

Celebrate International Women's Day with a Harmonious Ode to Iconic South Asian Women Artists at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai!

The Indian subcontinent has been blessed with legendary women artists who have left an indelible mark on the rich tapestry of its musical heritage. From *Mallika-e-Ghazal* Begum Akhtar, one of the foremost exponents of Ghazal and Thumri to *Queen of Sufi Music* Abida Parveen whose soul-stirring performances transcended linguistic and cultural boundaries. These extraordinary performers forged unique trajectories within an industry traditionally dominated by men and continue to resonate across generations.

On the occasion of **International Women's Day 2024**, **Royal Opera House, Mumbai** in association with **Avid Learning** presents **Śraddhā: Celebrating Iconic Women Artists from South Asia**, a mesmerizing homage to Indian classical and semi-classical pieces to cherish the legacies of the influential artists whose extraordinary creativity and artistry enriched the musical heritage.

A stellar ensemble featuring **Isheeta Chakrvarthy** on *vocals* accompanied by the talents of **Amandeep Singh** on *guitar*, **Adil Kurwa** on *bass*, **Vaibhav Wavikar** on *percussions*, **Nastya Saraswati** on *violin*, along with guest performer **Swarupa Ananth** on *percussions*; promises a unique musical experience. In addition to honoring the musical maestros and their timeless classics, the band will also perform improvisations of their original compositions through the lens of contemporary musical expressions. Music aficionados will experience an immersive blend of treasured melodies of yesteryears with the vibrant creativity of the present, producing a musical narrative that is both nostalgic and refreshingly relevant for the contemporary era.

The Royal Opera House, Mumbai and Avid Learning firmly believe in the **transformative power of the arts to drive social change** and consider it a privilege to utilize their stage in supporting various issues and causes. Particularly meaningful is their observance of International Women's Day, and the upcoming program is the continuation of their women-centric programming philosophy. In the past, this commitment has been reflected in sessions like **Female Agency in Art** and **Multipolis Mumbai: Women and Theatre in the City**, recognizing and amplifying the contributions of women in the arts.

Ashish Doshi, Honorary Director of Royal Opera House, Mumbai says, *"The core objective at the Royal Opera House is to engage and support artists who are leading examples of women empowerment and we take immense pride in being a platform to present programmes such as this, through classical performing arts disciplines and traditions. We are excited to give Mumbaikers this opportunity to witness the power, magic and elegance of an inventive and talented artists through an unique and immersive experience at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai. We are committed to facilitating dialogue and creating platforms and programmes that celebrate the grace, strength and fearlessness of a woman"*

Asad Lalljee, CEO of Avid Learning and Curator of Royal Opera House, Mumbai says, *"Music possesses an extraordinary power to elevate and empower the soul. Avid Learning has been conscious in presenting programs that celebrate the enduring impact of women artists. In curating this melodic journey, we are excited to collaborate with exceptional talents, honoring the legacies who actively contributed to a transformative shift across the South Asian creative and cultural landscape."*

Do not miss this convergence of deeply moving tradition and contemporary energy promising an unforgettable experience for all music enthusiasts.

When: 8th March 2024 | 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Where: Royal Opera House, Mumbai

Tickets: www.insider.in (Rs. 399 onwards)

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ARTIST BIOS:

Isheeta Chakrvarthy is an Indian contemporary singer-songwriter, composer, educator, voice over artist, recording artist and TED speaker based in Mumbai. With strong roots in Hindustani classical music, Isheeta is a musical explorer, pushing her edges as an expressionist traversing multiple genres especially Jazz, Pop and Electronic Music and other sonic spaces as evident in her original pieces of music. She is a recording artist for Bollywood (Sultan: Baby Ko Bass) as well as OTT shows like Mirzapur on Amazon Prime, Class, Fame Game , Bombay Begums on Netflix, apart from others like JioCinemas (Kalkoot) and Alt Balaji (The Married Woman) and many more and continues to work with many composers and producers. She is a cross-genre collaborator and collaborated with reputed artists like Vishal-Shekhar, Louiz and Gino Banks, Viveick Rajagopalan, Sanjay Divecha, Donn Bhat, Anyasa, Anand Bhaskar, Keshav Dhar and more.

She has had the privilege to open for Ustad Zakir Hussain at the International Jazz Festival at the NCPA in 2018. She is a global concert artist performing at various stages across India and the world like the Java Jazz Festival (Indonesia), Cervantino Festival (Mexico), La Merce (Spain), Star of Asia (Kazakhstan) and many independent concerts globally. Isheeta recently released her debut EP EK SUTRA in collaboration with producer and mridangam player Viveick Rajagopalan which was touted as one of the 10 best Indian EPs of 2022.

As an educator, Isheeta's approach is deeply holistic and is tuned to helping students of music unlock their authentic voices and discover their own musicianship. She is one of a kind in her field who has an understanding of both—her traditional roots as well as an understanding of a global soundscape which aids in helping students develop a wider understanding of their place in the world as musicians. Isheeta heads multiple outfits.

- Isheeta Chakrvarthy Collective is a space where she explores most of her influences ranging from Indian music to African to Jazz in a context that is not necessarily traditional but holds strong elements of world music as well.
- Isheeta Chakrvarthy Jazz Quartet/Quintet where she performs traditional Jazz standards and some modern Jazz compositions.
- An intimate semi-classical set where she sings thumris, bhajans, ghazals, Sufi as well as original compositions which are more traditional in nature.
- A curated set of choicest Indian, Bollywood, Pop and Jazz songs, for a more commercial requirement. Isheeta is constantly pushing her boundaries as an artist and is a committed student of music and continuously looks forward to exploring newer musical vistas.

Vaibhav Wavikar - I am 32 year old professional drummer and percussionist who is working as a freelancer musician and tutor in Mumbai . I have always enjoyed teaching drums and sharing the knowledge of what I have learnt traveling to different parts of the world.

Adil Kurwa is a bass player from Mumbai.

Nastya Saraswati is a musician from St.Petersburg, Russia, who finds her forte in Indian Classical Music, a passion she has been nourishing since late 2012. Born in St Petersburg Russia, in the family of non musicians Nastya started her first music experience to learn violin upon suggestion of her uncle, who was a professional orchestra conductor. She made frequent trips to India in search for Gurus and learn Hindustani Classical and Karnatic music from them. She still continues to hone her skills under guidance of her Guru Shri Purbayan Chatterjee and find her place in her Indian dream. In 2017 Nastya was also a part of Indian reality TV show 'Dil Hai Hindustani' on Star Plus. Lately Nastya has started sincerely educating russian students the basics of Indian Classical music to inspire them and open their world to the beauty of this ancient music in Russia.

Swarupa Ananth-Sawkar is a bold young Indian percussionist and producer, ranked in the Forbes India 30 under 30 list. She has been a prolific entertainer from a young age, under the mentorship of Ustad Allarakha & Ustad Zakir Hussain. Her debut album Raagtronic, released in 2014, reached #1 on the iTunes India charts. As a performer and producer, Swarupa has collaborated with many national and international artists, sharing the stage with some of India's biggest musical luminaries including Talvin Singh and A.R. Rahman, and is a well established entrepreneur in the Indian music scene, having served as A&R Manager for EMI Music India. Swarupa recently launched an online music school, Tablanaari's School Of Music, that promotes Indian Classical music with world class artists teaching rich traditional material in a holistic manner.