

NCPA presents the fifth edition of Sama'a- the annual Sufi Music Festival

~ Festival showcases multi-genre performance, depicting Sufism through Sufi poetry, Qawwali, popular Sufi songs, film screening on a Sufi poet & *Tannoura* - performed by the dervishes dressed in colorful skirts from Egypt

~ November 22nd to 24th, 2013~

Press Release For immediate dissemination

Mumbai, November, 2013: The mystique of Sufism awaits one and all as the **National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA)**, India's premiere art and culture institution, presents the fifth edition of its annual three-day Sufi Music Festival — ***Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy*** — from Friday, **November 22nd** to Sunday, **November 24th, 2013**. The line-up this year consists of power-packed performances by Sufi musicians, colourful dervishes from Egypt and a film screening.

The festival opens on Friday, 22nd November with a film screening - ***So Heddan So Hoddan*** (Like here like there) **by Anjali Monteiro & K. P. Jayasankar** which looks at the rich, syncretic legacy of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, a medieval Sufi poet, found in the cultural history of many communities in Kachchh, India, and across the border in Sindh, Pakistan. Dressed in colourful costumes and representative of Egypt's Sufi music tradition will be a performance '***Tannoura***' by **Egyptian Mawlawiyah Group**. **On, 23rd November**, the second day of the festival, **Salim Arif and Lubna Salim** will present **Sufi**

Highlights of the festival

- Film screening on Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai poet 'So Heddan So Hoddan' by Anjali Monteiro & K. P. Jayasankar
- Mumbai audiences to witness a unique performance - *Tannoura* by the dervishes dressed in colorful skirts from Egypt
- Salim Arif and Lubna Salim to present a Sufi Poetry reading
- Dargahi Qawwali by Wajahat Jaffar Badayuni & group
- Parthiv Gohil to enthrall audiences with traditional as well as famous Bollywood Sufi songs

Poetry reading. This will be followed by **qawwali by Wajahat Jaffar Badayuni and Group** who will present **Dargahi Qawwalis** composed by various Sufi saints. The festival concludes **on Sun. 24th November** with **Sufiana songs by Parthiv Gohil** who will sing traditional as well as famous Bollywood Sufi songs.

Based on the inner, mystical dimension of Islam, Sufism seeks to unite the practitioner with the Divine. The pain of separation from the Creator is at the core of Sufi lyrics and music; and hence the longing to dissolve the physical realm and transcend into the spiritual universe with Sama'a, the practice of listening to music, chanting and the whirling dance-trance, finally culminating in spiritual ecstasy. Sufi thoughts find expression through diverse art forms and musical genres, spanning across several continents and cultures.

Dr. Suvarnalata Rao, Head - Programming Indian Music, NCPA says *"With Sama'a, it has always been our endeavour to explore the many facets of Sufism through a multi dimensional approach. The audiences have enjoyed this for the past four years. This year we are trying to bring in international elements, to showcase poetry and cinematic works that relate to Sufism very well. At NCPA, we believe in the contemporaneous of any art form. We want to encourage contemporary expressions of Sufi philosophy, which is why we have traditional qawallis by Wajahat and modern versions by Parthiv Gohil as part of the festival this year."*

Sama'a, an Arabic word for 'to listen', is a word used to describe the Sufi practice which helps attain spiritual ecstasy through song, music and dance. Sufism itself is often seen as an exotic sect comprising of whirling dervishes and rhythmic divine chants. The musical beauty itself was brought forth in the pop culture space two decades ago by masters like Shankar-Shambhu and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and is continuing to touch souls today.

