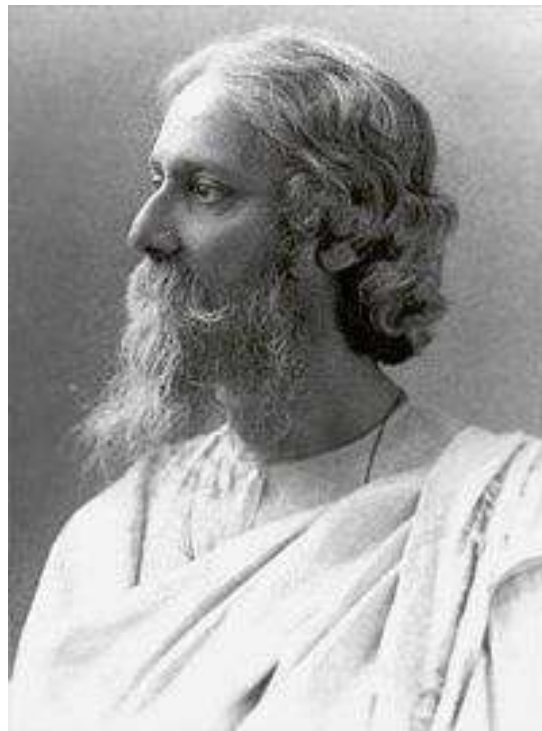


International Centre Goa
and
Information and Resource Center, Singapore

Celebrates
Rabindranath Tagore
in Song Music & Dance



Building a Better Asia

In honour of the Visiting Delegates from various Asian countries

17th of February, 2008

7.15 pm

AT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER GOA
Dona Paula

The Nippon Group of Foundations

PROGRAMME

- 7:15 pm Inauguration of the Musical Evening with felicitation of artists at the hands of *Smt. Vijayadevi Rane*, Chairperson, Bal Bhavan
- 7:25 pm Welcome song by young artists from Goa
- 7:30 pm Tagore songs by
Smt. Swastika Mukhopadhyay
Sangeet Bhavan, Viswa Bharati Univeristy, Shantiniketan
- 8:00 pm Recitation of Tagore's Poem in English
- 8:05 pm Theme Dance – ***Ritu Ranga*** by
Shri. Arup Mitra, Smt. Sujata Mitra, Smt. Anusuya Das & Shri. Saikat Mukherjee
Viswa Bharati Univeristy, Shantiniketan
Music Director: *Swastika Mukhopadhyay*
Choreographer: *Arup Mitra*
- 8:50 pm Recitation of Tagore's Poem in English
- 9:00 pm Sitar Recital & Fusion Music by
Shri Manab Das, Goa College of Music, Goa
Accompanied by
Shri Vishu Shirodkar, Shri Mayuresh Vast, Shri Prakash Amonkar & Shri Prakash Khutwalkar
- 9:30 pm End of the programme

The programme is presented by the Information & Resource Center and the International Centre Goa with the cooperation of PRATIDHWANI – A Bengali cultural group of artists from Bengal and Goa.

“BUILDING A BETTER ASIA: FUTURE LEADERS’ DIALOGUE”

2007-08 Theme

“BUILDING THE COMMON GOOD IN ASIA”

16-24 February, 2008 (Goa, India)

www.buildingabetterasia.com

The ultimate objective of the Building a Better Asia: Future Leaders’ Dialogue is to nurture future leaders for Asia so that they can contribute to the building of a better Asia in the future. This new initiative was launched in September 2006 with a first retreat in Peking University which was the host. Participants came from various countries in Asia and spent a week interacting with one another and were given opportunities to meet well-known scholars, political and business leaders who were invited to spend quality time with the participants. The talks by the resource persons are aimed at deepening the participants’ knowledge of a set of emerging issues in Asia and to foster the art of leadership in solving problems. In addition, group work for the purpose of enhancing long-lasting relationships among the participants was encouraged.

