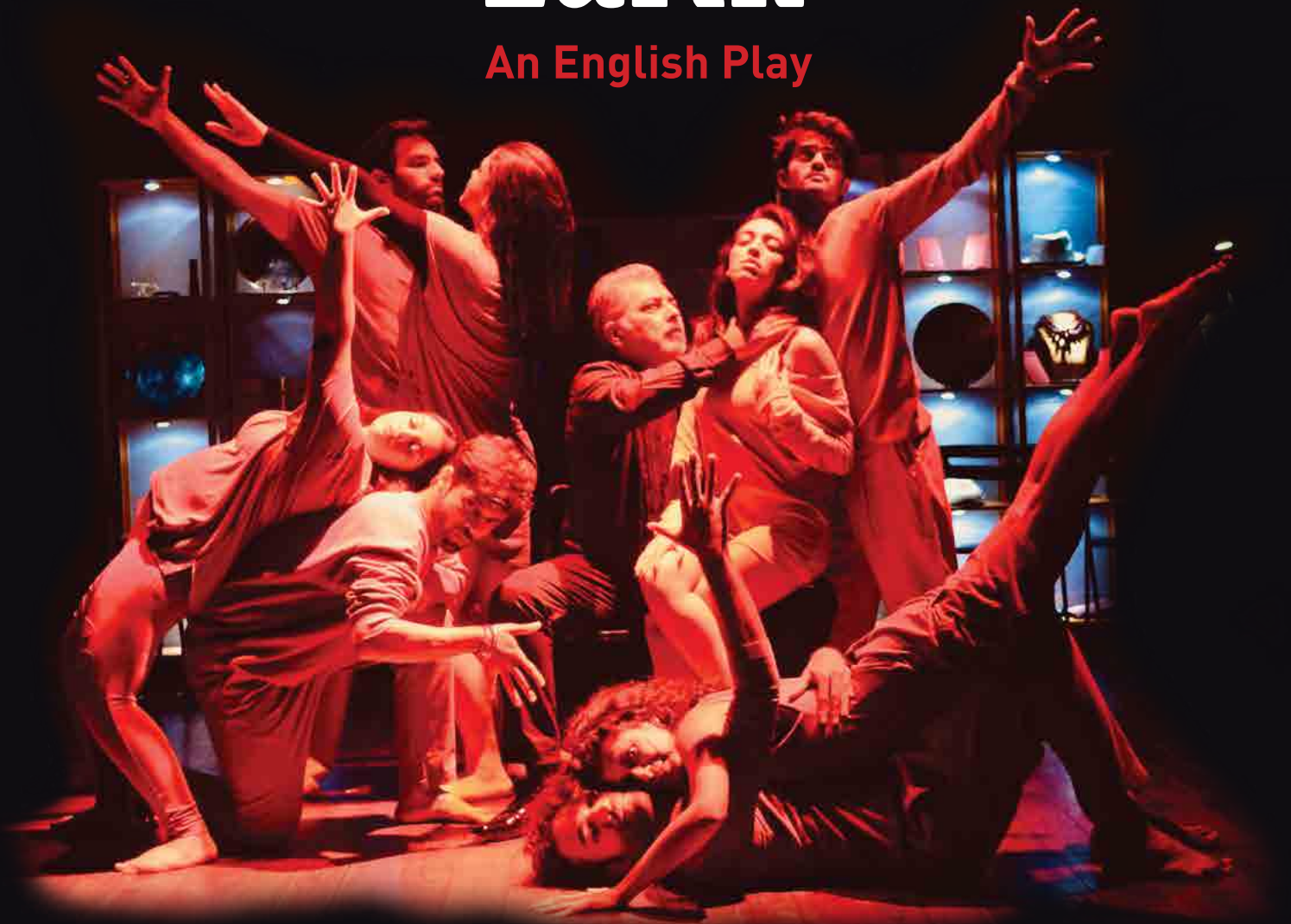
The annual Faiz Festival took place between 17th and 19th February at the Alhambra Arts Center in Lahore. Jointly organised by the Faiz Foundation Trust and Pakistan Arts Council, the much-awaited festival hosts more than 60 events, which include debates, lectures, theatre, dance performances, concerts and *qawwali* gatherings. Muneeza Hashmi, daughter of the late poet, emphasised that the festival is moving forward with the vision, mission and words of Faiz Ahmad Faiz while staying true to its roots. The opening day saw Ajoka Theatre perform its play, *Anhi Mai Da Sufna*, and a packed concert by Shafqat Amanat Ali Khan. The three-day festival also enables the rare coming together of artistes from India, Pakistan and other parts of the world. Highlights included performances by Mumbai-based actor, director and poet Danish Husain, Los Angeles-based singer Rizwan Wali Muhammad and a Kathak presentation by Farah Yasmeen Shaikh and her troupe from San Francisco. A *mushaira* on the final day featured Javed Akhtar, Khurshed Rizvi, Kishwar Naheed and Abbas Tabish, among others as panellists. At the closing ceremony, Naheed, the eminent Urdu writer known for her feminist poetry, renowned architect Nayyar Ali Dada and noted Kathak exponent Nahid Siddiqui were presented with Lifetime Achievement Awards. For more information, please visit [www.faizfoundationtrust.net](http://www.faizfoundationtrust.net) ■

- Aishwarya Bodke

NCPA Presentation in collaboration with  
Water Lily (formerly Masque)

# The Greatest Show on Earth

An English Play



Directed by Vikram Kapadia

Cast: Vikram Kapadia, Dipika Pandey, Akshay Datta, Amishka Sood, Hrishabh Kanti, Ariana Sajnani,  
Aaryan Deshpande, Nadeesh Bhambi, Kashish Sharma, Nihar Dhanraj, Ojaswi Bhattarai

23 APRIL 2023 | 7:00 PM  
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE, NCPA

Tickets on book [myshow](#)

# Lyrical Love

ON Stage brings you edited excerpts from the *NCPA Quarterly Journal*, an unsurpassed literary archive that ran from 1972 to 1988 and featured authoritative and wide-ranging articles. In the first instalment of a two-part series, noted musicologist **Premlata Sharma** discusses the history and origin of the *thumri*.

The *thumri* is the most popular form of Indian music cultivated by individuals, as distinguished from that spontaneous form of music cultivated by communities or social groups. It is, therefore, designated as classical music, as distinguished from folk music. It is comparatively freer of those restrictions of strict discipline which are part of orthodox classical music. For this reason, it is called 'light' classical music.

As denoted by its feminine name, the *thumri* is characterised by a striking note of tenderness and the theme of its songs is invariably related to some or the other phase of human love in a stage of separation or union. The *thumri* lacks that virility of musical expression associated with the *dhrupad* and *khayal* styles; we must remember that both these are masculine names. The songs in these styles do not always have love for their theme.

## The origin of the *thumri*

The most widely accepted theory attributes the origin of the *thumri* to the royal court of Oudh, especially that of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. This causal theory of the origin of a musical style, like all causal theories of interpretation of historical problems, is at best rather partial in its compass, if not wholly superficial. Causal theories do not take cognisance of the inner, homogeneous continuity of human affairs, to which causal factors have to be related to have any real significance. In order to understand and interpret the basic trend which made possible the evolution of the *thumri*, attention has to be paid to the continuity of fundamental trends in the Indian tradition of classical music which comes in an unbroken current from very ancient times and reflects India as an organic and vital cultural entity with a spiritual foundation too strong for any secular influence which does not owe loyalty to it.

Historically speaking, the true significance of the development of a new art form can only be grasped when its

understanding is related to preceding cultural trends. Intrinsicly, any classical musical form has to be judged with reference to the fundamental concepts of musical theory. Indian society has nourished such a strong spiritual base for the cultivation of the arts that incompatible influences of a political or exotic kind have made only a slight, superficial and evanescent impact on the fundamental concepts of art which are rooted in the very soul of the people.

As is well known, the theory of classical Indian music is enshrined in our traditional *Sangitashastra*. In studying any musical style and its characteristics, an attempt has to be made to relate them to the concept of musical forms as given in that *shastra*.

## The characteristic features of the *thumri*

The characteristic features of the *thumri*, as a musical style, can be enumerated thus:

(i) The musical effect of the *thumri* is far more dependent on its poetic content than is the case in the orthodox style of the *khayal*;

(ii) The poetic theme of songs sung in this style deals most often with *shringara rasa*, and has sometimes a dual significance, spiritual and mundane;

(iii) Its lyric form is due to the restricted range of ragas suitable for its rendering and to its latitude of elaboration. It is, at present, the most lyrical of all forms of Indian light classical music;

(iv) Judged by the familiar principle of art design, 'Unity in Diversity', this form dwells more in its melodic pattern on the element of diversity than on that of unity;

(v) It requires a special quality of voice, natural or cultivated, for its proper rendering;

(vi) Its association with the Kathak style of dance, looked upon as an inferior dance style, led to the exponents of this musical style being assigned a low social

status until quite recently;

(vii) The *talas* identified with this form of music constitute one of its features;

(viii) The embellishments are tonal-verbal for the most part and not purely the tonal ones which preponderate in orthodox classical music.

The *thumri* is an ephemeral evolute or a variant out of a long series of forms, beginning with the *Dhruvas* mentioned in Bharata's *Natyashastra*.

