



SYDNEY TO MUMBAI

**BOLLYWOOD MEETS
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

FEAT.

CONDUCTOR: SURAJ NAGARAJ

SINGERS: AVIJIT SARKAR, RUCHA LANGE,

VIKAS KOLAR, RUHANI DHILLON

CONCERTMASTER: SAGAR NAGARAJ

SUNDAY 13 AUGUST 2023 | 5PM

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

aio

Australian Indian Orchestra



WELCOME TO SYDNEY TO MUMBAI: A SYMPHONIC JOURNEY TO INCREDIBLE INDIA.

Tonight you will experience two nations
come together in concert with:

60 Symphony Orchestra Musicians
7 Specialist Instrumentalists
4 Incredible Singers
2 Devoted Brothers
1 Visionary Conductor

Performing the best of Indian music
in Australia's finest music institution –
the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Sit back, relax, and enjoy
this unique evening with us.



PROGRAM

AUSTRALIAN INDIAN OVERTURE

Shree Ganeshay Dheemahi – A Prayer to Lord Ganesha
O Saathi Re – O My Companion
Yaadon Ki Baarat – Procession of Memories
Yeh Raat Bheegi Bheegi – This Rainy Night
Lag Ja Gale – Come Embrace Me
Mere Dholna – My Beloved

INTERVAL

Breathless
Hai Rama – Oh My God
Mere Naam Tu – My Name is Yours
Abhi Mujh Mein Kahin – Still, Somewhere Inside Me
Dastaan - E - Om Shanti Om – The Tales of Om Shanti Om
Janam Janam – In Each and Every birth
Chaap Tilak – Mark of Love
Soja Soja – Sleep (sleep)

FINALE



ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN INDIAN ORCHESTRA

Australia and India share two loves – Cricket and Curry. Our vision is to instill a third love in this mix – Music.

Founded by brothers Sagar and Suraj Nagaraj, the Australian Indian Orchestra (AIO) represents the biggest collaboration between Australian and Indian musicians, melding the best Indian musicians with Australia's finest orchestra players to create Australia's first and only Symphony Orchestra dedicated to performing Indian music.

Each item in this inaugural concert program has been single-handedly arranged for the 60-piece orchestra by artistic director, composer, and conductor, Suraj Nagaraj. Through his meticulous arrangement, the selection of Indian music is able to be “translated” for the symphony orchestra and similarly, for Indian musicians to comprehend the workings of an orchestra; creating a synergy never before seen or heard in Australia.

Therein lies the “X factor” of the AIO, as it is not simply an Australian group of musicians playing Indian music, but a cultural institution creating a new age of musicians and genres of music in today's artistic landscape: Australian-Indian music.

Musicians in the AIO have performed with top orchestras around Australia including the Sydney Conservatorium Orchestra, Opera Australia Orchestra, and the Australian World Orchestra.

Complementing the orchestra will be Sydney's finest vocalists who will bring the stage alive with the most memorable songs from celebrated Bollywood movies and artists across the decades, including Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar, Hariharan, Shankar Mahadevan, Sonu Nigam, Shreya Ghoshal, Arijit Singh and more.

Celebrating the diversity and versatility of the cultural fabric of music in Australia, the AIO is set to be a cultural gem and an inspiration for future generations of musicians in Australia and around the world.



THE SINGERS

AVIJIT SARKAR



Avijit Sarkar is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, illustrator, cartoonist, writer, poet, puppeteer, philanthropist, and mathematician. With over 45 years on stage, he has entertained audiences in diverse musical styles in over 1,800 concerts. Proceeds from his numerous concerts go towards medical research

and charity. In 2020, Avijit received the Australia Day Award for contributions to Art and Culture and was featured in the book “Success Stories of Indo-Australians” in 2021. Avijit is the director of Natraj Academy Sydney, where he trains and supports emerging music talent in fine Indian Arts.

RUCHA LANGE



Rucha Lange is an authentic Indian vocalist who captivates audiences with her exquisite interpretations of both modern and classical songs. Born into a musical family, she grew up listening to her Grandmother Smt. Malti Lange, a renowned singer in Gujarat and studied under the master Guru Shri

Aniket Khandekar. She is known for her unique renditions of Indian classical ragas, film songs, ghazals, and devotional music. Rucha’s unique vocals can be heard on the ABC Show Wakefield and in the 2015 movie “un-Indian” starring cricketing icon Brett Lee.

