

Songs of the Stone: A Saga of Sound, Space and Story Brings the Qutub Minar into a New Cultural Conversation

Category: Business

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As winter descended on Delhi and the Qutub complex settled into stillness, the city witnessed The First Chapter of Songs of the Stone on 13th December with an after-dark cultural experience by Inkpot India that reimagined the Qutub Minar as a space for listening, reflection and cultural engagement.



Mehtab Ali Niazi and ensemble performs at the First Chapter of Songs of the Stone at the Qutub Minar

Hosted in association with Delhi Tourism and the Archaeological Survey of India, and co-presented by Max Estates, the evening was conceived as an intimate encounter between music, architecture and atmosphere, allowing the monument's presence to shape the evening.

Curated by **Simar Malhotra**, founder at Inkpot India and an alumna of **Stanford University and Columbia University**, the evening featured a sitar performance by **Mehtab Ali Niazi and his ensemble**, whose repertoire was developed in response to the scale and acoustic character of the Qutub Minar. The performance drew from classical foundations while responding to the monument's acoustics and setting. The evening opened with an address by **Eric Chopra**, author and founder of Itihasology who spoke on India's living heritage, reflecting on the cultural continuum of the Qutub Minar and the Mehrauli

region before the central musical performance commenced.

The musical experience was designed to engage all five senses through a considered integration of sound, sight, scent, taste and touch, creating an immersive cultural environment. The format emphasised attentiveness and presence, with the monument remaining central to the experience.

Simar Malhotra, Founder of Inkpot India said *"We are so incredibly lucky in India to be surrounded by places like the Qutub Minar – places that don't just hold history, but radiate it. Through Songs of the Stone, we want to bring alive heritage space, and craft moments of culture that can be lived and felt."*



Simar Malhotra, Founder of Inkpot India and Curator of Songs of the Stone, translating heritage architecture into Sounds, Space & Story

The audience comprised a curated gathering of cultural patrons, diplomats, artists and thinkers, including Former High Commissioner Sunjay Sudhir, Amrita Guha, Joya Nandurdikar (Untitled Designs), Shazia Ilmi, Suvir Saran, Suhana Nanda, Shah Umair (Sikkawala), Manish Saxena, Ananya Dasgupta, Dr Simal Soin, Sandeep Barasia and more.

Rooted in Inkpot India's belief that heritage is most meaningful when experienced directly, Songs of the Stone brings together classical music and site-sensitive curation to foster deeper engagement with India's cultural landmarks.

Following its presentation at the Qutub Minar, Songs of the Stone will continue as a cultural series, exploring new heritage sites and narratives through sound, space and musical storytelling.

The event was produced in association with Excurators Events Pvt Ltd., an organisation committed to creating experiential cultural platforms that bring India's rich heritage to contemporary audiences.