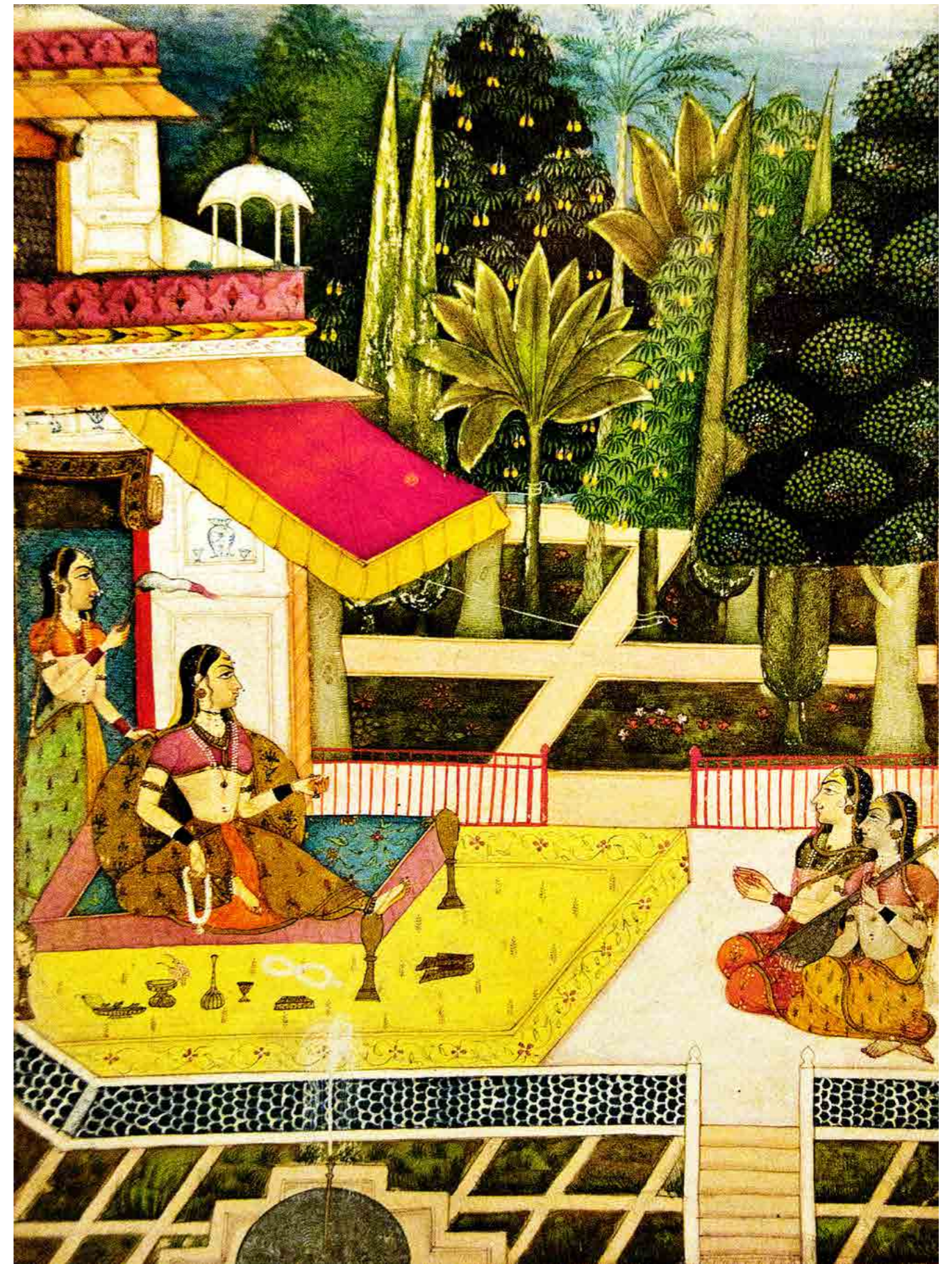
Bharata deals with verbal-tonal rhythmic compositional patterns in the 32nd chapter of *Natyashastra*, entitled 'Dhruva-Vidhana'. He speaks of five types of *Dhruva* in the context of drama (*natya*): *Praveshiki*, *Akshepiki*, *Naishkramiki*, *Santara* and *Prasadiki* or *Prasadini*. The last one is described as that which gives rise to colourful delight (*rangaraga*) and self-engrossing happiness (*prasada*). As is to be expected, this type is specially allocated to the delineation of the *shringara rasa*.

Incidentally, it may be noted here that Bharata has aptly enjoined the use of *madhya laya* (medium tempo) in this type of *Dhruva* which is especially suited to the *shringara rasa*, whereas he has enjoined the *vilambita laya* for the *Dhruvas* suited to the *karuna rasa* and *druta laya* for those suitable for *vira*, *raudra* and *adbhuta*.

Matanga, the next important extant author after Bharata, has dealt with compositional patterns in *Brihaddesi*. He speaks of *nadavati*, a type of *prabandha* specially suited for the *shringara rasa*:

नन्दावती तृतीया च तुर्या भद्रावती स्मृता ।  
ऋग्वेदादिसमुद्भूता विचित्रध्वनिरञ्जिता ।  
इत्येला गणमार्गण बुधैरुक्ता चतुर्विधा ।  
एला नादावती रम्या वर्णालङ्कारशोभिता ॥  
गीयते मट्टतालेन नादयुक्ता पदे पदे ।  
टक्करागो भवेत् तत्र सर्वेषामनुञ्जकः ॥  
श्वेतो वर्णश्च विज्ञेयः शृङ्गारः कथितो रसः ।  
कैशिकीवृत्तिराख्याता पाञ्चाली रीतिरिष्यते ॥

The following characteristic features of this type of *prabandha* can be noted from the above quotation:



(i) A remarkable beauty and variegated graceful embellishments;

(ii) Deployment of special rhythmic patterns (*talas*);

(iii) The universal appeal of the raga or melodic pattern of this form. (I shall shortly review this feature in some detail);

(iv) The presence of the Kaishiki Vritti and Panchali Riti; the former of these, the Kaishiki Vritti, represents the graceful, sportive tendencies of love in drama and the latter, the Panchali Riti, represents a special style of diction which is marked by the

absence of compounds on the analogy of which it can be construed that this form makes use of short and sweet embellishments and avoids elaborate and intricate ones.

It will be interesting and useful to review the special features of the raga

chosen for this compositional form. It may be noted that Takka is an important *grama* raga known as Bhasajanaka. It gives rise to a large number of Bhasas and Vibhasas. Bhasa is described as Alapavishesha or a particular variety of improvised elaboration of a raga. It is well known that only a few ragas permit unrestrained variety in elaboration. Bhasas and Vibhasas imply a licence for such variety as is evident from the following words of Matanga regarding these two *gitis* or style-forms of rendering ragas:

प्रयोगैर्गात्रजैः श्लक्ष्णैः काकुक्कतैः सुयोजितैः ।  
कम्पितैः कोमलैर्दीप्तैर्मालवी काकुक्कान्वितैः ॥  
ललितैः सुकुमारैश्च प्रयोगैश्च सुसंयतेः ।  
भाषगीतिः समाख्याता एषा गीतिविचक्षणैः ॥  
यथा वै रज्यते लोकस्तथा वै संप्रयुज्यते ।

The last line deserves special notice as it speaks of the ascendancy of *loka-ranjakata* over all rules and regulations. Similarly, he says for Vibhasa Giti:

ललितैर्बहुभिर्दीप्तैः कम्पितै रौरसेः समैः ।  
तारातितारैर्मसृणैर्मध्ये मध्यमदीपितैः ॥  
गमकैः श्रोतृसुखदैर्ललितैस्तु यहच्छ्रया ।  
विभाषगीतिस्तु संयोज्या यथा  
लोकोऽनुरज्यते ॥

It is clear that *rakti* or *ranjakata* and not rule or regulation is the main consideration in Vibhasa Giti. Thus, such ragas, as have been described by ancient authors as Bhasajanaka may be understood to permit somewhat loosely restrained elaboration.

Sarngadeva gives a similar treatment of *nadavati*, the type of *prabandha* which we have just spoken of on the authority of Matanga. He also says that novelty is to be preferred to conventional rules in certain varieties of *prabandha* forms. For example, in certain *rupakas* (compositional forms) the melodic structure (*dhatu*) is endowed with novelty through new *sthayas* which may be somewhat extraneous to the intrinsic structure of the raga concerned.

This element of novelty is supplied by either the latent potentialities of the raga itself (Mulaja Bhasa) or by the regional melodies known to the

performer (Oesaja Bhasa) or by the shadow of a different raga (Chaya Bhasa) or by the mixture of a number of ragas (Sankirna Bhasa).

Sarngadeva's discussion of the varieties of *alapti*, or improvised tonal elaboration, is also interesting in this context. He divides *alapti* into *ragalapti* and *rupakalapti*, the former being concerned with Ragaprakatikarana, that is with an unfolding of the tonal potentialities of the raga without any reference to the *rupaka*, or the verbal-tonal-rhythmic pattern, and the latter being devoted to the *rupaka* itself. Naturally, the verbal content of the *rupaka* gets an important place in *rupakalapti* which expresses the finer shades of significance of words through appropriate tonal variations. Viewed in terms of Sarngadeva's definitions of *ragalapti* and *rupakalapti*, the *thumri* has to be treated as a musical pattern of the latter form of *alapti*, and not of the former.