The 2006 theme was “**Reconciliation Reconsidered**” and focused on issues such as Development and Governance, Political Transition, Media, Innovation and Technology and Civil Society. Two retreats were planned for FY 2007-08 in Peking University in September 2007 and in Goa in February 2008. The theme for the 2007-08 retreats is –“*Building the Common Good in Asia*” and focuses on issues such as Shared Prosperity, Common Security, Ecology and Sustainable Development, Human Security, Globalization, and Media.

This year the 20 participants come from 16 Asian countries.

The retreats are managed and organized by the Information & Resource Center, a Singapore-based private think tank. The series is supported by the Japan-based Nippon Foundation, Sasakawa Peace Foundation and the Tokyo Foundation.

This year the retreat is honored to have the new Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), H.E. Dr Surin Pitsuwan, a former Foreign Minister of Thailand to give the keynote at the opening of the retreat and H.E. J.C. Jamir, Governor of Goa, to give a keynote address at the closing of the retreat.

Felicitation of the Guests

Smt. Vijayadevi Rane felicitating His Excellency Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Secretary General, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).



Smt. Vijayadevi Rane felicitating Dr. Shuichi Ohno, Executive Director, Nippon Foundation.



Smt. Vijayadevi Rane felicitating Dr. Lau Sim Yee, Senior Program Advisor, Sasakawa Peace Foundation.



RITU RANGA

(Arup Mitra, Sujata Mitra, Anusuya Das and Saikat Mukherjee)

There are six seasons in the Indian calendar,



singer (he once remarked, "I can't remember a time when I could not sing") and a consummate lyricist.

He always loved to live very close to nature. One of the most creative phases of his life was spent by the bank of the mighty river Padma (now in Bangladesh). The poetry [e.g. Shonar Tori (The Golden Boat)] and [prose e.g. Chhinnopatra (Stray leaves)] he wrote during his sojourn here shows how keenly he observes nature, and with what delicacy he depicts the seasons of riverine Bengal. The wide skies and open spaces of Santiniketan, where, over a span of 40 years, he experimented with education and gave shape to his dreams, inspired him to compose incredibly beautiful songs on the seasonal cycle.

I

Grishma or summer, Varsha the rainy season, Sharat early autumn, Sheet the winter season and Rituraj Vasanta spring, the king of all seasons.

The artistic and musical genius of Rabindranath Tagore has celebrated the ever-changing moods of these seasons in hundreds of poignant and evocative songs. Music and singing came very naturally to Rabindranath: he did not have much formal training in music, but he was, nevertheless, a very talented



Ever since Rabindranath's time, it has been a tradition at Santiniketan to welcome each



season with Rabindra Sangeet and Rabindra-Nritya i.e. dances set to Tagore's songs. For the participants, this is both homage and celebration: homage to the divine and celebration of the Beauty that underlines existence and the joy that encompasses everything. This evening, we feel honoured to be able to pay this homage and enact this celebration in your midst.

II

We begin our performance with an invocation to Nataraj the lord of the dance. The four movements of the song evoke the inspirational and creative power of dance as Life Force. The great dance of Shiva is at the centre of existence. It is also the force that awakens. Liberates, harmonies and unifies all manifestation. The singer prays that the rhythms of this stupendous dance, which has preserved the worlds through the surge of the ages, may infuse his very soul.



This dance infuses two traditional styles of dancing: Kathakali and Bharatnatyam.

In the next item, the poet envisages the divine as the original poet and singer, whose rhythmic utterance created the Heavens and the Earth and the entire universe. From this primal rhythmic utterance springs forth the delight (Ananda) that is the root of Existence; it is from this delight that different emotions (the nine Yasas) emanate and fill our hearts and minds. The utterance of the rhythmic word make it possible for the suns and stars to shine eternally, and for the spirit to infused with the vital force or the energy of life (Prana-Taranga)

One cannot help noticing, on the one hand, the Biblical echo of:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God

and on the other hand, the Vedic ech of Yajnavalkya's elucidation of the Brahman
anandhwalva khalwimani bhutani jayente
[Out of Delight everything is manifested]

This item will be presented in the Kathakali style

III

We now present Ritu Ranga or a cycle of songs and dances celebrating the myriad moods of different seasons.

