



Jodhpur RIFF Scheduled Program
2nd to 6th October 2025
(Open format listing)

2nd OCTOBER

BAL MELA - SCHOOL CHILDREN'S FOLK MORNING

8:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Venue: Veer Durga Das Memorial Park

*Entry Free (note: this event is **only** for schools)*

Kathputli - String puppetry using wooden dolls or marionettes, the *kathputli* is performed on a miniature stage with highly dramatic narration and music, retelling stories that reflect pertinent social concerns or the valour of erstwhile kings. Even though there are few accomplished practitioners left today, it continues to hold an iconic status in Rajasthan's performing arts culture.

Ghoomer – in *Ghoomer* women in their traditional ghagra (long swirling skirt) and choli (blouse) pirouette while moving in and out of a wide circle, to the tune of traditional songs and the rhythm of hands clapping. The word '*ghoomna*' describes the twirling movement of the dancers and is the basis of the word '*ghoomer*'.

Kachchi Ghodi - A novel dance form performed on colourful dummy-horses. Men in elaborate and embellished costumes dance rhythmically to beating drums, under a large umbrella *chhatarkotla*- while a singer narrates the exploits of the Bhavaria bandits of Shekhawati.

Young Rajasthani musicians – For our young audiences we present young Rajasthani traditional musicians, who sing and play their instruments. Trained by their ustad, the budding young masters will share their music and hopefully, inspire school children as they continue to uphold the legacy of their forefathers.

Rajasthani Circus - India's earliest circuses featured numerous traditional performing art forms from Rajasthan- acrobats, magicians, musicians, dancers and a variety of *Bhawai* artists performing daring feats. While it is rare to see such acts today, the *Kawa circus* and Jodhpur RIFF assemble some of the best artists still performing these forms, to re-create a traditional circus for our young audiences.

Bhapang – an unusual, single-stringed 'talking drum' is a classic folk instrument, particular to the Mewat region of Rajasthan. Coupled with equal parts music and hilarity, a group of talented *bhapang* artists will perform in unison for our young audiences.

Behrupiya - Blending around 52 different art forms—acting, singing, dancing, imitation, Behrupiya brings to life epic tales from mythology, such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The artists, known as Nakal or Nakalchi, are masters of disguise and impersonation.

Khari Dance- This enchanting dance form from Mewat revolves around a heartfelt dialogue between a couple. A frustrated wife, burdened by household chores, is tenderly reassured by her husband, vowing to ease her troubles. Central to this dance is the Khari, a wooden basket crafted from Tun wood, used by women to carry their belongings during travel.

Bakri ki Mashak – A wind instrument made from goatskin, the mashak closely resembles a bagpipe and is extremely difficult to play, and even harder to construct. It is mostly played by the *Jogis* of Mewat to sing songs of Bhairon ji and Shiv ji.



Jodhpur RIFF takes place under the aegis of the Mehrangarh Museum Trust, Jodhpur
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OPENING NIGHT - CITY CONCERT

7:30 PM to 10:00 PM

Jaswant Thada Parking

Entry Free and open to all

Heralding the beginning of Jodhpur RIFF, our opening night concert features a wonderful variety of riveting performances reflecting the diversity of traditional Rajasthani artists, performances by national and international artists – music, song and dance - ending in an exhilarating finale with drummers and dancers. From folk to swing to male dancers and women's voices, this is an opportunity for anyone and everyone to experience the festival in miniature, without having to purchase a ticket!

Be ready for a splendorous start to Jodhpur RIFF 2025!

The first day of Jodhpur RIFF is free for the city. In the morning the Bal mela is free for school children and the evening concert is open to all – children, families, tourists and festival ticket holders.



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2nd to 6th OCTOBER

EN ROUTE

Limited time slots available, on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Sign-up at the RIFF box-office from 1st October.

Full details will be available here from the 25th of September 2025.

This first run of en route is for Full Festival Pass holders only.

An India debut, en route in Jodhpur is reimagined as a journey through the majestic Mehrangarh Fort and the adjacent blue city. An immersive, pedestrian-based mobile work, en route creates an experience where the personal and public, the imagined and concrete, converge. Designed for a single audience member at-a-time, this site-conscientious experience crafts a personal connection to place. Courtyards, quiet lanes and old-city streets, snippets of voice, music and fragments of poetry...all inviting us to see the space anew. en route stretches into the now, a journey beyond space and time as you move through a landscape of moments in motion, both discovered and co-created.

Please wear appropriate, weather relevant and comfortable clothing, and good walking shoes.

en route is presented by One Step At A Time Like This and Richard Jordan Productions in collaboration with Jodhpur RIFF and supported by Creative Australia and the Mehrangarh Museum Trust.

India Premiere

3rd to 5th OCTOBER

FORT FESTIVITIES

09:45 AM to 5:00 PM

Venues throughout the Mehrangarh Museum

Museum Entry Ticket/ Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Discover the myriad hues of the traditional dance forms of Rajasthan, reflecting its distinctive root traditions, some popular and some rare, including: **Teraah Taali** - known for agility and grace, where women move to and produce the reverberating sounds of *teraah* i.e. thirteen little cymbals or *manjira* that are fastened to their waist, wrists, elbows, and hands, simultaneously showcasing their skills of movement, balance and concentration; the **Kalbeliya**, a dance form that evolved when the traditional snake charmers of the state could no longer work with snakes; **Khari Dance**- revolving around a heartfelt dialogue between a couple, performed with a wooden basket called Khari; **Tamak**, or *bam rasiya* is a folk form from Alwar. Popularly performed to celebrate the harvest season, Tamak is characterised by huge Nagadas (Bam) that set the beat and the wooden sticks decorated with flowers and feathers that are used by the dancers; **Bakri ka Mashak**; the captivating vocals of **Young Langa Musicians**!



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3rd OCTOBER

J RIFF DAWNS WITH THE MEGHWAL OF MARWAR

5:30 AM to 7:30 AM

Jaswant Thada (outside Mehrangarh Fort)

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass/ RIFF dawns pass Rs. 300/-

In true Jodhpur RIFF tradition, we begin the first of our dawn concerts with the gentle, soothing voices of the Meghwal, a community from the Marwar region in Rajasthan. While the community itself is not recognised as ‘professional’ musicians, the Meghwal (or Megh) are superb singers. Their patron saint is Ram Devji and singing bhajans in his honour is common in their villages.

