



MEDIA RELEASE

4th Edition of Mahindra Kabira Festival concludes on a high note

Varanasi, November 24, 2019: As the Festival entered its final day, the enthusiasm at **Mahindra Kabira Festival 2019** intensified with a spectacular and electrifying collaboration between Neeraj Arya's neo-folk fusion band Kabir Café and Sufi folk singer Mooralala Marwada. Running till late at night and beginning again in the wee hours of the morning, Mahindra Kabira has a certain uniqueness at each of its sessions and this edition was no different.

The Festival, however, is not only about various superlative sessions and performances; it's the entire experience that the Mahindra Group and Teamwork Arts create at the Festival for the performers as well as visitors that makes all the difference: from the choice of artistes, to the management of the event, and creating the perfect ambience that translate into an unforgettable collective memory.

Talking about the festival, Jay Shah, Vice President, Head – Cultural Outreach, Mahindra Group, said, "Another uplifting Mahindra Kabira Festival comes to a close. The enchantment of the morning music on the Ganges to the delight of incredible performances celebrating Kabira on the Ghats will resonate with us until we return next year. Thank you Benaras for your warmth and Kabira for your wisdom."

With the magnificent Ganga as the serene backdrop, the Morning Music on the second day got off to a splendid start as flutist **Rakesh Kumar** collaborated with Indian classical violinist **Sarada Prasan Das** for a unique recital of Kabir's teachings. Next to take the stage was Kabir-panthi **Shabnam Virmani** and musician **Swagath Sivakumar**. Their performance "Yeh to ghar hai prem ka" was based on an exploration of the challenge of love in the voice of Kabir and other mystics.

Sharing Kabir's philosophy through her performance Shabnam Virmani said, "Kabir takes us to the world of realization to understand the barriers, we carry inside and outside of our hearts. His teachings also take us to the house of love, where gates are always open."

After the Morning Session, it was time to once again view the city's tangible built heritage through a



walk. The Heritage Walk commenced from Guleria Ghat. Embarking on a journey to understand the beauty of the landscape Kabir once dwelt in, the walk embraced a love for the unknown passing the narrow lanes of the fascinating city. The walk witnessed pealing temple bells and calls for prayer from mosques which still coexist as they did in the times of Kabir.

The day then found its way to the literature session at Guleria Ghat, where novelist and Bhakti scholar **Purushottam Agrawal** addressed the audience on Kabir with the idea of a rational spirituality underlining the totality of his vision. He further spoke of Kabir's philosophy of maintaining a balance between one's inner and outer selves to earn purity of mind, and along with that, a rejection of unjust social structures and concern for the environment. This was followed by a performance by **Sadhana Rao** who spoke of the continuum and consistency of Kabir's verse.

Sharing his thoughts on the festival and Kabir's philosophy, Purshottam Agarwal said, *"I congratulate Mahindra Group and Teamwork Arts for having taken the job of educating people about Kabir's teaching and philosophy. It's a wonderful initiative, but we have to understand that we have many more like him in our heritage, but he is the one, who is unique."*

"We falsely believe that there is a contradiction between rationality and spirituality, the most important aspect of Kabir is the fact that he breaks this binary relation", he added.

The Evening Music featured a steady stream of gifted performances - **Omprakash Nayak** ushered in the distinct flavours of the ancient tradition: Vaani – the songs of the mystics from the desert regions of Rajasthan. **Nayak** along with his *tambura*, *dholak* and the *manjira* gave irresistible beats to the charmed audience. In a special collaboration, musicians Pato Banton, Antoinette Rootsdawtah and Kirstan Hoffmann from **UNITY EARTH** presented a special set at the Mahindra Kabira Festival stage with songs on love and peace from around the world.

Antoinette Rootsdawtah on Keyboard from UNITY EARTH, said, *"We perform reggae music and our belief is one god one philosophy, similar to Kabir's teachings. Reggae music tries to bring people together like one family."*

Being the recipient of 'Platinum Level Green Event Certification' from the University of Yale in previous years the Festival spreads the philosophy of a clean environment, preservation and sustainability through cleanliness in thought and deed. Apart from segregating waste and avoiding



the use of plastic, it has ensured that sustainability and Green practices have been ingrained within it right from curation to execution.

