

A Day-long Symposium and Ticketed Performance that celebrate the traditions and legacy of Qawwali

“To be a qawwal, one must be willing to release one's mind and soul from one's body to achieve ecstasy through music” – Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan

For Immediate Release

Everybody has heard of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, the musician who managed to modify Qawwali and make it popular among young and international audiences. Come discover the roots, nuances, innovations and perspectives around this age-old musical tradition with a day-long symposium at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai!

Sufi Kathak Foundation, Royal Opera House, Mumbai and **Avid Learning** present **Understanding Qawwali**, an illuminating day-long symposium that explores the traditional art form of Qawwali and its depiction in film, poetry and photography with leading experts and practitioners.

Conceptualized by *Kathak Dancer and Founder, Sufi Kathak Foundation* **Manjari Chaturvedi**, this symposium will comprise lecture demonstrations, panel discussions, presentations and a film screening and will examine the everlasting legacy of Qawwals and address issues and topics related to these exemplary performers.

Please read on below for more on the symposium:

Qawwali is a unique living performative tradition. A form of music practiced by Sufis to inspire religious devotion and instruction with the aim of deepening one's relationship with the Creator, this musical tradition has travelled through time and various regions, and has thereby seen significant changes, modifications and alterations in terms of space and structure.

This symposium will focus on the social impact as well as the syncretic traditions and unifying aspects of Qawwali, and how it forms a significant part of the living history of the diverse and vibrant performing arts culture in India. It will explore the relevance of Qawwali as a medium for communal integrity and how it exists not just as a traditional art form, but more importantly, as a cultural symbol which rightfully represents the essence of 'unity in diversity' of India.

Academics and experts from the worlds of music, film, poetry and photography will examine topics such as the influence of Ganga-Jamuni culture on the form and legacy of Qawwali, localisation of the art form, the relationship between music and religiosity, and the secular elements of Sufi philosophy, the changing face of patronage, the influence of Hindustani classical music, as well as contemporary fusion music and film. They will also analyse how this musical tradition is subverting gender roles and discuss the impact of the Feminine in the poetic tradition of Qawwali.

Sessions will include:

Lecture | SPATIALIZING POPULAR SUFI SHRINES IN PUNJAB – DREAMS, MEMORIES, TERRITORIALITY

Discussion | POETRY & QAWWALI: A ROMANCE TO RECKON WITH

Presentation | THE QAWWALI PHOTO PROJECT

Discussion | KHANQAHI QAWWALI TO COMMERCIAL QAWWALI – UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATING THE ART FORM OF QAWWALI

Discussion | QAWWALI AND FILMS

Film Screening | PAIGAM-E-MOHABBAT BY MUZAFFAR ALI

Closing Performance | QAWWALI MEHFIL WITH KHANQAHI QAWWALS LED BY DANISH HUSAIN BADAYUNI

The symposium will be followed by an enchanting Qawwali performance comprising live renditions of age-old compositions by Khanqahi Qawwals led by **Danish Husain Badayuni**, the grandson of the legendary musician Ustad Nissar Husain Khan Sahib, that will pay homage to the rich legacy and tradition of this venerable art form and trace the histories and stories associated with it.

This is also our second collaboration with Manjari Chaturvedi and the Sufi Kathak Foundation, with whom we presented an enlightening symposium and performance that celebrated courtesan culture and women performers in India earlier this year at the Royal Opera House, Mumbai.

At the Opera House, we have made a conscious effort to present and promote classical and contemporary Sufi music and dance and its fascinating subculture on our stage by showcasing a variety of styles and instruments. We have had the privilege to feature Sufi performances by the only non-Asian Qawwali group Fanna-Fi-Allah and the bands Sounds of the Sufis and Imran Khan and Friends. We have also showcased a variety of multi-disciplinary performances and styles including Sufi-Folk Fusion and Sufi-Kathak. For our recent third anniversary celebration we featured an inspired Sufi Qawwali performance by Warsi Brothers who are one of the finest Qawwal ensembles in India. Most recently, we presented another impressive Sufi concept experience, *HarooF* featuring the talented vocalist Radhika Sood Nayak.

Do not miss this insightful symposium and vibrant performance that celebrate the fascinating culture of the Qawwals!

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

When: Saturday, 30th November 2019 | 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Registrations | 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM – Sessions

Symposium Registration: www.insider.in

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

Understanding
Qawwali
FIRST TIME EVER IN



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SEMINAR
PERFORMANCES
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

CONCEPTUALIZED BY: MANJARI CHATURVEDI

A day-long symposium that explores the traditional art form of Qawwali and its depiction in film, poetry and photography with leading experts and practitioners. This symposium will examine the ever-lasting legacy of Qawwals and address issues and topics related to these exemplary performers.

