

DASTANGOI COLLECTIVE PRESENTS

ダースターン・エ・アフターブ
太陽の物語



داسـتان

آفتاب

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आफ़ताब

DASTAN-E AFTAB

Written & Directed by - Mahmood Farooqui
Performed by - Nusrat Ansari & Amina Syeda
Produced by - Anusha Rizvi

DASTANGOI

داستانگوئی

The Lost art of urdu storytelling, revived



Introduction: In 2005, Mahmood Farooqui embarked on an ambitious journey to revive and present Dastangoi, an ancient art of storytelling in Urdu that had remained dormant for nearly 77 years, gradually fading from public memory. Over the last two decades, this revival has not only resurrected Dastangoi but re-established it as a dynamic, evolving art form that resonates with audiences worldwide. Guided by the renowned Urdu critic Shamsur Rehman Faruqi, the combined efforts of Mahmood Farooqui and Anusha Rizvi have brought Dastangoi back to life. They formed the Dastangoi Collective, a passionate ensemble of 16 performers dedicated to keeping this art alive. With creative direction and the dedication of members like Darain Shahidi (award-winning journalist), Poonam Girdhani (renowned actor and theatre artist), and experienced performers like Rana Pratap Senger and Rajesh Kumar, the Collective has crafted and performed narratives that explore the depth and beauty of Urdu culture, heritage, and literature.

Growth and Global Reach: Since its revival, Dastangoi has gained widespread and growing popularity, with over 1500 performances worldwide since 2005. The Dastangoi Collective has captivated audiences from diverse backgrounds, introducing them to the allure of Urdu storytelling. These performances have reached prestigious stages including Bharangam NSD Theatre Festival in New Delhi, Rekhta Festival in Delhi and London, Prithvi Theatre Festival, Jaipur Literature Festival, Kala Ghoda Festival, and SPIC MACAY, as well as international venues like Faiz International Festival in Lahore, Karachi Literature Festival, Asia Society New York, Bakshi International Festival in Uzbekistan, and others in Dubai, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

Evolution of Dastans: While the traditional stories of Tilism-e-Hoshruha and tales of Amir Hamza remain central, the Collective has also crafted new dastans that showcase Dastangoi's versatility and thematic richness. Recent works like Dastan-e- Mir, Dastan-e-Raza, Dastan Naina Devi, Dastan-e-Fahmida, and Dastan-e-Ambedkar have received acclaim from critics and audiences alike. Other contemporary dastans include Dastan-e-Ret Samadhi, adapted from Geetanjali Shree's Booker Prize-winning book, Dastan Billi Ki, paying tribute to historian B.N.Goswamy's work on Indian cats, and Dastan-e-Aftaab, on the power of solar energy. Folk tales like Dastan-e-Chouboli, based on Rajasthani folklore, and adaptations of Rabindranath Tagore's Ghare Baire are also part of the repertoire, along with dastans based on the Partition of India, Mantoiyat (Saadat Hasan Manto's life), Dastan-e-Irrfan-e-Budhha, Dastan-e-Jallian and Dastan Karn Az Mahabharat to name a few.

Educational Outreach: The Collective has actively worked to ensure Dastangoi extends beyond theatrical performances. By conducting workshops at institutions like the National School of Drama and Ashoka University, as well as various schools and colleges, the Collective has introduced students and teachers to this unique art form.



DASTAN-E-AAFTAB

Dastan-e-Aaftab is a captivating narrative celebrating the Sun, intertwining mythological tales from the Rig Veda, Upanishads, Ramayana, Surya Purana, and Mahabharata with historical accounts of solar worship across cultures, including Egypt, Rome, China, and Japan.

In Egypt, Ra was revered as the Sun god, often depicted with a falcon head, embodying light and life. His daily journey across the sky symbolized renewal and resurrection, with significant temples like the Karnak Temple dedicated to his worship.

In Rome, Apollo was not only a god of music and prophecy but also associated with the Sun, embodying light, healing, and truth. His role in Roman religion was formalized with the construction of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill, symbolizing the divine connection between the Sun and governance.

In Japan, Amaterasu, the Sun goddess, is a central figure in Shinto belief. She is credited with bringing light to the world and is honored at Futamigaura, where rituals are performed to celebrate her influence on agriculture and the changing seasons.