So Heddan So Hoddan (Like Here Like There)

A film by Anjali Monteiro & K. P. Jayasankar

Sindhi, Kachchhi and Hindustani with English Subtitles (52 mins/2011)

Godrej Dance Theatre

Friday, 22nd – 5.30 pm

Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai (1689-1752), a medieval Sufi poet, is an iconic figure in the cultural history of Sindh. Bhitai's *Shah Ji Risalo* is a remarkable collection of poems sung by many communities. Many of the poems draw on the eternal love stories of Umar-Marui and Sasui-

Punhu. Umar Haji Suleiman is a self-taught Sufi scholar who lives his life through the poetry of Bhitai. Umar's cousin, Mustafa Jatt sings the *Bheths* of Bhitai and is accompanied on the Surando, by his cousin Usman Jatt. The film explores the worlds of the three cousins. The film provides insight in to how the older generation struggles to keep alive the rich syncretic legacy of Shah Bhitai that celebrates diversity and non-difference, suffering and transcendence, transience and survival.

Performance by Egyptian Mawlawiyah group

Tata Theatre

Friday, 22nd – 7.30 pm

In ancient Egypt, the practice of whirling was included in the annual Pharaonic rituals associated with the resurrection of Osiris, the god of the afterlife, the underworld and the dead. Osiris is also believed to be the one who taught man how to play the flute, which is integral to the Sufi practices of the Mevlawi order in which whirling is an important aspect. Established in 1994 by Amer Eltony, the internationally-acclaimed group has done pioneering work in showcasing the Mevlawi heritage of Egypt and is known for its spectacular audio-visual performances that combine spiritual and meditative aspects with aesthetic expressions. The performance includes a musical prelude followed by the spiritual ecstasy created by the whirling dervishes. The climactic piece is *Tannoura*, performed by the dervishes dressed in colorful skirts, symbolizing the existence of the human soul on physical, meta-physical and spiritual planes.

Sufi Poetry by Salim Arif & Lubna Salim

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 23rd – 6.00 pm

Sufi poetry has been written in many regions of the world in diverse languages, both for private devotional reading and as lyrics to accompany devotional music. Themes and styles established in Arabic, Persian and Punjabi-Sindhi poetry have had an enormous influence on Sufi poetry throughout the Islamic world, and is often part of the music included in Sufi practices. Salim Arif is a well-known personality from the world of Hindi theatre, film and television. Lubna Salim is a producer and actor, best known for her work in commercials and television shows. They will present a selection of Sufi and Bhakti poetry penned by the likes of Rumi, Lal Dedh, Kabir, Bulle Shah and Amir Khusrau along with the ideology reflected in the poetic traditions of Nanak, Tukaram, Ghalib and Mir.

Promoted by



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Qawwali by Wajahat Jaffar Badayuni & group

Experimental Theatre

Saturday, 23rd – 7.30 pm

In the Indian subcontinent, Sufi music finds expression through *ghazal*, *qawwali* and various folkforms. Although performed mainly at *dargahs*, today these genres have gained mainstream popularity. *Qawwali* is specially regarded as the most accessible musical form that leads to spirituality. Wajahat Jaffar was privileged to inherit the classical music of Rampur Sahaswan *gharana* as well as Sufi music from his grand uncle Jaffar Hussain Badayuni. He has performed extensively in India and overseas. The group will present *dargahi qawwalis* composed by various Sufi saints.

Sufiana Songs by Parthiv Gohil

Tata Theatre

Sunday, 24th – 6.30 pm

The core idea of love, longing and union with the beloved, as espoused in Sufi songs has an evergreen appeal. Today, besides the traditional repertoire a large number of songs are sung under the Sufi label. These compositions show a marked influence of contemporary idioms and expressions, and are widely popular. Parthiv Gohil's career in playback singing took off with a title song for the film *Devdas* and continued with numerous others. He will present contemporary *sufiana* compositions based on traditional Sufi poetry, works immortalised by legendary masters like Nusrat Fateh Ali, and songs popularised through Bollywood.

