



diary

INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

volume XXVIII. No. 2

March – April 2014

Same Difference

MUSIC APPRECIATION PROMOTION: *The North–South Convergence in Carnatic and Hindustani Music*

Panelists: Subhadra Desai, Saraswati Rajagopalan and Suanshu Khurana

Chair: Vidya Shah, March 21

PERFORMANCE: *A Celebration of Carnatic and Hindustani Music*

Carnatic Vocal Recital by Sudha Raghunathan

Hindustani Vocal Recital by Meeta Pandit

Collaboration: Spirit of India, March 22

This was a thought-provoking discussion-demonstration on the convergence between Carnatic and Hindustani music, two systems divided by a putatively common musical language. The audience certainly converged; as to the systems, it was largely a revelation of their divergences, though a very interesting, and at times even amusing one.

Carnatic training begins with the raga *Mayamalavagaula*, which has a mix of flat and sharp notes, while in Hindustani it begins with *Bilaval*, which has only flat (*shuddh*) notes. The explicit marking of *taala* with hand movements is an important virtue in Carnatic music; in Hindustani it's a sin, since *taal* is supposed to be internalised. A systematic and formally communicated understanding of *gamakas* is integral to Carnatic; in Hindustani, the corresponding awareness of *meends* is supposed to emerge properly only from practice. Carnatic music is substantially *kriti*-based, while Hindustani *bandishes* are minimal frameworks for abstract musical exploration.

But competitive purism notwithstanding, there's been an amazing amount of cross-fertilisation. Bhatkhande went to the south to study its *taala* culture; Venkatamakhi to Varanasi to research Hindustani ragas; Dikshitar

composed Carnatic music in Hindustani ragas as well as *NottuSvarams* inspired by British band music; in recent years, Carnatic ragas such as *Hamsadhwani* and *Charukeshi* have been adopted enthusiastically by the north; Maharashtrian *abhangs* have become staples at Carnatic concerts; Indian classical music has shown a willingness to naturalise Western imports such as the violin, guitar, saxophone, mandolin and even the organ. So what this really means is that you have two distinct systems, with often disparate ideas about what constitutes good music production, but tantalisingly similar lexicons and grammatical constructs that occasionally become the basis for some interesting conversations.

These insights kept coming to mind the next evening, when the clamour of birdsong at the picturesque Rose Garden heralded performances by Meeta Pandit of the Gwalior gharana and then Sudha Raghunathan, the Madras Music Academy's Sangeeta Kalanidhi for this year. Meeta showcased a bouquet of genres, with some rare forms as well as compositions. Her *chaturang* was a particularly interesting musical structure, and its *bols*, being about music itself, were reminiscent of similar *sahityas* in Carnatic pieces such as *Sobillu Saptaswara* or *Mokshamu Galada*. The *tappa* *O miya jaane vaale* reminded this reviewer of Malini Rajurkar, who has been one of Meeta's teachers. Sudha's concert, in starting with a *varnam*, proceeding to a second piece of medium classicism ('Renuka Devi') and then going on to the main raga *Alaapanai* and *kriti*, gave the audience a glimpse of the structuring and compositional variety so essential to a Carnatic concert. And if Meeta drew on her *gharana*, Sudha in turn evoked her *bani*, the main piece in *Keeravani* having been composed by her guru's guru, G. N. Balasubramaniam.

■ MAHADEVAN RAMASWAMY

An Evening of K. L. Saigal

PERFORMANCE: To Mark K.L. Saigal's 110th Birth Anniversary

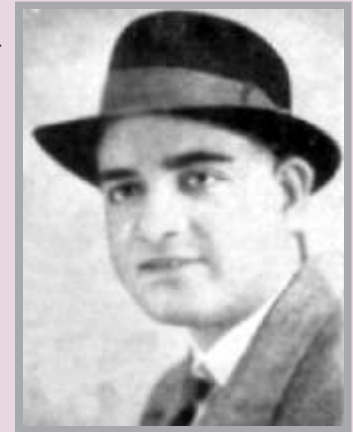
Speaker: Pran Neville, followed by Concert presented by Radhika Chopra

Collaboration: K.L. Saigal Memorial Circle April 4

For the last several years, the IIC in collaboration with the K.L. Saigal Memorial Circle has been hosting functions to celebrate the birth anniversary of K.L. Saigal on 4th April. This annual event is now well-known and extremely popular with music lovers.

In his introduction to the programme, the speaker and founder-convenor of the K.L. Saigal Memorial Circle highlighted the little-known fact that K.L. Saigal was himself a poet and composer. He mentioned his two songs *Main baithe the phulwari mein* and *hamjolion ki thi toliyan* which were written, composed and sung by him. But there was another poem written in Saigal's own hand *Pardes mein rehne wale aa* which was never sung by him or anyone else. It was only at the K.L. Saigal centenary celebration function in 2004 that this poem was composed and sung for the first time by Radhika Chopra.

The concert began with Radhika's rendition of Saigal's hit song *Ai Katib-e-taqdir mujhe itna bata de* from the film *My Sister* (1944). Then followed some other popular songs including *Jabdil hi toot gaya* from *Shahjahan* (1946). Radhika's performance was a tour-de-force showcasing her mastery of ragas and soulful rendition of verses which captivated the audience. Paying her *shradhanjali* to K.L. Saigal as the 'ghazal king' she sang his popular ghazals like *har ek baat pe kehthe ho tum, duniya mein hun duniya ka talabgar nahin hu* and some others which enthralled the audience. Responding to requests she sang another hit film song *Main Kya Janu kya Jadoo hai*. She wrapped up her performance with Saigal's unsung poem *Pardes mein rehne wale aa*. What an extraordinary rendering; she provided lifelike images to the words and succeeded in stirring up moods and feelings in the listeners. She sang it after a lapse of ten years.



■ PRAN NEVILLE

Musical Medley

PERFORMANCE: Piano Recital by Raphael Lustchevsky

Collaboration: The Polish Institute, April 11

Poland, which, at its Independence, chose the greatest pianist of the age to be its first President, brought to music lovers in Delhi one of *Paderewski's* heirs, the young master Raphael Lustchevsky.

He presented a well-conceived programme of romantic music, lyrical and reflective, opening with Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, whose evocative first movement set the mood for the evening. This was followed by two *leidars* of Robert Schumann, transcribed for the piano by Franz Liszt. These were like Schumann's own pieces for the piano recalling his childhood, dreamlike, with none of the virtuosity display one associates with Liszt.

Chopin, naturally, was the last of the composers of the classical period.



Lustchevsky played two contrasting dances: the waltz-like *Berceuse Op 57* and the rolling, joyful *Barcarolle Op 60*. The controlled lyricism of these pieces set them apart from the melancholy of the composer's nocturnes, and the dramatic assertions of his larger compositions.

The surprise at the end of the programme was a set of dances by a contemporary Argentinian composer, Astor Piazzola. These combined the melodic invitation of Chopin with the slow dance rhythm of the tango. It was well received by the audience.

Lustchevsky's playing throughout, as expected from a master, was controlled, beautifully articulated, romantic but not sentimental, with no unnecessary display of technical virtuosity. An enthusiastic audience was reluctant to let him go. The second encore, a Chopin nocturne, brought back the reflective quiet of the pianist's chosen pieces to end a memorable evening.

■ AJIT MOZOOMDAR

Celebrating Kabeer

PERFORMANCE: *Kabeer* by Shekhar Sen
COLLABORATION: Impresario India,
 March 16

Shekhar Sen's mono-act musical play *Kabeer* was presented at the Gandhi King Plaza's open-air stage recently. It was the magic of Shekhar Sen's well-groomed emotive voice that created the lasting impact of the 'Nirgun' poetry of Kabeer, the revolutionary medieval poet who challenged the religious dogmatism, the futile divide of caste, creed and religion between human beings, and the orthodox social system that created this disparity.

Shekhar tells the story of Kabeer through Kabeer's own pulsating poetry comprising *Dohas*, *Ramaini* and *Sakhis*, composed and sung by Shekhar in different ragas of classical to folk music in his own captivating way. Kabeer's childhood story has his weaver father Niru Julaaha, his doting mother Amma, friend Jagan, Rangrejji Chaachi

and many more characters including Loi, his wife, whom he carries to reach her lover (*Sabukar ka chhora*), and is puzzled when she changes her mind midway to live with him. Shekhar's *Vachik Abhinaya* was equally moving with the dramatic dialogue delivery in the *Sadhukkadi* dialect of Kabeer which is an amalgam of *Bhojpuri*, *Avadhi* and *Khadi Boli*.

