

SPIC



MACAY

AHMEDABAD CHAPTER

*SPIC MACAY, the Society for Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Amongst Youth is an organization that was founded in 1977, with the preservation of India's rich heritage through awareness and consciousness among youth as its aim. This aim, SPIC MACAY seeks to fulfill through establishing a dialogue between noted artists and the youth through concerts, workshops and performances & programs conducted for them which brings cultural and aesthetic awareness into the mainstream of the Indian educational system.*

The SPIC MACAY Gujarat State Convention 2012 was held at the Ravi J. Mathai Centre for Innovation at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad over a period spanning three days from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

Convention brought together members of SPIC MACAY from all parts of the state at a common platform. It comprised of organisational discussions to analyse the previous year's performance and the plans going forward along with any key challenges. It also featured talks, films, intensive workshops for students, yoga, classical and folk performances by maestros.

The operations of the festival were orchestrated by a team of student volunteers under the guidance and supervision of Mrs. Sushma Jacob, Coordinator SPIC MACAY Ahmedabad Chapter, Ms Indira Shrivastav, Central State Facilitator (Delhi) and advisory group of Gujarat State Convention Mr Sunil Parekh, Ms Gauri Wagenaar, Mr Chetan Chauhan and Mr Praveen Nahar. Team of National Chapter from Delhi led by Dr Kiren Seth (Founder SPIC MACAY) Ms Indira Shrivastava, Ms Neerja Sarin, Mr Harsh Narayan, Mr Ricky Shrivastava, Mr Sreenivasam and Anisha Pucadyil were also present and convened various activities of convention.

This convention marked the coming together of all the chapters of Gujarat after many years. It was a unique coming together of like - minded individuals for the one cause – sensitization towards India and its cultural heritage.

The convention comprised of a multitude of activities – an extensive press conference, three meetings regarding the future proceedings of various chapters, strategizing sessions,

# Gujarat State Convention 2012

13-15 July 2012 IIM, Ahmedabad



financial planning and marketing discussions, screening of cinema classics, a heritage walk, Hatha and Nada Yoga sessions, intensive workshops of Kathak (conducted by Mrs. Ishira Parikh), Khadi making (conducted by Mr. Yogesh Patel) and Dhrupad (conducted by Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar), and four concerts – to name a few.

The artists who gave evening recitals on each of the three days are Dr. Mrs. N. Rajam (violin), Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar (Dhrupad), Soorvani (a group of 21 folk musicians from Kachchh) and Vidushi Manju Mehta (Sitar). Guided viewing sessions of cinema classics were conducted by Professor Sekar Mukherjee from the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. A talk on Indian dance forms was compiled and conducted by expert dance critic Mrs. Leela Venkatraman and Mr. R. Sreenivasan.

The response to the Convention was very encouraging and positive, marked by a strong sense of enthusiasm by the participants and the audience for various programs.

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## July 13, 2012 (Day-1)

The Convention began on the morning of July 13, 2012. Following the registrations, the intensives of Kathak, Khadi and Dhruwad began.

For the Kathak intensive, Mrs. Ishira Parikh began with over 60 energetic students, acquainting them with the nuances and technicalities of Kathak. She also conducted an introduction exercise where all participating students gave their names. She began the workshop by teaching the students the Tatkaar, which are the dance syllables that are produced from stomping of the feet. At first, she took the students through an unaccompanied routine of the Tatkaar, after which she conducted the same exercise accompanied by the Tabla and the harmonium. Her assistants very effectively orchestrated the movements of all the participants.



The Dhruwad intensive began with over 40 students introduced to the swaras and the importance of Sa by Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar. He also illustrated why the Tanpura is so important within the proceedings of Indian classical music. After this, the Ustad took the entire group of students through a guided series of exercises which would relax their vocal chords and free their voices. After this, he took them through Sargam practices and Alankars and introduced the Raga Shankara which would be their item of presentation.



Mr. Yogesh Patel, resource person for the Khadi intensive, began his intensive with over 10 students by introducing to the process of how cotton is grown and how many types of cotton exist in the world. He then moved on to the types of cotton grown in Gujarat and how they influence the quality of Khadi produced. He then went on to show the Charkha, its different parts and how it works. After this, he guided the students through the process of making a strong thread from the strands of cotton. A futile effort in the beginning, but the students slowly began to get a hang of the process. He also gave a brief exposition over how Khadi is mass produced.



