

An evening of classical music



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Aiyushman Dutta 30 September 2008 19582 views

As per its tradition, Talim staged its annual group performance in Rabindra Bhavan last Sunday. Talim was founded by Sitar maestro Hem Hazarika in 1995 to keep alive the fast dying *guru-sishya parampara* of the country. Unlike other schools of music which lay more emphasis on certificates and degrees, Talim is one institute which believes in the acquisition of musical knowledge in a holistic manner. I remember Hem Hazarika telling me in one of our many discussions, “Merit cannot be judged with certificates. It shows when you perform on stage.” In Talim, students are not taught new lessons until and unless they have mastered the fundamental knowledge of *taal* and *loy*.

Though most of the students of Talim are already holders of master and bachelor degrees in music, Hem Hazarika teaches them to be performing artists and not be just a degree holder. He tells me, “An artist has to be recognised by society and not some certificate.” The students of Talim have performed together all across the State, including places as diverse as Bongaigaon, Lumding, Dibrugarh and Silchar.

The show began with an instrumental composition which was performed by a group of 36 students. I believe this is the first time that so many musicians had gathered together in our region for a performance based on Indian raags. A young national musical talent of the country Manmohan Sharma then took over the stage. Hailing from Kolkata, Sharma has been bestowed with the prestigious Sangeet Prabhakar award by the Prayag Sangeet Samiti of Allahabad in 2002.

It was the turn of Hazarika’s blood Subhankar to show his mettle next. Subhankar is the first Asomiya musician to be selected as a scholar of IT SRA, Calcutta and is very much on the way to replace his dad as the front runner of the Sitar in Assam. A B-high grade awardee of the Calcutta Cine Music Association, Subhankar has worked in a number of films, tele-films and albums as a reputed artists of commercial music. A regular performer of AIR and Doordarshan, Dibrugarh, Subbhanakar has performed at many prestigious platforms all over the country. He along with another musical prodigy Sandip Banerjee performed a jugalbandi that evening which was highly appreciated by the audience present.

One of the hallmarks of their show on Sunday was the jugalbandi where the entire family, comprising Hem Hazarika, his son and wife Swapan, took over the stage to mesmerize the audience. A jugalbandi with the Sitar is a very rare occurrence, but the trio carried it out with finesse. And to top it all up, the standard of each and every player was way above the mark, treating those present to an experience of a lifetime.

The sitarists and vocalists were accompanied by Ashit Jana from Kolkata, Nishant Sharma from Bhopal, Dibyojyoti Changmai, Madhurjya Mahanta, Dharani Chetia and Tutul Das on the tabla.

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BY AIYUSHMAN DUTTA

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