Totally drenched in tunefulness, the minimalistic approach of his music is magical. Trained from early childhood in classical music by his parents, Arun Kumar Sen and Anita Sen, who were classical vocalists of the Gwalior Gharana, Shekhar has a sound knowledge of music. *Moko kahan dhoondhe re Bande* in *Bhoopali*, *Saabhib hai rangrej...* in *Madhmaad Sarang*, *Maalaa pherat jug gaya...* in *Malkauns*, *Man na rangaaye, rangaaye jogi kapada* in *Shuddha sarang*, *Balihaari Guru aap ki...* in *Todi*—each and every song was thoughtfully composed and soulfully sung. Even the two-line *Dohas* were conceived and rendered in ragas that brought forth the intended effect.

■ MANJARI SINHA

Soaring to the Skies

CONCERT: *Scottish Pipes and Whistles*
 by Iain Morrison, March 29

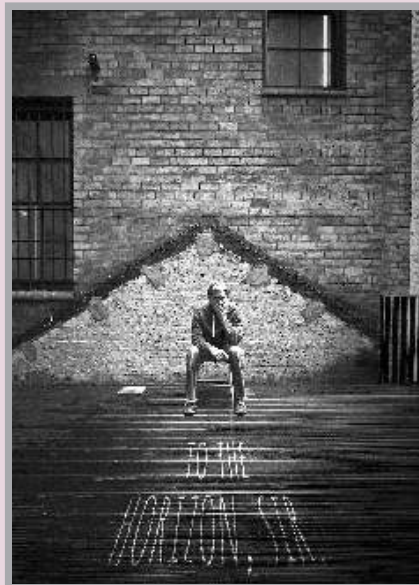
The exhilarating drone and characteristic sound of bagpipes is enough to hoist the human spirit positively to the high heavens. Any dark feelings of remorse or hurt whatsoever are banished the moment the camel-skin bag, squeezed by a strong arm and elbow, forces air out of its depths through a set of tuned pipes and reeds to produce one of the most charming musical sounds on earth: the quaint lilt of bagpipes!

And that is what Iain Morrison, one of Scotland's most talented singer-songwriter and musician did to a rapt audience. Winner of the 'Composer of the Year' at the Scots Trad Music Awards in 2010, Iain was born on the Isle of Lewis in Outer Hebrides, Scotland. His musical journey began when he was taught to play the bagpipes by his musician father using the traditional technique of *canntaireachd* (chanting). He also

learnt to play the guitar and quickly developed his own style of song-writing. With a mixed repertoire of songs and melodies that burrowed deep with a subtle, dark-hued intensity, Iain transported his listeners to the outermost periphery of Scotland's windy coastlines and raging seas. His original songs based on real-life experiences delved into themes relating to human emotions, and especially the feelings of isolation and helplessness borne out of living on a small island surrounded by vast expanses of water. Of special mention was his song, *Broken-off Car Door*, dedicated to his close friend Angus, who trained to become a medical doctor and decided instead to become a professional clown in a travelling circus.

Iain's casual manner and calm disposition endeared him to his listeners as he gave candid descriptions of the circumstances within which he wrote his songs. In response to repeated requests, he rounded up the evening by playing a spirited version of *Amazing Grace* and New Delhi gave him a standing ovation!

■ DEEPAK CASTELINO



Women's Films

TO MARK INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: 10th IAWRT
Asian Women's Film Festival 2014
March 4–7

The IAWRT Asian Women's Film Festival is organised by the members of the India chapter of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television who take out time from their busy professional schedules to put it together every year. The countries in focus this year were Taiwan and Sri Lanka. There was also a new and innovative segment called *Soundphiles*—a curation of sound works.

war; *My No-Mercy Home*, a courageous film from South Korea by Aori on a young woman's legal battle against her father in a case of child sexual abuse; ...*And the Unclaimed*, a moving film on the suicide of two lesbian girls by Debalina. The notable films of shorter duration included *Carpet Weavers* by Batul Moradi; *True Love Story* by Gitanjali Rao; *The Summer Flu* by Priyanka Chhabra; *Aisa Nahun Hua tha Tabira* by Rajula Shah; and *Jaadui Machchi* by the Ektara collective.

This year, the festival also travelled to different campuses and institutions in Delhi through the month of March. In addition to film screenings, there was a panel discussion on 6th March on 'Through the Looking Glass—Post Conflict Sri Lanka and its Dilemmas.' There were also two installations—*Cycle of Sovereignty* by the Zenki



On the evening of 5th March, there was a felicitation ceremony for all the participating filmmakers and sound artists. Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, His Excellency Chung Kwang Tien and Robin Mallick were the special guests.

Forty-five films and sound works from 14 countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Lebanon, Myanmar, Pakistan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Turkey and the UK were presented. Twenty-seven filmmakers and sound artists attended the festival, resulting in many lively and thought-provoking post-screening question and answer sessions.

Some of the highlights of this festival were *Sleepless Nights*, a powerful cinematic documentary by Eliane Raheb from Lebanon on the possibility of forgiveness after the civil

Collective that looks back at the role of a women's collective in the 1990s, the Tinsukia District Mohilla Committee; and *Memory of Water*, an installation by Jenny Pinto, one of a handful of studio paper artists in the country. At the IIC Annexe gallery, there was a group exhibition, *Andaaz-e-Bayaan*, celebrating diverse expressions in text and image by various IAWRT members. On 8th March, the festival concluded with a scintillating day-long seminar at Max Mueller Bhavan entitled—*Hum Gunahgaar Auratein* (We Sinful Women)—celebrating art and resistance by women in South Asia.

■ ANUPAMA SRINIVASAN

Varied Fare

IIC FILM CLUB: *Illusion and Reality – Khwaja Ahmad Abbas A Tribute*

Collaboration: K. A. Abbas Centenary Celebrations Committee and Varsha and Bobby Bedi, March 2014

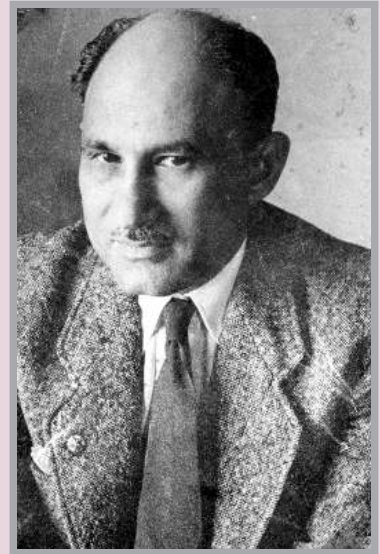
K.A. Abbas, the legendary scriptwriter, is credited with having written, produced and directed some of the best Hindi films in India—including some National Award winners. However, it is his films like *Saath Hindustani* and *Neecha Nagar* which showcase Abbas's ideological bent.

While many know *Saath Hindustani* (1969) as the debut film of the young Amitabh Bachchan, it is much more than that. The plot revolves around how six men from different parts of India, and representing different cultural sensibilities, come together to liberate Goa from Portuguese rule in the 1960s under covert operations led by the seventh member of their group—a Goan Catholic woman. The beauty of the film lies in its evocation of what now seems to be nostalgia for many of us—the idea that diversity is the unifying factor to the idea of being an Indian. What Abbas is also trying to suggest in the film is that caste, religious, cultural, ethnic cleavages can perhaps

best be 'dealt' with through communism. Indeed, a very bold statement to make considering India's chequered relationship with the Left.

Neecha Nagar (1946), another of his films that is hailed as a pioneer of sorts in the parallel cinema genre in India (directed by Chetan Anand), was the first Indian film to share the *Grand Prix du Festival International*

du Film (Best Film) award at the first Cannes Film Festival in 1946. Inspired by Hayatulla Ansari's novel *Neecha Nagar*—which also drew from Maxim Gorky's *Lower Depths*—the film represents the class divide between the rich and the poor.



