



Press Release
April 2008

THE DYING SONG

A brilliant theatre music experience presenting the dying art of **BAITHAK THUMRI** - conjuring up the mood and mystery of the lost world of the old Indian *haveli* and palaces in which the courtesans performed.

In a crumbling *haveli* in small town India lives a mysterious *thumri* singer. Who is **SURAIYA**? What is the secret behind the doors of the old house?

Script inspired by a Marathi novella by C.T.Khanolkar: **DEVYACHI AYEE**
Translated, written and directed by Sangeeta Datta.

The unique **BIRESHWAR GAUTAM** plays the androgynous singer *Suraiya* and gives a masterly performance singing *thumri* and performing beautiful *abhinaya*.

“**TAWA’IF**” a fascinating short documentary film about the courtesan tradition in India will be shown first.

THUMRI is a romantic vocal genre that lies between Indian classical music, theatre and folk traditions. It dates back across centuries and is said to have evolved through various strands including probably the **VAISHNAV** movement of **KRISHNA** worship, story telling and dance, temple music and finally the royal courts and *havelis* of the landed gentry from Mughal times to the fall of Lucknow and beyond in the 19th century. This vocal style became the preserve of the **TAWA’IF** or courtesan. **THUMRI** with its themes of love, separation, reconciliation and devotion, is the feminine style compared with the masculine *khyal* and *dhrupad*. In the hands of a master like Bireshwar Gautam this genre with the subtle use of *abhinaya* and improvisation is an art and a rare experience **NOT TO BE MISSED!**

ARTISTS

Bireshwar Gautam	vocal, abhinaya
Murad Ali	sarangi
Hanif Khan	tabla
Fida Hussain	harmonium

ACTORS

Bireshwar Gautam	Suraiya
Pervaiz Alam	Nawab
Rajesh Joshi	Narrator
Pratima Chatterjee	Champa

TOUR DATES

Tue 10 th June 2008	National Centre for Early Music, York 01904 658338 www.latemusicfestival.org.uk
Tue 17 th June 2008	Workshop, Asian Music Centre, London 020 8749 9584 www.amc.org.uk
Thu 19 th June 2008	The Sage Gateshead 0191 443 4661 www.thesagegateshead.org
Fri 27 th June 2008	solo performance by Bireshwar Gautam The Arts Club, St.Ives, Cornwall. 01736 794477 / 796297 www.stivesarts.club.org
Sun 29 th June 2008	Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, London 0871 663 2500 www.southbankcentre.co.uk
Fri 18 th July 2008	Pavilion Theatre, Brighton Dome, Brighton 01273 709709 www.brightondome.org
Sun 27 th July 2008	The Lowry, Salford Quays 0870 787 5790 www.thelowry.com

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

Artists are available for telephone interviews prior to the tour, personal interviews and photoshoot from 1st June till 9th June 2008.

For more information please contact Kuldeep Jalf at kuldeep@amc.org.uk

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THE ASIAN MUSIC CIRCUIT IS THE LEADING COMPANY IN THE UK PRODUCING EXCITING TOURS AND CONCERTS OF MUSIC FROM ASIA, ALONGSIDE A YEAR ROUND EDUCATION PROGRAMME INCLUDING AN ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL AND NOW IN ITS OWN UNIQUE MULTI MEDIA ASIAN MUSIC CENTRE – THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN THE UK.