VIKAS KOLAR



Vikas Kolar is a multi-award-winning singer from Bangalore, Karnataka. Trained in both Carnatic and Hindustani styles, Vikas brings his classical expertise to create a unique and authentic Bollywood style. While in India, Vikas has won several music contests at state and national level and performed for All India Radio. His voice can be heard in many professional recordings and radio jingles

for the Kannada-language music industry. In 2018, Vikas received the coveted Musicfare Award, a nationwide singing contest run by Heart & Soul productions, from world-renowned lyricist Gulzar. He was also judged as the best singer at the South Asian Film Festival in Sydney. Currently, Vikas is a sought-after singer who performs in shows across Sydney with many different bands.

RUHANI DHILLON



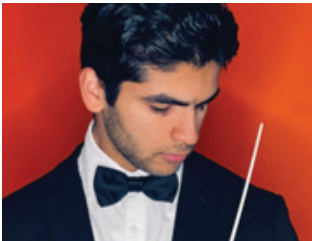
A generational talent, Ruhani is a singer, percussionist, guitarist, and dancer whose passion has seen her perform in concerts for international artists like Arijit Singh, Shreya Ghoshal, Atif Aslam and Jubin Nautiyal. Winner of the 2016 and 2018 NSW Percussion Championships, Ruhani has been an instrumental member of several orchestras and percussion ensembles

including the Sydney Youth Orchestra, Northern Sydney Youth Orchestra and Drumfill. Ruhani is currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Classical Percussion at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Her joyful style and infectious smile has touched hearts across the world via her social media platforms, and her energetic Bollywood numbers continue to rock stages across Australia.



TWO BROTHERS WITH A VISION

CONDUCTOR – SURAJ NAGARAJ



Well known in both the Australian and Indian music scenes, Suraj is a highly versatile musician known for his virtuosity and precision in performance. Playing the violin since the age of 4, he is currently the Concertmaster of the acclaimed Sydney Youth

Orchestra (SYO). He has recently led the SYO at sold-out Opera House concerts under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle, and Brett Weymark OAM in a performance of Mahler's Symphony no. 8 "Symphony of a Thousand". Suraj has also performed with international musicians like French String Quartet – Quatour van Kujik and musicians of the London Symphony Orchestra.

A highly-sought after violinist, Suraj authentically transcribes and performs complex violin passages in

Bollywood songs. He has amassed an international following on his YouTube channel "Suraj Nagaraj Violin" and has performed his compositions all over India. Suraj also shares his sheet music with other young musicians across the world, increasing the accessibility of Indian music for those who have learned with Western music notation. Suraj has meticulously arranged all 16 pieces you are hearing tonight to be able to bring together the Australian Indian Orchestra.

CONCERTMASTER – SAGAR NAGARAJ



Sagar Nagaraj is an Australian-Indian Violinist and Violist. He has performed with the Australian World Orchestra, Australian Youth Orchestra and Sydney Youth Orchestra. He is the Artistic Director and Concertmaster of the Rosemont and Macquarie Chamber Orchestras and 1st Violin of the Rosemont String Quartet. Having come through the Sydney and

Australian Youth Orchestras, Sagar understands the importance of education and the profound impact of providing young musicians with opportunities. In 2018, Sagar toured with the Australian World Orchestra across India, performing in Chennai, Mumbai, and in Kerala – where it was the first time a Kerala audience had heard a live Symphony Orchestra.



THE MUSIC

AUSTRALIAN INDIAN OVERTURE

Two patriotic tunes, “Waltzing Matilda” and “Vande Mataram” (I praise thee – Mother India) herald a new chapter in Australian-Indian relations. Listen for the Sitar delicately plucking Banjo Patterson’s tune as the orchestra swells to a crescendo, carrying the melody seamlessly into India’s second national anthem, “Vande Mataram”.

SHREE GANESHAY DHEE MAHI (A Prayer to Lord Ganesha)

A devotional song dedicated to Lord Ganesha, a revered deity in Hinduism, known as the remover of obstacles and the God of wisdom and intellect. The lyrics of this composition are in Sanskrit and were composed by the renowned Indian film composer duo Ajay-Atul. The song was originally sung by Shankar Mahadevan, a prominent singer in the Indian music industry.

O SAATHI RE (O My Companion)

Featured in the 1977 Bollywood film “Muqaddar Ka Sikandar”, this Kishore Kumar classic is a romantic ballad composed by Kalyanji-Anandji. It conveys the emotions of love, separation, and the desire to reunite with the ones we love. The song’s popularity has endured over the decades, and it continues to be cherished as one of Bollywood’s most beloved songs.