Every year, the Meghwals of Marwar herald in the dawn at Jodhpur RIFF. Under the light of the rising sun on a cool, serene morning, the melodic drone of the tandura (an unusual string instrument with a very distinctive sound), the beat of the jhanjh/ manjira (small, paired-cymbals) and the rhythm of the dholak create the mood for the meditative strains of the *bhajan* (literally, ‘to revere, also to share’). This year, we present the legendary **Mahesaram Meghwal** (who also performed at the very first Jodhpur RIFF in 2007 and featured on the festival’s poster). An experienced and mature artist and a national icon, Mahesaram has a unique timbre to his voice and has his own style of singing the traditional sequential bhajan and storytelling forms of the Meghwal. Traditionally pit-loom weavers, the women are known for their contribution to embroidery and the textile industry, but also for the rich folklore they nurture.

JRIFF DANCE BOOT CAMP

9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

Chokelao Mahal

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Back by popular demand, ‘Marathi mulgi’ **Aditi Bhagwat** brings the sensational **Lavani** to Jodhpur RIFF 2025’s first dance bootcamp. Trained extensively in *kathak* from an early age and having developed numerous collaborations with jazz and flamenco, Aditi’s heart was always in her homeland and its artform. A real treat to watch, Lavani, both robust and delicate, is a folk form of song and dance popular in Maharashtra and in parts of southern Madhya Pradesh.

Jodhpur RIFF presents rustic dance ‘bootcamps’, facilitated by noted practitioners and trainers. Short, intense, and rigorous, these camps will give participants an experiential insight into the movements and practice of traditional dance forms.

Please Note:

This is the one-and-only, stand-alone session of this dance form.

Please wear/ bring appropriate and comfortable clothing that allows free movement such as T-shirts, long/ loose shirts or blouses, tights, loose track or harem pants or long skirts.

Do carry your own rehydration and drying material. Be prepared to sweat - it is a boot camp!!



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INDIE ROOTS

5:00 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Rosa Cecelia

London-born and of Chilean-Italian heritage, Rosa Cecilia is a remarkable singer-songwriter who dissolves boundaries between cultures, genres, and personal truths. Raised in a trilingual household, she crafts a rich blend of root traditions – from Latin jazz to neo-soul and disco. Her bold, confessional songwriting explores themes like immigrant identity, wrapped together in melodies laced with soulful hooks. On stage, Rosa is magnetic. Her performances are charged with the emotional depth of artistry that speaks of longing, identity, and joyful reclamation, inviting listeners into a live dreamscape that is impossible to look away from.

This is Rosa's premiere festival appearance in India.

Jodhpur RIFF introduces the 'singer-songwriter' tradition to its line-up this year.

MOVES & GROOVES

5:45 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Lavani excerpts

Lavani is a Marathi dance form that stands out for its electrifying energy, flirtatious movements, infectious beats, and sensual grace. Lavani essentially carries narratives of women's experiences characterised by the themes of love, longing, and challenges borne out of separation from their beloved, told in a light-hearted, often satirical manner. It is performed exclusively by women, and can be quite a theatrical experience.

Trained extensively in *kathak* from an early age and having developed numerous collaborations with jazz and flamenco, **Aditi Bhagwat**'s heart was always in her homeland and its artform. A real treat to watch, Lavani, both robust and delicate at the same time, is a folk form of song and dance popular in Maharashtra and in parts of southern Madhya Pradesh. Made famous through V Shantaram's film *Pinjara*, the Lavani was traditionally developed and performed by shepherd communities in the 18th and 19th centuries, often for the Maratha nobility. It is performed in a 'nauvari' saree (nine-yard-long saree) to the beats of a *dholki* and gets its name from the same root word as 'Lavanya', meaning beauty.

Inayat: A Duet for Four

Kathak-Rajasthani collaboration with Tarini Tripathi & SAZ

Originally commissioned for Jodhpur RIFF 2023, Inayat is a one-of-its-kind collaboration that has continued to grow and evolve long after their success on the festival stage. Mumbai-based exemplary *Kathak* dancer **Tarini Tripathi** and young masters of the Langa tradition - **SAZ** - return to present their unique collaboration, bringing two traditions together in a unique *jugalbandi*. Almost always performed to Hindustani/ classical instruments such as the *tabla*, here, Tarini performs her freshly choreographed pieces



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completely tuned to select, traditional percussion and songs of the Langa community and to *Sufi kalaam*, rendered by SAZ.

SAZ, incredible musicians of the Langa community, return to the Jodhpur RIFF stage after the tremendous success of their first original single - *Sundar Gori*, which released earlier this year. They are a young trio committed to the continuity of their tradition, while writing new songs and developing new work in collaboration with artists from across the world. As a former athlete and fitness professional, **Tarini** sees a synergy between movement and the energy of **Sadiq Khan's** masterful dholak, **Asin Khan's** powerful vocals and his Sindhi Sarangi (Asin is the recipient of the Aga Khan Music Award 2020-22; Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar 2022), and **Zakir Khan's** amazing khartal.

For Tarini, dance is a dynamic extension of one's being, where we express what we are afraid to do in routine life. Recently bestowed with the 'Nritya Nipun' from Nalanda Dance Research Centre, Tarini is recipient of the Best Dancer Award at PECDA 2022. She is also the Co-Director, Principal Dancer, and faculty at Amara Nritya Kala Hansa. Tarini has performed extensively in India and the UK, under the guidance of her mother, acclaimed dancer, and choreographer Gauri Sharma Tripathi, and her grandmother, the incredible Smt. Padma Sharma.

This collaboration is a Jodhpur RIFF commission

MOODY RIFFS

7:30 PM onwards

Zenana Courtyard

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Ganga & Sundar

Mainstage opens with the unique vocals of **Ganga & Sundar**, guardians of a centuries old oral tradition of the Rajwadi Maand. Ganga started learning music from her mother, Sundar when she was 5. Sundar, in turn learned from her father. Hailing from the Rao community of Pali, this mother-daughter duo is known for their enduring work in breaking gender and social norms by reclaiming their space in a male dominated folk music landscape. They are widely known for their renditions of traditional spiritual songs in their own inimitable style.