The poet welcomes Boishakh the first month of the Hindu calendar and the harbinger of summer. Let the new year bring with it fiery breath of summer and drive away the decadent and the dead. Let old memories and forgotten melodies vanish, let the tears



evaporate in the hot dry winds of summer. Let the heat dispel the mists of falsehood and Maya.

This dance has been choreographed in the Kathakali style.

Summer has ended. The poet celebrates the coming of the rains as a festive occasion. Rain is personified as young maiden resplendent and beautiful. Her arrival is heralded by the great roar of thunder, which makes the blue hills tremble and by the poignant cry of the peacock. All the young maiden of the land are enjoyed to prepare themselves for this resplendent guest. She is to be welcomed with great pomp and music. Poets and musicians through the ages (says the concluding part of the song) have celebrated the coming of the rainy seasons. Let those hundreds of songs be echoed and re-echoed today in the rain-soaked air and wind toasted trees. The dance style is Kathakali

In another song, the destructive power of rainstorm is asked to wreak havoc among the dry leaves and dead leaves so that Earth may be reborn with the new rain. And the tears of the maiden, whose love has been rejected may mingle with the incessant drops of rain. And like the rejuvenated earth, she too may grab herself with a new identity. This item is presented in the style of folk dance and Kathakali.



Sharat or early autumn is the time for fun and frolic. It is time when golden sunlight and shadow play hide-and-seek with each other. And white clouds go floating across a clear blue sky. Inebriated by the sunlight, bees forget to suck honey from the flower. The poet refuses to go indoors today. He wants to establish his claim on the wide sky and the whole wide world. Today, the foaming waters and the rushing wind seem to be filled with happiness and laughter. The poet wishes to

idle away the whole morning and play upon his flute. This lively piece is presented in the style of folk dance.

The wish to spend an entire autumn day experiencing an ineffable delight is repeated in the next song. There is an ethereal song wafting in the breeze, its melody spreading across the wide blue sky. This song finds an echo in the poet's heart and he identifies with the bees that go in search of nectar. He probably hears the status of the same immortal divine. This is presented in the Manipuri style.

Poush it is the month of harvesting. The fields are swaying with the golden grains. The golden sunshine fills the lap of the earth. It is difficult to stay indoors at this time of the year. The whole world is filled with happiness and joy. This folk dance celebrates Sheeth or the winter season.

Spring the king of seasons has arrived at our doors. We should not keep him waiting. We should open the portals of our hearts. The voices of spring can be heard everywhere in the skies, in the forests, the tread of the south wind. But as darkness falls (says the poet), keep your ears ready to hear the footfall of the beautiful lord. (this dance is performed in the Bharatnatyam and Kathakali styles).

As the following item (in Kathakali and Bharatnatyam) tells us, sometimes the voices of spring may be filled with uncertainty and expectancy, and a yearning for something intangible. Something only partially grasped, as in the case of the musician who is desperate to know what has inspired such restless strains, so romantic and beautiful, from his veena.

The last item of this evening's performance is a raas a song celebrating holi, or the festival of colours (the quintessential spring festival of India). The refrain of this song is at once a popular public celebration and a very personal homage: "Let (Thy) colours touch my heart and all my actions..."