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM Registrations

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM Session I | Spatializing Popular Sufi Shrines in Punjab - Dreams, Memories, Territoriality
Lecture by Author **Prof. Yogesh Snehi**

12:30 PM - 01:00 PM Session II | Poetry & Qawwali: A Romance to Reckon with
Author and Poetry & Literature Critic **Dr. Saif Mahmood**
in conversation with Kathak Dancer and Founder,
Sufi Kathak Foundation **Manjari Chaturvedi**

01:00 PM - 01:30 PM Session III | The Qawwali Photo Project
Presentations and conversation by Photographers **Dinesh Khanna, Mustafa Quraishi** and **Leena Kejriwal**

01:30 PM - 02:30 PM BREAK

02:30 PM - 03:15 PM Session IV | Khanqahi Qawwali to Commercial Qawwal - Understanding and Appreciating the Art Form of Qawwali
Sufi and Classical Vocalist, Composer and Lyricist **Dhruv Sangari**
in conversation with Journalist **Narendra Kusnur**

03:15 PM - 04:00 PM Session V | Qawwali and Films
Filmmaker, Fashion Designer, Poet and Artist **Muzaffar Ali**
in conversation with Kathak Dancer and Founder,
Sufi Kathak Foundation **Manjari Chaturvedi**

04:00 PM - 05:00 PM Session VI | Paigam-e-Mohabbat
Screening of the film by **Muzaffar Ali**

05:00 PM SYMPOSIUM ENDS

DATE: Saturday, 30th November 2019

TIME: 11:30 AM to 12:00 PM - Registrations | 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM - Symposium

VENUE: Royal Opera House, Mumbai

RSVP: www.insider.in (prior registration required)

TICKETED

06:30 PM - 08:00 PM Evening Performance | Qawwali Mehfil with Khanqahi Qawwals led by **Danish Husain Badayuni**

A curated Qawwali performance by Khanqahi Qawwals in its traditional form, with a narrator leading the audiences through the music with historical references and stories associated with the popular Qawwalis sung.

DATE: Saturday, 30th November 2019

TIME: 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

VENUE: Royal Opera House, Mumbai

TICKETS: www.insider.in



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About the Performance

Danish Husain Badayuni, a Qawwal from Badayun, Uttar Pradesh, is the torchbearer of one of the most illustrious schools of Qawwali. He is a disciple of the great Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan of the Rampur Sahaswan Gharana and regularly sang as part of the Qawwali team of Wajahat Hussain Badayuni, the descendent of the legendary

Ustad Jafar Hussain Khan Badayuni, who was renowned for his Sufi music. Danish Husain has performed at many prestigious platforms all over India like the Serendipity Festival, the Jahan-e-Khusrau Festival and the Urdu Festival to name a few. He continues to reside in Badayun keeping alive the tradition of Qawwali that is rooted in its ancient heritage.

About Partners

The Sufi Kathak Foundation is a non-profit registered society in India (Regd. 61883, exempt from tax under section 80G and 12A and registered under FCRA). The Foundation is headed by its Founder & President, Manjari Chaturvedi, a leading exponent of classical Indian Kathak & creator of Sufi Kathak dance. She has a deep interest & in-depth knowledge on performance art & with her own experience of 20 years, with more than 300 performances in 24 countries, she leads the research projects. The General Body of the Foundation comprises of other 10 eminent academicians, lawyers, marketing heads, art & cultural activists & personalities. Sufi Kathak Foundation in 10 years has conducted 38 festivals /seminars/ concerts involving 402 artists to create awareness about India's intangible heritage in music and dance and preserve the gradually fading 700-year Sufi Traditions in Music and Dance. SKF aims to create a world of cultural unity, by spreading the secular message of the Sufis and also help in initiating children and orienting the youth to become self-employed through arts - dance and music. It provides assistance and support to needy artists and students by giving scholarships, pensions and medical support, in order to enable them to pursue classical music and dance. SKF seeks to evolve a humanist outlook and create centers, organize training classes, workshops and musical concerts to promote Sufi music, Qawwali, Sufi Kathak, and folk & classical dance across the world. Sufi Kathak Foundation has also worked with the Government of India and State Governments for various cultural concerts organized by them and through its concerts the foundation has tried to relive the past eras, thereby representing our rich cultural heritage. Sufi Kathak Foundation has also conceptualized and organized cultural festivals which explored the inter-religious issues through music and dance and brought together references of different religions on the same plane of confluence, for the audiences to experience. The 22 Khwaja Project that explores the lives of Sufi Saints is a unique secular initiative that has never appeared before the masses and adds to the list of successful initiatives taken by the Foundation. "The Courtesan Project", is the flagship dance revival concept by Sufi Kathak Foundation. "The Courtesan Project" is a labor of love, and a culmination of passion, research and mission to bring alive the stories of women largely forgotten by the history.

www.sufikathakfoundation.com

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. *Facebook:* MumbaiOpera *Twitter:* @MumbaiOpera *Instagram:* @mumbaiopera

Avid Learning, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 1000 programs and connected with more than 125,000 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.

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