

## 'Symphony of Mewar'

### *A Royal Collection of Musical Instruments*



The royal family of Mewar has always provided patronage to the continuation of the age-old traditions of music in the State of Mewar. The Maharanas themselves were passionate lovers of music, art and literature thus showing the softer and gentle pursuits in their warrior lives. Owing to their love for music, a

special place called **Naubat Khana** for the *Shahnaai* players and the **Nakkar Khana** for the Nakkarchis were built. They performed daily at sunrise and sunset.



The multifaceted ruler of Mewar, **Rana Kumbha** (r. 1433-1468), built the strongest foundations for Indian classical music and emerged as one of the greatest and most valuable proponents. Acclaimed as 'Sangeet Shiromani', he wrote an outstanding treatise on Indian music titled 'Sangeet-Raj'. This magnum opus of the medieval world has over 16000 shlokas or couplets.

It is considered not only a pioneering and path breaking scholarly work on Indian classical music but is often venerated as the fifth Veda. He also wrote 'Sangeet Ratnakar', 'Vadhya Prabandh', 'Sur Prabandh' and 'Geet Govind ki Rasik Priya'. The classification of Prabandh Gayan, which is Rana Kumbha's greatest contribution to the world of Indian classical music, demonstrates the warrior king's in-depth knowledge and mastery over the genre.



After merger of the State of Mewar with the Republic of India, **Maharana Bhagwat Singh Mewar of Udaipur** (r. 1955-1984) maintained the tradition of the conservation and perpetuation of the arts and cultural activities in Mewar. He hosted the Dagar brothers, Ustad Naseer Ammenuddin Khan and Ustad Naseer Moinuddin Khan, in Udaipur in the late 1950's. The extraordinarily accomplished Dagar brothers introduced the *Jod* and *Aalaap* techniques to the perfectly set *Raga* and *Taal Padas* of *Ashtachaap*. The Maharana then formulated the Maharana Kumbha Sangeet Kala Trust and collected all the recordings of the Dagar family and housed it in the archives of the Trust.

In order to felicitate the various artists for providing services of permanent value to society through the medium of Indian Classical Music, he introduced Dagar Gharana Award in 1981-1982 as a part of the Maharana Mewar Foundation Annual Awards organized by Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation.



**Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar of Udaipur**, the 76<sup>th</sup> Custodian of the House of Mewar has kept the tradition of music alive till date. Kartik Poornima, Swaranjali-Guru Poornima and the Holika Dahan Festival are a few examples of Shriji's initiatives to promote music. Shriji has also taken many steps to preserve the Living Heritage of Mewar by creating a system to archive old records and data related to music. Musical instruments belonging to the House of Mewar have been preserved and displayed in the Gallery.

It would be most pertinent to mention here that all the instruments on display belong to Members of the Mewar Family some of which are over hundred years. This makes the collection unique as it is a continuation of family's personal interest in music and preservation of these musical instruments. Yet another shining example of 'Living Heritage' practiced by Eternal Mewar .

The renovation and restoration of Zone D, Zenana Mahal, The City Palace Museum, Udaipur, where the Music Gallery is located is being undertaken with financial assistance from Ministry of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi under the scheme 'Setting up, promotion and strengthening of regional and local museums'.

In total 23 musical instruments are displayed in this gallery including string and wind instruments.



**Eternal Mewar**  
Custodianship unbroken  
since 734 AD

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