PROFILE OF ARTISTS

SWASTIKA MUKHOPADHYAY

Swastika Mukhopadhyay is one of the foremost exponents of Bengali music particularly the rich and multidimensional tradition of Bengali Vocal Music of the early 20th Century. The daughter of eminent musicians Sri Gobindagopal and Smt. Madhuri Mukhopadhyay, Swastika has been raised in a musical atmosphere since her childhood. The songs of D.L. Roy and Dilip Kumar Roy are, for her, part of a family heirloom as it were. She discovered the world of Rabindranath's music when she came to study at Visva Bharati (Santiniketan). Her first formal training in Rabindra Sangeet was under the noted singer Smt Nilima Sen.



She is today an exponent per excellence of two diverse styles of Bengali music: the songs of D.L. Roy, Dilip Kumar Roy, Atulprasad and rajanikanto on one hand, and Rabindra Sangeet on the other. In 1973 Hindustan Record Company brought out her rendering of Dwijendrageeti. A few years later HMV brought out her first audiocassette of Rabindra Sangeet. She has visited Bangladesh and Japan several times, performing extensively and to great critical acclaim. She has also conducted several workshops in these countries. She performs regularly for the Radio and the Television; professionally, she is a lecturer in Rabindra Sangeet at Sangeet Bhavana, Visva Bharati by vocation, she is a singer.

ARUP MITRA

Arup Mitra (born 1954) started dancing at the age of 13, under the guidance of his uncle, Sri Nirmal Shankar Mitra. He formally studied Dance at Visva Bharati University, Shantiniketan, (Bachelor of Music), and at Rabindra Bharati Univeristy, Kolkata (Master of Music). He spent 7 years learning Kathakali and Bharatnatyam from Guru Kulu Nayar. Under the atutelage of Sri K Jatindra Singh he learnt Manipuri.



As a dancer, choreographer and director, Arup Mitra's interests include: interpreting the different nuances of Rabindranath Tagore's music in the classical formds of Kathakali, Bharatanatyam and Manipuri; teaching and training young learners; and conducting workshops and adult foreign learners.

He has performed extensively both in India and abroad. He has performed and conducted workshops in England (1985) and Korea (2007). He has directed major productions of several dance dramas of Rabindranath Tagore in many major cities of India, including Bombay (1975), Kolkata (1992-93), Port Blair (1999) Allahabad (2004) and Hyderabad (2005).

Arup Mitra has been teaching Dance at Visva Bharati for over 20 years.

SUJATA MITRA



Sujata Mitra (born 1963) started dancing when she was four. She graduated (Bachelor of music) in Dance at the top of her class from Visva Bharati University, Shantiniketan. Since 1985, she has been performing regularly in different places in India. She has performed in Delhi (1985), Kolkata (1988), Port Blair and other major cities. In 2007, she was invited by the Asian Cultural Excahng Foundation to perform at Gwangju City in Korea.

Sujata Mitra teaches Dance at Visva Bharati, Shantiniketan.

MANAB DAS

Eminent Sitarist Manab Das, Masters in Music from Visva Bharati University. He started his career at the age of six under the tutelage of Late Ustad Ali Ahmed Kahn and later under the guidance of Pandit Indranil Bhattacharya in the age old tradition of Guru Shishya Parampara.

He belongs to Maihar Gharana founded by Ustad Allauddin Khan which has produced Sitar Maestros like Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Nikhil Banaerjee and Pandit Indranil Bhattacharya.

He presented his first performance at the age of 9 in Allaiddin Music conference at Kolkata. Thereafter he performed concerts in many parts of India (Kolkata, Mysore, Bhopal, Delhi, Pune, Lucknow, Allahabad, Ahmedabad, Shivsagar, Mangalore, Daman) and abroad (25 concerts in Europe at Germany, Scotland during 2000- 2006).

He has 2 audio CDs to his credit. One based on Indian Classical music (Indian-Western Classical Music) in the year 2000 in Germany and the 2nd CD is based on Fusion Music released in 2004 and 2006. A Video documentary on his life and various performances in and around Europe has been recorded by Video Works Co. Berlin, Germany).

Presently he is a faculty of Goa College of Music, Panaji affiliated to Goa University.



