

## **THE MALR INAUGURATION REPORT**

The Music Archives and Listening Room (MALR) is one of the most unique ventures of the college that was inaugurated on August 11 2017. The MALR is envisaged as a space within the premises of the college that is committed to the solitary pursuit of listening to Hindustani music, while also archiving and cataloguing the collections of various music aficionados and collectors who have given their music to the college.



The MALR was inaugurated by one of the most beloved and respected musicians of the country, the sarod player Pandit Biswajit Roy Chowdhury. After the welcome address by the principal Dr. Babli Moitra Saraf, Panditji who also performed to a packed hall of students and faculty members, presenting an eclectic blend of raags from his gharana: Bilaskhani Todi, Kukubh Bilawal and Desi. He was accompanied by Sh. Durjay Bhaumik on the tabla. After this beautiful performance, renowned musicologists Prof. Partho Datta of JNU and Dr. Urmila Bhirdikar of SNU made their presentations on the importance of the archive of classical music in India, giving an intellectual frame and direction to the MALR. The inauguration program combined theory and practise of Hindustani music, an intention that was best encapsulated by the concluding session: a lecture-demonstration on the tabla by an emerging musician, Rohen Bose from Kolkata, who is also the disciple of the legendary Pandit Kumar Bose of the Banaras gharana.

Pt. Roy Chowdhury significantly interpreted the archive as a modern day 'guru' which inspires and guides young musicians. He also gave useful suggestions as to the cataloguing of the collections. Dr. Bhirdikar underscored insightfully how an archive signifies "a pursuit of knowledge, and not the pursuit of truth". All the guests expressed their deep appreciation of the collections that the archive has already got in its keeping from Sh. Navjeevan Khosla, Sh. Ajay Ginde, Sh. Samar Mavinkurve and Dr. Urmila Bhirdikar, besides the large collection that has been bought by the college from Meera Music who publish rare Hindustani music.

The success of any such events depends on the students who are the main stakeholders in the intellectual and cultural life of the college. The inauguration saw a large scale participation from students in both organizing and attending the event and making it a shining success.

## **THE MALR Certificate Course**

In preparation to float the Baithak society and to introduce the MALR to the college community, the IQAC and the MALR organized a ten hour certificate course 'An Introduction to Hindustani Music: Aesthetics and Traditions', conducted in the MALR room by Kanav Gupta of the English Department of the college. The course is attended by about 30 students from among whom the first batch of the Baithak society will be constituted. The course covers a broad range of subjects within the formidable tradition of Hindustani music with the objective of teaching students both the history of the evolution of this art form and introducing them to the complex yet subtle pleasure of listening to both contemporary and archival music. Finally, the course also familiarises a smaller group of students with archiving technology and the complexities of cataloguing an art form essentially resistant to language.