The intensives were followed by an holistic lunch. Post lunch, there was a press conference. The conference began with the showcasing of the documentary 'Anubhuti' which highlighted the activities of SPIC MACAY and the views of artists on the movement and its progress. This was followed by the showcasing of an episode of Master Visionaries hosted by Vir Sanghvi on which Dr. Kiran Seth was interviewed.

The conference began with a note of thanks to all the sponsors and supporters of the event. The press was informed about the history of SPIC MACAY, how it functions as a student movement and not a business and how does the

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road lie further ahead of us. It was also pointed that SPIC MACAY Ahmedabad returned to its original performance venue after a hiatus of five long years. The unflinching support of the government of Gujarat and the preference and support given to SPIC MACAY by most schools and colleges as a culturally progressive organization was highlighted. The press was requested to wholeheartedly convey the objectives and the message of SPIC MACAY to the larger masses so that they may also be a part of the movement.



Mr. Harsh Narayan then elaborated on the Gurukul Scholarship Scheme and the Rural Intensive Scheme. It was heartening to see how the press was moved by the sheer intensity of these programs. He also spoke about the National, State and Regional conventions which happen each year. He insisted that the media assist SPIC MACAY in reaching out to the people so that many more can be benefited with the experience of Indian cultural heritage.



Dr. N. Rajam and Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar were very forthcoming in speaking about their long term associations with SPIC MACAY and also narrated various experiences which were humbling for them. They elaborated on how desensitization of the masses is occurring due to the present media and the excessive dependence on electronic communication. They appreciated the fact that SPIC MACAY concerned itself not only with Indian Classical music but with also other forms of art such as dance, craft, painting, pottery etc. Mr. R. Sreenivasan, an expert on documentation, elaborated the growth rate of SPIC MACAY. He mentioned that there 5000 events which happen each year, nationally, and many more internationally, in the 135 countries where SPIC MACAY has chapters. Mr. Ricky Srivastava and Mrs. Indra Srivastava elaborated upon how the spirit of volunteerism was the driving force of SPIC MACAY and how it moulds the lives and thoughts.



Following the press conference, Professor Sekhar Mukherjee from NID took the conducted a guided screening of Pather Panchali. After the screening, he spoke about Satyajit Ray's method of cinematic visualization and how his simple cinematic techniques have had a revolutionary influence on world cinema. He also deconstructed a few scenes and spoke about how they hit the audience right in the gut. He was also very receptive to the audience's questions and answered them with humility.

The screening was followed by an early holistic dinner. This was followed by the inaugural ceremony where the lamp was lit by Dr. Kiran Seth, Mrs. Leela Venkatraman, Dr. N. Rajam, Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar, Mr. Sunil Parekh and Mr. Bhagesh

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Jha. This was followed by the opening address by Mr. Sunil Parekh and Dr. Kiran Seth. After this, Mr. Bhagesh Jha presented his thoughts on the propagation of the rich cultural heritage of Gurjarat across borders.



Shortly after the speeches, Dr. N. Rajam came on stage and began the Inaugural concert attended by over 200 people. In the most liting of fashions, she unfolded the seasonal raga, Miyan ki Malhar. She performed a short, yet deep Alaap, followed by two compositions which stretched over one and a half hours. Her dexterity and command over the instrument moved the audience, and, the clouds too. Right when she began performing, the lands of Ahmedabad were blessed with rains. She concluded her performance with Narsinh Mehta's Bhajan "Vaishnava Jana". In her concluding notes, she was appreciative of the audience and of the work of all the volunteers present there.



After this, interested attendees were taken to a Heritage Walk across the Old City area in Ahmedabad.

## July 14, 2012 (Day-2)

The day began with a session of Nada and Hath Yoga conducted by Dr. Kiran Seth. Just by one's voice, he demonstrated how one could achieve mental peace and stability. This was followed by an holistic breakfast, after which many activities began parallel to one another.

On Day 2 of the Kathak intensive, Mrs. Ishira Parikh taught the participants a Tukda which was to be performed on a taped composition composed by her. The students readily learnt the movements, choreographed by Mrs. Parikh and her assistants and the rehearsals for the presentation were in full swing. Every participant, regardless of their age, gave their fullest into learning what was being propagated. The participants took short breaks but kept the momentum of the intensive steady. With patience and precision, Mrs. Parikh molded the rehearsal into a performance, by carefully correcting the participants where they went wrong, and encouraging one and all to perform better.