Emilia Lajunen

Emilia Lajunen is one of the most captivating voices in Finnish folk today. With her five-string fiddle-Biancospino, Kontrabasharpa, and its more recent variation, Nyckelharpa, she conjures a sound that's both ancient and curiosity-inducing. Her music pulses with trance-like rhythms, unexpected textures, and a raw beauty rooted in tradition but restlessly alive. It is earthy, hypnotic, and full of emotion, drawing listeners into a landscape where the old stories still know how to sing. This is perhaps why she's been famously described as playing "like a village full of haunted fiddlers."

A graduate and now longtime teacher at the Sibelius Academy, At Jodhpur RIFF, Emilia shares her own creations and her aural discoveries after exploring how body, movement, and old archive recordings, especially those of lesser-known women fiddlers, can shape a contemporary folk voice.



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Ars Nova Napoli

After their successful India premier at this very stage in 2023, Jodhpur RIFF brings back the music of the Neapolitan streets with the most accomplished young artists of the genre. Performing on the streets of Naples for the longest time before taking to the studios, **Ars Nova Napoli** has stayed true to their Campanian roots for almost 2 decades now. Their artistic practice is inseparable from the culture of the historic city of Naples, famous for street art and music. Born from a strong belief that artistic expression needs to be free and accessible to the common man, they have performed in countless marketplaces, alleyways, weddings and birthday parties across Italy, as well as music festivals around the world. Truly, no stage is small enough to keep them away. **Marcello Squillante, Bruno Belardi, Michelangelo Nusco, Antonino Anastasia, Vincenzo Racioppi, Luca Lanzano and Gianluca Fusco** perform a wide variety of music ranging from Sicilian serenades, Neapolitan Classics, Calabrian tarantellas, extending all the way to the Greek rebetiko and Balkan music. Their constantly evolving music is equal parts festive and joyful, and a testament to the fact that art truly has and will always belong among the people.

Ashwini Bhide-Deshpande

Padma Shri awardee Ashwini Bhide-Deshpande is a distinguished vocalist of the Jaipur-Atrauli *khayal gayaki* tradition. Hailed as an exceptional talent among the “new generation of veterans”, she brings both reverence and fresh insight to Hindustani music. A music prodigy from her childhood, she earned the President’s Gold Medal at All India Radio as a teenager and had already completed her Sangeet Visharad at 16. The accolades haven’t stopped since, the most recent being a Padma Shri this year. A scientist turned musician with a PhD in biochemistry, Ashwini chose music, carrying forward a tradition instilled by her mother and guru, Manik Bhide. Her music is deeply introspective, often a journey of her explorations into the complex “achchop” ragas that are distinctive to her gharana. Although firmly rooted in khayal, Ashwini is equally adept in lighter forms like Thumri- Dadra, Bhajans, Abhangs, and Sanskrit stutis/stotras, many of which she accompanies with compositions of her own. Ragarachananjali, her book of self-composed bandishes, has been heralded for its creative contributions to the Jaipur-Atrauli repertoire. Her concerts are marked by thoughtful artistry, a warm stage presence, and the rare ability to make even the most intricate music deeply accessible.

DESERT LOUNGE

Around midnight

Rao Jodha Desert Rock Park (adjacent to lower car park of Mehrangarh Fort)

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Ek raat khaas lok kalakaaron ke saath...

Jodhpur RIFF presents a special Desert Lounge in the Rao Jodha Desert Rock Park. An **all-acoustic** evening opening with **Idu Khan Langa**, a young maestro of the alghoza, the archetypal wind instrument of the Surnaiya Langa community. His soulful and melodious tunes are both uplifting and insightful, reminiscent of a profoundness that only large, open spaces like the desert can offer.

...followed by the sounds of Bikaner: vocalist in Seraiki/ Punjabi **Mir Bassu Khan**, a leading light among the Mir community from Bikaner.

The Mir-e-Alam are a semi-pastoral people of the Mirasi community of the Bikaner/Pugal region of Rajasthan and have a strong, beautiful musical tradition of spiritual music. They sing the poetry of Baba



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Farid, Baba Bulleh Shah, Shah Hussain, Sultan Bahu and Khwaja Ghulam Farid in Seraiki/ Punjabi. While recent years have seen an increased interest (and research) in their music, much of it remains inaccessible and unexposed to potential audiences. The challenges of eking a daily existence have taken a toll on the cultural heritage of this community, as have numerous socio-political factors which are largely out of their control. And yet, their voices remain strong and clear.

Musicians of Sanawara and villages nearby

Sanawara village, located near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan, is known for its vibrant folk music scene, particularly the Manganiyar tradition, who have a long history of performing for both Hindu and Muslim patrons, playing instruments like the kamaicha, sindhi sarangi, and others. Their music is a key part of the cultural landscape of the region, seen extensively especially during events like the Desert Festival. Led by **Manzoor Khan Sanawara**, joined by **Bhungar Khan** on Dholak, **Sawroop Khan** and **Bakshe Khan** on vocals, **Sawai Khan**, **Kode Khan**, and **Sadhi Khan** on Kamaicha, this experience is as rustic as you can get, sans electricity, surrounded by nature, against the backdrop of the legendary Mehrangarh fort. They will also be accompanied by some of the youngest musicians from Sanawara, making this a rare chance to listen to this tradition's future custodians in the making.

As the music is acoustic (non-amplified) and the space is intimate, seating is on a first-come-first-serve basis. The slightest noise distracts fellow audience members and makes it hard to listen to the performers. We would greatly appreciate it if the audience refrained from chatting and speaking during the performance or while waiting to be seated.

Please note: The meeting point for the Desert Lounge for all audiences is in the Mehrangarh Fort lower car park at 11.50 pm or at the entrance to the Rao Jodha Park at 11.55 pm. The walk to and from the performance space is approximately 10 minutes from the lower car park: first on the road to the Rao Jodha Park entrance (5 minutes) and then in the park itself (5 minutes) – so please wear decent shoes for walking! Please carry something warm (it gets chilly); hot drinks & light snacks will be available for purchase.



