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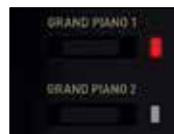
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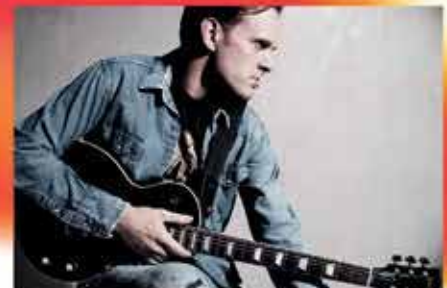
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I wish you all a happy and musical 2018!

In this editorial, I would like to call out a recent disturbing trend I am witnessing in South India: Virality through defamation. For some unknown reason, revered and prominent artists who we look to for inspiration have unfortunately chosen to use their influence to insinuate castist and sexist motives to legends who can no longer defend themselves. A prominent example is the case of a recent article on MS Subalakshmi, which portrays her as an opportunist, willing to "brahminize" herself to be get accepted into the Carnatic music circles and that the whole community is a bunch of conniving supremacists who only want to assert their hegemony perpetually.

I see multiple problems with this assertion: An artist choosing a persona that fits his or her inner image a trend as old as time itself. Do we attribute motives to Lady Gaga whose onstage antics and dress code shocks and awes? Do we attribute motives to prominent Carnatic singers who like to be more acceptable to a certain political image (TM Krishna)? or do we attribute motives to actors who make another city and industry their home and gladly align themselves with the aspirations of their adopted home (Rajnikanth)?

Let us instead accept all artists have had to adopt a persona and that a personal choice that was made because of societal constraints, audience demand, or because of a strongly held personal belief. Our society has made great strides in reforming itself and I believe it is only going to get better with every passing generation and with societal changes, so will the audience. While I salute the Mavericks, I will certainly refrain from outrightly criticising the conservatives for their beliefs and choices.

In conclusion, I must say that; While some people don't have any qualms about reopening deep cast wounds again and again if only for their personal fame, I for one believe in focussing on the future and not whining about the past.

PRAGASH VM

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SMART PIANIST




YAMAHA



Excelsior!

NCPA Chairman Khushroo Suntook converses brimming with fervor and joy as the blooming SOI prepares for its spring concert in February





Until the birth of the Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI), India probably never had a symphonic orchestra that was the country's official western musical identity. Many broken or amateur chamber orchestras maybe like the Bombay Symphony Orchestra that gathered local hotel musicians or the Calcutta Symphony Orchestra, but none that were a complete professional body. The SOI based at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai, when founded in 2006 by Khushroo Suntook and internationally-renowned violin virtuoso Marat Bisengaliev, was received with much skepticism. Very little did anybody anticipate the generous trajectory that the orchestra underwent in just over a decade. Suntook's infectious passion for western classical music, his cultural roots and upbringing, the wealth of knowledge and experience he had accumulated after heading Bisleri and Lakme for Tata, and the juxtaposition of opportunities perhaps gave way to the first official symphony orchestra, a prolific milestone in the country's cultural history. The stellar team of visionaries with Suntook like Bisengaliev, Associate Music Director Zane Dalal, Resident Conductor Evgeny Bushkov, the management at NCPA, and an ever-loving Mumbai audience, have collectively contributed to SOI's enviable success.

"I've been listening to music since the time I was a toddler at home on gramophone records, with friendship, with a lot of musicians who were part of the community and we always struggled about getting a good orchestra. We used to get wonderful artists like Yehudi Menuhin, Tito Schipa, Giovanni Martinelli, and there were no orchestra to accompany them. We always wondered, "Shouldn't we have an orchestra." I was brought here after thirty years in Tata to head the NCPA. The first thing I noticed was, there were empty halls! This was a reverse problem! Most symphonies had no place to play and here we were with large halls and nobody to play! (laughs) And then of course, I heard Marat, invited him over, and we slowly started putting together content. We are still developing. I want to get at least 30-40 Indians in the orchestra so I have a certain permanence, my aim is to make it a completely Indian orchestra, at least a majority," Suntook said with a kind smile.



Talking about the sound the of SOI and how one can qualify it in the global picture of orchestras, Suntook explained saying, “You develop the unique sound of an orchestra after a certain period when certain number players play together a long time. You have the famous sound of the Vienna Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Strings, the Boston sound, but those have developed over the years. A lot of players weren’t regular until the past five or six seasons where we have had almost 90-95% of the players in commonality. We have a sort of Eastern European Romantic sound which is a lush romantic sound with a lot of accent and a lot of resurgent sound from the strings which is very good. Our real glory are the Russian trained strings.”

Over the years the orchestra has developed immensely under the baton of many leading conductors from different schools in the world like French conductor Charles Dutoit, British conductor Martyn Brabbins, Italian conductor Carlo Rizzi, Russian conductor Yuri Simonov, Lior Shambadal, Rafael Payare, Adrian Leaper, Johannes Wildner, Evgeny Bushkov, Duncan Ward, Karl Jenkins, Mischa Damev, Alexander Anissimov, and Christoph Poppen, among many others who have taken the orchestra to higher levels of artistic excellence. “We have had totally different conductors like Yuri Simonov who conducted the Verdi Requiem and Charles Dutoit who did a wonderful Dvorak, New World. Now Charles, took great care in tuning our orchestra. He spent time with the woodwinds, the strings, and eventually got them in tune for the concert. Conductors take hours to tune an orchestra! One of the advantages of having a fairly good reputation is we get better players every year because they talk amongst themselves,” Suntook explained with great enthusiasm. Although commoners fail to understand the role of a conductor identifying him as the “man waving a wand to the orchestra,” a conductor’s role is quintessential in the success of an orchestra. Simply put, a conductor brings together the many elements that constitute an orchestra, train each section meticulously, prepare for hours even before meeting the orchestra – studying the music, trying to analyze the piece from the composer’s viewpoint. It is the conductor’s singular vision and interpretation of the piece that comes to life through the execution of the orchestra that leaves such a daunting impact on audiences.

Since its inception when Suntook first heard Bisengaliev in London (2004), the SOI has come together greatly under Bisengaliev’s musicianship from the recruitment stages to building the orchestra’s repertoires, presenting season concerts, and running the advanced music school. Suntook explains the distinct roles a music director, associate music director, and a resident conductor play in keeping the orchestra together saying, “Marat is artistic director. He’s a great violinist, full of influences in Eastern and Central Europe. Any number of players can be brought out by him of great quality. We have Bushkov who is a fine conductor and teacher who is here for about 8-9 months. And lastly, we have Zane who is here for about 4months. Between this team, we have honed some pretty good results. Marat was the founder and he has an incredible fund of players and he can bring out 12 players in a shot! He has been the master, the founder, the brains behind everything, and he runs the advanced music school for our children. He’s very devoted to that. Every player he brings out is also a teacher. So, they have a double role, they are not only playing in the orchestra,

but also the chamber orchestra and they're teaching! They are producing good results! Besides this, he watches the orchestra. He can hear the smallest deviation in sound. He is my friend and we work extremely amiably. Now, 2-3 months in the year is all that he can spare which is too little. So, we needed a partner. Very strangely, a college friend of mine said "I have a nephew who is always talking about classical music and he wants to conduct." Turned out to be Zane Dalal. Zane and Marat got on famously. Zane was the side of Marat which he wanted which was education, talking to the youngsters with his fine command of the language and his great understanding of music – he's a music historian actually. So, he would explain many of the pieces that were going to play in the season, give lectures on a symphony which was about to be played, conduct the orchestra, and many other things. Now you say why number three? Why Bushkov? Well these people are here altogether for four months. What do we do for the rest of the eight? Bushkov is an extremely good conductor, very good trainer, excellent on the nuances of music, and a fine showman. He's here to do the monthly concerts. He does the concerts at NCPA, Pritvi, and trains the orchestra until Zane and Marat arrive. He knows what exactly Marat wants to achieve with the orchestra and he trains them along those lines. We can't leave them alone for six months or they will deteriorate. So, the three of them have a very useful role."

The Orchestra has performed around India and internationally in the Hall of Columns, Moscow, and the Royal Opera House, Muscat. In the October 2015, the SOI opened the 2015-16 Abu Dhabi Classics season, performing at the Emirates Palace Auditorium, Abu Dhabi, and in January 2016, presented three concerts in Switzerland—at the Tonhalle, Zurich; Victoria Hall, Geneva; and the Tonhalle, St. Gallen—on invitation from the Migros Kulturprozent Classics series. Apart from the mainstays of the symphonic repertoire, the NCPA and SOI have also presented large-scale productions, including fully-staged operas—with productions of *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci*. In 2017, the SOI premiered an innovative new production of *La Bohème*, conducted by Carlo Rizzi.

Although one may be under the misconception that it is getting increasingly difficult to find audiences and aspirants who want to be a part of an orchestra specially in a country like India, the SOI's success and it's increasing number of Indians who constitute the orchestra exemplifies how "changing times and music" can only be a derivative of classical music and not otherwise. Having started off with just four Indians, today the SOI constitutes over 13 Indians. "The problem in India was, everybody said there is no career in music which is true! Once you became "fairly" accomplished musician in India, what do you do? No orchestra, no career beyond that point! There's no doubt about the talent and sheer genius of many of our Indian musicians, they've got perfect pitch and play so well but they lack training. That's what we have to provide! What we are essentially doing is creating a career for musicians not only in the orchestra, but also a second orchestra, teach them, make this a fountain of wisdom, and later gradually start teaching teachers. The only real challenge is making sure that your good players come each season, besides the obvious financial difficulties. It's a pity that in India, there is no proper developmental plan for culture. They are not putting in any new hall! In Delhi, there is no hall! Orchestras are asked to play in an Olympic wrestling ring! So, we should have some sort of infrastructure for music," Suntook explained.

Elaborating on the value of joining an orchestra he said, "Firstly, you get to learn from the great people who conduct

you and the value of that is far more than what you get from a normal teacher. Teaching of music is an art that is not easily practiced. A teacher must emotionally connect with a student – doesn't often happen, but is happening with many of the teachers here! Students love their teachers so much that they come to concerts with their teachers instead of their parents."

Ahead of their spring concert lined up in February and March, Suntook talks about the orchestra presenting a rather daring repertoire that includes German Romantic repertoire predominantly to the exception of Baroque and Classical Choral music, "This year, we are doing Lorin Maazel's reduction of the Wagner Ring for seventy-five minutes nonstop. Now that is tough! Our players are going around practicing that since the past three months! (chuckles) Not to stop at that, we are also presenting Richard Strauss's Alpine Symphony. This will have eight French horns off the stage, wind machines, etc. I remember there was a Polish conductor Antoni Wit who won the award for the 'Best Ricard Strauss Recordings' few years ago in the Gramophone. So, I got in touch with the conselia, and a few Polish players we knew to only hear, "Which orchestra in India can play this?" And after a recommendation from a very senior musician abroad, we got him finally. Let's see how that goes."

As Suntook elaborated about the endeavors that await the orchestra, a child-like excitement filled his face. His efforts have not only given the Parsi, Zoroastrian, and general western music aficionados in Mumbai an exciting endeavor to look forward to, but also testified India's talent and cultural direction. He continued saying, "Now we've got together a group of people who bring in the best by way of music, technology and recommendation for artists. We've got on board, Ed Smith who nurtured the career of Sir Simon Rattle, and is a major figure in the west and advisor. Zarin Mehta, Zubin Mehta's brother who managed the New York Philharmonic Orchestra for twelve years is on board. They are all very old school friends of mine who have come to help. Then we have John Alisson, the editor of one of the world's finest magazines called 'Opera' who is the world authority on opera and western classical music. Many such exciting steps ahead."

Before he signed off, Suntook swiftly pointed out what he's particularly looking for in musicians auditioning for the SOI, "Attitude – we're looking for musicians who have a good attitude towards music making. Definitely hard work, and more importantly they must have the ability to want to learn! Many players come to us saying they've played in other orchestras, various venues, but none of it matters if they don't want to learn. Nobody above 25-30years of age."

Along with this he handed over a copy of Cultural Secretary Maria Miller's Keynote speech insisting that I read and quote from it because of how moved he was. One, which particularly appealed to me said, "As human beings, we want to feel uplifted, enriched and, above all, moved by the culture that around us. We want our hearts to sing! Our heritage is one of the most universal and accessible forms of culture and the envy of many of our international tourists. But we also understand the local nature of heritage, how it helps build communities and give individuals a sense of belonging. Culture matters and that is why it holds a unique place in our hearts."



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Undoubtedly a musician can never discount the importance of a facilitator in their musical journey. Although the word ‘facilitator’ can imply educational, professional, technological, etc. I’m specifically referring to that of a music store. In many ways, a good music store is parallel to an artist’s development because as much as creative growth is self-initiated, having an instrument, tool, or material that can challenge and inspire you to push yourself harder is instrumental in the growth of a musician. Considering the kind of diverse influences that India has had in shaping its cultural identity, the introduction of Western Music in prominence through history is of no surprise. One such enterprise that arguably holds an unparalleled legacy in the music store circuit is Chennai’s Musée Musical, probably one of India’s oldest functional music stores.

Beginnings

Started by Portuguese businessman Misquith in 1842, Musée Musical opened exclusively to service pianos and organs on Mount Road, Chennai. Initially named ‘Misquith and Co.’, the enterprise shot to fame in no time opening over 16 branches across South India. Due to health concerns, they eventually reduced to one functional outlet that still remains on Anna Salai from the 1930s which was once an elephant stable of the nearby Parthasarathy Temple.

Musée Musical has always been a prime name in the Western musical instruments and music education field in southern India. Their 175 years of unparalleled legacy, in-depth understanding of the changing need of teachers, students, musicians, and a boundless passion to serve music has made them a singular interface for music connoisseurs of every

type. Musée Musical has been trusted partner and a global gateway in bringing the best of brands from across the world like Korg, Pearl, Gibson, Ritmuller, Steinway and Sons, Fender, Yamaha amongst a host of others coupled with a state of the art in-store experience for Indian musicians. Besides this, the Musée Musical Foundation supports students for higher education and research in music and instrument.

Tryst with Trinity

Musée Musical is probably India’s oldest associates with the prestigious Trinity College London since 1901. Annually, the school prepares roughly 8000 students for the exams conducted by Trinity College. Students are trained on both theoretical and practical skills on instruments like Piano, Keyboard, Drums, Guitar, Violin, Saxophone etc. The teachers at Musée Musical are highly qualified and handpicked to teach and prepare students for exams. The school’s legacy as an alma mater speaks volumes in the successes of many of its students who have become successful music directors, musicians and earned great accolades. “I came here when I was ten or eleven. I used to come with my father. I wrote all my music exams here,” recalls AR Rahman, the school’s most famous alumnus. With a long list of associates and well-wishers like G.V. Prakash, L. Subramanian, Veena Balachandar, Karaikudi Mani along with the innumerable number of students the school has fostered over the years; Musée Musical is one of Chennai’s most loved musical enterprises.