■ ANINDITA MAJUMDAR

Women of Tibet

TALK AND FILM: *The Women of Tibet and The Tibetan Nuns Project*

Introductory Talk by Rinchen Khando Choegyal

Films: *Dolma Ling Institute and Nunnery – Educating for the Future* and *Women of Tibet – A Quiet Revolution*

Collaboration: Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, March 26

Women in Tibet—as early travellers observed—always enjoyed a higher status than their sisters elsewhere in Asia. Rinchen Khando Choegyal pointed out that Tibetan women traditionally enjoyed freedom of movement, of running estates and businesses, remarriage of widows was common. However, like most of the lay population of Tibet, they were not literate. The impact of the Chinese invasion of Tibet forced thousands to flee to India. Entirely new tasks confronted Tibetan women—they accepted the challenges. A group of committed women founded the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA); they gave first priority to children, who had lost their parents in the turmoil of the flight. In 1987, a new wave of refugees reached India, among them a large number of monks and

nuns. The monks found refuge in branches of their monasteries established in India. But there were no nunneries for the nuns to go to. The Tibetan Nuns Project was born, with two nunneries at the beginning: Dolma Ling at Sidpur and later Shugseb near Dharamsala.

The film *Dolma Ling Institute and Nunnery—Educating for the Future* shows how young nuns beaming with enthusiasm learn to read and debate the ancient Buddhist texts.

A problem that has been debated among Tibetan Buddhists is that nuns cannot receive full ordination at par with monks. Internationally, schools of Buddhism differ on this point. A consequence of the barriers set up by stubborn traditionalists, Tibetan nuns also cannot sit for the Geshe exam, the highest degree in Buddhist studies. Here a wise compromise has been found: a new degree has been established, the Geshima, reserved for women and equal to the Geshe title. In 2015, 20 nuns will appear for the Geshima exams, Rinchen Khando informed us. *Women of Tibet—A Quiet Revolution* was screened in the third part of the programme. It contains a moving interview with a survivor of the protest march by 3,000 women in 1959.

■ DAGMAR BERNSTORFF

Art for All

EXHIBITION: *Public Art* by leading practitioners
March 20–29

For those of us who have loved versions of Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker*—not all the 28 castings were made under his supervision—the idea of public art is very appealing. Apart from the fact that it is noted artists who create large works of art for public display, it is the notion of art for all that has a particular resonance. While it is true that much public art is taken for granted, ignored and may even be defaced, the display of sculptures and maquettes by important artists at the Gandhi King Plaza brought into focus the power of such work. In various media, ranging from *sheesham* and plaster of Paris to bronze and cement, the exhibition was interesting though it could have been much better curated and the charming

space used better. One almost missed Saroj Jain's bronzes placed a bit too casually on a side wall.

All the same, it was a treat to see Satish Gujral's bronze torso of a horse, Latika Katt's work in progress as well as her 'Trees'—a delicate filigree in bronze—as well as Sheela Chamariya's 'Let's Play' and 'Sound of Music'. M.G. Kidwai's two bronzes of a palm that becomes a duck's head, and a duck whose tail blends into a palm looked majestic beneath the old ficus. Neeraj Gupta's strong, larger-than-life faces in cement, with touches of oil paint made sense in an exhibition of public art, though one wonders how small bronzes by Biman Das, Anil Vyas and Asurvedh would fare in Indian parks and plazas! A particularly gentle March morning made it very pleasant and one wishes that there were more footfalls at what was clearly an unusual art show at the IIC.

■ MALAVIKA KARLEKAR

Quarterly Launch

IIC QUARTERLY JOURNAL RELEASE: *Living with Religious Diversity* (Winter 2013–Spring 2014)
Released by Dr. Karan Singh
Panelists: Mrinal Miri; T.N. Madan; Bindu Puri;
Gurpreet Mahajan and Sonia Sikka
April 2

'Can there be a liberal person of faith?'

This key question, among others fundamental to the daily interactions of people of different faiths and the lived experience at the ground level of political and individual spaces, continues to engage philosophical minds. Whether the approach towards religion is one of opposition, or dismissal, or fundamentalism, it is an integral part of one's existence and its significance cannot be ignored.

Sonia Sikka outlined the genesis of the book, and said that this issue attempts to examine the role of state interactions with civil society, religious organisations, and the various actors that participate in the negotiation of religious diversity and the quest for equality.

The four concepts proposed by Bindu Puri were those to which the papers in the journal respond in different ways—that possible solutions came from a principled agreement on the essentials; the epistemological stance that defines this tolerance; the primacy of reason and scepticism in liberalism; and possible reasons for the

believer to respect dissenting religious others.

Mrinal Miri touched upon the issues of morality, self-knowledge, and knowledge of the other as a necessary condition of ethical self-practice, and the nexus between science and religion. '...the articulation of religious experience is a matter of mythical, poetic and primarily metaphorical imagination, and such imagination in one religion has deep resonances in others', he said.

Gandhi's suggested position on religious diversity was categorically rejected by T. N. Madan as factually incorrect, saying that Gandhi had clearly rejected both ideas—of toleration and of respect—choosing instead to situate his argument in Jaina philosophy. Madan also questioned the premise that there is no theology of pluralism in Islam by portraying Maulana Azad and Dara Shikoh as examples.

Gurpreet Mahajan focused on shared social practices and cultural /religious spaces as characteristic of India. Among the many issues she touched on was the distinction between 'education about religion' and 'education of religion.' So, can different faiths learn to live with one another rather than merely tolerate each other?

Dr. Karan Singh held up the 'Interfaith Movement' in the 20th century as a laudable attempt to bring together people of many religious persuasions in a harmonious understanding.

■ RITU SINGH

Transforming Waste

EXHIBITION: *At War with the Obvious* by Anita Ahuja

April 10–17

Edgy art-making in the last decade suggests that art and activism combine, or don't, in several ways. To me, an artwork, regardless of whether it intends to 'bring awareness' or not, is successful if it can provoke an experience. This is how I frame Anita Ahuja's work which was on display at the IIC. More and more artists are now working on environmental issues or meta consumption, and their strategies are varied.

Unlike most artists one comes across, Anita Ahuja's background has been diverse. Her work includes running a non-profit on energy issues and waste; then, best known of all, a highly successful for-profit that used plastic bags for consumer goods and accessories. Now, as an artist, Anita gestures to 'beautifying trash.'

To do this, she has painstakingly stripped bare the identity of a range of trash—mostly plastics—and created artwork bordering on collage. Most of her work is presented as front-on images, often abstract, and in a painterly manner. Using colour and texture, she tries to physically transform a material from its lowly existence as unwanted trash to valued art, displayed in a gallery space.



This would have worked if all Anita was doing was to make collages and waste as one of the materials she used. But when she infuses public messages into her work, the show stands on thin ice, because it engages at best at a visual level. The essential process of drawing-in and taking the viewer on a journey of thought and reflection, albeit for a few moments, is incomplete.

■ BHARATI CHATURVEDI

Symbolism of the Lotus

EXHIBITION: *Hana –The Lotus*

March 26 – April 1

Yuriko Lochan, a Japanese artist who has been living in India for over 25 years, opened her show in the Annexe Art Gallery of the IIC. Created between 2012 and 2014, the paintings were all made using traditional Japanese materials from Osaka, where her parents live. The works appeared in a swirl of paintings, executed by an experienced hand, with a command over intricate details and layered water colours of astounding shades.

'In this Lotus series, what I intend to achieve is the feeling of my origin comfortably lying behind and supporting the expression. I have started these works on concept in nature, using the Japanese material to search visual unity between India and Japan', says Yuriko, but it is not wise to assume any one meaning for Hana, the lotus, her latest series of intricate water colours on gold-bordered shikshi.

Yuriko's paintings depict the flower in different colours, which have their own implications. For instance, a white lotus flower is known to symbolise awakening and represents a state of mental purity, of spiritual perfection and inner peace.

A purple lotus is considered to be mystic, and can be depicted as either an open flower or as a bud. The eight petals of the purple lotus are representative of the noble eightfold path of the teachings of Buddha. The pink lotus, of which there is a large, four shikshi painting in the show, is the supreme lotus and is considered to be the true lotus of Buddha. It is interesting how the unopened bud is representative of a folded soul that has the ability to unfold and open itself up to the divine truth.