At the Khadi intensive, activity was in full swing. The participants were introduced to the method of using the charkha effectively and producing strings which would be tied together and made into Khadi fabric. Many a times their strings broke, but slowly and steadily, guided by Mr. Yogesh Patel, the candidates got a grip over the spinning method and soon began to pull out fine strands of thread out of balls of cotton.

In the Dhrupad intensive, Ustad Dagar now introduced the Bandish (fixed composition) for the Raga Shankara which would be their presentation on the following day. With great care, he also introduced the beat cycle of Sool Taal on which the Bandish would be performed. He took the students carefully through each phrase of the composition and guided them on how they should proceed with the beat cycle. He also guided the students on the nuances of how to maintain the Swara which has been established by the Tanpura.

Parallel to the intensive sessions occurred, there was a session on Organizational Issues addressed by Dr. Kiran Seth along with the team from Delhi, comprising of Mrs. Indira Srivastava, Mrs. Neerja Sarin, Mr. Ricky Srivastava and Mr. Harsh Narayan. All the chapter coordinators, along with Mr. Sunil Parekh discussed in depth the flaws in the present organizational and financial structure of SPIC MACAY in Gujarat. This meeting led to the appointment of new chapter coordinators and nodal institutions for each chapter. This meeting also saw solutions to financial, sponsorship issues

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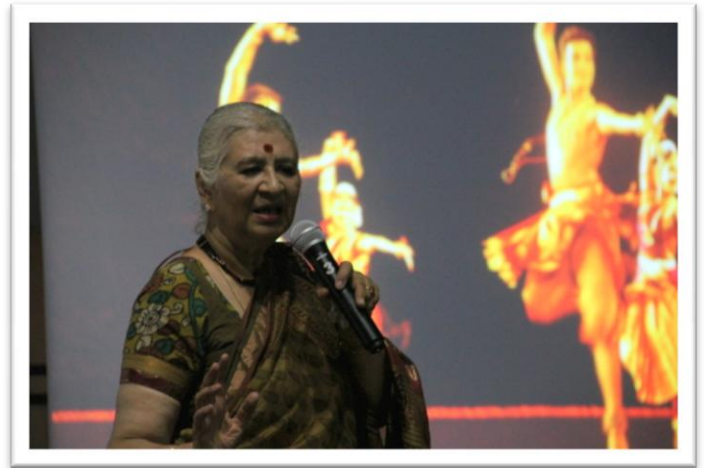


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which were encountered by the various chapters. There was also an agreement on a bi-monthly meeting schedule of all chapters to facilitate the better functioning of the organization.

Post lunch, a conceptual session was held for the various volunteers and chapter representatives regarding the concept of volunteerism and organization. In this meeting, the examples of many other organizations were also cited which were doing excellent work in improving the lives of people. There was also an elaboration of how civilization has declined due to various factors like urbanization and how we are forgetting our roots. This session encouraged critical and independent thinking and put forward its message very well.



Following this was the screening of Ketan Mehta's *Bhavni Bhavai*, a critically acclaimed piece of Gujarati cinema. The plot was gripping and the audience was left spellbound by his use of mis-en-scene. Parallel to this screening, there was a meeting of the heads of various educational institutes of Ahmedabad. In this meeting, every institution got assigned a specific role and their doubts regarding the organization were cleared.



This was followed by a session on Effective Documentation by Mr. R. Sreenivasan. He elaborated on the various observational and photographic techniques which he used to document effectively. He also mentioned that documentation not done on time is as good as documentation not done at all. He also mentioned the importance of documentation as it is the most useful referral point for future improvements in the functioning of an organization. He also emphasized that a good documentation team can do wonders to the progress of an organization.

After this session, Mrs. Leela Venkatraman and Mr. R. Sreenivasan compiled and presented a talk on the various dance forms of India and their social and religious roots and significance. Very elaborately, through various photographs, Mrs. Venkatraman elaborated on the symbolism in the geometry, or the lack of it, in various Indian dance forms. She also gave briefs about the exponents of various dance forms and the training which dancers undergo to achieve virtuous perfection.



This was followed by early dinner, after which there was a Dhrupad recital by Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar attended by over 200 people. Ustad Dagar, a master of his art, very carefully and elaborately presented Raga Yaman and Raga Shankara in their pristine forms. He was very encouraging of the audience and he was impressed by how informed they were.