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4th OCTOBER

J RIFF DAWNS WITH THE SOUNDS OF BHUTAN

5:30 AM to 7:30 AM

Jaswant Thada (outside Mehrangarh Fort)

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass/ J RIFF Dawns Pass Rs. 300/-

Sonam Dorji

“Kheng” Sonam Dorji is a celebrated Bhutanese vocalist, multi-instrumentalist, composer, and cultural archivist. A musical journey that began in the remote village of Kaktong, Bhutan, Sonam spent his early teens performing original songs on national radio and composing in his native dialect, earning national recognition. He composed the first-ever nationally broadcast song in Khengpa, which earned him the name “Kheng” Sonam Dorji.

A master of the Drangyen (Bhutanese lute), Lim (flute), Dratong (zither), Chiwang (fiddle), Esraj (bowed lute) and many more, he is a pioneering figure in the attempts to document and preserve the musical traditions of Bhutan.

At Jodhpur RIFF, Sonam presents ***YakVibe*** – an unusual folk music experience featuring Druk folk musicians. From the high valleys of the Himalayas come four musicians carrying the songs, stories, and spirit of their homeland. Their music is a meeting place of devotion and dynamism, where age-old Bhutanese melodies dance with the colours of contemporary and fusion sounds. Their performances are often lauded not just for their musical excellence, but for the profound spiritual and cultural messages they convey. The quartet features **Sobit Singh** (Lubang, Bass Guitar, Keyboard, Aungli), **Pinaki Chakraborty** (Drums, Chabdrung, Shakers), **Ganga Ram** (Auroo, Guitar, Metobobchu), and **Sonam Dorji** (vocals, Drangyen, Flute, Dobtsi). Together, they weave traditional tales with modern instrumentation, creating layered, textured performances that are both rooted and globally resonant. This Jodhpur RIFF performance is a rare chance to hear Bhutan live—music that travels lightly across borders, yet arrives heavy with meaning.

J RIFF DANCE BOOTCAMP II – KATHAK WITH TARINI TRIPATHI

9.00 AM to 10.30 AM

Chokelao Mahal

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

A former athlete, a functional trainer and an award-winning, young, third generation classical dancer, **Tarini Tripathi** grew up surrounded by Kathak. By popular demand, she returns with her unique legacy to Jodhpur RIFF, to facilitate an invigorating session of dance, introducing us to this beautiful form of movement. Kathak derives much of its beauty from subtle expressions, graceful hand movements and intricate foot movement enhanced by the resounding bells of the *ghungroo* worn around the dancer's ankles. Tarini has trained and performed alongside her mother Gauri Sharma Tripathi and grandmother Padma Sharma, both eminent names in Kathak. She has successfully incorporated dancing into her career in fitness training too, advocating the artform as a way of core building and balance training.



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This session gives us a taste of Tarini's simple philosophy, that dance is a way of life in every sense. *Jodhpur RIFF presents rustic dance 'bootcamps', facilitated by noted practitioners and trainers. Short, intense, and rigorous, these camps will give participants an experiential insight into the movements and practice of traditional dance forms.*

Please Note:

This is the one-and-only, stand-alone session of this dance form.

Please wear/ bring appropriate and comfortable clothing that allows free movement such as T-shirts, long/ loose shirts or blouses, tights, loose track or harem pants or long skirts.

Do carry your own rehydration and drying material. Be prepared to sweat - it is a boot camp!!

IN RESIDENCE I

11:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

The Music of Bhutan with Sonam Dorji and other musicians

In conversation with **Sonam Dorji**, with demonstrations by various artists.

Celebrated Bhutanese vocalist, multi-instrumentalist, composer, and cultural archivist, Sonam Dorji is a master of the Drangyen (Bhutanese lute), Lim (flute), Dratong (zither), Chiwang (fiddle), Esraj (bowed lute) and many more. He founded the Music of Bhutan Research Centre (MBRC) in 2008. Under his leadership, MBRC has documented over 170 elder musicians, retrieved and remastered 1968 royal court recordings, produced the first book profiling Bhutanese musicians, established archives and music education initiatives. Some of their rare interviews remain among the few surviving firsthand records of Bhutan's rich musical heritage.

A musical journey that began in the remote village of Kaktong, Bhutan, Sonam spent his early teens performing original songs on national radio and composing in his native dialect, earning national recognition. He composed the first-ever nationally broadcast song in Khengpa, which earned him the name "Kheng" Sonam Dorji.

Sonam founded the Hidden Kingdom World Music Festival, the Music4All Institute, and the Music Research and Archive Center, with the vision to encourage cultural collaborations and revitalise the musical traditions of Bhutan. He has also presented Bhutanese music at festivals and conferences across the world- from the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and Jaipur Literature Festival, continuing to deepen global understanding of Bhutan's rich musical heritage.

Jodhpur RIFF's interactive session series 'In Residence' gives the audience a rare opportunity to meet fascinating artists from various root traditions. The sessions encourage audience members to engage and discuss challenges, forms and traditional practice through performances, lecture-demonstrations and facilitated conversations. As more of Rajasthan and India's rich traditional cultural heritage disappears, Jodhpur RIFF puts the spotlight on some of its remarkable music forms and traditions (some nearing extinction) and opens dialogue to surface and explore how these challenges could be addressed.



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INDIE ROOTS

5:00 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Luke Wallace

Luke's music, whether you hear it at a festival or a rally, is equal parts art and activism. Over the course of his decade-long journey of touring, recording, and organizing for the betterment of the planet, **Luke Wallace** has become a highly sought-after voice in the fight against climate change. His unique brand of politically charged folk has earned him a loyal following and a reputation as a modern-day Pete Seeger. Featured at the 2023 UN Water Conference, Luke's music searches for hope at the brims-calm, yet carrying a sense of urgency to rise and meet the challenges of our time. Acoustic, often choral, rooted in folk traditions, his sound feels both intimate and anthemic. So much of his music is a response to the oddities of modern life, emerging from the margins, finding ways to grow and thrive even in the most challenging conditions.

This is Luke's premiere appearance in India.

Jodhpur RIFF introduces the 'singer-songwriter' tradition to its line-up this year.

