

the world of performing arts

avantika

Unity in diversity

We Indians are a privileged people. A people with not only an aeons-old history but a future that seems set to blaze new paths. A future that will not discard the past but learn from it, build on it and maybe, even improve on it.

In this second issue of *Avantika*, it is this balance that we have tried to achieve. Paying our respects to the past and celebrating the new. Remembering old masters and welcoming young talent. Without forgetting that being young is not about relegating the past to irrelevance, but opening it up to reinterpretation.

Avantika itself is about this balance. Despite naysayers, we were certain that there was a space for us. And the enthusiastic response to our first issue — pointing out errors included — has strengthened our conviction that our rich heritage of performing arts is in no danger of dying from lack of interest, though it does need more missionaries for its cause.

This issue celebrates the endurance of all that is India as exemplified in our performing arts. We do not recognise any cultural divide — our attempt is to focus on what is Indian. From the recently departed Bhimsen Joshi, the maestro we can never forget to T.M. Krishna, one of the brightest young stars today in the classical music firmament, from *Jana Gana Mana*, our enduring national anthem, to *Kolaveri di*, an unexplained national phenomenon, we cover them all.



Shouvik Dasgupta
Editor-in-Chief

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Shamik Bag is a freelance journalist based in Kolkata. He has contributed the India chapter in a book on global sounds published by Museyon, New York, and has worked for Rolling Stones, India.

Author of *Playwright at the centre: Marathi drama from 1843 to the present* and *Satyadev Dubey: A fifty-year journey through theatre*, Mumbai-based **Shanta Gokhale** is a translator from Marathi into English of plays, novels and autobiographies; a scriptwriter for films; an award-winning novelist; and a columnist on the performing arts and culture.

Sheila Dhar was a renowned storyteller, musician and authority on

Hindustani classical music. She passed away in 2001.

Sreyashi Dastidar worked at *The Telegraph*, Kolkata, and now works for Infosys Ltd. in Bengaluru. She feels nothing but awe-filled admiration for those in Bengaluru who brave the twin menaces of traffic snarls and swindling autorickshaws to reach the venues for plays and concerts.

Susmita Saha bills herself as a lifestyle writer just to check out the best concerts, hippest nightclubs and holiday hotspots gratis. She is based in Delhi.

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Yagna Nag Choudhuri is an M.Phil student whose thesis topic is Kabir and musical performances.

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7

Aalaap

Felicity Kendal touring India's jails, Pandit Hridaynath Mangeshkar saluting Salil Choudhury tongue firmly in cheek, an Odissi dance festival with Guinness Records in mind – a medley of recent happenings that have enlivened our world

26

Return of the Showgirl

Suddenly everyone is saying "My Name is Gauhar Jaan"

33

A sight for the gods

Remembering Bhimsen Joshi one year after his death

38

Under the banyan tree

What the guru-shishya bond can mean when the guru is Pandit Bhimsen Joshi

42

Now we want Panditji, only Panditji

Sheila Dhar's reminiscences of an unforgettable experience at a Hariballabh concert

51

Small steps, giant leaps

The 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore has seen many of his dance dramas take on myriad forms and colours



58

58

South turned upside down

He has made listening to Carnatic music cool, he has also ruffled many feathers. T.M. Krishna in conversation with Arunabha Deb on his music and his beliefs

66

Thank you for the music

Vignettes from the just-concluded Season in Chennai

69

Exit stage right

Sharata Gokhale analyses why Satyadev Dubey was such an iconic figure in the world of theatre

76

Playing second fiddle

Anuradha Chaurasia on what it means to be the wife of Hariprasad Chaurasia

80

Grace and steel

Rukimini Devi Arundale, born on a leap year too, was different in more ways than one

88

Whose music is it anyway

Yousuf Saeed talks about the making of his film on classical music in Pakistan

91

Neighbour's envy, owner's pride

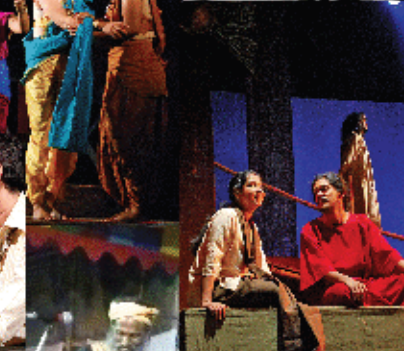
Music is hip and happening in Pakistan if it is at the Coke Studio

93

All in the family

Why a change of guard at Prithvi Theatre in Mumbai matters to the country's theatre community





98

Anthem for our times

The country's music community, from classical singers to rock musicians, is unanimous that our century old national anthem is still very contemporary

101

An affair to remember

Anshuman Bhowmich talks to Juthika Ray who soothed Mahatama Gandhi by singing bhajans to him when Kolkata was burning

104

Domestic drama

A couple's determination to carve out a new space for theatre from their home Bengaluru

106

Ghungroo tales

Little-known facts about the ghungroo

107

Moving body, still photo

Sadamand Menon illustrates through words and photographs the function of the camera when faced with dance

121

The Critics

The pick of concerts, plays, dance festivals, documentaries, books, etc. reviewed by experts.

Rising to the occasion: Kuldeep Kumar attends the Tansen Samaroh at Gwalior.

Lesson plan: When teacher and student performed at a concert in Mumbai meant just for the two of them.

Intimately yours: A clutch of baithaks performed at homes and not in concert halls.

Sword of silence: A play can be wordless too.

Staging the nation: A thumbnail sketch of Nandikar's National Theatre festival in Kolkata.

Reality bites: A play by Shyam Manohar portrays it like it is.

Courage under Fire: A Tagore text made contemporary and relevant for today's India

144

Splendours of the soul

Raag Kamod in brush strokes



139

What's on, when and where

A calendar of forthcoming events across the country this month