Just as the lotus represents enlightenment, it also appeared to me as Yuriko returns from the land of her birth to her other home after a hiatus, the lotus appears as a symbol of her rebirth; the emergence of the divine feminine and a spiritual attainment of peace.



■ SABA HASAN

Filomena's Journey

DISCUSSION: *Filomena's Journey – A Portrait of a Marriage a Family and a Culture* by Maria Aurora Couto

Speakers: Romila Thapar, Sunil Sethi and Maria Aurora Couto

Collaboration: Aleph Book Company
March 3

The book discussion around author Maria Aurora Couto's *Filomena's Journey* began with Professor Romila Thapar placing its context as a biography of Maria's mother, Filomena, a redoubtable Goan lady who settled for some years in Dharwar, and was married to Chico, a man of Goan gentry. Maria, she said, has called the book 'a portrait of a marriage'; Thapar, however likened it to an installation of kinetic art, showcasing an intricate network of relationships, almost like living in a spider's web.

Thapar said the book really had three characters, the mother, the father and the context/location of the book that *sotto voce* became the third person. She went on to

describe the location, the Westernised club culture of cantonment towns like Dharwar and Poona, where the dwellers belonged to a 'surrogate caste'. They were warned from venturing too far out, into the forbidden 'city', a hangover of colonial mind sets inherited by the English/Portuguese speaking populace.

Sunil Sethi, in conversation with Maria Couto, described her as a woman of many parts: teacher, author, critic and one who had lived in Goa as well as outside it. He could discern multiple narratives in her work that laid bare the wound of Goa, delving far deeper into its history than the common perception of hedonistic Goa currently allows for in popular media.

The Church with its soaring spires plays an important role in Couto's recreation of the life of Goa's feudal elite, stressing on its European artistic and other influences. However the borrowings, be they in music, architecture, or language, or the bonding between Catholics and Hindus, ended in mutual enrichment, a legacy she has more than ably captured.

■ MANJU KAK

World Economy

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: *Catch Up – Developing Countries in the World Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) by Deepak Nayyar

Discussants: Prem Shankar Jha, Sanjaya Baru; and Neera Chandhoke

Chair: Bimal Jalan
March 12

Dr. Bimal Jalan, who chaired the event, rightly observed that though there is no shortage of books on history, economics and politics, Deepak Nayyar's book remains unique as it combines all these three elements. The book spans the history of development, particularly emerging markets or developing economies over the last two or three centuries.

The three panelists expressed their views which covered a vast canvas: the West and the rest; the rise of Asia; and China's supremacy.

Sanjaya Baru observed that the story is about the rise of developing countries. He stressed that the last few decades essentially witnessed the rise of Asia, with China leading

the way. This was followed by a discussion on equality and poverty; the relationship between the two rather than economic policy per se, initiated by political scientist Neera Chandhoke. Lastly, Prem Shankar Jha focused on the importance of technology. According to him, the reason for both the stability, pre-1800, the great divergence, 1800-1967 to 1970, and the convergence thereafter is that these are all manifestations of the change of the organisation of human society in the inexorable progress of technology.

The author analysed the process of Catch-up—what has driven it? And those that succeeded. He stressed three essential ingredients: initial conditions, enabling institutions, and supportive governments. However, those who succeeded had an enormous diversity among themselves.

Deepak Nayyar explained that the book does not simply accept but argues that this Catch-up is very uneven between regions. In the aggregate there is a Catch-up and there is a diversity within each of the continents.

■ GAURIKA KAPOOR

Consumerism and Spirituality

TALK: *The Quest for Consciousness*

Speaker: Julio Ozan Lavoisier

Chair: H.E. Raul Ignacio Guastavino

Collaboration: Embassy of Argentina, April 1

Argentinian philosopher and prolific author Julio Ozan Lavoisier was introduced by H.E. the Ambassador of Argentina, Mr. Guastavino as a man for all seasons who dedicated much of his life and worldwide travels to study and research on the human condition.

The speaker recalled that for many years his investigations into the Western philosophical tradition of idealism inspired by Platonism led him to discover the Indian philosophical tradition, particularly Vedanta. He analysed the role of Christianity in the development of Western civilisation as a foreign factor that was never well integrated into the 'Indo-European' Hellenistic and Latin cultures of Europe and its American colonies. He saw the Renaissance as one of several periodic attempts to reclaim an integral humanist perspective.

Vijaya – The Victorious

PERFORMANCE: *Vijaya – The Victorious—90 Years On*

Directed by Ananda Gupta. Narrated by

Gustavo Canzobre

Collaboration: Embassy of Argentina, April 15

'Tagore was a human tree—a mystery which is delightful—a tremor so deep that it pains...' These thoughts were given voice by Tagore scholar Professor Ganguly, to introduce the event commemorating the 90th anniversary of Tagore's visit to Argentina at the invitation of Victoria Ocampo. Directed by Ananda Gupta and narrated by Gustavo Canzobre, the multi-media performance on this occasion uncovered the extraordinary personal, mystical, literary and spiritual milestones lived out over a period of three months. Ocampo had been privy to Gurudev's writings through a French translation of *Gitanjali*, and was moved by the presence of that 'absent figure' that symbolised the yearning of the human spirit in search of an ideal.

Through a tapestry of Tagore numbers and choreographed dances, accompanied with a mesmerising *pakhawaj-tabla-sitar-esraj-kanjira* orchestra, the evening got off to an engaging start. The Spanish version of some of Tagore's verses by Canzobre added emotive appeal, relished by the largely non-Spanish speaking audience.

The numbers picked for the evening were sung with Tagorean exactitude, while the dance, as a frontal on-

Ozan asserted that Indian spiritual traditions developed various techniques to get rid of the ego in order to enable humans to rise. Western civilisation has increasingly cultivated the ego as the essential motivating force for action, forgetting that, as Plato said, poverty is not the reduction of our means, but the expansion of our desires. As a result, the West is promoting a 'mass culture' of consumerism and competition which sacrifices the aesthetic for the functional, and subordinates the social hierarchy to merely financial considerations, contrary to the original *varnasrama dharma* of India which gave primacy to the spiritual element. Ozan warned India about the danger of imitating the Western model.

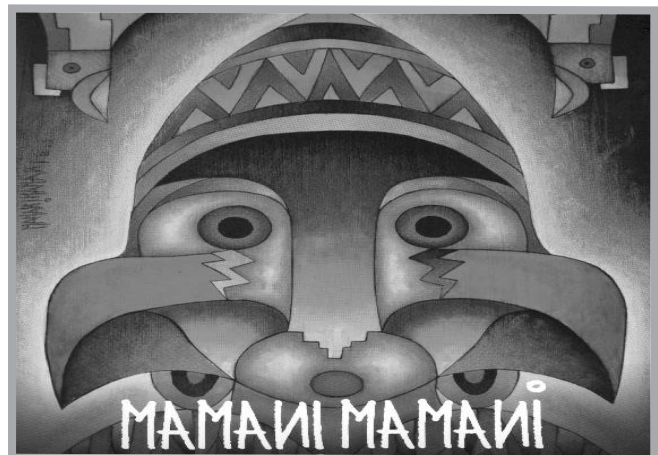
India's civilisation can now provide the necessary principles and tools to orient and regulate an otherwise blind technological flight forward. Inward development knows no limits while the conquest of the external objects of the world eventually leads to alienation and self-destruction.

■ COME CARPENTIER

going event, artistically framed the melody. The audio-visual re-created the times for viewers, with stunning photographs of Victoria or Vijaya and charming views of the villa at San Isidro.

The evening was also marked by scholarly acknowledgements of Tagore's genius by Professor Ganguly who mentioned the symbolic Tapi tree in the villa as a summation of the Victoria essence. Tributes by Shashi Tharoor were equally glowing. But the final salute by Canzobre established that it is Victoria who deservedly held the right to call Tagore 'Gurudev' for the legacy he had bequeathed her, and which had gracefully flowered into the poems of *Purabi*, and *Urvashi* thereafter.

