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International Sufi Festival

October 20 and 21, 2012
Khalsa College, Amritsar



Organized by
Foundation Of SAARC Writers And Literature
SAARC Apex Body
and
Punjab Heritage And Tourism Promotion
Board
Government of Punjab
in collaboration with
Ministry Of Tourism and Arpana Caur

Zehar vekh kay peeta te ki peeta,
Ishq soch kay keeta te ki keeta,
Dil dey kay dil lain di aas rakhi vey Bulleya
Pyar eho jeha keeta te ki keeta !!!

Bulleh Shah

And those who were seen to be dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music.

Old Sufi Saying

One who walks the path of Sufism is a lover, a slave, a seeker, a beloved, a being fulfilled and then again one who is forever thirsty. Time might revere a Sufi or treat the devotion as insanity, for not to everyone is revealed the melodies unheard and not all can dance to the rhythms of silence.

Such is the strength and reach of Sufism that it can help the human being realize the presence and closeness of the Supreme Being. In the merger of the physical with the metaphysical it is possible to touch, feel and attain Him within the mortal being. Sufism is the ultimate realization of oneness with the Maker. It is ultimate submission to the All Powerful and attainment of immense power in that subjugation.

Sufism is a search that is both within and without. It is an exploration of the deepest crevices and unknown fissure of ones mind, heart and soul and a flight to reach the intangible and the undisclosed.

The essence of Sufism proclaims that the only way to Love the Almighty, is to love all His creation in all its manifestations.

Punjab is the land of Sufism and of Sufis. Besides this, the reason for holding this Festival in Amritsar is amply elaborated in the following lines.

Tracing the influence of Sufism on Sikhism, particularly Gurbani, the divine poetry written by the Sikh Gurus, Khushwant Singh says, "The Sufis lived in villages and their vocabulary was refreshingly rustic. The day-to-day activities of peasants, artisans and their women folk, the complicated emotional relationships between the various members of joint families – a sister's



Malangs : the Whirling Darveshs from Pakistan

love for her brother, the tension between co-wives, and the tyranny of a mother-in-law – gave them the similes and metaphors they needed. The Sikh Gurus, particularly Nanak, made use of these familiar pastimes and situations to convey their message.”

Our Foundation has chosen to hold an International Festival on Sufism because it is the reconciliation of all opposites: the outer and the inner, the material and the spiritual, the finite and the infinite, the here and the hereafter, the human and the divine. In this spirit, Sufism has provided a way to reconcile some of the religious doctrines of earlier cultural and religious systems in a crystallized amalgamation.

“I searched for God and found only myself . I searched for myself and found God.”

'Sufi Tradition' has the capacity to bring and bind people together. It can eliminate antagonistic images the people have been holding against each other due to historical reasons. It can show that true belief can wipe out the demarcations of 'mine' and 'thine', and build a world that is 'ours.'

The Festival is not about religion or religious poetry. It is about fastening together the hearts, the minds and the conscience of the people from the world and beyond, through love, compassion and mutual respect. It is a Meet that would endeavour to re-discover the spirit of Tasawwuf or Mysticism.

Sufism erases the narrow boundaries within the human psyche and creates a voice for secularism and

composite culture. Thus, becoming the ideology of connectivity, tolerance, love, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation.

The menace of terrorism, religious fanaticism and communal violence has only added to an already dark situation all over the world. Terrorism perpetrated in the name of religion is the death of human values.

Sufism creates a voice for secularism and composite culture becoming the ideology of connectivity, tolerance, love, compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Terrorism has become a challenge for humanity because terrorism is the enemy of futuristic dreams of man. Shunning and defying the aesthetic and the poetic, it aims at pushing mankind towards hatred and violence,

Everything in Sufi ideology stands opposed to terrorism.

Through Sufism we re-discover and re-interpret Orientalism and become conscious about the necessity of creating democratic and secular spaces.

The deliberations in the Academic Session of the Festival will focus on tolerance, human values, love of futuristic dreams and a consciousness for love and compassion that Sufism creates and advocates—that we all have a paradise within us, if only we know

Sufi Murshid Sheikha Surgut Cemalnur Hoca's group of dancing Darveshs, from Turkey





Saeen Zahoor from Pakistan

how to find it, reach it, and assimilate it in our relations with humanity.

The ecstasy that is reached by being in love with one's Maker is expressed in many forms by the Sufi saints who dance, sing, recite verses and whirl in abandon. This ecstasy forms the basis of Sufi performances which shall be an integral part of the Sufi Festival. Evenings shall be dedicated to Sufi poetry, music and dance from all the thirteen participating countries.

30 International Sufi Scholars, 25 International Poets, 50 Sufi Musicians, Singers and Dancing Darveshs from 12 countries:

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.



All are most cordially invited to be part of this soul-enlightening International Sufi Festival. Come to join the hearts filled with reverence and minds attuned to the eternal truth. Listen to their enthralling music, witness the dance of ecstasy, absorb the deep discourses, and open your soul to welcome the gift of peace, brotherhood and humanity.

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