

The image shows a promotional graphic for the Mahindra Kabira Festival. At the top left is the Mahindra logo with the word 'Rise' in a smaller font. The central focus is a large white circle containing the text 'mahindra KABIRA FESTIVAL' and '18 - 20 NOVEMBER, 2022'. Below this circle, the word 'VARANASI' is written in large, white, capital letters. The background is a night scene of Varanasi, India, with the Ganges river in the foreground, illuminated ghats, and a small boat on the water. The sky is dark with some clouds and stars. In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for 'TEAMWORK CELEBRATING THE ARTS' with the text 'PRODUCED BY' above it.

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Mahindra Kabira Festival unravels this year's eclectic line-up

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The magnificent Mahindra Kabira Festival is set to run from **18th to 20th November, 2022**. Taking place on the historic ghats of **Varanasi**, the Festival will feature a unique mix of artistes and performers for its sixth edition.

Jay Shah, Vice President, Head - Cultural Outreach, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. said, *“Each year, it is a joy to curate the Mahindra Kabira Festival, the sheer diversity and virtuosity of talent in our country never ceases to amaze us. We give special attention to bringing surprising elements to the festival. The performing artists are equally excited to create special sets for the festival based on Kabir’s poetry. The presence of local Banarasi artists and school children adds authenticity. This year too, we are happy to present an astounding array of artists, musicians and performers.”*

The rich two-day programme will offer a wonderful musical experience along with Varanasi’s signature *Ganga Arati* spectacle on the banks of the timeless Ganga. The Festival will begin by hosting a mesmerising Opening Reception and end with an evening’s performance by the *santoor-tabla jugalbandi* duo **Kumar Sarang & Pt. Lalit Kumar**.

As always, days at the Mahindra Kabira Festival will begin with an invigorating and a soulful Morning Music Programme. This year, the Festival will feature *Dhrupad* expert & Benares Gharana vocalist **Ashish Kumar Jaiswal**; sarod maestro **Pandit Vikash Maharaj** along with his sons **Prabhash Maharaj** and **Abhishek Maharaj**; and classical vocalist **Rama Sundar Ranganathan**. Tracing the ancient history of this city of temples, the Festival will offer exclusive curated ‘Heritage Walks’ across the **Panchganga Ghat** traversing the alleys, sights, and sounds of Varanasi.

Afternoon sessions will be presented by eminent performers such as the first female Dastango, **Fouzia Dastango**; academic, spiritual mentor and researcher of theology, **Umesh Kabir**; writer **Purushottam Agrawal** with singer & songwriter **Vipin Heero**; Padma Shri awardee **Dadi D. Pudumjee** from **The Ishara puppet theatre trust**; and award-winning Carnatic vocalist **Sushma Soma**. The Festival will also include an art discourse by **Ojas Art** featuring **Anubhav Nath** and **Arpana Caur**.

The background of the top section is a night scene of Varanasi, India, with the city lights reflecting on the Ganges river. A large white circular graphic contains the festival's name and dates. The Mahindra logo is in the top left, and the Teamwork logo is in the bottom right.

mahindra KABIRA FESTIVAL

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Speaking about his offering, Umesh Kabir said, *“Kabir is the answer to every question in our lives. Whoever is looking for the true meaning of life should join the Mahindra Kabira Festival as (here) different people from different walks of life join together as one. Here, you will meet the soul of Kabir and have all your questions answered. If you want to revolutionise your thoughts and be one with Kabir, do attend the Mahindra Kabira Festival.”*

On performing at the Festival, Fouzia said, *“Kabir’s teachings have been an iconic symbol of modernity, progressiveness, peace, and harmony. I am delighted to be performing a Dastan-e-goi for Varanasi to witness the other side of Kabir at this edition of the Mahindra Kabira Festival.”*

While talking about her performance for the Festival, Soma said, *“I find a lot of Kabir's work piercing. They're meant to disturb the listener and shake them out of everyday societal expectations, and the practices, and norms that they partake in. This boldness and audacity in Kabir's work are some things I resonate with. HOME was created with the intention to disturb the audience, and make them reflect on their choices. To be able to experience the magic of Kabir through different musical forms and different artists is unique and special to the Mahindra Kabira Festival.”*

The Festival days will end with their glittering finale – the Evening Music Programme featuring acclaimed artistes and performers, namely contemporary folk band **The Tapi Project**; singer-songwriter **Jasleen Aulakh**; contemporary Indian folk band **The Raghu Dixit Project**; Padma Shri awardee and Carnatic vocalist **Aruna Sairam**; virtuoso string duo **Pt. Shubhendra Rao & Saskia Rao-de Haas**.

Talking about his and Saskia’s upcoming performance, protégé of Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar, Shubhendra Rao said, *“Sant Kabir was a poet and a saint, hugely influential through his writings. As artists, Saskia and I too believe strongly in his philosophies and his writings that were so powerful. This year, our music for the Mahindra Kabira Festival should speak the language and verses of Sant Kabir. There is nothing as beautiful as performing at such an amazing location and especially with the theme of Sant Kabir. Saskia and I are really excited about bringing our music and sharing it with the audience there.”*

Sharing her thoughts on the Festival, Aulakh said, *“There's a certain peace that emanates from Kabir's philosophy and today's world is deplorably lacking in peace and contentment. It's like a*

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rat race— there's a constant hurry to compete with one another and the only constant in people's lives is stress. Kabir teaches you to be at peace with yourself and at peace with your surroundings. Even if you're compelled to be part of the race around you, you still manage to find peace in his teachings."

