

For Immediate Release

Meeting of cultures is an amalgamation of distinct ideas between diverse customs and traditions of the society and blending together their unique elements to give a soothing symphony.

Indian Music Experience Museum, Furtados, Royal Opera House, Mumbai, Alliance Francaise de Bombay and Avid Learning present **Across Cultures: Fusing Identities Through Art**, the second edition of the ongoing three-part lecture demonstration series, **Across Cultures**, that aims to examine the influences and potential of blending disparate art forms to create a new, artistically curated, holistic experience.

Author, Director, Les deux Amis and Dhrupad Exponent (Surbahar), Sylvain Watmann, who will also moderate the session, will be in conversation with *Lute player Jean-Luc Tamby, Indian Kathak Dancer and Actor Maitryee Mahatma and French Baroque Actor Manuel Weber*.

The speakers will delve into their work in *Les deux Amis / Two Friends* - a French play stages the imaginary meeting of French fables writer La Fontaine with Pilpay, the legendary author of the Indian Panchatantra, embodied by a French Baroque actor and an Indian Kathak dancer holding a dialogue through their fables. The play is quintessentially an exploration of the space between mudras and baroque gestures, the space between baroque music and Indian alaps, a meeting of cultures, costumes, ideas, performance and art forms of India and France.

Read more about the Series below:

This lecture demonstration is the first of the new series – **Across Cultures**. The series aims to look at different paradigms of extraordinary exchange of culture and traditions, where we will try to answer the question - Is fusion a scaffolding built to support the existing structure of an art, in a way glorifying it? Or is it a framework crafted to dilute, and eventually dissolve an art that the posterity wouldn't even know existed?

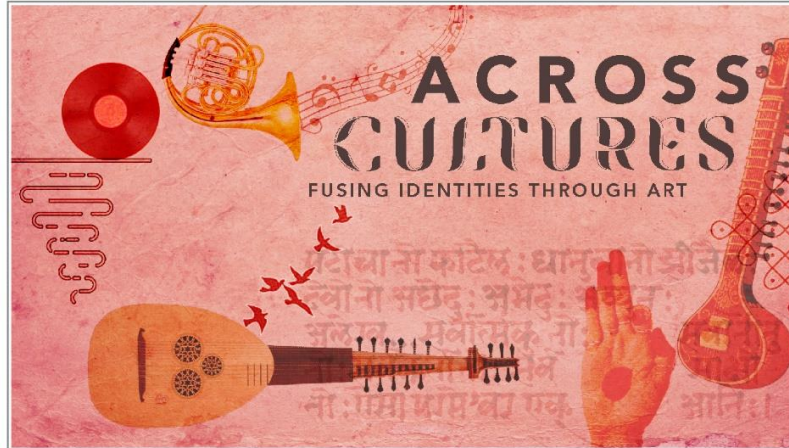
Join us for this extraordinary cross-cultural exchange, *Across Cultures: Fusing Identities Through Art*, as the fables spring to life, unveiling a surprising harmony between two distinct schools of art and a special live performance.

When: Thursday, 21st October 2021

Time: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM (IST)

RSVP: www.avidlearning.in

Press Email: Ayeshah Dadachanji on ayeshah.avid@gmail.com







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Indian Kathak Dancer and Actor Maitryee Mahatma	Lute player Jean-Luc Tamby	French Baroque Actor Manuel Weber	Moderator Author, Director, Les deux Amis and Dhrupad Exponent (Surbahar) Sylvain Watmann

DATE: **THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER '21**
TIME: **6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (IST)**
REGISTER: **www.avidlearning.in**



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About Speakers

Jean-Luc Tamby studied guitar and improvisation at the Paris CNSM (National Superior Conservatory of Music). He then turned to early musical instruments, studying in master-classes with Eric Bellocq, Vincent Dumestre, Jordi Savall and Hopkinson Smith. He has since performed in many concerts and recordings, notably with Vincent Dumestre as well as for the Musée de la Musique (Music Museum), Paris. He has accompanied Alexandra Rübner and Louise Moaty in theatre productions and founded the collective Les Batoutos, inspired by an enlarged conception of the Baroque borrowed from the Caribbean writer Edouard Glissant, emphasizing intercultural exchanges and improvisation. Jean-Luc Tamby has a doctorate in musicology and wrote his thesis on the musical repercussions of Edouard Glissant's thought. As a musicologist he is interested in the relationship between poetry and music, in improvisation and hybridization, more particularly by the work of Bernard Lubat, Thierry Pecou and Thierry Machuel. He teaches plucked instruments and early music improvisation at the Rennes Conservatoire (France) and lectures at the Rouen University.

