

For Immediate Release :

Mumbai's cultural landscape has always been the playground where great production houses develop theatre in Marathi, Gujarati, English, Hindi and the other languages that course through this multilingual metropolis. The evening's panel will go back in time to when The Royal Opera House, Mumbai was inaugurated in 1916 and soon became an integral part of the developing vibrant theatre world in Mumbai and beyond.

The Royal Opera House had a short career as a theatre stage before it turned into a cinema hall by 1925. But even in this short span, its plays and the actors made ripples in the local theatre scenes everywhere they toured throughout the country. It was a time when vintage grace played tug of war with puritanical attitudes, and it was against this backdrop that glittering careers – including those of Zohra Sehgal and Prithviraj Kapoor – took flight.

Its grand stage was the launch pad for the famous play on Partition, '*Deewar*' by Prithviraj Kapoor, which opened amidst protests but went on to play to packed houses until it was forced to shut down.

The Royal Opera House, Mumbai and **Avid Learning** present ***The Legacy of the Thespian Past: Theatre at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai*** a discussion on the stories that played out at this great performing space and how The Royal Opera House became the pulsating centre that launched several history-making plays and the careers of their actors.

On the panel are:

Producer, Director, Trustee Shri Prithviraj Kapoor Memorial Trust & Research Foundation, Prithvi Theatre, Kunal Kapoor, Actor and Director, Utkarsh Mazumdar, Playwright and Director, Ramu Ramanathan in conversation with *Culture Columnist, Sumedha Raikar Mhatre.*

The panel will bring to life these and other stories of this iconic stage. They will discuss the significance of theatre to the social fabric of the time; how its history is intricately linked both with the establishment of classy kothas as with the the city's cultural milieu; and why the submerged histories of places such as The Royal Opera House are relevant to our contemporary experience of theatre.

Join our panel as they bring to life stories of this iconic stage

Event details:

Date: Thursday, 25th November 2021

Time: 6:00 PM to 7.30 PM IST

Format: Live Zoom Session

Register: www.avidlearning.in

Contact: ayeshah.avid@gmail.com



Mumbai's cultural landscape has always been the playground where great production houses develop theatre in Marathi, Gujarati, English, Hindi and other languages of this multilingual metropolis. The Royal Opera House, Mumbai, inaugurated in 1916, became the pulsating centre that launched several history-making plays and the careers of their actors. Against a backdrop where vintage grace played tug of war with puritanical attitudes, glittering careers – including those of *Zohra Sehgal* and *Prithviraj Kapoor* – took flight and became an integral part of the vibrant theatre world in Mumbai and beyond.

Join our panel as they bring to life stories of this iconic stage. They will discuss the significance of theatre to the social fabric of the time; how its history is intricately linked both with the establishment of classy *kothas* as with the city's cultural milieu; and why the submerged histories of places such as *The Royal Opera House, Mumbai* are relevant to our contemporary experience of theatre.

#AVIDONLINE LIVE

			
Producer, Director, Trustee Shri Prithviraj Kapoor Memorial Trust & Research Foundation, Prithvi Theatre Kunal Kapoor	Actor and Director Utkarsh Mazumdar	Playwright and Director Ramu Ramanathan	Culture Columnist Sumedha Raikar Mhatre

DATE: THURSDAY, 25 NOVEMBER '21
TIME: 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (IST)
REGISTER: www.avidlearning.in



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About the Panelists:

Kunal Kapoor is a Trustee of one of Mumbai's best-known theatres, Prithvi Theatre. It was a long-standing dream of the legendary Prithviraj Kapoor to build a theatre, which his son Shashi Kapoor fulfilled in 1978. This legacy has been nurtured and carried forward by his son Kunal, his daughter Sanjna and now Kunal's two children. Prithvi Theatre is a catalyst for theatre, and committed to the promotion & development of professional theatre and developing a discerning audience.

Utkarsh Mazumdar: A theatre professional, Utkarsh has been on the stage for more than 50 years, performing plays in Hindi, Gujarati and English. He has also directed several plays including *Maro Piyu Gayo Rangoon*. He has been a program executive in at Doordarshan Kendra, Rajkot and

worked at Amdavad and Mumbai Doordarshan Kendra. He has directed several documentaries and training films. Two of his documentaries were screened at International Festival of Documentaries and Short Films organized by Films Division India. Utkarsh has also been a columnist for Gujarati newspapers for the last twenty years.

Ramu Ramanathan is a playwright, poet and journalist. Eight of his plays have been anthologized in the book *3 Sakina Manzil and Other Plays* (Orient Blackswan/EFLU). He is also the author of the poetry collection *My Encounters With a Peacock* and *To Sit on a Stone and Other Shorts* (both are Red River publications), and co-editor of *Babri Masjid, 25 Years On...* (Gyan). Ramanathan has been a journalist for three decades, writing on theatre and culture for newspapers and periodicals. He is the editor of *PrintWeek* and *WhatPackaging?* magazines.

Sumedha Raikar Mhatre is a culture columnist in the Mid-Day newspaper. Apart from enjoying a career as a theatre critic for the last three decades, Sumedha is also known for a constant journalistic search for the unsung, subaltern and off-stream voices. She celebrates people, trends and indigenous linguistic traditions that do not necessarily feature in the mainstream. She also a media advisor to the US Consulate, Mumbai.