With a lineage of illustrious directors like Prudhome, Amy de Rozario, Giridhar Das, and Haricharan Das who took the company to newer heights, Musée musical is at the heart of





India's oldest operational music store, Musee Musical in Chennai turns 175 years!

Chennai's western classical music circuit and an integral part of so many musician's journeys. Their pianos adorn many prestigious venues like Rajaji Hall, Raj Bhavan, and most churches in Chennai. Their cherished association with the Trinity College of Music began in 1901 has seen an envious but incremental growth over the years from just two students to over 10,000 odd who appear for exams today.

Meet the Musicians

Their latest, 'Meet the Musicians' is a platform for music students and enthusiasts to interact with acclaimed musicians personally. The session includes performances by the artist, participants, an interactive discussion which allows audiences to engage personally with their favorite artists to any technical or creative length. "Fans, beginners or upcoming artists never get access to talk to reputed artists when they attend their shows or it is very difficult to reach them otherwise. 'Meet the Musicians' will enable aspiring fans, musicians, and enthusiasts to come together to promote music. We select participants for this initiative through a contest," said the team at Musee Musical. The first edition featured Grammy-award winning percussionist Vikku Vinayakram, followed by an evening with Singer Karthik. The most recent with percussionist Sivamani was a huge hit amongst fans as it was the eve of his birthday which was celebrated grandly at the venue's own amphitheater hall.

With no signs of being affected by the "digital" shift, Musee Musical has undoubtedly stood strong against the test of time, being the gateway of Western Music amidst legendary Carnatic instrument craftsmen around Chennai and Madurai. From manufacturing instruments since the 1950s,

preserving a library of vintage music, starting a School of Music, becoming a Centre for music examinations, and being a part of Madras Musical Association, the enterprise has come a long way.

Exciting endeavors

Their upcoming project, International Pre-College Music Program aims to bridge the missing gap between creative preparation and academic preparedness amongst musicians who wish to pursue further music education at a conservatory or a music college. Program head, renowned pianist and lecturer Karl Lutchmayer said, "When I sit on audition panels for college entry in London or New York, most of the students who come before us have had years of training specifically preparing for this moment. With teachers who are not only graduates of these conservatoires, but are still continually in contact with them, they know exactly the expectations of the professors, and the students are thoroughly prepared for the situation. They then have a far greater chance of gaining a prestigious place and even winning a scholarship. Sadly, until now, this kind of preparation has seldom been available in India, and so even the most talented young musicians have seldom been able to reach their full potential. This program aims to change that for India's young musicians." What's interesting about the program is its fluid curriculum. The advanced intensive grooming and mentorship program offers individual training in piano, strings, voice, as well as group classes in theory, musicianship, improvisation, composition, music history and chamber music. Flexible to each student's needs, the aim is to help students blossom into their full potential and become well-rounded musicians.





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You hail from a place where there are so many talented musicians and bands. Did you have any challenge when you initially started out?

I am extremely fortunate to be born in Assam, North-East, a place which is the richest in terms of Music & Culture. Well I started off very early & as I was the youngest artist in Guwahati at that time, things became much easier for me. But, yes gradually when I grew up, things seemed to be little difficult. It has been a long & continuous journey where like most musicians, had gone through a lot of challenges, but love my journey totally, coz it has been a beautiful learning process too.

Tell us your first endeavour with music and how it all started?

My Maa being a professional singer too, who happens to be my 1st Guru, would do her practice regularly & I always would sit by her side & would quietly keep listening to whatever she would sing. I was 3 and half years old then. It was Durga Puja & my Maa had a show in our locality & as always I accompanied her along with my father. Just before her performance, suddenly I started shouting & irritating my parents saying that I too will perform on stage. Initially my parents didn't agree, because although they knew quite well that I was very much interested in music, but never heard me singing a complete song. So, they both were skeptical. But I would not listen to anyone, all I wanted was to perform on stage, also that the musicians would accompany me. Since I was so small, the organisers happily took me to the stage & I started with a "Bishnu Rava Sangeet" followed by a "Chota Khayal". Everyone including my parents were literally shocked. And from the very next day, my Maa started training me. So, this is how it all started.

You have a lovely texture to your voice. Have you had any classical training?

Yes, initially I did learn a bit at home from my Maa, but don't have a proper classical training.

Are you particular about the kind of genres you sing for or are you open to trying new forms of music?

Well my forte is FOLK – ROCK & I am extremely inclined towards Folk Music. But at the same time, I like experimenting too. I love my genre but yes, I don't mind trying new forms too.

Do you hail from a family full of musicians or were you the first one to venture into this field?

I have already mentioned about my Maa, being a Singer. Although my father was a govt. official, he was associated with the theatre world as an actor. My elder sister is a

popular actor from the Assamese Film Industry. So, practically I am the last one ;)

Who do you look at as an idol from the music space?

My Idol is my 1st Guru, my Maa always.

If there is one artist you would like to collaborate with and one composer you would like to sing for, who would it be and why?

When I was quite young, I always had a dream of singing with Michael Jackson, but unfortunately, this can never come true. Then I always had & have a craze for "Shakira". Just one line with her & I am done. When I started watching her live videos, I always felt that she is a great a human being & that attracted me more. Well when it comes to composer, I just pray that I get an opportunity atleast once in my life to sing a composition of my most favourite AR Rahman Sir. And I am sure, I don't need to reason why.

Tell us about your upcoming folk song and its idea

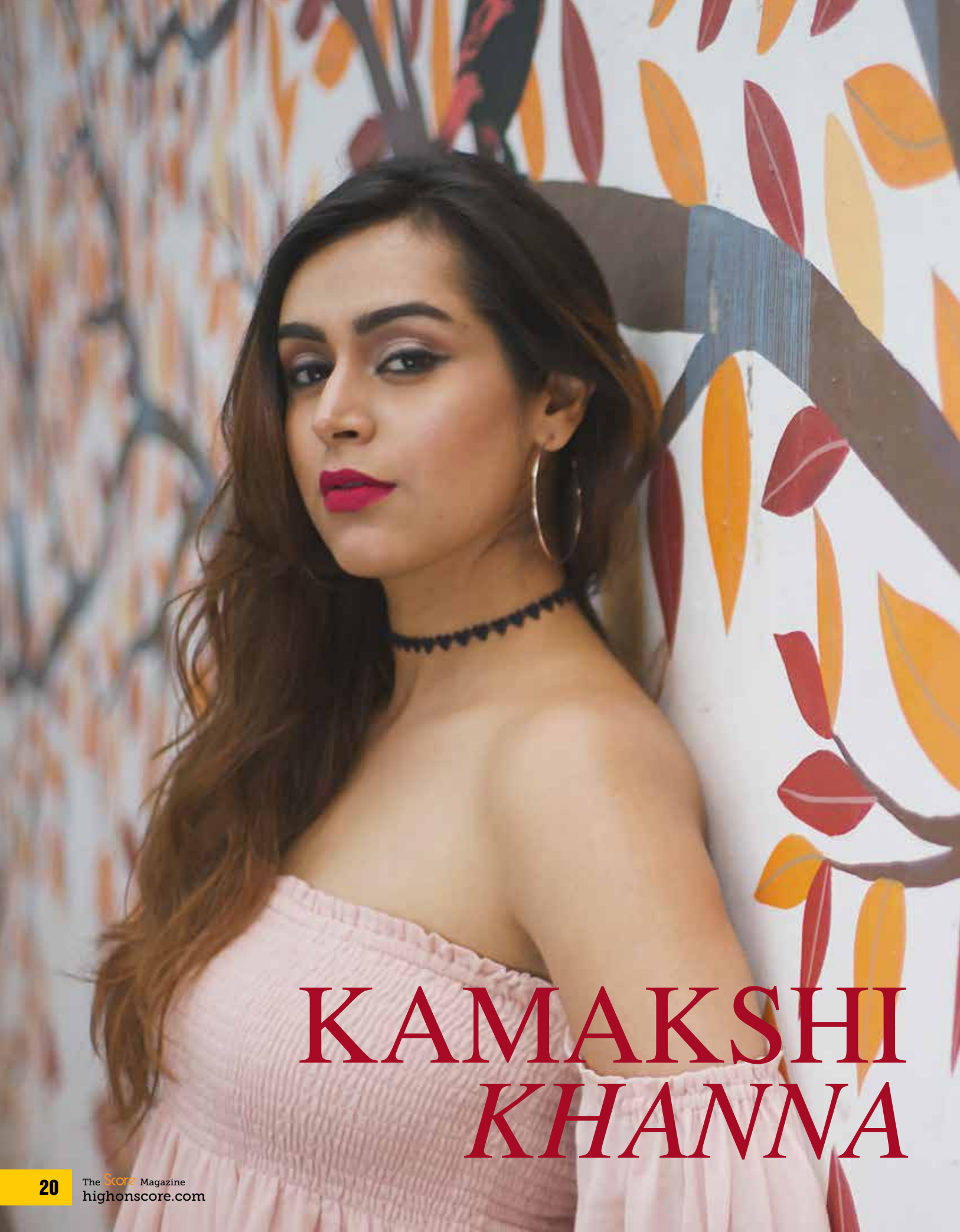
My upcoming Folk- Fusion Album is "Maati- Vol2 – The Folk Factor", which is a sequel of "Maati", which was nominated at GIMA in the best Folk Album category. The team is back after 4yrs of hard work. Folk Music mostly depicts the rooted elements of nature, love, humanity, devotion & emphasize on the simplicity of existence. The diversity of our cultures, reflects in our folk music, which I take pride in presenting it with my compositions (Contemporary Music). Show casing the richness of Folk Music & culture is itself a challenge & we have given our best to achieve that. I hope our music sounds like the breath of fresh air from the land of Red Rivers & Blue Mountains & touches the hearts of Music Lovers. I have collaborated with many brilliant musicians of the industry through my album, which has enhanced my music to a different level altogether.

How often and for how long do you practice?

I don't have a fix timing for practice. I do it whenever I get time. Although the ideal time said & believed to be early morning, but I left behind that timing long back. For me practice is extremely important & not the timing. Ofcourse, if one can manage its good.

What do you practice - exercises, new tunes, hard tunes, etc.?

I start with some warm up exercise, practice some lower notes & then sing whatever I feel like. It keeps changing. Sargams, ghazals, folk songs, film songs, non-film songs, western & so on, depending on the mood.



KAMAKSHI KHANNA

Your journey in music started in school after which you started going places and also perform for the Mozart Choir of India. Tell us your best experience till date in performing for the choir.

My journey with professional music started with touring Austria and India with the Mozart Choir of India trained and guided by Pt. Ravi Shankar and Gerald Wirth. The best experience with the choir was when we performed at the very prestigious Golden Hall in Vienna. The choir and Orchestra comprised of at least 200-300 people with a packed audience in thousands. We sang the piece Gloria In Exelsis Deo. I don't think I've ever been a part of something so grand ever again in my life.

You've mentioned that you love the concept of Chorale singing. Tell us about your learning experience and how this thought developed.

Chorale singing, acapella music is something I've always loved and been very passionate about. I believe that the more you sing with people, the more you learn about your voice, tone, control, blending and that's what helped me develop my musicality. I've been performing and singing with my collective for years now. Two albums down, I do want to now explore the world of looping where I'll layer up my own voice with minimal instrumentation.

After having entered the Indie music space in Delhi, what were the challenges you initially faced in a place with a whole lot of talent and competition?

I see the Indie music space in Delhi as a movement that we're all a part of and striving in. Rather than competition, I see us as threads belonging to the same fabric. We're all growing and building the scene together.

How was Kamakshi Khanna Collective born along with your other band River?

The collective was something I started long before River. River came along because of our joint love for harmonies, acapella and similar sensibilities and keenness for writing music that stirs the soul and moves people. It's been an incredible experience working with Abhilasha Sinha, Tarana Marwah and Utkarsh Varma. They all have their own solo projects too that I absolutely love.

Through your years in the music industry, who or what has been your biggest source of inspiration and why?

I find inspiration in experiences. Places I go, people I meet, feelings I feel and so much more. In the music industry, the one thing that keeps me going is believing in the power of creation and how it contributes to the world even if its in the smallest of ways.

Tell us about your best live performance till date and what made it so special?

Definitely NH7 pune 2017-8th December with Pranav Pahwa on guitars, Gautam Menon on Drums, Harshit Misra on Bass and Pranay Parti on keys. I felt like we were all a part of one giant ball of positive energy. Everyone was engaged and having a good time. We got the best platform and crowd we could have asked for and all the blood, sweat and tears felt like they were worth it.

You gained recognition after The Stage, how was your experience in participating in the it and what was your biggest takeaway?

The best part of The Stage for me was how it pushed me to get out of my comfort zone. As a songwriter, you have so much liberty as to what you want to do with your art and how and when you want to share it with the world that sometimes you get caught up in your own head. The Stage helped me unravel a part of myself that was in there hiding. The judges have been such great mentors all along. Especially, Ehsaan Noorani is someone I have worked with in delivering songwriting workshops and has really guided me through my journey as an independent musician.

If you had the chance to collaborate with an artist, who would it be and why?

AR Rahman is my ultimate god. If an artist could be a home, that would be Rahman. My dream is to work with him one day.

Upcoming projects

The beginning of 2017, I released my album, Cakewalk and the music videos for the songs I Tried and I'm In My Own Way are now out. The plan for next year is to release a lot more music, collaborate with people and also finally perform and release material from my solo looping set.

She recently released her second video for her well received track 'I tried' today, a song from her debut album 'Cakewalk' that was launched in January this year, it is the second track to be turned into a video. Earlier this year in September, Kamakshi presented a video of the track 'I'm In My Own Way' which was released on VH1 and all other digital platforms simultaneously.

According to Kamakshi, "I'm in my Own Way is a song about realising that sometimes we slow ourselves down and hold ourselves back from the endless potential that we all possess as human beings which we will only see if we truly accept ourselves for who we are. Loneliness is nothing but the inability to communicate with oneself." This vulnerable and sometimes painful process of self-reflection and soul searching is what this song encourages one to love and embrace.

'I Tried' talks about relationships falling apart, losing someone you once loved. "It strives to heal and takes you back home to the bitter sweet, wistfulness of knowing that you tried and finding the strength to move on."

The Jal-tarang

one of the most rarely heard instruments!



One of the oldest instruments in the world 'Jal-tarang' comes from 'Jal' meaning water, and 'tarang' that connotes to the "waves in water". Jal-tarang is an ancient Indian wave instrument which continues to play till today in the Indian classical music repertoire to produce both 'Ragas' and light melodies. Jal-tarang is a unique instrument in the sense that it is both a percussion, as well as a non-percussion instrument, used to play solo performances accompanied by Tabla or as an accompanying percussion instrument.

The instrument was developed in ancient India around the 17th century and finds its first mention in the music treatise Sangeet Parijaat. This medieval musical treatise categorizes this instrument under 'Ghan-Vadya' (Idiophonic instrument) in Indian music terminology wherein the sound is produced by striking the surface of the instrument primarily to produce vibrations, without the use of strings or membranes.