■ SUBHRA MAZUMDAR



Namaste India-An exhibition of paintings and sculptures by two leading artists from Bolivia

Tibet and Ecology

ROUND TABLE: *State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau*

Collaboration: Foundation for Non-violent Alternatives
March 28–30

The Tibetan Plateau is one of the most vulnerable places on earth. It is rich and varied with abundant plant and wildlife diversity, water resources, glaciers and grasslands, all of which play a vital role in maintaining the world's environmental balance. The Tibetan Plateau is called 'The Water Tower of Asia' or the 'Third Pole', or the Earth's third largest storehouse of ice outside the two poles, and is home to more than 46,000 glaciers covering an area of 105,000 sq km. The Plateau holds the Hindu Kush Himalayan Ice Sheet, considered to be the largest ice mass outside the two poles. Four of the world's ten major rivers have their headwaters on the Plateau. The Tibetan Plateau is therefore of strategic global significance in regulating and maintaining climate. Global warming, however, poses a grave threat to the Plateau's ecological system. Climate change has wrought changes in the

region, and accelerated the melting of Tibet's glaciers. This will have effects that resonate far beyond Tibet and China.

This Roundtable considered the prospects of consensus on problems affecting the ecology of the Tibetan Plateau, and future policy directions on trans-boundary issues. A common language, and common understanding emerged, in which the Himalaya and Tibet, rather than dividing India and China, unite them. Commonalities emerged on a wide range of issues, from rural livelihoods to the sharing of the waters originating in Tibet and drunk daily by 1.4 billion people; from the dynamics of development to the militarisation of the high mountains.

The Foundation for Non-violent Alternatives expressed its deep concern that a realm of traditional land management, indigenous knowledge, light touch nomadic mobility, respect for nature and a last frontier of pristine landscapes is rapidly becoming, on all sides, the object of national development strategies.

■ **REBON BANERJEE DHAR**

Young Adult Fiction

DISCUSSION: *Pushing the Boundaries – Writing for Young Adults Today*

Panelists: Ranjit Lal, Sayoni Basu, Paro Anand, Roshani Jain

Moderator: Anita Roy

Collaboration: Young Zubaan, March 6

This discussion focused on the literary trend of young adult fiction, its challenges, limitations as well as possibilities. The panelists included authors such as Paro Anand and Ranjit Lal, publishers Sayoni Basu and Anita Roy, as well as a student, Roshani Jain. The discussion began with a question about the greater popularity and glamour quotient of foreign authors vis-à-vis Indian writers of young adult fiction. Was it due to lack of publicity by the publishers? Roy also posed the question of whether Indian authors needed to be more radical. In response, Paro Anand pointed out that the bandwidth for young adult writing was widening, and would continue to do so as authors pushed the boundaries and wrote books that children wanted to read and not only what was acceptable in schools. Lal added that while some school

libraries were progressive, others were conservative. The discussants briefly dwelt on how the category of young adult fiction was linked to the American invention of the term 'teenager' in the 1960s. Basu also reflected that it was still difficult to get books for young adults in Indian languages.

Following this, the panelists spoke about the boundaries and restrictions of writing for children. Basu argued that authors and publishers shared a sense of responsibility when writing for children. For instance, when dealing with negative themes, they needed to differentiate between the authorial voice and the character's voice. According to Lal, irrespective of how outrageous the subject was, its outcome depended on how the author dealt with it. Roy added that many recent popular young adult reads were bleak and dystopian, which indicated that teenagers were often thinking about big issues. The discussion concluded with the general agreement that young adult writing was still in its early stage, and with time, it would have greater diversity and different kinds of narratives.

■ **SONAM JOSHI**

Tagore's Letters

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE: *Letters from a Young Poet* —
Rabindranath Tagore (1887–95)

Speaker: Rosinka Chaudhuri

Chair: P.K. Datta

April 3

Chhinnapatraboli or collection of scattered leaves/letters is the evocatively titled collection of letters written by a young Rabindranath Tagore, then between the ages of 26 to 34, to his niece Indira Debi, daughter of his brother Satyendranath. He later described this period as the most productive of his literary life. *Chhinnapatraboli* itself is the result of Tagore's request to Indira Debi to preserve the letters. In his words: '...I'll copy out just the experiences of beauty from them into an exercise book. Because if I live for a long time, I am sure to grow old, then all these days will become things of remembrance and consolation....My days and nights of sorrow are not woven together like this anywhere else in my poetry or prose.' His letters to her, copied in two hard-bound exercise books, were a present from Indira Debi to Rabindranath at a time when he was already a well-known

literary figure. A selection was first published as *Chhinnapatra* in 1912, the same year that *Gitanjali* was published.

Rosinka Chaudhuri, who translated *Chhinnapatraboli*, the complete collection of letters, from the original Bengali into English under the title *Letters from a Young Poet*, held the audience spellbound through her eloquent introduction to the book, and a few select photographs. The letters disclose yet another dimension to a multifaceted individual much written about and analysed—that of Tagore as a young man, long before the fame of the Nobel Prize. Through the special bond that uncle and niece shared, the varied interests, emotions, sensitivities that Rabindranath embodied were evident through his expression—his intimacy with nature, the love for his children, humorous accounts of various encounters, his angst at the attitudes of his fellow countrymen towards the British, dealings with his estates—his mood sometimes reflective and philosophical as one would expect, to sometimes downright mischievous. Rosinka's talk effectively encompassed this range.

■ KONINIKI RAY

Voices from the Northeast and the South

DISCUSSION: *Delhi — Capturing Women's Lives and Change in a City in Transition. Building Bonds? Experiences in an Expanding Delhi*

Coordinator: Indu Agnihotri

Collaboration: Centre for Women's Development Studies
March 22

This was a discussion between two voices from northeast India and Kerala on Delhi, which has been a city for girls from different parts of India and from different backgrounds over several years. There are positive and negative aspects of growing up in Delhi.

Tiplut Nongbri talked about how the story for northeastern women growing up in Delhi is changing over a period of time. Northeastern people face racial discrimination almost every day. She said that in the early years they used to come to Delhi for education, and now they also come in search of work. There are certain push factors for northeastern India, such as limited educational institutes, employment and basic infrastructure.

A woman from Kerala, Nafeesa, came as a wife to Delhi and then moved on to becoming the main earning member for her family. She has her own catering business. She talked about how the changes in the city and city's administration affect the individual. Her husband used to run a petrol auto rickshaw. When, in 1996, it became mandatory to change to CNG autos, he became jobless and could not find another source of income. For her, Delhi is secure. She said that Delhi helped her to grow without compromising self-respect.

The problems will be solved only when people start recognising differences and become tolerant. A great initiative is required to end this disjuncture of knowledge about the northeastern region or the southern region, or any other regions that have been ignored since years, into the curriculum of state education boards and other central educational boards, especially NCERT books. In addition, the government (both state and centre) should be more inclusive while forming and implementing policies to ensure that they do not alienate a community.

■ DAISY DEKA

Contemporary Chinese Art

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE: *Reading Contemporary Chinese Art*

Speaker: Suman Gupta

Chair: Patricia Uberoi

April 11

The connecting thread in Suman Gupta's talk was that of the constantly evolving social milieu in which Chinese art has found expression. Paramount in the analysis of any art form anywhere in the world is the context of production and the context of consumption. Gupta put forth a refreshingly innovative approach in discussing these aspects in the appreciation of contemporary Chinese art. An eminent professor of cultural history and English literature and an avid blogger on Chinese art, he suggested an in-depth 'reading' of artworks as one would with literary texts, to reach into the complexities to discover unforeseen meanings, and deduce the inter-relationship of the making and receiving of art.

Though advocating the need to dispense with preconceived notions, the speaker emphasised the importance of traditional areas which have given direction to Chinese artists—ink on rice paper paintings, the social realist genre and calligraphy. Much of neo-art and the avantgarde movement took inspiration from socialist realism. While expounding on abstraction or non-representational expression, which he related to ink painting, the speaker engagingly described the act of the brush meeting the paper as a performance.

Delving into the area of artists' support of protest movements through visual portrayals, for instance workers being laid off or the farmers' demonstration against land seizures in 2006, Gupta remarked on the dichotomy of these artworks being saleable commodities. Today, while new media, materials and technology are part of the Chinese artist's oeuvre, the speaker highlighted the indelible impact of the internet, its social ramifications and the powerful propulsion of Chinese art into the virtual world of cyber art.