YAADON KI BAARAT (Procession of Memories)

Originally composed by R.D. Burman in 1973, “Yaddon Ki Baarat” is perhaps one of the most influential songs in Bollywood. A blockbuster success, the movie established the ‘masala’ film genre which combines action, comedy, romance and drama with musical numbers in picturesque locations – exactly what Bollywood is known for today. Tonight you will be hearing its rearranged version from the 2002 movie ‘Dil Vil Pyaar Vyaar’.

YEH RAAT BHEEGI BHEEGI (This Rainy Night)

This romantic duet from the 1956 Bollywood film “Chori Chori”, is a timeless parlay between two lovers on a rainy night. Originally sung by Manna Dey and Lata Mangeshkar, the lyrics express the magic and romance of the moment, enhanced by the enchanting music composed by Shankar-Jaikishan. The song remains popular to this day and is celebrated as an iconic hit from Bollywood’s golden era.

LAG JA GALE (Come Embrace Me)

This Golden Era tune from the 1964 Bollywood film “Woh Kaun Thi?” (Who Was She?) was almost never recorded as director Raj Kohsla initially did not like it. However, after hearing the “Nightingale of India” Lata Mangeshkar’s soulful rendition of it, he was convinced of its beauty, and decided to keep the song in the film where it has endured to become a gem of Bollywood.

MERE DHOLNA (My Beloved)

A brilliant showcase of Indian classical music, Mere Dholna celebrates Indian classical music on the big-screen and is paired with Indian classical dance (Bharatnatyam). Listen for the complex “takadimi” rhythms vocalised by tablist Abhijit Dan and singer Rucha Lange, which are then shared in a vibrant dialogue between the soloists and orchestra.

BREATHLESS

Shankar Mahadevan’s “Breathless” gained significant popularity after its release in 1998 for its continuous and rapid singing style, where Mahadevan delivers the entire song in a single breath. In this orchestral arrangement, the rapidly flowing melody is shared seamlessly between Australian and Indian instrumentalists creating a true symphony of sound.

HAI RAMA (Oh my God)

Featured in the 1997 Bollywood film “Rangeela”, this song is a duet performed by playback singers Hariharan and Swarnalatha, with music composed by the “Mozart of Madras” A.R. Rahman, and lyrics by Mehboob. Rahman fuses elements of an Indian classical “raga” with gritty percussion and roaring cello lines to convey the raw power of love.

MERE NAAM TU (My Name is Yours)

From the 2018 Bollywood film “Zero”, the song was originally sung by Abhay Jodhpurkar, with music composed by brothers Ajay-Atul and lyrics by Irshad Kamil. The title “Zero” has multiple meanings, referring to the hero’s short stature, his aspirations and dreams, and the concept of finding his self-worth and identity despite society’s pressures and limitations. The song serves as the hero’s devotion to his love and despite his shortcomings, giving her everything he has.

ABHI MUJH MEIN KAHIN (Still, Somewhere Inside Me)

Originally sung by the “Modern Rafi” and living legend Sonu Nigam for the 2012 film “Agnepath”, this song conveys the inner turmoil and introspection of the hero. The lyrics delve into themes of self-reflection, longing, and finding solace within oneself. It portrays the protagonist’s struggle with his past, his aspirations, and his desire for inner peace.

DASTAAN E OM SHANTI OM (The Tale of Om Shanti Om)

Featured in the genre-defining “Om Shanti Om”, this song was originally sung by the beloved singer Shaan, with music composed by Vishal-Shekhar and lyrics by Javed Akhtar. The song depicts the journey of the hero, Om, as he uncovers the secrets of his past life. Listen for the orchestra depicting love, betrayal, and revenge, and Om’s quest for justice.

JANAM JANAM (In Each and Every birth)

Composed by Pritam with lyrics by Amitabh Bhattacharya, this Hindi song was sung by Airijit Singh in the 2015 Bollywood remake “Dilwale”. Once the “prince and princess” of Bollywood, Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol return to steal our hearts yet again with this song conveying the idea of being connected through multiple lifetimes or incarnations (‘janam’), as their love story is destined to repeat itself.

A fitting nod to the reincarnation of the original 1995 movie “Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge” (DDLJ), perhaps the most iconic Bollywood film of all time which holds the record for the longest-running Indian film in theaters – 28 years and still running to this day at the Maratha Mandir cinema in Mumbai.