SCHEDULE

Date	Event	Time	Venue	Tickets
November 22nd, 2013	A Film - So Heddan So Hoddan (Like Here Like There) by Anjali Monteiro & K. P. Jayasankar	5.30 pm	Godrej Dance Theatre	Entry on first come first served basis
	Performance by Egyptian Mawlawiyah group	7.30pm	Tata Theatre	Tickets: Rs.1,000, 750, 500 & 300/-
November 23rd,	Sufi Poetry by Salim Arif &	6pm	Experimental Theatre	Tickets: Rs.180 & 135/- (Members)

2013	Lubna Salim			Rs.200 & 150/- (Public)
	Qawwali by Wajahat Jaffar Badayuni & group	7.30pm	Experimental Theatre	Tickets: Rs.360 & 270/- (Members) Rs.400 & 300/- (Public)
November 24th, 2011	Sufiana Songs by Parthiv Gohil	6.30 pm	Tata Theatre	Tickets: Rs.900, 600, 450 & 300/- (Members) Rs.1,200, 800, 600 & 400/- (Public)

Box Office: Now Open
 Call **66223724/ 66223754** to book tickets.
 To use the online booking facility, visit the NCPA website
<http://www.ncpamumbai.com>
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/NCPAMumbai
 Twitter: www.twitter.com/NCPAMumbai

About *Sama'a*:

With an aim to offer its patrons a taste of the varied forms of music tradition, the NCPA, India's premier art and culture institution, started its annual Sufi Music Festival, *Sama'a: The Mystic Ecstasy*, in December 2009. *Sama'a*, which in Arabic means 'to listen', is a word used to describe the Sufi practice that helps attain spiritual ecstasy through song, music and dance.

Sama'a 2009 was a two-day festival (9th and 10th December, 2009) of Sufi music that featured the eminent sitar player Shujaat Husain Khan on the 10th December, 2009. A group of Langas & Manganiyars from Rajasthan, followed by *qawwals* from Fatehpur Sikri: Salim Hasan Chishti and his troupe entranced audiences on the 11th December.

Sama'a 2010 (November 17-19, 2010) traced the journey of Sufi music from Central Asia to India. The line-up for the festival included 'An Ode to Rumi by Kabir Bedi' on November 17th; Nuba Awamrya: Brotherhood music by the whirling dervishes from Tunisia and Qawwali by Haji Aslam Sabri and group on November 18th. Sufiana compositions by Roopkumar and Sunali Rathod on November 19th.

Sama'a 2011 featured a documentary based on the life of Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi, followed by a Sufi Gospel Presentation based on Poetry and Music by Sonam Karla; the Wadali Brothers presenting a bouquet of Sufiana compositions and *Sama Ayins: Whirling Prayer Ceremonies* by Konya Turkish Tasawwuf ensemble from Turkey.

Sama'a 2012 featured an Illustrated Lecture by Dr. B. N. Goswamy - From Quest to Astonishment, and then Nothingness: Sufis as seen by the Indian painter; followed by a Dance Presentation by Malavika Sarukkai - Love, Longing and Transcendence – In Search of the Spiritual on November 21; Documentary film premiere: The Heritage of Amir Khusrau by Yousuf Saeed on November 22; Sufism and the Common Man - Talk by Farooque Shaikh on November 22 and Sufiana Music by Sanam Marvi & Group from Pakistan on November 23.

About the NCPA:

Opening its doors to the world in 1969, the NCPA became the first multi-venue and multi-purpose cultural centre to be built in South Asia. Vibrant and diverse, the NCPA today is recognized by artistes, patrons and media alike as India's premier performing arts institution. The Centre provides a fine showcase for India's rich performing arts traditions, all thanks to the institution's training and research initiatives.

The NCPA presents over 600 events each year across all major art forms, most notably Indian Music, International Music, Theatre and Film, Dance, and Literature, Visual Arts and Photography. There are Heads of Programming for each of these art forms who curate innovative events and festivals; representative of everything from classical to contemporary throughout the year. The NCPA produces its own programmes as well as collaborates with leading cultural promoters from around the world.

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