



## Revisiting the Ethnic Gala - Astitva

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and Team Astitva

It is no news that people of the nation are shedding national pride quite swiftly and falling for staged supremacy of the overseas over the overlooked national belonging and inheritance, Heritage. Thus, the college Heritage Collective organizes Astitva, an inter-college event every year to reveal and revive the incredible Indianness present inside all of us.

Astitva, the mega-event celebrating Indian heritage, brings the campus confluence of excitement of competitions and energy of volunteers. Exhibiting exquisite brilliance of Indian heritage, the event attracts footfall in thousands. Astitva 2018, held on 24<sup>th</sup> August concluded it's 9<sup>th</sup> year with beautiful memories, remarkable highlights, and notable contributions worth remembering.

And thus, dear readers, revisit the ethnic gala in this account of Astitva season!

The goldenlamps were lightened amber by the Chief Guest, Shri Anand Bhate, a renowned classical vocalist in the inauguration ceremony. Mr. Bhate shared his thoughts on role of music in one's life and spellbound the spectators by singing one of his songs. Furthermore, our student singers payed a tribute to legendary singer-composer Sudhir Phadke on his birth centenary by performing a melodious medley of his songs. Sponsored by Fleetguard Filtrum, Peshwa Restaurant, Malpani Bakers and supported by Heritage India, Astitva was ready to enchant the audience with its grandeur. It

comprised of ten competition of academic, literary, creative, and cultural areas of art.

The ultimate harbour for curious minds and query mines, Quiz competition titled as Maha Quiz was based on the theme, Majestic Maharashtra. It was organized by Rajwardhini Pawar, Deshna Sanghvi and team. The quiz comprised of multiple rounds including elimination, personality, audio-visual, and pouncing rounds to declare the ultimate winner as Tushar Pathade and Tejas Shende.

Shabdalkar, the essay competition dedicated to ink slingers and young intellects was conducted on 20<sup>th</sup> August on topics based on Chanakya's matras, lessons from past; addictive social media, problem of present; and complicated Indian education system, question of the generation. It was judged by Prof. Pratima Agnihotri, Prof. Prasad Barve, and Prof. Maitreyi Shirolker and organized by Anushka Jain, Chaitrali Dharmadhikari and team. Among the 120 contestants, those who quilled their thoughts best were Bhakti Pardeshi (English winner) and Aditya Sawalkar (Marathi winner).

A fresh new competition introduced this year, Logo Tag, logo designing with tagline was welcomed spectacularly with 105 entries by creative thinkers. One of the themes for Logo Tag was "Plastic Free Zone", in support of decision of Maharashtra government to ban



plastic. It was organized by Radha Chaudhari, Girija Karmarkar and team. The winners, Anagha Chaudhari and Srushti Paranjpe excelled in the art of expressing tons in a small symbol. The competition was judged by Mrs. Shubhada Joshi.

Mrs. Joshi judged another newly introduced competition, Phalakruti, fruit carving and salad decoration. 22 teams carved their imagination on delicate fruits based on the theme "Indian Heritage". The artwork ranged from immaculate monuments carved on pumpkins to finely chopped vegetable decorated as Indian tricolor. It was organized by Simran Pardeshi, Chetan Mutgekar and team. The efforts on fruits were fruitful for the winning team, Sanket Page and Harish Bhawar.

Henna handiwork has been a part of Indian rituals since ages and the mehndi competition, Hastarang is one of its kind. Giving unique platform to mehndi artists, Hastarang attracted 100 participants managed by Arundhati Rudraximat, Pooja Polekar and team. The judge Kanchan Uttekar concluded Siddhi Shinde and Rachita Jain for their finest "cone creativity" as the winners.

Adding to the pleasantness of the festive day, aroma of henna travelled next door where 62 young artists were absorbed in doing marvels with their graphite pencils. Rekhatan, the sketching competition had one of its themes as P. L. Deshpande to give tribute to the celebrated writer and humorist. It was organized by Jasmine Fernandez, Pranjakta Rupanwar and team; and judged by Mr. Nachiket Damle who concluded Rutika Verma as the winner.

Mr. Nachiket Damle also judged painting competition, Ranganubhav which had themes as Horizons and Seasons. The exhibition of 180 mesmerising paintings in which colors fuse into natural scenery attracted large number of onlookers. It was organized by Ram Tawale, Tanmay Joshi and team. The competition was won by Kshitij Kulkarni.

While painters sat amid nature to brush the nature's beauty, the photographers crouched to capture the best angle for their submission in Clickathon, the photography competition. With distinctive themes, "View through a window" and "Generations- living and non-living". The competition was organized by Palash Kumar Verma, Niranjana Bendre and team; and judged by Satish Paknikar. The winner was Akshay Paranjape, physically challenged person with exceptional photography skills who proved an inspiration to all the participants.