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Following the Dhrupad recital, Soorvani, a group of 21 folk musicians from Kachchh gave recitals in 7 different groups. It was heartening to see century old folk traditions being preserved and presented in their nascent forms. The musicians expressed that they were very happy in performing at IIM and they would wait to come again. All the musicians were felicitated by Mrs. Ela Bhatt, the director of SEWA.



### July 15, 2012 (Day-3)

Day 3, the finale of the State Convention began with an early morning session of Hatha and Nada Yoga led by Dr. Kiran Seth followed by the Shramdaan program. In Shramdaan, participants of the convention planted saplings in a designated area of the institute, assisted by the gardeners of the institute.

Following the Shramdaan was the holistic breakfast after which the participants of the intensives met with their respective resource persons and prepared for the intensive presentation.

The morning was marked by a Sitar recital by Vidushi Manju Mehta, a senior disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar and founder of the Saptak School of Music and the Saptak Music Festival attended by over 150 people. She presented the morning raga, Raga Gurjari Todi, in the complex Dhamaar Taal. Her recital was marked by tenderness and fluid progression. The audience was spellbound and thunderous applause were a routine for the duration which she performed.

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Following her performance, the students of the intensives presented their learning over the three days. They were all humbled and glad to have gained excellent tutelage from great masters. The participants of the Kathak intensive gave a beautiful performance of the Tatkaar and the Tukda they were taught. The Dhrupad participants presented Raga Shankara and were being guided by Ustad Dagar on stage. The students of the Khadi intensive spun Khadi live on the stage and had the audience by surprise. Teachers and parents alike, were very happy to see their children on stage.

The Convention was concluded by remarks by Mr. Sunil Parekh, Mrs. Sushma Jacob and Dr. Kiran Seth. The convention was a success as it united all the chapters of Gujarat so that better activities can take place in a very synchronous fashion.

We express our gratitude to Suzlon, SIS, State Bank of India, Gujarat Tourism and Torrent Power for sponsoring this event, IIM Ahmedabad for institutional support and Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation for aiding in the publicity of this event.

Report compiled by Farheen Raaj, Naini Khajanchi, Kanchi Vasavda, Aanal Bhatt and Udit Thakre.

Photographs taken by Neha Chopra and team.

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# SPIC MACAY GUJARAT STATE CONVENTION 2012 AT A GLANCE






**SPIC MACAY**  
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*invites you to,*

## Gujarat State Convention 2012

13-15 July 2012 IIM, Ahmedabad




*13th July, Friday - Day 1*

09:00 am - 12:00 pm Intensive Workshops for Students  
 10:00 am - 12:30 pm Registration  
 01:00 pm - 02:00 pm Anubhuti & Master Visionaries  
 01:00 pm - 02:00 pm Press Conference  
 02:30 pm - 05:30 pm Cinema Classic  
 06:45 pm - 07:30 pm State Convention's Inaugural Ceremony  
 07:30 pm - 09:00 pm Violin Recital by Dr. N Rajam (Inaugural Concert)  
 09:30 pm - 11:00 pm Heritage Walk (prior registration)

*14th July, Saturday - Day 2*

04:00 am - 07:00 am Hath and Nad Yoga  
 07:00 am - 07:30 am Shramdan  
 09:00 am - 12:00 pm Intensive Workshops for Students  
 01:00 pm - 03:00 pm Cinema Classic  
 02:00 pm - 03:00 pm Documentation  
 03:00 pm - 04:00 pm Talk by Leela Venkatraman (Dance Critic)  
 06:00 pm - 07:30 pm Dhrupad Recital by Ustad F. Wasifuddin Dagar  
 07:45 pm - 09:00 pm Performance by Kutch Folk Musicians, 'Soorvani'

*15th July, Sunday - Day 3*

04:00 am - 07:00 am Hath and Nad Yoga  
 07:00 am - 07:30 am Shramdan  
 08:00 am - 10:30 am Intensive Workshop for Students  
 10:30 am - 11:30 am Sitar Recital by Mrs Manju Mehta  
 11:30 am - 12:30 pm Intensive Workshop Presentations

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Concerts Venue: Ravi Mathai Auditorium IIM Ahmedabad, SPIC MACAY State Convention Contact: Devki Bhatt, Outreach Coordinator (09909 188719), Deepak Bhandari, Programme Coordinator (088669 17831)  
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