

Padma Bhushan Ustad Zakir Hussain honoured with the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar



Mumbai, Nov 28, 2019 (Issuewire.com) - At the 24th edition of the Sangit Kala Kendra Awards function, Padma Bhushan Ustad Zakir Hussain was named the recipient of the coveted Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar. Alongside, two rising stars, in the firmament of Indian Classical Instrumental music – Ms. Ragini Shankar (violin) and Mr. Abir Hossain (sarod) were awarded the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskars. Ustad Fazal Qureshi received the award on behalf of his brother Zakir Hussain.

Addressing the gathering **Mrs. Rajashree Birla, President, Sangit Kala Kendra**, said that these awards are a magnificent celebration of the creative spirit of Sangit Kala Kendra's visionary founder, **Shri Aditya Vikram Birla**. Mrs. Birla cited his passion and his connect with the performing arts, reminiscing, "Adityaji, was a painter, an actor and a singer. He believed that this was a creative way of expression, which in his time and day needed a strong push. This led to the spawning of the SKK. Through his personal involvement, he did his best to stoke great interest in music, dance, theatre and other forms of art at the national level. Adityaji lent stature to Sangit Kala Kendra. In his memory and to carry forward his legacy the **SKK Awards were instituted in 1996**".

Having Padma Bhushan **Dr. N. Rajam** the world's most renowned violinist at the helm today as

the Chief Guest was both a privilege and an honor. **“Reckoned, as the unparalleled violin virtuoso, you are truly unmatched.** The love of the violin is a passion, that purposes your life even today. You have created, a new zone in this space. You have put India on the world map”, averred Mrs. Birla.

She also expressed Sangit Kala Kendra’s great pride in **naming Ustad Zakir Hussain, for the Kalashikhar Puraskar.** She reaffirmed his creative genius par excellence on the tabla. “The award is a testament to his invaluable contribution to Indian Classical Music. Zakir Hussainji is a marvel, whose drumbeats resonate in India and world over. He is the finest ambassador of Indian music across the globe”, added Mrs. Birla. As Ustad Zakir Hussain could not make it to the function due to an exigency, his brother Ustad Fazal Qureshi accepted the award on his behalf. It was great to have the tabla maestro grace the occasion. **He has won international acclaim, for his deft genre mixes, with jazz and western classical music.**

Mrs. Birla congratulated Ms. Ragini Shankar and Mr. Abir Hossain, the recipients of the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalakiran Puraskar.

The panel of judges who chose the recipients were marquee artists – Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, Pandit Arvind Parikh, Pandit Shekhar Sen and Dr. Saryu Doshi. The expertise and experience, the rigor in the process of evaluation have been the greatest positive, which the panel of judges have brought to bear from the start to date. Consequently, the SKK Awards have become aspirational.

Incidentally, this award’s function was unique in many ways. For the first time, the Chief Guest was an artist – Dr. Rajam, easily beyond compare globally. **For the first time again, the twosome Ragini Shankar and Abir Hossain performed on stage.** It was also different because of the scale, the expanse and the ambience created at **NSCI’s Dome.**

The event concluded with a soul-stirring and riveting performance by popular singer Arijit Singh, who belted out some of his Bollywood chartbusters and had the audience on their toes right through the evening.

Picture Caption:-

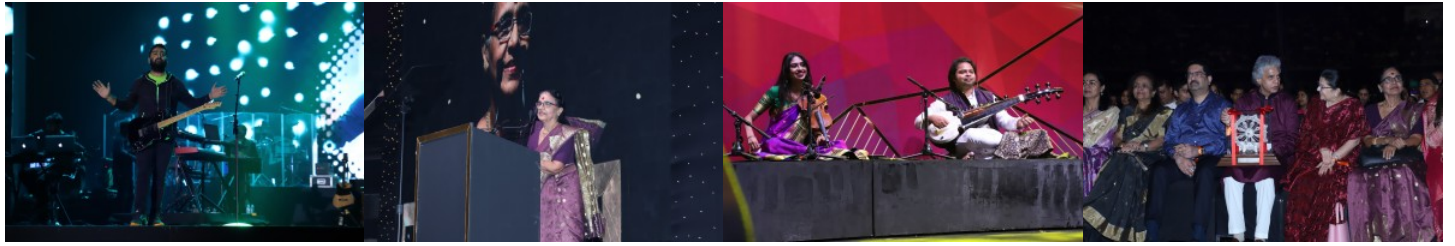
Pic 1- Fazal Qureshi receiving the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar 2019 on behalf of his brother Ustad Zakir Hussain. Also seen in the pic are Rajashree Birla, Dr. Rajam and Neerja Birla

Pic 2 - Chief Guest Dr.Rajam addressing the gathering

Pic 3 - Arijit Singh performing at the Aditya Birla Puraskar 2019

Pic 4 - Ragini Shankar and Abir Hossain performing at the Aditya Birla Puraskar 2019

Pic-5 - Kumar Mangalam Birla, Fazal Qureshi, Rajashree Birla and Dr. Rajam at Aditya Birla Puraskar 2019



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