Quills, cones, brushes, and camera clicks composed their own symphony throughout the event day, given the effect of morning vibes which rippled from musical vadyas in Vadyalankar, the instrumental competition. Organized by Mitali Yarde and Shubh Gujar, Vadyalankar hosted 22 participants tuning on the themes Raag (Yaman and Charukeshi) and Taal (Teental and Jhaptal). It was judged by Mr. Ajay Parad and won by Gajanan Inghave (solo) and Samandhar Kanherkar (team).

The most awaited and anticipated show on Astitva, Nrityalankar, the dance competition stretched through the day with 55 solo and 45 group entries. The performances were based on the theme historical and mythological events. It was organized by Pooja Hiremath and Aditi



Shrikhande and judged by Sheetal Kolwalkar and Gauri Gandhe. From stunning legwork to expressive kohled eyes, the dancers bowed to applause after giving absolutely breathtaking performances. The winners were Stuti Sarkar and group; and Vaishnavi Putambekar as solo.

The highlight of the event, Fashion Show stole the show showcasing ethnic outfits from cultures across the country. Girls and guys draped in elegant attires ranging from Rajasthanilacha to Assamese MekhelaChador and was coordinated by Tanisha, Anushka, Vaishnavi and Sagar.

The overwhelming figures of headcount in the event is the result of incessant efforts of the PR team (Public Relations) headed by Neeraj Pawar and Kunal Chougule. The volunteers in black and red Astitva t-shirts wearing its goodwill as badges ventured to different colleges across the city to promote the event. This way, they learned communication and negotiation skills bringing record breaking entries for the competitions every following day promoting plastic free initiative by distributing cloth bags.

Astitvians care about not just showcasing heritage but preserving it as well. So, this year, the preparations and decorations were carried out in a "Plastic free" manner. The designing team headed by Gayatri Kolte and Siddhi Pawar took up the challenge and decorated the whole campus without thermocol and followed 3Rs, Reuse, Reduce, and Recycle in their conduct.

Adorned with the craftwork by the designing team, the campus provided platform for student entrepreneurs who put up their stalls

selling paper culling designs, dream catchers and other products. Astitva also supported several NGOs by setting up their stalls which showcased bamboo rakhi by Melaghat and Chocolates by Niwant.

For conducting the massive event like this the core student co-ordinators Anushka Kumbhar and Aniket Jadhavar played an important role. Our college alumni, Samartha Balgude, Raghav Naphade, Ujjwal Parlikar and several others also helped in the event. The event would not have been possible without the invaluable guidance of Principal, Dr. C. N. Rawal and Heritage Collective faculties in-charge, Dr. Rajashree Gokhale, Dr. Anagha Kale, and Mrs. Vrushali Mahajan. Other faculty members Vedashri Bhide Mrs. Smriti Patwardhan, Mrs. Neetika Sharma, and Mr. Prasad Barve also helped in some events.

The event was a success. It was a victory of the winners who took glory back home, contestants who understood scope for their improvement, students who learned "life skills" during the process, teachers who imparted their knowledge to the students, spectators who made memories to cherish, and Indian Heritage which ventured beyond the museum glasses and neglected niches out in its restored glory. Astitva 2018 concluded with aspirations for the next 10<sup>th</sup> year to yet again raise the curtain from Incredible Indian Heritage.





## Virasat – Celebration of Legacy of Tradition

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The February air reverberated with the melody of medley of millenniums singing classic folk Marathi Powada in unison with evident enthusiasm and alike emotions. Emotions of pride for our traditional legacy, Virasat.

Virasat is an annual event organized by Heritage Collective, with the tagline "Celebration of Legacy of Tradition". The purpose of the event was to showcase the beauty of Indian traditions and make young students realize the importance to carry forward the legacy of Indian tradition. It was held on 7<sup>th</sup> February in Cyrus Poonawalla Hall. A renowned name in the world of tale-tellers and folk fare, Mahila Shahir Vinata Joshi was invited for the occasion. She shared bits of her journey of becoming a Shahir with the students and sang two of the poems by Swatantra Veer Savarkar in response to one of the students' question. She herself being a part of Savarkar's family lineage, sang his creations which made the audience 'feel' the poetry and imbibe the message.

Shahir Vinata Joshi, dressed in elegant traditional Powada outfit for her 985<sup>th</sup> performance, sang a Powada on the life story of Jhaansi ki Raani. She herself being a living embodiment of "Naarishkati", sang on the brave deeds of woman warrior Manikarnika and connected the audience with thread of belongingness, a feeling of patriotism. She also sang parts of Powada on Tanaji Maharaja and Veer Savarkar. Her energy and enthusiasm

travelled through the hall to the hearts of the audience leaving them overwhelmed. With the purpose of making students truly realize the beauty of art of traditional folk, she encouraged them to sing after her.

The program was entertaining, informative, inspiring, and carried a deep message. It was organized by the Heritage Collective student team under the guidance of faculty in charge, Dr. Rajashree Gokhale, Dr. Anagha Kale, and Mrs. Vrushali Mahajan. The success of the event was evident in the goosebumps raising across the hall. It was a perfect example of understanding our cultural heritage and also an example of how women can create a niche for themselves in a male dominated profession with her strong will power and abilities.

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