4 th Mahindra Kabira Festival to feature Acclaimed Artistes in Unique Collaborations

Brand

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22nd – 24thNovember 2019

- **Morning Music at Guleria Ghat begins at 6:30 AM with Neeraj Mishra and Ujwal Nagar on Saturday, November 23, and on November 24, with a unique collaboration between Rakesh Kumar and Sarada Prasan Das.**
- **Evening Music will feature Neeraj Arya's Kabir Cafe and Mooralala Marwada in a spectacular and electrifying collaboration.**
- **Shabnam Virmani with Swagath Sivakumar will present "Yeh To Ghar Hai Prem Ka: Love In Times Of Hate"**
- **Festival Delegate Packages include Afternoon Literature Sessions at Guleria Ghat along with curated Heritage Walks through the city of Varanasi.**

New Delhi. November 5, 2019. Varanasi, the birthplace of legendary 15th-century mystic – Kabir - unparalleled for its unique ambience, soul and history, will once again play host to the Mahindra Kabira Festival, to be held from the 22nd – 24th of November 2019. Acclaimed and gifted artistes will make the iconic ghats of Varanasi reverberate with sublime music celebrating the works of the poet and saint Kabir at both sunrise and sunset.

Delegates at the Festival can enjoy ‘Afternoon Literature Sessions’ at Guleria Ghat and curated 'Heritage Walks' through the ancient alleys of Varanasi. Conceived by the Mahindra Group and pioneering performing arts and entertainment company, Teamwork Arts, the fourth edition of the Festival will feature a rich, two-day program highlighting fascinating aspects of Kabir's philosophy as well as the city of his birth through music, discourse, walks, boat rides and local cuisine.

Talking about the Festival, **Jay Shah, Vice President and Head – Cultural Outreach, Mahindra Group,** said, "In this the 4th edition of the Mahindra Kabira Festival we are delighted to present Kabir’s verses in diverse styles through various artists and programs. Music, food, heritage walks and literature sessions will punctuate this enlightening weekend in Varanasi. With a combination of local artists and nationally acclaimed musicians, the attendee will be immersed in an environment of virtuosity and spirituality. The core values of the Mahindra Group resonate in the ideas of Kabir and we are proud to be able to celebrate him through this festival."

On the first day at Guleria Ghat at Morning Music, audiences will awaken to uplifting musical performances by renowned sitar-player Neeraj Mishra and Delhi-based Hindustani classical vocalist Ujwal Nagar. Talented and innovative flutist Rakesh Kumar will collaborate with Indian classical violinist Sarada Prasan Das for a unique recital on the second morning of the celebratory Festival. Renowned Kabir-panthi Shabnam Virmani and musician

Swagath Sivakumar will also perform on the same morning with an exploration of the challenge of love in the voice of Kabir and other mystics, through folk songs.

Talking about how Kabir's philosophy weaves itself into his current work for the festival, Ujwal Nagar says, *"Sant Kabir's philosophy revolves around human values and doesn't confine itself to one particular religion. Kabir's verses still feel contemporary as they are relevant for all societies and all times. They talk about self-introspection, love, compassion and empathy, instead of looking outwards and indulging in fault-finding negativity. There are compositions where Sant Kabir talks about the value of having a 'Guru', a teacher in life and there are verses where he discards religious exclusivism. I hope to take such verses and bhajans and present them in my own rendition style in the upcoming Festival."*

The Evening Music program, a 'Flute Symphony', is a cross-genre flute medley which experiments with the sounds of the wind by Pt. Ajay Shankar Prasanna. Ustad Kamal Sabri from the Ustad Imamuddin Khan Dagar India Music and Culture Society, the Dagar Archives, Jaipur, will present the poetry of the enigmatic saint as well as Indian classical ragas through his sarangi. Sharing his thoughts on the Festival Kamal Sabri says, "It is very important to attend this festival as it reminds us about how to live life the right way."

Sharing his thoughts on Kabir's teachings, Pt. Ajay Shankar Prasanna, said *"Kabir's teachings are so relevant in today's day and scenario where there is materialism, violence, untruth, and people are dissatisfied with everything in life.*

Our way of life defines our personality, our mentalities as human beings and ultimately it determines our conduct. Kabir's teachings encompass all walks of life and give us the right path that leads to self-realisation and self-fulfilment."

The Mahindra Kabira Festival 2019 will witness a spectacular and electrifying collaboration between neo-folk fusion band Kabir Café and Mooralala, a Sufi folk singer from the Janana village of Kutch in Gujarat. Evening Music will also feature the distinct flavours of an ancient tradition: 'Vaani' (songs of the mystics), from Bikaner by Omprakash Nayak.

Afternoon Literature Sessions at Guleria Ghat will feature a discourse on whether there can be a rational spirituality and if Kabir helps us articulate it, by writer, academic and novelist Purushottam Agrawal. He reflected," *Kabir insists on constant interaction of the within and outside, and outside is not confined to social structures and practices. It covers nature and the environment as well. His Ram permeates the entire universe, which is in continuation with a dominant position in Indian philosophy. He has been talking of maintaining a balance between the inner and outer selves of our existence, which implies an attempt to earn purity of mind, and along with that, the rejection of unjust social structures, and a concern with the integrity of the environment as a whole. It depends on us how we listen to him."*

Mumbai based Jashn-E-Qalam, will bring alive two timeless folktales with enchanting solo performances, celebrating the complexity and richness of Kabir through the wit and wisdom of the inimitable folklorist. Sharing his

thoughts on Kabir's philosophy, co-founder of Jashn-E-Qalam, KC Shankar said, *"We see Kabir closer to our own existence and experience: as the Poet-Artiste, rather than as a Philosopher-Mystic. He holds up an unflinching mirror to society; warts and all, sparing none in his seething observations. His path is a relentless one; of constant seeking, learning and self-discovery. It is also bold and courageous in its expression, ready to shatter all shackles and shibboleths. He inspires us to search for the extraordinary in the ordinary, to look beyond surface realities and above all find love and light in the darkest of places."*

Specially guided 'Heritage Walks', curated by Ajay Pandey and Navneet Raman from Banaras Cultural Foundation, will have delegates embark on a journey to experience Kabir and understand the beauty of the landscape he dwelt in, which will make them let go of prejudices and embrace a love for the unknown as they traverse the narrow lanes of historic Varanasi.

