

## FOLK NOTES...

- The term 'Folklore' was coined in 1846 by the English antiquarian William Thoms to describe "the traditions, customs, and superstitions of the uncultured classes"
- The word 'Baul' comes from Sanskrit *batul* meaning 'divinely inspired insanity'. Bauls travel in search of the internal ideal, *ManerManusb* (Man of the Heart)
- The tabla is used in a crude form like *daf*, *dbolak* or *nal* in folk music
- Sex education has traditionally been taught in Andhra Pradesh through folk songs
- *Bhangra* is a form of dance-oriented folk music that has become a pop sensation in the United Kingdom
- Rajasthani music has a diverse collection of musician castes including *langas*, *sapera*, *bhopa*, *jogi* and *manganijar*
- *Ektara*, *dotar*, *saringda*, *rabab* and *santur* are the crude versions of Sitar or Sarod used in folk music
- Skin, peritoneum, bamboo, coconut shells and pots are but a few commonly available materials used to make musical instruments

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IHC Lok SANGEET SAMMELAN  
August 13-16 2009, The Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre



### IHC Lok Sangeet Sammelan

The earthy rhymes of the folk music of Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat come alive at the India Habitat Centre as renowned folk musicians from the three states come together for the first *IHC Lok Sangeet Sammelan* to enthrall and captivate the audience with their performances.

A folk song is born differently from a formal poem. Poets create in order to express themselves, to say what it is that makes them unique. In the folk song, one does not stand out from others but joins with them. It is then passed from generation to generation, and everyone who sings it, adds something new to it. Every song has many creators and all of them modestly disappear behind their creation. No folk song exists for its own sake. It represents creativity, tradition and the originality of entire generations who pass the folklore down the ages.

On the 13<sup>th</sup>, octogenarian **Subbu Arumugam** presents *Villupattu*, a folk form of Tamil Nadu. On the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> **Gulzar Ahmad Ganai** and his troupe from Jammu & Kashmir take over to render the notes of *Chakri* while on the 16<sup>th</sup> **Kirtidan Gadhvi** and his troupe proffer *Dairo*, the folk form of Gujarat.

Celebrate the festive season as the traditional ethnic spirits of the three states come together to render more vibrant colours of our Democracy!

*Villupaattu* by **Subbu Arumugam**  
Aug 13, 7:00pm

When one mentions *Villupaattu*, the name Subbu Arumugam is mentioned in the same breath.

For over five decades, Subbu Arumugam has been fostering the art of *Villupaattu*. With rare innovative flair, the artiste and his family have redefined the folk tradition to appeal to the common people.

But for this ardent practitioner, *Villupaattu*, like many other folk arts, would have faded into oblivion. Today, only a few continue to make this unique weapon-cum-musical instrument in Tirunelveli (its birthplace). Fewer know how to play it.

*Villupaattu*, due to Arumugam's creative flair now boasts of a repertoire that includes contemporary themes for a wider appeal. He was presented the 'Kalaimamani' award by the Tamil Nadu Government. Later, approached by the Annamalai University to teach *Villupaattu*, he was also conferred with D.Litt degree by the 'World Academy of Arts and Culture', California in 1995.

The subjects he teaches include Kanchi Paramacharya, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda, Annai Saradha in addition to social issues like Family Planning, Prevention of AIDS, Rain Water Harvesting, to mention a few.



## Tamil Nadu

The rural or village arts of Tamil Nadu provide testimony to the greatness of the State and its culture. There are the *Pulayar* who perform melodies called 'talams' which are said to come from the cooing of birds. The folk dance of *Karagam* is performed balancing a pot on the head, at times even a fire pot, while the *Poikkal Kudirai Aattam* is the 'Dummy Horse' dance where the dancer, donning wooden legs, bears the dummy figure of a horse's body on his hips. *Oyilaattam* is the traditional dance of beauty while a violent fighting art from the days of Tamil Kings has metamorphosed overtime into a non-violent form of folk dance in *Kol Silambam*. In *Villupaattu*, the main singer is accompanied by a chorus, musical instrument and a main instrument, the Villu or Bow, fixed with bells which are struck rhythmically to make the bells jingle in tune. All in all, the ethos, aesthetic values and melody of Tamil Nadu coalesce in its diverse folk forms.