A rough similarity of the *Bol-banavas* of *thumri* can be traced to the varieties of *rupakalapti*, mentioned by Sarngadeva, namely, *Pratigrahanika*, *Sthayabhanjam* and *Rupakabhanjani*. When the artiste's attention is concentrated more on the tonal-verbal variations with the purposes of expressing musically the suggestions implicit in the words of the songs than in the effective exposition of the raga concerned, there is bound to be some deviation from the conventional pattern of the raga. Kallinatha has beautifully explained this idea by saying that in *rupakalapti*, the raga concerned is just like a pearl which is set in the midst of multi-coloured gems.

Reverting to the topic of *prabandha*, it may be remarked that writers after Sarngadeva either avoided a treatment of *prabandha* or were generally content with reproducing, almost verbatim, Sarngadeva's text on the subject. It is, therefore, not possible to connect the link of parallel trends with the *thumri* in our musical tradition relative to the period between the 14th and 17th centuries.

It will not be out of place to give now a short account of the trends in folk music which may be taken to

have supplied the raw material for a refined and classicised light musical form like the *thumri*. The *Chaiti*, the *Biraha* and the *Kajari* forms of folk music of the eastern Uttar Pradesh, as also the *padas* and *ramainis* of the Kabir Panthis (who have exercised a marked influence on the folk music of eastern U.P. and Bihar) may be mentioned in this connection. These must have contributed to and inspired the evolution of the *thumri* in Banaras. The theme of songs of the *Chaiti*, *Biraha* and *Kajari* is mundane love and that of the music inspired by Kabir and his followers has a double significance of spiritual and mundane love. These have considerably influenced the songs of the *thumri*, especially of the *Poorbi anga*. Some popular *thumri* songs with the following opening lines, inspired by the Kabir cult, have a double meaning of spiritual love clothed in the garb of the mundane and may be cited as an example:

बाबुल मोरा नैहर छूटोई जाय ।  
मैं न लरी थी श्याम निकल गये आज ।  
रे दिन कैसे कटि हैं जतन बताय जैहो ।

Songs of somewhat similar content of erotic mysticism are known as *padams* in Carnatic music and those having mundane love as their theme are called *javalis* in the South. The *Lavanis* of Maharashtra are also a variety of erotic folk music. All these forms of folk music on the one hand and classical forms on the other must have made possible the evolution of light classical forms in all parts of the country as a manifestation of a spontaneous cultural movement.

The *thumri* will thus be seen as one of the varieties of light classical music emerging in its time as a result of the impact of classical music on the one hand and folk music on the other in Northern India in line with similar developments in other parts of the country and as an incident in the normal course of musical history. ■

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

# Programme Guide

April 2023

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



## THEATRE

### Jeene Bhi Do Yaaro

Celebrating the 100th & 101st Show  
Hindi Play (110 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 1st – 4.30 pm & 7.30 pm

The promise of a sweet future together, walking hand in hand into the sunset forever. This is what romantic dreams are made of. The husband-to-be, to impress his sweetheart, will go out of his way to do everything she demands. The list is endless, from buying chocolates, flowers, movie and dinner dates to extravagant shopping. But what happens after marriage? The same sweetheart becomes a nag. The man, knowing well that the end has been achieved, becomes lax and takes his wife for granted. Watch the dynamics of this post-marriage situation in *Jeene Bhi Do Yaaro*.

Written & directed by **Om Katare**

Cast: **Om Katare, Prashant Upadhyay, Sailee Gaikwad, Akanksha Gupta & Anuj Balyan**

Produced by **Yatri Theatre Association**

Age: 18+

Tickets:

₹630 & 450/- (Members)

₹700 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

### Beatles Tribute

English Musical (90 mins)

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 2nd – 7.00 pm

An NCPA & Silly Point Presentation

Come together as it is time to Twist and Shout on a Yellow Submarine while we

Beatles Tribute, 2nd, Tata Theatre



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.

Artists: **Sarosh Nanavaty, Naquita D'souza, Danesh Irani, Danesh Khambata, Hormuz Ragina, Arish Bhiwandiwalla, 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 now open

## PHOTOGRAPHY

### Photo Exhibition of Works by Robert Capa

Dilip Piramal Art Gallery

Monday, 3rd to Wednesday, 19th – 12.00 pm to 8.00 pm

(The gallery will be closed on 7th & 14th April)

The Liszt Institute – Hungarian Cultural Centre Delhi, in collaboration with the Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Center, Budapest, is bringing to India a selection of works of one of the most well-known Hungarian-born photographers, Robert Capa. Images on view are selected from a collection of nearly 1,000 photographs from the Hungarian National Museum.

Photo Exhibition of Works by Robert Capa, 3rd to 19th, Dilip Piramal Art Gallery



**Robert Capa** (born Endre Friedmann, 22nd October 1913 – 25th May 1954) was a visual chronicler of several 20th-century wars—namely, the Spanish Civil War, the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Second World War, the First Arab-Israeli War and the First Indochina War. Capa, who covered these wars directly from the battlefield, captured moments from the frontlines and in the heartlands that remain stunning examples of photojournalism and convey the power of images that have been constructed from a deep sense of humanism.

Entry free.

## SCREENING

### Easter in Art

Exhibition On-Screen

(Approx. 85 mins)



Easter in Art, 5th, Godrej Dance Theatre

**Godrej Dance Theatre**  
**Wednesday, 5th – 6.30 pm**

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

The story of Christ's death and resurrection has dominated Western culture for the past 2,000 years. It is perhaps the most significant historical event of all time, as recounted by the gospels and as such, has been depicted by the greatest artists in history. From the triumphant to the savage, the ethereal to the tactile, some of Western civilisation's greatest artworks focus on this pivotal moment. This beautifully crafted film explores the story of Easter as depicted in art, from the time of the early Christians to the present day. Shot on location in Jerusalem, the United States and throughout Europe, the film explores the different ways artists have depicted the Easter story through the ages.

Directed by **Phil Grabsky**

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

#### SCREENING

**Fedora**  
 by Umberto Giordano  
 Opera Screening (145 mins)  
 Sung in Italian with English Subtitles  
 Godrej Dance Theatre



Fedora, 8th,  
 Godrej Dance  
 Theatre

**Saturday, 8th – 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 **Artur Ruciński** 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 now open**

#### INDIAN MUSIC

**Kalajayee**  
 Celebrating the Birth Centenary of  
 Kumar Gandharva  
 Tata Theatre & Experimental  
 Theatre  
 8th & 9th April

A Kumar Gandharva Pratishtan,  
 Dewas &  
 NCPA Presentation



Kumar Gandharva, 8th & 9th,  
 Tata & Experimental Theatres

**Sponsors:**  
**Ministry of Culture, Government of**  
**India**  
**SBI Mutual Fund**  
**Reliance Foundation**  
**Saroj Jhaveri Foundation**  
**Ground Support - Pancham Nishad**  
**Creatives**

**Kumar Gandharva** (born on 8th April 1924) was a legend in his lifetime. Known for his radical thinking, he was a non-conformist who made bold attempts at assimilating the best, from both art and folk music traditions. No wonder his name is etched in golden letters in the annals of Indian music as one of the most outstanding vocalists and composers of the 20th century.

**Saturday, 8th – 5.30 pm**  
**Tata Theatre**  
**Bhuvanesh Komkali (vocal)**  
**Niladri Kumar (sitar)**  
**Ulhas Kashalkar (vocal)**

**Sunday, 9th – 10.00 am**  
**Experimental Theatre**  
**Talk/Discussion /Lec-dem**

Coordinator: **Shashi Vyas**  
 Speakers:  
**Shruti Sadolikar**  
**Shama Bhate**  
**Satyasheel Deshpande**

**Sunday, 9th – 5.30 pm**  
**Tata Theatre**  
**Kalapini Komkali (vocal)**  
**Hariprasad Chaurasia (flute)**  
**Vyankatesh Kumar (vocal)**

There will be a photographic exhibition on **Kumar Gandharva** at the Tata Theatre (Upper Foyer).

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

#### WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

**Ariela**  
 Viola and Piano Recital



Sigrid Hagn and Hana Hobiger,  
10th, Experimental Theatre

(Approx. 180 mins)  
Experimental Theatre  
Monday, 10th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA and Jasubhai Foundation  
Presentation

Inspired by Manolo Valdés’s sculpture ‘Ariela’, which means lioness of God, the concert is dedicated to the remembrance and celebration of the spirit of Jewish women composers whose work is on the brink of being forgotten. The Austrian musicians **Sigrid Hagn** (piano) and **Hana Hobiger** (viola) intend to honour these under-appreciated composers by presenting diverse musical pieces that commemorate the horrors of hate and the power of hope and love. Hagn and Hobiger will be accompanied by a historian of Holocaust studies, who will narrate the background and help the audience navigate the evening’s musical session.

A limited number of admission passes can be collected by Members from the Box Office from 26th March onwards.

## FILM

**Amar Akbar Anthony**  
Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(184 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Tuesday, 11th – 6.30 pm

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

*Amar Akbar Anthony* is a 1977 film about three brothers who are separated in childhood and then adopted by three different families. The trio reunites in adulthood and sets out to seek revenge on the person who was responsible for their separation.

Director & Producer: **Manmohan Desai**



*Amar Akbar Anthony*, 11th, Godrej Dance Theatre

Cast: **Amitabh Bachchan, Vinod Khanna, Rishi Kapoor, Neetu Singh, Parveen Babi, Shabana Azmi, Nirupa Roy, Pran, Jeevan, Yusuf Khan, Ranjeet, Kamal Kapoor, Shivraj & Nazir Hussain**

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.

## WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

**Welcome to the Salon**  
A lecture-recital by  
**Judith Valerie Engel**  
Experimental Theatre  
Tuesday, 11th – 7.00 pm

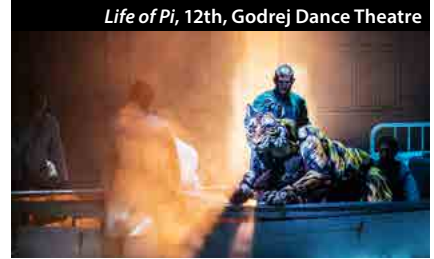
An NCPA Presentation

Austrian pianist **Judith Valerie Engel** started studying the piano at the age of five with the Russian pianist Mag. Nina Igudesman (who was brought up at the Neuhaus-school in St. Petersburg). From the age of 17, Engel has been studying with renowned pianist and pedagogue Pavel Gililov. For many years, she also took private lessons with Austrian pianist and author Paul Badura-Skoda. Further inspiration came from masterclasses with Matti Raekallio, Rena Sharon and Mihaela Ursuleasa, as well as regular singing and conducting lessons. Engel is currently pursuing a doctorate in Historical Musicology at the University of Oxford. Her research focuses on Viennese composer Marianna Martines and pays particular attention to the sociocultural significance of a Classical woman composer.

**Programme includes:**  
Marianna Martines: Sonata in G major  
Clara Schumann: Polonaise Op. 6/6  
Franz Liszt: Eugene Onegin Paraphrase

Tickets:  
₹720 & 450/- (Members)  
₹800 & 500/- (Public)  
(Inclusive of GST)  
Box Office now open

## SCREENING



*Life of Pi*, 12th, Godrej Dance Theatre

**Life of Pi**  
by **Yann Martel**  
Theatre Screening  
(Approx. 180 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Wednesday, 12th – 6.00 pm

An NCPA – National Theatre Live  
(London) Presentation

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

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

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

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

## FILM

**Short Film Corner**  
Short Film Screenings  
Little Theatre  
Wednesday, 12th – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation in

collaboration with White Wall Screenings

## Dali

Silent Film with English Subtitles  
(10 mins)



An animated musical on the passionate and tempestuous relationship of Salvador Dalí and his wife Gala, whom he considered his muse and the true auteur of his work, even signing her name on his paintings in the 1930s.

Directed by **Kabeer Khurana**

## Baithullah

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(9 mins)



Millions of children are engaged in child labour in India, and the number is growing every year. And with that, millions of childhood dreams are never realised as a result of a lack of education. *Baithullah* is the story of one such child with a dream in the maddening metropolis of Mumbai.

Directed by **Jitendra Rai**

## 7 Star Dinosaur Entertainment

Hindi Film with English Subtitles  
(20 mins)

A few years ago, two brothers, Sudhir and Vinod, began a business together called 7 Star Dinosaur Entertainment. Dressed as giant dinosaurs they would dance to Bollywood songs at weddings, birthday parties and mall events. Today, we find them two years deep into the pandemic. No public



functions are allowed anymore, leaving the brothers jobless and hungry. The giant dinosaurs are crammed with them into a tiny room of a shabby tenement. Their food is running out and so is their patience.

Directed by **Vaishali Naik**

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

## INDIAN MUSIC

### Saz-e-Bahar

Festival of Indian Instrumental Music

Godrej Dance Theatre  
Friday, 14th & Saturday, 15th –  
6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

The Indian subcontinent abounds in a variety of musical instruments, and a considerable specialisation is displayed in their usage. Instruments present music solos, provide melodic or rhythmic accompaniment or produce drones.

The 10th edition of this two-day festival will showcase four instrumentalists wielding instruments of different categories—drums-percussion (tabla), string-plucked (mandolin, sitar, sursingar & mohanveena).

**On each day at 6 pm, Dr. Suvarnalata Rao will present a pre-event talk on specific instruments presented on the respective days.**

**14th April**  
**Vijay Ghate (tabla)**  
**U. Rajesh (mandolin)**

**Vijay Ghate's** tryst with the tabla began at the tender age of three. He had the privilege of learning from eminent tabla maestro, Suresh Talwalkar. Today, he is known for his astounding mastery in providing accompaniment to dance recitals as



well as vocal and instrumental music. Having command of the technical as well as artistic aspect of *laya-tala*, he has performed with many stalwarts of Indian music.



Having been mentored by his virtuoso brother, Mandolin U. Shrinivas, **U. Rajesh** was trained in Carnatic music. Today, he has to his credit, numerous solo concerts as well as presentations with top-ranking artistes. Besides establishing himself as a reputed artiste and composer, he has also collaborated with several international artistes, including John McLaughlin on his Grammy-nominated album *Floating Point*.

**15th April**

**Joydeep Mukherjee (sursingar & mohanveena)**

**Kushal Das (sitar)**

**Joydeep Mukherjee** has trained with Pranab Kumar Naha of Senia Shahajanpur *gharana*, which is known for its foundation based on *dhrupad* as well as *khayal* idioms. Having resurrected the sursingar, an instrument of the late 18th/early 19th century, presently, he is a senior exponent of the sarod as well as the sursingar. He is perhaps the only instrumentalist to wield a rare instrument called the mohanveena, evolved by his grand-guru, the legendary Radhika Mohan Moitra.

**Kushal Das** was fortunate to be born in a family of sitar and esraj practitioners. He was groomed in the art of playing the sitar and surbahar by several accomplished musicians like Sanjoy Banerjee, Ajoy Sinha Roy and Ramakrishna Basu, besides his father and uncle. As a top-ranking musician of All India Radio, he has performed widely in major festivals across India and abroad.

**Daily Tickets:**

**₹180/- (Members)**

**₹200/- (Public)**

**Box Office now open**

## WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

### SOI Academy Orchestra

**Marat Bisengaliev, conductor**

**Tata Theatre**

**Sunday, 16th – 5.00 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

The SOI Academy Orchestra performs under the direction of Music Director **Marat Bisengaliev**. The concert will also feature students of the SOI Music Academy as soloists with the SOI Chamber Orchestra.



SOI Music Academy, 16th, Tata Theatre

**Admission passes will be available at the Box Office from 26th March for Members & 29th March for Public**

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



To Be or Not to Be, 19th, Little Theatre

### Movies Under the Stars

**To Be or Not to Be (1942)**

**Film Screening**

**(B&W - 100 mins)**

**Little Theatre**

**Wednesday, 19th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA & Film Heritage Foundation Presentation**

This screwball masterpiece from **Ernst Lubitsch** stars **Jack Benny** and, in her final screen appearance, **Carole Lombard**, as husband-and-wife thespians, the Turas, running their own theatre company in Warsaw. When the Nazis invade Poland in World War II, the Turas soon find themselves having to operate under severe restrictions, including shelving a comic play they had written about Adolf Hitler. They soon become embroiled in a complicated plot to prevent a double agent from delivering vital information to the Nazis. Lubitsch manages to brilliantly balance political satire, romance, slapstick and wartime suspense in a comic high-wire act.

Director: **Ernst Lubitsch**

Screenplay: **Edwin Justus Mayer**

Cinematography: **Rudolph Maté**

Cast: **Carole Lombard, Jack Benny, Robert Stack & Stanley Ridges**

**Admission on a first-come-first-**

**served basis. NCPA Members will get preferential seating till 6.20 pm.**

## FILM

### Reality Check

**Documentary Film Screening**

**Little Theatre**

**Thursday, 20th – 6.30 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Cinema Collective**

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

### Oh That's Bhanu

**English, Malayalam, Tamil and Hindi**

**Film with English Subtitles**

**(112 mins)**



Oh That's Bhanu, 20th, Little Theatre

Bhanumati Rao (1923-2022), an elegant and witty woman, whose hearing and memory are no longer what they used to be, has led an enigmatic and passionate, but also a simple and pragmatic, life. Filming with Bhanumati from 2014 to 2019, and her daughters Maya Krishna Rao, a contemporary theatre practitioner in New Delhi and Tara Rao, a human rights campaigner in Bengaluru, the filmmaker goes on a journey of life through the spasms of memory, complexities of relationships, love and a reflection of what could constitute a beautiful mind.

Director, Editor & Producer:

**R.V. Ramani**

Location Sound Recording:

**R.V. Ramani & Asheesh Pandya**

Featuring: **Bhanumati Rao,**

**Maya Krishna Rao & Tara Rao**

Presented by **Cinema Rendezvous**

**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.

## WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

Gabriele Strata, 20th, Experimental Theatre



### Piano Recital by Gabriele Strata

Experimental Theatre  
Thursday, 20th – 7.00 pm

An NCPA & Mehli Mehta Music Foundation Presentation in collaboration with Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Mumbai

**Gabriele Strata** has established himself as one of the leading Italian pianists of his generation. Concerto and recital performances have taken him to some of the world's leading stages, including the Berlin Philharmonie, the Barbican Centre and Cadogan Hall. He made his Wigmore Hall recital debut in 2022.