LIVING LEGENDS

5:45 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

An evening with the stalwarts of Rajasthani performing arts.

Barkat Khan Manganiyar

At 65, Barkat Khan's resonating voice carries a rare serenity that instantly touches the listener.

Barkat Khan has been singing since the age of 11. Like most Manganiyaars, his songs are those passed down from one generation to the next. Today, he is among the handful of Manganiyar musicians who remember and can perform in the Jangda shaili (songs of war, valour, heroes and love for the land), in its original form. The themes of his songs are also devotional, dedicated to deities like Lord Shiva and Krishna. The highlight of his performance is the joyful, celebratory raga, Khamaj, which he believes to carry the true heartbeat of Rajasthani folk. In his seasoned voice, Khamaj brings life to Rajasthan's songs of love, longing, joy, and devotion, all at once.

Barkat Khan is a performer and a teacher. These days, he is mostly dedicated to teaching young artists the old songs that are slowly disappearing, ensuring that the soulful heritage of Rajasthani folk music continues to live on.

Lakha Khan Manganiyar

Master vocalist and the greatest living exponent of the Sindhi Sarangi. Though the sarangi is not a traditional Manganiyar instrument, **Padma Shri awardee Lakha ji** has put his own stamp on their traditional repertoire with his mastery of this instrument. A living legend, Lakha Khan is not only a virtuoso on the sarangi, he sings fluently in Sindhi, Punjabi, Hindi, Marwari and a variety of dialects, his knowledge



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and skill spanning the divide between folk and classical music.

He was the one who commented "classical always remains in control while we, who have learnt on our own, take liberties. At times we go out of tune but at times we discover something new as well."

His first public performances were in the late 60's and 70's under the guidance of the late Komal Kothari, a highly regarded Indian historian and ethnomusicologist.

Today, Lakha Khan is one of the last remaining Manganiyars to have mastered this complex instrument and to carry forward the centuries-old musical tradition of Rajasthani folk and Sufi music. He has performed extensively across Rajasthan and India, and internationally in the U.S. and Europe. In 2011, Lakha ji performed in 'The legendary music of Rajasthan' at the opening of the recently refurbished National Museum of Scotland. The performance was presented by Jodhpur RIFF.

Sawan Khan Manganiyar

Sawan Khan Manganiyar stands tall as a Sufi singer in Rajasthan. His awe-inspiring voice and sheer depth of knowledge make for an unforgettable listening experience. He hails from Dabdi, a small village near Jaisalmer and learnt the basics of Sindhi Sufi gayaki from his father Bhikke Khan. His passion led him to further hone his craft under the tutelage of Ustad Bhikey Khan in Sindh, Pakistan for 8 years. He now travels the globe singing primarily in Sindhi/ Sindhri and introducing audiences to this distinct genre of music. His repertoire includes poetry and music by Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, Bulleh Shah, and Ghulam Farid among others... bringing to us a concert of some truly rare musical gems.

Jasnath ji ka Siddha

(at Dhanna Bhiyan Chhatri)

Practiced by the followers of the 15th century saint, Jasnath ji Maharaj of Bikaner. Legend has that Jasnath ji was an incarnation of Shivji, and as an infant, he would bathe in fire, and it is in honor of this legend that the fire dance is practiced by his followers even today. Performed as the culmination of *jaagarans* or all-night vigils, fire dance is a practice that requires incredible mastery of the senses and is equal parts ritual and art.

STRINGS & BEATS

7:30 PM onwards

Zenana Courtyard

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Ghewar Khan, Feroze Khan, Darre Khan

Brothers **Ghewar Khan Manganiyar** and **Darre Khan Manganiyar** are the undisputed masters of the *kamaycha*, a string instrument completely unique to the Manganiyar community. A unique Rajasthani string instrument, the *kamaycha* (a round bodied, fretless string instrument, variant of the Persian kamanche) is rarely heard today, with few musicians able to play the instrument as masterfully as brothers Ghewar and Darre Khan Manganiyar can. Sons and students of the late Padma Shri Sakar Khan ji and custodians of his legacy the brothers present a special showcase of some of the most unusual, significant, and legendary tunes of their traditional repertoire on the rustic, earthy and soulful *kamaicha*. Tying the trio together is their brother **Feroze Khan Manganiyar**, arguably the finest *dholak* player in Rajasthan. The brothers have made a name for themselves around the world, for their exquisite musical artistry, soul-stirring performances, and



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collaborations with classical and contemporary artistes from India and abroad. They are also teachers of their tradition, sharing the concern and care for the future of the legacy that they've inherited.

In its present form, the kamaicha comes with 10-17 strings and is played with a bow. Made of mango wood, its rounded resonator is covered with goat skin. Three or four of its strings are goat intestine called roda and joda while the other 14 strings of steel are 'jhara'. The kamaicha (also called kamaycha, but completely different from the spiked fiddle from Iran – the kamancheh) bow is prepared from khejari; wood and horse tail hairs or synthetic thread. Small bells (ghungroo) are attached to the bow to produce rhythmic jingle along the notes.

Karolina Cicha and Company

Singer, composer, multi-instrumentalist and often one-woman-orchestra, **Karolina** is known for her masterful vocals with accordion in one hand, keyboard in another and drums by her feet. Equally comfortable in singing in Yiddish and Esperanto (yes!), she is primarily committed to singing and performing tunes and songs of the Tartars - a minority Turkic and Finno-Ugric culture, sometimes understood as part Hungarian/ part Mongolian - and brings a Polish sensibility to her music.

At Jodhpur RIFF, the company presents some of their newer compositions, reflecting her current direction of musical exploration: the touchpoints between tradition and modernity as well as the ones between the music of the Podlasie minorities and modern poetry.

Karolina has performed all over the world, including TFF Rudolstadt (Germany), World Music Festival (Slovakia), WOMEX 2015 Official Selection (Hungary), Sibiu International Theatre Festival (Romania) and LaMama Theatre (USA) among many others.

