

50 years of music: Minoti Khaund



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Minoti Khaund celebrated 50 years of her musical career as a violinist on the 29th of December 2007. It was a grand evening with a packed audience full of her friends, family and fellow musicians.

The program had performances by Minoti's sister Pronoti Khaund on bhajans, her junior students and senior students on the violin, a vocal performance by well known writer Mitra Phukan (she is Minoti's sister-in-law) and also a raag based song composed by Minoti herself by her nieces upcoming singer Anshumala and Sanjana.

The grand finale was a duet by Minoti and daughter Sunita Bhuyan and a historic moment was created when they were joined by 8 year old Panchami Khaund, Minoti's grand daughter. Three generations of violin regaled the music lovers that evening.

The audience cheered and was moved by this presentation which also a dream come true for Minoti. It was the best gift that she could have got on her 50th anniversary as a violinist.

Minoti and Sunita performed Raag Hanswadhani and Bharat Darshan a folk medley which also has the Bihu in it. The recital ended with a raga to bollywood fusion by Sunita on bhimpalashri.

Below is an excerpt from a conversation we had recently with Minoti Khaund and her family.

Something about your earlier days. How did the orientation to music happen?

I started playing the violin at the age of 10. I expressed my desire to play with the fiddle to my maternal grandfather, who being a connoisseur of the fine arts himself could sense the passion in the girl child's eyes and bought me a violin. This is when my journey started with classical music.

I took my early training in violin from Shri Indreswar Sarma of Jorhat, in the music school of Late Darpanath Sarma.

Who were the Gurus under whom you have learnt and sought guidance?

The turning point in my life came when I was performing at the All Assam Music Conference in 1972 and violin maestro Pt. V.G. Jog witnessed my performance and offered to teach me . Thereafter started the traditional *Gururshisya Parampara* with Guruji. In the same time I started my studies in music and got associated with vocalist Pt. A.T. Kanan of the Sangeet Research Academy, Kolkata and imbibed the “gayaki ang” in my performance style. I also underwent music studies in the field of raga improvisations and rhythmic patterns of “tala” from sarod maestro and musicologist Pt. Buddhadev Dasgupta.

Where all have you performed?

The Rising Talent Conference at Kalamandir Calcutta in 1978 introduced me as a new artist in the circuit in front of the knowledgeable gurus and music hungry audience of Kolkatta. There has been no looking back since then. The Amir Khan Music Conference at Rabindra Sadan Calcutta, Benaras, Burdwan, Cuttack, Bhubaneshwar, Tatanagar, Rabindra Natya Mandir mumbai, India International Center Delhi, Mehta Memorial Hall Allahabad, IIT Festival, Shankardev Kalakshetra Guwahati, National Gallery of Modern Art Mumbai, India Habitat Centre Delhi, Women’s International Forum Goa, Madhusudhan Manch Kolkatta etc have been my memorable concerts which have got critical acclaim by both the audience and media.

Tell us some notable thoughts / moments of your career which are good memories now.

In 1972 I restarted my music after a gap of 10 year at the Assam Music conference. It was the most fulfilling stage in my life as I was happily married to Kabindra Ram Khaund and had become the mother of two beautiful children. At this juncture I happened to meet Guruji Pandit V.G. Jog. God could not have been kinder...

My convocation and performance at Prayag Sangeet Samitti Allahabad for topping the Sanget Visharad course at a stage when I was already a performing artist.

When my daughter shared the stage with me for the first time, Guruji had tears in his eyes and said to my husband "This is the fruit of her devotion towards music".

Today I cannot stop thanking the divine intervention when I see my grand daughter Panchami (my son's daughter) play the violin. She is 8 years old and confidently puts the notes together.

It was my dream for the three of us to perform together. And we did it last month when my family celebrated 50 years of my musical career.

Do you play both light music and classical or both?

I play mainly Hindustani classical .And I enjoy playing bhajans and other kinds of devotional music. My daughter plays all kinds of music from classical to fusion, folk as well as bollywood .She specializes in classical influences in popular bollywood numbers

Music seems to run in the family. Thoughts on your daughter.

I grew up with all my siblings pursuing some kind of music. My brothers sings and plays the tabla. My younger sister Pronoti Khaund is an established singer. All my nieces and nephews sing.

Music has been like a religion in our family and both my children have inculcated this discipline. My daughter is a HR consultant but pursues it as a serious passion. In fact she uses music as a management development tool and her *Life Enrichment* workshops through music attracted a lot of interest in the corporate world.

We listen to all kinds of music. All music in this world is based on the 7 notes and cannot be disregarded. My son uses it as a tool to *de-stress* and bond with his family and friends.

Message to aspiring musicians.

Hard work, perseverance and above all training in the classical forms shall give you sustainable success.

Message to people of Assam

Embrace peace. Please realize that contentment of the soul is what we have to aspire for. Let us teach our young generation to pursue life enriching skills like music, yoga, understanding the value of education and relationships. The world will be a better place to live.

The academic development of Assam is very impressive. Am not too sure of the all round development of mind, body and soul of our young generation.

editor

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