#### Programme:

Beethoven: Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90

Bartók: *Out of Doors*, Sz. 81

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5

#### Tickets:

₹720 & 450/- (Members)

₹800 & 500/- (Public)

(Inclusive of GST)

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

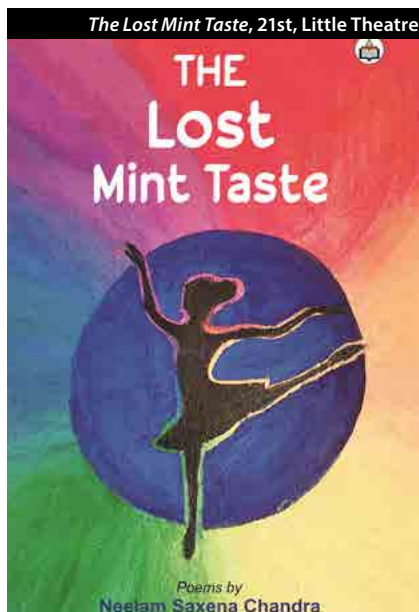
## MULTI ARTS & PRESENTATION

### New Book Discussion

The Lost Mint Taste  
Poems by Neelam Saxena Chandra  
Little Theatre  
Friday, 21st – 4.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

Every person on this planet has his or her own choices, likings and sources of motivation. However, at times the 'Mint' taste of that motivation gets



lost in the mundane daily chores and difficulties of routine life. **Neelam Saxena Chandra**, through her poems, takes us into the sphere of light through the darkness in which one can find that Lost Mint Taste, as she calls it, and be invigorated again.

Chandra is an Indian Railway officer, working as Chief Electrical Engineer in Mumbai. She is an engineering graduate and has done her post graduate diploma in IM&HRD and also in finance. She has completed a summer course in finance from the London School of Economics. She has authored seven novels, nine short story collections, 37 poetry collections and 15 children's books. More than 2,000 of her stories/poems/articles have been published in various international and national journals, magazines, etc. An award-winning author, she writes in English and Hindi, and holds a record with the Limca Book of Records - 2015 for having the highest number of publications in a year in English and Hindi. She was listed in *Forbes* as one of the 78 most popular authors in the country in 2014. Her poem was also placed at number seven in a contest organised by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness, USA) in 2021.

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

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

### An Ode to Carmen with S Experience

Experimental Theatre



Sonia Saigal, 21st, Experimental Theatre

Friday, 21st – 7.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation

**Sonia Saigal** – vocals  
**Harmeet Manseta** – piano/keys  
**Adrian D'souza** – drums  
**Rainer Pusch** – saxophone  
**Arka Chakraborty** – keys

American jazz singer Carmen McRae's vocal rendition of every standard is unique. She was an artiste that connected to her songs in a way rarely heard. There is so much emotion in her voice, whether she is singing jazz ballads about love and heartbreak, paying homage to Billie Holiday and Nat King Cole's 'This Will Make You Laugh' or singing uptempo standards like 'Well, You Needn't' and 'Take Five'. McRae also covered several artistes, including The Carpenters and Stevie Wonder, making their songs her own in a style that is completely original.

Come and experience the magic of jazz and all its emotions, as **Sonia Saigal**, along with her band, pays homage to the one and only Carmen McRae.

#### Tickets:

₹900/- (Members)

₹1,000/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

Box Office now open

## THEATRE

### OCD

English/Hindi Play (100 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Saturday, 22nd – 5.00 pm

An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Theatrewaalas

*OCD* is a light comedy about a carefree young man and his obsessive servant. In an effort to keep his master's house in order, the servant starts to



cross boundaries to set the former's life in order by trying to control his relationship matters. The protagonist is a turbaned Rajasthani butler called *OC chacha*, who suffers from obsessive compulsive disorder. While on paper, this might make him the ideal domestic help, in practice, *OC chacha's* idiosyncrasies get in the way of Rohan's lifestyle and, eventually, relationships. For instance, he believes the furniture in the house should only be arranged at particular angles, doesn't like even numbers and is convinced that one should stay away from women, because nothing good can come out of associating with the fairer sex. But since *OC chacha* has been a part of Rohan's family for years, it is difficult for Rohan to get rid of him.

The play is a funny take on human eccentricities wherein every individual in this world has some or the other quirky habit but he or she feels that the other person is weird and anyone who does not adhere to the norms of the majority is considered a freak.

Written and directed by **Rohit Tiwari**  
 Cast: **Abbas Syed, Ankit Sharma, Anurag Jha, Devyani Dagaonkar, Rishika Chandani, Rohit Tiwari, Sarang Patwarddan, Shivam Kataria & Sheetal Robinson**  
 Lights: **Garv Jangid/Ritika Chauhan**  
 Sound: **Sankalp Mishra**

**Suggested age: 16+**

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

## THEATRE

**The Verdict**  
 English/Hindi Play (100 mins)  
 Experimental Theatre  
 Saturday, 22nd – 7.00 pm



**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Akvarious Productions**

A down-and-out lawyer gets a wake-up call when a medical malpractice case comes his way. But his best intentions put him on the warpath with the system. Trouble is that the system always wins.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Josef Weinberger Ltd.

Written by **Margaret May Hobbs**  
 (from the novel by Barry Reed)  
 Adapted & directed by **Akarsh Khurana**  
 Cast: **Adhaar Khurana, Akash Khurana, Aseem Hattangady, Digvijay Savant, Dilshad Edibam Khurana, Faisal Rashid, Garima Yajnik, Lisha Bajaj, Muzammil Qureshi, Siddharth Kumar, Tahira Nath, Zayn Marie Khan & others**  
 Produced by **Saatvika Kantamneni**  
 Scenography by **Akarsh Khurana**  
 Costume Design by **Paramita Das**  
 Sound Design by **Varrunn Bangera**  
 Stage Management by **Megh Patil, Rahul Gupta, Snigdha Anand Prakash**

**Suggested age: 16+**

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

## WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC

**SOI Chamber Orchestra**  
 Gabriele Strata, piano  
 Tata Theatre  
 Sunday, 23rd – 5.00 pm

**An NCPA & Mehli Mehta Music Foundation Presentation in collaboration with Istituto Italiano di Cultura in Mumbai**

Italian pianist **Gabriele Strata**, hailed

as one of the leading Italian pianists of his generation, joins the SOI Chamber Orchestra to perform Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2. The rest of the programme will be announced shortly.

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

## THEATRE



**The Greatest Show on Earth**  
 English Play (110 mins)  
 Experimental Theatre  
 Sunday, 23rd – 7.00 pm

**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Water Lily (formerly Masque)**

The Creative Head of a TV production house informs her CEO of an Instagram post announcing a suicide by a person distraught with the government's neglect of the common man. She pushes to buy the rights of a live telecast of this sensational act. Implementing movement, choral speaking and song, this hilarious, condemnatory satire of the socio-political system brings to the fore the ugly core of surging communalism, capitalism and commercialism in a country where there is no value for human life.

Directed by **Vikram Kapadia**  
 Cast: **Vikram Kapadia, Dipika Pandey, Akshay Datta, Amishka Sood, Hrishabh Kanti, Ariana Sajjani, Aaryan Deshpande, Nadeesh Bhambi, Kashish Sharma, Nihar Dhanraj & Ojaswi Bhattarai**  
 Music: **Rohit Das & The Cast**  
 Live Music: **Rohit Das** (guitar), **Ritesh Malaney** (percussion) & **Vernon Misquitta** (keyboards)  
 Choreography: **Fiona**  
 Costumes: **Tanya Sharma**  
 Lights: **Yael Crishna**

**Suggested age: 18+**

**Tickets:**

₹720 & 540/- (Members)

₹800 & 600/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

**Box Office now open**

**SCREENING**



*Othello*, 26th, Godrej Dance Theatre

**Othello**

by William Shakespeare

Theatre Screening

(Approx. 180 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 26th – 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, and having risen to the top of a white world, he finds that love across racial lines comes at 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.

**Age: 15+**

**Tickets:**

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

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

**DANCE**

**NCPA Mudra Dance Festival 2023**

27th & 28th April

*Mudra* is the only thematic dance festival of the NCPA which is presented around International Dance Day every year. Previously, *Mudra* has been curated on themes like motherhood, colours, *bhakti* poetry, animal movements, etc. This year, it explores a unique theme **Aparajita – the one who didn't stop till she won.**

Post-pandemic, we have finally, collectively won over the darkness and found our light. How does one identify light in dark times? A force that can bring us out of the dark maze of challenges creeping slowly to crush every spark of self-confidence. It is now time for us to look back and identify qualities, impulses and habits that help us come out of that darkness. So, in this edition of *Mudra*, we celebrate women who have crossed the threshold, surmounted challenges and come back to outshine the stage light.

**Odissi by Sutapa Talukdar with Gurukul and Kathak by Rajashree Shirke & Lasya**

Experimental Theatre

Thursday, 27th – 6.30 pm

An exponent of Kathak and Bharatanatyam, **Rajashree Shirke** has, through deep and prolonged practical study, managed to capture and retain in her performance the technique and nuances of both these styles. She has performed extensively in India and abroad. Shirke is the Principal of the Lasya Centre of Dance Education and Research, which offers a Diploma in Kathak and Bharatanatyam. She is a recognised theoretician and an acclaimed academician. Shirke is also a gifted creative writer, a highly acclaimed, award-winning actor. As Founder-Director of Lasya, she continues to dedicate her life and work to the spread and preservation of the *kathakar* tradition of Kathak. She is also actively involved in imparting dance training to underprivileged children.

