

A Panel Discussion and Performance around Ajoy Bose's book Across the Universe: The Beatles in India

When you've seen beyond yourself then you may find

Peace of mind is waiting there

And the time will come when you see

We're all one, and life flows on within you and without you.

- George Harrison, lyrics for 'Within You Without You'

For Immediate Release

Avid Learning and the **Royal Opera House, Mumbai** proudly present a panel discussion and performance celebrating the launch of **Author Ajoy Bose's** exciting new book ***Across the Universe: The Beatles in India.***

The book etches in lyrical detail a picture of the world's greatest band torn apart by their inner dissensions yet bursting with creative genius. In February 1968, the Fab Four, John, Paul, George and Ringo visited an ashram in Rishikesh to learn Transcendental Meditation from Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. The book traces the path the Beatles took to India presenting a cast of colourful characters from across the universe that includes, among others, Hollywood actress Mia Farrow, Japanese performance artiste Yoko Ono, the controversial Greek Magic Alex and of course the two Indian gurus Pandit Ravi Shankar and the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

Details of the event are as below:

Journalist and Editor of Scroll.in **Naresh Fernandes** will give a Keynote Address on Bombay and the Beatles followed by a conversation between the author and *Journalist and Founding Editor of The Wire and author of 'India Psychedelic: The Story Of A Rocking Generation'* **Sidharth Bhatia** who will discuss the book and the band within their larger contexts. *Pioneering local rockers* **Devieka and Suresh Bhojwani** who are heavily inspired by the Beatles will perform a selection of best-loved Beatles numbers.

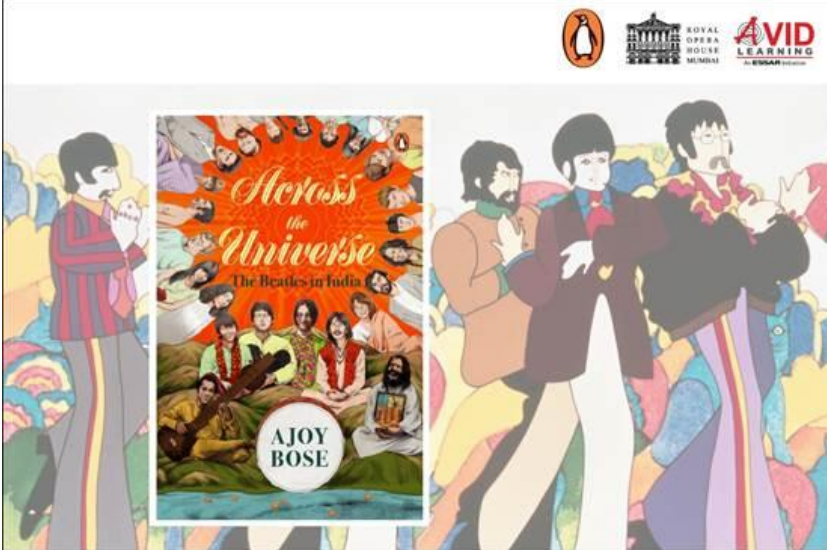
Join us for a rocking evening that revisits the swinging sixties with sounds from the greatest band in the history of rock music.

Where: The Royal Opera House, Mumbai, Mama Parmanand Marg, Mumbai - 400 004

When: Thursday, 15th March 2018 | 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM - Registrations and Refreshments | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Discussion and Performance

RSVP: www.avidlearning.in/ avidlearning@essarservices.co.in / +919769937710; prior registration required

Press Email / Call: Ayesah Dadachanji on ayeshah.avid@gmail.com / +91 9820155297



Avid Learning, Penguin Random House India and the **Royal Opera House, Mumbai** proudly present a panel discussion and performance celebrating the launch of **Author Ajoy Bose's** exciting new book **Across the Universe: The Beatles in India**. The book traces the path the Beatles took to India presenting a cast of colourful characters from across the universe that includes, among others, Hollywood actress Mia Farrow, Japanese performance artiste Yoko Ono, the controversial Greek Magic Alex and of course the two Indian gurus Pandit Ravi Shankar and the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. **Journalist and Editor of Scroll.in Naresh Fernandes** will give a Keynote Address on Bombay and the Beatles followed by a conversation between the **author and Journalist and Founding Editor of The Wire and author of 'Psychedelic Rock' Sidharth Bhatia** who will discuss the book and the band within their larger contexts. **Pioneering local rockers Deveika and Suresh Bhojwani** who were heavily inspired by the Beatles during their visit to India will perform a selection of best-loved Beatles numbers. Join us for a rocking evening that revisits the swinging sixties with sounds from the greatest band in the history of rock music.