It is said that Alexander, on his return from India to Macedonia, managed to take some Jal-tarang players with him. Vatsyayana's Kamasutra mentions about a certain water instrument called 'Udakavadya' which is assumed to be the Jal-tarang as he mentions playing on musical glasses filled with water is one of the 64 Arts and Science to be studied by a maiden.

Jal-tarang was also called 'Jal-yantra' in the medieval times as mentioned by the 'Asht-chhap' poets of the Krishna Cult. This instrument seems to have evolved from the ancient Gong and Gamelan made up of copper and other metal alloys that were molded in different shapes, to create various musical notes that were gently struck with bamboo sticks played with both hands. The instrument was earlier played across the Java, Bali, and Burma regions (Myanmar of today) and was in vogue in the ancient period, being played across the eastern border of India.

The musical treatises 'Sangeet Saar' considered a 22 cups Jal-tarang as a complete one, while the one with 15 cups to be of ordinary. The cups ranged from small to big sizes and were made either of bronze or porcelain. In the present era the preferred choice of the artists are the china bowls instead of bronze or porcelain, and the total number of cups preferred is around sixteen, while the number of cups depends on the melody being played.

The Jal-tarang has a pleasant characteristic tone similar to the Feng Shui wind chimes. In the 16th century Europe the glasses were used in place of cups. Similar cups are seen being played in Japanese Buddhist temples and in the music of the Kabuki theatre, where water is used for fine tuning and for creating sound ornamentations called 'Gamaks' in Indian music terminology that are created by carefully bringing the sticks into contact with the surface of the water.

The instrument includes a series of china clay bowls of descending sizes laid in a semicircular manner while the player sits in the center of the circle softly striking the cups on the edge with wooden sticks to create the sound. The cups used to produce the notes of 'Mandra Saptak' (lower octave) are large in size while the ones used for the 'Madhya Saptak' (Middle octave) are medium sized, followed by those used to produce the 'Taar Saptak' (higher octave) are small sized porcelain cups.

The cups are tuned to the notes of a Raga, being played by adjusting the amount of water. The instrument works on the principal of the motion of sound created or modified with the aid of water. When the edge of the bowl filled with water is struck with wooden sticks it produces vibrations, that travels through the water and are transferred to the surrounding air to produce sweet melodic sounds. The instrument requires a skilled technique to play some fine nuances and is not as easy to tune as it sounds and needs proper guidance, practice and experience. While an accomplished player can display his skills by playing some fine nuances and vibrations if he is able to rotate the water through a quick yet soft touch of the stick.

Very few artistes have adopted Jaltarang as their chosen instrument for classical performances namely Milind Tulankar, Ranjana Pradhan and Anayampatti S Ganesan and Dr. Ragini Trivedi who is one of the first women Jaltarang players, who has trained several students in this rare instrument. Due to its delicate built and design besides the difficulties and the lack of ease that the player faces, while trying to play the more complex Ragas, Jaltarang is losing its popularity and is a dying art that needs to be preserved!

Machines vs Musicians

The famous musical *Les Misérables* has been in production for years and is one of the most famous musicals in the world. It switched from a 22-piece orchestra to an 11 piece one with a computer replacing 11 musicians. This was done after the production was shifted from the Palace Theatre to the Queen's Theatre in London which is a smaller theatre and apparently doesn't have room for a full orchestra. The fact that the computer replacing the artists reduced the cost of the musical by several thousand dollars doesn't hurt either. This is not a new phenomenon. Over the years several productions have started performing with semi virtual orchestras to reduce costs and increase functionality. From live performance to recording studios, this phenomenon of replacing musicians with machines is slowly but steadily infiltrating the music industry.

Replacing live musicians or orchestras with recorded music is a massive change which is threatening the livelihoods of many artists across the world. The loss of jobs is definitely a downside but the artistic question is the vital one. The break in tradition is disconcerting but it also raises doubts as to the quality of a production- be it live or from a studio- and whether it will lead to a worse experience for the audience. There is also the risk of each piece of music to have a tinge of familiarity with the same machines bludgeoning out similar beats i.e. we may miss out on the exclusivity and the beauty of actual musicians playing instruments. If this trend continues there will come a day when live performances and concerts will be completely eliminated.

In the defence of technology, every job lost to technology is more often than not replaced by new jobs for people to either create the technology or to manage it. It is no less feat managing it but the creative dent which it creates cannot be replenished. Electronic music has been around for a while too but then again the definitions of music for everyone is different. As technology encompasses every field art,

culture and music cannot be left behind and has to adapt itself to the pace of machinery. What doesn't get modified is the musician's vision in creating a piece or the feel of the music no matter the medium. The tools of creation might be different but the essence of the outcome more or less doesn't get altered.

In terms of technological software, music creation software has been around for ages but the refined software's coming out these days are astounding. For example, LANDR has revolutionized the music industry which provides services for recording and mastering online itself thus eliminating the need of a professional recording engineer a highly skilled job which has been replaced by a sophisticated piece of software. Another software Gobbler allows sound producers or engineers to work on tracks and sync them easily even while being in different locations. There are several other software's like Splice, GitHub and Wavestack making it more and more easier to swap erstwhile manual work with technology. The recording studio can never fully disappear but it has the potential for heavy alterations.

Technology has taken leaps and bounds and is replacing musicians at a fast pace but the argument cannot be denied that complete automation is impossible because the artificially produced sounds from machines cannot replicate a live musician and also because the audience demands live musicians and acts whose symphony is irreplaceable.

History shows us that taped music and deejays have replaced live bands at dance recitals, restaurants and even plays. Digital technology has replaced old models from time immemorial in every sphere. This battle between technology and live music will rage on for years and both sides have equal weightage. It is yet to be seen which side wins or whether a melange of both can survive side by side.





THE STAGE WINNER

We had a conversation with **Siddhant Sharma**, the winner of The Stage 3 who took us through his journey in this season, practise routine, and more.

How does it feel to have won India's only English music talent hunt?

The feeling is unexplainable. The love and belief the judges and the people have shown is unbelievable. I wasn't expecting anything when I came back to audition for The Stage 3, it wasn't something I really expected. All the work and effort that I had put in was worth. I'm thankful, grateful and really fortunate that everyone watching could connect to what I was doing. The show, as we all know is not the kind of show that just anyone would risk to make. And to be a part of it, failing previously, coming back again and winning it. It's a mixture of emotions when I look back and think of what has happened. I'm really grateful to everyone who's been a part and played a role in this journey.

When you made it to the top 4, what was running on your mind? Did you think you will be the winner considering you had tough competition?

When I made it to the top 4 I didn't really think much about winning. To be honest, throughout the show, I really didn't think about the victory. To me victory is always like an opinion, different people have different kinds. But what made me happy was the fact that I wanted to be there till the last day and perform and try making people love rock n roll, which was happening!! And I couldn't be happier.

About the competition. I never was competing. I was performing. That's all I wanted to do. I knew that I am a part of a competition, but the competition wanted performers, someone who can speak to a crowd without saying a word, someone who could make people move just by singing a line while he/she looked into their eyes. This was my perception, this was what I was trying to build myself up as and tried to show the people and judges that this is me. Fortunately, it worked out well. People saw, they loved, they connected and now that the show is over. It's still there.

I'm here in Bangalore right now, and the kind of love and warmth and hospitality I'm receiving here is amazing! I wish I could just explain it in words.

So it wasn't really a competition to me. I never took it as one. I didn't think about victory. Maybe that's why it was easier for everyone to connect with me.

Honestly didn't expect the win, not because I didn't believe in myself, but because I kind of kept forgetting about it as I got so involved with just performing.

What according to you makes your voice stand out?

Everyone has a really special voice, we all sound different, and that is the beauty of voice.

For me, I guess what makes my voice stand out is firstly the acceptance that I have for however I sound, I don't have to sound like anyone, no artist who is loved and remembered sounds like anyone, and it's because they sound like themselves.

It's pretty much something I realised in my initial stage. I always adore and respect my voice, the way it is. I don't try to make it sound like something I would like to hear or like someone else. Also, I guess the very fact that I keep a bit of me and let it be natural helped. Something more that I guess made it stand out is, used textures that are natural to me. I love using textures, sometimes, the raspy rough one, sometimes mellow, sometimes, bold and heavy, you know... It's always about the song and the expression. So maybe that. Basically, I understand my voice and respect it. That's pretty much what I think helped me.

Tell us about your practice routine while you were marching towards the winning spot

My practice routine. Now this might sound a little odd. But I do more of listening. It's good to practice, like doing warm ups and all of that. But it's very important to keep listening to the song, because that's where you discover every single important stuff done to the song, maybe like a word that is stressed, or softly whispered. It is down for a reason, read the whole line and see what it speaks of.

Also, if you ask me about practice in general, I do it 24*7, it shouldn't be just for an hour, I'm always humming or moving around making weird noises, it really helps, it has to be 24*7, a routine, a part of your body. That's when nothing really affects. It's 24*7 for me, I practice my breathing warm ups when I go out for a walk, sing while I'm sleeping or sitting or even walking, helps me increase a lot of stamina and control. It's always been that way for me and most of the people I look up to.

You look up to Vishal Dadlani as an idol, did you incorporate any of his style in your way of singing?

I look up to Vishal Dadlani, Girish Pradhan, Abhishek Gurung and have learnt a lot from each of them. I've taken a bit of everything I have from each, not copied, but taken notes, of how, when, and what to do with a song. A style, is a trademark, it's a sign of originality of a singer, so I never tried doing that. But yes, whatever I have seen them doing, whatever I have noticed they do with their voice and their body on stage. It helped me. There is a lot. How to control, how to make it all happen, how to handle the stage in the worst situations, it all comes with experience, and they have it. I didn't really incorporate Vishal's style to anything cause of two reasons,

1. You cannot do what he does. It's magical!!
2. The judges were there to see what I could do and not who I could be like.

What was your biggest take-away from this season of The Stage?

My biggest takeaway from the stage this season has been more than just singing, it's been about believing in what I do. Loving what I do honestly, how I have always loved it. One thing that surprised me the most that will stay with me forever is the very fact that people loved what I loved and they loved me for what I do and not for anything else. They had one chance to support me and they did not disappoint me at all. The stage has opened a lot of gates for every artist who's been here. It's hard to think of all the amazing times we've had there. Now that the show is over. I guess every day and every song, every practice session is the takeaway. Everything, every moment there is something which I can never replace. To me, it's every moment there that I've spent is what I am going to have with me forever and will treasure it.

Your immediate plans

My immediate plans are pretty much about music itself. I'm looking forward to shows, college fests, festivals, that's how I could go out play for more people, both originals, and covers. Would be great to work in the studio as well to know more about the soundscape and everything around it and how things work. Also, the album that I plan to release by 2018 is something that is in my priority list. Would love to do that.

So touring, gigging, recording and trying out something very new and different. These are my plan of action for the moment. In fact, a lot of colleges are getting in touch for events, a lot of festival organisers are getting in touch.

I guess it'll be awesome to play for people, record and have my stuff saved in their phones.

In short. Will be amazing to let people know that I'm going to be giving them everything they expect!

MADAME GANDHI

A force to reckon with in every way, Madame Gandhi is as cool off stage as on. Glasses off, she's all warm smiles and powerful positive vibes, and we were lucky to catch her right in the middle of her India Tour at a special performance at The Humming Tree.

Starting off, you happen to be touring India for the first time right now! How has this been going for you?

As an artist, one thing I have been really working on this year is to be able to be comfortable in all sorts of really different environments. When I first started performing two years ago, I would find it difficult to perform in very stripped down settings, say its day time for example, or to be opening for someone else, or if I were to be performing on a huge stage with say a barrier between me and the audience because I need to be really connected to my audience. In India, I have been figuring out how to do that in all settings and still perform, deliver joy to my audience- and I can say I'm really proud, because all the shows have been going so well.

Delhi, Kolkata and Pune later, you are halfway through your run. Out of all your shows, which one do you think was your favourite?

Honestly, all three of those shows went so well, and were all so different from each other!

Does being on the road whilst on tour offer a lot of inspiration to you as an artist? Has it not been really tiring?

Oh yeah there's so much inspiration on the road. I have also found ways to manage my energy, as in if there's a party at 3 in the morning, I'm not interested in that- I'm interested in going to bed at 11, so that when I get on a plane the next day and meet the people of that city in a great energetic mood, I always find that those extra hours of sleep were worth it. You learn that really, to get sleep, honour your body, eat right and clean, drink water- I really like to bring this joyful energy to the spaces I am in. Especially when people expect

you to pull up moody, tired or jetlagged, and I am out here like "Oh great! This is amazing!" genuinely, I am glad I have learnt how to manage my vibe, and how to operate at my highest vibration of self on this tour.

So at Weekender and your other shows in India, the response has been wild with the crowd roaring The Future is Female right with you. That kind of positive response, energy, from the crowd- does that alter how you perform the next time?

That's a great question, because as a performer it's actually a mistake to make to assume that if you have had one good show you are at your prime and you're going to do better the next. If I have one good show I'm actually a little apprehensive about the next one. I have been reading a lot about this as well- detachment- and whatever happens in one good show, what made it good, belongs to that moment and that group of people, and that sound team, and outfit and that vibe. So that's what you take from that one show. I can't assume that India loves me because they sang along to that one song, or the next show is going to be great. For example in Calcutta, I was performing in a big open ground and no one was listening initially, I had to pull

them in. When I am performing I'm humbly bowed with the intention of serving, and what's needed of the moment. I suppose that's what makes a show good, letting people come into your space and energy, like "hey, she's smiling and having a good time, I'd like to smile and have a good time, let's do it!"

At the same time the crowd often, like in every other space, has a lot of naysayers. How do you deal with this? What would you say is the easiest way to make them see that your message is important?

I guess just by having a dance, have them feel the music, that's usually how it goes. M.I.A has inspired me this way because she could be criticizing a lot of things, but she has everyone dancing to her music, and she's infiltrating the music with these messages. I suppose my goal is to continue writing music that draws even more people in, to meet them where they are with this message. They could be naysayers, but they are on their own journey. I'm not here to convince anybody as long as my message is cerebral, and intelligent. I often feel as though feminism is for men, who oppress each other through their own systems, through this, we're healing everybody. Hey, the future is female.

Musically, would you say you enjoy drumming more, or vocals?

I've never been asked that before! (laughing) I sing four notes and I just sing them confidently. As for drumming, yeah I find a lot of self expression in drumming. Drumming is feminine. Every set I interact with is so different and I love gauging the personality of the drums. It's expressive because unlike a lot of other instruments there are no limits of scales, except keeping time. You get to run rhythms that are you.

Artistically- who are your musical inspirations?

Of course! Tune Yards, M.I.A, Thievery Corporation, Bjork, Beyonce

So you wear and are associated with a lot of bright, pop colours, which makes an audience perceive you in a certain way. Do you think an artists' personal dressing choice make a huge impact on how the audience perceives their music?

