



Sanam Marvi

Sanam Marvi / *Vocals*

Kashif Ali / *Tabla*

Imran Ali / *Harmonium*

Shahid Ali / *Sitar*

Noor Bux / *Dholak*

Arieb Azhar / *Guitar and Vocals*

Saturday Evening, April 15, 2017 at 8:00

Rackham Auditorium

Ann Arbor

Special thanks to Farina Mir for her participation in events surrounding this evening's performance.

This presentation of Sanam Marvi is part of Center Stage, a public diplomacy initiative of the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts in cooperation with the US Regional Arts Organizations, with support from the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art. Center Stage Pakistan is made possible by the US Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, and the Henry Luce Foundation.

Sanam Marvi appears by arrangement with Lisa Booth Management, Inc.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.

PROGRAM

This evening's program will be announced from the stage by the artists and will be performed without intermission. Please refer to page 5 for texts of a few of the songs that may be performed in no particular order as an entry point into the performance.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Sanam Marvi, hailing from the province of Sindh, is one of the leading exponents of Sufi music in Pakistan. Sufism is often described as the mystical or esoteric side of Islam, but Sufis themselves would say that Sufism is the essence of all religion that focuses on connection with the Divine positive life force and service to all humanity regardless of religion, creed, class, or color. To establish this connection, Sufis of several orders often feature music and dance in their ceremonies which are considered to have a healing effect on all listeners, even those who are not familiar with the meaning or cultural context of the poetry.

Pakistan has a long tradition of Sufi poet-saints, many of whom have also been musicians and music innovators in their own right. Their poetry preaches the message of love, faith, and devotion to humanity, can be found in all the indigenous languages of the country, and has always been at odds with the rigid exclusive interpretation of religion by the clerical class.

The message of these poet-saints has been kept alive and invigorated over centuries by the musician bards found throughout South Asia, who pay homage to the poet-saints by performing at their shrines. Besides memorizing and internalizing the poetry itself, musicians are also expected to have an in-depth knowledge of North Indian-Pakistani classical music theory. Indeed, all North Indian and Pakistani classical music traces its origin to Hazrat Amir Khusrau (1253–1325), a great

musician, music innovator, and poet, who was the disciple and successor of Hazrat Nizam uddin Auliya (1238–April 3, 1325), the head of the Chishti order of Dervishes.

POETRY AND TRANSLATIONS

Chhaap Tilak Sab Chheeni

Poetry by Hazrat Amir Khusrau

In praise of Saint Hazrat Nizam uddin Auliya

You took away my looks, my identity, with just a glance
By making me drink the wine of love's furnace
You intoxicated me with just a glance
My fair delicate wrists with green bangles
Are held tightly by you with just a glance
I am being colored by you, Oh my cloth-dyer
And sewed to yourself with just a glance
Khusrau gives his life to Nizam
You made me your bride with just a glance

Man Kunto Maula

Poetry by Hazrat Amir Khusrau

In praise of Hazrat Ali, the most exalted spiritual successor to the prophet Muhammad (Blessed be his Name) according to the tradition of most Sufi orders. The song form, called *tarana*, is a play of sounds with words such as "heart," "I and you," and "Ali the most exalted."

Whosoever accepts Me as Master
Ali is his Master also

Dar dil dar dil dar dani
Hum tum tanana nana
Tana nana re
Yalali yalali yala yalali
Yalalalali yalalali yala yalali

Mahi Yaar Di Gharoli

Poetries by Sachal Sarmast, Bulleh Shah, and Shah Hussain

The unity of existence is the founding philosophy of Sufi saint and language polymath Abdul Wahab (1739–1829), who adopted the name “Sachal Sarmast” (true ecstatic) for his poetry. The humanist philosophy of Bulleh Shah (1680–1757) is among the most well-known poetries of South Asia. Shah Hussain (1538–1599) is considered a pioneer of the Kafi form of Punjabi poetry. In Sufi symbology, the vulcanization of the clay pot in the fire is compared to the vulcanization of the human spirit in the tribulations of life.

I fill this earthen vessel with love for my Beloved
I fill this earthen vessel with love for my Lord
I fear only the wrath of Allah
I fear only the wrath of my Lord

You are All, I am naught
My heart flickers like an image
Reflected off the well's surface
Wherever I look I see only You
Bulleh cannot see himself

I seek the perfect guide
I seek the mentoring guide
I am the founding vision
Sachal, all is light Divine

I seek companionship with Ali and the saints
I fill this earthen vessel with love for my Beloved
I fill this earthen vessel with love for my Lord

May the spinning wheel keep turning
May she who weaves live long
She who discerns the fine thread from the coarse

Yaar Ko Hum Ne Jaa Baja Dekha

Poetry by Hazrat Shah Niyaz (1742–1834)

I saw my beloved in everything
At times revealed, at times hidden
At times possibility, at times imperative
At times ephemeral, at times eternal
Inspired by the wish to see himself
He made himself in every form
He is the one who sees and hears
I saw no other than him
Laughing gleefully through blooming flowers
Crooning in the nightingale's melodic songs
He took the forms of both candle and moth
And annihilated himself in his own flames
At times claiming "I am the Truth"
Witnessed his head raised on the stake
O' Niyaz, he was beyond the bounds of "You" and "I"
Yet I see him in every "You" and "I"
At times behaving in unfamiliar ways
At times recognizing his familiar face
At times an emperor in his glory
At times with a mendicant's begging bowl
At times a devout worshipper
At times a drunkard with tavern companions
At times as a lover like Niyaz
Beating his breast and heart aflame

Tere Ishq Nachaya

Poetry by Bulleh Shah

There is a story that Bulleh Shah (1680–1757), the Punjabi poet, humanist, and philosopher, was once shunned by his teacher, Shah Inayat. To win back the heart of his teacher, Bulleh Shah learned the art of dance, of which he knew Shah Inayat to be fond. He then returned dressed in dancing robes and sang these verses to his teacher, who immediately took him back under his tutelage.