**Sutapa Talukdar**, a devoted disciple of Kelucharan Mohapatra, has played a key role in taking the Odissi dance style to a level of national interest. Over the years she has passionately strived towards making this genre more acceptable. In 1987, she set up a dance school, Gurukul, for students who have a genuine interest in the form and a will to



Sutapa Talukdar, 27th, Experimental Theatre



Rajashree Shirke, 27th, Experimental Theatre

strive to perfect it. Talukdar entered the world of dance at the age of six, learning three diverse forms of Indian classical dance simultaneously—Manipuri, Kathakali and Mohiniattam. In Odissi, her initiation was under Muralidhar Majhi. Subsequently, she trained with Mohapatra from 1981 to 2004. She also studied mime with Kalanidhi Narayan, Bharatanatyam with Padma Subrahmanyam and, for a brief period, took lessons from Sanjukta Panigrahi.

**Tickets:**

₹360 & 270/- (Members)

₹400 & 300/- (Public)

**Bharatanatyam by Sonal Mansingh & Troupe and Sandhya Purecha along with Bharata College of Fine Arts & Culture**

Tata Theatre

Friday, 28th – 6.30 pm

An iconic cultural personality of India and Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, **Dr. Sonal Mansingh** has been unique among dancers who have mastered multiple Indian classical dance forms from different parts of India like Bharatanatyam, Odissi and *Chhau*. A scholar and seasoned art administrator, she has performed and taught in 90 countries around the world. As the Founder-President of the Centre for Indian Classical Dances, she has trained several talented performers who are



carrying the message of Indian culture all over the world. She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1992 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2003. She has been honoured as a Sangeet Natak Akademi Ratna (Fellow of Sangeet Natak Akademi). She has also been nominated as one of the Navaratnas for Swachh Bharat Mission by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She has served as chairperson of Sangeet Natak Akademi and is currently serving her second term on the Board of Trustees at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.

**Dr. Sandhya Purecha** is among India's foremost performing-academics. An incredible dancer, ingenious choreographer, erudite author, scholar and researcher, her passion for excellence and artistic talents shines through her commitment to Indian classical dance. She is the senior-most disciple of Parvati Kumar and has learnt under his tutelage in the traditional *guru-shishya parampara*. Her vision scaled with the establishment of her brainchild, the Bharata College of Fine Arts & Culture, affiliated with the Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Nagpur. She is also the Founder-Principal and Managing Trustee of the college which is under the management of her NGO Sarfojiraje Bhosale Centre, Mumbai, that works to preserve, promote and propagate Indian art and culture. She has been presented with numerous awards of appreciation for her contribution and lifetime devotion to the arts, including

the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Overall Contribution 2017 and the Maharashtra State Cultural Award by the Government of Maharashtra. Currently, she is the chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi.

**Tickets:**  
 ₹360, 270 & 180/- (Members)  
 ₹400, 300 & 200/- (Public)

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

### THEATRE

## So Called Comedian

Stand-up Comedy by Kunal Kamra  
 Hindi /English (90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 29th – 6.00 pm & 8.30 pm

Sunday, 30th – 4.00 pm & 7.00 pm

Kunal Kamra's career in advertising has made him so jaded and frustrated that he does stand-up in order to satisfy his need to ridicule and mock what he sees in his daily life. He is an observational comedian and is known for his weird and twisted take on things. He is known to be brutally honest and incisive, and his material is fresh, edgy and hilarious.

Written & directed by **Kunal Kamra**  
 Production: **Comedy Ladder**

**Suggested age: 16+**

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

### WESTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC



## April Blossoms

Piano Recital by Students of Blossom Mendonca

(approx. 120 mins)

Little Theatre

Saturday, 29th – 7.00 pm

### An NCPA Presentation

A second-generation piano teacher and the founding director of Living Voices, **Blossom Mendonca** has been teaching the piano for over 40 years. With a musical teaching lineage that includes Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Liszt and more directly, Blanche Viegas, Olga Craen, Tehmie Gazdar and Mario Monreal, she feels compelled to spread the joy that music has given her. She has had several students who have been recipients of local, national and international awards at the ABRSM and Trinity College London examinations and winners of several local, national and international competitions. The recital will present performances by some of her students.

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

### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



## International Jazz Day

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 30th – 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.

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

# What's Next

May & June 2023

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

## THEATRE

### Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav

A Stage for Marathi Stories

Godrej, Experimental & Tata Theatre  
Friday, 5th May to Sunday, 7th May

An NCPA Presentation

Born out of the objective to inspire, encourage and support Marathi theatre, the NCPA's *Pratibimb Marathi Natya Utsav* returns this summer. The three-day festival will be a melange of plays, readings, campus tours, talks and discussions by Marathi theatre experts. The line-up will be a mix of popular as well as experimental plays from a variety of established and up-and-coming theatre groups. This edition will also see the premiere of the winning play of *Darpan*, the new Marathi writing initiative launched by the NCPA. True to its name, *Pratibimb* offers a reflection of the vibrant tradition of theatre in Maharashtra known for its thought-provoking themes that present the world around us in a new light. Get ready to partake in this celebration of Maharashtra's rich cultural heritage.

Supported by Shilpa Kumar

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

## SCREENING

### Frida Kahlo

Exhibition on Screen

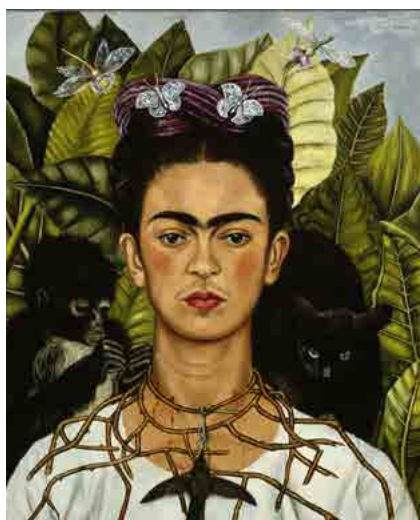
(Approx. 85 mins)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 10th May – 6.30 pm

An NCPA-Seventh Art Productions  
(UK) Presentation

Who was Frida Kahlo? Everyone knows



Frida Kahlo, 10th May, Godrej Dance Theatre

her, but who was the woman behind the bright colours, the big brows and the floral crowns? Take a journey through the life of a true icon, discover her art and uncover the truth behind her often-turbulent life.

Making use of the latest technology to deliver previously unimaginable quality, we take an in-depth look at key works throughout her career. Using letters Kahlo wrote to guide us, this definitive film reveals her deepest emotions and unlocks the secrets and symbolism contained within her art.

Exhibition on Screen's trademark combination of interviews, commentary and a detailed exploration of her art delivers a treasure trove of colour and a feast of vibrancy. This personal and intimate film offers privileged access to her works, and highlights the source of her feverish creativity, her resilience and her unmatched lust for life, politics, men and women.

By delving deeper than any film has done before, engaging with world-renowned Kahlo experts and exploring how great an artist she was, this is your chance to discover the real Frida Kahlo.

Directed by Ali Ray

Tickets:

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

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

## DANCE

### Petal Stories

A collaborative dance venture by  
Daksha Mashruwala & Anusree  
Bonnerjee along with their teams  
and

Why Roses are Red by Sandip  
Soparrkar & students

Experimental Theatre

Thursday, 11th May – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

What do poetry, music and dance have in common? They employ form, breath, flow and mindfulness that translates into rhythm, pace and movement. When you combine the three forms, you can capture anything the imagination can conjure. *Petal Stories*, a beautifully choreographed spectacle, will reach out to audiences with its unique perspective and the magic it creates with different classical dance and music forms along with poetry, as the voices of flowers come alive. This dance ballet is conceptualised, directed and produced as a collaborative venture between Indian classical danseuses **Daksha Mashruwala** and **Anusree Bonnerjee** coming together with writer/poet **Sudipta Dhruva** and singer/music composer **Kaustuv Kanti Ganguli**.

**Sandip Soparrkar** is an Indian Latin and ballroom dancer, Bollywood choreographer, actor, columnist, reality show judge, radio jockey and a Ted X speaker, who holds a doctorate in World Mythology Folklore



Daksha Mashruwala, 11th May,  
Experimental Theatre

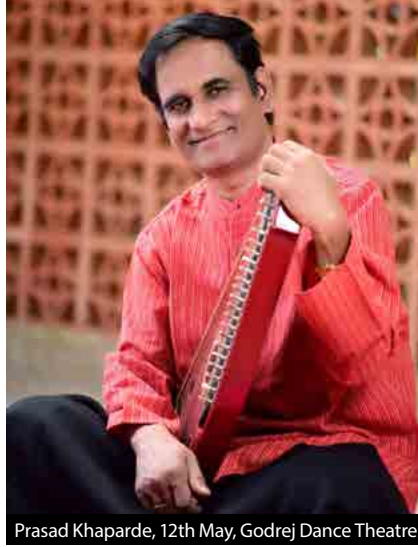


Anusree Bonnerjee, 11th May,  
Experimental Theatre

from Pacifica Graduate Institute, United States and also an Honorary Doctorate in Performing Arts from the National American University. He has been honoured with three National Excellence Awards and one National Achievement Award by the Government of India. He is the recipient of the Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for Social Achievement and the prestigious Bharat Gaurav Samaan given by the Ministry of Culture at The House of Lords in London. The renowned *Dance Today* magazine rates Soparrkar as one of the '100 most influential dancers in the world'.