The Cool Desert Project

Original moods, bluesy riffs, desert vibes, and off-beat dance grooves... The Cool Desert Project comes back to its home after a gap of two years, bringing together some of the traditional folk favourites and the ease of Jazz in an original, upbeat musical experience. A unique collaboration that brings together Mumbai's jazz scene and Rajasthani folk traditions, The Cool Desert Project reinvents classics like Kesariya Balam, Hitchki and Soni Ghar, but with a shot of Jazz. At its core, The Cool Desert Project is **SAZ, - Sadiq, Asin and Zakir Langa** - the rising stars of Rajasthani folk, and **Rhys Sebastian (Saxontoast)**, saxophonist par excellence, leader of Bombay Brass and The Bartender. One of the country's most sought after Saxophonists, Rhys is a household name in Mumbai's jazz scene. Trained in the classical piano, clarinet, and saxophone, he is a highly versatile musician juggling fusion, electro swing, jazz, and reinvented Bollywood. Rhys Sebastian's saxophone with Asin Khan's exquisite Sindhi sarangi and strong vocals; Sadiq's mellifluous dholak, the incredible khartal and poignant supporting vocals of Zakir, the hugely talented **Amandeep Bhupinder** on guitar, this collaboration comes full circle with **Merlyn D'Souza** on the keyboard. Merlyn is India's leading woman composer and pianist, and a music director and band leader for numerous projects. The creative force behind Filmytronix, Indiva and Soul Yatra, Merlyn defies categorization and is a true-blue genre-independent leading light of Indian music.

An initiative of Jodhpur RIFF, The Cool Desert Project has been a crowd favourite for over 2 years now and is gradually evolving its remarkable new sound, which we will get a taste of at the festival this year.

This collaboration is a Jodhpur RIFF commission



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Helder Moutinho

One of the most charismatic and genuine singers of our time, **Helder Moutinho** dons the many roles of interpreter, composer and poet in the Fado musical tradition. The Portuguese Fado (literally, “fate”), is an artform renowned for its profoundly melancholic character. Helder’s songs often speak of the harsh realities of life, with a bittersweet sense of resignation and hope, invoking a deep sense of *saudade* or yearning. Over the course of 2 decades, Helder has dedicated himself to the interpretation of traditional fados with their respective founding poems or with new poems (some of his own), and some original compositions. His more recent music, made in collaboration with some of the most talented contemporary poets and composers, have received great praise from critics who believe that many of these new songs will go on to become future traditional fados.

At Jodhpur RIFF, Helder is accompanied by maestro **Ricardo Parreira**, one of the most renowned contemporary guitarists of the fado world on the Portuguese guitar. Having played with masters like Fernando Alvim, Ricardo’s debut album received great acclaim as one of the most important documents on the great composers of the history of the Portuguese guitar in recent years. Helder and Ricardo will be accompanied by **Nelson Aleixo**, **Francisco Gaspar** and **Carlos Vales** in a set that brings a deep sense of nostalgia and longing to life onstage.

This is Helder’s premiere appearance in India.

Jatayu

Hailing from Tamil Nadu, Jatayu is a bold revisiting of the much-revered Carnatic music tradition of South India. **Jatayu** uses their expert understanding of the rules of Carnatic music to find ways to move around the structural rigidities of mainstream Carnatic music. In their music, the cool, laid-back vibe of jazz meets the raw energy of rock, all woven together with a steady Carnatic base, making three otherwise niche genres accessible to audiences from across the world. Intricate Carnatic ragas are reimaged on an electric guitar, backed by impeccable vocals that can only be mastered from years of formal training. Watching Jatayu live is an exhilarating experience, a ‘musical mathematics’ where centuries-old tradition and contemporary soundscapes collide to create something truly unique and immersive. The lineup consists of **Sahib Singh** on guitars, **Manu Krishnan** on drums and vocals, **Kashyap Jaishankar** on bass, **Shylu Ravindran** on Kanjira and Mridangam, **Wesley Crispus**, and **Jarryd Rodrigues**.

CLUB MEHRAN

Around midnight

Salimkot

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Killabeatmaker

Hilder Brando Osorno is a Colombian DJ, singer, and songwriter from Medellín, a pioneering Afro-Colombian voice. His music is built upon his indigenous roots, with the rich rhythms of Colombia and the Valle de Aburrá, blending them with deep basslines and urban beats to create a sound that is deeply rooted, yet never once seeming out of place in clubs across the world. Known for his bold cross-cultural experiments, much of his music also pays homage to the dwindling natural biodiversity of Colombia.



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At Jodhpur RIFF, Killabeatmaker features an explosive solo DJ set preceded by a live band featuring **Guadalupe Giraldo** (tambora, gaita, vocals) and **Julian Herrera**.

Together, they bring a raw, high-energy experience where ancient sounds and modern electronics collide, moving effortlessly between freestyle, percussion, and soaring vocals.

Lookout for the beginnings of a new collaboration with Rajasthani folk artists!

This is Killabeatmaker's premiere appearance in India.



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5th OCTOBER

J RIFF DAWNS WITH THE SHAMANIC SOUNDS OF UZBEKISTAN & KAZAKHSTAN

5:30 AM to 7:30 AM

Jaswant Thada

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass/ J RIFF dawns pass Rs. 300/-

Layla Tazhibayeva (Layla-Qobyz)

A virtuoso Kobyz player from Kazakhstan, **Layla** brings a short but brilliant set to the Jodhpur sunrise. The traditional Kobyz, with a deep, meditative sound, is a sacred instrument of Shamans and spiritual medics in Kazakh and Turkish cultures.

The Kobyz reveals its two distinct sides in Layla's hands. She draws out the pensive, melancholic depths of the traditional Kobyz, as well as the lively, dynamic spirit of the electric variant, moving between them with graceful fluency.

Gulzoda Khudoynazarova

Widely recognised as one of the most significant voices of Central Asia, **Gulzoda Khudoynazarova** is among the numbered few practitioners and interpreters of Uzbekistan's *Shashmaqam*. Included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, *Shashmaqam* is a classical music tradition rich in vocal and instrumental music, melodic and rhythmic idioms and poetry. Paired with her magnetic stage presence and haunting voice, this 1000 year-old tradition comes to life at Gulzoda's concerts and lingers long after she concludes. She is accompanied by **Bekzod Safarov** on the Dutar (a 2 stringed lute) and **Farrukh Vohidov** on Gijjak (Uzbek's oldest bow instrument). Gulzoda herself sings while also playing the Doyra, one of Asia's oldest percussion instruments.