The way I dress is to do with self expression. People constantly try to analyze it as great branding, but honestly I just love yellow. If I see am buying something and it's yellow, as opposed to something that is blue right next to it, I am going to buy the yellow! It's not about strategizing- same with the outfits. For instance when I was in the marathon, my shirt matched my pants which matched my shoes-my outfit was dope. When people asked me asinine questions about why I wasn't wearing black pants, it was simply that I like wearing dope outfits out of self expression- inspired by the moment. People do perceive it as a message- as young, funky, authentic and effortless, it's also about how us as women talking about rights and me choosing to wear an outfit are all part of the same energy, about self expression.

The media tends to portray women through stereotypes, and this is about making us all three dimensional. I'm brown, my hair is blonde, we are out here.



HOW TO CREATE MUSIC OUT OF THIN AIR, LITERALLY!

It is fascinating to note how the foetus in a mother's womb reacts to external stimuli which includes the sounds of music, nature and everything that can be stored in the deepest of the deep tranquilities.

Music in many aspects had always depended or fed upon the mystical realm of the human emotions. But, now the sensibilities of the music have transcended from the emotions to the ulterior level of the senses. Hence altering the way we perceive our music to a state of constant evolution and experimentations. Chris Lee's "Rainy Day, But We Are Together" has employed a revolutionary AI system which has redefined the way how music defines the way a story is told. The rain drops in the music video are rigged to respond to the musical environment of the song. So suddenly it is not about the quality of music but it is also about the way a music piece is presented.

Intel's keynote at Consumer Electronic Show 2016 at Las Vegas saw AR Rahman performing live with his band in collaboration with other musicians. So, what's the big fuss about, well he and his team of musicians performed without any musical instruments except for a guitar keyboard for harmonies. What Rahman did that evening was a big step forward to revolutionizing the way music will be cooked and served in the very near future.

Rahman wore the intelligent wrist bands of Intel called Curie, and he let his genius do the rest. Basically Curie is a 32 bit Intel Quark System on chip with 384 KB of flash memory that has both advanced gyroscopic facilities and accelerometers ready to translate movement tracking and gesture recognitions. Hence, the next big value addition that this button shaped sensor boasts of is a low energy wireless communication that fleshes out a connection across a lot of different smart wearable devices. Thus, the music produced on that night was not only gesture driven but it was by and large a triumph of the wireless triggered music, happening live in synchronisation with the host of musicians of varied calibre.

Indeed music is so intangible, you cannot touch it but you can feel it, and Curie just reminds you that once again.

We are shifting gears rapidly to neither virtual, nor augmented but, a world of merged reality. This means that the interaction has totally gone "untethered" or in other words, there is

absolutely no chance of a generation loss between the real and the virtual world.

The debate on whether technology driven music is hampering the growth of pure, soulful music; is freshly rejuvenated with such inventions of the modern times. It is a fact that many musicians are frustrated with the advent of the MIDI sounds in mainstream musical scene but it is an absolute delight for the nerdy hobbyists of the consumerist age. Though, hardware like the Curie, sinks us too deep in awe to even contend a rebuttal of regressive mindsets.

Because frankly speaking, the musicians now, not only want their music to be enjoyed but also devoured with the spices that the listeners want to sprinkle on it. Case in point, Santigold's Can't Get Enough of Myself, took the interactive listening to the point where the viewer of the music video could actually place his face in the music video and decide the progression of the narrative. There are more instances where the music is open to be explored by the listeners as he perceives it to foil and toil with it. Thereby, blurring the line between the creator and contributor.

On the other hand, there are VR experimental live shows which promises a newer dimensional trip but for which a buyer will have to download an app to get the ticket locked to his phone and then submit his smart phone before submerging in an augmented world of fantasy and music.

Niche music festivals, frenzied audiences and devoted fans were believed to be the tell-tale signs of a successful band, or a solo musician but all of a sudden it has been very important for the musicians to stay relevant in the industry first. So, being a pop star might just not help, being able to do a bit of acrobats too will make you grab eyeballs like Pink did in the "gravity defying" act at the American Music Awards. Yet the celebration of frugality in the videos of Raja Kumari (reference to the use of snippets from the school videos of her dancing) puts our faith in the pagan beliefs of the soul cleansing values of music.

Honestly though, if good music is like good wine, a good serving of it should not hurt, right?



ARKO PRAVO MUKHERJEE

Take us through your musical path so far and how has it been?

It's been quite a revelation on many levels. From learning RabindraSangeet as a kid, to being obsessed with Rock Music as a teenager and through college, to learning Hindi to write and compose for films, it's been a rather unplanned journey.

But I'm enjoying composing and writing because of the trust of my labels and producers, and of course because of the love and acceptance from the audience.

You had risen to fame with your song Dariya. How did that break come about?

Well my debut film was Jism2 and it got me nominations in many award ceremonies, especially Abhi Abhi. Then I won my first

award at Stardust for Allah Waariyan. After a few more films, playback started with Saathi Re (Kapoor&Sons) and Dariya (BaarBaarDekho) in the same year.

That happened when I met Karan Johar and he loved the songs and wanted me to sing both of them.

Who is your God father/ idol in the industry and why?

I have no idols and no Godfather but Mahesh Bhatt and Pooja Bhatt will always have a special place in my heart as they showed the gumption and faith to give me my debut film.

You are now singing too, apart from composing. which one would you choose to do more often?

Well I compose many more songs than I sing. And it frankly depends on the kind of song and rendition required. In 2018 you will hear many songs releasing in my voice.

You have done some really good movie compositions. Which was your best by far and why would you choose that?

It's difficult to choose among your babies. Few special ones would be — Abhi Abhi as it was my first, TereSangYaara as the audience showered an unprecedented amount of affection on it, and Dariya & Nazm Nazm are close to my heart too.

Which male and female singers would you like to sing with for your compositions?

Male - Bono

Female - Lorde

What's your take on the current independent music scene in India?

It's growing rapidly and it's the future of the Music Business in India.

As an acclaimed composer, you would like to see certain changes in the current scheme of things. What would it be?

The changes we all want are set in motion and we await a fruitful fair outcome. To be precise, Royalties and fair distribution of rights.

Most often, singers of a song are given more precedence and importance than the person behind the song i.e the composer. What is your take on that?

It's unfair and immature.

How do you plan to sail in the ever changing industry and what new from your side?

Good melody and good writing can never go out of style. Hence that is my sole focus.

Upcoming projects

Among films, there's Sudhir Mishra's DasDev, Hate Story 4, Tadka (first time with Nana Patekar sir), Gold, and a few others.

Besides, there are singles with Sony, Tseries and ZeeMusic.

Message to composers who are just starting out.

Be original, be patient and don't let anyone(including me) tell you how it's done!



Naaz (Aisha): Self-love. Self-worth. Pride in oneself. Those hippie-dippie sounding things that none of us seem to have time for in the middle of exhausting lives that seem set up to break you. Who has time to like themselves when you have bills to pay and expectations to meet?

You do. So insists Aisha, the Bangalore based vocalist whose single “Naaz” offer some resounding advocacy for liking oneself and feeling proud of everything that one has achieved. The message is, in my opinion, much needed. With all the advertisements telling you that you’re missing out on life if you don’t have that piece of jewelry or that insurance plan or that fairness cream, one could use a healthy dose of FTW.

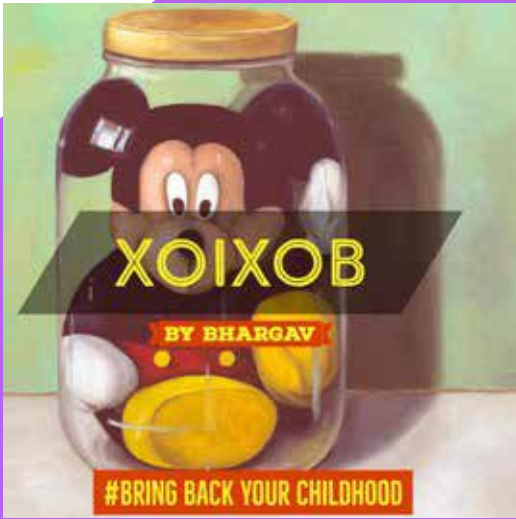
Naaz is a series of catchy sounds made memorable by uplifting lyrics and a video consisting of ordinary folks revealing the extraordinary feats they achieved by sticking to their own guns. Someone started a business after 50, someone came out to their mom, someone realised that they don’t have to be a guy to win the world. The music is appealing, easy to hum along to and leaves you with a good feeling. That’s pretty good for those exhausting days when you need to be reminded of your own magic.



Awakening Beyond (Tina Turner and collaborators):

Rock ‘n Roll queen Tina Turner lays out the nuances of faith with an ensemble of female vocalists that gives you reason to restart that meditation habit you abandoned because it meant having to wake up earlier. The album idolises peace and embodies the longing for healing that an anxious, exhausted world suffers from. The divergent, nuanced orchestral melodies shimmer gently amidst tones from various regions of the world - an Arabic prayer for rain, a lullaby from Spain that traveled to Israel, mantras and prayers that seek to heal gaping wounds and remind of the possibilities that emerge when hostility is set aside. As always, it is the voice of Ani Choying that offers the most soothing balm, but each vocalist brings forth the enchantments of her culture. The Indian element is set alight with Shende Sathaye, who intones mantras and tunes in a voices trained by her grandmother.

This album seeks to soothe, and that is an intention that can be nothing short of pure. Anyone reading these words will know how human existence creates a deep, almost incurable exhaustion. Every word on this string of songs gently exhorts the listener to take steps upon a healing path. Each song is revelatory of the beauty that still exists but is often lost in the clamor of car horns, cash registers and overblown egos. The songs teach mindful presence, caress you with compassion and guide you to the joy inherent in letting go of toxic, tiring ideas. Find it, listen to it, and you might find yourself meditating on how, when you let yourself be, things are not that bad after all.



Xoixob (Bhargav) : Xoixob emerges from ‘Shoisob’, the word for childhood. Bhargav is 24, a perfect age to start immersing in childhood nostalgia. His childhood, in fact was laced with the wonder of Assamese folk music. He took this childhood wonder and transformed it into a celebration of a charming youth. The song is in Assamese, but its clearly conveys the beauty of school, songs on radios, running around and familiar balconies. However, he infuses nostalgia with expertly crafted electronic turns of sound. Nothing too grandiose, just a touch of some futuristic sounding snags to bring sweetened memories into the present. Its a lovely track, and pleases both lovers of folk poetry and electronic musical concoctions.



Shine a Light (ONEmpire) : Mumbai-based band trying to make a difference. ONEmpire are disarmingly frank in their intent : they want to lend their voice to those stigmatised by mental illness. Their music is an outright beacon for change, exhorting the necessity for sympathetic attention to mental health. Its not easy, considering the amount of insensitivity and hate that topics related to psychological dysfunctionality attracts.

The music is pleasant, is somewhat predictable. The band is composed of musicians worth their salt. They sing of a heartbreak that goes beyond mainstream romance, and offer hope and light without missing a beat. The plea is for holding on and having faith springs from authentic passions, and it is genuinely joyful to see people pouring their hearts out in song.

I am not particularly enthralled by the track, but I recognise its nobility. They shot the music video in the Gateway School in Mumbai which houses a student population that needs special care for disabilities. Getting the kids involved is charming, and constitutes a call for greater compassion. The track should be listened to for its message, even if its musical prowess does not appeal.



The Incredible Journey of Light (RIVU):

Star Trek meets rock opera? Yes? No? Whatever your reaction, RIVU’s debut album is addled with intrigue and delicious drama. His musical inspiration is manifold : the dual nature of light, an unusually visual dream, interstellar exploration, lightspeed traversal, the teleportation of a particle at lightspeed to the ISS using quantum entanglement; the kepler space telescope finding multiple potentially habitable exoplanets, the beginning of Project Centaur. Rivu speaks about science with a sense of glee and wonder that we are often taught to associate with poetry, love, foolishness and naivete. Hearing him talk makes it impossible to not smile. His excitement is a living thing, and its gonna get you.

The eight instrumental pieces are scintillating narratives, each lush with flamboyant connotation. They roll off your tongue, almost physical beings that are eager to convey grand stories and hasty secrets. Their bombast is offset

by delicate whispers of willowy strings. The amount of fun that he had while weaving these phonetic tales is apparent in the impatient but elegant progression. All of it is like a highly organised circus veering on the edge of a cyberpunk explosion. The enormity of RIVU’s storytelling, however, is careful to not to risk its delicacy. Its magnificence is like a finely woven thangka - glorious - its glory composed of quivering, barely perceptible strokes.

In case it isn’t amply apparent, I highly recommend the album. I also recommend getting a physical copy, because the CD and case have themselves been injected into the store; imbued with objects and designs that convey the “lore of the universe” as RIVU calls it. The whole thing is both expansive and intimate, like getting a glimpse into the heart of a boy with stars in his eyes, and the heart is full of the vastness of the stars.

Get the album. Worth every penny, despite the fact that a good story can never be priced.

TOP 7 REASONS WHY THE NEW CELVIANO AP-270 FROM CASIO IS THE ULTIMATE JOY TO PLAY ON.



Casio is really famous for producing millions of great electronic products and have been designing and building digital pianos for well over 40 years. The new AP-270 is part of a traditional furniture cabinet line of digital pianos called Celviano. The new AP-270 is the lowest price digital piano in the Celviano line and has now been released in India. It will be available in satin black finish including a matching piano style padded bench. The new AP-270 has some very distinct upgrades over the previous model AP-260 in a number of ways and the AP-260 was the same price as the new AP-270.

1. Redesigned cabinet – Casio has given the piano cabinet a good overhaul with fewer seams, smoother installation, more piano-like in appearance. Even the speakers under the piano have been redesigned to be more "invisible" and less obvious to give the cabinet a more realistic look.

2. The piano sound chip – The sound engine has been noticeably improved along with an exclusive stereo piano sound sample from a handmade New York Steinway 9' grand piano. Up until now Casio and others have used sound samples from a variety of pianos including from Europe, but never from a real New York custom 9' concert grand. The new AP-270 is the only Casio piano made out of all models with this new Steinway piano sound and I can tell you first hand that it is the best piano sound for a traditional piano cabinet digital piano in this price range that I have ever heard. Beyond that, the New York Steinway sound has a couple of variations to it which also sound great. I was very impressed when I played and heard this new piano sound and did not expect the AP-270 to sound as good as it did. Also when you use a good pair of stereo headphones the stereo Steinway piano sound is even better because you get to hear all the tonal nuances coming directly into your ears.

3. The sustain pedal – The sustain pedal and its ability to hold the piano sound out over time and then to have that sound decay and fade out is crucial to any intermediate to advanced pianist and that's where many of these digital pianos fall short. This time the new model has more than twice the realism in sustain/decay time of the piano tone along with the volume of the sustained piano sound to hold a more realistic level before fading out. I noticed this change from the previous model right away and for people that play piano at a higher level than a beginner, this new upgrade will simply make your music sound better with a more organic tone like a real piano. Along with half-damper pedaling for more natural piano sustain at different pedal depths and the improved damper resonance which gives the piano sound a more organic natural reverb (echo) response especially when playing on the high octave keys that don't normally have good sustain.