For more information on the Festival, please visit <https://mahindrakabira.com/>

Programme Details:

18th November, 2022: Festival Opening at Guleria Ghat (by invite only)

- *Ganga Arati*
06:00 – 6:45 PM
- *Santoor- Tabla jugalbandi* to be performed by Kumar Sarang & Pt. Lalit Kumar
07:45 – 8:30 PM

19th November, 2022

1. Morning Music at Guleria Ghat
Dhrupad Kabir to be performed by Ashish Kumar Jaiswal
08:00 AM - 8:45 AM
2. Heritage Walk at Guleria Ghat (for festival delegates)
 - *Panchganga Walk*
09:30 – 10:30 AM
 - *Mandir Walk*

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09:30 – 10:30 AM

3. Afternoon Session at Guleria Ghat

- Art conversation Anubhav Nath in conversation with Arpana Caur (Ojas art)

11:30 – 12:00 PM

- Home by Sushma Soma

12:00 – 12:45 PM

4. Heritage Walk at Guleria Ghat (for festival delegates)

- *Panchganga* Walk 2

03:00 – 4:00 PM

- Mandir Walk 2

03:00 – 4:00 PM

5. Evening Music at Shivala Ghat

- Dohè jo Mohè to be performed The Ishara puppet theatre trust- Padma Shri awardee Dadi D. Pudumjee

07:00 - 7:45 PM

- *Anahat*: a symphonic poem to be performed by Pt. Shubendra Rao & Maestro Saskia Rao-de-Haas

08:00- 8:45 PM

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- Traditional Carnatic performance by Padma Shri awardee Aruna Sairam

09:00 - 9:45 PM

20th November, 2022

1. Morning Music at Guleria Ghat

- Form or the formless - A dialogue between nirgun and sagun to be performed by Rama Sundar Ranganathan

07:00 AM - 7:45 AM

- Untouched Music of Benaras to be performed by Pandit Vikash Maharaj

08:00 AM - 08:45 AM

2. Heritage Walk at Guleria Ghat (for festival delegates)

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- Panchganga Walk

09:30 AM – 10:30 AM

- Mandir Walk

09:30 AM – 10:30 AM

3. Afternoon Session at Guleria Ghat

- *Dastan e Kabir* to be performed by Fouzia Dastango

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

- '*Suno bhai Sadho*' to be performed by Umesh Kabir

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM

- A session by Purushottam Agrawal & Vipin Heero

12:45 PM - 01:30 PM

4. Heritage Walk at Guleria Ghat (for festival delegates)

- Panchganga Walk

03:00 PM – 04:00 PM

- Mandir Walk

03:00 PM – 04:00 PM

6. Evening Music at Shivala Ghat

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- The Tapi Project
07:00 PM - 07:45 PM
- *Gurbani* to be performed by Jasleen Aulakh
08:00 PM - 08:30 PM
- The Raghu Dixit Project
08:45 PM - 09:30 PM

~~ENDS~~

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Mahindra:

Founded in 1945, the Mahindra Group is one of the largest and most admired multinational federation of companies with 2,60,000 employees in over 100 countries. It enjoys a leadership position in farm equipment, utility vehicles, information technology and financial services in India and is the world's largest tractor company by volume. It has a strong presence in renewable energy, agriculture, logistics, hospitality and real estate.

The Mahindra Group has a clear focus on leading ESG globally, enabling rural prosperity and enhancing urban living, with a goal to drive positive change in the lives of communities and stakeholders to enable them to Rise.

Learn more about Mahindra on www.mahindra.com /Twitter and Facebook: @MahindraRise/ for updates subscribe to <https://www.mahindra.com/news-room>

About Teamwork Arts:

Teamwork Arts is a highly versatile production company with roots in the performing arts, social action and the corporate world. For over 30 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India, presenting the finest of Indian performers, writers, change



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makers and visual artistes in the knowledge and arts space in India and abroad. Every year, we produce over 33 festivals in 42 cities and 17 countries in the fields of performing & visual arts and literature. We produce the world's largest literary gathering: the annual Jaipur Literature Festival; JLF international now travels to the US, UK, Canada, Australia and the Maldives and soon in Europe.

Even amidst the upheaval and unsettling times of 2020 and through 2021, Teamwork Arts successfully launched the digital series, 'JLF Brave New World' and 'Words Are Bridges', which were viewed by over 4.8 million people in their first season. Through its digital avatar, the Jaipur Literature Festival reached over 27 million viewers in January 2021. Our initiative 'Art Matters' empowers artistes across India to collaborate across genres by commissioning them to create new works thereby effecting change & raising awareness. The digital series 'Be Inspired' was launched in 2021 – a series that crystal-gazes into the future with conversations on science, technology, innovation, environment and more.

More information at: www.teamworkarts.com

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