■ ANU JINDAL

Cancer and Carcinogens

TALK: *Emerging Carcinogens in an Emerging World*

Speaker: Siddhartha Mukherjee

Collaboration: Cellular Operators Association of India

April 21

It was a packed hall that had gathered to listen to Siddhartha Mukherjee (Pulitzer prize winning author of *The Emperor of all Maladies*) speak on cancer and carcinogens in a talk entitled 'Emerging Carcinogens in an Emerging World.' Mukherjee's opening words, 'I am interested in the structure and acquisition of knowledge...(more especially how)...we acquire knowledge of carcinogens...' were a prelude to a carefully and logically constructed analysis of the hypotheses used over the centuries to pry open the mysteries of cancer. We might, he said, think of cancer as a modern disease, but in fact it is quite an ancient one, quoting a papyrus dating back to the third millennium BC that contains a medical description of breast cancer.

Using language with jewel-like precision and an exactitude of phraseology, Mukherjee elaborated the many approaches to unravelling the causes of cancer.

Some were rare and fortunate leaps of intuition, such as the connection made in 18th century England by Percivall Pott, who connected the incidence of scrotal tumours amongst chimney sweeps with cancer rather than venereal disease. Some were born of methodical and painstaking research, such as that undertaken by Drs. Doll and Hill, that established the fatal link between tobacco and lung cancer. Other factors include the very process of aging, or yet again, genetic predispositions. At the same time, Mukherjee pointed out, of all diseases the level of diversity amongst cancers is the highest, exacerbated by our environment and its pollution.

One supposed linkage that is not supported by data, Mukherjee said, is the impact of cell phones and towers on health. There is a fear of radiation; this is unfounded as the Electro Magnetic Force (EMF) does not have enough energy to alter DNA. Sam Pitroda—who joined the discussion via Skype—reiterated this, pointing out that India has very stringent EMF radiation norms. A lively question and answer followed, during which the question of pesticides as carcinogens arose; this needed, said Dr. Mukherjee a closer tracking.

■ ASHARANI MATHUR

Disappearance of the Instrument-maker

MUSIC APPRECIATION PROMOTION: *The Last Flute Maker – The Disappearance of the Instrument-maker*

A dialogue between Jagdeep Singh Bedi and Ajay Rikhi Ram

Coordinator: Manjari Sinha

April 7

At the outset, the moderator Manjari Sinha introduced both Jagdeep and Ajay to the audience, and described the topic of the discussion very clearly, explaining the affinities between the musician and the instrument-maker, and also the significance of swara, sruti, and raga. Jagdeep Singh Bedi followed by enumerating some of the rare musical instruments of India such as *Rudra Vina*, *Vichitra Vina*, *Surbahar*, *Isharaj* and even *Pakhawaj*. He gave various reasons for the disappearance of these instruments.

To throw light on the topic as an instrument-maker, Ajay Rikhi Ram said that earlier, musicians used to make their

own instruments. Even in the gurukul tradition, students learnt music as well as the art of instrument-making. So, Ajay's father also descended through this tradition and became one of the finest instrument-makers of India.

Further, he also described some factors regarding the disappearance of musical instruments as well as instrument-makers, such as lack of interest of the younger generation to learn this *kala*. He gave some important suggestions to re-energise these instruments. He also explained the essential points which are necessary while making musical instruments: tonal quality should be melodious, it should be easy to tune and should remain tuned.

He also narrated his father Rikhi Ram's experiences regarding differences in the making of the sitars of Ustad Vilayat Khan and Pandit Ravi Shankar. His father made sitars according to their demands. Therefore, it is clearly apparent that the principles of making instruments have also developed according to the demands of both musicians and listeners.

■ TAMASHWOR SHARMA

Female Voice in Hindi Films

MUSIC APPRECIATION PROMOTION: *From the Courtesan to the Heroine – The Female Voice in Hindi Film Song*

Illustrated lecture by Shikha Jhingan

April 19

The theme held great promise with the images evoked of early Indian experimental cinema. Despite the thrust on women's education in India in the 19th and early 20th centuries, social approbation and the high moral ground were pointed as dire consequences to women even from enlightened sections of Indian society. With the majority of the first actresses and cinema persona being former courtesans or from theatre or from less reputed backgrounds, there was a dramatic transition of the female voice from the courtesan into the demure heroine.

In all, Jhingan gave a well documented illustrated lecture on the female voice in cinema. Where it faltered was the lack of historical reference, the limited scope to the late 1940s, a period well after the gentrification of music had begun, putting back respectability to those in the musical profession and well after playback singing had taken root, and the very personal view that it was one person alone, Lata Mangeshkar who was responsible for removing the

spectre of the courtesan from Indian cinema, a conclusion which is both farcical and somewhat absurd.

Major omissions included the many efforts of pioneering stalwarts to push women and society into music and into cinema as a respected and creative profession. That Calcutta was the film cluster for India, producing successful bi-lingual and multi-lingual films, including Urdu and Tamil cinema. Here, family-owned studios like the acclaimed New Theatres and Madan Theatres achieved many pioneering firsts of Indian cinema, recording and cinema photography and many women were in the forefront like Saraswati Devi of Bombay Talkies. Lahore too was a significant centre but on a smaller scale. Bombay later developed as a film centre.

Jhingan as in a paean to Mangeshkar spoke of her multi-layered tones depicting the inner voice of the Indian film heroine. There is no mention of history; the work by others and of the technological development of superior microphones which allowed Mangeshkar to project a voice which many originally described as thin and shrill compared to the usual form of the female voice at the time and had even rejected.

■ MEKHALA SENGUPTA

Tradition and Time

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: *The Relevance of Traditional Cultures for The Present and The Future*

Collaboration: IIC-Asia Project and Indian Council for Cultural Relations

March 24-26

This was an extraordinary conference at the initiative of the IIC-Asia Project, this time the sphere of its coverage extending to Africa and South America, besides Asia. This international conference was attended by 30 delegates from China, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal, Mauritius, Benin, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Mexico, Argentina, Greece, Russia, Germany, Hungary, UK, USA and India. Many delegates congratulated and thanked the organisers for giving them an opportunity to participate in a unique conference of its kind, and for an inspirational and rewarding experience in interacting with scholars from different parts of the world.

developing world in the context of the ongoing international political and economic discourse. She pointed at the two symbols, one of 'global' and the other of the 'Earth'. Extending that argument, she said that 'global' meant contrived uniformity; the 'Earth' took one to everything we today understand as the discourse on environment, sustainable development and so on. She drew attention to the fact that the countries which are grouped together under the nomenclature of 'developing' countries happen to be those with ancient civilisations and also long continuities of living traditions.

Vice-President Ansari, in his inaugural address, raised a series of questions to which the conference should seek answers. He gave a number of examples to underline that traditions are indispensable; that they do not impede forward movement of societies but actually lend authenticity to them. He stressed that tradition and modernity are not antipodes; that the examination of the past has to be critical rather than adulatory, and must steer clear of imagined glory and must not be an incentive for chauvinism. He suggested the need to rethink modernity by criticising it from within, in its own terms and



The conference was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. M. H. Ansari, Vice-President of India, and presided over by Hon'ble Mr. N. N. Vohra, Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and Life Trustee of the IIC. Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan observed that the conference represented the fifth phase of work undertaken by the IIC-Asia Project since its inception in 1993. The objective this time was to place the

there by enriching it.

In his President's address, Mr. N. N. Vohra added several new dimensions to the issues under discussion. He asked whether the past can contribute to finding solutions to the challenges facing the world today, including for instance that of internal insurgencies in different parts of the world, overcoming the problems inherited from

Engaging with Empowerment

PANEL DISCUSSION: *Engaging with Empowerment – What Does it Entail?*

Panelists: Srilatha Batliwala; Kalyani Menon-Sen; Subhalakshmi Nandi

Moderator: Ritu Menon

Collaboration: Women Unlimited
April 12

In tune with its title, the lively discussion around Srilatha Batliwala's book, *Engaging with Empowerment*, focused around the important and elusive term 'empowerment.'

Writer and publisher Ritu Menon, who also moderated the session, started the evening of reflections and dialogue by pointing out that the women's movement has been engaged with the three E's of equality, equity and empowerment. She surmised that we have been able to achieve some amount of equality through laws, some amount of equity through affirmative action, but defining, redefining, conceptualising and attaining empowerment is due to feminist struggle and thought.