Born in Calcutta, **Maitryee Mahatma** has been training under Pandit Ashimbandhu Bhattacharya and Pandit Birju Maharaj, the acclaimed Kathak maestro; she has been performing on stage since the age of 10. Her dance style combines subtlety of expression with rhythmical virtuosity. A PhD in French literature too (University of Paris, 2008), she has been living in France since 2002, giving Kathak recitals throughout Europe, as well as multidisciplinary projects focusing on the meeting of cultures. Such is the case of *Indalousie*, a creation for dance and music from the Indian, Arab-Andalusian and Moorish traditions (Bonlieu, Annecy National Stage, Festival of Sacred Music of Sylvanès Abbey, 2010) and *Rasa*, with the Jhankar ensemble (Festival of Sacred Art, Vauvenargues 2010, Musée Guimet, Paris, 2011) among others. She has given Kathak workshops in (Lyon National Superior Conservatory of Music, 2011, UNIMAIL Geneva 2018) and gives talks about her art (France Culture, French national cultural radio, 2004). She lives in Marseille, where she fully participates in regional cultural life.

A graduate of ENSATT (Superior National School of Arts and Techniques of Theatre, France) **Manuel Weber** is an actor and stage director. He performs in numerous festivals in France and abroad. He studied Baroque theatre with Eugène Green and performed in his Mithridate production (Paris, Avignon), the film *Le Pont des Arts* and recorded Apollinaire's *Alcools* (Alpha CD) with him. He gives conferences on Baroque declamation and gestures (Japan, the Luxemburg Philharmonic). He gave a series of readings of Mahabharata and Ramayana excerpts with Indian dance and singing. His interest for music led him to participate in projects such as *La Fable du Monde* (The Fable of the World) with Les Ombres ensemble (Saint Etienne Opera House, France 2013) and the recording of the audiobook *Joan of Arc* by Jordi Savall (Allia Vox). He staged and performed in Baroque works such as *La Fontaine's Adonis* (Jean de La Fontaine Festival, Pontoise Baroque Festival, France), Molière's *L'amour médecin* (created in 2013 at the Grenoble MC2 theater, France). He performed *Accords mystère/corps volatiles*, a theatrical and musical farce with texts by La Fontaine, with his company La Véloce (Jean de La Fontaine Festival, Lyon, Grenoble). He gives a theatre workshop at the New Sorbonne University in Paris.

Sylvain Watmann studied musicology, composition and guitar (1st prize in Excellence, 1999) in France and spent over 10 years in India traditionally learning ancient Dhrupad music with Pandit Pushpraj Koshti on Surbahar, Vedanta philosophy and Sanskrit. He has been teaching and performing Dhrupad (Academie-Bach Festival) since 2009. His experiments led him to design a show associating Surbahar and French literature with actress Anne-Guersande Ledoux, another associating Surbahar with Japanese Buto, with choreographer Béryl Breuil. He is the author and director of *The two Friends* (2017), a play about the historical influence of the Indian *Panchatantra* on French fables writer Jean de La Fontaine. His projects seek to bring present-day vibrancy and creativity together with the astonishing continuity of traditional arts. He is presently designing a documentary film exploring the life of classical musician Pushpraj Koshti in New-Bombay, and a theatrical project on poems by Yiddish writer Avrom Sutzkever.

Partner Information

IME

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<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYt7Q44R5xkd4dRefvV3nFloOHEePgLAZ>

Royal Opera House, Mumbai

Website: <https://www.royaloperahouse.in/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/mumbaiopera>

Instagram: @mumbaiopera

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mumbaiopera>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/royaloperahousemumbai>

Furtados

Website: <http://furtadosonline.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FurtadosMusic/>

Instagram: @furtadosmusic

About Partners

The Indian Music Experience (IME) is India's only interactive music museum. The IME is an initiative of the non-profit Indian Music Experience Trust, supported by the Brigade Group. The vision of the museum is to increase the understanding and appreciation of the diversity of Indian music, from the traditional to the contemporary through exhibits, performances and learning activities. It features a Sound Garden with 10 playable musical sculptures, Exhibit Galleries with musical instruments, storyboards, touchscreens, mini-theatres, and audio-video kiosks, a Learning Centre with regular classes and workshops, and much more. In addition to museum visits, an event calendar of regular

concerts, storytelling for children, film screenings, workshops, and seminars, makes the IME a must-visit destination for culture vultures and music aficionados.