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

## INDIAN MUSIC



Prasad Khaparde, 12th May, Godrej Dance Theatre

### Hindustani Classical Vocal Music Recital

By Prasad Khaparde  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Friday, 12th May – 6.30 pm

#### An NCPA Presentation

**Prasad Khaparde** is a senior disciple of Rashid Khan, one of the top-most vocalists of the Rampur-Sahaswan *gharana*. He is recognised as an All India Radio A-grade artist and is an empanelled artist with the ICCR in New Delhi. He has been a scholar at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy in Kolkata. He was born in 1973 and grew up in a family of music-loving educationists from Ghatanji, a small city in Maharashtra. He received early musical training from Shri Bhalarao, D.V. Panke, Sumantai Choudhari and Abdul Rashid Khan. He holds a Master's degree in Indian classical vocal music from Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University. Khaparde has performed at several prestigious festivals including the Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav in Pune, the Surashree Kesarbai Kerkar Sangeet Samaroha in Goa and the Mandu Festival in Madhya Pradesh, among others. He has collaborated with several Indian and global artistes including Amol Palekar, Nitin Sawhney and the Manganiyars and has toured around the world. He has taught at the Kala Academy in Goa and is currently teaching several disciples from India and abroad.

**Tickets:**  
₹180/- (Members)  
₹200/- (Public)

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

## DANCE



Rupali Desai, 18th May, Experimental Theatre



Manisha Jeet, 18th May, Experimental Theatre

### An Evening of Kathak

by Rupali Desai with Sanskruti Nritya Kala Mandir and Manisha Jeet with Manas Cultural Institute

Experimental Theatre  
Thursday, 18th May – 6.30 pm

#### An NCPA Presentation

Born in 1973, **Rupali Desai** was encouraged to study Kathak by her arts-loving family. Desai has undergone rigorous training in Kathak for 30 years under the guidance of Manjiri Deo, disciple of Gopi Krishna. An artiste who strives for precision and perfection,

she is also undertaking meticulous training for *layakari* from tabla player Mukundraj Deo. In addition to B.A. and L.L.B degrees from the University of Mumbai, she has also received a Sangeet Acharya from Nrityalankar and a Visharad in Kathak from the Akhil Bhartiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal. She has established the Sanskruti Nritya Kala Mandir, a dance institution in Mumbai where she has been training students since 1997. Desai is an 'A' grade artiste from Prasar Bharati Doordarshan and holds the prestigious title of 'Shringarmani' by Sur Singar Sansad. She has also been awarded the Girnar Ratna Puraskar at the Girnar Mahotsav in Gujarat, the Yogeshwari Ratna Puraskar at Ambejogai, the Madhuban Ratna Puraskar at the Madhuban Holi festival. She is an accomplished television and theatre actor. Her performance in the play *Uncha Majha Jhoka Ga* won her the Best Actress award by Natyadarpan. She also anchored the TV serial *Tak Dhina Dhin* on Doordarshan.

**Manisha Jeet** is a Kathak exponent and a disciple of Asha Joglekar. She is a Kathak Visharad, Kathak Alankar, has a Master's in Performing Arts (Mumbai University), and is a researcher and fellow of the Asiatic Society. Jeet is the Vidya Ravi award winner of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's organisation Alaap, and Nritya Sambardhini by Atharva School of Fine Arts. She is a member of the International Dance Congress and has participated in the NCPA Mumbai Dance Season. Jeet has worked as the Head of the performing arts department in Rachana Sansad and as the main Kathak instructor at Nalanda Dance Research Centre. She is the Founder-Director of Manas Cultural Institute.

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

#### SCREENING

### Lohengrin

by Richard Wagner

Opera Screening (285 mins)

Sung in German with English Subtitles  
Godrej Dance Theatre

Saturday, 20th May – 1.00 pm

An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera  
(New York) Presentation



Lohengrin, 20th May, Godrej Dance Theatre

Richard Wagner was the complex, controversial creator of music-drama masterpieces that stand at the centre of today's operatic repertory. He was an artistic revolutionary who reimagined every supposition about music and theatre. He also developed the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk, meaning "total work of art" that combines music, poetry, architecture, painting and other disciplines, a notion that has had an impact on creative fields far beyond opera. Wagner's soaring masterpiece *Lohengrin* makes its triumphant return to the Met stage after 17 years. The sequel to *Parsifal* unveils an atmospheric staging that weds striking visual style with keen dramatic insight into Wagner's breathtaking music.

Conductor: **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

Cast: **Tamara Wilson, Christine Goerke, Piotr Beczala, Evgeny Nikitin, Brian Mulligan & Günther Groissböck**

**Tickets:**

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

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

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

### MaMoGi

Feat. Mohini Dey, Mark Hartsuch & Gino Banks

Tata Theatre

Saturday, 20th May – 6.30 pm

An NCPA Presentation

MaMoGi is an all-star, powerhouse band that plays progressive rock, electronic and jazz music that has consistently



MaMoGi, 20th May, Tata Theatre

left audiences wanting more. The band features prodigy bassist **Mohini Dey**, the incredible drummer **Gino Banks** and superstar saxophonist **Mark Hartsuch**. The MaMoGi trio exemplifies the notion that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". Together, they nurture their individual talents and pool them together to make music that is truly collaborative. This can immediately be heard in the tightness of the groove and be seen in the amount of energy radiating from the stage. This music of the band is proof that instrumental music can also make people dance.

**Tickets:**

₹900, 720, 450 & 270/- (Members)

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

**Box Office now open**

#### INTERNATIONAL MUSIC



Disco & More, 21st May, Tata Theatre

### Disco & More

English Musical  
(120 mins)



Tata Theatre  
Sunday, 21st May – 7.00 pm

### An NCPA and Silly Point Productions Presentation

Give us a D  
Give us an I  
Give us an SCO...

What do you get? DISCO.

Be as cool as Daddy with Boney M; roll back the years and become Young Men again with the Village People who will have you Staying Alive with the Bee Gees, ABBA, Michael Jackson, Madonna amongst many more.

So dance like no one's watching, sing like no one's listening and party like there is no tomorrow at Silly Point Productions' latest extravaganza *Disco & More*.

Artistes: **Kelly Dlima, Hormuz Ragina, Nathan Miles, Alria Rose D'souza, Adil Kurwa, Brent Tauro, Karan Parikh, Karan Jhaveri & Danesh Khambata**

**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

#### SCREENING

### Best of Enemies

by James Graham  
Theatre Screening  
(Approx. 180 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre

Wednesday, 24th May – 6.00 pm

### An NCPA – National Theatre Live (London) Presentation

**David Harewood** (*Homeland*) and **Zachary Quinto** (*Star Trek*) play feuding political rivals in **James Graham's** (*Sherwood*) multiple award-winning new drama, *Best of Enemies*. In 1968 America, as two men fight to become the next president, all eyes are on the battle between two others: the cunningly conservative William F. Buckley Jr. and the unruly liberal Gore Vidal. During a new nightly television format, they debate the moral landscape of a shattered nation. As beliefs are challenged and slurs slung, a new frontier in American politics is opening and television news is about to be transformed forever. **Jeremy Herrin** (*All My Sons*) directs this blistering political thriller, filmed live in London's West End.

Directed by **Jeremy Herrin**  
Inspired by a documentary by  
**Morgan Neville & Robert Gordon**

Age: 15+

**Tickets:**  
₹360/- (Members)  
₹400/- (Public)  
Box Office: 9th April for Members & 12th April for Public

#### SCREENING

### Falstaff

by Giuseppe Verdi  
Opera Screening (165 mins)  
Sung in Italian with English Subtitles  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Saturday, 3rd June – 1.00 pm

### An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation

In a remarkable career spanning six decades, Giuseppe Verdi composed 28 operas, at least half of which are at the core of today's repertoire. *Falstaff* was his final work for the stage. A comedy full of humour and genuine emotion, Verdi's last opera is a splendid finale to an unparalleled career in the theatre. The story is an amalgamation of scenes from Shakespeare, primarily drawn from the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. It centres on the remarkable personality of Sir John Falstaff, one of literature's most compelling characters. With a supremely well-crafted score, which has long commanded the respect even of Verdi's critics, it is an astounding work and among the greatest operatic comedies of all time.

Conductor: **Daniele Rustioni**  
Cast: **Hera Hyesang Park, Ailyn Pérez, Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Jennifer Johnson Cano, Bogdan Volkov, Michael Volle & Christopher Maltman**

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

#### SCREENING

### Cézanne: Portraits of a Life

Exhibition on Screen  
(Approx. 85 mins)  
Godrej Dance Theatre  
Wednesday, 7th June – 6.30 pm

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

Exhibition on Screen is thrilled to bring back one of its most successful films ever, offering a unique and fascinating exploration of the life and times of Paul Cézanne. One cannot appreciate 20th-century art without understanding the significance and genius of Cézanne. Filmed on location at the National Portrait Gallery in London, National Gallery of Art in Washington and Musée d'Orsay in Paris, the film features interviews with curators and experts and

*Best of Enemies*, 24th May, Godrej Dance Theatre



correspondence from the artist himself, taking us beyond Cézanne's portraits to the places he lived and worked in and sheds light on one of the lesser-known Impressionists until now.