4. The Polyphony in this new piano – The polyphony has been increased from the previous 128-note polyphony to the new 192-note polyphony. This is considered as piano's processing power which enables the piano sound to be larger, fuller, and more resonant along with being able to play more complex music without notes dropping out or sustain time being too short.

5. 22 Built-in Tones - The AP-270 now has 22 separate instrument sounds which are an increase from the previous model and all of those sounds have been improved to be even more like the real thing including the electric pianos, harpsichords, organs, choirs, etc. and as mentioned earlier also the acoustic piano tones. It is interesting to note there are now a total of 7 distinct acoustic piano sounds using a New York Steinway grand piano sound and a European grand piano sound which is far more than the other brands in this price range. The main piano sounds are also easily accessible with buttons on the control panel. Most people want a variety of actual acoustic

piano sounds rather than the non-piano sounds so this new Casio AP-270 delivers on this point.

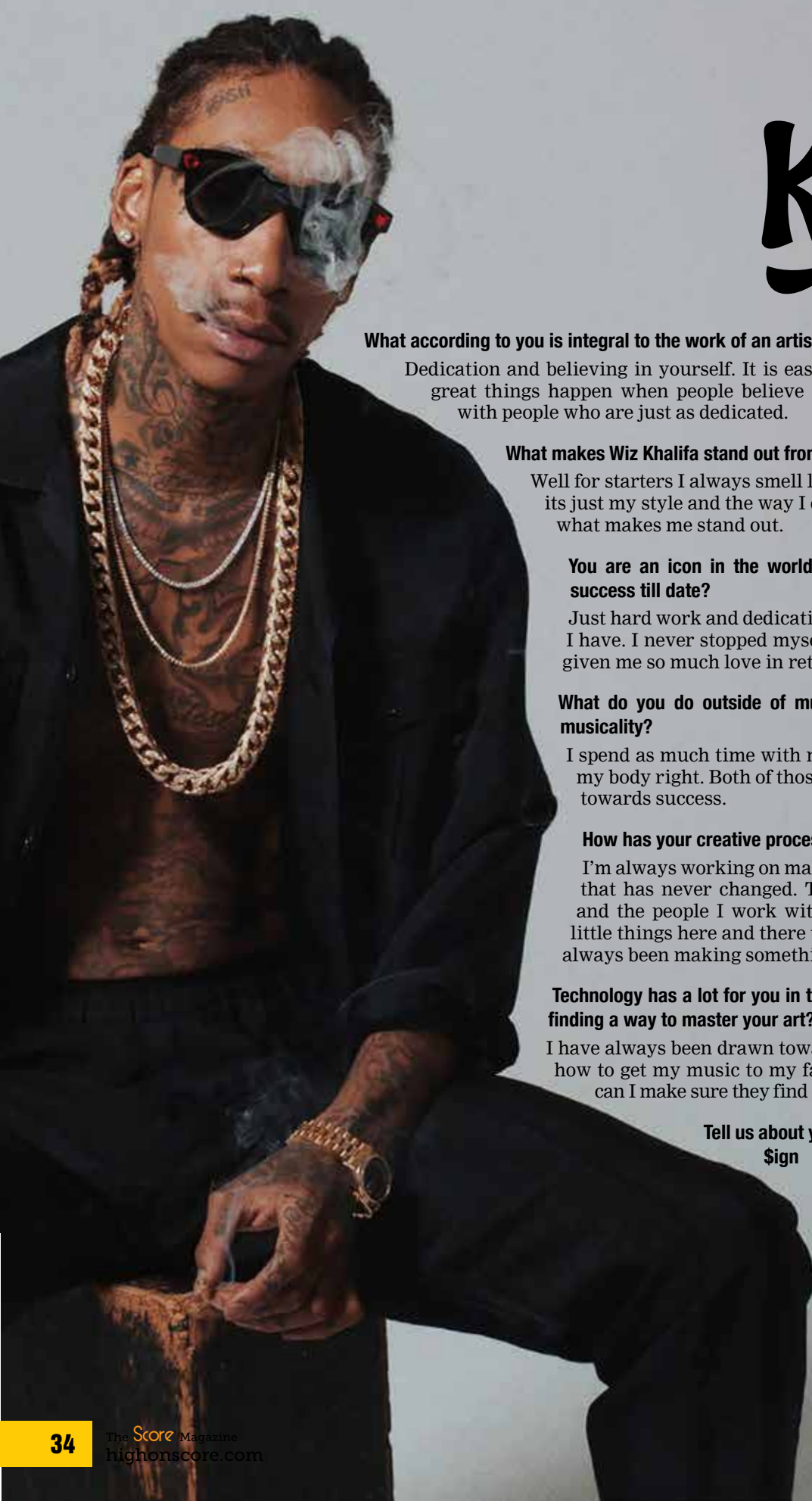
6. New Control Panel - The control panel of the new model has changed from having the buttons above the keys to having them on the left side of the keyboard. Casio did this to make the piano look more minimalist and give it a cleaner appearance with a bit less clutter. Casio has placed the names of the sounds and additional functions above the keyboard so they are easy to find and this is done through with pressing one button and then using a specific key to trigger the feature. It's fairly easy to operate and much easier than similar control panels in other brands because the features (sounds, effects, metronome, etc.), are labeled on the new AP-270.

7. Simulated Ebony & Ivory Keys - The tops of the keys are made of synthetic ebony & ivory material to replicate the older real acoustic pianos from many years ago when ivory and ebony were legal to be made into piano key tops. Casio has been using this material on their keys for a number of years now but in this model Casio has redesigned and upgraded the "feel" of those key tops by changing and smoothing out the texture so that it feels more like actual ivory and ebony and I noticed this change right away when playing the piano. When you touch those keys the surface now feels better and is more natural to play. This is a relatively small change but a good one and shows that Casio is paying attention to the details as well as the big things.

As you can see by the improvements I just mentioned that this new AP-270 really does have many significant advantages in all aspects of this piano, but at the same time Casio has kept some nicer previous features and functions of the AP-260. This would include layering of two sounds together for simultaneous play such as string symphony and grand piano, as well as a split sound function allowing for an instrument sound on the left hand and a different instrument sound on the right hand. Other useful functions and features carried over to this model include transpose, an adjustable metronome for rhythm and timing training, and last but not least a 2-track MIDI recorder for left and right-hand piano practice and playback. This 2-part recording system is something other digital pianos in this price range do not have and being able to record and playback your left and right hand separately is really useful for students. Most students need to practice and hear each hand one at a time, and for more advanced players, they want to analyze their performance by listening to how each hand is doing one at a time and then played back together. You can also speed up or slow down the playback portion so that you can record the song at a slow speed and playback at normal speed or you can record at a normal speed but playback at a slower speed so you can better hear how you played and identify your mistakes better that way.

So here's the bottom line; The AP-270 is a lower priced digital piano with higher priced features in an attractive traditional furniture cabinet with matching piano bench, sliding key cover, and full privacy panel with features that concentrate and focuses on the best piano playing experience possible in its price range. It does not have a lot of unnecessary bells & whistles so is great for families or players who mainly just want to play the piano and have the necessary elements in a piano to do so. With the improvements that Casio has made to this Celviano model as compared to the previous model and the current competition out there, there really is no other digital piano that comes close in this price range in my opinion.

Wiz Khalifa



What according to you is integral to the work of an artist?

Dedication and believing in yourself. It is easy to doubt yourself or someone else. But great things happen when people believe in themselves and surround themselves with people who are just as dedicated.

What makes Wiz Khalifa stand out from the others?

Well for starters I always smell like Khalifa Kush. Aside from that I think its just my style and the way I carry myself. We are all unique but that's what makes me stand out.

You are an icon in the world scene. What would you contribute to your success till date?

Just hard work and dedication. I am super proud to have the fans that I have. I never stopped myself from doing it for them. And they have given me so much love in return. That's how I measure my success.

What do you do outside of music that contributes to your creativity and musicality?

I spend as much time with my son as I can. And I work out and keep my body right. Both of those things keep my head clear and drive me towards success.

How has your creative process changed since your first album?

I'm always working on making the next big thing. That is something that has never changed. The technology and the rooms I work in and the people I work with have changed over time. So there are little things here and there that are different but for the most part its always been making something special for my fans.

Technology has a lot for you in the current age. How has tech inspired you in finding a way to master your art?

I have always been drawn towards technology. For me now its all about how to get my music to my fans. How are they finding music and how can I make sure they find what I have available.

Tell us about your latest song Something New Feat. Ty Dolla \$ign

I love working with Ty. He is signed to Taylor Gang so you already know I support everything he does. But we were working together one night in the studio and we both heard this song and new it had to go. So we put it together and put it out in August.

What's in store for your fans in the coming year?

I'm excited about 2018. I have a lot in the works. Just waiting for the right time to give it all to the fans.

PROMOTING YOUR MUSIC

in the Digital Era

Being a musician in the 21st century is a completely different ballgame than it was back in the day, when there major labels monopolized the business. Now, the internet has opened a number of different avenues for musicians to independently promote their music and get it out to the real world. Here are a few ways to make sure that your music gets the exposure that it deserves by taking advantage of all the means available to you.

1. Consistent online presence

A powerful strategy to succeed in promoting your music is to be frequently visible on the internet. Whether it's releasing new music, updating your fan base with recent developments or announcing collaborations and upcoming shows, a prominent online presence goes a long way and helps you stay relevant. Interacting with your fans and responding to them is very crucial as this creates a personal connect between the musician and the audience.

2. Radio plays

The radio has been one of been one of the important factors in deciding what the vast majority of the prospective audience are going to be listening to. While this often leads to a trend of easily digestible and generic music being aired, it is undeniably one of the best means to really get your music out there. Apart from the usual city specific radios, the internet offers various radio channels which can be accessed from around the globe. This enables you to reach out to the right audience, even if your music might be aimed at a specific section of listeners.

3. Features on different projects

Having your music featured on different commercial ventures such as advertisements, television shows, short films and webisodes, apart from being good business on its own, lets you reach out to a completely untapped audience. For instance, avid followers of a certain television series might be supporting your music because it was featured on it.

4. Using digital music platforms

Music platforms such as Spotify, Saavn, and iTunes provide an instantaneous solution for you to be able to reach your audience without the need for the meticulous process of physical music distribution. Putting up an album or an EP up for streaming on

YouTube is another great way to make your music accessible to a wider audience.

5. Music Videos

A vast majority of the audience respond much better to music when it is represented audio-visually. Not only does the music have better context when it is paired with visuals, but it naturally makes it more memorable and gives the listener more reason to revisit your content. In some cases, the audience might not be able to keep up or fully understand the music and its nuances, and this is exactly where a video might make things a lot more accessible.

6. Playing live shows

With all the digital music platforms available to us, a lot of us have forgotten how important live music performances are. As obvious as it may be, playing shows is the most crucial aspect of promoting your music and getting it out there. There is no alternative to proving yourself as a musician and performer in front of an audience and earning their respect. Touring and playing shows regularly are great ways to establish your presence and is a good source of income once you've got a foothold.

7. Collaborations

Collaborating with other artists and musicians enable you to widen your audience. Having your name pop up on other musicians' tracks will direct the attention of their fan base to your music and vice-versa. Apart from expanding your target audience, collaborations also allow you to get mutually influenced and grow as a musician, and approach things with a different point of view.

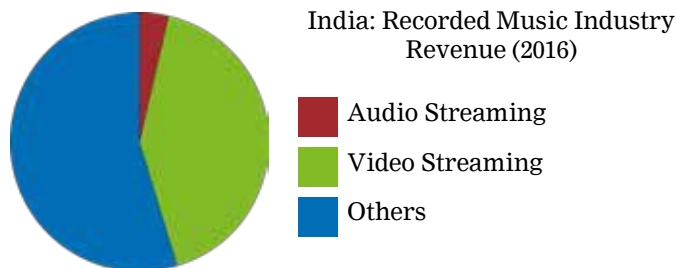


The “Value Gap” – Rapidly Progressing Obstruction to Music Industry Revenue Growth

Global music record industry is gradually growing out of the phase of economic anaemia triggered by digital revolution two decades ago (thanks to surge in music consumption through paid audio streaming services in the year 2016). For the first time since 1997, the industry has seen a growth as significant as of 5.9%. While the overall picture is finally turning positive, the “value gap” has emerged as a new road-blocker.

What is “Value Gap”?

It is the enormous difference in value actually generated by the consumption of music digitally and the revenues earned by the music community there from. The root of the problem lies in the fact that millennials are taking biggest chunk of their music entertainment diet through user upload video streaming platforms like YouTube which have very low royalty payout structures and poor infringement control measures. In 2016, despite the fact that digital video



streaming constituted the dominant manner of music consumption in India, it contributed a meagre 4% of total recorded music industry revenue, whilst audio streaming services with a much smaller user base were responsible for 43.5%. Global figures also show the similar trend.

Legal lacunae - Safe Harbour laws insulating intermediaries from liability

The growing value gap is primarily attributable to mammoth pirated content uploaded on platforms like YouTube which are earning billions by running ads around it, leaving copyright holders deprived of the economic benefits they deserve. These platforms hide behind the ‘safe harbour’ laws providing immunity to internet intermediaries from contributory / vicarious liability for

infringement, so long as the infringing videos are removed by them on notification from the copyright owner. This “notice and take down” procedure fails to serve the purpose as it is difficult for copyright owners to track so many infringing videos. Moreover, once they get 100 infringing videos taken down, 200 other videos with same infringing content re-emerge within next few hours.