The female lead vocalists from UNITY EARTH, Kristin Hoffmann said, *"Kabir's teachings, takes you to the mystic world which teaches us to spread love, which is above everything else and makes sense in this material world."*

Neeraj Arya's Kabir café and folk singer **Mooralala Marwada** concluded the Festival with their spectacular and electrifying collaboration, leaving the listeners craving for more. The Mumbai based neo folk band came back the 4th edition of the festival after its first edition in 2016. The team was comprised with Neeraj Arya on vocals and Rhythm Guitar, Mukund Ramaswamy on the Violin, Raman Iyer on the Mandolin, Britto KC on the Bass Guitar, Viren Solanki on Drums and Vikram Brahmkar on percussions. The collaborative performance brought out the rustic flavour of folk music with legendary folk singer Mooralala Marwada from Kutch. Putting together 3 special songs the band performed *Main Vaari Jaaoon Re* - a celebration of the presence of a Guru in our lives, *Kanku Patari* - a song of longing for the eternal beloved and *Kya Le Ke Aaya Re Bande* - a poignant song on the transience and impermanence of life.

Like every year, **Mahindra Kabira Festival 2019** witnessed a fabulous feast of performances by Kabir-lovers on the ancient *ghats* of Varanasi and concluded with the promise of looking forward to next year's 5th milestone edition.

~~~

For media queries, please contact:

#### Teamwork Arts

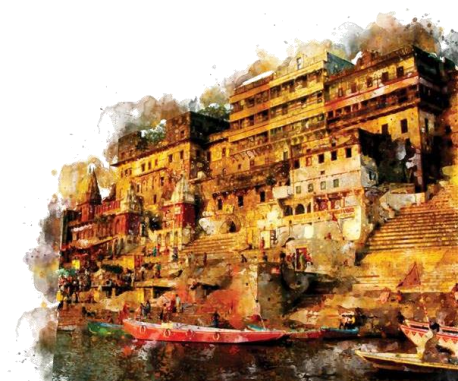
Manash Pratim Deka: [manash@teamworkarts.com](mailto:manash@teamworkarts.com)

Deeksha Purohit: [deeksha@teamworkarts.com](mailto:deeksha@teamworkarts.com)

#### Zimisha Communications

Imitaz Alam: [imtiyaz@zimisha.com](mailto:imtiyaz@zimisha.com) / 9810227818

Santosh Kumar: [santosh@zimisha.com](mailto:santosh@zimisha.com) / 9990937676



## NOTES TO EDITORS

**About Mahindra:** The Mahindra Group is a USD 20.7 billion federation of companies that enables people to rise through innovative mobility solutions, driving rural prosperity, enhancing urban living, nurturing new businesses and fostering communities. It enjoys a leadership position in utility vehicles, information technology, financial services and vacation ownership in India and is the world's largest tractor company, by volume. It also enjoys a strong presence in agribusiness, aerospace, commercial vehicles, components, defense, logistics, real estate, renewable energy, speedboats and steel, amongst other businesses. Headquartered in India, Mahindra employs over 2,40,000 people across 100 countries.

Learn more about Mahindra on [www.mahindra.com](http://www.mahindra.com) / Twitter and Facebook: @MahindraRise

**About Teamwork Arts:** For over 25 years, Teamwork Arts has taken India to the world and brought the world to India. In countries such as Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Israel, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, UK and USA, Teamwork produces over 25 highly acclaimed performing arts, visual arts, and literary festivals across more than 40 cities. Teamwork Arts produces one of the world's largest free literary gatherings, the annual [Jaipur Literature Festival](#), the [Ishara International Puppet Festival](#) and the annual [Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards \(META\) and Festival](#) in New Delhi, international festivals [Shared History](#) in South Africa, [Eye on India](#) in the United States of America, [India by the Bay](#) in Hong Kong, [Confluence- Festival of India](#) in Australia, [India@70 2017: Year of Culture in the United Kingdom](#), and many more.

Website: [www.teamworkarts.com](http://www.teamworkarts.com)

-ENDS-