Directed by **Phil Grabsky**

**Tickets:**

₹360/- (Members)

₹400/- (Public)

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

**THEATRE**

On popular demand

**Twelve Angry Jurors**

English Play (90 mins)

Experimental Theatre

**Saturday, 10th & Sunday, 11th June – 5.00 pm & 8.00 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation in collaboration with Rage Productions**

The play, based on a film that was adapted from Reginald Rose's teleplay at the time, begins with an 18-year-old boy from a slum who is on trial for the murder of his abusive father. A jury of twelve people is locked in the deliberation room to decide the fate of the young boy. All evidence is against the boy and a guilty verdict would send him to the electric chair. But the judgement must be unanimous. Even before they begin a discussion, it is apparent that most of the jurors are certain the boy is guilty. While they have already decided on the fate of the boy, one vote of not guilty opens a Pandora's box and a forced deliberation begins. Slowly, but surely, each member of the jury is forced to confront the facts on hand and open their mind to the possibilities that exist outside them and shine a light on the kind of person they actually are. Originally produced for Aadyam, an Aditya Birla Group Initiative, this production of *Twelve Angry Jurors* is presented by special amateur license arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.

Directed by **Nadir Khan**

Cast: **Ajitesh Gupta, Deven Khote, Devika Shahani, Dipika Roy, Nikhil Murali, Prerna Chawla, Rohit Malkani, Shivani Tanksale, Shivani**

**Vakil, Sohrab Ardeshir, Suresh Venkat & Rajit Kapur**

**Age: 10+**

**Tickets:**

₹900, 720 & 450/- (Members)

₹1,000, 800 & 500/- (Public)

(Plus GST)

**Box Office now open**

**SCREENING**

**Der Rosenkavalier**

by Richard Strauss

Opera Screening (270 mins)

Sung in Italian with English Subtitles

Godrej Dance Theatre

**Saturday, 24th June – 1.00 pm**

**An NCPA-The Metropolitan Opera (New York) Presentation**

Richard Strauss composed an impressive body of orchestral works and songs before devoting the second half of his long and productive career to the stage. Set in an idealised Vienna of the past, Strauss's most popular opera concerns a wise woman of the world who is involved with a much younger lover but is ultimately forced to accept the laws of time, giving him up to a pretty young heiress. Hugo von Hofmannsthal's fascinating libretto deftly combines comedy, dreamy nostalgic fantasy, genuine human drama and light but striking touches of philosophy and social commentary. Strauss's magnificent score, likewise, works on several levels, combining the refinement of Mozart with the epic grandeur of Wagner. Genuine historical references are merged with fictitious inventions (like the "noble custom" of the presentation of the silver rose to a fiancée, which never actually existed) and anachronisms (like the Viennese Waltz, which did not yet exist at that time). It is a mixture that creates a seductive mythical landscape, a ceremonious and impossibly beautiful Vienna-that-never-was. The Met's current production moves the setting to the last years of the Habsburg Empire.

Conductor: **Simone Young**

Cast: **Lise Davidsen, Isabel Leonard, Erin Morley, Katharine Goeldner, René Barbera, Thomas Ebenstein,**

**Markus Brück & Günther Groissböck**

**Tickets:**

₹450/- (Members)

₹500/- (Public)

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

**DANCE**

**XENOS by Akram Khan Company**

Jamshed Bhabha Theatre

**Saturday, 24th & Sunday, 25th June**

**– 6.00 pm**

**An NCPA Presentation**

*'Whose war?*

*Whose fire?*

*Whose hand is this?'*

*Xenos* by Jordan Tannahill

**Akram Khan's** most anticipated solo, *XENOS*, marks his final performances as a dancer in a full-length piece. In this work commissioned by 14-18 NOW, the U.K.'s arts programme for the First World War centenary, Khan draws on the archives of the 20th century and gives voice to the shell-shocked dream of a colonial soldier in the war. *XENOS* reveals the beauty and horror of the human condition in its portrait of an Indian dancer whose skilled body becomes an instrument of war. Shifting between classical Kathak and contemporary dance, *XENOS* takes place on the border between East and West, past and present, mythology and technology, where humanity still stands in wonder and disarray.

Khan has brought together a stellar creative team. Along with dramaturg **Ruth Little** and acclaimed Canadian playwright **Jordan Tannahill**, he teams up with German designer **Mirella Weingarten**, award-winning lighting designer **Michael Hulls**, costume designer **Kimie Nakano** and composer **Vincenzo Lamagna**.

Khan is joined onstage by five international musicians: percussionist **B C Manjunath**, vocalist **Aditya Prakash**, bass player **Nina Harries**, violinist **Fra Rustumji** and saxophonist **Tamar Osborn**.

**Age: 9+**

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

## Become a Member

### Dear Supporter of the Arts,

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please turn over for the Membership form.



# Membership Application Form

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

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

Silver member of the NCPA

Friend of the SOI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## NCPA Silver Membership (inclusive of GST):

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

## Special Membership Packages

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

## Membership Benefits:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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









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

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

# Events at a glance

April 2023

Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sat	1st	4.30 pm & 7.30 pm	<i>Jeene Bhi Do Yaaro</i> Celebrating 100th & 101st Show Hindi Play	
Sun	2nd	7.00 pm	Beatles Tribute English Musical	TATA THEATRE
Mon to Wed	3rd to 19th (closed on 7th and 14th)	12.00 pm to 8.00 pm	Photo Exhibition of Works by Robert Capa	
Wed	5th	6.30 pm	<i>Easter in Art</i> Exhibition on Screen	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	8th	1.00 pm	<i>Fedora</i> by Umberto Giordano Opera Screening Sung in Italian with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	8th	5.30 pm	Kalajayee Celebrating the Birth Centenary of Kumar Gandharva (8th & 9th April) Bhuvanesh Komkali (vocal) Niladri Kumar (sitar) Ulhas Kashalkar (vocal)	TATA THEATRE
Sun	9th	10.00 am	Talk/Discussion/Lec-dem Coordinator: Shashi Vyas Speakers: Shruti Sadolikar, Shama Bhate & Satyasheel Deshpande	
Sun	9th	5.30 pm	Kalapini Komkali (vocal) Hariprasad Chaurasia (flute) Vyankatesh Kumar (vocal)	TATA THEATRE
Mon	10th	7.00 pm	Ariela Viola and Piano Recital	
Tue	11th	6.30 pm	<i>Amar Akbar Anthony</i> Hindi Film with English Subtitles	Godrej dance theatre
Tue	11th	7.00 pm	Welcome to the Salon A lecture-recital by Judith Valerie Engel	
Wed	12th	6.00 pm	<i>Life of Pi</i> by Yann Martel Theatre Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Wed	12th	6.30 pm	Short Film Corner Short Film Screenings	
Fri	14th	6.30 pm	<i>Saz-e-Bahar</i> Festival of Indian Instrumental Music (14th & 15th April) Vijay Ghate (tabla) U. Rajesh (mandolin)	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	15th	6.30 pm	Joydeep Mukherjee (sursingar & mohanveena) Kushal Das (sitar)	Godrej dance theatre

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



Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
Sun	16th	5.00 pm	SOI Academy Orchestra Marat Bisengaliev, conductor	TATA THEATRE
Wed	19th	6.30 pm	Movies Under the Stars <i>To Be or Not to Be</i> (1942) Film Screening	LITTLE THEATRE
Thu	20th	6.30 pm	Reality Check Documentary Film Screening	LITTLE THEATRE
Thu	20th	7.00 pm	Piano Recital by Gabriele Strata	E THEATRE
Fri	21st	4.30 pm	New Book Discussion <i>The Lost Mint Taste</i> Poems by Neelam Saxena Chandra	LITTLE THEATRE
Fri	21st	7.00 pm	An Ode to Carmen with S Experience	E THEATRE
Sat	22nd	5.00 pm	<i>OCD</i> English /Hindi Play	Godrej dance theatre
Sat	22nd	7.00 pm	<i>The Verdict</i> English/Hindi Play	E THEATRE
Sun	23rd	5.00 pm	SOI Chamber Orchestra Gabriele Strata, piano	TATA THEATRE
Sun	23rd	7.00 pm	<i>The Greatest Show on Earth</i> English Play	E THEATRE
Wed	26th	6.00 pm	<i>Othello</i> by William Shakespeare Theatre Screening	Godrej dance theatre
Thu	27th	6.30 pm	NCPA <i>Mudra</i> Dance Festival 2023 (27th & 28th April)  Odissi by Sutapa Talukdar with Gurukul and Kathak by Rajashree Shirke & Lasya	E THEATRE
Fri	28th	6.30 pm	Bharatanatyam by Sonal Mansingh & Troupe and Sandhya Purecha along with Bharata College of Fine Arts & Culture	TATA THEATRE
Sat	29th	6.00 pm & 8.30 pm	So Called Comedian Stand-up Comedy by Kunal Kamra	E THEATRE
Sun	30th	4.00 pm & 7.00 pm	Hindi /English	
Sat	29th	7.00 pm	April Blossoms Piano Recital by Students of Blossom Mendonca	LITTLE THEATRE
Sun	30th	6.30 pm	International Jazz Day	TATA THEATRE

# SOI MUSIC ACADEMY

FEATURING THE  
SOI ACADEMY ORCHESTRA  
AND SOLOISTS FROM THE SOI MUSIC ACADEMY  
WITH THE SOI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

**MARAT BIENGALIEV** CONDUCTOR



**16TH APRIL 2023 | 5:00 PM | TATA THEATRE, NCPA**

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