



MINOTI KHAUND

Weaving Magic With Bow and Strings

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One of the finest violinists India has produced with a musical career spanning half a century hails from Assam. She is none other than our very own Minoti Khaund, violinist par excellence who weaves magic with her bow and strings.

Her journey into this world began 70 years ago in Jorhat where she was born to Manik Phukan and Nalini Devi. Brought up in a large family of seven siblings, she had three sisters and three brothers who were also musically inclined. It was her maternal grandfather who saw the potential in her and encouraged her yearnings to play the fiddle by buying a violin for her. Indreswar Sarma was her first guru at the age of 10 at the Darpanath Sarma Music School in Jorhat. She continued her formal education in Jorhat itself. Her personal turning point came when she got married to Kabindra Ram Khaund in 1961 who has been a pillar of support and encouragement to her.

Her real turning point came when she met violin maestro Pt.V.G.Jog in 1972 when she was performing at a music conference. Her daughter was only 11 months

at the time while her elder son was a toddler. She took her training as Pt. Jog's disciple with tremendous support of her family and in laws.

However, it was a stop gap arrangement as she had to go outside Assam for learning. There was no social concession to all the practice that was needed. Minoti had to do all her other duties equally as people's expectations were such. However, she had a word of advice for the present generation i.e. to be focused in just one field instead of being a jack of all trades, one should prove one's potential in one singular area and be the master of it. The pressure on students should be reduced, according to her.

Her devotion to her art paid off as recognition came to her in the form of accolades and awards. A gold medalist and topper in her M.Muse, she was conferred the Sangeet Jyoti Award in 2005 by the N.E. Foundation; Shilpi Award in 2007 by the Chief Minister of Assam; she was felicitated by Lord Dholakia in London in 2008. But perhaps the most cherished and beautiful award she could ever receive has been her daughter Sunita who has ably taken on her mother's legacy. In fact, their jugalbandis have become famous for the display of passion, harmony and perfect blending. Her daughter is now herself an accomplished musician and winner of Indira Gandhi Award for Excellence in Music.

Minoti Khaund is associated with some social organizations for spreading awareness on classical music. Few know of her skills in cooking, knitting, dressmaking etc which were her hobbies at one time. However she maintains that 'sadhana' is needed for musical proficiency, while a platform is also necessary. Her future plans include carrying on her pursuit of excellence, to play on and to spread awareness on music among the masses.□□