This is Layla's and Gulzoda's premiere appearance in India

J RIFF DANCE BOOT CAMP III

9.00 AM to 10.30 AM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Sega / Maloya with Davy Sicard

Get set for a groovy and sensual boot-camp, dancing to the Sega and maloya tunes of **Davy Sicard**!

Drawing from his Madagascan-Reunion Island roots, Davy Sicard discovers, embraces and reinvents creole music traditions, bringing them to vibrant life on stage – where its music and dance are indistinguishable from each other. These island music traditions, Maloya and Sega both have mixed-race origins, practiced and popularised by island cultures as not just an artform but as a vessel for socio-political expression and the stories of lived experiences.

Jodhpur RIFF presents rustic dance 'bootcamps', facilitated by noted practitioners and trainers. Short, intense, and rigorous, these camps will give participants an experiential insight into the movements and



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practice of traditional dance forms.

Please Note:

This is the one-and-only, stand-alone session of this form.

Please wear/ bring appropriate and comfortable clothing that allows free movement such as T-shirts, long/ loose shirts or blouses, tights, loose track or harem pants or long skirts.

Do carry your own rehydration and drying material. Be prepared to sweat! It is a boot camp!!

IN RESIDENCE II

11:00 AM to 1:30 PM

Chokelao Bagh

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

The music of Central Asia with Zhan Kasteyev, Husniddin Ato, Layla, and Gulzoda

A virtuoso Kobyz player from Kazakhstan, **Layla** is well known for her bold cross-genre experiments. The traditional Kobyz, with a deep, meditative sound, is a sacred instrument of Shamans and spiritual medics in Kazakh and Turkish cultures. Layla developed the Electric Kobyz, a bold, dynamic reinvention of this ancient instrument. She has since paired and perfected the Kobyz with rock, pop, jazz, and electronic music, finding newer ways to bridge tradition and innovation, breaking stereotypes and inspiring younger musicians picking up the instrument. The Kobyz reveals its two distinct sides in Layla's hands. She draws out the pensive, melancholic depths of the traditional Kobyz, as well as the lively, dynamic spirit of the electric variant, moving between them with graceful fluency.

Widely recognised as one of the most significant voices of Central Asia, **Gulzoda Khudoynazarova** is among the numbered few practitioners and interpreters of Uzbekistan's *Shashmaqom*. Included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, *Shashmaqom* is a classical music tradition rich in vocal and instrumental music, melodic and rhythmic idioms and poetry. Paired with her magnetic stage presence and haunting voice, this 1000 year-old tradition comes to life at Gulzoda's concerts and lingers long after she concludes. She is accompanied by **Bekzod Safarov** on the Dutar (a 2 stringed lute) and **Farrukh Vohidov** on Gijjak (Uzbek's oldest bow instrument). Gulzoda herself sings while also playing the Doyra, one of Asia's oldest percussion instruments.

Layla and Gulzoda will be joined in conversation with **Zhan Kasteyev** – a leading promoter and presenter of Kazakh performing arts, and **Husniddin Ato**, a teacher, an ace photographer and an expert in Uzbeki culture.

Jodhpur RIFF's interactive session series 'In Residence' gives the audience a rare opportunity to meet fascinating artists from various root traditions. The sessions encourage audience members to engage and discuss challenges, forms and traditional practice through performances, lecture-demonstrations and facilitated conversations. As more of Rajasthan and India's rich traditional cultural heritage disappears, Jodhpur RIFF puts the spotlight on some of its remarkable music forms and traditions (some nearing extinction) and opens dialogue to surface and explore how these challenges could be addressed.



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MOONRISE

5.30 PM to 7.00 PM

Jaswant Thada

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass/ Moonrise Pass Rs 500/-

Satish Vyas

Padma Shri awardee **Satish Vyas** is one of India's foremost Santoor players. The son and disciple of the late C. R. Vyas, one of India's foremost vocalists, he brings a rare lyrical sensibility to the santoor - an instrument traditionally rooted in the folk traditions of Kashmir but has been beautifully reimagined in Hindustani classical music. Satish Vyas's music carries the unmistakable imprint of the Shrivkumar Sharma gharana of santoor playing - a balance of meditative alaap, intricate rhythmic interplay, and melodic improvisation rooted firmly in Hindustani classical tradition. Also a Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee, he has been instrumental in taking the Santoor to global stages, having performed at prestigious stages such as the Edinburgh International Festival to the Aga Khan Museum.

Satish will be accompanied by the remarkable **Paras Nath** on the flute and **Mukund Deo** on the Tabla. **Paras Nath** is a globally renowned flautist, known for his masterful, classical renditions as well as his contributions to film music.

INSIGHTS

7:30 PM onwards

Zenana Courtyard

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

Nagada Interlude

Nathulal Solanki is a master of the Nagada, a two-drum instrument with a treble-thunderous sound, unique in Rajasthan's folk tradition. Rajasthan's finest nagada player, Nathu ji brings to it a rare refinement: summoning its ceremonial power, yet shaping its tones with classical-sounding beats typical to instruments like the tabla. Traditionally used in temples or as a call to battle, the nagada has, over centuries, found its place in weddings and festive gatherings across the desert

Anita & Prem Dangi

Trained from a young age in Rajwadi Maand, **the Dangi sisters** are treasure troves of a vast repertoire of the traditional music of the Damami community from the western parts of Rajasthan. Perhaps one of Rajasthan's most sophisticated style of folk music, Maand closely resembles Thumri and Ghazal in its classical likeness, and is extremely difficult to master. Extremely popular across Rajasthan, the Dangi sisters come from a family that has been the custodians of this form for generations. Anita and Prem were trained by their mother Ratani Devi and are among the numbered few who carry this form forward with such beauty and sensitivity.