CHAAP TILAK (The Mark of Love)

“Chaap Tilak” is a popular Sufi Qawwali (Islamic devotional song) originating in the 14th century, and is the expression of love and devotion, often associated with mystical poetry and the Sufi, Islamic tradition. The lyrics of the song symbolise the intense love and longing for the divine and the quest for spiritual union.

SOJA SOJA Sleep (sleep)

A striking jazz number by the great Indian composer A.R Rahman, Soja Soja burst onto the silver screen in the 2019 movie ‘99 Songs’ and was sung by Shashaa Tirupati. The hero is a musician who must compose 100 songs in order to reunite with his lover. On his journey, he meets a jazz queen named Sheila who helps him compose more contemporary jazz songs. The pivotal song represents the new generation of Bollywood and the evolution of its music and movies.

FINALE (Medley of 3 Songs)

AA DEKHEN ZARA (Come Let’s See)

From the 1981 Movie ‘Rocky’ this hit song launched Bollywood legend Sanjay Dutt into stardom in his debut role. The song was originally sung by Kishore Kumar and Asha Bhosle.

TUMSE MILKE DIL KA

(My Heart Has Lost It Upon Your Glance)

This song is famous for the swarm of violinists that suddenly appear behind Shah Rukh Khan to signify him falling in love in the hit 2004 movie ‘Main Hoon Na’ (I’m with you). Anu Malik’s iconic score leaves a lasting impression across generations of Bollywood-lovers.

AAJ KI RAAT (Tonight is the Night)

A vibrant, ethereal and bittersweet song from the 2006 film “Don: The Chase Begins Again.” This stirring number celebrates all four singers and the Australian Indian Orchestra to close out a magical evening.

THE AUSTRALIAN INDIAN ORCHESTRA

STRINGS

VIOLIN 1

Sagar Nagaraj

Heather Kim

Hana Tan

Nikki Kim

Bonita Cynthia Silva

Joy Limoa

James Parberry

VIOLIN 2

James Krockenberger

Khang Mai

Nick Fairbanks

Hayden White

Tim Dickinson

Daniel Parkee

Stephanie Gough

Klara Decker-Stewart

VIOLA

Viktoria Vukovich

Phoebe Gilbert

Po Wang

Cienna Irwin

Josephine Lumanau

CELLO

Lauren Olofsson

Nazli Sendurgut

George Yang

William Thorpe

Chae Park

Stephanie Tran

Alexandra Boyling

DOUBLE BASS

Harry Young

Michael McNamara

George Machado

Nemanja Petkovic

HARP

Kaela Phillips

MANDOLIN

George Teasdell

SITAR

R. Nagraj

SANTOOR

Behzad Ansari

LEAD GUITAR

Sadiq Rehmani

BASS GUITAR

Bobby Kumar





WOODWINDS

OBOE

Frank Giraldo

CLARINET

Morgan Lacey

SAXOPHONE

Jasmine Mills

Nicholas Zengoski

FLUTE

Michelle Wang

Isabeau Hansen

BRASS

FRENCH HORN

Rob Stonestreet

Oliver Harris

Kaitlyn Phillips

TRUMPET

Raphael Harvey

Panagiotis Karamanos

TROMBONE

Cooper Rands

BASS TROMBONE

Harry Macpherson

TUBA

Samuel Hannan

PERCUSSION

Ruhani Dhillon

Jack Peggie

Bryn Wood

Ishvinder Singh

Alice Zhang

PIANO

Satyajeet Roy

Ravi Trachtenberg-Ray
(Guest Artist)

DRUM KIT

Preetam Telugu

TABLA

Abhijit Dan



SUPPORT OUR VISION

The Australian Indian Orchestra sincerely thanks our Koh-i-Noor Patron, Mr Ezekiel Solomon AM and our Opal Patron, Ms Bunny Gardiner-Hill for their generous support and belief in our vision.

Without the support of our generous donors, a 60-piece orchestra performing bespoke Bollywood Orchestra arrangements would simply not be possible.

Support our vision to see your Australian Indian Orchestra continue to bring Australians and Indians together, create new styles of music, and inspire the next generation.
Any amount goes a long way.

The AIO is sincerely grateful to the Dhillon and Nagaraj families for their unwavering support in bringing this vision to life.



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The Australian Indian Orchestra is proud to present
this concert with the support of its partners.

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