Due to the Festival's continued sustainability initiatives during its past editions, the Mahindra Kabira Festival has received a 'Platinum Level Green Event Certification' from the University of Yale in previous years. The Festival spreads the philosophy of a clean environment, preservation and sustainability through cleanliness in thought and deed. Apart from segregating waste and avoiding the use of plastic, it has ensured that sustainability and Green practices have been ingrained within it right from curation to execution.

The Festival will also collaborate with Unity Earth, an international organisation on a mission to accelerate the realisation of unity and peace on earth. In a special collaboration, musicians Pato Banton, Antoinette Rootsdawtah and Kirstan Hoffmann, will present a special set on the Festival stage this year.

For the detailed artiste line-up and more information please visit www.mahindrakabira.com

While attendance to certain events like Morning and Evening Music across the two days is free and open to all, the Festival has in store customised Delegate Packages which offer a curated experience. These meticulously planned one and two-day packages are an opportunity to live out the history of one of the world's oldest cities and its powerful character while coming close to understanding Kabir's essentially syncretic path of life. Delegates also have an option to choose from a range of designated Festival Hotels to stay at during their visit.

For more information please visit http://mahindrakabira.com/test/

Date: 22nd – 24th November 2019

General Entry: Free registration for the Morning and Evening Musical Performances

Delegate Entry: One-day (INR 13,000) and two-day (INR 25,000) Delegate Packages for a one-of-a-kind Festival experience.

Accommodation Package

: Hotel packages offer a wide range of choices.

Note: Accommodation packages mandate the additional purchase of the two-day Delegate Package (one package per person) since all hotel stays come with a 2-day, 3-night booking duration. Starting from Rs. 20,000/- for 3 nights and 2 days and going up to Rs. 1, 46,000/-, these cover select hotels across the city.

For more information on **Delegate Packages**, please email

delegates@teamworkarts.com

Exclusively for Mahindra Kabira Festival Delegates

For more information visit www.mahindrakabirafestival.com

Mahindra Kabira Festival Programme 2019

Day 1

Saturday, 23rd Nov 2019:

Morning Music

6:30 AM onwards | Guleria Ghat

- Neeraj Mishra

- Ujwal Nagar

Heritage Walk*

10:00 AM-12:30 PM and 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Guleria Ghat

Literature Afternoon*

1:00 PM onwards | Guleria Ghat

- JASHN-E-QALAM:StoryPlay Experience Kabir through the folktales of

Vijaydan Detha

Evening Music

6:30 PM onwards | Shivala Ghat

- Flute Symphony by Ajay Prasanna

- Ustad Kamal Sabri

Presented by Ustad Imamuddin Khan Dagar Indian music art and culture society

the Dagar Archives Jaipur

Day 2

Sunday, 24th Nov 2019:

Morning Music

6:30 AM onwards | Guleria Ghat

- Rakesh Kumar and Sarada Prasan Das

- Yeh To Ghar Hai Prem Ka: LOVE IN TIMES OF HATE by Shabnam Virmani

with Swagath Sivakumar

Heritage Walk*

10:00 AM-12:30 PM and 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Guleria Ghat

Literature Afternoon*

1:00 PM onwards | Guleria Ghat

- Purushottam Agrawal

- Sadhana Rao

Still Flows the Verse and Song

Evening Music

6:30 PM onwards | Shivala Ghat

- Omprakash Nayak

- Pato Banton with Antoinette Hall and Kristin Hoffmann (UNITY EARTH)

- Neeraj Arya's Kabir Cafe with Mooralala Marwada

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Mahindra: The Mahindra Group is a USD 20.7 billion federation of companies that enables people to rise through innovative mobility solutions, driving rural prosperity, enhancing urban living, nurturing new businesses and

fostering communities. It enjoys a leadership position in utility vehicles, information technology, financial services and vacation ownership in India and is the world's largest tractor company, by volume. It also enjoys a strong presence in agribusiness, aerospace, commercial vehicles, components, defense, logistics, real estate, renewable energy, speedboats and steel, amongst other businesses. Headquartered in India, Mahindra employs over 2, 40,000 people across 100 countries.

Learn more about Mahindra on www.mahindra.com / Twitter and Facebook: @MahindraRise

About Teamwork Arts: For over 25 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India. In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts, and literary festivals across more than 40 cities. Teamwork Arts produces one of the world's largest free literary gatherings, the annual Jaipur Literature Festival, the Ishara International Puppet Festival and the annual Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META) and Festival in New Delhi, international festivals Shared History in South Africa, Eye on India in the United States of America, India by the Bay in Hong Kong, Confluence- Festival of India in Australia, India@70 2017: Year of Culture in the United Kingdom, and many more.

Website: www.teamworkarts.com

Tags :

Mahindra Kabira Festival | Kabir's verses | Heritage walks | Literature | Benaras