The narrative also speaks to the representation of the Sun in art, architecture, literature, and philosophy in India and globally. Drawing on the insights of scholars like Al-Beruni, who noted the significance of celestial bodies in Islamic astronomy, Abul Fazl, whose writings celebrate the Mughal embrace of solar symbolism, and Badayuni, who documented the cultural syncretism of the era, it highlights the Sun's significance to Mughal rulers.

Moreover, Dastan-e-Aaftab underscores the vital role of solar energy in combating climate change, emphasizing its importance for a sustainable future, drawing parallels with ancient practices of solar worship that revered the Sun not only as a deity but as a life-giving force essential for the planet's health.

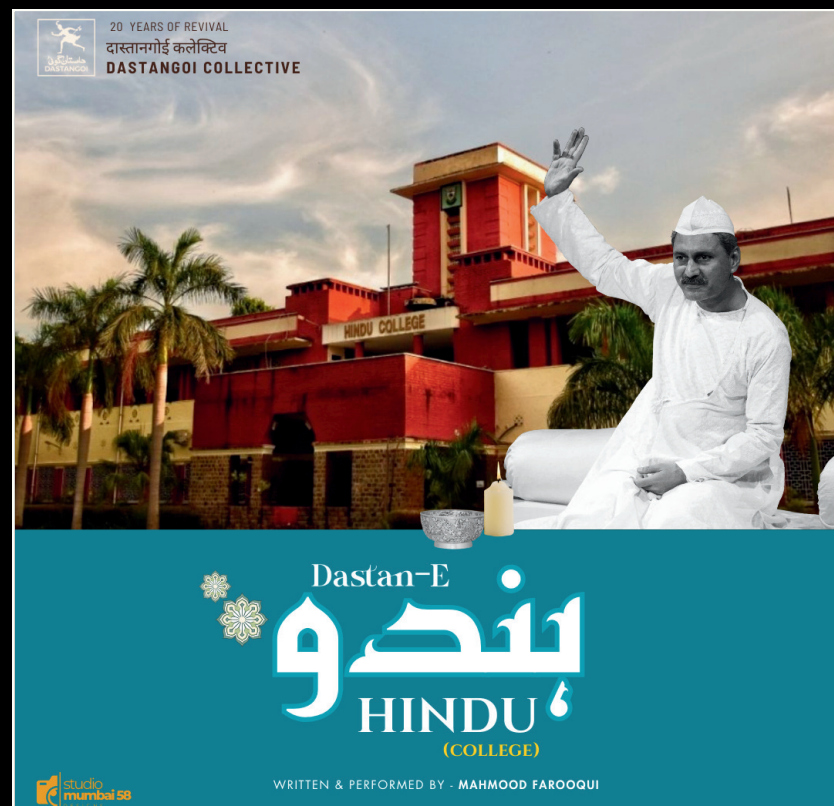
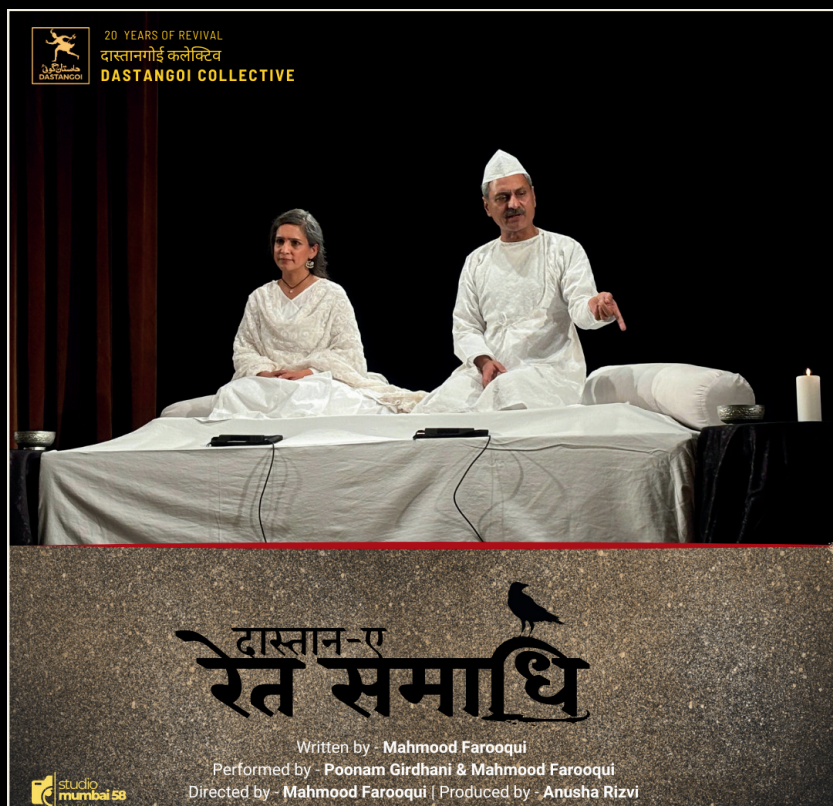
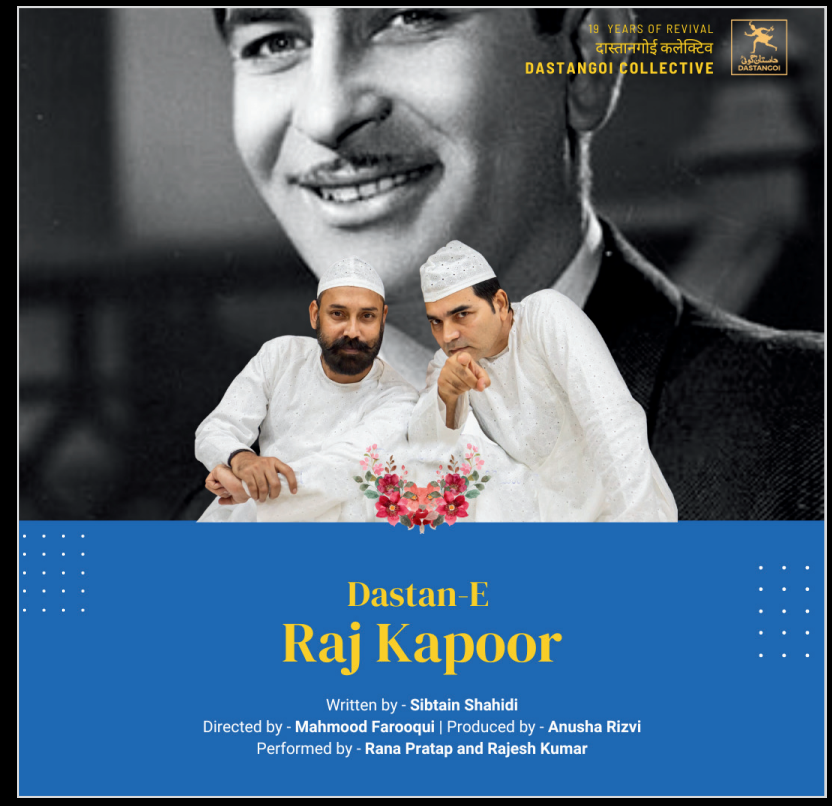
PERFORMERS