Furtados established in 1865, Furtados has always been a leader in the field of Western music education and knowledge in India. From musical instruments, accessories to print music and digital equipment, we have a complete spectrum of musical instruments in the Western and Indian categories.

Furtados has grown into a household name in the music business and are spread across Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Chandigarh, Bengaluru, Mangaluru, Panjim and Margao in Goa. With a growing retail network (17 showrooms) and over 350 dealer outlets, Furtados holds a record number of international dealerships for top-of-the-line brands in music. You can access Furtados' wide range of products at its retail showrooms or on furtadosonline.com.

The Royal Opera House, Mumbai is widely touted as Mumbai's Cultural Crown Jewel and India's only surviving Opera House. The original idea for the space was conceived of in 1908, inaugurated in 1911 by King George V, and eventually completed in 1916. The design incorporated a blend of European and Indian detailing. The space became a cinema in later years before falling into disrepair and shutting by the 1990s. Fittingly, the space has been owned by the Royal Family of Gondal since 1952 and was eventually restored by conservation architect, Abha Narain Lambah under the leadership of His Highness, Maharaja Shri Jyotendrasinhji of Gondal.

The Royal Opera House Mumbai, now one of the last remaining Baroque structures in the city, reopened after 23 years in October 2016. The building was included on the 2012 World Monuments Watch to raise awareness about its history and significance, and support preservation efforts. The building has since been recognized with an Award of Merit in the 2017 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

The restored facilities feature a 575-seater 3-level auditorium with an orchestra pit and state of the art technological upgradations, including acoustics, stagecraft, lighting and air-conditioning, alongside retaining the old-world charm of the proscenium stage, the royal boxes and the magnificent regal chandeliers. Some more enhancements to the venue include a motorized screen, co-axial ceiling speaker system, Four-zone volume control and all round wifi access. Today, it stands as a key performance and creative hub in the city's cultural landscape, while being a premier heritage landmark.

Website: <https://www.royaloperahouse.in/>

Facebook: [MumbaiOpera](https://www.facebook.com/MumbaiOpera) | Twitter: [@MumbaiOpera](https://twitter.com/MumbaiOpera) | Instagram: [@mumbaiopera](https://www.instagram.com/mumbaiopera) | YouTube: [Royal Opera House, Mumbai](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

Avid Learning, the cultural philanthropy arm of the Essar Group founded in 2009 has, over the past decade, grown into one of Mumbai's leading public programming platforms and is firmly entrenched in the country's wider cultural ecosystem. Our thoughtfully curated and diverse events embrace the spirit of collaboration to bring together the best of Indian and international writers, artists, intellectuals, cultural experts, policymakers and industry leaders across Visual Art, Literature, Culture and Heritage, Education, Design & Technology and the Performing Arts through engaging and dynamic formats like panel discussions, workshops & master classes, roundtables, lecture demonstrations, festival platforms, symposiums & conferences, multidisciplinary performances and walkthroughs. To date, AVID has conducted over **1400** programs and connected with more than **150,000+** individuals, a widely eclectic group of life-long learners including students, patrons, practitioners, influencers,

thought leaders and cultural & creative enthusiasts in Mumbai, Delhi, Jaipur, Bangalore, Goa and Gujarat. We have also made our mark internationally, with events and collaborations in Dubai and New York. We regularly collaborate and partner with institutions, organisations and initiatives like the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), (CSMVS) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), one of the apex bodies that impact cultural policy and the creative sector as a whole. We have been at the helm of programming at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai India's only surviving Opera House since its reopening in 2016. We believe in the importance of arts for social change and we regularly offer our support and platforms for Social Advocacy. In April 2020, we launched AVID Online, an online further learning campaign on our social media platforms for our followers to engage with a range of varied topics across the breadth of the arts. Our eclectic faculty of experts, thought leaders, practitioners and innovators continue to share their learnings, expertise and knowledge on our social media platforms with tailored content featured weekly for AVID's online community and beyond. In collaboration with long-term and new partners, we have since dimensionalised the campaign by re-introducing our existing offline formats and IPs and enhancing them for digital engagement. We have taken our content live with engaging masterclasses and virtual panel discussions and also built robust tangential campaigns and series in support of worthy causes and highlighting topical issues.

AVID continues to give truth to our belief that **#LearningNeverStops**

Stay tuned to our social media channels to know more about upcoming programmes on AVID Online and remember #LearningNeverStops

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