Date : Thursday, 15th March 2018
Time : 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM - Registrations and Refreshments | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Discussion
Venue : The Royal Opera House, Mumbai, Mama Parmanand Marg, Mumbai - 400 004
RSVP : www.avidlearning.com/ avidlearning@essarservices.co.in / +919769937710; prior registration required

[@avidlearning](#) [/avidlearning](#) [@avidlearning](#) [/avidlearning](#)

About the Author

Ajoy Bose has written a widely acclaimed book on the Emergency, *For Reasons of State*, and *Behenji*, the definitive political biography of Dalit leader Mayawati. A leading television commentator and columnist, he now uses his formidable investigative skills to look beyond politics, recreating the fascinating journey of the Beatles to India half a century ago.

About the other Speakers

Naresh Fernandes is a journalist who lives in Bombay. He is the editor of Scroll.in, a digital daily. He is the author of *City Adrift: A Short Biography of Bombay* and *Taj Mahal Foxtrot: The Story of Bombay's Jazz Age*.

Sidharth Bhatia is a Mumbai-based journalist and author. He is the Founder Editor of The Wire and has written several books on cinema and popular culture. His Twitter handle is @bombaywallah.

About the Performers

Devieka and Suresh Bhojwani have been a force to be reckoned with in the Indian music scene, for the past 4 decades. Their combined chemistry has swayed many an audience over the years, with their intricate arrangements and beguiling duets. However individually both of these talented musicians come with their own experience and pedigree.

Devieka Bhojwani: Devieka has often been referred to as the Indian Joan Baez. With her commanding presence on stage and powerful voice, she sang her way into many a theatre production over the years, such as 'Jesus Christ Superstar', 'Godspell', 'The Wiz' and 'Jaya the Musical'. She was also the only cast member in 'Jesus Christ Superstar', who featured in both the original production and the revival, done 40 years later, by Theatre Legend Alyque Padamsee. Besides her deep rooted musical history, Devieka has been a driving force in Women's Cancer Awareness and at present she runs the NGO, Womens Cancer Initiative in partnership with the Tata Memorial Hospital.

Suresh Bhojwani: Suresh was the lead singer and bassist in pioneering Indian rock band, 'The Jets', back in the 60s. He's been known to have a soothing voice and charismatic charm that have seen him win over many an audience over the years. One of the highlights of Suresh's musical career was writing, recording and releasing the single "Love a little longer" on Colossus Records in the USA 1969. Since then Suresh has had the privilege to jam with some of Rock n Rolls greats, like George Harrison of the Beatles, Dave Stewart of the Eurythmics as well as Jazz sensation Sadao Watanabe. Suresh is also an investor in Blue Frog, the iconic music start up and Club, that has been a catalyst in the Indian music scene for the past 10 years. He is currently

Chairman & MD of Bright Brothers LTD, a publicly listed company, pioneers in the field of injection molding in India.

About Partners

Avid Learning, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 850 programs and connected with more than 95,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Avidlearning; Twitter: www.twitter.com/Avidlearning;

Instagram: @avidlearning

Penguin Random House India is the largest English language trade publisher. The company publishes over 250 new titles every year and has an active backlist of 3000 titles. With a strong fiction and nonfiction list, we publish across every segment including biography, travel, business, politics, history, religion and philosophy, lifestyle, cookery, health and fitness, sports and leisure, visual books and children's books. The children's titles are published the Puffin and Ladybird imprints. We also publish Disney India's iconic Mickey and Friends characters and five classic characters- Aladdin, Peter Pan, Pinocchio, Dumbo and the cast of The Jungle Book- under the Puffin imprint in India. Our illustrious author list includes three Booker Prize winning novels (The God of Small Things, The Inheritance of Loss and Life of Pi) and virtually every major literary prize, including the Nobel Prize, the Magsaysay Award, the Jnanpith Award, the Sahitya Akademi Award and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. Several of our authors are also recipients of the Bharat Ratna and Padma Vibhushan, India's highest civilian honours. Penguin Random House India has a co-publishing partnership with Majul Publishing House for local language translations across adult and children's fiction and non-fiction titles that are available in Hindi, Gujrati, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi. Further, we are also the exclusive distribution partners for some of the leading publishing houses – Faber, Granta, Short Books, Atlantic Books UK, Canongate, Ingram Publishing Services, Pushkin, Sterling US, Egmont, Walker Books, Icon, FW Media, Guinness, Hay House, Wiley Business India, Zubaan, Black Ink and Fun OK Please – in India.

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 the current Maharaja of Gondal, Shri Jyotendrasinhji. 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 574-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. *Facebook:* www.facebook.com/royaloperahousemumbai/ *Twitter:* @MumbaiOpera *Instagram:* @mumbaiopera