*Chakri* by **Gulzar Ahmad Ganai**  
Aug 14 & 15, 7:00pm

Gulzar Ahmad Ganai and his troupe are one of the most renowned folk singers of Kashmir. Grade-A artist of All India Radio, he has enthralled audiences all over the country with his magnificent voice. He has also released several CDs and cassettes on Kashmiri folk music and has also composed for Doordarshan, Kashmir



## **Kashmir**

Since Kashmiri language does not have any script of its own, its music has been passed from generation to generation. Kashmiri music is so full of melody and rhythm that it distinguishes itself from the music of any other state. There is no function or celebration, which is performed without music. Even in times of sorrow, the involvement of music is a must, like *Van*, a folk form that is sung when someone dies and an environment of sadness prevails all over. Kashmir has been home to Lalleshwari - the mystic poetess who used to roam naked, being of the opinion that the body is a creation of God and so need not be covered. Abounding in depth and pain, her *Vakhs* are sung in every Kashmiri family. Then there is *Vanvun*, a prayer in the form of folk music while *Ruf*, an emotional type of folk dance related to spring, depicts the dance of the black bee which sucks the juice of the flower, sits on it, moves forward and backward. *Lahnvun* reflecting pure motherly love illustrates the unbroken bond between the mother and the child while *Naind Gyavun*, an agricultural song is purely joyful, exciting and merry making thus rendering the difficult tasks of the farmers easy and enhancing their zeal. *Chhakri*, one of the most popular forms of folk music is rhythmic, fast and when in full swing attracts one's attention making him want to sway to the rhythmic beats of the tune.



Folk music by **Kirtidan Gadhvi**  
Aug 16, 7:00pm

Kirtidan Gadhvi, a descendent of the Gadhvi community of Gujarat committed to keeping the folk music of the region alive, strongly follows in the footsteps of his forefathers. The strain of folk art is only second nature to him. Well-versed in the folk forms of Kutch, Saurashtra and Gujrat, he has taken contemporary music to new heights and embellished it with an outlook at once modern and preserving of the traditional. Gadhvi's forefathers were court singers who earned the title of *Raj-Kavi*. Having himself being thoroughly trained in classical music, he has done his Masters in the performing arts from M S University, Baroda. A musician of international repute, he has travelled extensively all over the world and has a large number of performances, both national and international, to his credit.



## Gujarat

Legend has it that musicians Baiju Bawra and Tana Riri belong to the state of Gujarat as does Narsinh Mehta, of the 'Vaishnav Janto' acclaim, a Vaishnavite poet of Junagadh who wrote songs in the praise of the Lord. It is believed that he came in communion with Lord Krishna when he sang 'Raag Kedar'. Gujar Tod, Bilaval and Khambhavati also remind one of the land of Gujarat.

Charans and Gadhavis are communities, amongst others, deeply committed to the preservation of folk music and the arts of the state in their pure and pristine form. Lullaby, nupital songs, festive, *Rannade* are the different types of folk songs sung in Gujarat. There is the *Marsias*, a peculiar form of singing at the time of death while the Vaishnava cult in Gujarat has promoted its version of temple-music. *Bhavai* performed in village and temple grounds by Taragalas and Bhojakas lasts an entire night depicting episodes from the social life of communities in the countryside in a satirical or farcical manner. There is *Dayro* which owes its simple origin to the days of yore when there were no formal entertainment and people would gather and with no formal beginning, a musical concert would take place under a banyan tree.

Besides its contribution to classical and folk music, Gujarat has also produced its own folk instruments like the wind instruments - Turi, Bungal, Pava; string instrument - Ravan Hattho, Ektaro, and Jantar; percussion instrument - Manjira, Zanz pot drum amongst others.



## SOME FOLK MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Bansuri - bamboo flute  
Bombashi - bamboo fipple flute

Chimpta - fire tongs  
Daf - frame drum

Ghatam - clay pot  
Ghungharu - small bells

Dholak - barrel drum  
Dholki - barrel drum

Damaru - hourglass drum  
Dhol - large barrel drum

Ektar - simple lute  
Dotar - two stringed lute

Bapang - single stringed lute  
Gettuvadyam - hammered lute

Santur - hammered dulcimer  
Saringda - simple fiddle

Murchang - jaw harp  
Naggada - kettle drums

Kamancha - simple fiddle  
Kartal - wooden clappers

Gopichand - one stringed instrument  
Idakka and Udaku - hourglass drums

Pung - drum  
Pungi - snake charmer's instrument

Shankh - conch shell  
Thanthi Panai - pot drum

Khol - clay drum  
Magadi Vina - bamboo lute

Rabab - lute  
Ravanhasta - simple fiddle

Nakula - bamboo lute  
Pena - simple one string bowed instrument