SAYED AMIINA is an Assistant Manager and educationist based in Delhi, with a deep-rooted passion for theatre and storytelling. She holds a Master's degree from Jamia Millia Islamia and has been actively associated with the traditional art form of Dastangoi for over a decade.

As one of the youngest and most committed members of the Dastangoi collective, Amina brings a distinctive voice and vibrant energy to the stage. She is both a skilled storyteller and a gifted actress, known for performances that seamlessly weave the richness of classical narrative with contemporary themes, captivating audiences across generations.

Amina has performed at several prestigious venues across India, including a landmark appearance at the Rashtrapati Bhavan before the Honourable President of India. Her journey is a compelling fusion of professional excellence and artistic devotion, establishing her as a remarkable force in the fields of performance and education.

NUSRAT ANSARI comes from Lucknow and had moved to Delhi for her higher studies. She has been associated with this artform and the Dastangoi Collective for over 7 years and has performed over 50 shows across the country for diverse audience. She also conducts workshops on Dastangoi especially in schools and colleges. In May 2021, Nusrat was awarded with 30 Under 30 **Young Achievers Award** for theatre by Hindustan Times for her outstanding work in Dastangoi. Nusrat along with Poonam Girdhani represented India in the 2nd International Bakshi Art Festival, 2021, in Uzbekistan and were awarded with the Preserver of Ancient Heritage Award.



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