Suonno D'ajere

This Neapolitan musical quartet of **Irene Scarpato**, **Marcello Smigliante Gentile**, **Gian Marco Libeccio**, and **Salvio La Rocca** blend bold vocals with classical guitar, mandolin and percussion. The result is a dynamic, yet serene sound, fresh and ancient at the same time. Suonno D'ajere borrows its name from Pino Daniele's 1977 song title that translates to The Dream of Yesterday. True to the name, their music, drawing



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freely from jazz and the blues, evokes great nostalgia of the traditional, classical Napolitan song traditions. Watching them onstage feels quite like travelling back in time. Their performance combines the dynamic energy of the live stage with the timeless beauty of classical music, never failing to leave the audience wishing for more.

Basel Rajoub

A Syrian-Swiss saxophonist, composer, and improviser whose musical vision bridges Middle Eastern traditions and jazz – **Basel Rajoub** holds many titles. As a multi-culture collaborator, Basel weaves melodies from across the Middle East, North Africa, Asia, and Europe, honouring centuries-old techniques while breathing fresh life into them. Although his primary instrument is a Saxophone, he has used his mastery of it to perfect several wind instruments like Duclar and Tárogató. The very first Aga Khan Master Musician, he is also director of the HEM Oriental Ensemble, a collaboration paying tribute to classical Arabic, Iranian-Persian, and Ottoman-Turkish repertoire. Deeply personal and political at the same time, his music is a testimony of lived experiences of fatherhood, exile, memory and cultural resilience.

Later, Basel will also be sharing the stage with his friends **SAZ - Sadiq, Asin** (a recipient of the Aga Khan Music Award) and **Zakir Khan Langa**, giving us a taste of what could be the makings of a fantastic collaboration.

Davy Sicard

Drawing from his Madagascan-Reunion Island roots, **Davy Sicard** embraced Creole music traditions at a very young age. These island music traditions, Maloya and Segha both have mixed-race origins, practiced and popularised by island cultures as not just an artform but as a vessel for socio-political expression and the stories of lived experiences. Owing to this deep-rooted history of the tradition he draws from, Sicard's music has an unmistakably rustic, nostalgic charm, while also being irresistibly groovy. Traditionally played at social gatherings, this is music that truly evokes a sense of community and makes you want to sway and sing along. Although known for his calm, charismatic stage presence, it's impossible to separate Davy Sicard's songs from dance. His performances almost always start off steeped in bittersweet nostalgia and inevitably end up with the crowd on the dance floor.

Nicotine Swing

When Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grapelli combined swing jazz with Gypsy virtuosity in the 1930's, a new style emerged and Gypsy jazz was born. Returning crowd favorite from Jodhpur RIFF 2017, Nicotine Swing is - **Giuseppina Moltino, Ignacio Hernandez, Cameron Dempsey and Juan Cardarello**. Having started out as a Gypsy Jazz band from Tenerife, Spain, for almost 2 decades now, they have been perfecting their personal style, a heady mix of gypsy jazz and swing music with original songs in both Spanish and English. Their music has been experimenting across genres, forging a style highly nostalgic of the base genres, now and then with a dash of tango and funk. Listening to Nicotine Swing is like taking a journey to experience the charmed old music, performed in the warmth and intimacy of speakeasies and night-clubs in the past.

Infectious, foot tapping music at its best!



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RIFF RUSTLE

Around midnight

Zenana Courtyard

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass

RIFF Rustle is our largest, impromptu collaboration performance that concludes the festival's night-time revelries. Every year, the festival appoints a musician as a 'rustler', who then rustles up other musicians from the festival to participate in this performance in pairs or quartets or all together.

This year's rustler is Colombian DJ **Killabeatmaker**, supported by **Rhys Sebastian**, saxophonist par excellence, **Rhys Sebastian**. Both will work together to gather musicians at the festival to come and jam with each other while collaborating with *other artists including the Dhol Drummers, khartal and dholak masters and other* Rajasthani musicians. Who's to say what can happen when they all get together!



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6th OCTOBER

J RIFF DAWNS

5:30 AM to 7:30 AM

Jaswant Thada

Full Festival pass/ Day Pass/ J RIFF dawns pass Rs. 300/-

In Rajasthan, bhajans are not just songs — they are devotion, invocation, story, celebration and a lifeline of the people. They speak of love, courage, sacrifice, and faith. Imbued with an inner stillness, these recitations have a shared sacredness that brings together all communities, keeping alive the syncretic spirit of harmony that has been the tradition for centuries. From the villages to the grand forts, bhajans are woven into everyday life. In the land of valour and resilience, songs and music give people the strength to endure, the will to survive and to stand together. The words carry the wisdom of saints and poets like Kabir, Dadu Dayal, Goraknath, Baba Ramdev and Mira Bai. Some of the bhajans remind us of folk deities - Pabuji, Tejaji, Ramdevji, Gogaji... others are often 'nirguni', odes to formlessness, attracting people from all spiritual persuasions, reminding people of their roots, their values, and their connection with the divine.

Dayaram ji, a Dholi and Maand singer from Naguar, brings to a close this year's festival with a concert of varied and sulful niguni songs. Blessed with remarkable vocal prowess, Dayaram ji is also an experienced artiste of Kuchamani Khayal, a form of Rajasthani folk theatre known for its ancient poetry, all-night recitals and resonant vocals.

The "Cuckoo of Rajasthan", **Sumitra Das Goswami**, who grew up performing at all night Jagaras: nocturnal vigils, replete with devotional and spiritual songs, then joins Dayaram ji. A regular at Jodhpur RIFF, Sumitra is an internationally acclaimed singer, with a voice so magical that it seems to channel the mystic poet Meera Bai herself. She has collaborated with Mumford and Sons and Laura Marling, performed at the prestigious Berlin Philharmonie, and the Lincoln Centre in New York – all facilitated by Jodhpur RIFF.

This dawn concert at Jaswant Thada is more than music — it is an experience of Rajasthan's soul. It is where history, devotion, and tradition meet and where the rising sun carries forward the timeless spirit of the desert.

PLEASE NOTE:

- The Jodhpur RIFF program is subject to change, without prior announcement.
- For more information on the program, email: info@jodhpurriff.org
- The Opening Night concert on the 2nd of October is free for all.
- Tickets are valid only from the 3rd of October 2025- Tickets go on sale online at www.jodhpurriff.org from the 18th of August 2025.



Jodhpur RIFF takes place under the aegis of the Mehrangarh Museum Trust, Jodhpur
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