Your love makes me dance like mad
Your love made its home inside me
I filled the cup of poison and willfully drank
Come my healer before I die
Your love makes me dance like mad

The sun is hidden, only its glow persists
I offer my life for a glimpse of you
Forgive my forgetfulness when you called, beloved
Your love makes me dance like mad.

The peacock calls in this grove of passion
My beloved is my Qibla (direction) and Kaaba (holiest place)
You made me lost and inquired not
Your love makes me dance like mad

Bulleh Shah sits at Shah Inayat's door
It's you who has dressed me in green and red
Where I strike my heel I find thee, beloved
Your love makes me dance like mad

Laal Meri Patt

Poet(s) unknown

The most widely sung Sufi song from Pakistan, this ecstatic number is from the tradition of Qalandari Dhamaals, dancing songs in praise of Syed Muhammad Usman Marwandi (1177–1275), popularly known as Laal Shahbaz Qalandar (Red Eagle Dervish), and Mast Qalandar (the ecstatic dervish), whose own poetry was in praise of Hazrat Ali — the spiritual founder of three out of the four original Sufi orders.

The shrine of Laal Shahbaz Qalandar, built in 1356 in the city of Sehwan in Sindh province, was bombed by criminal extremists on February 16, 2017. 88 people were killed in the blast; hundreds more were injured. At 3:30 the next morning, the custodian of the shrine took his designated place and rang the first bell of the day.

My beloved Laal, keep this connection strong
My swaying dervish my generous dervish
Who comes from Sehwan
Who comes from Sindh
Damadam Mast Qalandar
Ali is in every breath

The four lamps (of your spiritual lineage) burn forever
I will burn the fifth

O' my guide thy shrine is exalted
Songs are played in rhythm with the clock

Ghanan Ghanan sounds your drum
The clock strikes in beat

Damadam Mast Qalandar
Ali is in every breath

Lyric translations and contextual information written by Arieab Azhar.

ARTISTS

Sanam Marvi (*vocals*) was born in 1986 in the small city of Hyderabad in Sindh, Pakistan. By age seven, she began singing with her father, Faqir Ghulam Rasool, during festivals and ceremonies held at shrines throughout Pakistan's Sindh and Punjab provinces. She continued her studies under noted gurus, including Ustad Fateh Ali Khan at the Gwailor gharana (school). Her breakout performance on Pakistan's national television in 2009 made her a rising star and since then her persuasive and revelatory interpretations of the subcontinent's mystic and humanist poetries have crossed cultural borders and generations to offer solace in our uncertain and often troubled times. She has toured widely around the world, and has been featured many times on Pakistan's popular *Coke Studio*. She is the subject of *Marvi: The Mystic Muse*, a documentary by Tanya Panjwani (2016), which has been screened at festivals in Toronto and Pakistan. Follow Sanam Marvi at www.facebook.com/sanamarviofficial.

A musician, cultural catalyst, writer, activist, and advocate, **Arieb Azhar** will introduce Sanam Marvi's performances and participate in off-stage activities including panel discussions, master classes, and workshops. As a cultural translator of South Asia's poetries and music, Mr. Azhar's humanist, inclusive approach shares common ground with Ms. Marvi's. He says: "True music is the union between the individual and the universal; a release, rapture, celebration, quest, lament of the human spirit. If I am able to touch that in moments of my life, I consider myself fortunate!" Follow Arieb Azhar at www.facebook.com/ariebazhar.

Center Stage invites performing artists from select countries to the US to perform, meet, and share their experiences with communities around the country. Now in its third season, by the end of 2017, 24 ensembles from Algeria, Haiti, Morocco, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Vietnam will have made independent month-long tours from coast to coast, hosted by colleges and universities, festivals, music clubs, and cultural centers. Each tour includes residencies in large cities and small towns, and a range of activities from performances, workshops, and discussions, to artist-to-artist exchanges, master classes, and community gatherings. Center Stage artists engage with audiences onstage and online sharing their work with audiences in the US and friends and fans at home to build mutual understanding through shared cultures and values. Sanam Marvi's US tour in March and April 2017 includes engagements in Storrs, CT; Boston, MA; Houston, TX; Brooklyn, NY; Savannah, GA; Chapel Hill, NC; Ann Arbor, MI; and Washington, DC.

For more information, please visit www.CenterStageUS.org, Facebook (www.facebook.com/CenterStagePage), and Twitter (@CenterStageUS).

UMS welcomes Sanam Marvi as she makes her UMS debut this evening.

Center Stage

*General Manager / Lisa Booth Management, Inc.,
Deirdre Valente, Lisa Booth, Alexis Ortiz
Production Manager / Robert W. Henderson, Jr.
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