VISHNU SHIRODKAR



Vishnu Shirodkar, a renowned Keyboard player took initially lessons in music from his father who was a musician and stage actor of repute. He first started playing harmonium at the age of 7 years, and developed the amazing quality of playing music on keyboard instantaneously by listening to the songs in any languages such as Vedic, Hindi, English, Kankani and Bengali etc. He has participated in several cultural programmes organized in Goa since his childhood including accompanying renowned

artists from Goa and outside Goa. His school teachers profoundly encouraged him for his astounding talents in music. He has won several prizes in various music competitions during his school and colleges days. He has won the "BEST BACKGROUND MUSIC" award for the television programme "SATYA SPARSH" of Doordarshan Kendra, Western Zone, in 2002. Besides, he also has to his credit several certificates of appreciation in the field of music.

MAYURESH VAST

Mayuresh vast is one of the finest Tabla player in Goa. Presently he is a lecturer in the Goa College of Music. He has accompanied on Tabla with several eminent singers in Goa. Basically he is a classical Tabla player. He has participated in many music festivals all over India to accompany eminent singers all over India.



PRAKASH AMONKAR

Prakash Amonkar is an eminent Octopad player in Goa. He received his training in music from the Trinity College of London, U.K and earned the certificate of 8th grade on Drum. from the same college. He is presently associated with the leading Orchestra group of Goa led by Shri Vishnu Shirodkar. He has performed all over Goa in various occasion with eminent singers. His mastery of art in music is outstanding. His sense of music earned him the reputation of being one of the finest octopad player in Goa.

He made the audience spell bound with his artistic beats in the drum. He has been in this line of music for the last 10 years. He has been coaching young talents to groom them to the best of his ability.



PARESH KHUTWALKAR



Paresh Khutwalkar is an eminent guitarist of Goa. He has earned the reputation of being one of the promising guitarist in the filed of music. He has been associated with one of the most popular Orchestra group led by Shri Vishnu Shirodkar. He has the magical touch in the strings of his guitar which creates wonderful vibration all around and makes the music to a great height. It is because of his creative art and natural artistry of playing music in guitar he has been highly applauded whenever he

accompanied any musician. He has always been a great accompanist with the Orchestra.



ORGANISERS

The Nippon Group of Foundations

The Nippon Foundation was founded in 1962 as an organization that concerned itself primarily with the maritime industry. However, the last few years have seen its sphere of activity expand inland from the oceans to the point where now it encompasses most of the globe. Together with the Sasakawa Peace Foundation and the Tokyo Foundation the Nippon group has extended its philanthropic activities to many countries and many different educational and social activities.

Information and Resource Center

The IRC, which is based in Singapore, was established in 1985 and is a private research center that is devoted to strategic, prospective and cultural issues in the Asia-Pacific. Its work and networking are all aimed at contributing to the understanding of the issues concerning the wider Asian region. The IRC initiated the One Southeast Asia project in 1990 in order to engage the transition economies of Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar. In 1995 it initiated the Asian Renaissance project, which attempted to rediscover Asian civilization through the study of some of its better-known thinkers. Since 2003 the IRC has broadened its work to include South and Central Asia as part of an initiative under the Asian Dialogue Society. The IRC cooperates with a number of international and regional research and philanthropic organizations. (www.asiandialogue.com)

International Centre Goa

The International Centre Goa (ICG) was founded in June 1987 under the Societies Registration Act (1860) "to promote understanding and amity between parts of the country and with different communities of the world" through a multiplicity of activities. The Centre is an autonomous institution. Residential and non-residential conferences, seminars and training programmes are organized by local, national and international organizations. The Centre also has guest rooms, seminar halls, restaurant, and several lawns of different sizes. The ICG's facilities are located on 14 acres of land on the Taleigao Plateau at Dona Paula, Goa (INDIA). The plateau overlooks the confluence of the famous Zuari river and Arabian sea.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE GOA

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