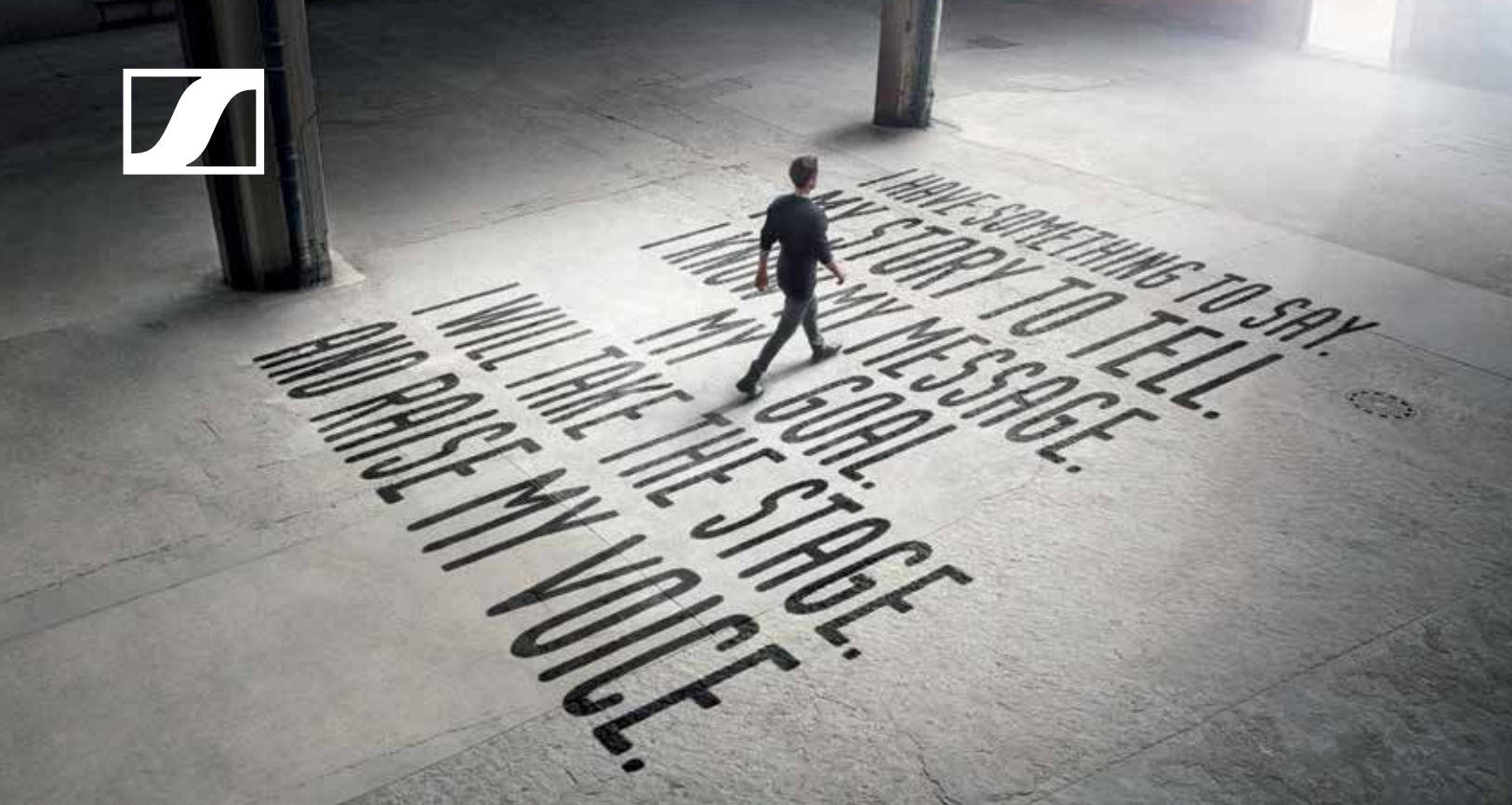
In response to constant complaints, intermediaries have introduced some technical tools to automatically identify infringing content. For instance, YouTube provides for a digital fingerprinting system called “Content ID” through which copyright owners may register reference content with YouTube - videos uploaded by third parties are then automatically compared against such content, looking for any matches. When a video matches, copyright owner gets the notice and may choose to block the video, mute it or monetise it by running ads against it. But such tools have also failed to deliver desired results due to serious technical flaws. In light of broad immunity from liability, it is hard to expect platforms like YouTube which thrive on infringement, to introduce really effective technological tools for tracking pirated content.

Need for a legislative fix

Legislative amendments are required to make the intermediaries accountable for the content they are offering or hosting, so that we have a fair digital marketplace. Notably, intermediaries no longer play a passive role in communication of user uploaded content to public. To illustrate, YouTube promotes content and optimises the presentation of it. Once you watch a video, you get suggestions for similar videos which show that the role is active. This dilutes the very basis on which the law providing immunity rests.

One option could be to do away with safe harbours, completely. Alternatively, the “notice and take down” principle could be replaced with “notice and stay down” so that intermediaries are at least obligated to prevent the infringing content once notified by the copyright holder, from re-emerging through other videos. While Australia is all set to exclude online platforms like Facebook; Google from safe harbour shield, it remains to be seen if India follows.

Author - Simrat Kaur is a Copyright and Trademark Attorney at “The Endretta – IP Advocates and Solicitors”. The Endretta offers legal solutions across all areas of intellectual property including registration, management and enforcement of copyright, trademark and designs.



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GETTING SMART WITH AUDIO.



Thinksound On2

Supra-Aural studio monitor with passive noise isolation

The headphones/studio monitors market has seen a huge inflow of products in the last few years. The Thinksound On2 is a breath of fresh air and it stands out from the rest of its counterparts. With the On2, Thinksound has adopted a more sustainable and environment friendly approach to the design and materials used. The ear cups are made out of wood and the ear pads are made of memory foam for passive noise cancellation. The fit and finish feel very polished and classy, down to the staining on the wood, the fabric wrapped cable and the embroidered logo on the headband. Although they are marketed as studio monitors, it doesn't sound sterile or flat, on the contrary, it has a really warm and full-bodied sound. The headphones come with an unbleached cotton pouch with two cables, one with an inline mic.

A few setbacks that we experienced included mild discomfort during extended use. For certain ear sizes, it tends to feel like it's clamping down too hard, but this may reduce as the headband becomes more flexible over time. While they are a bit expensive, they do have the premium look and sound to match.

Kush Audio Novatron

Compressor Plug-in

The Novatron is the new innovative compressor from Kush Audio. The interface is slick and stays true to the Kush branding, with a retro-dashboard look and a satisfyingly symmetrical layout. The controls include a no-nonsense "compress" knob, compression modes, saturation, level trims, tone shift, sidechain filter, blend knobs and, of course, the attack and release controls.

The attack knob seamlessly blends the attack and "grab" characteristics from three different types of compressors: FET (filed effect transistor), VCA (voltage controlled amplifier), and Variable-Mu. UBK determined that each had a sound they personally wanted at each particular stage and imparted certain specific qualities. The faster attack times are handled by the FET circuit, the medium attack times are handled by the VCA, and the slower times are controlled by the Variable-Mu circuit. Similarly, the Release knob functions with the respective times are handled by the same circuits. The compression knob couples predetermined threshold values to an auto gain control in order to make easy to use. The manual suggests sweet spots for the plugin as well. It's an absolute swiss army knife and extremely powerful on the master bus. The saturation circuits add steel or nickel type saturation on the input and output stages and the tone shift knob really helps shape the mix with the dark shift (rolls off some highs and smoothens its texture), airy (adds some top end sheen and really helps open out the mix) and flat (for transparent sound) modes.

In conclusion, the Novatron is an extremely powerful and versatile compressor plugin. It hides all the heavy lifting under a very unassuming and easy to use skin. This plugin has a very close resemblance to hardware characteristics in the way that it handles transients and the depth that it gives. It truly feels like the next step in software processing.



Toontrack Superior Drummer 3

Virtual Drum Instrument

In the world of virtual instruments, drums have always been quite hard to get right. Superior Drummer 2, back when it was launched in 2008, set a benchmark in terms of flexibility and realism. Now, with SD3, Toontrack has made a huge leap forward.

The GUI has been completely revamped and it looks extremely appealing. It looks quite similar to other programmes, with menus and tabs (Drums, Grooves, Mixer and Tracker) on the top. All instrument edit-ing controls in a single contextual panel on the right-hand side, and the new sequencing tools at the bottom. The main kit has a photorealistic representation of each piece.

The library is massive with over 200 GB of samples recorded by George Massenburg in true 11-channel surround sound. It contains six full kits in 14 configurations: Ayotte Classic (sticks and rods), four-piece Gretsch Round Badge (sticks, brushes, and rods, all with snares on and off, plus mallets), Ludwig (single- and double-headed toms), Premier Genista, Pearl Masterworks and Yamaha Beech Custom. Sup-plementing those, are a staggering roster of extra snares and kicks, and the 32 cymbals that are provid-ed by Zildjian, Paiste, Masterwork, Istanbul, Bosphorus, and Spizzichino.

Every snare drum encompasses eight articulations (Centre, Rimshot, Flam, etc), with the brushed snares upping that to twelve. Crash and ride cymbals come with up to eight articulations; kicks can be Open or Hit; and toms can be struck in the center, rimshot, or on the rim while the hi-hats have 27 articulations each. It sounds as close to the real thing as you can get, with a lot of depth and space. The hits are all recorded with pristine accuracy and detail. Every sound is stackable with user samples and which makes it extremely flexible.

This version has also included its own sequencer, complete with editors, filters and everything in be-tween. You can also drag audio samples into the sequencer and have it slice, detect and replace them with samples from the SD3 library or user-defined libraries.

In conclusion, this piece of software is truly a remarkable leap as far as drum programming goes. The detail, flexibility, and usability have come really far from all previous efforts to make a game-changing advancement.



Slate Digital Virtual Microphone System

Microphone, Preamp & Modelling Software

almost every piece of analog hardware, from EQs and compressors to tape saturation, has been modelled in the digital world quite well, the microphone and preamp have always been tricky. Pre-amp emulations have been around for some time now and while they don't quite sound like their analog counterparts, they have their place in the digital realm. Slate has tried to up the ante by combining this sort of technology with their own system of microphones and preamps.

What the system is, in its essentials, is a discrete flat response preamp and a large diaphragm capacitor microphone designed to provide a transparent and clean signal. This signal is then processed by Slate's modelling software. The software is available with three microphone options:- the FG-47 (Neumann U47), the FG-251 (Telefunken ELA M251) and the FG-800 (Sony C800g). They also have an expansion pack that adds a number of additional tube-mic options including the Neumann U67 and the AKG C12. Additionally, the software provides the option of increasing the intensity of a mic's character to provide different levels of harmonics and valve saturation. Also included within the software are two virtual pre-amp options, emulating the Neve 1073 and the Telefunken V76.

On testing the system against a few of the actual microphones, initial impressions have been quite good. On higher 'intensity' settings the system does quite well. But it does lack the depth and character of the real thing and can start to sound quite digital with a harsher top end and sibilance. Although it does not push for producers currently using such microphones to adopt the VMS system, it is quite the value for an intermediate producer. It provides a lot of variety and color at a relatively affordable price. It will also be quite interesting to see how such systems evolve in the future.

DRUM REPLACEMENT TIPS

Every sound engineer will tell you that getting a good drum sound on recording day is always the most challenging aspect since there are a lot of factors involved in determining the end result. From the room that you record in, the placement and positioning of the microphones to the way that the drummer plays and the tuning of the drums themselves, everything contributes in deciding whether you end up with a good recording or a bad one. Ideally, you would want to record it well in the first place, but since there is a lot of room for error, especially in a home studio set-up, sample replacement or sample enhancement can be used a last resort to get that ideal drum sound that you're looking for.

Sample replacement or enhancement is the process of bringing in a pre-recorded sample and blending it in with your recording. This way you'll be able to bring in a more polished and consistent sound and match it up with the dynamics and realness of your recording to achieve a good balance. The process would involve placing the sample and synchronising it with the corresponding drum recording. This would obviously be a very long process to edit out accurately.

Luckily, on certain DAWs like Pro Tools, we have an option called "Tab to Transients". What this allows us to do is every time we hit "Tab" on the keyboard, the marker automatically jumps exactly on to the next transient or the beginning of the hit. So, if you need to replace your snare, you just need

to paste your selected snare sample and paste it every point that you have a transient in your snare track. Maintaining the intensity when the drummer is more dynamic or complex can be a bit tricky. Once you've edited in your sample in sync with the corresponding transients you can blend in the level of the drum replacement based on how much of it you need in the balance.

A more easier approach would be to use sample triggering plug-ins to trigger a selected sample with the recorded track. Triggering plug-ins like the Slate Digital Trigger and the XLN Audio Addictive Trigger allow a lot more flexibility and efficiency while making the editing process a lot less tedious. These plug-ins allow you to choose exactly what the threshold for the recorded track should be in order to trigger the sample. This way the softer bleed signals will not trigger the sample. The dynamics and intensity of the recorded hits also translate well through these trigger plug-ins. A built-in tool in these plug-ins allow you to control how much of the selected sample you want to hear in your output.

In the kind of scenario where you want that perfect kick or snare sound and your drum recording just isn't going to make the cut or if you aren't able to re-record to rectify recording errors, drum replacement serves as a great option to make up for what your drum recording is lacking.



Beginner's Guide to home studios: **Mastering**

In this edition, we will be dealing with mastering a mix with nothing more than few readily available stock plug-ins to get your tracks sounding radio-ready, loud and punchy. To carry out the mastering process efficiently, it is essential to have a great sounding recording that has been mixed very tastefully. The track picks up almost all of its character and feel during the recording and the mixing stages. Therefore, mastering a track that has been poorly recorded or mixed won't do it any wonders.

The first step would be to import your mixed out track and a commercially available track, as a reference track, into your DAW. Make sure that your reference track is pretty much the same genre or sound that you're going for in your track. It's also advisable to mix and record with the same reference track in mind because it will help you get closer to achieving the kind of sound that your favourite bands have managed to pull off. Now, bring down the level of the reference track (having been mastered already, it's going to be a lot louder) so that it matches your mix in loudness. After having set both the tracks to approximately the same loudness, switch back and forth between your mix and the reference track to try and spot the differences when it comes to tonality. The aim of this comparison is to make your mix sound more like you want it to by tweaking very mildly with an equalizer. For example, your track might not have enough air or you might have to roll off the low end a little or maybe certain frequencies stick out like a sore thumb. Make sure that while you are cutting or boosting certain areas, the difference in gain shouldn't be more than 2dB because this process is just done to very subtly fine-tune the overall mix while all the in-depth EQing is done in the mixing phase. After this step, your mix should start sounding more similar to your reference track, in terms of its tone.

The next plug-in that we'll be using is a simple compressor. We will be employing a technique called

parallel compression which simply means that we will routing our mix signal to another return track with an aggressive compressor on it. This way we'll be achieving a balance between our dynamic mix signal and the relatively punchier and more squashed signal from the compressor. Set your compressor's ratio to 3:1 and bring the threshold down until you see an average gain reduction of about 5dB. Now adjust the amount of the clean signal being sent to compressor until you have the perfect blend that is punchy and exciting as well as dynamic.

The final step involved in mastering your track is bringing its level up to "commercial loudness". The "loudness war" has been quite prevalent in the industry: the louder the mix, the more attractive it is. But at the same time, making your track too loud will distort it and destroy the dynamics that you worked hard to achieve while mixing. We will be using a limiter to bring up the level. Set your ceiling on the limiter to around -0.5dB and keep bringing down the threshold until your RMS level reads around -9 or -10dB. Make sure that gain reduction on the limiter isn't much more than 1 dB on the heaviest or the loudest part of your song because this ensures that your mix isn't too heavily compressed and retains all of its nuances. After following these steps, your mastered mix should sound very similar to your reference track and should sound just as interesting and bang-on, even at lower volumes.

MIXING IN THE BOX (ITB) OR OUT OF THE BOX (OTB)



The battle of digital vs analog has been going for as long as the audio community can remember. There will always be a section of people that will side with producing and mixing purely with analog gear (OTB) while others stand for the benefits and the ease of mixing in a DAW software (ITB) using its stock plugins or third party plugins. Personally, I prefer using my API 512c Mic pre and JDK R22 Compressor during tracking but high-end outboard gear or expensive hardware may not be a reality for everyone. Besides, it's not the equipment that you use but how you mix it is what finally decides how your end product sound and ultimately, this is what counts to real world.