Feminist thinker and practitioner, Srilatha Batliwala, while sharing her field experiences, highlighted how power is still at the heart of 'empowerment', and that any

attempt to engage or practice empowerment has to deal with power, which has grown more complex over the years due to the emergence of global structures like finance, foreign markets and trade systems. She also succinctly illustrated how gender and social power relations are constructed and sustained.

Feminist activist and writer Kalyani Menon-Sen contributed to the discussion by tracing the devolution of the term 'empowerment'—from its inception in the feminist domain to its usage by the state in spelling out policies, and later its abuse by the development industry.

Subhalakshmi Nandi of UN Women further discussed the problems in the definition and understanding of the term 'empowerment.' She gave examples from her field experiences of the micro-credit programme to show how this scheme, by focusing only on the financial aspect, has over the years influenced and altered the poverty and empowerment discourse in India.

The speakers concluded that even though the word 'empowerment' has eviscerated over the decades, it remains an important term in feminist theory and therefore cannot be discarded by feminist thinkers and scholars.

■ DEEPSHIKHA BATHEJA

Ubiquitous Mobile Phones

TALK: *Cell Phone Nation*

Speaker: Robin Jeffrey

Collaboration: Cellular Operators Association of India
April 30

Dr. Robin Jeffrey, co-author of the bestseller *Cell Phone Nation*, gave a riveting discourse at the IIC. This was the inaugural part of a three-city lecture series (Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai) and was co-sponsored by the COAI, whose Director General, Rajan Mathews, introduced the speaker.

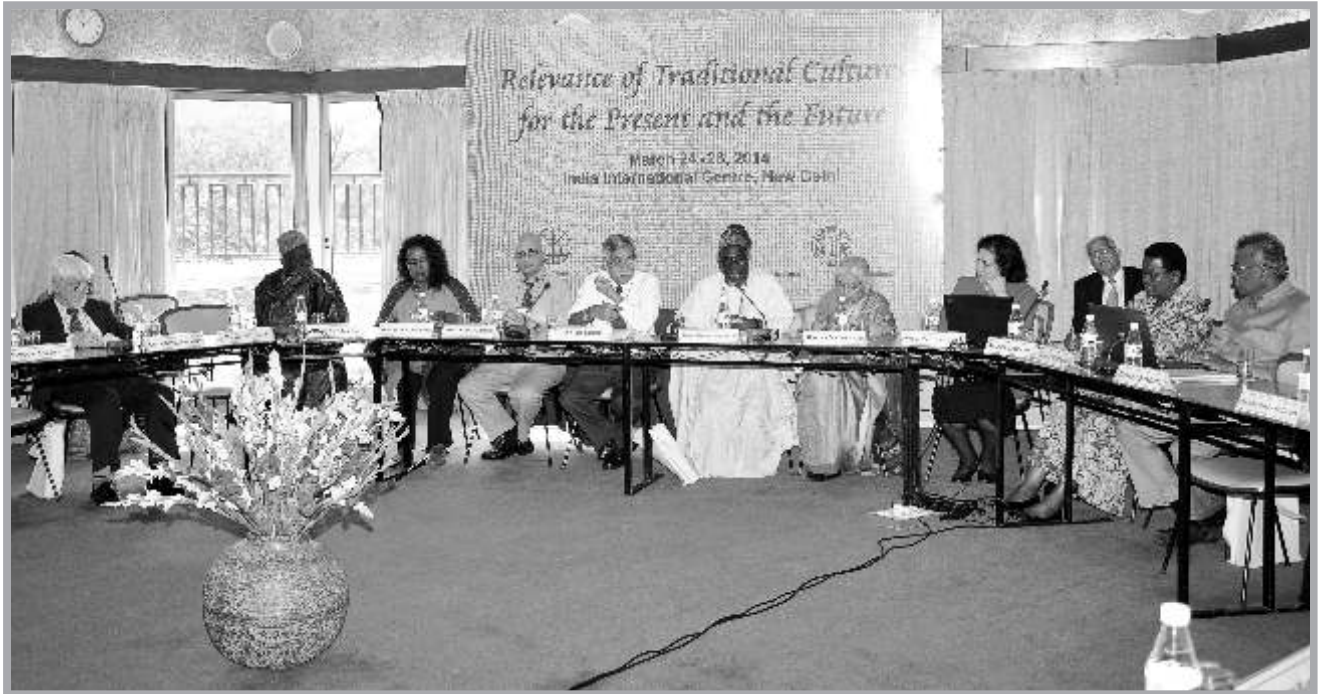
The chief guest, Secretary, Telecom, spoke of how the speaker's book inspired him and how the speed at which the telecom sector had grown in India, giving a voice to millions, leading to vital social, economic and political changes, and unleashing the hidden creativity of the Indian masses.

Dr. Jeffrey, a Canadian, who had spent time in India as a schoolteacher and in Australia and Singapore, having got his PHD in Modern Indian history from the UK,

outlined the growth of the telephone network from its early stages in the 1970s to the spiralling growth that came in with the influx of new technology and economic liberalism. The real change in mobile connectivity came between 2004 and 2012, when the mobile connections went up from a few million to over 900 million.

The arrival of the inexpensive mobile phone has smashed many walls and made conditions much faster, more efficient and more democratic for the *aam admi*. Mobile telephone is the most important change since the arrival of shoes in the history of mankind, as it gave dignity and democratic equality to the common man. Its political impact was first felt in 2007 with the resounding victory of Mayawati, helped hugely with the use of mobile phones by her cadres to garner votes. Knowledge is power and putting a little knowledge-power in the hands of hundreds of millions of citizens for the first time is fairly disruptive. We are now in the age of the Network Society as a democratic equality of communication has been established.

■ SIDDHARTH KAK



The conference concluded with a valedictory session at which the Rapporteur, Ambassador Nalin Surie, presented his report on outcomes and highlights of the discussions. In his valedictory address, Dr. Karan Singh began by stating that he agreed with the outcome of the discussions as presented by the Rapporteur. He recalled the IIC-UNESCO project on 'Tradition and Modernity' held fifty years ago. The crisis in the world community persisted. We face a vanishing past and an indeterminate future with problems such as fanaticism, terrorism and inequality confronting us. In addressing this crisis, the development of cultures was critical. He recalled that the

Global South was not always poor. Indeed, it was the riches of the latter that attracted the attention of others. The South had again to develop and articulate its cultures and perceptions to add to the richness of global society and make due contributions to Asia, Africa and South America. The links among the South that had been shattered by colonialism had also to be restored across the board. Further, the importance of oral traditions should be stressed. In India, the latter had been central to its persistence as a civilisation.

Mr. Satish C. Mehta, Director-General, ICCR and Dr. Kavita Sharma, Director, IIC thanked Dr. Karan Singh for his wide-ranging and

profound valedictory address and also the participants who had taken the trouble to travel from different parts of the world. At the end of the session, speaking on behalf of the foreign participants, Professor Akosua Anyidoho of Ghana announced that there was need for a follow-up conference and that Africa would take up the baton in this regard.

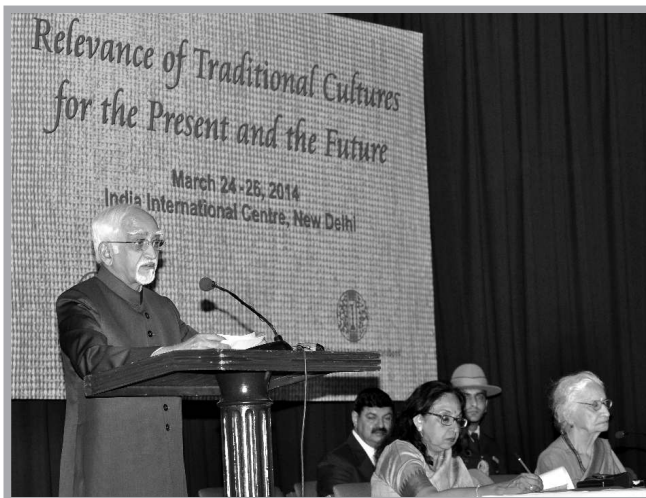
The Hon'ble Vice-President of India and Mr. Soli J. Sorabjee, President, IIC hosted dinners in honour of the delegates.





colonial systems of education and imperial thought, changes required in the framework of the international economic system and its impact on defense and other policies. He underlined that the tradition in India and Asia was on brotherhood and living in peace; that pluralism as defined in the concept note was badly needed today. He stressed that in today's world, the capacity to dialogue needs to be enhanced.

