

Explore the past legacies of cities like London, Jerusalem, Mumbai, Pune and Shanghai which part of Sassoon's' passage in the early nineteenth century

In the era of The 400 lists, real-time billionaire rankings and surging cryptocurrencies, the influence of the Sassoon family continues to shape economies, innovations and even politics of some global capitals. Known as the "Rothschilds of the East," Sassoon and his heirs established a trading dynasty along the Silk Route, and expanded into real estate, banking, and countless other commodities which then formed the foundation of globalisation today.

Bangalore Literature Festival, Bombaywalla Historical Works, Penguin Random House India, and Avid Learning present **Sassoons: The Global Merchants** a fascinating lecture-demonstration that will take a deep dive into one of the remarkable business dynasties of the nineteenth century, with *Author and Professor of History and Politics at Georgetown University, Joseph Sassoon*. Drawing instances from his recent book, **The Global Merchants: The Enterprise and Extravagance of the Sassoon Dynasty**, Joseph will give a fresh perspectives on how these influential merchants of the 19th and early 20th centuries shaped the cities like Bombay, Pune, Shanghai, London and their contribution to prosper it economically, politically, socially and towards its arts, culture and architectural legacies. Joseph will then be in conversation with *Historian and Founder of Bombaywalla Historical Works, Simin Patel* where they will further discuss contributions, influences and affluences of prominent members of the family and their contribution in forming Bombay as a modern port city.

At AVID, a focus of ours has been on celebrating contributions of various influential families and philanthropists that has shaped the city including the Sassoon Family. In our recent live session **Uncovering Urban Legacies: The Jewish Diaspora in Bombay** traced architectural and financial history of Bombay- as tied with the Jewish community and its prominent members of Sassoon Family. In 2016, we presented **#SassoonLegacy**, a unique mural and visual archive that mapped the legacy of David Sassoon, his love of books and the great lengths he took to amass his collection using informative tweets and hashtags.

[Read Below for more about the book:](#)

The Sassoons were one of the great business dynasties of the nineteenth century, as eminent as traders as the Rothschilds were bankers. This book reveals the secrets behind the family's phenomenal success: how a handful of Jewish exiles from Ottoman Baghdad forged a mercantile juggernaut from their new home in colonial Bombay, the vast network of agents, informants and politicians they built, and the way they came to bridge East and West, culturally as well as commercially. As one competitor remarked, 'silver and gold, silks, gums and spices, opium and cotton, wool and wheat - whatever moves over sea or land feels the hand or bears the mark of Sassoon & Co.'

Drawing for the first time on the vast family archives, Joseph Sassoon brings vividly to life a succession of remarkable characters. From a single generation: Flora, the first woman to steer a major global business, Siegfried, the poet, and Victor, the tycoon who drew the stars of Hollywood's silent era to his skyscraper in Shanghai. Through the lives these ambitious figures built for themselves in London, Bombay and beyond, the reader is drawn into a captivating world of politics and power, innovation and intrigue, high society and empire.

The Global Merchants is thus at once an intimate portrait of a single family and a panorama of the hundred and thirty years of their prominence: from the Opium Wars and opening of China to the American Civil War, the establishment of the British Raj to India's independence. Together these give a fresh perspective on the evolution of one of the defining forces of their age and the present: globalization. The Sassoons

were variously its agents, advocates and casualties, and watching them moving through the world, we perceive the making of our own.

Join us to further explore complexity, scope, and lives of prominent Sassoon family members and their contributions in shaping some of the world's greatest economies.

Date: Saturday 6th March 2022

Time: 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM

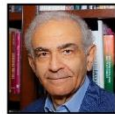
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In the era of The 400 lists, real-time billionaire rankings and surging cryptocurrencies, the influence of the Sassoon family continues to shape economies, innovations and even politics of many global capitals. Join us for a fascinating lecture-demonstration that will take a deep dive into one of the remarkable business dynasties of the nineteenth century, with *Author and Professor of History and Politics at Georgetown University, Joseph Sassoon*. Drawing instances from his recent book, **The Global Merchants : The Enterprise and Extravagance of the Sassoon Dynasty**, Joseph will give a fresh perspectives on how these influential merchants of the 19th and early 20th centuries shaped the cities like Bombay, Pune, Shanghai, London and their contribution to prosper it economically, politically, socially and towards its arts, culture and architectural legacies. Joseph will then be in conversation with *Historian and Founder of Bombaywalla Historical Works, Simin Patel* where they will further discuss contributions, influences and affluences of prominent members of the family and their contribution in forming Bombay as a modern port city. Explore the complexity, scope and lives of prominent Sassoon family members and their role in shaping some of the world's greatest economies.

#AVIDONLINE LIVE



Lecture Demonstration by
Author and Professor of History and
Politics at Georgetown University
Joseph Sassoon



Followed by conversation with
Historian and Founder of
Bombaywalla Historical Works
Simin Patel

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TIME: **5:30 PM - 6:30 PM (IST)**
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About the Speakers

Joseph Sassoon is the director of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies and Professor of History and Political Economy at Georgetown University. He holds the al-Sabah Chair in Politics and Political Economy of the Arab World. He is also a Senior Associate Member at St Antony's College, Oxford. In 2013, his book *Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) won the prestigious British-Kuwait Prize for the best book on the Middle East. Sassoon completed his Ph.D at St Antony's College, Oxford. He has published extensively on Iraq and its economy and on the Middle East. *The Global Merchants* is his fifth book.

Simin Patel also known as MISS BOMBAYWALLA, is the founder of Bombaywalla Historical Works, an organisation that showcases Bombay's built environment and social history. Bombaywalla explores how local establishments like bakeries, lodging houses and hair dressing saloons have negotiated change through colonial and contemporary settings. It tells the stories of these establishments through photographic essays and little movies. Simin's forthcoming book on Irani restaurants dives into the world of Irani strongmen and dons and the cafes they operated from. She has received a New India Foundation Fellowship (2021-22) to complete the book. Her DPhil dissertation from the University of Oxford traced the role the Parsi community played as cultural intermediaries in colonial Bombay. She was a Clarendon Scholar at Balliol College.

Partner Information:

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