The Real Truth

The listener isn't concerned with whether you've used hardware equipment or what plugins you've used to produce the track, a minute into your track they'll be judging it on how it sounds to them. In most cases, it is almost impossible to tell by listening if a track has been mixed using an SSL or Neve analog console, for instance, or it has been mixed ITB using a DAW unless you're physically present during the session.

Nowadays, plugins have been developed to the point where they very accurately emulated analog hardware. The first name to pop up in your mind would be WAVES, which has managed to come out with tones of emulations of a lot top tier analog gear. Companies like McDSP, Sound Toys, Sonnox Oxford, UAD, Plugin Alliance, iZotope and Steven Slate, to name a few, have put a lot of effort into accurately emulating hardware to get that specific tone and character.

Advantages of producing ITB

One of the main reasons for the massive shift towards producing ITB is the cost effectiveness and flexibility. There is also no need for patch cables and the space required to run an analog setup. DAW's allow a user to have as many tracks as they require

which tackles huge issue faced by users who use analog mixers. But while analog gear can be expensive, it has its own beauty and a certain tone for which users build a taste for.

Why are analog equipment expensive?

The fact is that the signature design, the expensive components which take years of research to develop and integrate and the great sound and tone that it imparts to your mix, all add up to their price. They use high-quality components with industry standard input and output transformers, valves(Tubes) and transistors which create that hard hitting tone in the mix. It should also be noted that added costs such as good patch cables and regular maintenance and servicing should be considered while maintaining an analog setup.

Advantages of using plugins

Plugins have the upper hand when it comes to ease of application and the lack of a need for maintenance and additional costs. A lot of companies have trial versions of the plugins available for free for a limited period of time. You can check the quality and applications of the plugins firsthand and then make a decision based on useful they seem to you. Patching outboard equipment to multiple tracks is a tedious task whereas plugins can very conveniently be used on as many tracks as very require. The only concern is that plugins may have to be updated from time to time, whenever an advanced option is released.

In Conclusion

It doesn't matter if you mix ITB or OTB as long as you are able to get the desired output using the means available to you. In fact, in a lot of cases, the use of both hardware equipment and software (Hybrid mixing) is quite predominant. In the end, it all comes down to how you use your tools and creativity in your mix to make it stand out.

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THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS





CIRCUIT MONO STATION

Next-generation sequenced monosynth



Circuit Mono Station is a paraphonic analogue synthesiser that originates from the Bass Station II, with three sequencer tracks that benefit from the 32 velocity-sensitive RGB pads found on Circuit. The synth has two oscillators that can be individually controlled, three distortion modes, plus one multi-mode filter with high-pass, low-pass or band-pass.

- Two oscillators with individual control of sync and tuning parameters
- Multi-mode filter – high-pass, low-pass and band-pass – with slopes of 12dB & 24dB
- Three distortion modes
- Monophonic and paraphonic modes with individual glide control
- Four-by-eight modulation matrix that enables complex alteration and routing
- Load and save up to 64 patches on the device
- Three sequencer tracks (two oscillator sequencers, one modulation sequencer)
- 32 velocity-sensitive RGB pads
- 16 scale types
- Changeable sync rates
- CV/Gate, CV mod plus MIDI In, Out and Thru for connecting and controlling separate hardware
- Modulate, evolve and process your source through the audio input
- Backup patches and sessions with Components

ROLAND RELEASES

RP102 DIGITAL PIANO

Roland releases the RP102, the latest addition to the award-winning RP series of affordable digital pianos. Featuring advanced technologies derived from Roland's premium pianos, the RP102 offers best-in-class sound and touch in a compact, space-saving design. The RP102 is ideal as a first piano for the home, and also a great fit for lesson studios, practice rooms, and other music education settings.

With its simple, direct interface, the RP102 allows users to enjoy great piano sound with zero hassle. A variety of piano and non-piano sounds are available to play, and it's possible to layer any two sounds together.

The RP102 is equipped to inspire music making with over 200 ready-to-play songs, including traditional music, classical masterpieces by Mozart and Beethoven, and famous piano etudes from Hanon and Czerny. There's also an onboard metronome with variable time signatures, an essential practice tool for players of all levels. Twin Piano

mode splits the keyboard into two 44-note pianos, allowing two people to play together side by side.

Offering piano sound and touch inherited from Roland's premium home instruments, the RP102 will continue to inspire as the user's playing grows and evolves. SuperNATURAL Piano technology delivers the rich, expressive tone of an acoustic grand piano, while the responsive PHA-4 Standard keyboard accurately translates every playing nuance. A dynamic onboard speaker system provides rich, satisfying sound that fills the room. It's also possible to plug in headphones and mute the speakers, allowing for late night practice without disturbing others.

The RP102 features three integrated pedals made of metal for an authentic feel. They also support half-pedal control for playing more advanced piano pieces, a feature not found on typical entry-level instruments.

To learn more about the Roland RP102 Digital Piano, visit www.roland.co.in



Integrated Systems Europe

The European destination for the global AV industry



The fifteenth show will take place at the RAI Amsterdam from 6-9 February and it promises to be the largest and most exciting exhibition so far in its illustrious history.

The most obvious change from the 2017 show is the addition of another hall. This will be known as Hall 15. This has been added to help meet the demand from vendors and service suppliers keen to take part in the world's largest AV and systems integration show. It is located at the front of the venue.

What can attendees expect at ISE 2018?

Experienced attendees will know that there is much to take part in on the day before the show opens its doors. Taking place on the 5th February there are three conferences, all open to ISE exhibitors and attendees.

The Audio Forum conference, an established fixture at ISE, will explore the opportunities and challenges faced when distributing audio over IP. Audio Forum brings together the worlds of AV and pro audio and seeks to improve dialogue and understanding between pro audio and AV professionals. The conference will focus on the following they core subject areas:-Digital Audio Transport; Audio Design with Audio over IP and Digital Audio Protocols.

The Smart Building Conference will explore the latest technologies and business case studies for smart offices, homes, building and cities in a full day, twin track event. The 2017 edition attracted over 400 attendees and leading conference speakers have already been confirmed for next year's event. This year's theme is From Smart Building to Smart City, as Conference Chairman Bob Snyder explains, "As more layers of digital networks blanket urban space, new approaches to commercial and residential built environment are emerging."

The Smart Building Conference will be followed by the ISE 2018 Opening Address, to be given by Carlo Ratti, the eminent Italian architect, inventor and professor at the Senseable City Lab at MIT, USA. In his speech Ratti will explore, Senseable Cities: "The increasing deployment of sensors and hand-held electronics in recent years is allowing a new approach to the study of the built environment. The way we describe and

understand cities is being radically transformed – alongside the tools we use to design them and impact on their physical structure. The contribution from Prof. Carlo Ratti will address these issues from a critical point of view through examination of various projects he has been involved with."

The official Opening Reception will follow Ratti's speech and is open to all everyone to attend to enjoy complementary food and drinks. It's a perfect opportunity to network and plan for the upcoming four days.

New for 2018, and the pre-show schedule, will be the launch of the TIDE conference taking place at the Okura Hotel, nearby to the RAI. This event is being produced by AVIXA, the trade association formerly known as InfoComm International. TIDE is a thought leadership conference that will explore the intersection of content, space and technology and will show how all three elements can come together to immersive customers in exceptional experiences.

Being run alongside ISE 2018 the World Masters of Projection Mapping is an exciting new competition based in Amsterdam. It will showcase the finest in 3D projection mapping artistic creativity and cutting edge technology. The competition is being produced as a cooperative venture between Amsterdam Light Festival, Integrated Systems Events (ISE) and the RAI Amsterdam. The artistic and technical challenge for five shortlisted artists will be to create a work of video art to be mapped onto the three-dimensional architecture of the futuristic EYE Filmmuseum, to be experienced from multiple viewpoints. For projection mapping artists this represents a unique challenge. The judging, led by Amsterdam Light Festival Creative Director Lennart Booij, will take place on 8 February and the winner will be announced at ISE on the morning of 9 February at a Special Showcase Event featuring the five finalists. During this period ISE attendees will be able to enjoy a two-hour boat cruise and dinner from the RAI Harbour to the competition's location in the centre of the city. The winning entry and those of the other finalists will also



be projected onto the EYE Filmmuseum during the Friday evening after ISE 2018 has finished.

The 2018 designated zones are: Education, Smart Building, Digital Signage, Pro Audio/Live Events, Unified Communications and Residential. Hundreds of product introductions are anticipated. New for 2018 is the XR Zone, covering VR, AR and Mixed Reality technology and solutions.

A brand-new 500sq m. XR Technology Zone has been located in the Park Foyer, at the rear of Hall 8. The centerpiece of the XR Technology Zone will be provided by HoloVis. The company is a world leader in sensory experience design in the entertainment, industrial, and retail sectors. An X Reality Hub will be placed at the rear of the Park Foyer and will host a range of XR workshops and presentations throughout the show.

InAVation Awards: Taking place on the evening of the first day of the show this event continues to grow from strength to strength and will once again deliver the recognition that the very best of the global AV industry deserves at this unique and enjoyable ceremony. With the much coveted Project Awards contested by the world's top integrators and consultants, a ticket to the event provides an all-inclusive evening, so there are no additional costs on the night. After an informal drinks reception guests will take their seats under the iron dome of the converted industrial building for a four-course gala dinner, during which winners across all Technology and Project categories will be announced.

Situated amongst the exhibition stands, three ISE Show Floor Theatres will feature four days of 30-minute presentations covering innovative business and technology case studies from exhibitors, partners and consultants. Theatre sessions are open to all attendees and no pre-booking is necessary. For 2018 the theatre are named the CEDIA Smart Building Solutions Theatre sponsored by KNX, the AVIXA Unified Communications Solutions Theatre sponsored by Crestron and the AVIXA Commercial Solutions Theatre sponsored by Crestron.

Taking place in each theatre for the first time will be a unique set of Business Sessions produced by ISE official supplier AV Magazine. There will also be exclusive theatre

sessions produced by the Smart Building Conference, KNX and the Digital Signage Summit.

Throughout ISE 2018 there will also be the opportunity for people to attend a number of conferences and to take advantage of numerous personal development opportunities. These include:-

Digital Signage Summit ISE: This is a half day conference that will focus on the latest Digital Signage and DoOH technologies and business applications. It is produced by ISE partner invidis consulting and will be chaired by Florian Rotberg.

Sports Venue and Fan Engagement Summit: For 2018, SVG Europe has partnered with leading venue publication PanStadia & Arena Management Magazine to create Sports Venue and Fan Engagement Summit, that focuses on the overall experience of the modern stadium – in particular those technologies geared towards enhancing fan engagement. The conference will feature panels and presentations from leading broadcasters, service providers, vendors, architects, designers and consultants.

XR Summit: this is a new, full day conference that will showcase the latest Virtual and Augmented reality products, workflows and solutions available for the AV marketplace. It will be equally relevant for both exhibitors and attendees. This is being produced by ISE partner VR Days Europe. It will be chaired by VR Days festival Director Benjamin de Wit.

As ever there will also be a full range of training options provide by ISE co-owners CEDIA and AVIXA. These will vary from short 20-minute 'primers' on their respective stands to a full day's workshop, masterclass or conference. These will take place on the pre-show day and throughout the four days of the exhibition. Full details are now available on the ISE with passes available from the new, online ISE Ticket Shop.

The ever popular Tech Tours will give attendees the chance to get a 'behind the scenes' tour of some of Amsterdam's most innovative AV installations and buildings. These will demonstrate the state of the art use of technology and installation solutions.

For the latest show updates, check the Integrated Systems Europe website: www.iseurope.org

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- 1 **Numark DJ2GO2** – Portable 2-channel DJ controller for Serato DJ Intro. Perfect for performing or prepping your DJ set playlist and cue points.
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- 4 **Numark HF Wireless** – High performance collapsible wireless headphones with built-in microphone.
- 5 **Numark NTX1000** – Professional High-Torque Direct Drive Turntable.
- 6 **Numark M6USB**– A 4-Channel USB DJ Mixer.
- 7 **Alesis TransActive Wireless 2** – Portable, powered PA speaker with rechargeable battery. Integrated RGB LED lightning reacts to your audio.
- 8 **Alesis PA System in a Box** – 280Watts 4 channel PA system. Includes PA80 powered mixer, two 10" 2-way Passive Speakers and speaker cables.
- 9 **Alesis DM10 MKII Pro Kit** – Premium Ten-Piece Electronic Drum Kit with Mesh Heads. 6-piece pad set with 4 dual-zone toms, dual-zone snare and 8" kick. Cymbal set with a hi-hat, 2 crashes and triple-zone ride.
- 10 **Alesis Samplepad Pro** – 8 pad percussion and sample-triggering instrument.
- 11 **Akai Professional MPC Live** – The new MPC Live makes the process of performing your studio inventions on stage incredibly seamless.
- 12 **Akai Professional MPK Mini** – Compact Keyboard and Pad VIP Controller.
- 13 **Akai Professional LPK25 WIRELESS** – A wireless Bluetooth MIDI pad controller that's meant to escape the boundaries of your studio.
- 14 **Akai Professional MPCX**– The nextgen standalone MPC, with a 10.1" multi-touch OLED display, 16 GB in-built storage and expandable 2.5" SATA drive bay.
- 15 **Akai Professional MPK Mini MKII** – Designed for the traveling musician and the desktop producer. It lets you record, compose, and perform with virtual instruments, effect plugins and DAWs.

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CIRCUIT MONO STATION

Next-generation sequenced monosynth



Circuit Mono Station is a paraphonic analogue synthesiser that originates from the Novation Bass Station II, with three sequencer tracks that benefit from the 32 velocity-sensitive RGB pads found on Circuit.

Connect to just about anything

The CV, Gate, and modulation outputs provide an easy mechanism for controlling separate hardware. You can plug Circuit Mono Station into your Mac or PC via USB and start playing. It also has MIDI In, Out and Thru, so you can connect your other MIDI gear. Passing an audio signal through the audio input opens up a world of analogue filtration and distortion. Using the audio input with the mod sequencer, you can modulate, evolve and process your source in entirely new ways.

Three sequencer tracks

Both monophonic and paraphonic modes are available, with each oscillator controlled by its own sequencer. In total, there's two oscillator sequencers and one modulation sequencer. You can alter Gate length, switch patterns instantly, choose sync rate and mutate patterns.

Demystifying 'Paraphonic'

Novation's Circuit Mono Station is by no means the first paraphonic synth. But by embracing 'paraphony', we entered a sometimes confusing sub-section of synthesis categorization.

Turns out that the sub-section of phraseology that refers to the number of sounds a synth is capable of creating at any one time is a pretty confusing topic. Read what Peter Kirn (Create Digital Music) and the makers of Circuit Mono Station have to say about it.

Key Features

Individually control oscillators

Two oscillators with individual control of sync and tuning parameters.