The five sessions of the seminar were chaired by Ambassador Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yayi, former Chairman of the UNESCO Executive Board, Professor Dr. Sri Hastanto (from Indonesia), Ms Samira Hanna el Daher from Lebanon, Ambassador Fauste Godoy (from Brazil) and Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan. The presentations and the discussions that ensued brought out the many commonalities in the perceptions of the issues faced by the South.



The delegates stressed the importance of diversity and respect for cultures; that culture was universal and existed at many levels, in time and space, and had to be kept alive for humanity; the continuity and fluidity of traditional cultures provided a liberating influence and that tradition was a living reality and the principles that underlined it evolved and adjusted, but were based on timeless wisdom. They also underlined the importance of the preservation of the centrality of languages and strengthening oral traditions across the board. Many delegates, for instance Dr. Wafaa El Saddik from Egypt, as also Dr. Le Thi Minh Ly from Vietnam and Dr. Elizabeth W. Giorgis from Ethiopia stressed the role and significance of cultural heritage for a positive national identity and the importance in this context of museum education.

Highlights for June 2014

DANCE

5 June 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium
Bharatanatyam Recital by Renuka Iyer

17 June 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium
Mohiniattam Recital by Aiswaria Warier

30 June 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium
Kathak presented by 'Antarang' from Delhi



MUSIC

9 June 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium
Hindustani Vocal Recital
by Madhumita Chattopadhyay

SUMMER FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND DANCE :
24 - 25 June 2014

24 June 2014 from 6:00 pm in the Auditorium
Sitar Recital by Debajit Chakraborty



Hindustani Vocal Recital by Shalini Ved



25 June 2014 from 6:00 pm in the Auditorium

Odissi Recital by Rajib Bhattacharya

Kathak Recital by Namrata Rai

FILMS

18 June 2014 at
6:30 pm in the
Auditorium

Bansuri Guru
Director: Rajeev
Chaurasia

A film on the
flute maestro,
Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia

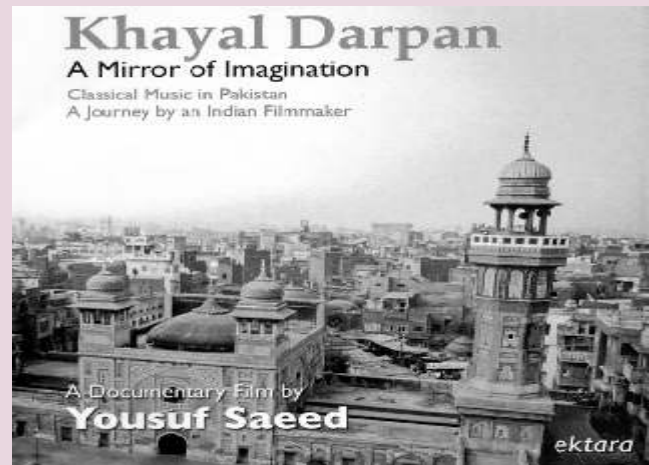


21 June 2014 at 6:30 pm in the Auditorium

Khayal Darpan (A Mirror of Imagination)

Director: Yousuf Saeed

Film on classical music in Pakistan



Whither Archaeology

TALK: FRONTIERS OF HISTORY: *The Marginalisation of Archaeology – Does the Discipline Have a Future in India?*

Speaker: Supriya Varma

Chair: Dr. P. K. Basant, March 21

The India International Centre hosted a talk with Professor Supriya Varma of Jawaharlal Nehru University, where she teaches archaeology, and is the only practicing archaeologist on the faculty. Her position as the only archaeologist in India's premier post-graduate institute for historical studies is a telling representation of the state of archaeology in the nation, and its future, which was her subject.

The talk began with a brief genealogy of the field, and its colonial heritage. She dwelt at length on the manner in which the colonial Oriental and Utilitarian knowledge-producing projects not only built up an image of the Indian past, but also created a field of study that has, since the removal of its colonial impetus, languished methodologically.

She criticised the continuation of field practices developed in the 1950s and 1960s and earlier, before the advent of processual archaeology, and the resulting loss to the study of India's ancient past by sticking to old practices. The insistence on Antiquarian and Culture-historical approaches and the monopoly of the ASI on all archaeological agendas and permits has also limited access for academics.

Protesting against certain stereotypes that are applied to archaeology, whether it is the idea that archaeology is the handmaiden of history, or that archaeology can only be used to study ancient history and has little or no relevance to the present day, Varma used a plethora of examples to prove archaeology's growing relevance.

She suggested a three-point strategy to bolster archaeology in the country: the first was at the level of the state, the second in academia, and the third in the non-specialist. She advocated a strong involvement of archaeology in school curricula and some reforms in museology to allow artefacts to become tangible rather than abstractions behind dusty glass.

■ EDUARD FANTHOME

Annual Membership Subscription

Members who have not paid the annual subscription so far are requested to immediately do so along with all previous dues. They should specifically indicate payment for Annual Subscription, *IIC Quarterly* and other bills.

Please note that as per Rule 9 of the IIC's Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations, it shall be the responsibility of the members to ensure due and timely payment of subscription and a default in the timely payment of annual subscription on or before 31 May 2014 would result in removal from the membership roll.

Membership Admissions

Individual and Institutional Membership

The data entry and other backend work regarding the received applications is in progress.

Further information in this regard will be made available in due course of time. Any inconvenience caused is regretted.

Obituary

A-2520 Shri Rakshat Puri
 A-3120 Mrs. Kamala Devi Jadhav
 A-3547 Mrs. Harsh Handa
 A-4136 Ms Ranjit Dugal
 A-5190 Ms Rajamma S. Madden
 A-5232 Mrs. Sunanda Mitra
 L-0290 Sardar Khushwant Singh

L-0322 Shri Jagat Singh Mehta
 M-1225 Shri D. B. Mohindra
 M-1236 Shri G. K. Bhagat
 M-1881 Mr. Romen Basu
 M-2779 Dr. Hari Mohan
 M-3437 Professor Dr. O. P. Bhalla

A Note from the Director

Dear Members

You will be glad to know that the India International Centre has a new website with a fresh design, look and feel and slightly revised content. However, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the website remains the same as the earlier one, i.e. iicdelhi.nic.in.

The new website has been designed to make it compliant with the Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW). Security and quality features of the website have been certified by a competent web security agency.

All modules of the existing website have been incorporated in the new website and some of these have been improved by adding new features. A Hindi version of the website is also available and the entire website content can be viewed in Hindi too.

A new online payment gateway through 'Bill Desk' has been integrated for enabling payments through Net Banking along with Debit and Credit cards. Earlier, the members could make on-line payments using Visa and Master Credit cards only. Now members can make payments through Net Banking of most of the banks and also through Debit or Credit cards of Visa and Master. Payments can also be made using American Express and Diners cards. Instructions for using members' area and payment gateway are being sent to members separately through email.

The login feature to members' area has been strengthened for security reasons. For the ease of members, login can be done on the home page itself. Earlier this option was inside the membership page.

To make the IIC website user friendly, add-on features like Screen reader access, Font re-size and change of colour option have been made available on the top of the web page of the website. Link of Web OPAC (Library Online Books Catalogue) has also been provided at a prominent place on the left pane of the home page to enable members to reserve/renew or to see the status of books. Earlier this feature was inside the Library module.

Upcoming programmes are being displayed prominently on the home page. There is an option for venue and date-wise programme search, to find and view details of upcoming and archived programmes. The IIC website is being updated regularly by the concerned departments of the IIC for uploading information related to IIC programmes, publications, library, notices and information regarding outstanding dues and other information that may be needed.

A Virtual tour of IIC venues has been incorporated and a panoramic view of existing venues can be viewed online. This feature would enable users to have a clear online view of venues prior to reserving them. For both the Virtual Tour of the Centre and Webcasting, Adobe Flashplayer 10.1 is required which can be downloaded free of cost. Hope you enjoy the new website.

I would also like to thank all members for their active participation and contribution to the Centre. It is this that makes the Centre such a vibrant place and yet a home away from home.

■ **KAVITA A. SHARMA**