Get the frequency band you want

High-pass, low-pass and band-pass filters with slopes of 12dB and 24dB.

Three distortion modes

Classic Bass Station, new fuzz or a mixture of both.

Monophonic and paraphonic

Monophonic and paraphonic modes with individual glide control.

Adaptable modulation system

Four-by-eight modulation matrix that enables complex alteration and routing.

Patches at your fingertips

Load and save up to 64 patches on the device.

Three sequencer tracks

Two oscillator sequencers and one modulation sequencer.

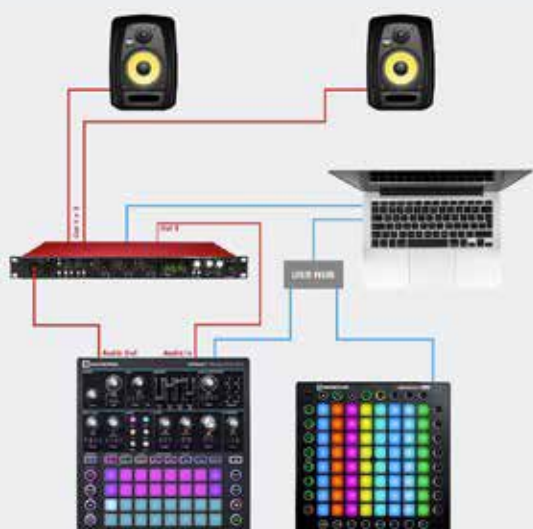
Connect to hardware and software

CV, Gate and modulation outputs for controlling separate hardware. Connect and sync to your music software and MIDI-compatible hardware. Modulate, evolve and process your source through the audio input.

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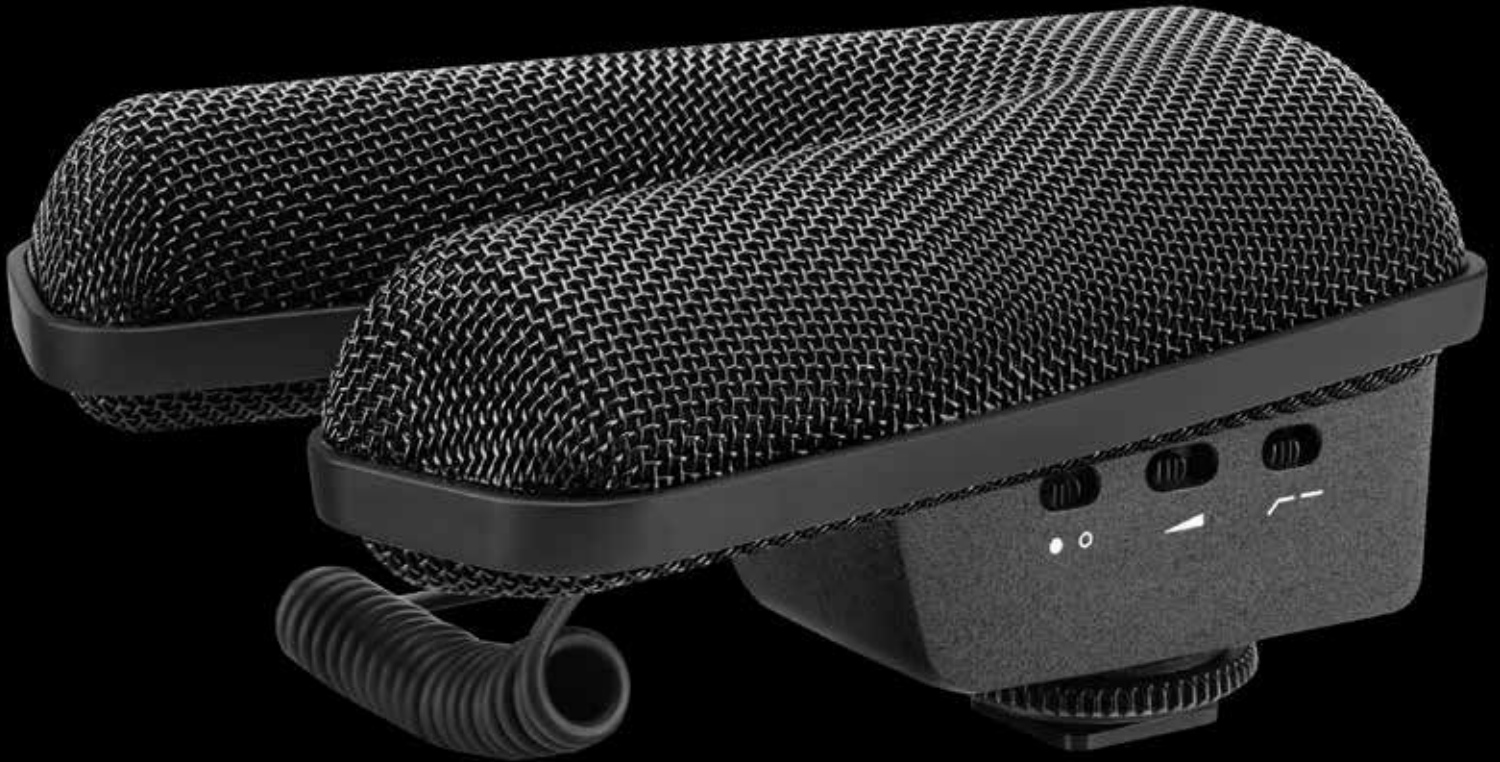
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SENNHEISER MKE 440



German audio specialist Sennheiser unveiled the MKE 440, a stereo camera microphone that solves a typical challenge encountered by DSLR users: capturing focused stereo sound from the filmed object.

DSLR filmmakers have always had a hard time getting good sound from their camera-mounted stereo microphone. The new MKE 440 achieves this task: Thanks to two mini-shotgun microphones and a new stereo technique, it records the sound from within the camera angle, beating any mini AB, MS or XY arrangements. While these classic stereo set-ups also capture sound and noises from the sides – including any comments from the camera operator or people next to them – the two mini-shotguns of the MKE 440 are mounted in a V-shape arrangement that predominantly picks up the sound from within the direction of filming and rejects the majority of off-axis noise from outside the camera focus. The matched mini-shotguns of the MKE 440 feature super-cardioid pick-up patterns that overlap to create a front focus.

The microphones are shock-mounted internally to reduce any handling noise and are protected against wind noise by a stainless steel micro-mesh. For strong wind, a special hairy cover is available as an accessory. The compact, all-metal MKE 440 attaches to standard camera shoe mounts. It features a three-level sensitivity switch to adjust to softer and louder sound sources and has a switchable low-cut filter to eliminate low-frequency noise such as wind noise. The microphone is

powered by two AAA size batteries, with the green LED of the on/off switch doubling as a low-batt indicator. The LED will turn red approximately four hours before the batteries run flat, ensuring sufficient time to finish shooting.

About Sennheiser Electronics India Private Limited

The Sennheiser Group based in Wedemark near Hanover, Germany, was founded in 1945 and has gone on to become a leading manufacturer of microphones, headphones and wireless transmission systems. Sales in 2013 totalled 590.4 million euros. Sennheiser employs more than 2,500 staff worldwide and operates plants in Germany, Ireland and the USA. The company has a worldwide network of subsidiaries in France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Germany, Denmark (Nordic), Russia, Hongkong, India, Singapore, Japan, China, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, Mexico, and the USA. It also has long-established trading partners in other countries. Georg Neumann GmbH, Berlin, a maker of studio microphones and monitor speakers, and Sennheiser Communications A/S, a joint venture making headsets for PCs, offices and call centres, are also part of the Sennheiser Group.

For further information about Sennheiser India please visit en-in.sennheiser.com

Bose Professional ShowMatch Systems Increasingly Adopted by Rental Sound Company Owners Worldwide



ShowMatch™ is rapidly becoming the system of choice, and a smart business decision for leading rental and tour sound companies, based on its sound quality, compact size, selectable coverage patterns and scalability – allowing ShowMatch systems to handle a wide variety of sound reinforcement applications

Within the past few months, numerous sound and A/V rental company owners around the world have chosen the new Bose Professional ShowMatch™ compact line array system with DeltaQ™ variable-coverage technology as a go-to solution for their rental inventories.

In the United States, Total Production Group (TPG) of Cerritos, California, is an example of a full-service A/V rental company that has adopted ShowMatch. Owner/partner Steve McAllister said going with a ShowMatch system was a very easy decision: “I’ve heard many different systems over the years, and I was very impressed by the coverage and clarity of the Bose ShowMatch system. ShowMatch is a great system for our company because it allows us to scale the rig for anything from a small corporate gig all the way up to stadium-size shows – and do it with amazing quality. It’s small and compact, and it’s just as capable of handling a symphony as it is for EDM shows – simply by reconfiguring the boxes. We’re finding lately that there is more interest in smaller, mid-sized systems that are scalable, because it gives us and our clients flexibility and easier logistics for moving the system from show to show. I know ShowMatch is going to become the workhorse of our audio systems.”

Across Europe, ShowMatch systems are in use by over two dozen rental companies helping to fulfill production contracts for product launches, business conventions, jazz festivals, civic ceremonies and rock shows.

As examples, rental firm Xeos (Strasbourg, France) recently completed a series of events for French automaker Peugeot. In

Italy, Sonique Live recently provided sound services for British rockers Marillion in concert at the 2,400-seat Teatro Degli Arcimboldi (Milan), while Star Service (Milan) helped support the multi-venue, outdoor Piano City Milano event series. Star Service recently added a 24-box Bose ShowMatch line array system with 12 SMS118 subwoofers to its rental inventory.

In Asia, integrated audio-visual rental firm Really A/V (Shanghai, China), services a variety of corporate and entertainment industry clients like Victoria’s Secret and Alibaba Group, China’s leading e-commerce company. Really A/V recently acquired 24 ShowMatch line array modules and 12 SMS118 subwoofers. Vincent Gu, Sound Supervisor for the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra, recently mixed on the ShowMatch system. “This group is very much like western symphony orchestras, but with special musical instruments unique to China,” noted Gu. “The Bose system was extremely clear, with well-defined coverage for our concert in the Shanghai Opera House. I look forward to seeing this system becoming more available in local rental inventories”.

In Latin America, regional rental companies specializing in live concerts and festivals are also adopting ShowMatch systems. T&S Group (Quito, Ecuador) recently held a ShowMatch training and certification event for area system owners and operators, along with local sound reinforcement technicians, highlighting the new Bose system solutions platform that includes Powersoft DSP and amplification.

In Australia, FOH engineer Anatole Day recently mixed his show on a Bose ShowMatch system, in a ground-stacked configuration, with artist Guy Sebastian in concert at the Newcastle Civic Theater. “This was definitely the best-sounding show on the tour,” noted Anatole. “ShowMatch delivered high quality audio for the quieter songs as well as the louder ones.”

For more information, visit pro.bose.com.

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MY MUSIC. MY PIANO. MY WAY.

You have always dreamed of learning to play your favourite songs. The Clavinova CSP will make this dream come true. By scanning the songs in your smart device's music library, the CSP will produce a chord chart, a piano score, and will show you what keys to play and when with the intuitive Stream Lights feature. Never before has technology been able to make this dream a reality!

No more frustrations!

The CSP will dispel any preconceptions you might have about playing the piano being a difficult, frustrating experience. The dedicated CSP app analyses the music you want to play and then creates a piano accompaniment score for you. All you have to do is follow the Stream Lights!



STEP 1 : Pick a song, any song...

Choose any song you like from your audio/ song library.



STEP 2 : Audio to Score

Load the song into the Smart Pianist app, and the "Audio to Score" feature will analyse the chords and create a score instantly.



STEP 3 : Stream Lights

Now you're ready to go! Let the Stream Lights guide your fingers as you play along with the song.

Innovation for effortless performance

Clavinova is an innovative lineup of digital pianos that have continued to evolve while seeking to provide the touch and tone of a concert grand piano—the ultimate symbol of piano excellence. This authentic grand piano experience is the product of the knowledge and expertise that Yamaha has accumulated over more than 100 years of crafting acoustic pianos. Utilizing state-of-the-art technology to achieve grand piano quality, Clavinova digital pianos offer an inviting playing experience that is perfect for players of all levels. They emulate the touch and tone of a grand piano to make the transition from digital to acoustic piano a seamless and enjoyable one.

For the more committed performer...

When you're ready to take on the challenge of solo performance, the CSP offers built-in songs for immediate enjoyment or additional songs for purchase from Yamaha MusicSoft (<https://www.yamahamusicsoft.com>). And even if you're not confident in your own playing abilities, you can trust the Stream Lights to show you the way.

<https://www.yamahamusicsoft.com>

Solo, band, orchestra, and more!

CSP Clavinova offers unrivalled capacity for musical expression, with a huge variety of instrument voices that bely their simple, elegant exteriors. You can also enjoy ensemble sessions with rock or jazz bands, and even bossa nova orchestras, simply by assigning Styles.

Want to sing as well? The CSP comes equipped with a mic input, and will even harmonize with you as you sing!

CREATIVE SIDECHAINING TECHNIQUES

Sidechaining is a production technique that is used in a wide variety of music genres to achieve different results. It is the process of using an alternative audio source to trigger various kinds of processors. The processor is activated when the threshold set on it is exceeded by the alternative source track. In this edition, we'll be getting into how sidechaining can be used to get various results that can be used as mixing as well as production techniques.

One of the most common examples of using this technique is called Sidechain Compression. In this technique, the compressor on a certain track is triggered every time the track that it is linked to exceeds the set threshold level. While this might seem a bit overwhelming, it is a fairly simple but powerful tool once you familiarize yourself with it. Sidechain compression is used heavily in electronic music where the kick has to cut through the bass. This is done by sidechain compressing the bass to the kick drum. This results in the bass ducking every time the kick drum punches in, giving it that rhythmic ducking character. In heavier genres of music such as metal, when there are intricate kick patterns involved that need to pop out of the mix, it is not uncommon to find yourself in a situation where the bass and the kick are fighting each other. Sometimes, this issue can be resolved by sidechain

compressing the bass to the kick drum. In this case though, there shouldn't be a very obvious ducking effect, therefore, it's important to make sure that the gain reduction is just enough to help the kick cut through a little more while the bass is still present enough to make the mix sound full and steady.

In certain mixes, you might have noticed that in the chorus or the fuller sections of the song where the vocals are the highlight, the guitars take a step back, just enough for the vocals to fit in perfectly. This can be done by sidechaining the guitars to the vocals so that the guitars are compressed enough to make space for the vocals. A lot of engineers use these techniques while mixing to achieve some great-sounding tracks.

Sidechaining is also heavily used while producing tracks to get some unique effects. For example, using a sidechained gate will open up a track only when the track that is linked to the gate exceeds a minimum threshold. Sidechain gating a synth, for instance, to a snare pattern that has been deactivated will make your synth audible only when the snares hit, resulting in a very interesting slicing effect while following the same pattern. Sidechaining is a brilliant tool that can be used for various applications that is only limited by your imagination and creativity.

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